



Dragan Vojvodić

MEDIEVAL WALL PAINTINGS
IN THE CHURCHES
AND MONASTERIES
OF RAŠKA I

Saint Peter's Church
and Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras

MEDIEVAL WALL PAINTINGS
IN THE CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES OF RAŠKA

I

Saint Peter's Church
and Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras





Dragan Vojvodić

MEDIEVAL WALL PAINTINGS
IN THE CHURCHES
AND MONASTERIES
OF RAŠKA

I

Saint Peter's Church
and Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras

Belgrade 2024

PUBLISHER

The Institute of Art History
Faculty of Philosophy – University of Belgrade

EDITOR

Bojana Stevanović

REVIEWERS

Miodrag Marković
Danica Popović
Marka Tomić

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Miljana Protić

GRAPHIC DESIGN AND PREPRESS

Miroslav Lazić

INDEX

Marijana Marković

PRINTED BY

Copy Centar doo, Beograd

PRINT RUN

100

ISBN-978-86-6427-304-6

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7
SAINT PETER'S CHURCH	11
Earliest frescoes	16
Late Middle Byzantine frescoes	39
Late Byzantine frescoes	59
Post-Byzantine paintings	93
DJURDJEVI STUPOVI IN RAS	107
THE WALL PAINTINGS IN THE KATHOLIKON	109
The earlier wall paintings	113
The later wall paintings	161
THE WALL PAINTINGS IN KING DRAGUTIN'S PAREKKLESION	173
NOTES	211
INDEX ICONOGRAPHICUS	231



1
Adoration of the Magi, detail

2
St. Peter's church, view
from the northeast

INTRODUCTION

In the early stages of the development of Serbian culture, Raška (Rascia) had a prominent and often leading role among the territories inhabited by Serbs. In the 9th and 10th centuries, this region, which at the time housed the nucleus of Serbian political life, began to bring forth monuments that would have lasting significance for the evolution of national art and without which its genesis would be very difficult to understand. After a hiatus and a period when Zahumlje (Zachlumia) and Zeta took over the leading role, the political center of the Serbian lands once again shifted northward in the first half of the 12th century, permanently anchoring itself in the Raška region. Developing under the Nemanjić dynasty, the Serbian state – whose rulers lived in the fortified capital of Ras and which had reincorporated parts of the regions of Neretljani, Zahumlje, Konavle, Travunia, and Diokleia and expanded its territory at Byzantium's expense – began a distinct cultural rise. From the second half of the 12th and throughout the 13th century, Raška saw the construction of religious monuments whose architecture, sculpture, and wall paintings would decisively influence the building and emerging identity profile of Serbian medieval culture in an area much broader than Raška itself.

It was then that the distinctive solution of the church emerged: a single-nave (aisleless) building





3

Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras,
view from the northeast
(aerial photo using a drone)

with a dome-topped central bay with lateral vestibules and façades with Romanesque secondary sculpture, later elaborated by transforming the vestibules into rectangular choir spaces and adding lateral parekklesia along the narthex, and its interior ennobled by Byzantine-style wall paintings. Those frescoes were the works of first-class Byzantine painters accompanied by Serbian *zografoi*, and their thematic program, like the architecture of those churches, was shaped to serve the needs of the milieu for which they were created. In this process, the formulation of the distinctive ideology of the Serbian state and church had a remarkable impact. It rested on the notion of the saint-bearing ruling dynasty and the holiness of the autocephalous church, explained in both literature and the visual arts. The 13th century brought the writing of literary and liturgical texts and the painting of distinctive thematic fresco programs intended for the glorification of the Nemanjić dynasty as the leader of New Israel and for explaining the apostolic underpinnings and justifiability of founding an autocephalous national church. The legacy of those artworks would decisively shape later Serbian art and the idea of Serbian national identity, remaining influential until modern times. It would long serve as the framework and impetus for artistic projects in Raška, where notable works of monumental painting continued to be produced even in the 14th and 15th centuries, when the hubs of state political life were on the other territories.

There can be no doubt that the wall paintings created in Raška from the 9th/10th century to the second half of the 15th century hold extraordinary importance for understanding artistic and ideational flows in Serbian culture and for interpreting the evolution of Byzantine painting as a whole. Hence, it warrants intense scholarly attention, which it has not always enjoyed as much as it deserves. Some fresco ensembles of remarkable importance in the history of Serbian art have never been exhaustively and comprehensively studied in a stand-alone monograph. That is especially true of two heavily damaged ensembles of monumental painting produced in Raška, both of which are now reduced to modest remains but are, all the more so, precious witnesses of the distant past as the earliest examples of their kind to have reached us. It is to them that this book is dedicated in the hope that it is only the first volume in a thematic series aimed at minimizing those blanks and gaps in art-historical studies.



Saint Peter's Church





4
Enthroned Virgin and Child
in the *Adoration of the
Magi*, drum of the dome

5
Shepherds in the *Nativity of
Christ*, drum of the dome

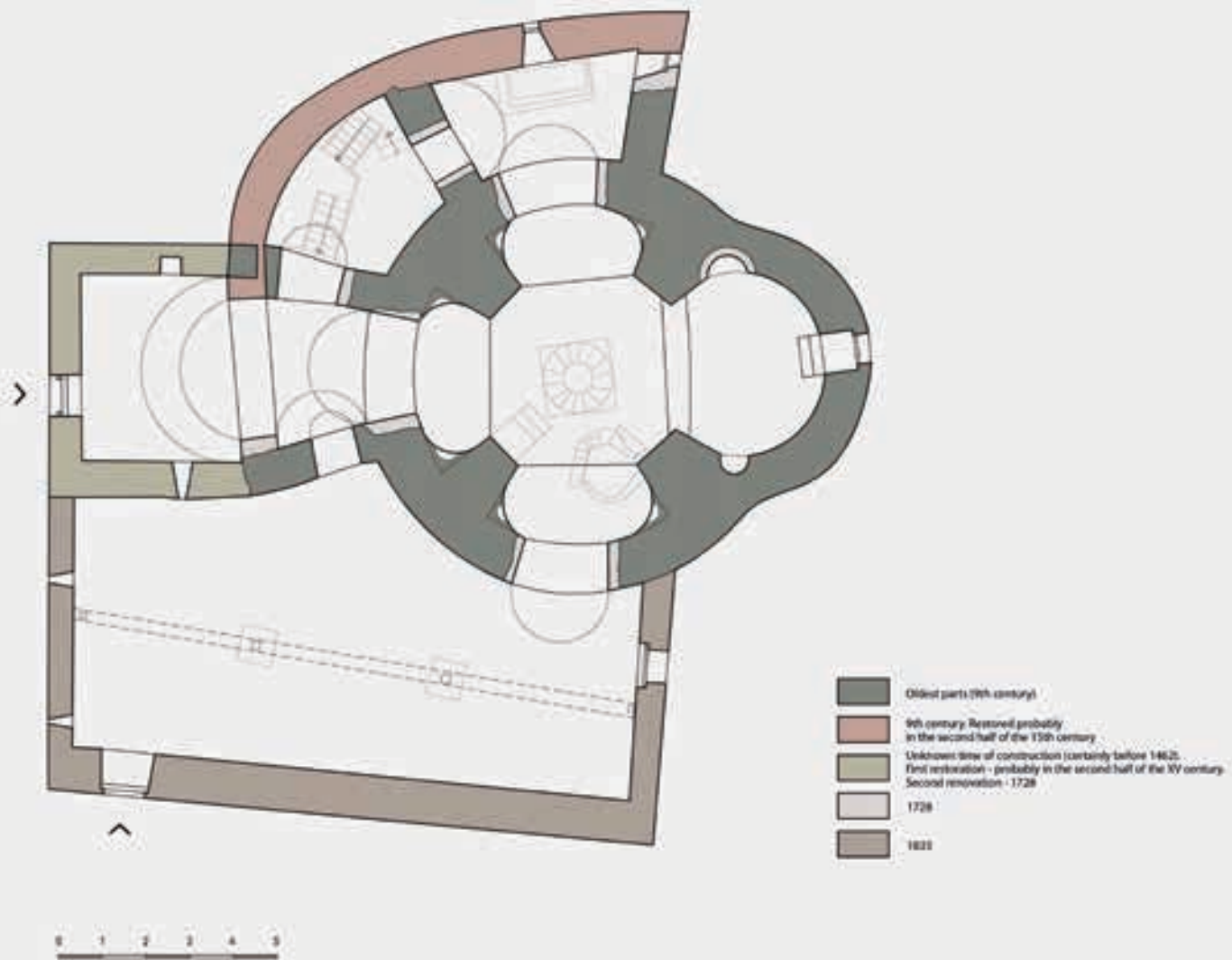
The paintings of St. Peter's church – closely tied to the fate of the for centuries, built, removed, and rebuilt church walls they once graced but still much more vulnerable than them – testify to the long and turbulent history of one of the oldest Serbian shrines.¹ Unfortunately, those paintings, chronologically multi-layered, have survived only as smaller or larger fragments scattered on the wall surfaces of different parts of the ancient edifice. They are difficult to date and impossible to conclusively sort into chronological groups. At times, even identifying the general content of these scarce remnants is an exacting task. Using them to draw conclusions about the wider thematic or programmatic circles to which they belonged is even more challenging. The seductive conservation retouches on them, often indistinguishable from the original parts, can easily lead us astray. The yearning to wrench away at least a modicum of bygone times from the oppressive darkness of oblivion is, therefore, inspiring but always fraught with the fear that the lack of reliable guideposts might mislead us in the misty depths of history and along stray paths that falsely promise to take us to the truth. And yet, those modest morsels of the past are invaluable, and often the only, evidence we have about the history of the ancient edifice. As such, they are also the inevitable starting point for any





Plan 1

Longitudinal section of St. Peter's church, present state (corrected drawing from the documentation of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Serbia – Belgrade)



Plan 2

Ground plan of St. Peter's church, present day (corrected drawing from the documentation of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Serbia – Belgrade)

knowledge we hope to glean about the beginnings and directions of the evolution of old Serbian art and culture in general. Scarce and seemingly obscure as they may be, they will long continue to elicit attempts to decipher the cryptic messages of times gone by and decode their sometimes pitilessly illegible contents. No less persistently, they will continue to invite constant evaluations and reexaminations of the authenticity of the deciphered content.

Earliest frescoes

The stylistic, programmatic and iconographic characteristics of the surviving frescoes in the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras allow us to establish, with a fair degree of certainty, that they were painted in several rounds and in different medieval and post-medieval periods. The church was fully (or almost fully) frescoed at least twice – in the early Middle Byzantine era, i.e., at the end of the 9th or in first decades of the 10th century, and again in the last quarter of the 13th century. In the late Middle Byzantine period, from the beginning of the 11th to the early 13th century, the wall paintings of the church were thoroughly restored, probably not all at once but gradually, in several stages. Finally, some parts of the church, such as the narthex and exonarthex, were frescoed in the Post-Byzantine period, i.e., during the era of Ottoman rule.

Some remnants of the earliest frescoes, created around 300 years before the original paintings of Studenica, have survived, albeit partially covered by more recent fresco layers, in the drum of the dome, the upper zones below the dome, and the walls in the sanctuary. Smaller fragments of the original murals, mostly showing no more than traces of the borders that once separated their zones, have also survived in the lower parts of the naos. That points to the conclusion that the original frescoes covered the entire naos, including the sanctuary, expanding into the large openings on the gallery but only partially (Figs. 15, 16). Approximately at a third of the breadth of the wall in these openings, the fresco decoration ended with a border; behind the border, the fresco plaster was left blank, suggesting that the gallery had not been frescoed. By that time, the smaller windows on the galleries and the blind niches between them had already been walled up and covered with plaster to create suitable and sufficiently wide surfaces for the frescoes in the area below the dome (Figs. 13, 14). Furthermore, the ancient paintings also covered – at least in some parts of the church – the decorative drawings from the period of Iconoclasm carved into the plaster layer previously spread over the wall surfaces.² Sadly, ax blows and other types of damage have heavily disfigured those paintings, reducing them to a pale and barely detectable shadow of their former beauty. No finer final touches of paint have been preserved anywhere on the surviving original frescoes. What can still be discerned are almost exclusively the undercolors



6
Annunciation and Visitation,
 drum of the dome

and faded silhouettes of figures on an other background. Hence the iconographic content and visual characteristics of the few distinguishable representations in this fresco layer can be assessed only in very general outlines. However, identifying their basic content is by no means easy: it entails meticulous poring over the scarce details and piecing them together into more suggestive ensembles, so it seems sensible to at least roughly describe the iconography of these almost completely lost images, whose traces are rapidly disappearing in the inexorable ravages of time.

The original wall paintings of St. Peter's church are best preserved in the drum of the dome. In this area, even the elaborate ornamental frieze – stylized floral motifs on a fluted wreath separating the drum from the cupola – has survived, along with

five narrative compositions on the surfaces between the four windows.³ The scenes that have elaborate iconographic contents deserve special attention.⁴

In the southeastern part of the drum are two Gospel scenes (Figs. 6, 20, 21): the *Annunciation to the Virgin* (Lk. 1:26–38) and the *Visitation* (Lk. 1:39–56), the visit of the Blessed Virgin Mary to Elizabeth. On the left side of the field, nearer to the east, wearing a red dress, the Mother of God stands in a slight contrapposto on a rectangular pedestal in front of a wide backless throne. The throne seems to be ornately carved or inlaid. On it is an oval cushion and next to it a knitting basket; one of the yarn threads is held by the Virgin in her relaxed left hand. Her right hand, probably holding a distaff, is raised almost to the level of her head framed with a fairly small halo. She is turned to the right, from whence the archangel Gabriel strides forward to bring her the joyful tidings. Almost unknown in later art, this arrangement of the scene, with the Mother of God on the left and Gabriel on the right, was used in the pre-Iconoclast period and the early phase of Middle Byzantine art.⁵ At St. Peter's, it allowed the artist to more clearly distinguish the contents of the two chronologically separated episodes in the Gospel narrative while compositionally uniting and balancing them. The massive figure of the archangel is at the center of the scene, so that the Virgin before the throne in the *Annunciation*, on the left side of the painting, balances out the huddled, almost conjoined bodies of Mary and Elizabeth on the right. The two relatives in the *Visitation* embrace each other: Elizabeth, in an ochre dress, drapes her left arm over Mary's shoulders, while the Virgin lays her outstretched right hand on Elizabeth's underarm.

The *Nativity of Christ*, the next scene in line (Fig. 7), is in the southwestern part of the drum. Based on what is still discernible, the composition seems to have the standard iconography, essentially inspired by the Gospel text (Lk. 2:4–15). The dominant element in the scene is the diagonally positioned figure of the Virgin, who is lying on a birthing bed in the cave of Bethlehem. The undulating edge of the cave opening is indicated along the upper rim of the composition and descends towards its left part, which shows two shepherds in animated conversation on a yellow background, outside the cave (Fig. 5). The shorter, beardless shepherd wears a red tunic and, softly inclining his head, rhetorically stretches his arm to the left, to his taller and certainly older companion. Only the silhouette of the second shepherd has survived, but it is enough to infer that his face was upturned and that, with his right hand raised high, he gazed upwards. In fact, this shepherd was shown conversing with an angel, now only partially visible, who had come to tell the shepherds about the birth of the Christ Child and invite them to pay homage to him. The manger with the Divine Infant seems to have been painted at the foot of the Virgin's bed, in the right part of the scene, but the figures of the three eastern magi bowing to the newborn Savior, which would become almost a standard feature in the later iconography of the *Nativity*,⁶ were not included here. Instead, they are shown in a separate composition.

7

Nativity of Christ,
drum of the dome



That composition – *Adoration of the Magi* – has survived in a somewhat better state of repair than the other scenes in the dome of the ancient cathedral of Ras (Figs. 4, 8). It was located on the northwestern side of the drum, where the cycle continues. Along its right edge, the Virgin sits on a throne with a lyre-shaped backrest, characteristic mainly of the early Middle Byzantine period,⁷ and holds the Christ Child on her lap. They are approached by an angel, his body fully turned to them but the head thrown back toward the left side of the painting, facing the three magi he has brought to Bethlehem and, with his right wing raised above them, inviting them to come closer to the Savior.⁸ Dressed in ornate tunics with golden trims, the three magi approach and offer him gifts with their hands covered with white cloths (Fig. 1).

The sequence of scenes in the drum ends on its northeastern side with the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* (Lk. 2:22–38). At first glance, just two female figures and the outlines of a column-supported ciborium are perceptible (Fig. 9). Half-turned to the left, the prophetess Anna, in a red *maphorion* and ocher tunic, stands by the



left edge of the composition. Her raised right arm is outstretched in the same direction. The Virgin is shown much closer to the center of the image. She wears a dark red tunic and a light-colored *maphorion* and holds the Christ Child in front of the chest but looks back. Between her and the prophetess Anna, there is the faint, whitish silhouette of St. Joseph's figure, which has lost all of its paint. The outlines of the back, shoulder, and back of the loins of Mary's aged husband are discernible on the red background of Anna's *maphorion* and her dark yellow tunic. Closer to the Virgin, the outlines of his chest and himation-covered arms, which once must have held the sacrificial turtledoves, can be traced on an ocher background. Similarly but even less clearly, it is still possible to distinguish the silhouette of St. Simeon the God-receiver, who stood in front of the Mother of God with his back turned to the ciborium.⁹ Placed at the right end of the image, the ciborium marked the holiest part of the Temple of Jerusalem.

8

Adoration of the Magi,
drum of the dome

9

Presentation of Christ in the
Temple, drum of the dome



Illustrating the events recounted at the beginning of the Gospel narrative, the four described scenes unfold clockwise in a regular and expected chronological sequence. What is unusual, however, is their location in the topography of the church. Except for the *Ascension of Christ*, narrative iconographic scenes were very rarely positioned in the domes of Orthodox and, more widely, Christian churches. Their placement in the drum of the dome was even more uncommon. The drum's many windows, which served to let light into the central part of the church, disrupted the cylindrical wall surface and made it impossible to paint more elaborate compositions in it. Therefore, the series of Gospel scenes in the drum of St. Peter's must have been the result of special reasons, which were not ideational or conceptional but rather practical. The lack of broad wall surfaces for painting narrative scenes in the space below the dome and the lower zones of the naos, where such representations were usually shown, meant that suitable surfaces had to be sought elsewhere. They were, among

other places, found in the dome because it had only four windows (Plan 1).¹⁰ It should, therefore, be noted that the drums of the very few Orthodox churches whose domes feature sequences of Christological or hagiographic scenes also had only four windows (Panagia Koubelidiki in Kastoria, Panagia Kera in the Cretan village of Kritsa, White Church of Karan, Taxiarches on Aegina, Panagia Kountouriotissa in Pieria).¹¹ The wall surface between them was wide enough to accommodate compositions with elaborate contents. In other words, the unusual architecture of St. Peter's church dictated the suppression of the five scenes recounted at the beginning of the Gospel story from the central to the highest points in the spatial hierarchy of the edifice, and adequate space for them was found in the uppermost sections. The height of the drum allowed the figures to be slightly larger than those in the lower parts of the building, which meant that they could be easily seen even in the dome. That, however, leads us to the question of the extent to which these scenes – sectioned off into the space between the two cornices of the drum¹² – were separated in terms of content from the rest of the thematic program of the church's wall paintings, i.e., whether they constituted a stand-alone ensemble, as previously sometimes believed.

Firstly, it should be noted that the interpretation of these images as a separate cycle of Christ's childhood was heavily influenced by the fact that the monument was underresearched.¹³ All of the scenes in the space below the dome remained unidentified long after the identification of the representations in the drum of St. Peter's church. This, in turn, precluded an assessment – even a very general one – of the wider programmatic ensemble of the paintings in the upper zones of the central part of the church and the underlying idea of the program. However, the drum of St. Peter's features three scenes that belonged to the cycle of major Christian feasts (Annunciation, Nativity, Presentation of Christ), whose representation had to be continued somehow in the lower sections of the central part of the edifice. The two remaining scenes in the drum, the *Visitation* and the *Adoration of the Magi*, had the most direct connection with the representations of the first two Great Feasts. Namely, the Adoration of the Magi was, for example, the main topic of Gospel readings in the Christmas liturgy (Mt. 2:1–12) in the early Middle Byzantine period, like in other eras.¹⁴ In view of all this, it is entirely understandable that, in ancient illustrated manuscripts and programs of many churches from the early Middle Byzantine period, these two scenes were included in more or less extensive cycles of paintings illustrating the complete New Testament account.¹⁵ Beginning with the Annunciation to Zechariah or, much more commonly, the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary, this cycle, which could also include other episodes from Christ's childhood, did not end with the Presentation of Christ, i.e., the scenes that precede the Baptism. In old painted programs, the narrative continued without interruption with the subsequent events. It unfolded to the end of the history recounted in the New Testament and included scenes from the ministry of Christ, his miracles and passion, as well as the events that took place after his ascension into Heaven.

10
Baptism of Christ,
northwestern squinch



When it comes to monumental Middle Byzantine art, the richest treasury of such cycles has survived in the churches of Cappadocia, especially the ones frescoed in the 10th century: Kiliçlar Kilise, Old and New Tokali Kilise and El Nazar in Göreme, Ayvali Kilise in Gullu Dere, Tavşanlı Kilise, Pigeon House Church in Cavuşin, Kokar Kilise in Ihlara, Bahattin Samanlığı Kilise in Belisirma, etc.).¹⁶ Although known earlier as a solution, grouping the scenes from the New Testament account into parceled, thematically distinct cycles would not become the norm until the monumental programs of the Late Byzantine period and even then with many exceptions.

That the New Testament narrative beginning with the paintings in the drum continued below the dome of the old cathedral of Ras is evidenced by a few barely



detectable scenes in the lower parts of the church. Directly beneath the drum, in the squinches that formed the transition to the dome, it is possible to reliably identify two or three Gospel scenes that continue the sequence of the five compositions described above, following the chronology of the New Testament narrative. Based on the rather modest yet informative remnants, it can be inferred that the *Baptism of Christ* (Mt. 3:13–17; Mk. 1:9–11; Lk. 3:21–22; Jn. 1:29–34) graced the northwestern squinch (Fig. 10).¹⁷ All of the main elements of the iconography of the Epiphany

11
Betrayal of Judas,
 northeastern squinch

are distinguishable here.¹⁸ The center of the squinch held the figure of Christ, now reduced to traces of an ocher halo and the outline of the head – bowed and lightly turned to the left, to St. John the Baptist, who bends over the Lord and places his right palm on the Savior's head covered with brown hair. The facial features of St. John, dressed in a reddish-brown himation and yellow chiton, have completely faded, as have Christ's, but the shape of the hair framing the face and the point of the short beard still remain partly discernible. St. John's figure is balanced out by the angels with folded wings on the opposite, right side of the scene. They raise their arms with cloths draped over them, waiting for the Lord to emerge from the waters of the Jordan. There seem to have been just two of them, which was fairly common in early post-Iconoclast art.

The neighboring, northeastern squinch featured the *Betrayal of Judas* (Mt. 26:47–51; Mk. 14:43–47; Lk. 22:47–50; Jn. 18:3–10).¹⁹ Again, Christ's figure is at the center of the scene, his head illuminated by a halo with an inscribed cross (Fig. 11). The Savior holds a scroll in his left hand; his face and body are turned to the left, towards the traitor Judas, who treads forth in a wide stride. The outlines of Judas' body are discernible only as a grayish silhouette – a surface that has lost all of the paint and is now only visible partly on the ocher background and partly on Christ's clothing. Disingenuously kissing his teacher, Judas lays his right hand on the Savior's chest. Behind Judas follow the Israelites in long tunics and cloaks, shod in black footwear. However, the upper parts of their figures are covered by a considerably younger layer of frescoes and are no longer visible. In the bottom right corner of the squinch, the head of the prostrate Malchus, whose ear St. Peter cuts off, appears faintly discernible.

The scene in the southwestern squinch also seems possible to identify, although it has lost a lot more of the painted layer than the two previously described ones. Again, at the center of the field, although now at its very top, there is Christ's head with long dark hair, positioned almost frontally but very lightly inclined to the right (Fig. 12). An ocher nimbus with an inscribed cross is clearly visible around his head. Below Christ's neck and at his shoulder level, there are no broad surfaces in the dark color used for underpainting the Savior's himation in other scenes, which could mean that here he wore very pale or white garments. In addition, roughly in the middle of the left half of the composition, the outline of a light-colored, perfectly circular mandorla is discernible on the ocher background. On it, to the Savior's left and at the height of his neck, there is a dark mass of someone's hair – an unknown figure without a halo bending towards the Lord. The surface of the fresco to the right of Christ's head has completely faded, but along the sides of the squinch, much lower than the level of the two previously described figures, the outlines of the hair of two even smaller heads remain detectable. This scene seems to have been the *Transfiguration* (Mt. 17:1–6; Mk. 9:2–8; Lk. 9:28–35). In the Early and Middle



12

Transfiguration (detail),
southwestern squinch

Byzantine period, the *Transfiguration* was more frequently depicted with a perfectly circular mandorla that, besides Christ, enveloped the figures of two prophets, and the dark-haired Moses was shown on the left much more commonly than later.²⁰ That was, for instance, the case on the miniatures in some manuscripts (Paris Gr. 510, Chludov Psalter, Panteleimon Ms. 2, etc.),²¹ as well as in monumental art, especially in the Middle Byzantine churches of Cappadocia (Old Tokali Kilise, Karanlik Kilise, Elmali Kilise, Çarikli Kilise, etc.).²² At Saint Peter's church, the white-haired St. Elijah seems to have stood to the Savior's right, but his white tresses are no longer detectable on the almost faded frescoes. Slightly lower, to the left and right of the mandorla, where the outlines of the heads are, and below it, near the bottom edge

of the squinch, where the fresco layer has been completely lost, three apostles were depicted. In pre-Iconoclast and early Middle Byzantine art, the arrangement of their figures in the iconographic concept of the *Transfiguration* was not fixed, and hence St. Peter could sometimes not be shown on the left side of the composition, which would later become more common.²³

As the mark of the Savior's divine nature, the mandorla did not appear in depictions of the New Testament events that had taken place before the Transfiguration. Having climbed Mount Tabor with three of his disciples, the Lord incarnate revealed himself to the members of humanity in ethereal radiance. All other scenes that show him in a mandorla describe the New Testament events that happened after the Resurrection: the *Descent into Hades*, *Ascension*, and *Dormition of the Mother of God*.²⁴ Since the arrangement of the faintly detectable figures and other elements of the iconography that can be discerned on the heavily faded fresco in the southwestern squinch correspond only with the Transfiguration, it is almost certain that it was indeed featured in this scene. Consequently, it follows that, in the series of squinches below the dome of St. Peter's, the scene of the Baptism was given a place between the *Transfiguration* and the *Betrayal of Judas* and that the guiding principle behind the sequence of the Gospel episodes in the space below the dome remains unclear. It should be noted that the chronological order of the scenes in the Christological cycle could sometimes be disrupted even in much younger Byzantine and Serbian medieval art.²⁵

But whatever the arrangement of the themes in the space below the dome at St. Peter's might have been, there is no doubt that it featured the scenes that illustrate the stages of the New Testament account after the Presentation of Christ. It included depictions of the events that were being celebrated with increasing stability among the great Christian feasts in the medieval period, but also illustrations of other Gospel episodes topically connected with them, just like in the drum. In this way, the Gospel narrative beginning in the dome continued beneath it, flowing through space as it had done through time and unfolding from the higher to the lower zones. Based on the higher number of figures in the zone of the big openings on the gallery, dressed in long tunics and black footwear like the Israelites in the *Betrayal*, it seems that this area featured the scenes associated with Christ's entry into Jerusalem and his subsequent passion (Figs. 13, 14). Some scholars have identified the traces of the frescoes on the western wall as the remnants of the *Crucifixion*,²⁶ a hypothesis that for now remains impossible to verify. Unfortunately, most of the scenes in the space below the dome are now destroyed or so heavily faded that they can no longer be recognized. The much younger frescoes that partially cover them are of little help in their identification because, as we will see, they did not repeat the selection and arrangement of the themes of the original wall paintings. In addition, it is impossible to conclusively ascertain the number of zones the frescoes in the space below the dome might have been divided into. Furthermore, it is unclear whether the



squinches and the wall surfaces between them formed a separate zone or whether the scenes on the eastern, southern, western and northern wall below the dome covered the entire surface up to the sub-dome cornice, which is the case on the youngest layer of paintings in this part of the church. The figures on the walls, although slightly larger than those in the squinches, are of a size that suggests the first possibility, albeit not conclusively. Hence, the number of scenes painted in the original layer of the space below the dome is impossible to hypothesize even with relative certainty, just as the system of their arrangement cannot be definitively reconstructed. The complexity of this problem is best exemplified by the remnants of the scene with Christ's figure in a mandorla, which has been fairly reliably identified as the *Transfiguration*, in the southwestern squinch.

That brings us to the question of what might have been painted above the drum, in the half-sphere, that is, the cap of the dome, when the Church of the Holy Apostles

13

Remnants of the scene on the southeastern side of the space below the dome

14

Remnants of the scene on the southwestern side of the space below the dome



15
Remnants of the wall paintings on the northern side of the northwestern opening on the gallery

16
Remnants of the wall paintings on the southern side of the northwestern opening on the gallery

Peter and Paul in Ras was frescoed for the first time. At first glance, it seems acceptable – even very plausible – to assume that the *Ascension of Christ* occupied this area because it often featured in the domes of Middle Byzantine churches.²⁷ In the crown of the dome at the cathedral church of the ancient eparchy of Ras, there are no visible traces of the earliest paintings to either confirm or refute such a hypothesis. However, the modest fragments of the original frescoes in the sanctuary seem to suggest the untenability of this assumption.

Very near the bottom of the northern part of the conch of the altar apse, directly above the cornice, on the oldest layer of the fresco, a few unshod feet are visible fairly clearly (Fig. 17). The feet are one next to another, turned in opposite directions, and almost raised on tiptoes. Their position, stance and size in proportion to the entire space of the conch suggest that the figures to which they belonged were once part of an elaborate, dynamic composition with multiple participants. Although



17
Feet of the apostles,
probably from the
Ascension, semi-
hemisphere of the
altar conch

18
Halo and head, probably
from the *Ascension*, lower
layer of the frescoes in
the semi-hemisphere

these feet very likely belonged to Christ's disciples, the scene was almost certainly not the *Communion of the Apostles*. That this was not the case is suggested, on one hand, by the position of the feet and, on the other, by the fact that the *Communion of the Apostles* did not become a part of the thematic programs of the central part of Orthodox sanctuaries until the 11th century.²⁸ Furthermore, a fragment on the southern side of the conch also contradicts the hypothesis that the *Communion of the Apostles* graced the sanctuary of St. Peter's. The fragment shows a halo and a head whose surviving features suggest that the face was upturned (Figs. 18, 35). The size of the halo and head is proportionate to that of the feet on the northern side and points to the conclusion that the scene in the conch of the apse at St. Peter's in Ras was the *Ascension*.²⁹

Of course, in themselves, these scarce remains offer more of a hint than firm grounds for the conclusive identification of the scene. However, the belief that this was indeed the *Ascension* is further supported by the relatively well-known practice of depicting this scene in the apses of churches frescoed in pre-Iconoclast and early Middle Byzantine times. In this case, the Coptic and Syrian examples of representing the Ascension of Christ in conchs on the western sides of Monophysite churches and chapels (Bawit, Saqqara, the Syrian monastery in Wadi El Natrun, etc.) should be laid aside.³⁰ Far more important for identifying and interpreting the scene at St. Peter's



is the practice of painting the Ascension in the conch of the altar apse that can be traced in the art of the adherents of the Chalcedonian Creed from the 6th to the 8th century. It was most consistently followed from the 9th to the 11th century. This practice is evidenced by examples from the churches of St. Michael in Tarrasa, Catalonia (6th c.); Panagia Drossiani in Naxos (7th c.); the “Little Church” or Kilise Mescidi in Byzantine Amastris (modern Amasra), Paphlagonia (probably 9th c.); the Rotunda of St. George in Thessalonike (late 9th c.),³¹ and ten or so churches in Cappadocia: St. Elijah in İltaş (8th c.); three churches in the area of Ilhara – Yılanlı Kilise (9th/10th c.), Pürenli Seki Kilisesi (first half of the 10th c.), and the Church of the Mother of God or Eğri Taş Kilisesi (9th/10th c.); St. George in Açık Saray (11th c.), Kale Kilisesi near Selima (11th c.), Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia in the village of Shahinefendi near Ürgüp (1216/1217).³²

Painting the Ascension in altar apses had both a formal and a symbolic or mystical justification. The curved surface of the conch gave the composition scenic credibility, introducing the two-dimensional painting into three-dimensional space and creating the impression that Christ, floating above, really bent over his disciples. On the other hand, the altar apse has always been seen as one of the celestial zones in the church – an icon of the sky where God resides,³³ and hence the depiction of the Lord's ascent to the Heavens suited it very well. Furthermore, the Ascension, as is well known, does not merely describe the Savior's return to the heavens. It was also a faithful picture of His Second Coming (Acts 1:11) and an allusion to Christ taking his seat on the prepared throne from which he would judge humankind once the Kingdom of Heaven comes as the ultimate eschatological aim of every liturgical assembly, which both physically and spiritually faces the shrine in the East.

The symbolic connection of the sanctuary, its cultic foci and the sacerdotal rites performed in it with the Ascension and Second Coming has been highlighted by some of the most learned early Byzantine theologians. St. Maximos the Confessor (580–662) in his *Mystagogy* explains that the Savior's "ascension into heaven and return to the heavenly throne... are symbolically figured in the bishop's entrance into the sanctuary and ascent to the episcopal throne", i.e., the so-called High Place in the center of the apse.³⁴ On the other hand, the archpriest's descent from the High Place after reading the Gospel, according to St. Maximos, symbolizes "the end of this world." The end will come "in the second coming of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ from the heavens in glory", who will "through the holy angels separate the faithful from the unfaithful, the just from the unjust."³⁵ For St. Germanos I, Patriarch of Constantinople (715–730), the archpriest's ascent to the synthronon and his blessing the people essentially have the same meaning that St. Maximos ascribes to them. They signify the blessing that Christ, having completed the economy of salvation and begun his ascent to the heavens, gave his disciples with the words: "Peace I leave with you" (Lk. 24:50–51; Jn. 14:27). Therefore, the bishop's sitting at the High Place, the learned patriarch teaches us, signifies that the Son of God "sat down by the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3) in the deified human body that he raised to the heavens and offered to the Father.³⁶ At the same time, for St. Germanos, the sanctuary with the episcopal throne is a "concave place, a throne on which Christ, the king of all, presides with His apostles... judging the twelve tribes of Israel", precisely as he taught them when he foresaw that "He will come sitting on the throne of glory to judge the world" (Mt. 19:20; Is. 121:5).³⁷

The fact that the two theologians offered very similar explanations shows that their ideas were deeply rooted in the Orthodox understanding of the liturgy. These interpretations of the symbolism of the sanctuary and High Place, that is, the bishop's entrance into the holiest part of the church, ascent to, sitting on and descent from the throne, fully justified the programmatic association of the Ascension scene and its two meanings with the conch of the altar. Positioned in the apse of the church, this

19

Remnants of the first fresco layer on the northern side of the lower part of the altar conch



scene highlighted the celestial symbolism of the space and offered eloquent Christological and ecclesiological explanations. The association of the Ascension with the altar conch is also easy to understand when it comes to parish and monastery churches, especially those with carefully built High Places, such as the abovementioned Panagia Drossiani on Naxos. However, this composition acquired its full ideational meaning in churches that held a bishop's cathedra, such as the church of the Holy Apostles in Ras. In later times, the Ascension would often be shown directly in front of the apse, in the sanctuary vault.

Some remnants of the original wall paintings have also survived in the lower zone of the conch, below the cornice, beside the High Place. On the northern side, a few heavily damaged and faded haloes and, among them, but a little lower, traces

of a row of male saints' heads with nimbuses are discernible yet unclear (Fig. 19). It is impossible, for now, to identify reliably enough the ensemble that the saintly images might have been part of. Perhaps that was the tribunal of the apostles on thrones and standing angels behind them? Such a representation in the Ras *apostoleion* would have additionally emphasized the symbolism of the High Place as the throne "on which Christ, the king of all, presides with His apostles," judging the world upon his Second Coming.³⁸ The socle zone offers a few more modest traces of the original murals, but they are only partially visible beneath as many as three younger layers of frescoes.

Given the state of repair of the oldest wall paintings in St. Peter's, very little can be said about their iconographic, programmatic and visual features or the characteristics of their style. Hence we can but offer a very wide and rough time frame in which they might have been painted. Although not always clearly perceptible, these frescoes undoubtedly have many archaic iconographic and programmatic traits. Some of those are, for instance, the arrangement of the *Annunciation* composition with the archangel Gabriel approaching the Virgin from the right, the shape of the backrest on the Mother of God's throne in the *Adoration of the Magi*, and the content of the Gospel cycle and the distribution of its scenes in the topographic structure of the church. In this regard, the placement of the *Ascension* in the conch of the altar apse, if the identification of the scene were to prove correct, would be highly suggestive. That would mean that the oldest frescoes at St. Peter's church must have been painted not long after the church acquired a dome and was built in the form it more or less still has, that is to say, they were made at the end of the 9th or in the first half of the 10th century. The painterly characteristics of the earliest wall paintings, insofar as they are still discernible, do not suggest a different dating.³⁹ In the higher zones, the frescoes were painted on a peculiar background with a wide band of ocher in its lower part (Figs. 6–10, 20, 21). This section covers four-fifths of the compositions; above it, there was a rather narrow strip of another, now completely lost paint that provided the background for the haloes of the participants in the scenes. Such a background, in warmer or cooler tones of ocher, which reaches to the level of the nimbi executed in a similar color, can be found in some other monuments of the early Middle Byzantine period.⁴⁰ It was consistently used in the images making up the first fresco layer at the Church of the Taxiarches in Kastoria (9th/10th c.); it is dominant on the original wall paintings at the Church of St. Stephen in the same city (9th/10th c.) and also appears on a separate, heavily faded fresco from the 9th or 10th century showing the image of an unidentified bishop in the basilica of St. Demetrios in Thessalonike.⁴¹ A somewhat more far-fetched parallel for this color scheme of the background – ocher in the lower part and another color (light blue) in the upper section – is the monumental *Ascension* of Christ in the apse of the Rotunda of St. George in Thessalonike (late 9th c.).⁴²

The figures of the compositions in the drum and the spaces below the dome at St. Peter's are characterized by elongated proportions, measured gestures, and graceful stances. That is particularly true of female figures. All participants in the depicted events are in the foreground of the compositions, which are reduced to their basic content and characterized by a subdued rhythm, classicist order and a general air of monumentality. The abovementioned abstract yellow background almost completely offsets any depth of the space. Very faint hints of perspective and three-dimensionality have been achieved in the Virgin's throne and the pedestal in front of it in the *Annunciation* and the ciborium in the *Presentation of Christ* rendered in oblique projection. Those heavily attrited frescoes have not preserved enough evidence to discuss the voluminosity of the figures, modeling and coloristic harmonies they once had. In most cases, nothing has survived but the unnuanced base color used for underpainting shapes or mere imprints of forms on the background that have completely lost their painted layer. For the most part, there are no detectable traces of painterly elaboration or finishing touches on the forms. It is, therefore, difficult to propose any well-grounded conclusions about the artistic value and more specific stylistic characteristics of these earliest wall paintings. However, the fine draughtsmanship of the figures and throne in the *Annunciation* (Figs. 4, 8, 20), the studied stances and harmonious proportions (Figs. 1, 9) do suggest a fairly accomplished work belonging to the classicist trend of the early Macedonian dynasty period. The light-infused coloring adds to the classicist atmosphere of the paintings in the drum and the higher zones of the space below the dome, at one time – too hastily, it would seem – described as provincial. To counter this inference, some might argue that the faded and whitened frescoes now seem much paler than they would have been when they were created. There is, however, little doubt that the dominant ochre background and the long-lost light accents on the shapes even then gave these scenes a very solemn character and allowed them to produce the impression of a brightly lit spectacle.

The classicist mood of the earliest wall paintings in the drum, as a whole, was intensified by the unusually consistent introduction of wide ornamental borders around scenes and architectural elements. This was a very carefully executed and highly elaborate decorative system rooted in geometric principles. In the space around the scenes, little has survived except the border in the form of thin red and black lines set wide apart, with an occasional, faintly visible trace of geometric decoration between them (Figs. 7, 21–23). A hint of the full splendor of the skillfully and spiritedly painted vegetal ornaments, executed by imprinting circular dot-shaped matrices into wet plaster, has survived in the painted decoration of the upper cornice of the drum (Figs. 20, 21, 23). Traces of the fresco decoration have also been preserved on the cornice at the base of the dome and directly below it, especially on the south-eastern side. This system of framing iconographic compositions with wide decorative bands instead of simple red borders was most closely associated with miniature



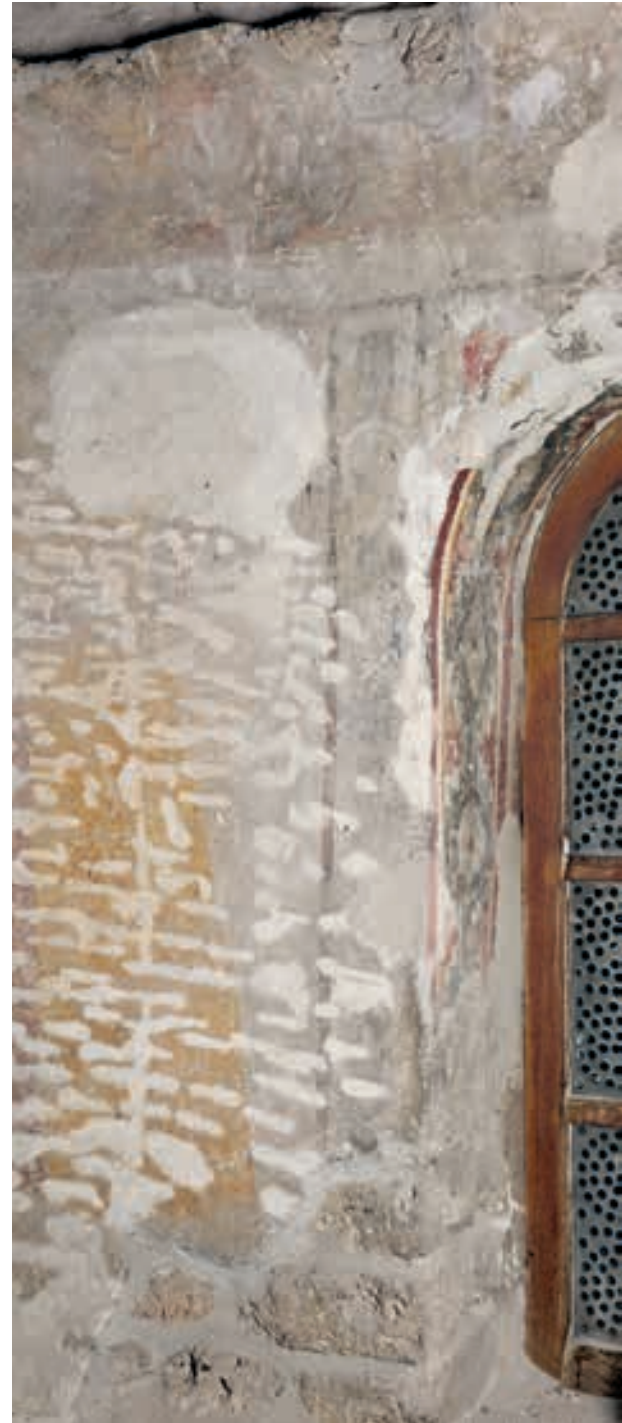
20
Annunciation (detail) and
some of the frescoes
on the lower cornice,
drum of the dome

21
Visitation and some of
the frescoes on the lower
cornice, drum of the dome

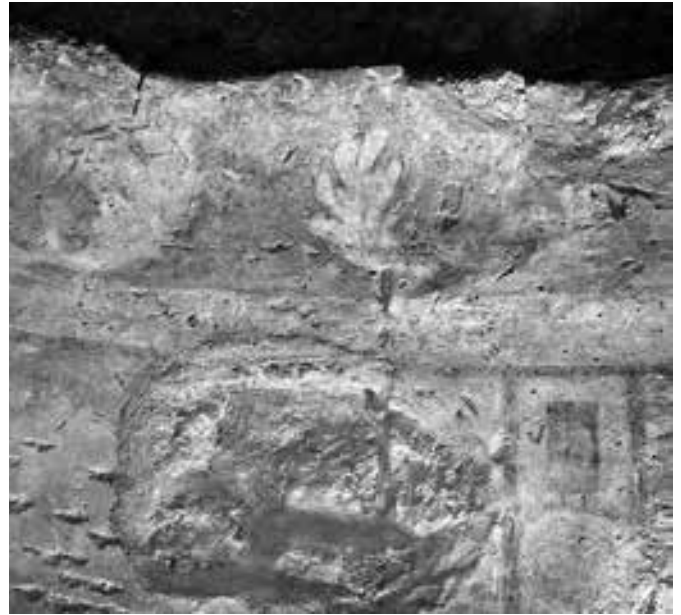


painting, but it also had a long tradition in the monumental classicist art of the Byzantine Empire. Compelling evidence about this is provided, for instance, by the elaborate system of bands used to section off the fields with images in the lower part of the dome at the Rotunda of St. George in Thessalonike (5th/6th c.) or in the uppermost zones of the walls at the Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna (6th c.) or the border of the fresco showing the *adventus* of a basileus at St. Demetrios in Thessalonike (7th/8th c.).⁴³ In later Byzantine art, wide decorative bands were mostly used to emphasize the framing of the paintings by the architectural elements in the interior of the church. The wide ornamental band around the edge of the Ascension fresco in the Rotunda of St. George (late 9th c.), for example, serves that purpose. It is, therefore, worth noting that the vertical bands in the drum of the Holy Apostles in Ras, used as scene dividers, were painted right along the windows although their shape does not fully reflect that of the window openings. The implementation of decorative systems similar to the one in the Ras cathedral can be found also among Western early medieval murals, such as some Carolingian and Ottonian fresco ensembles: the main church of the Benedictine monastery of St. John in Müstair (ca. 800), the Church of Saint George in Oberzell on the island of Reichenau (10th c.), etc., and some slightly younger, Romanesque ones, e.g., Sant'Angelo in Formis (c. 1080) and Castel Sant'Elia di Nepi (11th/12th c.).⁴⁴

In terms of the general impression they create as a whole, as well as their still visible details and manner of execution, the oldest wall paintings at St. Peter's in Ras are very far from the rigid draughtsmanship, rather naïve and rustic, of the probably considerably younger provincial frescoes in the Church of the Transfiguration in the town of Koropi in Attica, although some attempts have been made to draw parallels between the two groups of murals.⁴⁵ The paintings in the Ras church have more in common with some of the oldest frescoes in the Taxiarches church in Kastoria (late 9th or early 10th c.). However, those wall paintings, like their counterparts in the Church of St. Stephen in the same city, differ from the frescoes at St. Peter's in that they employ highly schematized drawing, sometimes achieved with wide contour lines that rigidly break and fragment the shapes, and have simplified stances, static figures and restrained movements with no softness or naturalness to them. It seems that the frescoes under consideration have a closer – but by no means perfect – analogy in Thessalonian monuments from the late 9th century. The Virgin's elegant contrapposto and



the complex movement of the archangel to her right in the Ascension scene in the dome of St. Sophia,⁴⁶ for instance, are very reminiscent of the carefully studied stances of the Mother of God in the *Annunciation* and the angel in the *Adoration of the Magi* at St. Peter's (Figs. 8, 20), probably painted then or a few decades later. Furthermore, there are other comparable details. The drawing, shaping and rendering of the angel wings in the Ascension scenes at the Thessalonian churches of St. Sophia and St. George⁴⁷ are very similar to those in the *Annunciation* at the old cathedral of Ras (Figs. 6, 20, 21). The Ras frescoes also have more in common with the Thessalonian murals than with those from Kastoria⁴⁸ in terms of the elongated figures, softer lines and less prominent drawing strokes that cut up shapes, i.e., their more pronounced borrowing of the solutions of classical art. Unfortunately, the damage that the paintings at St. Peter's have suffered precludes a more in-depth and reliable comparison with early Middle Byzantine murals from the second city of the Byzantine Empire.



The remains of the oldest wall paintings in the altar apse – admittedly very scarce – seem to suggest that they were not the work of the same artists who frescoed the dome and space below it. These murals also have very archaic stylistic features, but they were set on a blue background and, it would seem, used a slightly different painting approach, with a considerably more prominent role of the base drawing outlined before painting in thinner or thicker lines (Figs. 17–19). This makes the forms appear cruder and more rustic than those in the higher zones of the central part of the church, and they were executed with a much less refined feeling for classicist norms.

Late Middle Byzantine frescoes

As a result of the poor state of repair of the original, apparently less than durable frescoes and the changes that the 11th and 12th centuries brought in the programmatic and iconographic concepts employed in the murals of Orthodox churches, St. Peter's church in Ras entered the end of the Middle Byzantine period with its wall paintings completely or almost completely changed. Remnants of the frescoes that can be dated to this period have been preserved in different parts of the church. They have survived in the dome, sanctuary, front of the northeastern pilaster and the socle zone of the western conch below the little drapes painted in the late 13th-century layer. That shows that, in this period, a thorough reworking of the existing frescoes took place. However, a comparison of the style, iconography and technical

23

Remnants of the ornamental bands that framed the scenes and painted decoration on the upper cornice, drum of the dome (archive photo taken shortly after the discovery of the frescoes)

22

Remnants of the ornamental bands that framed the scenes and painted decoration on the upper cornice (on p. 150)

details that characterize some of the frescoes from the late Middle Byzantine period at the old Ras cathedral reveals a high level of heterogeneity. These wall paintings are so diverse that their differences cannot be plausibly explained by the concurrent involvement of multiple painters. Their physical stratigraphy also testifies to the different chronologies of their creation. Hence it seems fairly certain that, from the 11th to the 13th century, the frescoes at St. Peter's were repainted gradually, in several stages. Unfortunately, the content of the frescoes from this period with aniconic contents (ornaments in the windows, the socle, etc.) is not chronologically suggestive enough, and the iconographic representations have survived only in fragments, which makes their assessment and interpretation very difficult. It is, therefore, unsurprising that scholars have proposed widely divergent hypotheses about grouping the fragments into smaller chronological sets and dating those fragments and ensembles.

Representation of St. Peter the Apostle. On the northeastern pilaster, on the side facing the center of the naos, there is a partially preserved standing figure of St. Peter the Apostle, one of the patrons of the church (Fig. 24). Since the accompanying inscription has not survived, the saint is identified based on his distinctive iconography and prominent place in the fresco program. He was shown half-turned to the right, dressed in a dark blue chiton and a golden-ocher himation. What remains of the image are only a fragment of the head, more specifically, the face, and one half of the torso with the right hand raised to the chest level in a blessing gesture. In his left hand, of which only the fingertips remain visible, the apostle holds an open scroll, most of which has been lost.⁴⁹ His white-haired head is framed by a nimbus, which has a double pearl trim painted around it with gems between the two strings of pearls – a commonly shown detail in the early periods of Byzantine art, especially in the 9th and 10th centuries. This ancient custom – later replaced, but not completely lost in provincial art – was also used here to emphasize the importance and solemnity of the representation. Painted on the frontal side of the northeastern pilaster, the image of St. Peter, as the representation of the church's patron, was part of the painted program next to the altar screen. It has been rightly assumed that the front of the southeastern pilaster facing it – to which St. Peter directed his gaze and where there are no traces whatsoever of the fresco that once must have stood there – featured the other prince among the apostles and patron of the old Ras cathedral: St. Paul the Apostle.⁵⁰

Most scholars who had studied the frescoes of St. Peter and Paul's believed that the image of St. Peter was painted concurrently with the second fresco layer in the sanctuary and dated it to the late 12th century.⁵¹ However, it has already been noted that the apostle's depiction does not match the overwhelmingly dominant typology of this saint in late Komnenian art. In the 12th century, a new iconography

24

Peter the Apostle,
frontal side of the
northeastern pilaster



of St. Peter came to be widely accepted, in which he was portrayed with white, mid-length, thick, wavy hair, usually with many curls.⁵² In contrast, at the ancient cathedral of Ras, he is depicted with a very low forehead and combed-back, completely straight hair (Fig. 25). While this archaic Petrine iconography cannot be said to have been unknown in Byzantine art during the reign of the last Komnenoi and Angeloi, it was by no means characteristic of that period. The Ras representation of Christ's most devout disciple also differs from its late 12th century counterparts in the very wide modeling of the clothing folds. Fairly thick and voluminous, they follow one after another in a slow rhythm, with no dynamism or any hint of waviness or movement. The very subtle drawing of the face has a similar character, meticulously outlining the firm, simple shapes, never digressing into linear playfulness. Further, it is important to note that in its typology – the shape of the head, the proportions and interrelations of the different parts of the face with its low forehead, and the draughtsmanship and modeling of the carnation, hair and drapes – the apostle's representation clearly stands out as different than all other images in the altar conch at St. Peter's. This is easy enough to observe if we compare the drawing and painting of his head and garments with the heads and clothes of the evangelists in the conch (Figs. 32–34). A comparison with the remnants of the archpriests in the *Officiating Bishops* scene reveals equally prominent differences (Figs. 36–37). In addition, it is worth noting that the painter of St. Peter's figure laid the fresco plaster only up to the level of the stone cornice, leaving the existing architectural frame visible.⁵³ Unlike him, the artist of the *Officiating Bishops* in the sanctuary covered the cornice with plaster and painted an ornamental band at its height (Fig. 36).

All of the above leaves no doubt that the figure of St. Peter was created independently of the younger layers of wall paintings in the apse and that it is not contemporaneous with any of them. The archaic features of this partially surviving representation suggest a considerably earlier date of creation than the late 12th century. Some scholars – although alone in their views – have proposed its dating to the first decades of the 10th century.⁵⁴ However, given the chronology of the construction of the church and the existence of an even older fresco layer, as well as the paleography of



25

Peter the Apostle (detail),
frontal side of the
northeastern pilaster

the Greek inscription on the scroll in the apostle's hand and the visual characteristics of the image, this date seems too early. The typological and visual features of the image more likely suggest the early decades of the 11th century, the time of the restoration of Byzantine secular and ecclesiastical rule in the area of Ras.⁵⁵ Since, in other parts of the church, there are no remnants of wall paintings that could be reliably associated with the image of St. Peter in terms of style and chronology, the re-establishment of Byzantine domination probably gave rise to a need to restore only a part of the painted program in the cathedral church. It is difficult to estimate just how large this restored part might have been. What does seem certain is that, directly opposite the image of St. Peter, with which it formed a pair, a representation of St. Paul the Apostle, the other patron of the church, was then depicted next to the altar screen. The task of painting these two figures was entrusted to an accomplished artist capable of capturing the character of the saints, who seems to have been closer to the followers of the so-called monastic style than to classicist court art.

The Greek inscription in the dome and the ornamentation in the windows of the drum. In the upper half of the dome, around the tondo with Christ's bust at its top, a wide ring-shaped band has survived with a representative Greek inscription inscribed on it in the fresco technique (Fig. 26). The layer with the Savior's image and the one with the representations of the prophets in the lower part of the dome – both of which belong to the Late Byzantine period and will be discussed below in more detail – cover the said “ring” of the fresco with the inscription (Figs. 27, 43, 44). This undoubtedly means that the inscription belongs to a layer of paintings older than the one featuring Christ's protome and the prophet figures.⁵⁶ Besides, the appearance of such a representative inscription in Greek would have been completely inconsistent with the customs followed in the area of the Serbian autocephalous archbishopric when these images were created.⁵⁷ The inscription was done in black lettering on a whitish background. In some places, there are paler remnants of other letters that do not match the black ones. Those other letters are brown. Since the same color was used to under-paint the band with the inscription before applying the finishing coat of white paint to the background, these are more likely to be the imprints of some younger, subsequently added and then faded Cyrillic letters than the traces of any changes the painter might have made while working on the inscription. In-depth research of the inscription's paleographic characteristics will hopefully allow a more accurate dating but, based on the above, we can infer that it belongs to the late Middle Byzantine period. The inscription is a quote from Ps. 33: 13–14: “The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all humankind. From where he sits enthroned he watches all the inhabitants of the earth.”⁵⁸ These verses unambiguously show that, even at the time of creation, the inscription was tied to the bust of the ascended Savior, the King of the Universe, and acted as its frame. They were generally seen as a suitable accompanying text for the Pantokrator image, painted at the top of the dome, the



26
 Christ Pantokrator, Greek
 inscription quoting Psalm
 33, archangels and
 prophets, cap of the dome

27
 Greek inscription
 quoting Psalm 33 (detail),
 cap of the dome



par excellence “heavenly” zone of the church.⁵⁹ The conclusion that Christ Pantokrator was shown in the crown of the dome at the time of writing of the inscription is further supported by the modest remains of his image. In the same layer as the fresco with the inscription, a little above it and precisely at the level of Christ’s codex in the younger layer, there is a small fragment of the gold book cover and whitish pages of the Gospel that the Savior held in the older representation (Fig. 27).

Having suffered damage, probably because it was on the very vulnerable surface of the dome crown, the Middle Byzantine image of the *Pantokrator* was detached and replaced by a new fresco with the same content. In any case, it shows that the practice of representing Christ’s bust in the half-sphere of the dome, widely accepted in the late Middle Byzantine period, was implemented at St. Peter’s in Ras. Consequently, this provides grounds for the hypothesis that, again in line with the customs of the time, the prophets were featured below the Pantokrator. If this was indeed the

case, then their figures, as well as the image of Christ, were merely repeated during the restoration undertaken in the last quarter of the 13th century, which will be discussed below. It is fairly certain that the entire body of wall paintings in the dome was overpainted in the late Middle Byzantine period. This is suggested by the wide ornamental bands, skillfully executed in light, well-harmonized colors that have survived in the southern, western and northern windows of the drum (Fig. 28). There is little doubt that those bands, like the inscription, date from the said period, but a more specific dating would require additional thorough research – in this case, of the underexplored field of Byzantine painted ornamentation.

The younger frescoes in the sanctuary. In the socle of the altar apse, on its northern part, four layers of frescoes can be distinguished (Fig. 62), which suggests that the holiest section of St. Peter's church was painted more times than the other areas. The oldest layer of plaster in the bottommost part of the sanctuary, as noted above, contains the original wall paintings of the church; the youngest, as we will see, dates from the last quarter of the 13th century. In the meantime, the altar conch was frescoed at least twice.

The artists of the late Middle Byzantine period completely changed the iconographic program of the apse (Fig. 29), whose conch previously featured a scene, most likely the Ascension of Christ. In the upper part of the conch's semi-hemisphere, they painted a large tondo framed by a wide ornamental band with a yellow background and featuring the bust of the Virgin Orans of the "Sign" type (Fig. 30). She is set on a vivid red background and dressed in a light blue tunic and dark *maphorion*. On her bosom is a green medallion with a bust of the Christ Child wearing light-toned yellow vestments. Unlike the Virgin's ocher halo, his aureole is red and has an inscribed cross with blue arms. Surmounting the altar apse, such a depiction of the Mother of God, with its unambiguous symbolism of the incarnation, was much more in line with the programmatic norms of the period than the Ascension,⁶⁰ by that time long abandoned as the scene to be featured in the conch of a shrine. Christ's ascent into the heavens would continue to appear in the holiest section of the church, but it would be moved to the vault of the sanctuary bay,⁶¹ an architectural element not present at St. Peter's. However, as much as the Virgin's image in the conch might have been a widespread programmatic solution in the 11th and 12th centuries, its reduction to a bust in a tondo and placement at the very top of the central altar apse is a rarity indeed. This decision can be explained by the need to develop to the greatest possible extent possible the thematic program of the single-part sanctuary, which is made up of only the conch without any walls or a bay vault above it. The expansion of this program, however, was achieved in a very unusual way.

Right below the medallion with the Virgin of the Sign bust, near the bottom of the conch's semi-hemisphere and directly above the cornice, there is a surviving fragment



28
Remnant of the ornamental field on the western side of the southern window on the dome drum

29
Frescoes in the semi-hemisphere of the altar conch



of a painted wooden pedestal decorated with large pearls on which Christ and the Mother of God were traditionally depicted (Fig. 31). Since her image was represented in the upper part of the conch, the space below it could have only held the figure of her son, Lord Jesus Christ.⁶² The rest of the thematic program in the conch reinforces this conclusion. The standing figure that once occupied the pedestal was flanked by four saints wearing chitons and himations – the garments of learned men in classical antiquity, which the Savior's disciples also wear in their representations (Figs. 29, 32, 34). Although scarce, the remains of their figures allow us to identify them. Three figures hold codices with the golden covers of the kind used to decorate Gospel books; the fourth figure, the one at the southern end of the line, has suffered damage at waist level, where the other three rest their tomes. There is, however, no doubt that the fourth figure also held a Gospel book and that these were



representations of the four evangelists.⁶³ Sadly, the head has survived on just one of them and even that one only partially. The preserved elements are the lower part of a face with a very short, sparse beard and the crown of the head covered in light, curly hair, which is still enough to definitively identify this evangelist as St. Luke (Figs. 32, 33). The placement of his figure – at the outer end of the left flank of the five-member group (Fig. 29) – is noteworthy because it shows that the artists arranged the evangelists around Christ's figure to reflect their hierarchy. The Lord was almost certainly flanked by the two most highly venerated among them – St. John the Theologian

30

Virgin of the Sign, top
of the semi-hemisphere
of the altar conch

31

Remnant of a jewel-
encrusted *souppedion*,
lower part of the semi-
hemisphere of



and St. Matthew. These two were held in higher regard because they had been among the Twelve Apostles and personally witnessed Christ's ministry on earth. Therefore, in programmatic and iconographic ensembles, they were given precedence over Luke and Mark, whose accounts about the Savior were not first-hand testimonies and who had belonged to the wider group of Christ's followers – the Seventy Disciples.⁶⁴ The damaged figure of the evangelist at the outer end of the right flank, shown as Luke's counterpart, would have accordingly belonged to St. Mark.

On the southern and northern ends of the conch, there is an archangel each, dressed in imperial vestments and girdled with a crossed *loros* (Fig. 29). The figure on the northern side has a preserved signature with the name of Michael, but only the right part of the head, the upper segment of the chest and a fragment of one wing have survived of his depiction. The figure of the other archangel, no doubt Gabriel (Fig. 35), which has survived in a somewhat better condition, allows us to infer that they held orbs and labara in their hands (only the rod in his right hand is visible now). The archangels must have been depicted as the court guards of Jesus Christ, shown at the center of the conch, and their imperial costumes and insignia prove that the One whom they served was of a higher rank than imperial.

Following the established custom, the lower part of the altar conch, below the cornice that separated this section of the semi-hemisphere, was covered by a representation



32
Luke the Evangelist,
semi-hemisphere of
the altar conch

33
Luke the Evangelist
(detail), semi-hemisphere
of the altar conch





34
Remnant of an evangelist,
semi-hemisphere of
the altar conch

35
Archangel Gabriel,
semi-hemisphere of
the altar conch

of the *Officiating Bishops*, which had once been very elaborate. Located on the northern side, the lightly bowed heads of two bishops facing the center of the apse are all that has survived of this scene (Fig. 36). Based on the size of their heads and haloes, as well as the width of the conch, we can assume that the liturgical procession consisted of five or six figures on the northern and as many on the southern flank. Due to the scene's fragmentary state of preservation, many aspects of its iconographic and epigraphic content remain unknown. Thus, what might have been painted in the center of the composition, in the axis of the once much smaller apse window, if anything was shown there at all, must remain in the realm of conjecture.⁶⁵ An even more challenging riddle is the content of the frescoes on the western wall of the sanctuary, that is, on the eastern face of the triple-arched opening – tribelon, where only a small fragment of a figure has survived. Dressed in a reddish chiton and gray himation, this figure blessed with its right hand and held a rolled scroll in its left (Fig. 38). The fragment is located directly above a low wall supported by the northern pillar of the tribelon. The proportions of the figure's hand in relation to the total surface of the western wall suggest that the remaining part of the fresco belonged





to a composition that had no more than a handful of participants.⁶⁶ However, this is not entirely certain and, because of the very fragmentary state of preservation of the figure, which might have belonged to an angel or apostle, as the only surviving iconographic detail, we must for now refrain from attempting to identify the content of the destroyed scene.

Regardless of all those missing pieces, it is possible, at least roughly, to reliably reconstruct the program from the late Middle Byzantine period in the sanctuary of St. Peter's church. This is particularly true of the frescoes in the apse, a very unusual and intriguing ensemble. The series of apostle figures that appear in the conchs of Middle Byzantine Orthodox churches usually represent no more than a partial analogy for it.⁶⁷ The center of the conch at the Ras church is covered by an image of the Savior surrounded by four instead of twelve apostles, all of them evangelists. Fundamentally Christocentric, probably like the original concept of the late 9th or early 10th century frescoes, this apsidal program can, it seems, be understood only when taken as a whole and associated with the cathedralic purpose of the church it decorates. The four authors of the Gospels, depicted at Christ's side, are witnesses of divine incarnation – additionally accentuated and explained in the image of

36

Remnant of the *Officiating Bishops*, upper part of the altar conch

37

Head of an archpriest from the *Officiating Bishops* scene, upper part of the altar conch





38
Fragment of a fresco
on the western wall
of the sanctuary

the Virgin of the Sign shown directly above them – but also of the entire economy of salvation, whose subsequent fulfillment is both the foundation and the mission of the Church. The Church realizes its mission in two ways: by spreading its teaching, which rests on the four Gospels, and by performing the God-given holy sacraments, all of which reach their climax in the liturgy, which is encapsulated in the *Officiating Bishops* scene in the bottommost zone of the conch. It should be borne in mind that the bishop is the heart of the Church on earth. In line with the principle of apostolic succession, he is the source of its teaching and officiant of the holy sacraments – an icon of Christ as the heavenly high priest.⁶⁸ The altar throne of the bishop of Ras was located below the mentioned figure of the Savior, whom he represented, and precisely at the center of the line of archpriests from the *Officiating Bishops*, with whom he co-officiated in an all-times liturgical reality. Multiple ties connected the imagery and purpose of this space, i.e., the symbolism of the cultic foci that the images marked. In this way, the liturgical context of the bishop's throne lent a convincing ecclesiological perspective to the themes of the wall paintings in the sanctuary of the Ras cathedral, just like the imagery provided important explanations of the historical, dogmatic and theological underpinnings of the “High Place.” This program of the sanctuary was probably somewhat more complex than the original one, and for that reason it seems ideologically more nuanced.

The poor condition of the frescoes in the sanctuary, i.e., the very fragmentary state of preservation of the most informative parts of those representations, such as faces, does not allow us to assess their visual characteristics as fully as we would like. It is, therefore, impossible to offer a well-grounded and accurate dating of these wall

paintings, about whose time of creation there are no written or more specific iconographic testimonies. It seems fairly certain that the paintings in the semi-dome and the lower part of the conch were not the work of the same artist. This is suggested by a comparison of the drawing and modeling of the surviving head parts, as well as the execution of the haloes, Luke the Evangelist in the semi-dome (Figs. 32, 33) and the second bishop in line on the northern flank of the *Officiating Bishops* scene (Figs. 36, 37). The draughtsmanship of Luke's head and the figures of some evangelists, particularly the drapes, seem more rigid, and the contrasts of light and shadow on them are stronger. However, the images of the Virgin and Christ in the medallion are under-painted with light green, modeled very softly, and drawn in thin, supple lines (of course, in places where there is no conservation retouching), which is also the case with the bishop's head. The frescoes in the upper and lower part of the conch share the use of light-infused, transparent coloring with ruddy ochers and vivid green on the haloes, backgrounds and garments, and bright red on the borders. The hues of the ornaments in the windows of the dome complement this color scheme. That suggests that all second-layer frescoes in the apse, and possibly also those in the dome, were painted concurrently.

The wall paintings in the apse were most likely created around the middle of the 12th century.⁶⁹ Their typology and the drawing of the said bishop depiction indicate such a dating (Fig. 37). It is characterized by elongated, noble proportions, a prominent, high and slightly protruding forehead, slender, arched brows, large eyes, and a very lightly curved nose. The drawing was done with a thin brush, in measured strokes, using lighter and dark brown paint, and the modeling is very mild. Starting from the narrow, pale green and light-brown shadows, it moves towards ruddy, light-infused ochers, "rising" to the subdued white, unfortunately mostly worn off, accents. They are still discernible on the nose, the undereye area, and partially on the cheeks. On the cheek that the illusion of perspective makes closer to the eye of the spectator, there are some traces of a circle indicating ruddiness and a whitish line around it. That was a painting device characteristic of Komnenian art no less than the multiple thin red lines drawn towards the bottom of the other cheek of the same bishop. In line with the practices of the Komnenian period, his white hair and beard were not treated as a uniform mass and were instead painted in strands with alternating brown, light-green and white lines. The bishop's head betrays no traces of the mannerism characteristic of the closing decades of the 12th century. Likewise, there are no visible remnants of the art that preceded the Komnenian style to support its dating to the early 1100s. The most convincing parallels for the typology and painterly execution of the bishop's image can be found in the Byzantine painting of the second third of the 12th century.⁷⁰ The proposed dating of the remnants of the *Officiating Bishops* scene at St. Peter's church is not contradicted by any programmatic or iconographic reasons. Among the fresco ensembles that include the *Officiating*

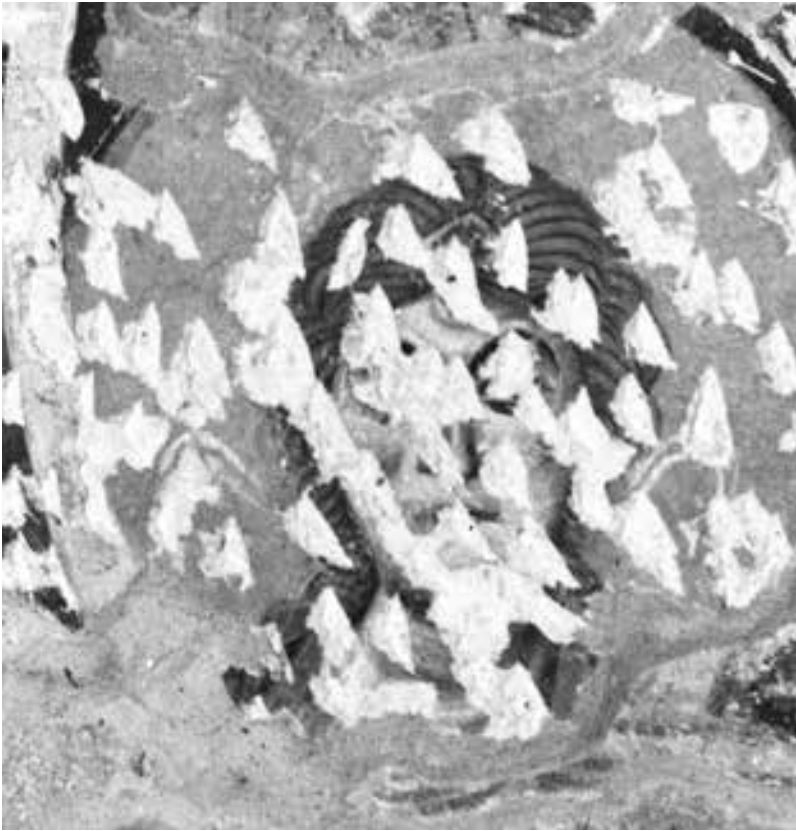


39
Head of the archangel Michael after retouching, semi-hemisphere of the altar conch

40
Head of the archangel Michael before retouching, semi-hemisphere of the altar conch

Bishops, the one at Veljusa is believed to be the earliest and, based on its stylistic features, has been dated to ca. 1080.⁷¹ The oldest monument with this theme that has been more specifically dated in its ktetorial inscription is the fresco decoration in Nerezi from about 1164.⁷²

The wall paintings in the semi-hemisphere also share the stylistic characteristics of Byzantine art from the mid-12th century. This dating is suggested by the slender, elongated figures of the evangelists and the archangel Gabriel, with no pronounced weight and volume; the appearance of the *loros* and the thinness of the archangel's wings; the execution of St. Luke's and the archangel Michael's curls; and the drawing and modeling of the Mother of God and the Christ Child in the clipeus at the top of the conch. If it had survived in a slightly better state of repair, the representation of the commander of the Bodiless Hosts painted over the older figure of the archangel Michael, on the younger layer of the fresco (Fig. 39), could probably confirm the validity of this dating. In the later layer, the archangel holds a saber in his hand – an extremely unusual detail in the painted program



of the sanctuary that is difficult to explain. The extent to which the fresco layer on which it was painted repeated the previous program and arrangement of the figures in the semi-dome of the apse remains unclear. The wide ornamental band painted around the medallion, with the Virgin of the Sign in the new layer, follows the frame of the older representation (Fig. 30). The figure of the archangel, however, is considerably shorter and smaller than the previously painted bodiless beings and evangelists. Unfortunately, the archangel's head has suffered heavy damage due to being struck with an ax, and when it was uncovered, both eyes and the majority of the face were missing (Fig. 40). The extensive conservation retouching had, in fact, created a new visage, which has little value in a stylistic analysis of the archangel's features.⁷³ Judging by the old photos taken before any retouching was done, the archangel seems to have been painted sometime in the first decades of the 13th century and belonged to the backward sty-

listic trends practiced in Raška at the time, which included a considerable input of Komnenian art (the Vukan Gospel, northern parekklesion of the Virgin's Church at Studenica, fresco fragments from the exonarthex at Žiča).⁷⁴

Late Byzantine frescoes

The last medieval redecoration of St. Peter's church took place in the closing decades of the 13th century. Almost all frescoes in the church were overpainted at that time, but the reasons for undertaking such an extensive project remain unknown. There is no evidence whatsoever that more serious devastation or remodeling of the edifice directly preceded the redecoration. The extant remains of the frescoes from the late Middle Byzantine period do not suggest that those murals were damaged in a fire or were in particularly poor condition. The assumption that the Greek inscriptions on the earlier frescoes irked Serbian bishops does not seem to point to the correct

answer. Admittedly, as discussed above, it is possible that one of the most extensive and prominently positioned Greek inscriptions – the one around the Pantokrator image in the dome – was overpainted in the secco technique and replaced by a Serbian text.⁷⁵ But the most plausible hypothesis might be that the bishops of Ras wanted to change the structure and themes of the Middle Byzantine program created under the supervision of the Byzantine archpriests – to modify its ideational emphases and messages. This assumption is, however, difficult to verify because the remnants of the wall paintings at St. Peter's are insufficient to allow a comparison of the contents of the earlier Middle Byzantine and the Palaiologan-era murals. The program was undoubtedly changed in the ground zone on the southern side of the church, but it seems that it was mostly repeated in the upper part of dome and partially in the apsis.

In this redecoration project, the bust of Jesus Christ was again painted in the dome crown, but now the Savior was marked only with the abbreviation of his name, ineptly and incorrectly written, without an attribute to unambiguously define him as the Pantokrator (Fig. 26). With his left hand with the fingers splayed, he brings a Gospel book close to his chest and blesses with his right hand. His halo has an inscribed cross, whose arms were once decorated with gemstones. The face, however, is destroyed, and the details that would have been the most informative for determining the stylistic characteristics of the image and its accurate dating are no longer visible. Below the surviving ring of the earlier fresco-layer with the Greek inscription around Christ's bust, a series of half-length figures was painted in the lower part of the cupola (Fig. 26): four archangels, placed above the windows of the drum, in the longitudinal and transversal axis of the church, and ten prophets between them.⁷⁶ The archangels wear imperial *sakkoi* with *kotomanikia* and *loroi*, and each holds a scepter topped with three gems in his raised right hand. Their figures have been preserved to the chest level, and hence we can only assume that, as usual, they held orbs in their relaxed left arms. The names beside the representations of the archangels Michael (Fig. 43) above the eastern and Gabriel (Fig. 42) above the southern window are legible enough to allow conclusive identification. Judging by the partially discernible letters of the damaged inscription, the one on the northern side seems to be Raphael, which would consequently mean that the archangel above the western window should be identified as Uriel (Fig. 44). The inclusion of the images of the Bodiless Powers in the dome was not unusual at all. However, representing the four commanders of the Bodiless Hosts, dressed in imperial regalia and placed directly above the dome windows, at the four cardinal points, had special symbolism. In this case, they are to be understood both as beings of light who “escort invisibly” the King of the Universe shown in the summit of the dome and as an active, extended-from-above bridge between his Heavenly Court and the earthly realm.

Down below, on the ground, multitudes of hands were for centuries prayerfully being raised towards the Lord, yearning for knowledge of Him. However, only

41

Holy physician (*anargyros*),
western wall of the
western conch





42
Head of the archangel
Gabriel, cap of the dome

the select few righteous, such as the Old Testament prophets, could come closer to the Heavens in their visions and convey the attained truths, however vague they might be, about the Lord to humankind. Therefore, in the late medieval period, as the second bridge between the two worlds, they were represented in the drum of the dome, which symbolized the Heavens.⁷⁷ Only when the Ascension of Christ covered the entire dome, their figures were placed in the uppermost zone of the space below the dome. Here at St. Peter's, due to the peculiar proportions of the dome and the lack of suitable surfaces for painting scenes, the prophets are not in the drum but in the cap of the dome. They were placed there alongside the bodiless heralds to, together with them, mark the mystagogical meeting point of the heavens and earth, reconciled and united into one liturgical community by the God-man, who is shown at the very apex of the edifice's spatial hierarchy. Two

prophets are depicted between each archangel on the eastern half of the dome and three between each on the western.

The fragmentary state of preservation of the prophet images and the damaged accompanying inscriptions allow us to identify no more than a handful of them. On the southeastern side, the prophets Daniel and Elijah are between the archangels Michael and Gabriel (Fig. 43). Shown as a frontal figure, the former is youthful, with the usual phylactery on his head covered with mid-length, curly hair, and he raises his right arm in prayer. The long- and white-haired Elijah, with a long beard, blesses with his raised right hand, lightly turning and directing his gaze to the archangel Gabriel on the right. The prophet shown on the other side of the archangel, in the southwestern part of the cupola, is not Elijah's disciple Elisha, as would have been expected, but a beardless prophet with dark, mid-length hair and a dome-shaped crown on his head, wearing the costume of a ruler – King Solomon, no doubt. Shown as a frontal figure, he holds – very unusually and parachronically – a large cruciform scepter in his right hand. A white- and long-haired prophet faces him, but the only surviving fragment of his image is the upper part of the head. Based on two preserved letters of his signature (... κβι.), it can be assumed that this is Ezekiel. Even less has survived of the next prophet. His representation is reduced to the remnants of the upper part of the halo, a fragment of a dark-haired head, and a right arm raised high, almost to the top of his head. Since there is much less space between the haloes of this and the previous prophet than between the aureoles of the other figures in the sequence, he seems to have been shown inclining his upper body and head to his right. This detail, coupled with the elevated right hand with its fingers pointing to the top of the head, probably his ear, matches the iconography of Habakkuk and is associated with very specific verses of his prophecy (Hab. 3:2).⁷⁸ That makes it highly likely that the figure in question does indeed represent the prophet Habakkuk.

Clockwise, the line of prophets continues with three half-length figures in the northwestern part of the dome. Behind the archangel Uriel (?) above the western window, there are two middle-aged, long- and dark-haired men: the first has a longish beard, while the face of the second is destroyed (Fig. 44). Both wear chitons and himations, are half-turned to the archangel, bless with their right and hold rolled scrolls in their left hands. Not a single letter of their accompanying inscriptions has survived, and hence they are now impossible to identify. Next to those two, there is a frontal figure of the Old Testament King David. If the still legible inscription with his name had happened to be lost, this image, although almost destroyed, could have been identified by the dome-shaped, pearl-encrusted crown with perpendoulia. Like his son Solomon, this king of Israel holds a big scepter in the parachronic cruciform shape in his right hand. On the northeastern side of the dome, between the archangels Raphael and Michael, there are two more prophets. The one closer to Raphael,



shown en face, has a rather confusing iconography. He is youthful and beardless, with long, wavy hair and a cap and phylactery on his head, all of which would have suggested that this was Daniel had he not been shown on the southeastern side of the dome. No other young prophets were portrayed with this type of headdress in Byzantine art. The image of the next prophet has almost disappeared. Old photographs reveal that he was half-turned to the right, to the archangel Michael. A heavily faded inscription has survived next to his nimbus and seems to read Isaiah, although it cannot be deciphered with absolute certainty. Another problem with identifying this figure is that the upper part of its head was underpainted with dark brown, and it is questionable whether white lines were once drawn on this base to indicate strands of white hair, which would have befitted a representation of the prophet Isaiah.⁷⁹

The series of prophet images in the cap of the dome at St. Peter's is too heavily damaged to allow the finer layers of the messages it probably once conveyed to be read.

43
Field with the Greek inscription and the prophets Daniel and Elijah, cap of the dome

44
Field with the Greek inscription, an archangel, and two prophets, cap of the dome



Less than half of the depicted personages can be identified conclusively. In addition, the texts on their scrolls are crucial for determining the more specific ideational underpinnings on which the sequences of Old Testament prophets in the domes of Orthodox churches rest. Unfortunately, in the dome of the ancient cathedral of Ras, none of the scrolls with quotes have survived. In fact, almost all representations of the prophets are damaged from the shoulder level down. Only the half-length figures of the two prophets on the southwestern side of the dome have survived to a somewhat larger extent, with both arms visible on each. They, however, do not hold unrolled rotuli but closed scrolls. It is difficult to believe that all other prophets at St. Peter's held rolled rotuli, as that would have been very odd and almost impossible to explain, especially in a cathedral church. The prophets Daniel and Elijah raise their right arms, while their left arms hang relaxed alongside the body and, in line with the custom of the time, probably held an open scroll with a quote. If this was indeed the case, the content of the quotes on the lost scrolls will remain a mystery forever, as well as the specific meaning of the selection and arrangement of the prophet



45
Prophet Aaron after
retouching (detail),
southeastern squinch

46
Prophet Aaron after the
retouches faded (detail),
southeastern squinch

images in the cupola of the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Ras. The heavy damage these representations have suffered also precludes more reliable assessments about their iconography. Only two conspicuous oddities can be detected: the appearance of two youthful prophets with caps and phylacteries and the large crosses in the hands of the kings David and Solomon. This detail is undoubtedly a cross-topped scepter, an important insignia of Christian sovereigns. It was most likely adopted, together with other insigniological details, from the contemporaneous portraits of Byzantine emperors and Serbian kings,⁸⁰ who served as the models for the representations of the two Old Testament rulers.

Since a remnant of the ornamental band, painted in the late 13th century fresco layer, has survived in the eastern window of the drum at St. Peter's (Fig. 47), there are reliable grounds for the conclusion that the entire dome was repainted in the last medieval reworking of the frescoes in the naos. The youngest frescoes in the drum, as well as those from the late Middle Byzantine period, had unfortunately been completely ruined. Hence it is impossible to offer a well-grounded assessment of the contents and themes of the restored paintings in this part of the dome. What we do know for sure is that, at the time of the Late Byzantine restoration, the drum was covered in frescoes whose selection and arrangement of themes did not match those in the original layer because at least one of the important scenes in that layer – the Annunciation – was assigned a new place in the program of the last quarter of the 13th century. It was painted, as it will turn out, on the eastern wall of the space



below the dome. In fact, the programmatic differences between the earliest and latest wall paintings in the naos must have been rather profound in all segments of their structures – a change compellingly evidenced by the frescoes in the area below the dome. There are inconsistencies both in the distribution of the subject matter and the system and logic that guide the unfolding programmatic discourse. Those differences were largely the result of the changed stylistic framework of the epoch and the younger artists' aspiration to achieve monumentality, which led them to employ larger formats and, consequently, condense the number of pictures.

In the late 13th century, the Gospel scenes from the original fresco layer in the squinches underneath the dome were replaced by large-format prophet busts. In the southeastern squinch, there is an extant image of a long-haired Old Testament high priest named Aaron in the inscription (Figs. 45, 46).⁸¹ In line with the standard iconography of the first High Priest of the Israelites, he holds a long rod with budding green leaves in his right hand.⁸² The leafing rod acquired Theotokological symbolism in the works of religious writers and poets, although it could sometimes take on Christological meanings too. It was emphasized as a prefiguration or medium of the prophecy of the Savior's resurrection. Hence, depending on the programmatic context in which it featured, the representation of Aaron could acquire different symbolic meanings. Opposite the image of the first High Priest of the Israelites, in the northwestern squinch, stood the bust of another Old Testament personage, evidenced only by a remnant of the inscription that included the word "prophet"



47

Ornamental band in the eastern window of the dome drum: Middle Byzantine (above, left) and Post-Byzantine layer (right; below, left)

because the rest of the representation is destroyed. That was most likely another of the Old Testament righteous to whom the Orthodox tradition assigned the rank of a high priest. It was precisely in the late 13th and early 14th century that their images were grouped together, usually separated from other prophets, in the uppermost zones or sanctuaries of churches in the Byzantine cultural sphere (Virgin Peribleptos in Ohrid, Arilje, St. Nicholas in Prilep, Protaton, etc.).⁸³ The inference that such a grouping existed in the space below the dome at the old Ras cathedral is suggested by the fact that no high priests appear among the prophets in the cupola. From the late 13th century, Moses was also shown in high priest vestments, usually as a counterpart to his brother Aaron,⁸⁴ and hence it seems reasonable to assume that his image graced the northeastern squinch at St. Peter's. Two more members of the group of Old Testament high priests – which also included the priest Zechariah, Melchizedek, Samuel and Hur – seem to have been shown in the western pair of squinches, judging by the programmatic customs of the early Palaiologan period.

All of the abovementioned Old Testament personages were seen as prefigurations of the New Testament high priesthood of Jesus Christ, the founder and archpriest of the new Church.⁸⁵ After the Incarnation, he became the Great High Priest who sacrificed Himself on the cross to atone for the sins of humanity and with his divinity raised the resurrected human nature to the Heavens, to the “tabernacle that is not made with human hands” (Heb. 9:6–24) as the God-man, the eternal *leitourgos*.

Pictured in the squinches that form the transition from the dome to the space below it, the images of the Old Testament high priests bore a very specific symbolism, which permeates the entire program of the central part of the church. On one hand, they pointed to the image of the ascended Savior in the dome as the heavenly high priest, the source of all sacerdotal powers and the icon of all archpriests in the earthly part of the Church. On the other hand, placed between the Gospel scenes in the space below the dome, they highlighted the stages in the economy of salvation shown on those paintings as the acts in the fulfillment of Christ's mission on earth as a high priest. The most prominent and crucial place in the program was given to the two scenes below the busts of the Old Testament archpriests, on the eastern wall of the space below the dome – the illustrations of the very events that the high priesthood of the Savior rests on: the Annunciation and the Crucifixion.

In itself, the placement of the Annunciation at the entrance to the sanctuary was not unusual or peculiar at all.⁸⁶ The figures of the archangel Gabriel and the Mother of God were painted on the subsequently destroyed tribelon, which had once rested on high columns between the naos and the sanctuary (Fig. 48). The remnants of the torso and wing of the bearer of glad tidings can be discerned on the northern, low wall of the former three-arched structure (Fig. 49). All that has survived of the Virgin's representation are the upper part of the halo with the Greek signature above it that designated Mary as the Mother of God and the right hand resting on the *maphorion* at the chest level (Fig. 51). The Mandylion, the imprint of Christ's face not made by human hand (i.e., an *acheiropoieton*), preserved as a fragment on the right side, is between the archangel and Mother of God and forms a part of the scene. It was by no means a coincidence that the holy "towel" – for centuries seen as significant material evidence of God's incarnation – was given a place in the Annunciation scene. It served as an irrefutable confirmation of the reality of the holy mystery of the incarnation and the descent of the Holy Trinity's second hypostasis to earth – the miraculous and fateful event that happened in Nazareth.⁸⁷ Into the spatial framework of the Annunciation, the artists purposely and very skillfully incorporated the images of two evangelists, those who, by the written word, testified to the appearance of God in the flesh and his salvation mission on earth (Figs. 48–50). These heavily damaged representations of the apostles Matthew and John are above the frontal side of the northeastern and southeastern pilasters below the dome. The evangelists are shown writing the beginnings of their Gospels⁸⁸ in elaborately described scriptorium interiors with desks, stands and writing implements, but the architectural elements only partially separate them compositionally from the podium where the Annunciation scene takes place. In fact, their scriptoria are not unequivocally distinguished from the room in Nazareth where humanity heard the glad tidings. Thus, the artist depicted the evangelists as eyewitnesses of the great mystery of the deification of the human flesh. It is very important to note that the beginning of the Gospel of John

concerns the God-man's divine nature, while the opening chapter of the Gospel of Matthew speaks of his human nature.

Cleverly combining and ideationally uniting several programmatic elements into an eloquent iconographic concept, the painters constructed a peculiar narrative around the Annunciation scene. Created in that way and bound into a single ensemble by multiple ideational ties, it served as one of the important segments in the much broader, multi-directional dogmatic discourse of the church's wall paintings. The Incarnation heralded in the Annunciation and at the same time fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the maiden Mary was a necessary and crucial precondition of the Savior's high priesthood.⁸⁹ Only after becoming human could Christ perform the perfect ministerial service and offer Himself in a corporal sacrifice, once and for all, to meet death in the flesh and vanquish it. This redeeming act of sacrificial offering for the salvation of humanity was realized in the crucifixion on the cross, a strongly emphasized scene in the program, shown directly above the Annunciation (Fig. 51). The emphasis of the Crucifixion in the thematic and symbolic structure of the fresco paintings in Serbian religious art was known from earlier times and, ever since the time of St. Sava, acquired different forms (Studenica, Žiča, probably Mileševa, Gradac).⁹⁰ However, nowhere is it as clearly imprinted into the very heart of the entire program as here, at St. Peter's, where it has become the most prominent focal point, visible on the eastern wall, immediately upon entering the naos.

Only a small lower part of the once monumental Crucifixion, which covered most of the eastern wall and stretched to the cornice underneath the cupola, has survived (Figs. 48, 51). At its center is the craggy hill of Calvary with a cross at the top. A horizontal wooden beam is nailed to the bottom end of the cross to serve as a foothold for the crucified Christ. The toes of one of Christ's feet are still discernible on the beam, as is the skull of his forefather Adam in the cavity of the hill. In line with the widely followed iconographic practice, the left side of the scene was occupied by the Mother of God and the women in her retinue.⁹¹ Of these figures, only a part of the Virgin's figure and the end of the dress worn by a woman in her vicinity have survived. On the opposite side, to the right of the cross, stood – as inferred based on the very modest remnants – John the Theologian, the centurion Longinus and one of the Roman soldiers. The demarcating line of the ground, indicated in green paint on the background, was set very low, beneath the level of the Calvary hilltop. Above the completely flat, horizontal ground line is a surface covered with ocher paint. It is more likely that this is a remnant or, more specifically, the lower part of a simplified depiction of the Jerusalem walls than that the entire scene was executed on a yellow background, which does not appear in any surviving compositions from the Late Byzantine period in the church.

48

Remnants of the frescoes on the eastern wall of the space below the dome



Prominently placed on the large surface of the eastern wall, broader than the other sides of the space below the dome, the Crucifixion was an imposing visual dominant and the ideational focus of the entire thematic program of the youngest fresco layer in the naos of St. Peter's church. Most directly associated with the contents of the other wall paintings on the same side of the church, it did not make up a closed semantic ensemble with them but acted as an ideational vantage point within the entire fresco program – the vantage point that provided the key for its reading. It informed the whole program with the overarching notion of Jesus Christ as



the great archpriest of the New Testament and the executor of the economy of salvation. Bringing this ideational emphasis to the foreground of the fresco program was fully consistent with the purpose of the church as the cathedra of the local bishop – the living icon of the Savior’s high priesthood.⁹² That, however, did not disrupt the logical structuring of the program as a whole or its subsequent reading and assessment in the diachronic, topographic or mystagogical key. The application of this last approach in conceptualizing the thematic structure of the frescoes at St. Peter’s has already been and will be discussed. On the other hand, the remnant of the Entry into Jerusalem scene is of crucial importance for analyzing the guiding principles of the arrangement of the subject matter and the meaning of the painted program in the central part of the church. The preserved elements are the upper part of Christ’s figure on a donkey, the haloed head of an apostle, a segment of the Jerusalem walls, and the remnants of the figures of the children who greet the Savior (Fig. 52).

49
Remnants of Matthew the Evangelist and the archangel Gabriel from the *Annunciation*, northeastern corner of the space below the dome

50
John the Evangelist, southeastern corner of the space below the dome



The scene was painted on the northern wall below the dome, revealing that the Great Feasts cycle, perhaps supplemented with some other major Gospel events, unfolded clockwise in chronological succession. Therefore, there is little doubt that the depictions of the events that occurred before the Crucifixion and Entry into Jerusalem once covered the southern and western walls of the sub-dome area. This small segment of the painted program is enough to show that the late 13th century selection and arrangement of the themes on the walls of the church followed, at least to a certain extent, the historical timeline of the New Testament narrative.

Sadly, no other scenes of the cycle painted in the youngest fresco layer in the naos have survived. Given the available space in the lower parts of the church and the fact that the entire standard program of the dome is positioned in its half-sphere (Pantokrator, ten prophets and four angels), it seems certain that, like earlier, some Great Feasts were painted in the unusual drum of the dome. The appearance of the Great Feasts in the lower part of the dome in a much younger church in Raška, the White Church of Karan,⁹³ supports this conclusion. Such a programmatic solution of the Karan wall decoration, which abounds in programmatic and iconographic references to the older churches of Raška (King's Church of Studenica, Arilje),⁹⁴ could have been modeled after the youngest layer of frescoes in the dome of St. Peter's. As noted above, there is no doubt that the selection of the scenes in the drum of the Ras cathedral was different from the one made in the early Middle Byzantine period. The Annunciation has been brought down to the space below the dome, and representing the Visitation separated from it in the drum would not only be uncommon but would also make little sense. In addition, when the frescoes of St. Peter and

Paul's were restored in the Palaiologan period, depicting the Adoration of the Magi as a separate scene in the expanded cycle of the Great Feasts was no longer customary in Orthodox art. In the meantime, it had become an almost mandatory part of the Nativity scene.⁹⁵

Due to all this, we should not discard the possibility that the Christological scenes on the late 13th century layer unfolded in the opposite direction from their 9th/10th century predecessors and ran from the lower to the higher zones. It might be of note that the sequence of the Great Feasts follows the same from-the-bottom-up direction at the abovementioned White Church of Karan. There, the drum features the scenes from the final part of the Great Feasts cycle (Crucifixion, Descent into Hades, Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles). In other – admittedly very few – Late Byzantine and Post-Byzantine churches whose domes feature



representations of the Great Feasts and sometimes even of the Passion of Christ, the scenes in question belong to the central or final part of the Christological account. At Panagia Koubelidiki in Kastoria (ca. 1260–1280), the Descent into Hades and the Myrrhbearers at the Tomb were painted in the drum, and they were probably followed by the now lost scenes of the Crucifixion and the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles.⁹⁶ The cupola of the unusual dome at Panagia Kera in the village of Kritsa in Crete (late 13th century) features the Presentation of Christ in the

51
Remnants of the *Crucifixion* (above), Mandylion and *Annunciation* (below), eastern wall of the space below the dome

Temple, Baptism, Raising of Lazarus and Entry into Jerusalem,⁹⁷ while the Raising of Lazarus, Entry into Jerusalem, Mocking of Christ and Crucifixion scenes were painted in the fresco layer from the late 15th or early 16th century in the drum of the ancient Panagia Kountouriotissa in Pieria.⁹⁸ In view of all this, it can be assumed that, at St. Peter's, some of the opening scenes in the cycle, such as the Nativity, Presentation in the Temple and Baptism, were located in the semi-domes of the southern, western and northern conchs of the naos. In that case, the drum would have had enough space to accommodate the four final scenes of the Great Feasts cycle. If the Dormition of the Virgin was in the narthex, then one of the Passion of Christ scenes could have also been located in the dome.

The thematic program of the lost paintings on the western side of the space below the dome can be discussed with much more confidence because the surviving parts of the frescoes on the eastern half provide sound grounds for such an endeavor. It is almost beyond doubt that the space below the dome featured five of the Great Feasts: four on the walls and one on the tribelon. The monumental busts of four prophets, most likely Old Testament high priests, occupied the squinches. There is even less cause to doubt that directly across the two evangelists – John and Matthew, shown above the frontal sides of the eastern pair of pilasters below the dome – stood the representations of the remaining two Gospel authors, Mark and Luke, above the western pilasters. Between the figures of the latter pair, the Keramion (Holy Tile), Christ's other acheiropoieton, must have been painted on the western wall as a counterpart to the Mandylion. Christ's face was miraculously imprinted onto the Keramion after it had come into contact with the Mandylion.⁹⁹ The representations of the evangelists with the Keramion on the western side of the space below the dome formed an ensemble with St. Matthew, St. John and the Mandylion gathered around the Annunciation on the eastern side. In this way, they completed and rounded off the reminders of the most important written and material testimonies of the appearance of the God-man and his act of salvation in history, described and minutely explained through the entire system of paintings in the church, primarily those with Gospel themes. Therefore, the representations of the evangelists and acheiropoieton were built into different thematic and ideational programmatic circles, both narrower and wider. As an ensemble in the more limited sense, however, they also had – besides their symbolic, dogmatic and didactic roles – a special, prophylactic purpose. Arranged on the opposite sides of the heart of the edifice, these representations were invoked – reflecting the inextricable ties that connect the works of the four evangelists and the generic-mystical bridge between Christ's acheiropoieton – to spiritually bind together the physical structure of the church. Prayerfully entrusting this task to holy images, the creators of the thematic program of the Ras cathedral accepted long-established views and repeated old programmatic patterns.



52

Remnant of the *Entry into Jerusalem*, northern wall of the space below the dome

Remnants of the frescoes from the last quarter of the 13th century have also survived in the lower zones of the naos. In some places, they can be traced from the socle to the little squinches that make the transition toward the semi-hemispheres of the conchs. It is, therefore, certain that the youngest frescoes in the naos covered all walls in this zone including, among others, the figure of Peter the Apostle on the frontal side of the northeastern pilaster (Fig. 24). Its paint – unlike on the representation of Matthew the Evangelist directly above it and on the remaining frescoes in the lowest zone of the naos (Figs. 41–46, 49–59) – have preserved their original chromatic values. In other words, the ochers on St. Peter's halo, face and himation did not become red because the new fresco layer, painted over the apostle's figure and in the meantime lost, protected them from the heat effect of a fire that had broken out at some point. This new layer probably repeated the old iconographic content, and so the images of the church patrons, St. Peter and St. Paul, retained their previous places. That this was indeed so is rather reliably indicated by the fact that, on the new layer of the fresco, Jesus Christ was not given a place on the frontal side of the southeastern pilaster, just by the altar barrier, as would have been expected. At this spot, where no painted content has survived, must have stood the figure of St. Paul. The image of the Savior was painted on the southwestern side of the pilaster

and, although somewhat further away from the altar barrier, it can be understood as part of the extended program by the entrance to the sanctuary (Fig. 53). In this way, it was not demoted to a hierarchically unacceptable extent because the southeastern pilaster was positioned so that its frontal and southwestern sides faced the center of the naos at almost the same angle. In addition, the figure of Christ was larger than that of the apostle, which could have reached no higher than the stone cornice on the pilaster. The lower part of a fresco representing John the Evangelist, painted on the new layer, still stands right above the cornice. Finally, the accompanying inscription assigns a special epithet to the Lord – the “King of Glory,”¹⁰⁰ while the quote on the open Gospel in his hands refers to him as “the Light of the World” (Jn. 8:12).¹⁰¹ This quotation, like almost all other inscriptions on the paintings from the last quarter of the 13th century, was written in the Cyrillic script of the Old Serbian language.

Moving the Savior's image to the west and its closer association with the southern conch also had other justifications. It perfectly suited the organization of the iconographic content in that part of the church. Namely, although a border separated the representation of Christ from other figures in the lowest zone of the southern conch – allowing it to function as a stand-alone devotional painting within the program of the altar screen, i.e., one of the cultic foci of the frescoes in the lower zones – it was still unambiguously connected to those images in terms of both content and idea. To the right of the Lord, on the eastern side of the curved wall of the conch, the Mother of God was painted in a dark blue tunic and brown *maphorion*. Only the lower part of her figure has survived, but it is enough to show that she stood facing her son, with her arms raised, apparently in prayer (Fig. 56). Behind her approaches a schemamonk in a light gray tunic and reddish-brown cloak with a wide belt fastened with a frame-and-prong buckle below the waist, over his *analabos*. He raises both arms in supplication to the chest level. The upper part of his figure is lost too. However, there is little doubt that this is St. Simeon Nemanja. His image appears in a wide range of 13th century Serbian churches in a very similar iconographic and spatial context: in donor compositions with the Mother of God interceding with Christ on behalf of a Nemanjić ktetor. The donor is usually being recommended to the Savior by his holy ancestors that took the vow and became monks painted between the ktetor and the Virgin. Their progenitor, St. Simeon, was shown as the first in those lines of Nemanjić rulers, usually depicted in the southwestern part of the church.¹⁰² The remnants of the ktetorial procession in the southern conch provide indisputable evidence that a member of the House of Nemanjić, probably the incumbent ruler, should be credited with the fresco restoration in the last decades of the 13th century and perhaps even some minor repairs on the cathedral church of the Ras bishopric.

In 1728, a passage was made or expanded in the said conch,¹⁰³ destroying the figures of the Nemanjić family members painted behind the dynasty's founder. Valuable

information about the person who commissioned the last medieval restoration of the church's frescoes and the time when they were painted was thus lost. However, it is still possible to observe that the Virgin was shown as the intercessor between the Nemanjić family members and Christ, whom the members of the ruling family prayerfully approached under her patronage in their ktetorial compositions from Studenica, Mileševa, Voljavac, Morača and Sopoćani to Gradac.¹⁰⁴ In slightly younger monuments, such as King Dragutin's parekklesion at Djurdjevi Stupovi, the Mother of God does not appear between the Nemanjić family members and Christ in her intermediary role.¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, sometime in the last quarter of the 13th century, the custom of depicting the Virgin and the tonsured Serbian rulers as intercessors bringing the ktetor to Christ, holding his hands, was abandoned. Therefore, the donor composition at St. Peter's church seems to have been created in the late 1270s or early 1280s, making it at least slightly more probable that the restoration of the frescoes was undertaken during the reign of King Dragutin than under King Milutin.¹⁰⁶ In any case, the ktetor and his forebears who, in the footsteps of the Mother of God, strode towards Christ were represented, as per the quote on his Gospel tome (Jn. 8:12), as those who "will not walk in darkness." Of course, it is implied that – having embarked on that path of salvation, which everyone who sets foot in a church is invited to follow – the members of the Nemanjić family, the saint-bearing ruling dynasty, also lead to the Light all the people entrusted to their care. The Savior in front of them is designated as "Merciful" because he showed mercy for the fallen and debased humanity by becoming flesh and offering Himself on the cross for the salvation of humankind. As noted above, the described paintings in the higher zones of the church are reminders and detailed explanations of that. That is why the image of the merciful Lord is not clearly connected only with the representations in the lowest fresco zone, along the horizontal axis. Programmatically, he is also the crucial ideational link between those images and the contents of the upper parts of the naos, on the vertical axis.

The damage incurred by the wall paintings in the bottommost zone precludes their full assessment and prevents us from understanding all of their underlying ideas. The number of the figures that made up the donor composition and the exact place where it ended is unknown, and their relation with the images in the southwestern part of the conch is unclear, too. There, the southeastern side of the southwestern pilaster has preserved the remnants of two martyrs dressed in tunics with wide, gold-embroidered, sewn-on pieces of fabric and cloaks hemmed with bands encrusted with gems and pearls, fastened at the chest with fibulae (Fig. 56). Both hold martyr's crosses in their left hands and stretch out their open right palms in a gesture of supplication. They have dark brown, wavy hair, and the one on the left seems to have had a mid-length beard. The other one, whose figure is easier to observe and accompanied by an inscription with the name of Christopher,¹⁰⁷ is



53
Jesus Christ the "King of
Glory," southwestern side
of the southeastern pilaster

54
Jesus Christ the "King
of Glory" (detail),
southwestern side of the
southeastern pilaster



beardless with long hair falling down his back (Fig. 57). On his head is a circlet made of pearls on a white string.

The function and symbolism of the monumental standing figure on the frontal side of the southwestern pilaster are somewhat clearer.¹⁰⁸ This is a representation of St. John the Merciful,¹⁰⁹ an early 7th century bishop of Alexandria (Fig. 58). He has a long, white beard and wears a pink *sticharion* and light-green *phelonion* with an *epigonation*, *epitrachelion* and unusually wide *epimanikia*, and a white *omophorion* with large black crosses over it. St. John blesses with his right hand raised to the chest level and holds a large Gospel book generously adorned with gemstones and pearls in his left. The saint's halo was subsequently "decorated" by incising a series of small circles after the fresco had dried (Fig. 59) – a procedure for which analogies can be found in the much later, Post-Byzantine art. The separation of the archpriest's figure from the context of the sanctuary program and its painting in the southwestern part of the space below the dome was motivated by special reasons. The exterior bishop's throne ("lower place"), where the bishop sat during the first part of the Divine Liturgy, until the Little Entrance, was in that part of Orthodox churches. A raised stone platform under the said pilaster, which dates from the time of the restoration of the church in 1728, provides indirect evidence that such a throne indeed existed by the frontal side of the southwestern pilaster at St. Peter's.¹¹⁰ Thus the image of St. John the Merciful, in the role of a protector and ideal exemplar of the bishops of Ras, overlooked and marked the place intended for their throne. Since no medieval bishop of Ras is known to have been a namesake of the Alexandrian archpriest, the reason for the choice of this particular Alexandrian is difficult to determine. In any case, seated during the opening part of the liturgy on a throne surmounted by an image of St. John the Merciful, the bishops of Ras were, at the same time, in visual communication with the most prominent representations associated with the program of the altar barrier: the images of the two Princes of the Apostles and patrons of the church, whose successors they were by apostolic succession, and the representation of the resurrected "King of Glory" to whose Kingdom, as the ultimate aim, they brought the flock entrusted to them, just like the Mother of God led to Him the members of the Nemanjić family in the ktetorial procession.

The western conch of St. Peter's church, whose position corresponds to that of the western bay of the naos in longitudinally positioned churches, featured representations of saints, commonly shown in this space. Two monks in light gray rhasons and brown mandyases with purple *analaboi* were painted on the northwestern side of the southwestern pilaster. Both hold rolled rotuli in their hands. The image on the right is in a better state of repair: it is a representation of St. Ephrem the Syrian, recognizable owing to a part of the accompanying inscription¹¹¹ and his very short, sparse beard (Fig. 64). Based on this figure, it is clear that the *analaboi* of both monks ended in *koukoulia* of the same color.

55

Remnant of the ktetorial composition, southern side of the southern conch



Remnants of valuable murals have survived in other parts of the conch too. To the south of the entrance, there is a representation of a healer saint holding medical instruments, which has the distinctive iconography of holy physicians (Fig. 41). Since this is a younger man with a very sparse beard and thin mustache, it must represent one of the two *anargyroi* brothers – Kosmas or Damianos.¹¹² Only a part of the shoulder and arm has survived of the second brother, whose figure was destroyed when the once very narrow entrance to the naos on the curved western wall of the conch was substantially expanded in 1728.¹¹³ Before the door was widened, the space to its south could accommodate only two figures, which makes it clear that Panteleimon, the third *anargyros*, was not shown with them, as he could sometimes be. We will probably never know if he was depicted, together with some other saint, north of the western entrance to the naos, where there was enough space for two figures,

or which personages could have been painted on the southwestern side of the northwestern pilaster. The content of the murals in the northern conch will remain no less obscure. However, there is no doubt that, in the late 13th century, a painted socle in the form of small white drapes with red and dark gray ornaments was executed below the zone of standing figures in the entire naos. The remnants of those curtains have been preserved below Christ and the Virgin in the southern conch, below the figure of St. John the Merciful on the southwestern pilaster, and on the entire western and northern side of the western conch (Fig. 60),¹¹⁴ as well as on the front of the northwestern pilaster and the subsequently added wall along the northwestern side of the northeastern pilaster. The late 13th century frescoes also covered the small squinches that formed the transition to the hemispheres of the conchs, originally decorated with drawings impressed onto the plaster base. Only the ornament of the northern squinch in the western conch has survived – a red, foliate cross with the sigla of Jesus Christ's name (Fig. 61). There is no reason to doubt that the five other small squinches were painted accordingly and held similar visual contents.

The decoration on the socle from the last quarter of the 13th century, although of a different shape, has also been preserved in the lowest zone on the northern side of the altar apse, on top of three older layers (Fig. 62). It is, therefore, certain that the eastern conch was refrescoed at that time, at least partially. However, there are no remnants from this period in the upper parts of the apse although some scholars believe otherwise.¹¹⁵ The fragmentarily preserved head of the archangel on the third fresco layer in the hemisphere of the conch and the heads of the two archpriests from the Officiating Bishops scene on the second fresco layer under the cornice (discussed above) betray no typological or stylistic similarities with the youngest paintings in the naos. Furthermore, they also differ in some secondary and technical details, such as the way of drawing and painting haloes, the tone of the background, and the borders. It is hence possible that only the wall paintings of the socle were restored, probably due to having suffered the heaviest damage from capillary damp. If, however, the entire sanctuary was frescoed anew in the last quarter of the 13th century, then that layer is completely lost in the higher zones.



56
Unidentified martyr
and St. Christopher,
southeastern side of the
southwestern pilaster

57
St. Christopher,
southeastern side of the
southwestern pilaster



The youngest murals in the naos of the ancient cathedral church of the Ras bishops were heavily damaged in a fire, as mentioned above. Due to high-temperature exposure, the colors lost their original chromatic values. The others were completely lost, acquiring a vivid or dark red hue. Later, the frescoes suffered further damage when they were struck with an ax to prepare the surface for applying a new layer of plaster, and conservation retouches also seriously altered their character. No definite judgments can, therefore, be proposed about the visual characteristics and value of this group of murals, which is generally true of the entire older corpus of paintings in the church. Its surviving parts, unfortunately, do not provide enough evidence for a reliable ascertainment of the number of artists who worked on it or for determining their shares in the frescoing of the church. However, this layer of paintings has reached us in a better state of repair than the others, and hence it does allow a somewhat more specific consideration of its thematic and stylistic or formal characteristics.

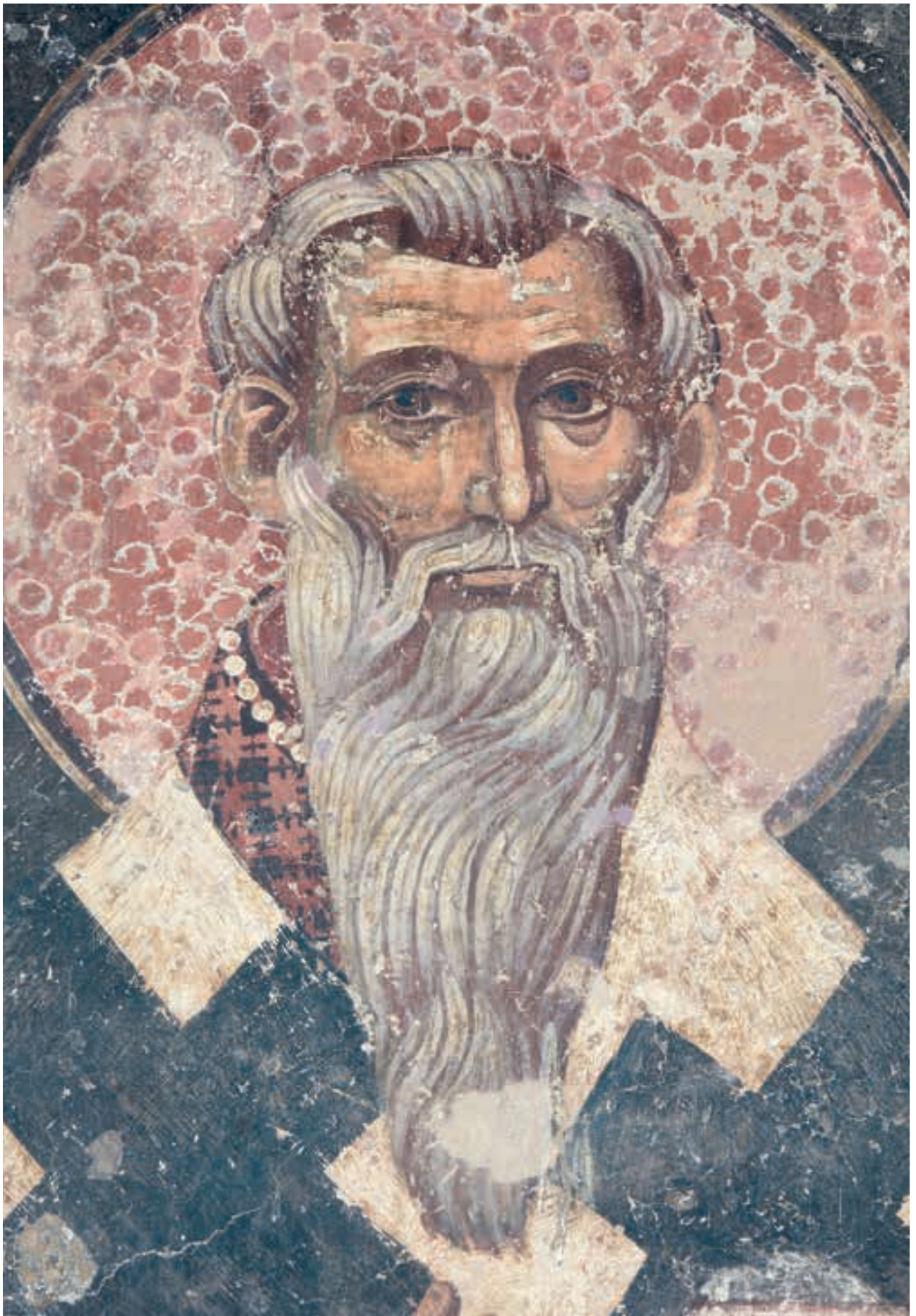
The extensive damage suffered by the frescoes poses a major impediment already in the analysis of the most prominent image in the spatial hierarchy of the church: the representation of Christ in the hemisphere of the dome (Fig. 26). There is no doubt that it was created in the Late Byzantine period. However, it is impossible to determine if it was executed by the same artists who restored the frescoes of St. Peter's church in the last quarter of the 13th century. The surface of the fresco on which it was painted and the fresco layer with the archangels and prophets are not physically adjacent: as noted above, the Middle Byzantine belt of mortar with the Greek inscription sits between them. The fact that, unlike the half-length figures of the prophets and archangels, the bust of Christ is not separated from the background by white contour lines suggests that caution is advised when attempting to date it. The very unusual circumstance that only the ring of the older fresco with the inscription between Christ's bust and the frescoes in the lower part of the dome cap have survived would be easier to explain if we were to assume that the image at the top of the dome was a few decades younger than the prophets below it. Could it be that, during the 13th century restoration, the painters did not detach the fresco with Christ's bust, along with the accompanying Greek inscription, and began their reworking of the existing murals in the zone of the prophets? In that case, the Pantokrator image in the crown of the dome, where frescoes are prone to erosion, could have been damaged a few decades later and then also had to be removed and repainted in the early decades of the 14th century.

A few better-preserved representations of prophets and archangels on the southeastern side of the bottom part of the dome cap, however, correspond to the stylistic characteristics of the saints painted in the late 13th century in the lower zones of the church. There are very strong similarities in the typology and manner of



58 St. John the Merciful, frontal side of the southwestern pilaster

59 St. John the Merciful (detail), frontal side of the southwestern pilaster





execution of some depictions, for example, Elijah the Prophet in the dome and St. John the Merciful in the bottommost zone. These parallels are so conspicuous that they point to the conclusion that both depictions were the work of the same painter (Fig. 63). Many similarities can be observed in their general appearance and details, such as the shape of the ear on the left side of both of those representations, the drawing and expression of the lower lip, the forms of the dark under-eyes and cheeks slit by long vertical and curved horizontal indentations. They also share the manner of rendering light accents in pastose layers of white paint on the forehead, above the brows, on the bridge of the nose, below the undereye area, and on the chin. The accents were executed in brisk brush strokes and appear like sparks that have not fully melded with the surface of the face. Admittedly, there are some differences in the fineness of the modeling and draughtsmanship as a result of the painter's adaptation to the different distance of the two depictions from the eye of the spectator and the increased disruption of the coloristic values on the prophet image due to having been exposed to heat. Further, a comparison of the representation of St. John the Merciful with the prophet Aaron in the southeastern squinch suggests that the latter was also painted by the same artist. More than in their typology, the similarities are noticeable in the painterly treatment of the

60

Two layers of ornamental wall paintings in the socle zone, northwestern corner of the western conch

61

Foliolate cross, small squinch in the northwestern corner of the western conch

62

Four layers of ornamental wall paintings in the socle zone, northern side of the altar conch





images characterized, on the one hand, by the usage of lines as the key elements of visual expression, which defines but also breaks down shapes into smaller units, and on the other, by the dominant role of tone modeling in rendering the rather pronounced voluminosity (Figs. 45, 46, 59). The artist who painted those images – and who can be said to have been the first – was an excellent draughtsman capable of imbuing his portraits with character but falling short of achieving full exuberance and liveliness of the painted matter.

A markedly different approach was employed by the painter of Christ the Merciful on the southeastern pilaster (Fig. 54), who seems to have also been responsible for the figures in the ktetorial composition and the Entry into Jerusalem (Fig. 52). His drawing is much less eye-catching and his modeling more gradual – essentially tonal, too, but more reliant on coloristic relations in creating the impression of rounded shapes. He uses green in somewhat broader strokes, swiping it even over the shadowy part under the eyes, and employs light pink for coloring the

63

Prophet Elijah (left) and St. John the Merciful (right)

carnations. On the high points of the cheeks and forehead, over the pink, he applies a subdued white hue, creating the impression that the face is lit by sufficiently strong yet indirect, almost diffused light. Unlike the first artist, he very rarely – for example, along the undereye area of the Savior's left eye and on his right arm – uses pastose white paint to apply, with a very thin brush, tiny, usually barely perceptible reflections of light that do not meld with the skin tone. Due to all this, his painted matter seems more natural and much less dry. Besides considerable differences, the works of the two painters also display some similarities, probably as a result of their having worked together over a longer period and taking cues from one another. They can be noticed, for instance, in the chosen type of blessing, position, drawing, and even the modeling on the right arms of Christ and St. John the Merciful (Figs. 53, 58). Due to the damage that the Savior's image has suffered in the eye area, only from up close it can be observed that the scheme and the lines that trace his lids, pupils and undereyes are very similar to those on St. John's representation (Figs. 54, 59).

Those two artists were probably the leaders of the painting workshop that frescoed the church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Ras in the last quarter of the 13th century. That this was indeed the case is also suggested by the fact that they were entrusted with painting the most prominent images in the naos – those near the altar barrier and above the bishop's throne. However, the two of them did not fresco the entire church by themselves. The figures of some prophets and archangels in the cap of the dome were executed by a much less competent painter, who was also responsible for the image of St. Christopher and the unidentified martyr on the southwestern pilaster (Figs. 56, 57). He seems to have been a journeyman of the second artist, inferior to him in both skill and talent. In his works, the drawing is rougher and less confident, the modeling harder and unrefined, and the coloring cruder. That makes the painted matter appear quite dry and bereft of pictorial beauty. More than the formerly mentioned two artists, this one tended to simplify shapes and reduce them to mere and inharmonious cubist geometry. His way of depicting hands, especially St. Christopher's left, best exemplifies that. As the expressions of a more refined painterly culture, the figures of the monks and holy physicians in the western conch of the naos show much higher artistic merit (Figs. 64, 65). Although considerably marred by facial retouching, they are undoubtedly the work of an accomplished draughtsman capable of rendering the calmly superior, striking characters of the shown saints. On those representations, the lines are again far from aggressive and very subtly trace the noble physiognomies. They usually blend into the mostly tonal, very gradual modeling without markedly deep or wide shadows or flickering accents of light, which – evoked by the lazure layers of white paint – spills over the forehead and the high points of the face. The skin tone is rendered in light ocher and pink and appears very natural. The more

prominent role of the skillfully combined colors on the clothing adds to the beauty and appeal of the painted matter in these representations. The palette ranges from pastel purple (St. Ephrem's *koukoulion* and *analabos*) to transparent red (tunic of the holy physician).

With their markedly broad noses and faces, large eyes and softly curved brows, those images are typologically more consistent with the representations executed by the first artist. However, they could only be ascribed to him assuming that he employed radically different approaches when painting younger men (without many wrinkles or white hair) versus elderly personages (Elijah the Prophet, St. John the Merciful, the high priest Aaron). Substantial differences in painting young and aged saints can indeed be found in the works of some medieval artists. However, the shift is so striking here that it seems more likely that the latter images were the work of a fourth artist from the same workshop. Be that as it may, all of the members of the group that restored the frescoes of St. Peter's in the late 13th century are characterized by an adherence to the conceptions of the final stage of the so-called monumental style of 13th-century Byzantine painting. To a lesser or greater extent, they strive to achieve plasticity, conquer the planes of the scene, add perspective and depth (the backdrops of the evangelists, Entry into Jerusalem), and attain monumentality of expression. Their commitment to achieving an air of grandeur is also apparent if we compare their system of decoration with the one employed by the painters of the original layer. Instead of the scenes with shrunken figures in the squinches, the late 13th century artists painted large busts of high priests and, on the walls of the space below the dome, spread out compositions that probably occupy two former fresco zones. In doing so, in multiple places, they chose not to follow the framework dictated by the architecture of the church. They covered all shallow niches in the space below the dome, including those with impressed ornamentation, with a thick layer of plaster to obtain surfaces spacious enough to accommodate the Great Feasts scenes. The window on the eastern wall below the dome was walled up for the same reason (but was reopened later) – to make room for the Crucifixion composition.¹¹⁶ Space for painting scenes in the area below the dome was also obtained by allowing the borders on both sides to penetrate deep into the sub-dome squinches in defiance of their masonry framework.

A pronounced tendency to use tonal modeling, some deviations from classicist canons and typology, a new role assigned to drawing and, at times, dryness of painted material, that is, of texture, are the stylistic elements of the 13th-century wall paintings in the church of St. Peter that bring it closer to the works of Byzantine and Serbian art created in the last quarter of that century. Some programmatic and iconographic details also point to their similarity with this, so-called monumental art in decline. For instance, it is worth noting the emphasis on, and probably grouping of, the high priest images in the thematic program of the higher parts of the church,¹¹⁷ as

64

St. Ephrem the Syrian
(detail), northwestern side
of the southwestern pilaster



well as the specific organization of the ktetorial composition. The closest parallels for all mentioned stylistic, iconographic and programmatic characteristics of the youngest painted layer in the naos of the ancient cathedral church of Ras can be found on the frescoes of Serbian churches and icons from the second half and last quarter of the 13th century: the parekklesia next to the narthex of Sopoćani, the Parekklesion



65
Holy physician (detail),
western wall of the
western conch

of King Dragutin in Djurdjevi Stupovi, the Serbian icon of Sts. Peter and Paul in the Vatican, Arilje, and a Hilandar icon of St. Panteleimon.¹¹⁸ However, the similarities are not strong enough to propose ascribing any of the abovementioned works to one of the painters from St. Peter's church.

Post-Byzantine paintings

The abovementioned fire and the resultant heat exposure, so detrimental to the coloristic values of the youngest fresco layer in the naos, did not change the visual characteristics of the remnants of the murals in the small narthex of St. Peter's church. But neither did those wall paintings survive intact: they were heavily damaged in the rebuilding of the narthex vault and struck with an ax during the preparations for applying a new layer of plaster. In the upper part of the southern wall of the narthex, there is a large bust of St. Nicholas (Fig. 66),¹¹⁹ and below it, around the passage leading into the southern compartment, an ornamental field (east) and the representation of a stylite – St. Simeon, no doubt (west).¹²⁰ In the passage itself, some aniconic wall decoration has survived: an ornamental field in an arch and a foliate cross with a cryptogram on the eastern side (Figs. 67, 68). On the eastern part of the barrel vault of the narthex, above the entrance to the naos, two rather large fragments of the Dormition of the Virgin scene have been preserved (Fig. 69). The fresco program in the narthex must have been much more elaborate in the past. On the northern wall, little has survived except a plaster base that had been struck with an ax. The layer with the Dormition extends only up to that base, which can be seen along the arched edge of the upper part of that wall on the eastern side, but that does not necessarily mean that it did not once spread further (Fig. 69). It is fairly certain that another composition had been painted in the same layer opposite the Dormition, on the western side of the vault, before it was remodeled (Plan 1). Prior to the substantial expansion of the passages to the naos and northern part of the edifice in 1728, there were wall surfaces around them suitable for painting several saints in the lowest zone of the eastern and northern walls (Fig. 3b).

Such surfaces do not seem to have existed on the western side or, if they did, they would have been smaller. Namely, the surface of the fresco with the stylite stretches to the west, over the line of the border around the bust of St. Nicholas, which followed the curve of the earlier vault, replaced by a somewhat wider and higher version under Patriarch Arsenije IV (Fig. 66). Judging by the placement of the stylite figure, the surface of the fresco must have extended much further to the west than today, below the subsequently built pilaster. It was probably for this reason that, shortly before or after the exonarthex was built,¹²¹ most likely in the Ottoman period and definitely before the painting of the representations of St. Nicholas and St. Simeon the Stylite, the circular western wall of the old narthex was demolished. After that, the old narthex must have been connected to the subsequently added exonarthex, either with one wide arch or multiple arches that melded into the upper part of the lateral walls. When the narthex vault was later remodeled, the construction on which it rested on the western side was moved further to the west and somewhat altered (Plan 1–2). In any case, there is no doubt that more than half of the thematic program of the frescoes in the narthex of St. Peter's was thus lost. Hence,



66

Wall paintings on the southern side of the narthex

67

Ornamental field in the archway on the southern wall of the narthex



the program's ideational underpinnings and the messages it conveyed cannot be reliably reconstructed.

Although St. Simeon the Stylite ranked among the most highly venerated pillar saints,¹²² the painting of his image in the narthex, on the narrow surface of the wall by the passage into the southern part of the building (Fig. 66), is not an oddity that warrants special attention. The position of pillar saints, even the most highly revered among them, in the program and their place in the sacral topography of the church were not strictly defined at all. Stylites were shown on similarly proportioned, narrow surfaces of various parts of Orthodox churches, ranging from the sanctuary to the exonarthex, including narthexes.¹²³ Many more questions surround the saintly image in the upper part of the same wall. The representation of St. Nicholas, the famed wonderworker and bishop of Myra, whose cult was and continues to be very strong in all Serbian lands,¹²⁴ was commonly given a prominent place in the program of the central part of the church – the naos. It is unlikely that such a spot could not be found for St. Nicholas in the ancient cathedral church of Ras. On the other hand, if his image happened to be repeated in the peripheral zones of religious edifices, the second depiction usually appeared in a direct connection with side parekklesia dedicated to him. That might lead us to assume that the bust of St. Nicholas was featured above the passage to the southern part of the church because this area could have once held a parekklesion dedicated to him. However, the remaining wall paintings in the narthex seem to contradict such a hypothesis. The abovementioned fresco with

ornamental fields and foliate prophylactic crosses in the passage on the southern side of the narthex, below the representation of St. Nicholas, covered only slightly more than one-half of the thickness of the wall in the passage (Figs. 66, 67). This suggests that, when the narthex was frescoed, the passage had a door separating the narthex from the courtyard, meaning that there was no adjacent structure on the exterior side of the narthex's southern wall. The appearance of the monumental bust of the miracle worker of Myra in the tiny narthex of St. Peter's thus remains quite mystifying.

Similarly, the placement of the Dormition of the Virgin, one of the most important Great Feasts, into the narthex of St. Peter and Paul's church is also very extraordinary. Admittedly, in some older churches, this scene could be assigned a place in the narthex, but almost all of those religious buildings did not have a full wall between the naos and narthex, and the two areas were separated only by high pillars.¹²⁵ Since in such churches the western wall of the naos was not large enough to accommodate the elaborate scene of the Dormition, it was instead shown on the western wall of the narthex, where it would be visible from the central part of the church. At St. Peter's, however, a full wall with a narrow door once separated the naos and narthex, and the Dormition was painted on the eastern side of the vault, meaning that it was impossible to even glimpse from the naos. There can be little doubt that the reason for choosing this unusual place in the program for the depiction of the Virgin's passing should be sought in the peculiar architecture of the central part of the church and the lack of space for painting frescoes with elaborate contents in it. Hence, the illustration of the last Great Feast in chronological order probably had to be moved from the naos to the narthex, where it was given a prominent place above the entrance into the main part of the church. Whether it was joined, on the western side of the vault, by a representation of another Great Feast or, which is more probable, by a scene of an important Marian feast (Nativity of the Virgin, Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple) must remain in the realm of conjecture.

The wall paintings in the narthex of the old cathedral church of Ras have been previously dated to the second half or end of the 13th century, like the youngest fresco layer in the naos. Admittedly, some differences have been noted between the painterly approaches in the lower parts of the naos and the narthex, but they have been interpreted as the result of two different groups of artists working concurrently in the naos and narthex at the end of the 13th century.¹²⁶ But a more careful analysis of the frescoes in the narthex of St. Peter and Paul's church in Ras and their comparison with the youngest murals in the naos, as well as with other Serbian and Byzantine monuments of the late 13th century, point to a very different conclusion.¹²⁷

Comparing, for instance, the image of St. Nicholas with the representation of St. John the Merciful, another elderly bishop, in the naos, major differences between them become apparent at once (Figs. 58, 59, 66, 70). The two depictions are very



68
Foliate cross with a cryptogram, eastern side of the archway on the southern wall of the narthex

69
Remnant of the *Dormition of the Virgin* (left part), eastern side of the narthex vault



far from each other in terms of general typology, head shape and some parts of the face, as well as the proportional relations between those parts. More importantly, the artists who painted them employed radically different painterly approaches. First of all, the importance, role and nature of the draughtsmanship in the two paintings are incomparable. On the bust of St. Nicholas, the drawing was executed in distinct yet unimposing, very thin, dark brown lines, without haste and tension, softly tracing the broadly curved, geometric forms of the head, eyes, brows, nose, mouth, chin, mustache and ears. The representation of St. John the Merciful reveals a more dynamic approach, with the drawing strokes broken up more abruptly, firmly and substantially. The modeling is also very different, as is the level of plasticity and “massiveness” of the shapes. The modeling on the portrayal of St. Nicholas, who looks almost weightless, is very subdued, mild and translucent, while the volume is barely intimated. On the other hand, the face of St. John the Merciful is much harder and more convincingly modeled, with pronounced valeur





70
St. Nicholas (detail),
southern wall of the narthex



71
St. Simeon the Stylite,
after retouching, southern
wall of the narthex

72
St. Simeon the Stylite,
before facial retouching,
southern wall of the narthex

differences between the shaded and illuminated parts. It looks as if it had been sculpted, with its full and taut forms creating the impression of massiveness and heaviness. The two images also differ considerably in the painted textures and material effects, which are unrefined and much drier in the representation of St. Nicholas. All of the above can be repeated, with more or less consistency, if we juxtapose the bust of St. Nicholas, the best-preserved image in the narthex, with the depictions of the holy physician Kosmas and St. Christopher and the representations of St. Ephrem the Syrian or Christ the Merciful in the naos of St. Peter's church (Figs. 54, 57, 64, 65).¹²⁸

Similarly, the stylite in the narthex does not betray any specific similarities with the saints shown in the naos. A comparison of his image with the naos representations admittedly has reduced value due to its limited authenticity because it was heavily retouched during the conservation and restoration works (Figs. 71, 72). However, he is so different from the images in the naos, particularly when considering the original parts of his representation, that the results of previous comparisons can but be confirmed. There are also pronounced dissimilarities between the shape and size of the letters in the accompanying inscriptions of the representations in the narthex

and those in the main part of the church. The signature of the image of St. Nicholas differs most obviously from the inscriptions in the naos.¹²⁹

The strong dissimilarities in facial typology and painterly treatment – especially in the role and nature of the drawing, modeling, firmness and voluminosity of the shapes – which distinguish the frescoes in the naos and narthex at St. Peter's from each other also separate the latter from other fresco ensembles of the late 13th century.¹³⁰ The wall paintings in the narthex of the old cathedral church of Ras contain other rather suggestive details with certain stylistic characteristics not usually found in the monumental art created at the end of the 13th century. Late 13th-century artists, and even those who worked in the early 14th century, tended to magnify the size of the objects held by archpriests. In the hands of bishops, they showed enlarged, voluminous codices, a tendency that can be traced from the frescoes of Mileševa to St. Peter's (naos), Arilje, Protaton and the Virgin Ljeviška in Prizren.¹³¹ On the other hand, the Gospel in the left hand of the holy bishop of Myra in the narthex of the old Ras cathedral is of modest dimensions (Fig. 66). It is substantially reduced compared to the size of the archpriest's bust and shown without any attempt to render the voluminosity of the painted tome. The emphasizing of large crosses with very wide arms on the bishops' *omophoria* also reflected the 13th century artistic tendency to achieve as convincing an impression of monumentality as possible. In some cases, those crosses are quite oversized, for instance, on the representation of St. John the Merciful in the naos of the Ras cathedral (Fig. 58). In contrast, the crosses on St. Nicholas's *omophorion* have much thinner and elongated arms. The shrunken size of the pearls decorating the saint's *epitrachelion*, visible around the neck, *epimanikion* and cover of his Gospel book, is also at odds with the painting practices more widely followed in the late 13th century (Fig. 70). Present in the same painting, those elements are a valuable indication that can be important for stylistic and, consequently, chronological considerations.

The painterly manner, coloring, drawing, and modeling on the murals in the narthex of the church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Ras are very similar to those in the works of Serbian artists who were active in the second half of the 16th century. The closest analogies for the execution of the ornamental fields in the narthex of the ancient Ras cathedral are also found in the art of the said period. Post-Byzantine art offers a plethora of parallels for the listed distinctive secondary stylistic elements on the depiction of St. Nicholas, such as the undersized codex, slender arms of the crosses on the *omophorion*, and the tiny pearls on the edges of the *epitrachelion*, cuffs and Gospel covers.



73

John the Apostle, detail from the *Dormition of the Virgin*, eastern side of the narthex vault

Due to all this, the frescoes in the narthex of St. Peter's church should be dated to the last third of the 16th or the early 17th century at the latest. No other works of the artists who painted them seem to have survived, and so there are no direct analogies to be found for them. However, it seems fairly certain that those artists were aware of the painting trends in the territory the restored Patriarchate of Peć because some general features connect them to this rather wide artistic circle, which included the painting workshops that frescoed the churches in the Serbian lands in the post-1557 decades. Therefore, it is precisely this artistic circle that offers some stylistic and typological parallels for the murals in the narthex of the old Ras cathedral.¹³² The dating of the frescoes in the narthex of St. Peter and Paul's church to the Post-Byzantine period is also supported by the above-proposed conclusion that they were painted after the western wall of the old narthex had been removed and a door installed in the passage leading into the southern part of the church, by that time probably already demolished. The fact that the murals in the narthex contain some peripheral epigraphic and iconographic archaisms should not affect this rather late time frame for their creation.¹³³

As noted above, St. Nicholas's bust in the narthex of the episcopal church of Ras is not particularly three-dimensional or voluminous. Hence, the representation's air of monumentality was primarily achieved by making it oversized compared to the spatial and visual context to which it belongs (Fig. 66). The size of the bust of the Myra wonderworker is disproportionate to the surface on which it was painted and the surrounding images. The bust, especially the head, was enlarged so much that the top of the halo could not fit into the available surface of the wall and had to be cut off by a border. This needed to be done although the diameter of the nimbus was diminished compared to the size of the saint's head. The stylite painted directly below the bust of St. Nicholas and the figures in the nearby Dormition of the Virgin scene are completely incomparable in terms of size with the holy bishop's protome. As a result, the wall paintings in the narthex of St. Peter's do not seem like a formally well-balanced and esthetically well-harmonized ensemble. To a certain extent, the impression of those paintings as a unitary ensemble is also impaired by the differences in the painterly treatment of the figures.

At first glance, there are already noticeable coloristic differences, which are most apparent in the dissonant tones of the haloes of St. Nicholas (cool ocher) and the pillar saint below him (a much warmer ocher hue). Further comparisons of the two representations, although hampered by the damaged condition of the stylite figure, reveal other dissimilarities between them (Figs. 66, 70–72). The head shapes of the archpriest and stylite and the proportional relations between their facial parts are not even roughly analogous. There are also many differences in the painterly treatment of those images. The drawing of the stylite's face is markedly harder and sharper, and the modeling drier and more tonal, without the vivid brown sections on the cheeks. The dissimilarities between the images of the two saints on the southern wall of the



74

Peter the Apostle, detail from the *Dormition of the Virgin*, eastern side of the narthex vault

narthex at St. Peter and Paul's church are particularly easy to spot in the drawing and modeling of the noses. The nose of the bishop of Myra was modeled much more gradually and softly and is noticeably wider compared to the rest of his face than the pillar saint's, which is, unlike Nicholas's, bifurcated just under the forehead, forming the Y symbol. The two representations also differ in the drawing and modeling of the beards and mustaches, as well as the folds of the clothing. It is, therefore, apparent that the depictions of the two saints on the southern wall of the narthex were not painted by the same artist. However, given the painterly approach and end result of the artist who painted the heavily damaged pillar saint, there can be little doubt that he worked concurrently with and alongside the one who executed the bust of St. Nicholas. The fact that both images were painted on the same plaster layer attests to this too. Furthermore, the two artists seem to have jointly done the Dormition scene. In that composition, the style of drawing and painting of the artist who executed the stylite can be recognized on the head of John the Apostle, particularly on the upper part of his nose, which forms the Y symbol (Fig. 73). On the other hand, the drawing and modeling on the folds on the chitons and himations of the apostles on the right side of the Dormition, whose faces are almost lost, are more reminiscent of the creator of St. Nicholas's bust. Finally, the conclusion that the two artists worked side-by-side is firmly supported by one technical detail on their paintings.

More specifically, both saints painted on the southern wall of the narthex at St. Peter's, as well as the figures in the adjacent scene of the Dormition of the Virgin, are framed with a thin white line. That is a technical detail known from the Middle Byzantine period and used in Eastern Christian art even later to distinguish the figures from the background, especially in dimly lit parts of the church.¹³⁴ The practice was not forgotten in the Post-Byzantine era and was sometimes employed both in the Greek and Serbian milieu.¹³⁵ Therefore, the possibility that at least one of the two painters adopted it from his teachers or other contemporaries should not be discarded. However, as mentioned above, it was also used by the late 13th century artists on the half-length figures of the prophets in the dimly lit hemisphere of the dome. If the narthex was frescoed concurrently, as it seems to have been, this detail could have also been employed in its wall paintings, especially because the narthex also suffered from a lack of light. The remnants of those frescoes, in a better or poorer state of preservation, might have influenced the restorers from the Ottoman period to resort to the ancient painting device. That, however, inevitably leads us to the question of whether – and if so, to what extent – the programmatic and iconographic solutions of the Post-Byzantine paintings in the narthex were the result of repeating the older murals. Since the appearance of some themes in the narthex (for example, the Dormition of the Virgin) seems possible to explain only by the spatial framework and the programmatic disposition of the content of the frescoes in the entire church, those themes seem to have been part of the program in the narthex



even earlier; in other words, it seems likely that the younger artists repeated the older program at least to some extent. Certain iconographic archaisms in the works of the younger painters, such as the high wire fence on St. Simeon's pillar, suggest the same conclusion.

§

The dating of the wall paintings in the narthex of St. Peter's church to the last third of the 16th or the early 17th century entails the conclusion that the old cathedral church of Ras was not neglected during the lively restoration activities in the wide territory of the Patriarchate of Peć after 1557. Given the monument's current state of repair, the scope of the restoration and reworking of the frescoes in the church during the first centuries of Ottoman rule cannot be definitively ascertained. The remnants of the wall paintings in the narthex are certainly not the only ones that have survived from the Post-Byzantine period at the Church of the Holy Apostles Sts. Peter and Paul in Ras. In the niche on the southern side of the sanctuary, there is a cross with a cryptogram decorated with a simple ornamental field at its foot (Fig. 75).¹³⁶ Based more on the ornament in the field than its superficial and inattentive execution, the painted cross can be very reliably dated to the Post-Byzantine period.¹³⁷ The ornamental field consists of a sequence made up of alternating pairs of red lines, a slanted straight one and a broken one, and pairs of identical black lines on a white background. Ornamental fields executed in

75

Cross with an ornamental base, niche on the southern side of the altar conch

76

Cross, southern side of the window on the eastern side of the dome

77–78

Wall paintings in the window on the southern wall of the exonarthex: a) eastern side; b) western side



such lines, with simplistic and unappealing coloring and drawing, are not found in Serbian art from the Byzantine period. On the other hand, they were often – almost routinely – painted in Serbian Post-Byzantine churches. Similar yet diverse ornaments, usually rhombus-shaped, composed of alternating red and black lines, sometimes either broken or straight and sometimes combining both, are not unknown in Serbian 16th century art but appear more commonly in the following century. Because of this and the fact that the cross with the ornamental field at its foot was executed with considerably less painterly skill than the frescoes in the narthex and is hence highly unlikely to be the work of one of the artists that worked in that part of the church, it is much more probable that it dates from the 17th than the 16th century.

On the other hand, the painters of the narthex might have been responsible for the prophylactic crosses that have survived in the breadth of the exterior part of the window wall, on the eastern side of the dome (Fig. 76). This is suggested by the fact that those crosses, insofar as they have survived, mostly match the shape of the abovementioned cross with a cryptogram, painted in the passage leading from the narthex into the southern compartment of the church. Sadly, the crosses in the dome windows and the passage are so heavily damaged that they prohibit any reliable comparisons and definite conclusions. If the crosses in the dome windows are indeed older, the painters of the narthex probably based their own versions on them. In any case, the frescoes in the narthex and the modest remnants of the murals in the sanctuary, and possibly also those on the exterior part of the dome windows, suggest that the additional painting and reworking of the wall paintings at St. Peter's took place in several rounds in the first centuries of Ottoman rule and that they are by no means negligible in any recapitulation of the church's long history. The remnants of crude frescoes on the eastern and western side of the window in the southern wall of the exonarthex belong to the same period (Figs. 77–78), but at this point, nothing more specific can be said about their time of creation. However, the remnants does make it clear that the interior of the exonarthex was once also covered with frescoes, which were destroyed during the extensive rebuilding of this part of the religious edifice.



Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras





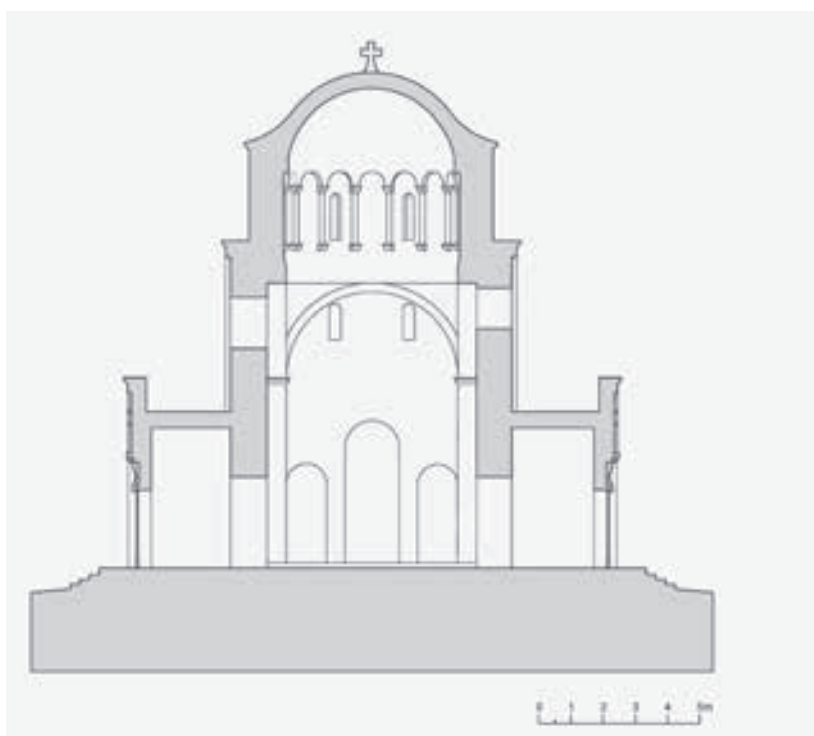
79
Entry into Jerusalem,
detail: John the Apostle
(?), fragment, National
Museum of Serbia

80
Archangel bust in a
medallion between
the northern pair of
pendentives in the
katholikon, fragment,
National Museum of Serbia

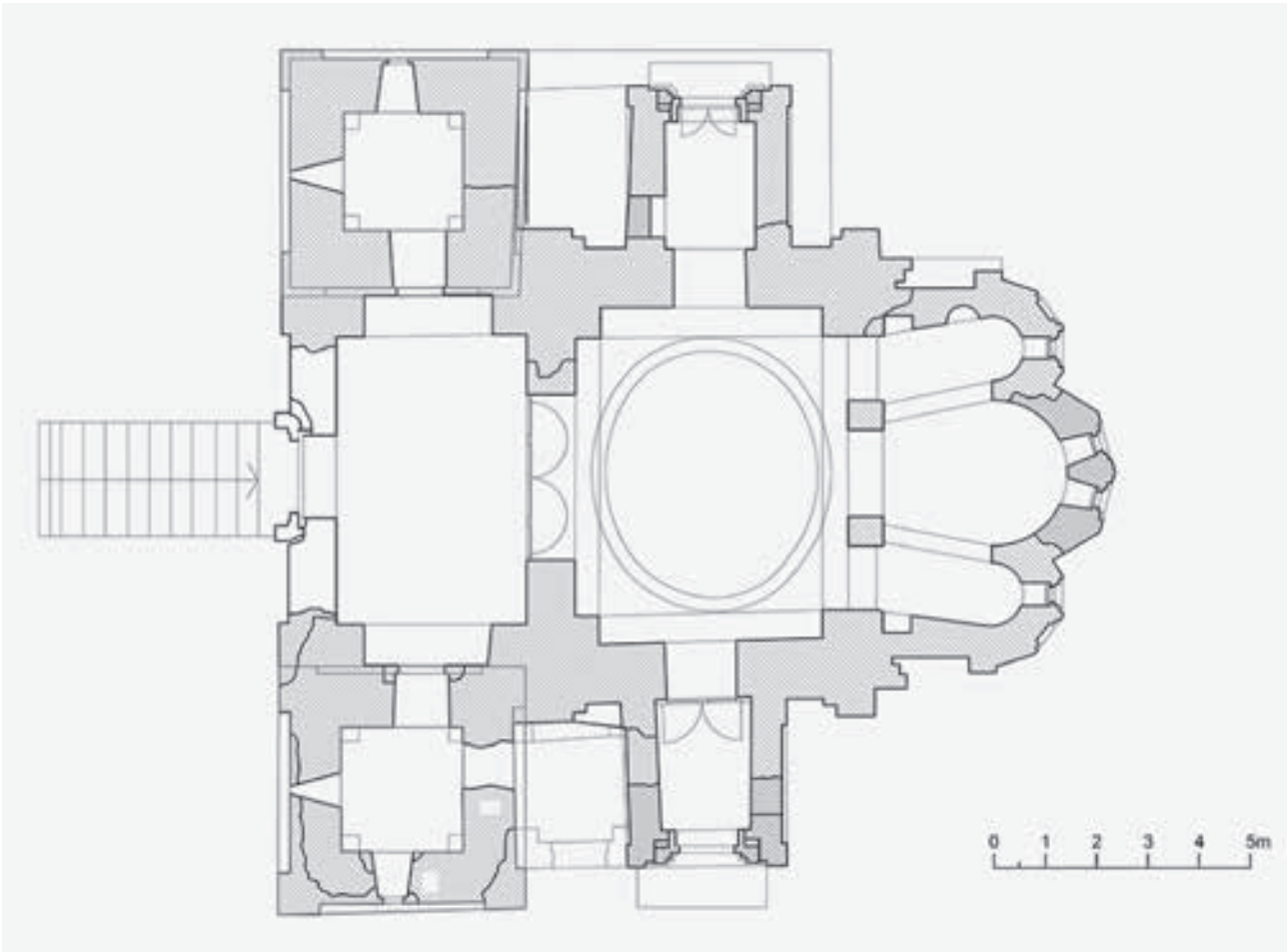
THE WALL PAINTINGS IN THE KATHOLIKON

Going through the portal of the restored katholikon of the Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery and, a moment or two later, stepping into the naos, we enter the space below the dome, wide open to the eye and generously lit, with its harmoniously composed volumes delineated by the striking architectural framework. The balanced structure of its forms lights up one's spirit and raises it gradually by the distinctive crescendo of the building's architectural articulation. It takes it from the steady, spacious wall surfaces in the lower segments of the edifice, framed by the slow-paced arches, to the more elaborate parts, toward the dome, where the rhythmic alteration of blind arcades and colonnettes becomes a lively play of forms, which is not common in the interiors of Eastern Christian churches. At the first glance, it seems as if, on the wishes of the ktetor and chief architect, this abstract harmony of the building was meant to achieve by itself a completely rounded fullness of expression. That, however, was by no means so. The eye that can, thanks to the deceptive reality of the restoration, travel across the walls of Nemanja's endowment as if they were never touched by the ravages of time will, sooner or later, come upon torn and faded remains of frescoes – a sobering testimony to the tragic history of the monastery's decay. Then, with deep grief, we realize just how much the





Plan 3a–3b
Longitudinal and cross section of
the Church of St. George in Ras



Plan 4
Ground plan of the Church of St. George in Ras

calamitous historical events have taken from us here. Only together with its wall paintings, which stood in a special esthetic harmony with it, did the architecture of this ancient church condense and bring closer to us the messages of its abstract beauty, and their imagery imbued the abovementioned ascending rhythms of the building structure with a deeper theological meaning. The iconography made the messages of the creators of Djurdjevi Stupovi, embedded into the very fabric of the church as a whole, incomparably more multi-layered, richer and more eloquent. What makes our loss even greater is that this was an extraordinarily valuable body of wall paintings, the only one among those created owing to the efforts of the founder of the most important Serbian dynasty that had survived to a greater extent into the modern period and, as ill-fortune would have it, perished shortly thereafter. Too few monuments of Serbian wall painting have reached us from Nemanja's time to allow us to assess its development in the period that preceded its grand rise in the 13th century. Finally, the frescoes of Djurdjevi Stupovi were a stylistically mature achievement of the Komnenian era whose importance far exceeded the national cultural framework. It is, therefore, very difficult to come to terms with its complete loss and resist the yearning to bring it back, at least seemingly, through the solace that the artificial reality of a book can offer, drawing on what of, and about it, has been saved from oblivion.

Thankfully, such an effort is not utterly hopeless. A faithful and quite compelling – although not exhaustive – picture of the Djurdjevi Stupovi murals can be reconstructed in our mind and eye owing to a plethora of preserved written testimonies, old photographs, a number of fresco fragments at the National Museum in Belgrade and the church itself. We owe this opportunity to the generations of noble-spirited lovers of antiquities, travel writers, painter-conservers and scholars who, in a race against time, managed to wrench away quite a lot from oblivion and ruin. Before the monastery was deserted after the Austro-Turkish wars and the Great Serbian Migration of 1690, Nikola Bošković, a Ragusan, saw its frescoes *in vivo* and much later mentioned many of them from memory.¹³⁸ Another notable name among its early visitors, such as Ami Boué and Theodor Ippen, was the Russian linguist Alexander Hilferding, who left more detailed descriptions of the “countless paintings” at Djurdjevi Stupovi and recorded some of their Serbo-Slavonic inscriptions.¹³⁹ He visited the already abandoned and dilapidated monastery in 1857, and his testimonies are important because he, like the British travel writers Adeline Pauline Irby and Georgina Muir Mackenzie ten years later,¹⁴⁰ could see at the monastery many things that would later be lost. Unfortunately, the first trained researchers of medieval art arrived to Djurdjevi Stupovi much later, in the early 1920s, after the katholikon had already been heavily damaged in an artillery duel between the Serbian and Turkish armies in 1912. It was then that Aleksandar Deroko, Vladimir Petković, Sergei Smirnov and Nikolai Lvovich Okunev compiled the first exhaustive

lists of the thematic contents of the frescoes, which were rapidly fading and crumbling off the dilapidated walls, described them and, even more importantly, immortalized their appearance by photographing them.¹⁴¹ For assessing the contents and artistic value of those wall paintings, the photographs taken in 1934 by the French Byzantinist Gabriel Millet are invaluable.¹⁴² Not long after that, during World War II, the Church of St. George and its murals suffered another round of devastation. The bulk of the surviving fresco fragments was later detached from the walls and taken to the National Museum in Belgrade. With the information preserved by the abovementioned scholars, these fragments provide a valuable foundation for reconstructing the murals at Nemanja's church, an endeavor most consistently and successfully pursued by Ivan M. Djordjević and Sara M. Wages.¹⁴³

The earlier wall paintings

Thanks to Irby and Mackenzie's report that "to obliterate the figure of Christ, destroyers have broken up the plaster of the dome" we know that a Pantokrator bust graced the hemisphere of the cupola at Nemanja's church of St. George.¹⁴⁴ This is not surprising at all because, by the Komnenian era, it had long become a usual part of the program at the top of the spatial hierarchy of domed churches.¹⁴⁵ In addition, the remaining program of the frescoes in the dome is structured so as to form an ideational ensemble with the bust of Christ Pantokrator. Directly below and around it, in the lower half of the dome hemisphere, large yellow medallions with half-length archangel protomes were set on a blue background (fig. 83). This is evidenced by old photographs and Okunev's descriptions,¹⁴⁶ and the same or similar programmatic solutions are well known in both Komnenian and later Byzantine art. Some examples of its common inclusion in thematic ensembles chronologically close to the monument discussed here are the Church of St. Nicholas Chalidou in Attica, Panagia Kyparissiotisa at the Monastery of St. Hierotheos and the Church of the Ascension, both in Megara, Panagia Arakiotissa in Lagoudera, Cyprus, and the Episkopi church in the hamlet of Agios Georgios in the village of Stavri on the Mani Peninsula, etc.¹⁴⁷ In the listed churches, besides the archangels in medallions below the Pantokrator, other images were usually painted: the Hetoimasia and/or the Mother of God, and sometimes John the Forerunner alongside the Virgin. Whether at least one of those images once stood beside the archangels at Nemanja's endowment is impossible to determine due to the fragmentary state of preservation of the surviving frescoes. However, the old photographs lead to the conclusion that there was quite a large gap between the medallions, i.e., that only a few *clipei* were painted. This concept, with a smaller number of medallions, sometimes just four, with angels in proskynesis or cherubim and seraphim scattered more freely between them, was not uncommon. It was implemented in several of the abovementioned monuments. The angelic orders were painted as the royal retinue and





81
Elijah the Prophet, drum
of the katholikon dome

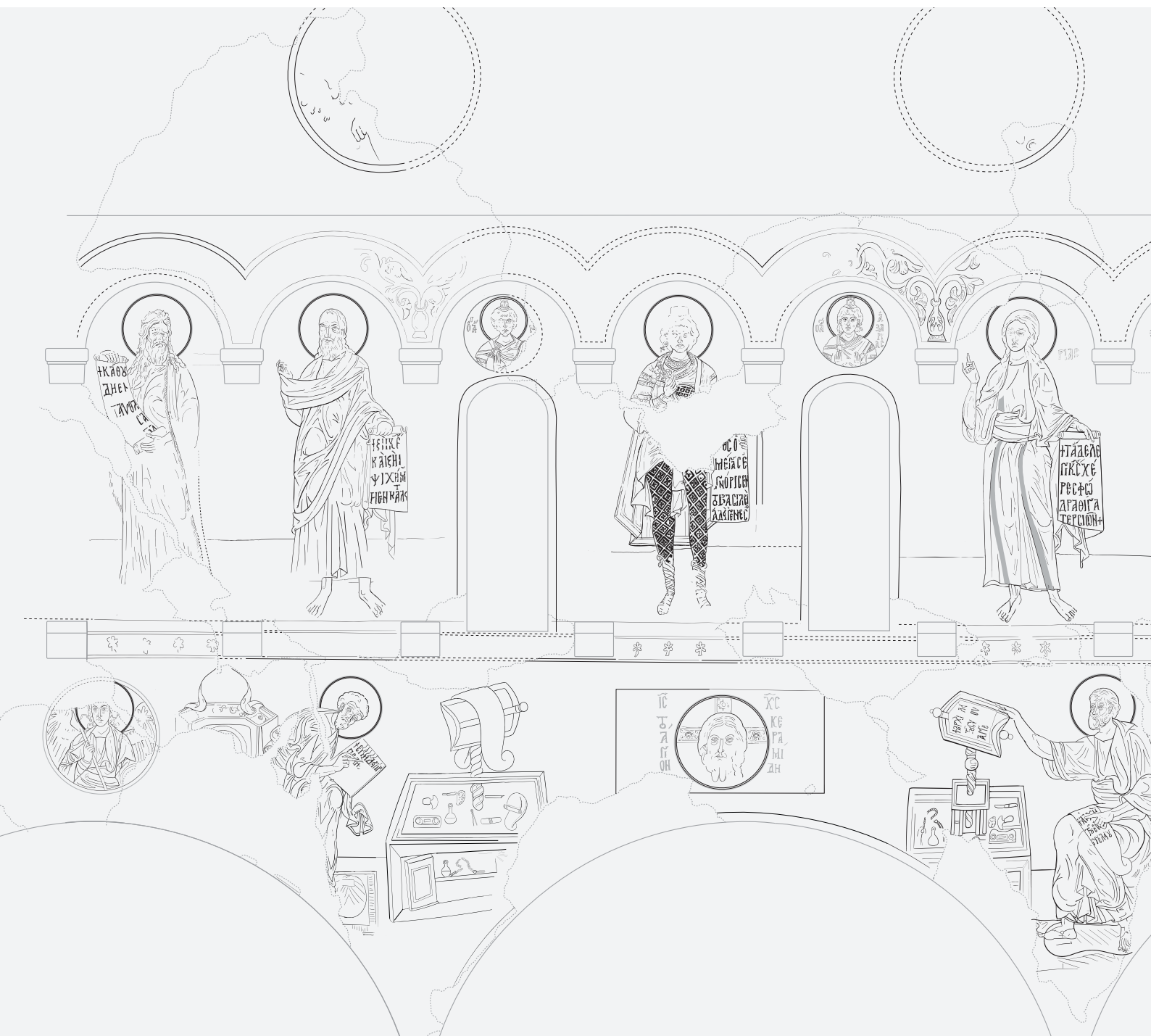
82
Daniel the Prophet, drum
of the katholikon dome

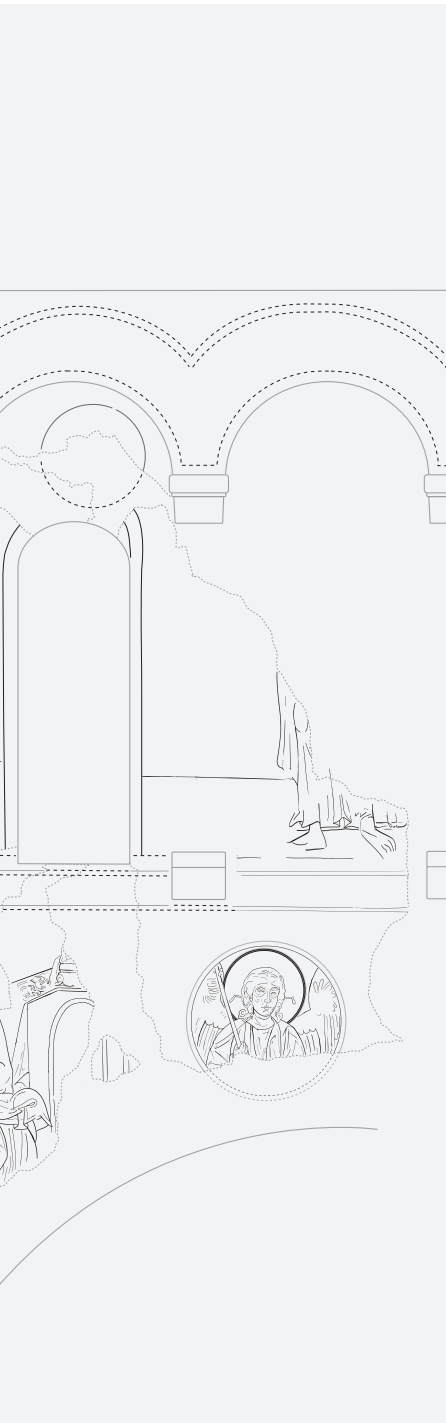
83
Drawings of the frescoes
in the dome and the
pendentive zone of the
katholikon (p. 116–117)

bodiless guard of the ascended Lord of the Universe in his dwelling, the Heaven of Heavens, and the Hetoimasia and the figures of the Theotokos and St. John the Forerunner brought to mind, among other things, the day of his Second Coming and invited the faithful to carefully await the Last Judgment.

The rhythmically structured drum of the katholikon at Djurdjevi Stupovi had a program that was essentially customary in domes with the Pantokrator at the top. Below the fourteen blind arches of the drum's arcade frieze, there were the standing figures of the prophets – in the eight fields with no windows – and the busts of Old Testament personages in medallions above the six windows. By the time the first trained researchers visited the monastery, only the paintings in the western half of the drum were still in existence (fig. 83). Photographs and descriptions from the first decades of the 20th century reveal that the two adjacent fields on the southwestern side of the dome, without a window between them, featured representations of Elijah the Prophet and his disciple and successor Elisha.¹⁴⁸ The images of those two contemporaries and associates make up a pair, i.e., a small ensemble in the thematic program of the domes of many medieval Orthodox churches.¹⁴⁹ In line with his usual iconography, Elijah is shown as an old man with completely white, long and unruly hair and beard, dressed in an ochre tunic and a green, fur-lined melote (fig. 81). Elisha is balding (2 Kings 2:23) and middle-aged, with dark hair and a mid-length beard, who wears the clothes of the learned men of classical antiquity – a blue chiton and a red himation. The two prophets faced each other, as if having a conversation whose subject is revealed by the Biblical quotes written in Greek on the unrolled *rotuli* in their hands. The following text, albeit heavily damaged, was once decipherable on Elijah's scroll: :+ κάθου δη ενταύθα <ότι κ>(ύριο)ς α<πέστα>λ[κέ] ... , which translates to: "Stay here; the Lord has sent me..." The letters of the verse on Elisha's rotulus were better preserved, making it easier to read: + ζη κ(ύριο)ς και ζη η ψιχή μου η ενκατ(α)λεί[ψω σε] ... (it should be: ψυχή σου, ει εγκαταλείψω), and translate: "As the Lord lives and as my (instead of "your") soul lives, I will not leave you."¹⁵⁰

The texts of the *rotuli* of the prophets Elijah and Elisha at Djurdjevi Stupovi have been identified previously as the fourth verse of Chapter 2 of the Second Book of Kings,¹⁵¹ in which Elijah informs his disciple that the Lord sends him to Jericho, and Elisha swears to God and on his (own) soul to go with him. However, according to most old Greek translations of the Old Testament, the words on the scrolls of the two prophets correspond to the second and sixth verse of Chapter 2 in the Second Book of Kings, which mention Elijah's departure for Bethel and the Jordan. Given that only the sixth verse had a liturgical use and was, via the readings in the prophetologion, included in the celebration of some ecclesiastical feasts to whose understanding it contributed, there should be no doubt that the words inscribed on the *rotuli* of the two prophets in the dome of Nemanja's endowment were meant to





bring precisely this verse to the mind of contemporaries. In Greek prophetologia, including the one kept in the British Library in London as AddMS 36660 and created around the same time as the frescoes at Djurdjevi Stupovi, in the 12th century, the second verse of Chapter 2 in the Second Book of Kings appears as the opening line of the paroimia read at vespers on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (i.e., Epiphany in the Eastern Church) and the feast day of St. Elijah.¹⁵² Considering that the figures of the prophets Elijah and Elisha are part of the themes shown in the dome murals at the Church of St. George, with the Pantokrator in the crown of the dome as its ideational focal point, the texts on their *rotuli* clearly have Christological symbolism at their heart. Therefore, they should be understood as a reminder of Christ's descent into the waters of the Jordan, his baptism and, at the same time, the consecration of all matter.

On the western side of the dome of the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon, two more Old Testament prophets were shown, and again their appearance matched their usual iconography. Daniel the Prophet was given a place just at the longitudinal axis of the dome, and the figure of Zechariah the Younger was a little bit more to the north, above the northwestern pendentive (fig. 83). The beardless, young Daniel, with mid-length curly hair, wore close-fitting, oriental trousers made of red fabric with a yellow pattern, and a short, belted gray-blue tunic (fig. 82). Over his shoulder hung a long yellow cloak, with pearl-embellished piping, fastened at the neck with a circular *fibula* and decorated with a *tablion* on the chest.¹⁵³ At the top of his head, he wore an oriental headdress in the form a small fez, and from his right ear hung a hoop earring with a pearl pendant. His right hand, raised to the chest level, made a blessing gesture, and in his left hand, he held a scroll with the following Greek inscription: <+ ο> θε(ε)ς ο μέγας εγνόρισεν τό βασιλεία δει γενέσθ(αι) [μετά ταύτα] (it should be: ... εγνώρισεν τώ ...). This is a quote from the Book of Daniel (Daniel 2:45):¹⁵⁴ “The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future,” and it is read at the end of the sixth paroimia at Christmas vespers.¹⁵⁵ This paroimia contains Daniel's interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a stone that, all by itself, falls off a large hill and crushes a statue made of precious metals, iron and clay. In his prophetic vision, Daniel read the Babylonian ruler's dream as a portent of the eternal kingdom to be established, at the end of time, by the God of Heaven after he brings down all transient, earthly kingdoms. Christian interpreters understood the hill as the Mother of God and the stone that crumbled off the hill “without hands,” i.e., with no human intervention, as the immaculately conceived and Virgin-born Christ Child.¹⁵⁶ Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream thus found its way into Old Testament readings for Christmas (Great Vespers), and so the quote from this reading on Daniel's scroll should be understood as a foreshadowing of the birth of God Incarnate, Jesus Christ, and an announcement of his Kingdom of Heaven.



84
St. Azarias, drum of
the katholikon dome

85
Luke the Evangelist,
southwestern pendentive
of the katholikon

86
Mark the Evangelist,
northwestern pendentive
of the katholikon

Zechariah (...<Ζαχα>ρίας) the Prophet, dubbed the “Younger” on account of his distinctive, almost boyish iconography, despite having lived half a millennium before his namesake among the prophets, the father of St. John the Forerunner, is dressed in a blue chiton and a red himation.¹⁵⁷ Although heavily damaged, his figure is the only one that has survived in the drum of Djurdjevi Stupovi. Based on the remains of this painting and an old photograph, it can be ascertained that he was beardless, with long, dark, straight hair, its strands coming down to his shoulders. He is gently turned toward Daniel and makes a blessing gesture in his direction with his right hand raised high. In his left hand, he holds a scroll with the following text in Greek: + τάδε λέγ[ε]ι κ(ύριο)ς χέρε σφόδρα θίγατερ Σιών + (it should be: ... χαίρε ... θύγατερ ...),¹⁵⁸ which translates to: “Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion!” This is the beginning of the ninth verse in Chapter 9 of the Book of Zechariah, and it continues with these words: “Shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”¹⁵⁹ Understandably, the Christian fathers read this verse as a prophecy of Christ’s entry into the holy city of Jerusalem, and it served as the beginning of the third paroimia read at vespers on Palm Sunday.¹⁶⁰



Of the prophet painted in the next field on the northern side of the dome, separated by a window from Zechariah's figure, very modest remains were found, barely discernible on old photographs. These traces allow us to infer only that the Old Testament visionary shown there was dressed in a chiton and himation. However, the ideas that inspired the thematic program of the western part of the dome at Djurdjevi Stupovi are not attested just by the standing figures in the drum. In the lunettes above the two windows flanking the image of Daniel, medallions were painted with the busts of St. Ananias – ο ἅγιος <Ανα>v<ίας> – and Azarias – ο ἅγιος Ἀζαρίας (fig. 83).¹⁶¹ Both wear tunics with jewel-encrusted *peribrachia* on their upper arms, a cloak fastened at the throat with a circular, pearl-embellished *fibula*, and ornate phylacteries at the top of their heads. The figure of St. Azarias was slightly better preserved, and an earring, very similar to Daniel's, could be seen dangling from his left ear (fig. 84). These busts belonged to two of the three young men (collectively known as the Three Holy Youths) who accompanied Daniel to King Nebuchadnezzar's palace in Babylon. Given that a third medallion was painted above the next window on the western side of the dome (fig. 83), as evidenced by a smallish fresco fragment, there can be no doubt that they were joined by the fourth Israelite youth – St. Misael, commonly shown together with Ananias and Azarias.



87
Christ's *acheiropoieton* image on the Holy Keramion between the western pair of pendentives in the katholikon

88
Archangel bust in a medallion between the southern pair of pendentives in the katholikon

89
Archangel bust in a medallion between the northern pair of pendentives in the katholikon

Spatially and ideationally tied to the figure of the prophet Daniel, the busts of his three compatriots and companions inevitably brought to mind the great miracle in Babylon that ensured they would be celebrated for centuries (Daniel 3:1–30). Nebuchadnezzar ordered Ananias, Azarias and Misael to be thrown into a blazing furnace because they refused to worship the golden idol that the king had made and thereby debase their faith in the one living God. Although the flames in the furnace were so hot that they scorched even those who had cast them in it, the three youths stood in it unharmed, in the company – as the ruler of Babylon saw it – of a fourth man who seemed “like the Son of God.” Since Ananias, Azarias and Misael stepped out of the furnace unharmed, like from the womb of death, New Testament interpreters of the Old Testament event saw this account as a prefiguration of the Resurrection of Christ.¹⁶² However, not unlike the burning bush that Moses saw, they also understood it as a prophecy of the Mother of God’s virginal childbearing and the miraculous birth of the God-Man. Hence the Three Holy Youths were glorified, along with Daniel, in the canons of the services for the two weeks running up to Christmas Day, also emphasizing the invulnerability of the three young men in the blazing furnace as a prefiguration of Mary’s virginity and the immaculate conception of Christ.¹⁶³ Interpreted in this way, the appearance of St. Ananias, St. Azarias and St. Misael not far from the figure of Prophet Daniel would have carried a special meaning. It would have additionally underscored the idea intimated in the verse on his scroll about the incarnation of God, unintelligible to the human mind, as the arrival of the Savior and the founder of the Kingdom of Heaven to come.



By the time when the first trained researchers of medieval art had a chance to visit Djurdjevi Stupovi, the eastern side of the dome above the katholikon was already demolished. This is the reason that the themes of the frescoes that once graced that part of the dome remain completely unknown, and we can but speculate about the identity of the four full-length figures of prophets that would have been shown opposite Elijah, Elisha, Daniel and Zechariah and about the Old Testament personages in the *clipei* above the windows. Nevertheless, it is obvious that just one of the four great prophets (Daniel) was shown on the western side. Since it would have been very odd not to include the most prominent prophets in the program of the dome, it is almost certain that they were featured in its eastern part. The eastern side, the more important of the two sides in the sacral topography of a church, is also where they were often shown.¹⁶⁴ But the question is whether all three of the remaining great prophets – Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel – were represented, and which of the Minor Prophets were included with them. There is much less certainty about the choice of quotes that might have graced the *rotuli* in their hands, all of which prevents a comprehensive assessment of the program in the dome of the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon and a full appreciation of the idea that underpinned it, and consequently, the broader ideational context of the prophet images found *in situ*.

It can, however, be noted that, in the westernmost part of the dome, clearly intentionally, images of five youthful prophets were grouped together. Together with Elisha and Isaiah, their appearance and the symbolism of the texts on their scrolls



Ἰησοῦς

Ἰησοῦς

Ἰησοῦς

Ἰησοῦς

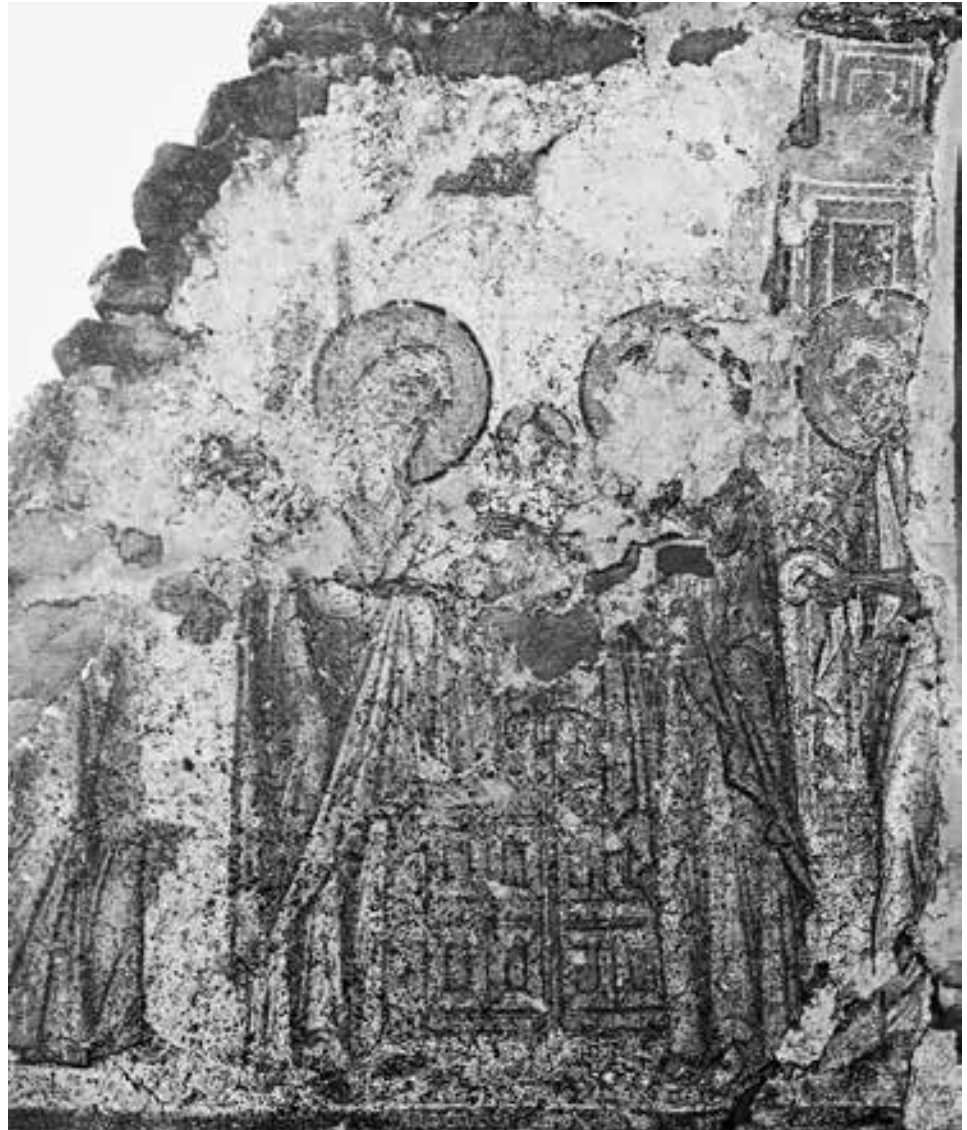


Ἰησοῦς

Ἰησοῦς

Ἰησοῦς





90
Drawing of the frescoes
on the southern wall
of the katholikon

91
Presentation of Christ
in the Temple, southern
wall of the katholikon

pointed to the Pantokrator in the dome as the image of God who had become flesh and, incomprehensibly, come among humans to establish, in lieu of obsolete earthly empires, the imperishable Kingdom of Heaven – the land of the eternally living. Daniel and three of his fellow prophets foretold in their visions and miracles his arrival in history by foreshadowing the God-Man’s birth from the Holy Virgin Mary. The arrival of the righteous King of Peace, “having salvation, lowly and riding on

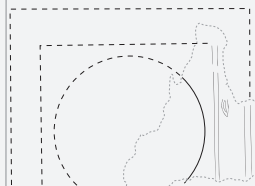
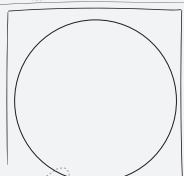
a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey,” was anticipated a long time ago by Zechariah,¹⁶⁵ and the citizens of the holy city of Jerusalem greeted him as the King of Israel and glorified him just five days before he would be crucified to meet death and vanquish it forever. However, Christians also see the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) as an augury of the Savior’s Second Coming, i.e., the final establishment of his kingdom. According to the text of a very old Prayer Behind the Ambon recited by the priest at the end of the liturgy on that feast day, a worshipful congregation exclaims, restating the words of the ancient inhabitants of the holy city: “... You who have come in the name of God, staying in the glory of the Father, and who will come again to justly judge the world, grace us with your coming... and, having bestowed on us the beauty of virtue instead of palm and other branches, to greet you with joy, you who will come on clouds in glory, and be the heirs of your Kingdom...”¹⁶⁶ But the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven cannot be opened without the holy sacrament of baptism because “no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit” (John 3:5).¹⁶⁷ The Lord established this sacrament when he descended to the waters of the Jordan and bowed his head under the right hand of St. John the Forerunner, an event prefigured centuries earlier by the prophets Elijah and Elisha, and so their depictions and the verses inscribed on their *rotuli* complete the frescoed homily about the Pantokrator and his Kingdom of Heaven in the dome of Djurdjevi Stupovi. The lost representations of the prophets on the eastern side of the dome probably added to and elaborated this sermon, recalling the prophecies about other key events in the Gospel narrative as the cornerstones of Christ’s economy of salvation.

If the frescoes in the dome explained the doctrine of the eternally living God and his redemptive incarnation in history by drawing on vague Old Testament visions of future events, right below the dome, the pendentive zone brings direct written and material testimonies about the arrival of the God-man among humankind on earth, an event that had already come to pass (fig. 83). In the southwestern pendentive, Luke the Evangelist was shown sitting at a writing-stand full of writing implements and other material and penning the opening lines of his Gospel (fig. 85): Ἐπηδειπ<ε>ρ πολὴ ἐ[πεχείρησαν] (it should be: Ἐπειδήπερ πολλοὶ ...).¹⁶⁸ Opposite his image, in the northwestern spherical triangle under the dome, the apostle and evangelist Mark, dressed in an ocher chiton and a blue himation, also sits at a desk in a scriptorium (figs. 86, 116, 121). His depiction, whose remnants are still attached to the walls of the church, is interesting in that the evangelist is not shown beginning his Gospel but checking the accuracy of the transcription on the *tetradion* (quire) under his left-hand index finger: + ἀρχὴ τοῦ Ευ[αγγε]λείου against the original text set on a raised bookstand: + ἀρχὴ τοῦ Ευαγγελ<ί>ου (it should be: Ἡ ἀρχὴ τοῦ Ευαγγελίου).¹⁶⁹ The evangelists face each other, their feet are on rectangular wooden footrests, and there is a low building behind each of them. The

92

Baptism of Jesus Christ,
southern wall of the
katholikon, detail: angel







93
Drawing of the frescoes
on the western wall
of the katholikon

94
Drawing of the remains
of the figure of St.
Theodore the Studite

surface between the western pair of pendentives featured one of Christ's – Ι(ησού)ς Χ(ριστό)ς – *acheiropoieta*, the Holy Keramion, marked with a Greek inscription: το ἅγιον Κεραμίδη (figs. 83, 87). Earlier scholars noted that the tile was painted red, as per the established custom, that the halo around Christ's head was done in ocher and that the blue surface of the beams of the inscribed cross was embellished with multicolored jewels and pearls.¹⁷⁰

Above the side arches supporting the dome or, more specifically, between the pendentives on the southern and northern side, a medallion each was painted, with an ocher border and a purple background, and a bust of an angel dressed in a chiton and himation (figs. 83, 88, 89). They held pearl-topped messenger staffs or scepters in their right hands and orbs in their left. As the angels are intermediaries between heaven and earth,¹⁷¹ their images were often placed on the lateral sides of the uppermost parts in the space below the dome because the symbolism of the sky was always attributed to the dome in mystagogical interpretations of church topography.¹⁷² Their role as messengers and heavenly guardians also meant that, shown frontally between the evangelists, the angels highlighted their work as sacred, divinely inspired writings, in which the earth constantly meets the heavens.¹⁷³

On the eastern pair of pendentives, opposite St. Luke and St. Mark, no other saints could have been featured but the evangelists Matthew and John the Theologian because the thematic fresco program in medieval Orthodox churches strictly followed well-established practices that dictated its design. Throughout the medieval period, these two evangelists, as the more distinguished pair among the four Gospel authors, were routinely painted on the eastern, more prominent side of the space below the dome.¹⁷⁴ Their special veneration was a result of the fact that they had directly witnessed Christ's work on Earth and belonged to the Twelve Apostles, whereas St. Luke and St. Mark had written their accounts of the Savior's deeds based on second-hand knowledge and were members of the Seventy Disciples. Similarly, there is no doubt that the wall between the eastern pendentives held, as the counterpart to the Keramion, Christ's other *acheiropoieton* – the Holy Mandylion (Holy Napkin), the piece of cloth on which Christ mystically imprinted an image of His face by holding it against His cheek, leaving it as material evidence that God was truly incarnated and became flesh. Later, this imprint of the Lord's face, which had healing powers, was miraculously impressed onto the Keramion through contact with the Holy Napkin. However, the Mandylion – the original *acheiropoieton* created in direct contact with the Savior's face – had always enjoyed a slightly loftier status than the Holy Keramion. This was reflected in the fact that, like the depictions of St. Matthew and St. John, it was given a more prominent place in the thematic program and painted on the eastern side of the space below the dome.¹⁷⁵



95
Descent of the Holy Spirit, western wall of the katholikon, detail: apostles John, Peter, Paul and Matthew

96
Descent of the Holy Spirit, detail

The listed images in the pendentive zone were not just meant to invoke various testimonies about the reality of God-Man's appearance in history and the sacral nature of those accounts. As in St. Peter's church, they also served a prophylactic purpose. Arranged on opposite sides of the uppermost and constructionally most vulnerable heart of the building, the abovementioned images were prayerfully invoked to spiritually bind together and statically secure the elements of the church's material structure by the inextricable ties between the four evangelists, a generic-mystical bridge between Christ's *acheiropoietia* and the inexhaustible energies of the Bodiless Powers.

The upper zones of the walls below the dome-supporting arches featured the scenes of the Great Feast cycle and the Passion of Christ, most of them quite condensed and, with a few exceptions, without any notable iconographic peculiarities. The Presentation and Baptism of Christ, separated by a window, graced the top of the southern wall (fig. 90). Positioned east of the window, the Presentation is somewhat unusual in that the Mother of God and St. Joseph, with two sacrificial doves in his hands, approach from the right the Holy of Holies, indicated by a low, ochre-colored door at the center of the scene (fig. 91).¹⁷⁶ The Virgin hands the Christ Child, dressed in a short, pale tunic, to St. Simeon the God-receiver. The Lord, almost prostrate, looks to the old man with white, long hair and a long beard, who takes



the infant's feet with his cloth-covered hands. Christ's halo was yellow, with an inscribed cross executed in blue and red lines.¹⁷⁷ Behind St. Simeon, on the left end of the scene, the lower part of the prophetess Anna was discernible; on the right side of the composition, which had suffered heavier damage due to the subsequent expansion of a window, there was a narrow, high, olive-colored architectural structure in the background. When the window was widened, the left part of the next scene, the Baptism of Christ – Η Βά<πτι>σης – was destroyed even more, with the figure of St. John the Baptist – Ο άγ(ιος) Ιω(άννης) – right next to the window bearing the brunt of this architectural modification. Little has survived of the Baptist's figure except some fragments of the halo, hair at the crown of the head and the lower part the chin, traces of his right hand outstretched in a rhetorical gesture, and



97

Descent of the Holy Spirit,
detail: Hetoimasia

his left hand resting on the head of the nude Savior – Ι(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστό)ς – whose face and a part of torso are almost completely lost. Christ stood serenely in the waters of the Jordan, indicated by lazure undulating lines. In the lower left corner of the scene, there was a personification of the Jordan River, but only a fragment remained discernible – an outstretched naked leg, much smaller than Christ's. On the right side of the composition, on a rocky shore, two angels stood inclined toward the Lord, ready to wipe his body after he came out of the river with the fabric of the himations that covered their hands (fig. 92).¹⁷⁸

The succession of scenes continued in the same zone on the northern wall with the Raising of Lazarus (west) and Entry into Jerusalem (east). These two compositions were separated by a window, and were also damaged in its subsequent widening (fig. 98). Thus, the Raising of Lazarus lost a part of the resurrected man's figure. With his head bowed and illuminated by a halo, Lazarus stood in his tomb, bound in grave wrappings. A man in form-fitting, oriental trousers held the end of those wrappings and covered his nose with the upper part of his shirt to protect himself from the stench of Lazarus's body, which had already begun to decompose. At the foot of the grave, partially below the widened window, the damaged form of another man, also in tight trousers, could be seen. He was removing the stone slabs that closed off the opening of the grave. In the background, a single-nave basilica had been painted and then cut off when the window was widened; a group of Israelites with white caps on their heads stood in front of it.¹⁷⁹ The scene of the great miracle in Bethany suffered the heaviest damage on the opposite side of the field,

where Christ was represented calling to his friend to come out of the tomb. Nothing had survived of the Savior's figure, surrounded by the apostles, except a fragment of the halo and the lower part of the torso.¹⁸⁰ Martha and Mary, Lazarus's sisters, greeted him in deep proskynesis, lying on the ground (fig. 100).

The left side and central part of the Entry into Jerusalem – Η Βασιφόρος (it should be: Η Βαϊοφόρος) – were in a quite good state of repair and could be easily discerned (figs. 98, 99): Christ, accompanied by the apostles, rides on a donkey, while two boys spread their cloaks on the ground before him. In the upper segment, there was the top of a palm tree and, in it, a fragment of the head, shoulders and back of a child picking branches to give the “Son of David” and “King of Israel” a fitting reception. The right side of the composition was so heavily damaged that its contents could only be roughly identified. In the group of citizens painted on this side of the scene, greeting the Lord at the walls of Jerusalem with foliated branches in their hands, it was still possible to make out a man with a mid-length, dark beard and a light-colored veil on his head and a woman holding a child.¹⁸¹

Following a not entirely accurate chronological sequence, the Christological narrative continued in the lower zone of the southern wall, with the scenes of the Transfiguration (east) and Betrayal of Judas (west). They had a distinctive frame of tripartite painted arches on the pillars, like the scenes in the same zone of the western and northern wall. At the center of the Transfiguration scene, Christ stood on a rounded mound, at the top of Mount Tabor (fig. 90). Only the lower part of his frontally positioned figure, dressed in light-colored garments, could still be seen in the first decades of the 20th century. The Savior's figure was enveloped in a light-blue, almond-shaped mandorla with beams of light, represented as three thin lines, radiating from it.¹⁸² The prophets Elijah and Moses, gently inclined toward the Lord, stood on the hillocks to the left and right of the central mound. Only the silhouette of Elijah's torso, dressed in a chiton and himation, was discernible on the left side of the scene. Shown on the opposite side, Moses wore the same type of garment but, unfortunately, his head was destroyed, and so he was identified by the Tablets of the Law in his left hand and the remains of the accompanying inscription – Μοις<ής>... (it should be: Μωσής). In the lower part of the composition, right below the mound on which Christ stood, a younger apostle was shown lying face-down on the ground. Another youthful disciple of Christ's fell to the right, supporting his body with his hand on the ground and holding his head up, looking at the blinding source of Divine light. The two youthful apostles were John and James, and hence, St. Peter, Christ's most faithful follower, must have been shown in his usual place, in the lower left corner of the scene.¹⁸³ The central part of the Betrayal of Judas – <Η Προ>δοσία – was already destroyed. Nothing could be seen except a part of the head, the back and the legs of the treacherous disciple, who stepped forward to greet the Savior, and many Jews brought to the site on both sides of the

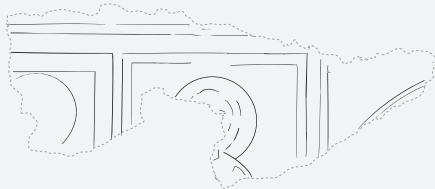
scenes (fig. 90).¹⁸⁴ Their heads were mostly covered by light-colored veils, and they held clubs and torches in their hands.¹⁸⁵

Only modest traces were found of the scenes that continued the cycle in the same zone on the northern wall (fig. 98). Directly below the central arcade of the decorative, tripartite arched opening on the western side of the wall, one could see a part of the beam of the cross on which Christ was crucified and the top of its upper arm with the inscription: I(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστό)ς. To the left of the cross, the wing and parts of the head, body and halo of a small hovering angel, dressed in a chiton and himation and mourning the unjustly crucified Lord, were still visible (fig. 68). Facing the Savior, the angel held both of his open palms in front of his chest in a prayer gesture. Much lower, along the right edge of the composition, there was a very small fragment of a halo, which could have belonged to the soldier Longinus (fig. 98).¹⁸⁶ Based on these details, the place assigned to this scene in the sequence of the Gospel episodes and the relatively condensed version of the cycle shown here, it was possible to infer that this was indeed the Crucifixion and not the Deposition from the Cross. Below the arched opening of the composition on the eastern part of the wall, Nikolai Lvovich Okunev noticed a remnant of a fresco with John the Forerunner's hand holding a cross. That, along with the place of this representation in the frescoed Christological account, led him to justifiably conclude that this scene depicted the Descent into Hades,¹⁸⁷ one of the obligatory representations of the Great Feasts, for which it would have been difficult to find a suitable place in another part of the Djurdjevi Stupovi naos, although it was recently proposed that the Lamentation of Christ stood next to the Crucifixion.¹⁸⁸

The two closing episodes in the Great Feasts cycle were painted on the western wall (fig. 93). The upper zone featured the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles – Η Πεντηκοστή (it should be: Πεντηκοστή). On a wall surface far from suitable for painting this scene because it was partitioned by two windows, an exedra was painted in the lower part, with the Twelve seated around it, hierarchically arranged, as per the established custom. St. Peter and St. Paul – “the first-enthroned among the Apostles,” as they are described in the St. Peter's Day troparion, tone 4 – were given the most prominent places, at the very center of the synthronon. The Princes of the Apostles were flanked by two evangelists on each side, with John and Matthew, as the more eminent two, seated next to Peter and Paul (fig. 95).¹⁸⁹ The evangelists were followed by the remaining apostles. The youngest among Christ's followers, Philip and Thomas, were the last in line, as usual, and this was once attested by the well-preserved image of a beardless apostle on the left end of the exedra (fig. 96). In the upper part of the field between the windows, in a semi-circular segment of the sky, an ornate prepared throne (Hetoimasia) hovered, with twelve flames of the Holy Spirit running from the foot of the throne toward the apostles (figs. 93, 97). On the surfaces separating the windows from the sides of the scene,

98

Drawing of the frescoes
on the northern wall
of the katholikon





99

Entry into Jerusalem,
northern wall of
the katholikon

100

Raising of Lazarus, northern
wall of the katholikon:
Martha and Mary



an aedicule each was painted above the last apostles in line. Although there were no *vela* strewn between those aedicules, they symbolized the interior of the Cenacle on Mount Zion as the place where the promised Consoler was sent to the apostles. All the way down, along the lateral ends of the scene, two groups of people were shown on a smaller scale.¹⁹⁰ Dressed in different costumes, these were the representatives of the multitude of nations and personifications of the languages that the apostles could speak after the Holy Spirit had descended upon them. Those groups had to be pushed to the periphery of the scene because there was no room for them at its center, below the most prominent apostles, which is the case, for instance, at the Holy Anargyroi in Kastoria (last decades of the 12th century), where the two groups were iconographically conceived in a very similar way and marked as λαοί, φυλαί, γλώσσαι (nations, tribes, languages) or in St. George at Kurbinovo (1191).¹⁹¹

Of the composition in the zone below the Descent of the Holy Spirit – under the very broad painted frame that characterizes all scenes in this zone – there was just one surviving fragment with the lower parts of several figures in chitons and himations, followed, after a small gap, by another group (fig. 93). These details and



101

Remains of the Crucifixion scene, northern wall of the katholikon

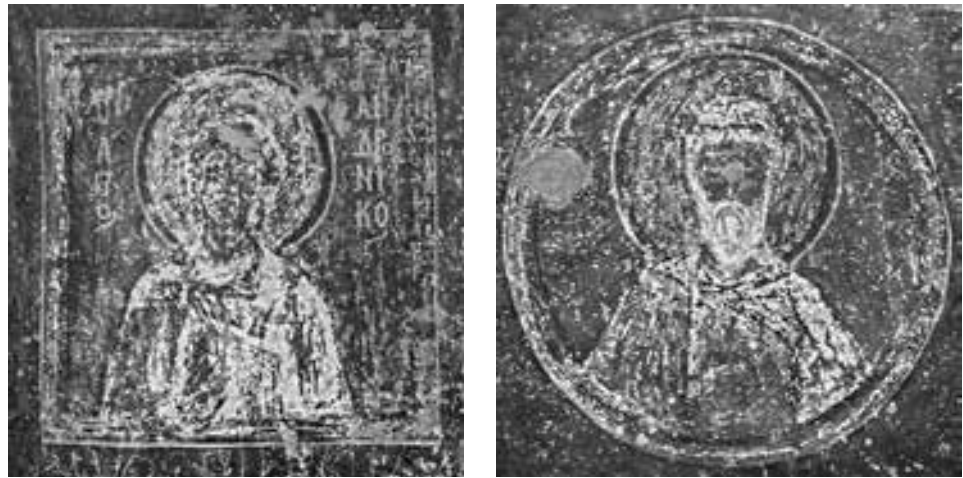
102

St. Andronikos, passage from the narthex to the katholikon naos

103

St. Tarachos, passage from the narthex to the katholikon naos

the spot where they were painted suggest that this scene depicted the Dormition of the Virgin,¹⁹² but they are insufficient to conclusively identify it. However, another preserved fragment in the same zone, on the adjacent surface of the southwestern pilaster below the dome, proves that this was indeed the Dormition: a remnant of the figure of a hymnographer saint, his body facing the scene of the Virgin's death (fig. 60, 61). In his right hand, he held a scroll with the following Greek text: + Το θαύμα του Τόκου σ<ου> εκπλ<ήτ>τ<ε>ι μ<ε> Πανάμομε (it should be: Πανάμωμε).¹⁹³ This is a verse from the theotokion, i.e., a hymn to the Mother of God from the Lenten and Festal Triodion, which translates to: "The wonder of thy childbearing doth fill me with awe, O all-imaculate one."¹⁹⁴ Figures of the holy melodists holding *rotuli* with verses glorifying the Theotokos began to be shown on both sides of the Dormition scene precisely during the Komnenian era and became common in the following centuries.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, there should be little doubt that the hymnographer at Djurdjevi Stupovi was part of the Dormition scene, located at its usual place in the second zone of the western wall, with another holy melodist shown on the other side, on the northwestern pilaster. Along with the Bachkovo Monastery in Bulgaria,¹⁹⁶ Djurdjevi Stupovi is one of the earliest known examples of this solution in Byzantine art.



Although only the lower part of the hymnographer's figure has survived, it nonetheless reveals that he was not dressed in monastic garb (fig. 94). Instead of a monk's mantle that would have been fastened at the chest, the holy melodist wore a dark-brown *phelonion* trimmed with a gray-blue band with a drawn-on ornament. Under the *phelonion*, instead of an *analabos*, he wore a priest's *epitrachelion* and *epigonation*, both in an ocher color that suggested a luxurious fabric. The *epitrachelion* had two rectangular fields with goldwork embellishments. Given that Theodore the Studite was the only hymnographer saint shown in sacerdotal robes and sometimes included in the Dormition of the Virgin scene,¹⁹⁷ there is no doubt that this was his representation. Similarly, it is certain that the zone of paintings with his image was occupied by standing saints on both sides of all four corner pilasters below the dome.¹⁹⁸ On the east-facing front of the southwestern pilaster, right beside the depiction of St. Theodore the Studite, traces of an image were still visible but were insufficient to identify the category of saint to which the depicted person belonged. In contrast, there is enough evidence to infer that the southern side of the northeastern pilaster bore the figure of a martyr because his tunic and chlamys with a *tablion* were still visible.¹⁹⁹ Consequently, this suggests that, in this zone, the remaining sides of the eastern pair of pilasters and the east-facing fronts of the corner pilasters showed those who were martyred for the faith and Christ.

Only one narrative could have been shown in the rather reduced space of the naos of the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon: the cycle of the Great Feasts, which seems to have been supplemented with a sole scene from the Passion. Given that this cycle almost inevitably included the Annunciation, Nativity and Ascension, there is no reason to doubt that these scenes once graced the demolished walls in the eastern part of the church. Suitable space for the Annunciation and the Nativity could have



been found only on the eastern wall of the naos, above the *tribelon*, opposite the Descent of the Holy Spirit and the Dormition of the Virgin, painted on the western side of the naos. Further, the surface on the eastern wall that would have been available for painting, segmented by the openings of the *tribelon* and, it would seem, windows, too, was of such a shape that it would have been easier to place the Annunciation than the Nativity directly around the passage into the sanctuary, and so it seems safe to assume that the Nativity probably occupied the upper part of the wall.²⁰⁰ This arrangement of the scenes would have also allowed a much more coherent sequence of the depicted events. The Nativity would have been followed, in this circular, clockwise-running cycle, by the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and the Baptism in the same zone on the southern wall. In this way, the cycle, as we have already noted, continued to unfold in the uppermost zone of the northern wall (Raising of Lazarus and the Entry into Jerusalem), circling back or, more accurately, spiraling down, to the lower zone of the southern wall (Transfiguration and the Betrayal of Judas) before finally reaching the opposite side of the northern (Crucifixion and the Descent into Hades). Only the scenes on the western wall and, no doubt, the abovementioned Ascension lay beyond its circular flow. The Ascension of Christ seems to have been depicted in its usual spot – the vault of the central part of the sanctuary.²⁰¹ This selection and arrangement of scenes, i.e., the general programmatic disposition of the Christological cycle, made the body of frescoes in

104

St. George riding a horse, above the passage from the narthex to the katholikon naos, fresco copy

105

Archangel bust in the lunette of the southern vestibule of the katholikon

106

Remains of the image in the lunette of the northern vestibule of the katholikon



the katholikon of Djurdjevi Stupovi quite isolated and without more notable parallels among the programs painted in Serbia later on.

The most unusual feature of the Christological cycle in the katholikon of Djurdjevi Stupovi is the placement of the Transfiguration in the sequence of scenes. It was not painted right after the Baptism and before the Raising of Lazarus, which would have reflected the chronology of the events recounted in the Gospels and, consequently, the usual programmatic solution; instead, it was positioned after the Entry into Jerusalem and before the Betrayal of Judas. However, it should be noted that the place of the Transfiguration in Byzantine and post-Byzantine cycles of the Great Feasts was highly variable.²⁰² A practice that is of lesser importance for understanding the programmatic solution implemented at Djurdjevi Stupovi is separating this scene from the chronological course of the cycle and giving it topographic prominence, sometimes due to the dedication of the church, on the eastern side of the building, which is, for instance, the case in the katholika of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th c.), the Monastery of the Transfiguration of the Lord in Pskov (12th c.), the Church of St. Stephen in Kastoria (12/13th c.) and the Church of St. Panteleimon and St. Nicholas in Bojana (13th c.).²⁰³ Much more commonly, it was moved to the highest zone of the western wall, usually gabled, above the Dormition of the Virgin, or, alternatively, it could be placed beside the Dormition, in the same zone: Bachkovo (12th c.), a few churches in Kastoria from the mid-14th

century (Taxiarches, Agios Georgios tou Vounou, St. Nicholas Kiritsi, St. Athanasios of Mouzaki), the Virgin's Church in Matka, St. George in Ajdanovac (late 15th c.) and the revetment of a tetraevangelion (early 16th c.) kept in the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade, etc.²⁰⁴ Moving the Transfiguration closer to the Dormition can be explained by the proximity of the dates of these two immovable feasts (6 and 15 August), with the Feast of the Transfiguration falling during the Dormition Fast.²⁰⁵

For the purposes of explaining the programmatic solution applied in Djurdjevi Stupovi, however, more interesting are the cycles with a continuous flow in which the Transfiguration was assigned a chronologically inappropriate place for slightly different, dogmatic reasons. It could be placed, among other spots, after the Descent into Hades (Episkopi Church in the village of Stavri in Mani, ca. 1200; the Sinai tetraptych with depictions of the Great Feasts, Passion of Christ, figures of St. George and St. Demetrios, second half of the 14th c., etc.),²⁰⁶ highlighting that Jesus, owing to his divine nature which he revealed to three of his disciples on Mount Tabor, vanquished death in his human body and rose from the dead as the God-Man. For the same reason, sometimes the Descent into Hades could be moved from its usual place in the cycle and shown next to the Transfiguration, like, for example, in the Church of the Ascension at Žiča and the Holy Apostles in Peć.²⁰⁷

Even more commonly, the Transfiguration was represented after the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and before the Passion scenes, i.e., the Crucifixion, just like in Djurdjevi Stupovi. The chronologically closest example of this arrangement of scenes is found at the Church of St. George in Kurbinovo (1191), where the Raising of Lazarus appears on the western end of the southern wall, and the Entry into Jerusalem, the Dormition of the Virgin and the Transfiguration follow one after another on the western, before the Passion and the subsequent scenes on the northern wall.²⁰⁸ Earlier scholars claimed that this disruption of the sequence of scenes occurred because there had been a window in the middle of the field where the Transfiguration was supposed to go. Because of this, they argue, the Raising of Lazarus was painted there instead, as it does not have a centric composition, and the Transfiguration was moved not one but two or three places forward.²⁰⁹ However, the window on the western end of the northern wall was as much of a hindrance for the placement of the Crucifixion scene, which also has a centric structure but, instead of finding a different spot for it, the program designers decided to merely reconfigure it, thereby disrupting its usual symmetry.²¹⁰ In addition, there are many monuments, most of them of a later date, in which the Transfiguration appears between the Entry into Jerusalem and the Crucifixion, or the Passion scenes, even though there were no technical reasons that would have required its displacement. Besides Djurdjevi Stupovi, illustrative examples include the murals at the Church of St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessalonike (1310–20), the Virgin's Church in Mali Grad



107

Ornamental band on the western arch of the space below the dome in the katholikon, fresco copy

108

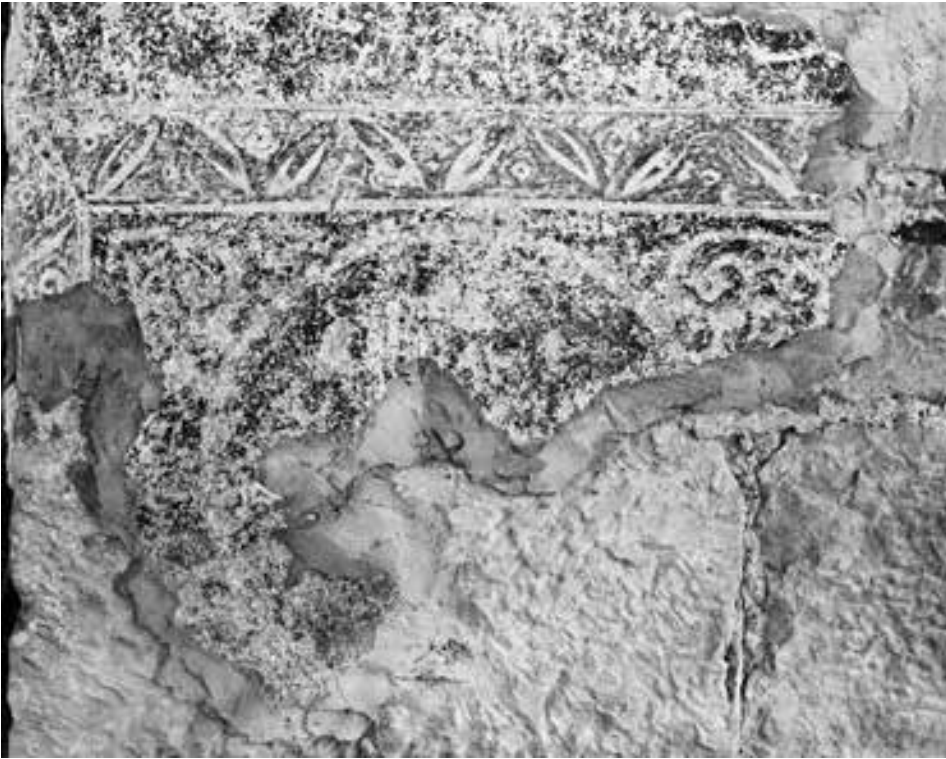
Ornamental band on the northern arch of the space below the dome in the katholikon, fresco copy



on Lake Prespa (1368/1369), two stone slabs from the 14th century with the figures of Christ and the Mother of God surrounded by their *vita* scenes (Staatliche Museen, Berlin, 2721), a few soapstone icons with depictions of the Great Feasts made in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Museum Schnütgen, Köln, no. K/21; Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, no. 41.241; the treasury of St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai, Case 4, no. 8; Metropolitan Museum of Art, no. 63.68.1–13), the murals in the Church of Timios Stavros (Holy Cross) tou Agiasmati, Platanistasa, Cyprus (late 14th century),²¹¹ and many icons from the post-Byzantine period.

The moving of the Transfiguration scene and its placement beside the Crucifixion and other Passion scenes was probably inspired by the homilies of church fathers and theologians who associated the miracle on Mount Tabor with the Savior's announcement of his passion, death on the Cross and resurrection. Some of these homilists were St. Ephrem the Syrian, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Alexandria, Panteleon, Timothy of Antioch, Emperor Leo VI and Nikephoros Choumnos.²¹² They remind us that Moses and Elijah, illuminated by the radiance of Transfiguration, "spoke" on Mount Tabor with Christ of "his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:30–31). According to their homilies, Christ took his followers to Mount Tabor to show them his glory and power and thus reassure and embolden them before the humiliation and suffering that was to come. When they heard God the Father say from the heavens "This is my Son, whom I love," the apostles could understand that their teacher would not be abandoned when he surrendered to torture and death. The Father's words "Listen to him" meant, according to the interpretations of some church fathers, that they "should not stand in Jesus' way even if he should set out to be crucified" because he had the deepest of reasons for all he did. The Savior took three of his disciples to Mount Tabor to have them witness his divine nature, making it obvious for them that he would not suffer his arrest and crucifixion due to human weakness but voluntarily, for the salvation of the world. In this way, the old church fathers believed, he wanted to let his closest followers know before his death and resurrection, that he would not rise from the dead because he had deserved to be granted glory but that he would rise in the glory of his Divine nature that has belonged to him prior to the beginning of time. He showed them, the homilists explain, that death could never triumph over the righteous, bringing Moses and Elijah before their eyes, and, as they spoke with him of "what is to come to pass on the Cross," the two prophets shone more radiantly than in their previous lives. Therefore, during the service for the Feast of the Transfiguration, it is sung: "Your disciples beheld Your glory as far as they could see it/So that when they would behold You crucified/They would understand that Your suffering was voluntary" (Kontakion, Tone 7).²¹³

The displacement of the Transfiguration scene and its inclusion directly before the Passion scenes underscored the idea of Christ's self-sacrifice, i.e., that the sacrifice



109

Fresco decoration in the socle zone on the southern side of the passage from the narthex to the katholikon naos

110

Descent of the Holy Spirit, detail: John the Apostle

was made voluntarily, in keeping with the plan for the divine economy of salvation.²¹⁴ At the same time, the Transfiguration was assigned a place facing the Descent into Hades, most likely shown on the opposite, northern side of the church. The two representations of these events, which most clearly expressed Jesus Christ's divine nature and whose deep connection was highlighted by the abovementioned authors of Transfiguration homilies, were thus positioned as direct spatial and ideational counterparts. Another reason for modifying the programmatic concept at Djurdjevi Stupovi could have been the need to keep the representations of the Raising of Lazarus and Entry into Jerusalem close together – two feasts that have a strong heortological and liturgical bond and make up a composite festal unit.²¹⁵ Had the painters strictly followed the chronology of the Gospels in their distribution of the scenes, those two images would have been very far from each other – one in the uppermost zone of the northern and the other in the middle belt of the southern wall.

Sadly, the themes that might have been shown on the destroyed frescoes in the lower parts of the sanctuary and the ground-level zones in a large part of the naos at Djurdjevi Stupovi can only be speculated about. It is, however, certain that the side walls to the east and west of the vestibules and the western wall featured standing







111
Entry into Jerusalem,
detail: Peter the Apostle

112
Descent of the Holy Spirit,
detail: Peter the Apostle

figures of saints and that, above the vestibules, there were two fresco-icons on each side with busts of saints set on a red or blue background (fig. 90, 98). Owing to a modest fresco fragment on the eastern part of the northern wall, it could be inferred that the full-length figures beside the sanctuary barrier, or *tribelon*, were surmounted by a decorative painted arch, like the Gospel scenes in the second zone. Judging by the curvature of the fragment of the painted arcade, it seems that, on the eastern side of the southern and northern walls, two particularly distinguished saints were shown under the decorative frame. The one on the southern side was probably the patron of the church, St. George of Cappadocia. The western part of



113
Archangel bust in a medallion between the northern pair of pendentives in the katholikon, detail

114
Archangel bust in a medallion between the southern pair of pendentives in the katholikon, detail



the side walls, however, held full-length figures without ornamental arcades above them.²¹⁶ This is evidenced by a fresco fragment on the southern wall with a part of the halo and a remnant of the inscription: Οάγ(ιός) Θε<ό>δωρο<ς>. The figure belonged to one of the two warrior saints named Theodore, Tyron or Stratelates,²¹⁷ who were, by the second half of the 12th century, already being shown together, as a pair.²¹⁸ That also seems to have been the case at Djurdjevi Stupovi, where the monumental figures of the two saints must have stood to the west of the vestibule, as suggested by the size of Theodore's halo and its distance from the right edge of the field.

Although nothing had survived of it by the time it was found except a modest and barely discernible fragment, the figure of St. Theodore is quite significant for assessing the program in the lowest zone of the naos at Djurdjevi Stupovi. Firstly, the figures of warrior saints – the two Theodores – for sure, together with the emphasized depiction of St. George as the church patron, suggest that holy soldiers were the dominant type of saint shown in the lowest zone of the first foundation Nemanja built as a ruler. That is not surprising at all because such a choice would have suited the dedication of the church. On the other hand, the placement of the image of St. Theodore on the western part of the southern wall in the naos reliably proves that the donor composition was not shown there, in contrast to the custom strictly followed in later foundations of the Nemanjić family. However, it should be noted that, in those foundations, the donor composition was, programmatically and symbolically, closely associated with the ktetor's tomb, which it marked, and the grave was located along the western part of the southern wall in the naos.²¹⁹ Unlike them, Djurdjevi Stupovi was not built to serve as the burial church of its founder. Therefore, it seems that, although the programs of Nemanja's foundations that preceded Djurdjevi Stupovi are unknown, the tradition of placing the donor composition in the western part of the southern wall of the naos in the foundations of Serbian rulers must have emerged slightly later, probably during the time of St. Sava. The establishment of this tradition can be traced from Hilandar, Studenica and Mileševa, the temporary or permanent burial churches of Sava's kinsmen, whose painting he personally oversaw.²²⁰ At Djurdjevi Stupovi, however, the original donor composition was probably somewhere in the narthex. That can be inferred from the images of three Nemanjić family members painted in the narthex in the 13th century – St. Simeon, the founder of the church; King Dragutin, its restorer; and St. Sava of Serbia. These representations will be discussed in more detail below.

Even less data has reached us about the placement of the representations in the lower parts of the pilasters in the naos. The border between the zone of standing figures and the upper fresco belts on the walls continued uninterrupted along the very narrow pilasters. Unfortunately, in this zone, only a remnant of a heavily damaged figure has survived, accompanied by a partially legible inscription: Οάγ(ιός) ..., on the northern side of the southwestern pilaster, directly beneath the figure of



the holy hymnographer Theodore the Studite (fig. 93). On the old photographs of this tattered image, we can discern that he was a beardless saint with dark, curly hair.²²¹ The size of his nimbus, head and chest matches the bust of the saints above the entrances to the vestibules, but, unlike those, this is not depiction rendered as a fresco-icon. Taking that into account, and assuming that the system of zone division was implemented consistently, it is reasonable to allow for the possibility that the wall paintings in the lower parts of the pilasters were not split into two zones and only featured full-length figures.

The division of the frescoes into zones – achieved by painting fresco-icon busts above the full-length figures – was, on the other hand, implemented in the big arched passage between the naos and the narthex. That was the only more extensive ensemble with depictions of saints survived in the cathedral church of Djurdjevi Stupovi. In the second zone on the southern side of the passage, an icon was painted of a beardless martyr with a cross in his right hand, dressed in a red chlamys with a golden *tablion*. The accompanying inscription names him as St. Andronikos: Ο άγιος Ανδρόνικος (fig. 102).²²² Across from him, the youthful St. Provos (Ο άγιος Πρόβος) was painted as a rectangular bust icon with a yellow frame, and at the

top of the soffit of the arch, in a tondo with a yellow frame and a red background, there was a protome of an older martyr with a mid-length, white beard, with a patrician chlamys with a *tablion* draped over him, just like the previous two saints (fig. 103).²²³ Although the inscription that once accompanied his image has not survived, there is no doubt that he was St. Tarachos, who was regularly shown with his younger companions, Provos and Andronikos.²²⁴ In the bottommost zone in the arch, on the southern side, there was a heavily faded fragment (the halo and a part of the head) of an image of St. Paul the Apostle: ... Παύλ<ος>.²²⁵ A trace of the figure of a white-haired saint, with no remnants of the accompanying inscription, survived until World War II on the northern side of the arch, opposite Paul. Given that the well-known practice of representing the two leading apostles by the entrance, facing each other, had been long accepted by the 12th century (Bachkovo, Nerezi, the Holy Anargyroi in Kastoria, etc.), St. Peter must have been shown as Paul's counterpart here, in the passage into the naos of the katholikon at Djurdjevi Stupovi.²²⁶ This solution and its implementation in the main church of Nemanja's monastery probably inspired the creators of the thematic program of the adjacent Dragutin's *parekklesion* because, a hundred or so years later, the figures of the two princes of the apostles were painted on the sides of the arch that led into that chapel.²²⁷

The large-format equestrian figure of St. George, the patron of the church, is the sole yet truly monumental remnant of the original frescoes in the narthex (fig. 104).²²⁸ Highly venerated in the Serbian lands and the Serbian ruling family,²²⁹ the warrior saint was shown in armor with a long red cloak, lined in olive-green fabric, fluttering behind the rider on a galloping white horse. With his right hand, St. George triumphantly holds an almost upright spear, and a large circular, gold-rimmed shield leans against left shoulder. The victorious saint rides through a landscape with a hill-ock visible on the left edge of the image, but there is no way of knowing what could have been painted in the lower parts of the representation. Recalling this painting of the patron, Irby and Mackenzie – having forgotten to bring their notebook to Djurdjevi Stupovi and describing it from memory – report that the image showed Nemanja's guardian saint, “St. George with the dragon.”²³⁰ Regardless, their testimony should not be lightly discarded. About sixty years later, Nikolai Okunev noticed, at the forefeet of the warrior's horse, “a faint trace of the right shoulder and head of a figure, which would have matched the representation of the queen leading the dragon at the church of St. George in Staraya Ladoga.”²³¹ On the other hand, although he had seen and quite carefully described the damaged equestrian fresco of St. George, Aleksandar Deroko only ventured a hypothesis about its lost contents: “A symbolic figure must have lain under the strong hoofs of the forelimbs.”²³² Vladimir R. Petković noticed no traces of a princess or dragon,²³³ and, more importantly, neither did Alexander Hilferding, who had drawn attention to the image of Nemanja's “liberator, St. George on a white horse,” before all of the abovementioned visitors.²³⁴

116

Mark the Evangelist,
northwestern pendentive
of the katholikon, detail



Unfortunately, old black-and-white photographs show the fresco in such a condition that they cannot be used to either rule out or authenticate the testimony about the lost details of this painting. What is certain, however, is that it would have been difficult – but not impossible – to find the space for the princess and dragon figures on the very cramped surface in the lower part of the patron's equestrian image.

The representation of St. George seems to have been originally surrounded by scenes from his *vita* because the remnants of this cycle that can still be seen on the semi-arched ceiling of the narthex date from the time of King Dragutin's restoration undertaken in the last quarter of the 13th century. It is, however, much more difficult to assess the thematic program of the frescoes in the vestibules. In 1927, Nikolai Lvovich Okunev published the above-mentioned article in which he reported:



“The wall paintings in the vestibule are heavily faded, but it is possible to discern an archangel bust above the southern entrance and stand-alone, full-length figures of saints in the passageway.”²³⁵ Aleksandar Deroko in 1922 also mentioned an “angel”, but only above the southern entrance,²³⁶ whereas in 1923, Vladimir Petković claimed that “an angel each was painted above the northern and southern portal.”²³⁷ Photographs taken in the 1920s and 1930s confirm that the monumental bust of an archangel did indeed grace the wall under the passage from the southern vestibule into the naos (fig. 105). On the other hand, they refute the claim that the frescoes on the southern wall of the northern vestibule had the same content. The old photos show that, by the time they were taken, only the right part of a scene had survived, and it took place in a craggy landscape with a succession of undulating mounds (fig. 106). It might have seemed to Petković that those mounds were the layers of feathers of a large wing belonging to an angel. No similarly painted details of a hilly or craggy landscape can be found in the Christological scenes on the lateral walls of the main part of the church (Baptism, Transfiguration, Entry into Jerusalem). Also, the way in which the wing of the frontally shown archangel in the southern vestibule was drawn and painted does not match the angelic figures in the naos (Baptism, the medallions between the pendentives), and neither do his contours and proportions. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the wall paintings in the vestibules were restored in the closing decades of the 13th century, concurrently with the frescoes in the narthex. Unfortunately, the condition in which the remains of the representations in the side passages were found does not allow us to reliably determine if that was indeed the case. However, if they were painted in the time of Stefan Nemanja, the wall paintings in the vestibules, or at least the area of the southern portal, were certainly not done by the artists who frescoed the upper zones of the naos in the katholikon of Djurdjevi Stupevi.



A special feature of the wall paintings in the naos of the Church of St. George is the minutely designed and carefully executed system of its decorative framework. In the drum of the dome, it is primarily made up of architectural elements – the series of colonnettes on the consoles surmounted by an arcade cornice emphasized by a broad, elaborate frescoed decorative band (Plan 3a–3b, fig. 83). The colonnettes and the arches above them frame the windows and prophet figures, coming together to form a ring of rhythmically arranged, shallow canopies reminiscent of the niches in which the figures of heroes, poets and philosophers were placed in classical antiquity. Architectural elements also provided a three-dimensional frame for the frescoes in the uppermost zone of the space below the dome. Wide blind arches below the dome surmounted the Christological scenes, and their soffits were covered by painted bands with various ornaments (fig. 107, 108), more directly introducing



the surfaces of the arches into the decorative system of the frescoes, strikingly separating and emphasizing certain iconographic ensembles. In the part of the walls below the base of the arches, where the architecture did not create a relief, three-dimensional frame for the imagery, it was conveyed through drawing and color.²³⁸ All scenes in the second fresco zone (Transfiguration, Betrayal of Judas, Dormition, Crucifixion and Descent into Hades) had a painted frame made up of highly decorative three-arch canopies resting on slender, bipartite pillars that had a sailor's knot at their center, with narrow capitals (figs. 90, 98, 101). A linear ornament covered the fields above the arches of the canopies, and a very similar frame in the form of a single-part arcade, surrounded the figures in the lowest zones on the lateral walls by the iconostasis. The decorative system also included ornamental bands in the windows and those that separated the paintings in the drum from the frescoes in the pendentive belt and the uppermost from the second zone on the walls below the dome. Their ground-level parts, at the height of the socle, were covered by paintings that imitated a marble cladding made up of multicolored, inlaid slabs (fig. 109).

The entire decorative system in the naos of Djurdjevi Stupovi matched the artistic views of the Middle Byzantine period, particularly the taste of the late Komnenian era, but it had older roots.²³⁹ The set of arcades on the colonnettes in the dome also reflected these views on art. In the drum of the cathedral in Ishani, Georgia, a similar arcade frieze was executed ca. 1032 on the colonnettes, making up a relief frame for the windows and prophet figures painted between them. On the surfaces below the arches, above the windows and full-length figures, medallions with busts were painted in this church, just like later in the katholikon of Djurdjevi Stupovi.²⁴⁰ However, at the Church of St. George in Staraya Ladoga (ca. 1167), the fields with prophet figures were topped by painted arches on consoles,²⁴¹ and the colonnettes carrying the slender arcades and framing the figures of saints in the segmented semi-dome of the narthex of the Nea Moni Monastery on Chios (ca. 1050) were partially rendered architecturally and partially in the mosaic technique.²⁴² In the second half of the 12th century, painters from the Byzantine cultural sphere tended to place figures and even entire scenes in frames made up of arches resting on columns even in the lower zones of churches. Sometimes, like in the proskynetaria beside the altar barrier at the Church of St. Panteleimon in Nerezi (third quarter of the 12th c.) or the iconostasis epistyle from the second half of the 12th century at Vatopedi, these could be executed as relief, in stone or other materials, as single or tripartite arcades on colonnettes with capitals.²⁴³

Much more commonly, figures or scenes were framed by painted columns topped with arches. This method was employed to delineate the Dodekaorton scenes on a few painted epistyles from the second half of the 12th century at St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai, several figures of saints at Nerezi (the spaces below the smaller domes) and Nereditsa (1199).²⁴⁴ Besides the prophets in the dome and the saints in the lower zones, at the Church of St. George in Staraya Ladoga, a painted,



tripartite arch surmounts the central part of the Last Judgment composition on the western wall.²⁴⁵ Regardless, it was noted a long time ago that the frames of scenes at Djurdjevi Stupovi were most reminiscent of the tripartite and multipartite arches on slender double colonnettes that delineate the compositions at Bachkovo in Bulgaria (third quarter of the 12th c.).²⁴⁶ The linear ornaments in the fields above the painted arcades in the foundation of St. Simeon of Serbia are also very similar to those that appear at corresponding places in Staraya Ladoga and especially Bachkovo. The practice of showing busts of saints as icons hanging on the walls, like it was done above the vestibules and in the passage from the narthex to the naos at Djurdjevi Stupovi, was well-known in the Middle Byzantine period. It was particularly widespread in the wall paintings of St. Sophia in Ohrid²⁴⁷ and commonly applied in the late Komnenian era, with the fresco-icons sometimes given the tondo shape. Besides the frescoes in the church and crypt at Bachkovo,²⁴⁸ these fresco-icons appear, for instance, at the Church of the Holy Archangel Michael in Rila (apse), Nerezi (spaces below the smaller domes), St. Cyril's Monastery in Kyiv,

119

Preparatory sketch for the equestrian image of St. George, fragment, National Museum of Serbia

Church of Zoodochos Pege (the so-called Samarina) in Messenia and Panagia Forbiotissa in Asinou, Cyprus (apse).²⁴⁹ In Serbia, this custom endured for several more decades after the frescoing of Djurdjevi Stupovi, as attested by the wall paintings of Studenica, Žiča and the Holy Apostles in Peć (apse).²⁵⁰

All other elements of the style of paintings in the naos of Djurdjevi Stupovi also suit the spirit and views of the time when the monument was created. The fresco painter responsible for those murals, probably with his assistants, was a well-educated and gifted artist very familiar with the developmental currents of Byzantine art in the second half of the 12th century. His work is characterized by accurate drawing, a good knowledge of human anatomy, an ability to create compositions with a classicist balance, a feeling for the monumental, and an extraordinary sense for the decorativeness of the ensemble.²⁵¹ His draftsmanship, capable of making his figures seem natural even in the most complex positions, along with skillful shortenings of the perspective and extraordinary knowledge of anatomy, is most apparent in the figures of Christ seated on a donkey in the Entry into Jerusalem or standing in the waters of the Jordan in the Baptism, as well as the apostles in the Descent of the Holy Spirit scenes (figs. 95, 96, 99, 117). It is also attested by the sketch of St. George riding his horse, executed in a single move, liberally and nonchalantly during preparations for work, which was discovered underneath a layer of fresco plaster (fig. 119).

The work of the Djurdjevi Stupovi fresco painter also displays the pronounced linearism of late Komnenian art and the undulating lines blending into a network over the surface of the volumes. On youthful faces, it is usually reduced to thin, curt brushstrokes that convey reflections of light or ruddy cheeks (figs. 79, 84, 113–115, 118). A much denser network of lines cuts across and splinters the faces of the middle-aged and elderly (figs. 110–112). This fragmentation of facial volume and shapes of the indentations under the cheekbones and on the forehead and around the nose and eyes is quite reminiscent of the artists who painted some faces at Nerezi, a fragment with St. Paul's head at San Pietro alli Marmi near Eboli (1156), the representations at Staraya Ladoga, the Annunciation Church in Arkazh near Novgorod (1189), the *parekklesion* and the refectory of the Mother of God at the Monastery of St. John on Patmos (last quarter of the 12th century) and on a fragment with St. Peter and St. Paul embracing from Vatopedi (late 12th century).²⁵² However, although ubiquitous as the main feature of his artistic expression and at times even manneristic, especially on the drapes, the artist's line only partially departs from the logic of natural shape and turns into an arabesque (figs. 92, 96, 99, 116, 117).

It was pointed out several times that the drawing of the chief artist of Djurdjevi Stupovi is very pronounced, with the contours being dominant,²⁵³ but that is only partially correct. This impression of the overbearing presence of lines is a result, on the one hand, of the dilapidated condition of the frescoes at Nemanja's foundation and



120

Descent of the Holy Spirit,
detail, fragment, National
Museum of Serbia

121

Mark the Evangelist,
northwestern pendentive of
the katholikon, fresco copy

partial loss of the modelation, and, on the other, the fact that most of the surviving frescoes were painted far from the eye of the spectator, in the uppermost zones, where the drawing and contours were usually emphasized to make visual content easier to distinguish. At Nerezi, too, the drawing and contours are more pronounced on representations in the higher and less visible spaces below the smaller domes than in the lower zones of the naos. At Djurdjevi Stupovi, the contours were not as strong in the Christological scenes in the second zone as on the images in the dome and the pendentive zone. Old photographs show that they were barely visible on the saints in the arched passage between the narthex and the naos and on the monumental equestrian representation of the church patron in the narthex.

However, one can hardly deny that the line strokes of the Nerezi and Bachkovo artists were less brusque and, indeed, subtler and more refined. It is this feature – along with the more gradual and sophisticated modelation, i.e., idealization of shapes, elongation of the proportions of figures with elegant movements, typological stylization and, often, a melancholy absentmindedness and calm *pathos* on



their faces – that lends the frescoes of Bachkovo and, even more so, Nerezi their aristocratic note and a dominantly lyric character, spilled over the cheerfulness of their bright, lively coloring. The wall paintings of Djurdjevi Stupovi are a work of a different sensibility. Built on the conceptional and stylistic underpinnings of the Byzantine art of the late 12th century, like the frescoes of Bachkovo, Nerezi and St. Demetrios in Vladimir, relying on the same or similar representation models and manners, they nonetheless reflect different poetics and different artistic aspirations. They are a work of an unambiguously epic artistic expression rooted in a monumental and clear-cut form, robust volumes, and a sobering acerbity of the visual approach. The painter who frescoed Nemanja's foundation did not elongate the proportions of his figures, idealize their faces or imbue them with dreamy charm. They were always serious and stoically awake, usually sullen, with unflinching gazes, and stern, even when they happened to be angelic creatures (figs. 113, 114). The postures of the figures, studied and classically sturdy, betray no whiff of an esoteric elegance of gesture and instead display a temperance that adds to the eloquence of

the account (figs. 96, 99, 100, 116, 117). The spirit of this epic poetics was strikingly apparent in the figure of Elijah, with his chest pushed forward, the strong, voluminous body flexing, and the broad face swollen with thunderous inspiration and framed by thick, restless strands of his hair and beard (fig. 81). No less monumental was the representation of Mark the Evangelist with his sharp gaze and vexed facial expression (fig. 116).

Reflecting the principles of Komnenian art, the landscapes and interiors on the compositions in Djurdjevi Stupovi are not particularly deep but are still compellingly conveyed through the simplified architectural backdrops and furnishings rendered in oblique projection. In most compositions, the protagonists only occupy the first and second plane of the scene, which also added to the impression of monumentality. Given that the chief artist was capable of making their faces psychologically convincing and spiritually present, the compositions and stand-alone representations of saints display a remarkable scenic faithfulness and liveliness of character. He was able to bring to their faces, with classical restraint yet very compellingly, the full depth of the most dramatic human feelings, like in the representations of Mary and Martha in the Raising of Lazarus (figs. 100, 118). On the other hand, he positioned some figures in the scenes so as to, suggestively directing their gazes beyond the surface of the paintings, pull the viewers into the image and give them an illusion of communication, thereby transforming them, for a fleeting moment at least, into co-participants and witnesses of the Gospel events, which spilled over, unnoticed, deep into the other side of reality, into the three-dimensional space of the church (figs. 79, 99, 111).

The visual characteristics of the frescoes of Nemanja's Church of St. George, known to us only partially and mostly based on old documentation, cannot be assessed in all their details and securely enough. The coloristic values of these paintings can be judged only based on the faded fragments in the church and those detached from its walls, now in the National Museum in Belgrade, and a few copies in the Gallery of Frescoes. Drawing on them, one can glean but a very general picture of the coloring of the earliest frescoes at Djurdjevi Stupovi. Its harmonies relied on balanced relations of lazure blue, which dominated the background of the images, dark ochers, green, purple and violet. The challenge of offering a fair assessment of the value of those paintings is even greater because not a single representative full-length figure has survived in the bottommost zone, which was usually most carefully frescoed. Regardless, we know enough to conclude that, with the destruction of the earliest frescoes in the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon, we lost a remarkably valuable body of late Komnenian painting. Based on its place in the developmental line of Komnenian art, which can, at least provisionally, be traced owing to surviving fresco ensembles, and the date when the construction of the church was completed,²⁵⁴ scholars rightfully proposed a long time ago to date it to the period ca. 1175.²⁵⁵



image, which would have contained the figure of an executioner about to behead the saint, is destroyed.²⁵⁷

Judging by its modest remnants, it can be inferred that the cycle was very elaborate and probably began in the uppermost zone on the southern side of the ceiling, spilled over onto the western wall and the northern side of the ceiling and unfolded clockwise in the two lower zones, spiraling down to the final scene of the *Beheading* on the eastern end of the northern wall. It seems entirely certain that imagery inspired by the *vita* of St. George also graced the narthex ceiling when it was frescoed for the first time. *Vita* cycles of church patrons had long become a part of the program of narthexes and other peripheral parts of Orthodox churches by the Middle Byzantine period, especially in the Komnenian era (St. Panteleimon in Nerezi, Holy Anargyroi and St. Nicholas Kasnitzi in Kastoria etc.).²⁵⁸ There is no way of knowing, however, to what extent the late 13th century painters of the katholikon at Djurdjevi Stupovi repeated the number, selection and iconography of the scenes in the original painted hagiography of St. George of Cappadocia.

Remains of the wall paintings in the bottommost zone in the narthex have survived only on the arches adjacent to the lateral walls. At the top of the arcade on the southern side, the bust of an archangel, dressed in a light-colored chiton embellished with a wide, gold-embroidered collar stretching downward in segments, covering his shoulders and the central part of the chest, was painted on a purple

122

St. George's torture on the wheel, southern wall of the katholikon narthex

background in a medallion. A dark-gray himation is draped over his luxurious tunic (fig. 123). In his right hand, he holds a scepter with a long handle and in his left, an orb with a Christogram – $\tilde{\chi}$. His image served a doubly prophylactic purpose. As noted above, archangels were painted in constructionally vulnerable places in the church, in the dome and the space below it, but also on ceilings and on the soffits of arches, in the hopes that their incorporeality might relieve the static load and their inexhaustible energy reinforce the construction. There should be no doubt that, as a counterpart to this one, another archangel was painted at the top of the arch on the northern side of the narthex in the katholikon of Djurdjevi Stupovi, on a spot that has long lost its fresco plaster. All that is left of this representation is a tiny segment of the medallion in the eastern part of the northern arch. Shown above the doorways leading from the narthex to the ground floor of the towers that served as *parekklesia*, the two archangels, ever-present through their icons, oversaw and guarded these passages.²⁵⁹

On the other hand, the medallions with busts of bodiless beings had a direct spatial connection with the figures of anchorites in the lower parts of the arches and can, therefore, be ideationally associated with them too as the original image of the “angelic likeness” that eremites sought to emulate. The remains of three out of four hermit images can still be seen on the blind arches. The eastern side of the southern arch featured a representation of St. Paul of Thebes, with only the right side of the halo and a fragment of the two-line inscription – $\tau\eta\upsilon\epsilon(\eta)\sigma\kappa\eta$ – preserved (figs. 123, 125). However, not a trace has survived of any letters next to the figure shown opposite St. Paul from the Egyptian city of Thebes, on the western side of the southern arch, where only a segment of the halo and the left side of the upper part of a hermit's naked torso, which most likely belonged to St. Onouphrios, are still visible (fig. 123).²⁶⁰ There are no remains of a signature either for the representation of the anchorite painted on the eastern side of the northern arch. He is dressed in a fur tunic with close-fitting long sleeves, and his both hands are outstretched in front of the chest in the “Eve-Oranta” posture. His very long, graying hair falls on his shoulders, and his beard tapered down, it seems, all the way to his unshod feet, which could, until not that long ago, still be discerned on the timeworn lower part of the fresco. This iconography fully matches that of the saintly anchorites Makarios the Great and Mark of Thrace.²⁶¹

Thanks to the testimonies of early visitors to Djurdjevi Stupovi and the scholarly documentation drawn up by later researchers, quite a lot can be said about a few destroyed yet remarkably important figures in the bottommost zone in the narthex. Alexander Hilferding recorded in 1857 that St. Simeon and St. Sava of Serbia were shown on the eastern wall of the narthex, around the entrance to the naos.²⁶² The image of the monastery's founder was located north of the doorway and accompanied by the following inscription: $\epsilon(\beta\epsilon)\tau\upsilon\ \sigma\iota\mu\epsilon\omicron\eta\ \eta\ \eta\epsilon\lambda\mu\alpha\eta\ \eta\ \chi\eta\tau\iota\tau\omicron\rho\ \mu\epsilon\tau\alpha\ \sigma\epsilon\gamma\omicron$

ϸ(ΒΕ)ΤΑΓΟ.²⁶³ The first three words of the inscription, with the ktetor's name, could still be seen in 1920 when Vladimir R. Petković visited the church, as attested by the photographs taken a bit later (fig. 124), but by this point there was no discernible trace left of St. Simeon's picture.²⁶⁴ Given the content of the inscription and the time of painting, there is no doubt that the ktetor was shown in monastic garb, with a halo around his head and, if Irby and Mackenzie are to be believed, a model of the church in his hand.²⁶⁵ The paleographic characteristics of the letters in the inscription that accompanied the saint's image and the stratigraphy of the frescoes in the narthex unambiguously suggest that the representation of Nemanja was painted at the same time as the frescoes on the ceiling and the lateral walls of the narthex.²⁶⁶ The image of St. Sava stood south of the passage to the naos and, according to Hilferding, had a legible inscription with the saint's name – ϸ(ΒΕ)ΤΥ ΣΑΒΑ ΣΡΠΚΗ.²⁶⁷ In addition, the Russian linguist noted that Nemanja's youngest son was shown with a long, light-brown beard, a description confirmed a few years later by the two above-mentioned British travelers.²⁶⁸

The notes left by 19th-century travel writers are invaluable in a consideration of the programmatic and iconographic concepts implemented in the narthex of the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon as well as in Serbian art in general. Obviously, the images of St. Simeon and St. Sava, around the entrance to the naos of the first foundation Nemanja built as a ruler, made up a programmatic ensemble or, more specifically, a pair – an intimation and early example of their joint representation, which would in time become customary. This practice was very widespread from the early decades of the fourteenth to the end of the 16th century.²⁶⁹ It is rightly believed that the decisive impetus for it came from the liturgical texts written, precisely in the late 13th century, by the Serbian religious author Teodosije, in which the two pre-eminent Serbian saints are celebrated together.²⁷⁰ Positioned next to each other, their images already appear in the room on the second floor of the Žiža tower and the Mileševa narthex, but in generationally and hierarchically arranged sets of dynastic portraits.²⁷¹ At that time, moreover, the cult of the first Serbian archbishop had yet to develop because he was still alive, and so the connection between his image and St. Simeon's carried a different meaning. After St. Sava's death, starting from the southern *parekklesion* of the Virgin's Church at Studenica and throughout the following decades of the 13th century, their images were omitted from dynastic ensembles and instead added to the series of portraits of Serbian archbishops.²⁷² It was not until the second decade of the 14th century that, on the one hand, we can trace the establishment of the abovementioned representation of St. Simeon and St. Sava of Serbia as a pair and, on the other, the programmatic re-inclusion of the two – albeit with a new meaning – among the dynastic ktetorial representations and series of portraits (Virgin Ljeviška, King's Church of Studenica, the naos and narthex at Hilandar, St. Nicholas in Dabar, the White Church of Karan, the southern



123

Archangel bust in a medallion and anchorite saints, arch on the southern side of the narthex

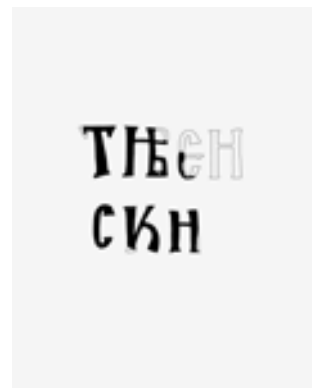
parekklesion at Dečani).²⁷³ However, already in the narthex of Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras, the programmatically joined images of St. Simeon and St. Sava constituted the central part of the programmatic ensemble with a dynastic meaning, along with, as we will see, the portrait of at least one more member of the Nemanjić family.

As far as we know at this point, the iconography of St. Sava's image at Djurdjevi Stupovi seems much more congruent with the customs of the 14th century than those followed in the second half of the thirteenth. The portraits from the time when he had long served as the Serbian archbishop (Mileševa) and those painted shortly before his death (the southern *parekklesion* of the Virgin's Church at Studenica) show him with dark hair and beard, but in the decades following his passing, Sava was painted as white-haired and elderly (the altar apse and *proskomedija* of the Holy Apostles in Peć, the sanctuary and *parekklesion* of St. George at Sopoćani, St. Achilleos in Arilje).²⁷⁴ However, starting from the Virgin Ljeviška in Prizren, a systematic change becomes apparent. From that time onward, with very few exceptions, e.g., the King's Church of Studenica, the founder of the Serbian autocephalous church again began to be shown with pale auburn or brown hair and beard, usually with a white strand or two.²⁷⁵ It is precisely this version – as Hilferding, Mackenzie and Irby report – that was featured in the narthex of Djurdjevi Stupovi. Nevertheless, like the programmatic joining of Sava's image with Simeon's, that cannot be used as evidence to infer that the paintings in the narthex are of a slightly later date than usually believed and that they were created in the 14th century, as Nikolai Okunev assumed.²⁷⁶ Such a claim is countered, first of all, by the stylistic characteristics of the narthex frescoes, which will be discussed later in more detail. The historical circumstances in the Serbian state after 1299 also speak against it – the decade-long conflict that broke out at the beginning of the 14th century between King Dragutin,

the ktetor of those paintings, and King Milutin, on whose territory Djurdjevi Stupovi was located from 1282.²⁷⁷ Finally, a particularly strong counter-argument would be the youthful appearance of the Serbian ruler – Milutin or, more likely, Dragutin – on the portrait that for centuries stood on the eastern end of the northern wall (figs. 126, 127), next to the image of St. Simeon until it was recently completely destroyed, to the irredeemable shame of our generation. Both brothers look considerably more mature already on the portraits in Arilje from 1296 or 1297.²⁷⁸

The young ruler in the narthex of Djurdjevi Stupovi was shown in a hieratic, frontal position, dressed in a reddish-brown *sakkos* with a gold-embroidered *kontomanikion*, *peribrachia* and *epimanikia* (fig. 126). He also wore a *loros*, its bottom end, lined in light-green felt, draped over his left arm, in which he held an *akakia*. In his clenched right hand, raised to his chest, he held a cruciform scepter with a long handle and wide arms encrusted with gems and strings of pearls. His head was covered by a domed crown with a half-arch that went across the head, and on the front, judging by the once visible remains of the drawing, it ended with a wide, rectangular plate – an ornament on the frontal side of the circlet. This plate also graced the crowns on the portraits of King Uroš I at Sopoćani and Gradac,²⁷⁹ as well as Dragutin's portrait painted next to the donor composition in the Gradac church. Unfortunately, the old travel writers accorded no attention to the ruler's image and failed to even mention it. When, in the early 1920s, Vladimir R. Petković and Aleksandar Deroko visited Djurdjevi Stupovi, not a single letter of the accompanying inscription was to be seen. Its considerable length was attested only by a series of parallel lines incised into the plaster to help align the lines of the letters. Petković's and Deroko's descriptions both report that the northern wall of the narthex featured a dark-haired, young king with a small, fine (sparse), combed beard and long hair,²⁸⁰ and the accuracy of these accounts is confirmed by photographs taken considerably later. Deroko suggested right away that this could be a portrait of King Dragutin because, as the monastery's second ktetor, he had been buried in the church.²⁸¹ Agreeing with this explanation, the majority of later researchers accepted Aleksandar Deroko's hypothesis. Further, given the iconography of the portrait, which matches that of a sovereign, and the fact that there is no surviving portrait of King Milutin in the narthex, it was concluded that this portrait must have been painted during King Dragutin's reign (1276–1282).

There are, however, some details that call for caution when identifying the ruler portrait on the northern wall in the narthex of the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon and suggest that a reexamination of the proposed hypothesis is due. There is no doubt that King Dragutin restored the Church of St. George and was buried in it. The fact that his grave was located in this church is attested by the Serbian patriarch and author Danilo III of Banjska in his *Service to King Milutin with a Prologue Vita* and other medieval and later sources.²⁸² And yet, the only masonry tomb in which the king's remains could have been laid was found beneath the arched passage from the narthex



124

Remnant of the inscription beside the image of St. Simeon Nemanja, eastern wall of the katholikon narthex

125

Drawing of the remnant of the inscription beside the image of St. Paul of Thebes, arch on the southern side of the narthex

to the naos, next to its southern cornerstone.²⁸³ Alexander Hilferding, too, was shown the raided grave of King Dragutin “in the interior of the church, to the right of the door.”²⁸⁴ The discussed portrait was, however, painted on the opposite, left (northern) side of the narthex. Therefore, the now lost representation in the eastern part of the southern wall, directly opposite the surviving portrait and right next to the image of the first Serbian archbishop on the eastern wall, would have been closer to Dragutin’s tomb. Similarly, it is beyond any doubt that the lost painting had a direct programmatic connection to the other images in the eastern part of the narthex, which made up an ideational ensemble. It bears repeating that these images represented three members of the Nemanjić family – St. Simeon, St. Sava and the young ruler. Is it not, then, the portrait of the church’s second ktetor, King Dragutin, that was painted on the southern side of the narthex? And was not the ruler portrait that, until recently, stood on the northern wall, in fact, Milutin’s, and was not the narthex of the katholikon frescoed after 1282? This dating is supported by Petković’s claim that the ruler portrayed in the katholikon had a small beard and mustache and that Dragutin was shown, beardless, on the portrait on the western wall of the *parekklesion*,²⁸⁵ painted after Milutin replaced his brother as the sovereign at Deževa.

The analyses conducted during the conservation works at Djurdjevi Stupovi in the 1970s showed that the murals on the ceiling and the lower parts of the walls in the narthex were executed on a plaster of a different composition than the one used by the painters of the *parekklesion*.²⁸⁶ Besides, different techniques were applied when making the two sets of wall paintings: the one in the narthex of the main church was largely done in fresco-secco, whereas only the fresco technique was used in the chapel.²⁸⁷ This means that the narthex of the katholikon and the *parekklesion* were painted by two different groups of artists but does not, in itself, unambiguously settle the relative chronology of the creation of these ensembles. In addition, the possibility that they were painted at the same time cannot be ruled out because two guilds could have worked concurrently on frescoing the narthex, the rooms on the ground floors of the towers and perhaps even the space between the vestibules and the katholikon towers, probably closed off in Dragutin’s time, as well as the new refectory and the *parekklesion*. It seems, however, that there is more evidence to assume that the wall paintings in the main church were created before those in Dragutin’s *parekklesion*, at least a little before the Deževa takeover.

It should be first said that Petković’s claim about the appearance of the donor portrait in Dragutin’s *parekklesion* is incorrect. It was influenced, to a large extent, by the diminished visibility of the details on the heavily damaged and sometimes darkened paintings in the chapel. In fact, King Dragutin was also shown with a short beard and mustache on the ktetorial portrait in the *parekklesion*, as has become evident after it was recently cleaned. It is even possible to make out the individual lines with which the artist indicated the king’s facial hair (fig. 152). In any case,

the young ruler's beard and mustache on the portrait in the narthex of the katholikon were, according to the old photographs, neither longer nor thicker than on the ktetorial portrait in the *parekklesion*. This makes it clear that the narthex of the katholikon – if the portrait painted in it indeed belonged to Dragutin – and the *parekklesion* at Djurdjevi Stupovi were frescoed at the same time or in quick succession. On the other hand, the appearance of the crown on the head of the ruler shown in the narthex of the main monastery church, with traces of an ornament in the form of a small rectangular plate on the forehead, suggests that the painting works at Djurdjevi Stupovi took place successively and that the young ruler's portrait in the narthex was created at least a bit earlier than those in the chapel. As noted above, a crown with the same ornament appears on some portraits of King Uroš I and Dragutin but not on any later representations of Serbian rulers. Hence the portrait in the narthex should be attributed to Uroš's elder son and dated to the period before 1282 because the sovereignty of the shown ruler is also attested by his hieratic position and other insignia (the *akakia*, cruciform scepter, etc.). Finally, it seems reasonable to assume that, reflecting the hierarchy of monastery complexes, their purpose and medieval customs, the reparation of the katholikon would have been a more pressing matter and that it was restored and frescoed at least a little before Dragutin's chapel.





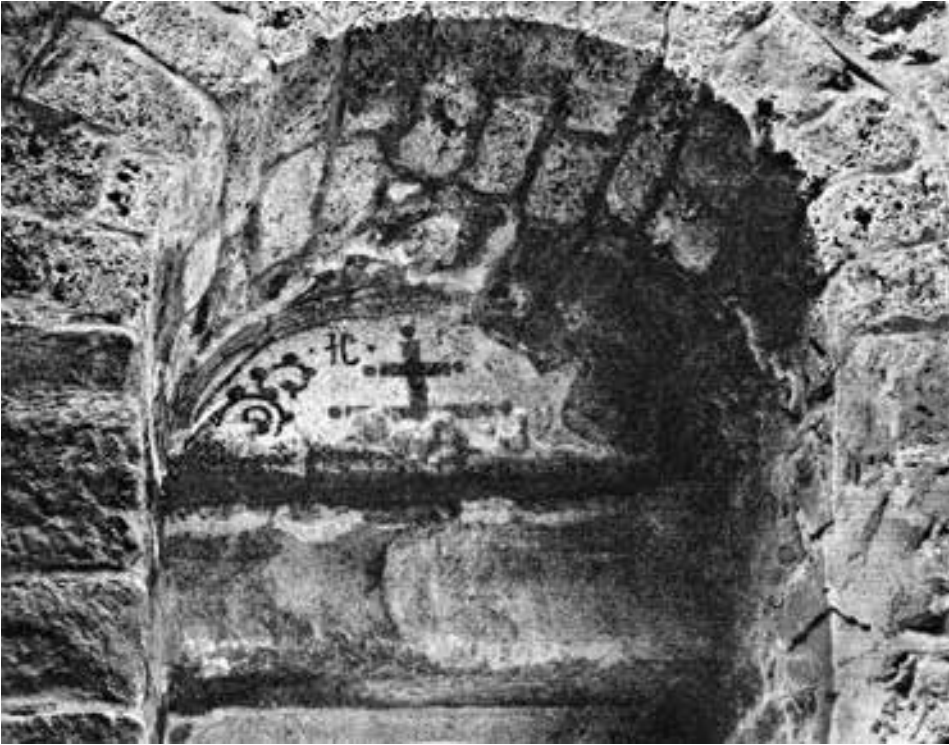
126

Portrait of King Dragutin,
northern wall of the
katholikon narthex

127

Portrait of King Dragutin,
northern wall of the
katholikon narthex, detail

Neither does the place of the ruler portrait in the narthex of the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon necessarily contradict the attribution of the portrait to King Dragutin, to the contrary. The position of the tomb marker of the monastery's second ktetor – a sarcophagus made of multicolored marble and lauded for its representative appearance by the Ragusan author Nikola Bošković – has not been ascertained.²⁸⁸ However, it is entirely certain that it could not have been placed directly above the pit, prepared in advance and carefully clad in masonry, on the southern side of the passage into the naos because that would have required deconstructing and damaging the lavish and very heavy sarcophagus for the ruler's burial.²⁸⁹ Therefore, we can assume that



the sarcophagus was placed beside the spot below which the tomb was built, along the northern side of the passage to the naos and not far from the ruler portrait that, until recently, stood on the eastern end of the northern wall in the narthex. If it was indeed so, it seems entirely appropriate to ascribe the portrait to King Dragutin – even more so because a portrait of King Dragutin, as the restorer of the monastery, on the northern side of the eastern wall of the narthex would have been right next to the image of Simeon Nemanja, the monastery's founder, on the northern end of the eastern wall. However, in this case, we must assume that, on the eastern end of the southern wall, next to the image of St. Sava and opposite the young ruler's portrait, another departed member of the dynasty or one of its heavenly protectors was shown.



The later frescoes in the narthex of Djurdjevi Stupovi are so heavily damaged that their visual characteristics only offer grounds for a very broad dating – to the last quarter of the 13th century. Judging by their remains, they were executed by artists that held quite similar views to the painters of the *parekklesion*. Some authors have

128

Foliated cross in the lunette of the entrance on the northern side of the ground floor of the southern katholikon tower

hence proposed that both fresco ensembles were done by the same workshop.²⁹⁰ However, besides the discussed technical details, there are some painterly differences that contradict such a conclusion. The color palette of the later frescoes in the narthex was cooler, their draftsmanship more summary and the painting matter drier. They seem to have been executed with a little less inspiration and skill. It is entirely possible that the same artists frescoed the ground floor of the two towers by the narthex, although this cannot be reliably determined. These spaces were decorated with wall paintings in the last decades of the 13th century, as attested by the stylistic and iconographic features of the foliated Calvary cross with the initials of Christ's name painted in the lunette above the passage leading from the southern tower to the narthex (fig. 128). It is possible that the fresco fragments in the room built subsequently between the vestibule and the tower on the southern side of the church belong to the same period, but they are so scarce that it is impossible to date them securely.



129

Holy Trinity, detail,
southern wall of King
Dragutin's *parekklesion*

130

Wall paintings on the
eastern side of King
Dragutin's *parekklesion*

THE WALL PAINTINGS IN KING DRAGUTIN'S *parekklesion*

Much better preserved than the katholikon paintings are the frescoes in the *parekklesion* created by restructuring the ground floor of the original monastery entrance tower during King Dragutin's restoration.²⁹¹ Therefore, almost all of their themes are known to us except for the paintings in the sanctuary, lost a long time ago together with the *parekklesion* apse, which was rebuilt as late as 1926.²⁹² Muir Mackenzie and Irby already found a tiny *parekklesion* without an apsidal conch, "open on two sides," and slightly before them, in 1857, Hilferding described the chapel as the "entrance" to the monastery.²⁹³ Considering the shape and size of the apse and analogies with frescoes in *parekklesia* built along or next to Serbian 13th- and 14th-century churches,²⁹⁴ we can but assume that the Mother of God was shown in the semi-hemisphere of the apse, almost certainly as a bust, and below her, the Divine Liturgy, possibly performed by four bishops. In the western part of the broad arch in front of the apse, two six-winged seraphim have survived – guardians of the holy of holies and the retinue of God Almighty (figs. 131–133).²⁹⁵ These representations remind the viewer of the bodiless powers' participation in the liturgy, which lifts the barrier between the earth and the heavens and concurrently takes place in the earthly and heavenly tabernacle.²⁹⁶ For instance, in the program of Studenica's *parekklesion* of St.





131–132
Cherubim, soffit of the triumphal arch, King Dragutin's *parekklesion*

133
Frescoes on the soffit of the triumphal arch in the *parekklesion*

Nicholas, painted a few decades before this one, seraphim and cherubim appear on the other side of the holy table, in the breadth of the wall of the apsidal window.²⁹⁷

Between the fields with the cherubim and the narrow ornamental band painted on the western side of the arch below the apse, there is a belt, approximately as wide as the ornamental band, which has no fresco plaster and runs all the way to the ground (fig. 133). Given that the field with the cherubim and the ornamental band have borders around them and that the inner edges of the plaster base of those borders are bent, stretching downward, it is obvious that, on the spot



of this belt with no frescoes once stood an architectural element that restricted or partially closed off access to the apse. It was built before the *parekklesion* was frescoed but was not constructionally dependent on the earlier walls of the edifice and thus eventually collapsed, just like the apse. In view of the chapel's dimensions, unlike the *katholikon*, it could not have had a *tribelon* (a wall with three openings). In the *parekklesion*, access to the sanctuary could have been closed off by a single-opening wall between the naos and apse or, more likely, a masonry altar barrier topped by a slender arch. It is much less probable that an ordinary arch stood there instead because it would not have had an appropriate relation to the altar barrier. In that case, the barrier would have had to be positioned too close to the arch, just twenty or so centimeters to the west of the arch, directly below the cherubim. Whatever this architectural element might have been, the fact that it collapsed meant, like in the case of the apse, the loss of some paintings that might have been programmatically significant.

The symbolism of the themes of the frescoes in the upper zone of the eastern wall in the *parekklesion* is well-suited to the zone of approaching the sanctuary (figs. 130, 134–136): in the middle is Christ's *acheiropoieton*, the Holy Mandylion – ⚭(ВЕ)ТЫ· ЖЕРЪСЬ·, І(СОУ)С(Ь) Х(РИСТО)С(Ь) – flanked by the busts of St. Joachim – ⚭(ВЕ)ТЫ НАЪКНМЬ· (sic!) – and St. Anna – ⚭(ВЕ)ТА АЪНА (sic!). The images of Christ's ancestors and the miraculous imprint of his face on matter, on the cloth of a napkin, made without human involvement, bore testament to the reality of God's incarnation as the root of the Eucharistic sacrifice performed



134Holy Napkin, eastern wall of the *parekklesion***135–136**Sts. Joachim and Anna, eastern wall of the *parekklesion***137**Holy Keramion, northern wall of the *parekklesion***138**Wall paintings in the *parekklesion* groin vault (p. 134–135)

in the sanctuary. There are many examples in Byzantine and medieval Serbian art of the Virgin's parents and the Mandylion shown without each other in the sanctuary or its vicinity. Alternatively, they could be represented together on the eastern wall around the apse or at the top of the arch in front of the shrine, more or less in the same arrangement as in the *parekklesion* at Djurdjevi Stupovi (Hagioi Theodoroi near Kaphiona on Mani, 1263–1271; the Cretan Church of Saint George at Sklavopoula near Paleochora, 1290/1291; and the Transfiguration Church in Zouridi, early 14th c., etc.).²⁹⁸ On the other side, as the counterpart to the Mandylion on the eastern side of the church, the Holy Keramion (fig. 137) – (СВѢТА КЕ)РАМНАН, (Ι(ΣΟΥ)Σ(Υ)) Χ(ΡΗΣΤΟ)Σ(Υ) – was also shown here but not on the same axis as the Holy Napkin. The artists painted it on the northern side of the *parekklesion* because this side, like the eastern, featured an arch whose top was a convenient place for an image in the shape of the Keramion (fig. 148). Thus, it was positioned among the busts of holy physicians, possibly as an allusion to the healing powers of the *acheiropoieta*.²⁹⁹

Between the massive ribs of the chapel's groin vault, elaborately decorated with ornamental bands, four scenes made up a unique cycle from the history of the Nemanjić dynasty (fig. 138). Unfortunately, none of those representations has preserved its accompanying inscription, which would have unequivocally identified their contents. The inference that these scenes indeed illustrated events from Serbian history is suggested, on the one hand, by the appearance of rulers'





symbols that reflect the evolution of insignia used at the Nemanjić court, and, on the other, the tonsured heads of the featured bishops – a distinctive sign of Serbian Orthodox clergy in the medieval period.³⁰⁰ Another highly suggestive feature is the emphasis on the secular and religious dignities of the main protagonists in some scenes, which correspond to the personages that had a decisive role in some changes on the Serbian throne. Thanks to the enthroned monarch on the first and two rulers in the last scenes, both of which have survived in a better state of repair than the others, it is possible to identify them as illustrations of specific events in Serbian medieval history and, consequently, understand the contents of the whole cycle.³⁰¹ Properly interpreted and read, it reveals its creators' talent for historicity. In fact, they tried to make these schematized visual accounts of past events as congruent as possible with the historical facts known to them and clearly strove to imbue the cycle with the authenticity of a convincing testimony.

The first in the chronological sequence of compositions is on the eastern segment of the vault (fig. 139). It shows the enthronement of Grand Župan Stefan at the council held at the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul in Ras in 1196.³⁰² This can be unambiguously inferred from the iconography of the scene. In the foreground, three main participants in the event, illuminated by haloes, sit on high-back thrones. At the center is the newly enthroned ruler with brown mid-length hair and beard, dressed in a dark purple tunic with *peribrachia* and *epimanikia* and, over it, a slightly lighter chlamys rimmed with a broad goldwork band and fastened with a circular fibula on the right side of the chest. These facial features and the ornate indeed correspond to the portraits of Stefan the First-Crowned in the entrance tower of Studenica, in the scene of the Translation of the Relics of St. Simeon in the southern *parekklesion* of the Virgin's Church at Studenica and in the Mileševa narthex.³⁰³ Since the image is damaged in its upper part, we cannot reliably ascertain what kind of headdress he wore, although it was obviously not a domed *stemma*. However, like the later Serbian rulers with a royal title in the following scenes, he holds an *akakia*; the throne is covered by a white cloth with embroidery; he sits on a purple cushion, and his feet rest on a purple suppedaneum. To the left is a monk with graying hair, and to the right, a bishop in a *phelonion*, both slightly inclined toward him, all of which suggests that this can only be a depiction of the enthronement of the Serbian ruler in 1196. Therefore, the monk should be identified as St. Simeon Nemanja, who abdicated in favor of his son Stefan in Ras and immediately took the vows. To show that he had recently become a monk, the artist made his beard no longer than that of Stefan the First-Crowned. It is noticeably shorter and darker than Simeon's beard in the bottommost zone of the *parekklesion*, where he is shown as an already revered and renowned monk (fig. 150). The church dignitary across from Nemanja must be Kalinik, Bishop



139
Enthronement of Grand
Župan Stefan, eastern side
of the *parekklesion* vault

140
Enthronement of King
Milutin at Deževa,
northern side of the
parekklesion vault

of Ras, mentioned in Stefan's literary account of his own enthronement.³⁰⁴ Behind the backrests of the three thrones, a few more council participants can be seen or made out in the background.

Given that the sequence of cycle scenes in medieval Serbian churches began in the east and ran from left to right, e.g., clockwise, the last composition on the vault of Dragutin's *parekklesion* must be the one in the northern segment (figs. 140, 153). Its content confirms this hypothesis. In the foreground, this scene again shows three persons sitting on high-back thrones. In the center, a frontally positioned youthful, almost beardless ruler wears a domed crown and a dark-brown ruler's *sakkos* with a *loros* and *kotomanikion*. To the left, another young ruler with an identical crown and ornate, holding, like the previously described monarch, an *akakia* in his right hand, sits on a throne with a white cloth strewn over it and rests his feet on a purple *suppedaneum*. Obviously, these are two



rulers of almost the same rank. The subordinate status of the latter is suggested only by his place by the central monarch's right shoulder and his posture – his head, upper body and left arm are gently turned toward him. All of these details suggest that this was a non-violent takeover of power between members of the dynasty from the same generation, after which the previous monarch kept his royal dignity. Therefore, there can be no doubt that the newly enthroned ruler in the center should be identified as King Uroš II Milutin, to whom his elder brother Stefan Dragutin, on the left side of the scene, ceded sovereign power in Serbia.³⁰⁵ This takeover took place in Deževa in 1282, after which King Dragutin retained his title and a part of the country's territory. The enthronement of the new sovereign, in the presence of many secular dignitaries in the background, is consecrated by a tonsured hierarch on the right side of the scene. Given that he is dressed in a *polystaurion*, worn by the heads of the Serbian autocephalous



141
Frescoes in the upper
zones of the southern
side of King Dragutin's
parekklesion

142
Holy Trinity, southern
wall of the *parekklesion*

church in the 13th century, he should be identified as Archbishop Jevstatije I (1279–1286).

The remaining scenes of the cycle in the southern and western part of the vault are heavily damaged, but it is clear that, unlike those discussed above, they did not depict takeovers of power (figs. 141, 145, 158). The foregrounds of these two compositions also feature three enthroned persons but, in both scenes, the ruler is flanked by hierarchs, with no previous ruler ceding the throne to his heir. Hence these scenes must represent inaugurations of monarchs who either ousted their predecessor from power or inherited the throne from a deceased king. Since they were positioned between Nemanja's abdication in Ras and Dragutin's in Deževa, both scenes must illustrate events that took place between 1196 and 1282. In this timespan, however, as many as four Serbian kings were inaugurated, and all four came to power after coups or their predecessor's death: Radoslav,



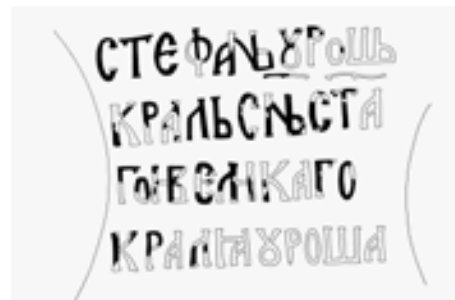
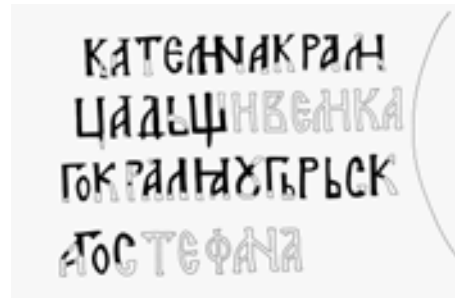
Vladislav, Uroš I, and Dragutin. We must, therefore, recall an important piece of information. Sequences of Nemanjić dynastic portraits included only the monarchs who were direct ancestors of the incumbent king and strictly followed the order in which they had ascended the throne. This was done to emphasize the legitimacy and inviolability of the succession rights of the main dynastic branch. Since such a sequence of Nemanjić portraits was, as we will see, also painted in the bottommost zone of Dragutin's *parekklesion*, the same dynastic principle must have been implemented when designing the enthronement cycle in the vault.³⁰⁶ There is no doubt, therefore, that the scene in the southern segment commemorated the inauguration of Uroš I, while its counterpart in the western depicted the enthronement of his rebellious elder son Dragutin.³⁰⁷

In the zone below the groin vault of the *parekklesion*, an Old Testament scene and the busts of five holy physicians were painted. The arched surface in the

second zone of the southern wall, which catches the eye as one enters the chapel, is occupied by a condensed depiction of the Hospitality of Abraham, i.e., the Trinitarian God shown as three angels at a table, identified in the accompanying inscription as «с(в)ѢТА ТРОИЦА» (figs. 141, 142). The Old Testament Abraham and his elderly wife Sarah were not included. In view of this omission and the inscription, it is clear that the creators of the thematic program did not want to literally depict this Biblical event but, drawing on its Christian interpretation, to emphasize the image of God, who already appeared to his beloved Abraham in three hypostases. The appearance of the angel in the middle was adapted to reflect the same intention. He bears iconographic elements characteristic of the second person of the Holy Trinity, Lord Jesus Christ, such as the cross-shaped halo, red chiton and blue himation. Unlike the other two angels, his hair is less wavy but long, falling down past his shoulders, and he seems to have held a rolled scroll in his damaged left hand.

The inscriptions by the busts of three holy physicians in medallions on the arched surface in the second zone of the western wall, now only partially visible, were once fully legible, as attested by old photographs. St. Kosmas – с(в)ѢТЫ КОЗМА – was shown on the left side of the field, St. Panteleimon – с(в)ѢТЫ ПАНТЕЛЕИМОНЬ – in the middle, and St. Damianos – с(в)ѢТЫ ДАМИАНЬ – on the right end. All three were depicted with their usual iconography, with scalpels and boxes for medical instruments and medicines in their hands (figs. 145, 146). The attribute of the medical profession also marks the representation of one of two holy physicians represented as busts on the northern side of the *parekklesion*, beside the big archway (fig. 148). The image of St. Cyrus – с(в)ѢТЫ КИРЬ – west of the entrance is quite worn, but a medical flacon with a spherical body and a long cylindrical neck, with a border running across its lower part, can still be seen. Such a vial was a common detail on Cyrus's medieval depictions.³⁰⁸ On the opposite side, east of the arched entrance, his youthful companion and co-martyr, St. John – с(в)ѢТЫ ИОВАНЬ – was shown with a cross in his right hand and his left hand raised to the chest in prayer (fig. 162). Although he made up a pair with Cyrus and was counted among holy physicians, he is dressed here, as usual, in a blue tunic with goldwork and a purple chlamys because he was a Roman officer who was martyred for the faith.³⁰⁹

The five holy physicians shown in the second zone are the most numerous group of saints in the *parekklesion*. Its ktetor, King Dragutin, must have held the *anargyroi* in high regard because they are also very well represented in his most important foundation, the Church of St. Achilleos in Arilje, frescoed ten years later. In this much bigger edifice, as many as eight holy physicians were painted.³¹⁰ Such a fondness for healer saints was explained, quite rightly, it would seem, with Dragutin's fall from a horse near the city of Jeleč. Having sustained a serious



143–144

Drawings of the remains of the inscriptions evidenced by an old photograph beside the portraits of Queen Catherine and King Milutin

145

Wall paintings on the western side of King Dragutin's *parekklesion*





injury to his leg that prevented him, at least temporarily, from going into battle, the king, as noted above, was forced to cede sovereign power in 1282 to his younger brother Milutin.³¹¹ He asked for their images to be painted in the little chapel to express his deep prayerful trust in their assistance, whereas the multitude of their representations at Arilje probably reflected gratitude for his healing, which, as his and Milutin's joint campaigns suggest, eventually came about.³¹²

While images of holy physicians prevail in the second fresco zone, stylites are the most numerous among the pan-Christian saints in the bottommost zone.³¹³ Representations of the two Simeons, accompanied by inscriptions in a mix of Serbian and Greek, with some orthographic errors, were honored by a place on the eastern wall (fig. 130). St. Simeon described as the “Wonderworker” – $\sigma(\kappa\epsilon)\tau\eta\ \sigma\iota\mu\epsilon\omicron\eta\text{[}\beta\text{]}\ \sigma\ \phi\alpha\lambda\mu\alpha\tau\sigma\tau\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ (sic!) – occupies the northern side and St. Simeon marked as “the Stylite” – $\sigma(\kappa\epsilon)\tau\eta\ \sigma\iota\mu\epsilon\omicron\eta\text{[}\beta\text{]}\ \sigma\ \sigma\tau\eta\lambda\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ – the southern (figs. 130, 147). Since both of these saints called Simeon – the elder, celebrated on 1 September, and the younger, commemorated on 24 May³¹⁴ – were revered as both stylites and healers, we might ask which representation belongs to which saint. A reliable answer can be found thanks to a few images of the younger St. Simeon the Stylite described in the attendant inscription as the “Wonderworker” ($\theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\upsilon\gamma\omicron\varsigma$), such as those in the churches of Christ Antiphonetes near the village of Kalograia and Panagia tou Araka in Lagoudera, Cyprus, or an icon from St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai with the Crucifixion surrounded by saints on the frame, all from the late 12th century.³¹⁵ Opposite those images or in their vicinity, in all three cases, the elder St. Simeon the Stylite was painted and

146

Busts of Sts. Kosmas, Panteleimon and Damianos in medallions, western wall of the *parekklesion*

147

St. Simeon the Stylite, eastern wall of the *parekklesion*



variously described in the inscriptions as Στυλίτης or Αρχιμανδρίτης or Ο της Μάνδρας,³¹⁶ appropriate attributes for this saint that mark his representations in other monuments, too. Hence there can be no doubt that the elder St. Simeon the Stylite was painted south of the entrance to the sanctuary in the *parekklesion* of Djurdjevi Stupovi and the younger St. Simeon the Stylite north of the entrance.³¹⁷ The latter was also known as Simeon “of the Wonderful Mountain” (Greek: ο Θαυμαστορείτης) because he undertook ascetic feats on the Wonderful Mountain (Greek: Θαυμαστό Όρος) near his native Antioch, so his images more commonly had an inscription with this attribute.³¹⁸

Beside the two stylites next to the entrance to the *parekklesion*, on the northern side, no letters can be seen any more (fig. 148). However, relatively recent photographs reveal a remnant of the inscription, again in a mix of Serbian and

Greek (fig. 149), above the head of the pillar saint east of the entrance: ς(ΒΕ)ΤΗ· ΑΛΗΠΠΟΥς (sic!), securely identifying him as St. Alympios the Stylite, although he was shown with short brown hair, slightly younger than usual.³¹⁹ The image of the saint on the western side is so tattered that only the narrow surface he was painted on, which matches those with representations of Alympios and the two Simeons, suggests that this was probably Daniel the Stylite. Such elongated architectural elements in churches of the Orthodox world were one of the reasons for introducing images of hermits on high pillars into their painted programs, including the one in this *parekklesion*. However, at Djurdjevi Stupovi, a monastery built on a craggy hilltop, whose *katholikon* had two tall tower-pillars, after which this religious edifice got its name, the cult of stylites must have been particularly revered. For instance, it is known that Archbishop Danilo II built a



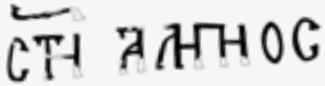
148

Wall paintings on the northern wall of King Dragutin's *parekklesion*

149

Drawing of the inscription beside the image of St. Alympios

parekklesion dedicated to St. Daniel the Stylite in the belltower of the Peć monastery, acknowledging the symbolism and place of towers, i.e., “pillars,” in the sacral topography of sacral buildings.³²⁰ Therefore, it is entirely possible that the *parekklesia* on the ground level or possibly one of the upper floors of the two towers of the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon were dedicated to prominent pillar saints. In addition, we should bear in mind that Dragutin's *parekklesion* was created by partially remodeling a tower that once served as the entrance to the monastery. It is possible that this building, after it was remodeled and repurposed, retained the upper floors and served as a watchtower. Hence it seems, at least at first glance, that the “stylite” symbolism and architectural iconography of the two main church buildings in the monastery, i.e., the special veneration of pillar saints fostered in it, could at least partially explain the inclusion of as many as four stylites in the quite limited space in the chapel. Other, possibly equally



important reasons will be discussed below. Finally, it should be noted that representations of pillar saints were indeed very well suited to the proportions of the surfaces on which they were painted in the *parekklesion*, but those surfaces were still broad enough to accommodate other types of images, too.

By far the largest and most prominent wall surfaces in the bottommost zone of the tiny *parekklesion* were used for painting remarkably elaborate series of dynastic portraits. On the western end of the southern wall, in the center of this group of portraits, is Jesus Christ enthroned – $\text{I}(\text{COY})\text{C}(\text{Ь}) \text{X}(\text{P}(\text{HCTO})\text{C}(\text{Ь}))$ – holding a Gospel in his left hand and blessing with his right. Members of the House of Nemanjić approach him in two prayerful processions, forming an integral composition like the wings of a diptych (figs. 150, 151). One was featured on the southern and the other on the western wall. All those portraits of the dynasty's members once had informative inscriptions, now damaged or destroyed. Luckily, they can be reconstructed owing to old photographs³²¹ and transcriptions made by Alexander Hilferding in 1857.³²² As for the surviving parts of the inscriptions, the readings of the learned Russian linguist seem correct except for an occasional detail or two. On the southern wall, St. Simeon Nemanja – $\text{C}(\text{BE})\text{T}(\text{Y}) \text{C}(\text{H})\text{MEOH}(\text{Ь}) \text{HEMAM}(\text{H}) \text{G}(\text{OC}(\text{P}(\text{A}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{B}(\text{Ь})\text{C}(\text{Ь})\text{X}(\text{Ь}) \text{C}(\text{P}(\text{Ь})\text{B}(\text{Ь})\text{C}(\text{K}(\text{H})\text{X}(\text{Ь})) \text{ZE}(\text{M}(\text{A})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})$ – leads the procession of former rulers dressed in monastic garb (fig. 150). He is followed by his son and successor Stefan the First-Crowned as monk Simon – $\text{C}(\text{BE})\text{T}(\text{Y}) \text{C}(\text{TE})\text{FA}(\text{H})\text{H}) \text{P}(\text{P}(\text{Ь})\text{B}(\text{O}(\text{B}(\text{Ь})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{A} \text{C}(\text{P}(\text{Ь})\text{B}(\text{E})\text{C}(\text{K}(\text{Y})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{C}(\text{H})\text{MEOH}(\text{Ь}) \text{M}(\text{O}(\text{H})\text{A})\text{H})\text{H})$ – grandson Uroš I, with the monastic name Simeon – $\text{C}(\text{TE})\text{FA}(\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{A} \text{O}(\text{Y}(\text{P}(\text{O})\text{H}(\text{Ь}))\text{H}) \text{C}(\text{H})\text{MEOH}(\text{Ь}) \text{M}(\text{O}(\text{H})\text{A})\text{H})\text{H})$ – and Uroš's wife Jelena – $\text{C}(\text{E})\text{A}(\text{H})\text{H}) \text{B}(\text{E})\text{A}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})$.

On the western wall, from the other side, Christ enthroned is approached by members of the Nemanjić dynasty dressed in rulers' ornates of the highest rank (fig. 151). The first in line is the chapel's ktetor, King Dragutin, shown slightly inclined and with a model of his foundation in his hands – $\text{C}(\text{TE})\text{FA}(\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{A} \text{C}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{C}(\text{BE})\text{T}(\text{A})\text{G}(\text{O}) \text{H}) \text{B}(\text{E})\text{A}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{A} \text{X}(\text{P}(\text{O})\text{H}(\text{A}) \text{H}) \text{X}(\text{H}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{C}(\text{BE})\text{T}(\text{A})\text{G}(\text{O}) \text{X}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{M}(\text{A}) \text{C}(\text{E})\text{G}(\text{O}))$ (fig. 119). Dragutin's wife, Queen Catherine (Catalina) from Hungary, walks behind her husband escorting their young son Vladislav in front of her. The now lost inscription with her name – $\text{K}(\text{A})\text{TE}(\text{A})\text{H}(\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{D}(\text{Y})\text{H}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{B}(\text{E})\text{A}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{A} \text{X}(\text{G}(\text{Ь})\text{P}(\text{Ь})\text{C}(\text{K}(\text{A})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{C}(\text{TE})\text{FA}(\text{H})\text{H})$ – was above Vladislav's head, as attested by the remnants of lines for letter alignment and old photographs (figs. 143, 151). The other, northern half of the western wall features the only two frontally positioned dynastic portraits in the *parekklesion*, unfortunately completely faded: the incumbent ruler of Serbia, King Milutin, and his wife. The king was shown in a hieratic position, holding a scepter and an *akakia*, the symbols of his sovereign power, in front of his chest. The inscription that accompanied his portrait – $\text{C}(\text{TE})\text{FA}(\text{H})\text{H}) \text{X}(\text{P}(\text{O})\text{H}(\text{Ь})) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{A} \text{C}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{C}(\text{BE})\text{T}(\text{A})\text{G}(\text{O}) \text{H}) \text{B}(\text{E})\text{A}(\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H})\text{H}) \text{K}(\text{P}(\text{A})\text{A})\text{A} \text{O}(\text{Y}(\text{P}(\text{O})\text{H}(\text{A}))\text{H})\text{H})$ – is now completely worn, but old photographs from the 1920s show that it stood to the right of Milutin's halo (fig. 144). This means



that the destroyed signature next to the portrait of his queen consort Jelena, also shown upright and frontally but with her hands prayerfully directed toward Christ's image, was written along the very northern edge of the western wall. However, it was still visible and legible when Alexander Hilferding in 1857 and, most likely, Vladimir R. Petković in 1920 visited the monastery: *црква кралица српска*.³²³

The creators of the thematic program in the *parekklesion* split the representations of mostly deceased monks, ex-rulers of the Nemanjić dynasty, and the portraits of their living lay descendants into two separate yet ideationally and iconographically coherent lines. There were several reasons for this decision. Firstly, this allowed them to avoid painting a lengthy, compositionally monotonous

150

Prayerful procession of monks, former rulers of the Nemanjić dynasty, approaching Christ on the southern wall of the *parekklesion*



151
Portraits of King Dragutin with his wife and son and King Milutin with his consort on the western wall of the *parekklesion*

procession of the dynasty's members, whose number had grown in time. Also, such a large procession would have begun on one wall and continued on another in awkward continuity. By splitting the sequence into two segments, they could include the ktetor's mother, Queen Jelena, and her two daughters-in-law without disrupting the comprehension of the patrilineal line of succession to the Serbian throne. At the same time, this resolved the problem of having the ktetor and incumbent rulers, who would have been painted at the rear of a long line, too far from the image of the Lord as the ideational focal point of the entire iconographic ensemble. Owing to this bipartite concept, the ktetor of the *parekklesion* could be shown beside Christ and directly opposite the progenitor of the dynasty and his intercessor (that is why the king holds a model of his foundation in his hands while St. Simeon offers an intercessory prayer at the front of the opposite

line). Reflecting the order in which they ascended the throne, King Dragutin is in front of his brother Milutin and his wife in the sequence of portraits on the western wall. However, he is accompanied by his heir and spouse, both shown in front of the incumbent ruler's portrait, which could have created a problem for reading the hierarchy of dignities of the featured personages. Any confusion was avoided by showing King Milutin and partially his wife in frontal hieratic positions, distinguishing the ruling couple from other figures in the procession (fig. 151). The distinction was additionally highlighted by the conspicuous distance between the couple and the ktetor's family and the positioning of the accompanying signatures. The inscriptions marking the images of King Dragutin and Queen Catherine were on the left, whereas the signatures for the portraits of King Milutin and his wife were on the right side of their haloes.

The division of the Nemanjić figures into two parallel lines gathered around the enthroned Christ, intimated in the peculiar donor composition on the southern wall and on the southwestern pilaster at Gradac,³²⁴ appeared as a concept precisely here, in Dragutin's *parekklesion*. Slightly later, it was employed again at Arilje, but in a distinctive form.³²⁵ Finally, the problem of the increasing number of members of the main dynastic line and the growing self-awareness of the saint-bearing dynasty, i.e., its trust in the intercession of its holy progenitor, gave rise to another novelty in the donor-genealogical image in Dragutin's chapel: the Mother of God, previously routinely shown at the head of Nemanjić processions prayerfully approaching the Lord, was not included here.³²⁶

Since the northern wall of the *parekklesion* was cut out to make a large archway that served as the entrance, the frescoes in the breadth of this arch were given iconographic contents that usually graced the entrance zone of medieval Orthodox churches. At the top of the arch, Jesus Christ – $\text{I}(\text{COY})\text{C}(\text{b}) \text{X}(\text{PHCIO})\text{C}(\text{b})$ – is shown as a bust, blessing with his outstretched hands all who enter the chapel (fig. 154). Visitors are greeted, seemingly also with a blessing, by the two principal apostles in the lower part of the archway. Both are half-turned to the outside, i.e., toward those entering the chapel. The figure of St. Peter is on the western side of the archway and St. Paul's – $\text{C}(\text{BE})\text{Tb} \text{PAKAb}$ – is on the eastern, with a volume of his epistles in his hand (fig. 155). The custom of representing these two apostles near the entrance to a church – the one on whose faith, firm as stone, the Lord founded his church and the one on whose teachings it was built – had been accepted in the Serbian milieu, as noted above, already at the time when the Djurdjevi Stupovi katholikon was painted. Later, from the frescoing of Žiča and through the 13th century, it did not leave its mark in Serbian art, probably because of the then-established practice of grouping the apostles together in the choirs of churches in Raška.³²⁷ Representing this apostolic pair beside the portals experienced a revival in Serbia in the 14th century, during the restoration of

152

Donor portrait of King Dragutin on the western wall of his *parekklesion*

СТЕФАЪКР
ЛЪСЪТАО
ИВЪЖАО
КРАДЪЗРО
ШАХТЪ





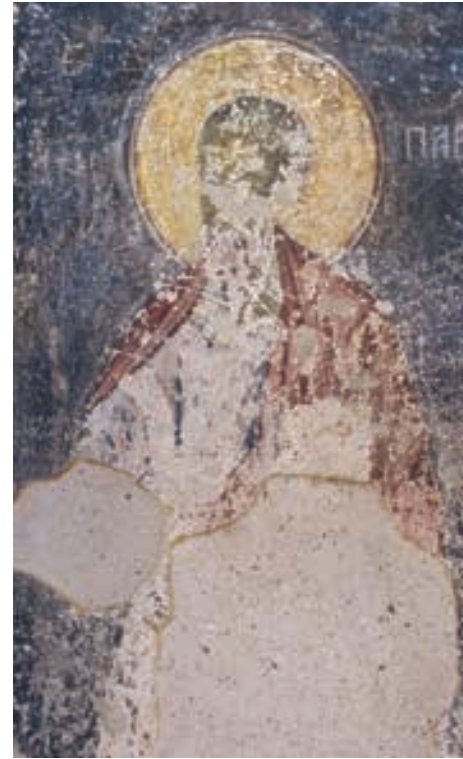
153

Enthronement of King
Milutin at Deževa, northern
side of the *parekklesion*
ceiling, detail

Žiča.³²⁸ Since St. Peter and St. Paul were painted at the entrance to the Djurdjevi Stupovi *parekklesion* considerably earlier, we must assume that such a decision was made to emulate the solution implemented in the *katholikon*, where they were shown on the sides of the archway leading into the naos. However, in the chapel, they swapped places, with St. Paul's image on the left and St. Peter's on the right side of the entrance.

There is no doubt that visitors had a chance to see some of the frescoes even before they passed through the mentioned archway. Describing the murals in Dragutin's chapel, Hilferding reported that "these paintings continued on the outer wall of the church."³²⁹ Aleksandar Deroko confirmed his testimony in 1920, noting that the entire *parekklesion* was frescoed and that there were "wall paintings even on the outside, on the sides facing the courtyard."³³⁰ Unfortunately, the frescoes on this side of the chapel's façades are now lost, and little can be said of their contents or date of creation.³³¹

Modest traces of heavily worn paintings have survived only in the arched niche on the opposite, southern façade of the *parekklesion*. A bust of Jesus Christ was represented there on a purple background (figs. 156, 157). One can still make out the outlines of the upper torso beneath the folds of his himation and the head, illuminated by a halo with arms of a cross inscribed in it, the lines of the horizontal beam impressed in the plaster, to the right of the Savior's head, and the better preserved upper beam decorated with pearls and jewels. Judging by the drawing and ornamentation of this upper beam, the cross in Christ's halo is very different from the crosses inscribed in the nimbuses on the images of the Lord in the *katholikon* and *parekklesion*, and its diminutive decorations, above all, the jewels, and the way they were painted are most reminiscent of examples from the high 14th century. It could have been a replica of a much older representation, which, insufficiently protected on the façade, had been exposed to the elements and decayed over time. That is even more probable because the niche is known to have existed even before the ground level of the tower was converted into a *parekklesion*. Therefore, it seems, especially since it was not above the entrance but on the opposite façade, out of sight of visitors of the *parekklesion*, that the bust in the niche did not represent the chapel's patron. Its purpose was probably slightly different. Placed on a building that stood in front of the encircling monastery walls and visible from afar due to its size and position, Christ's bust, probably alongside an image of St. George, was part of the imagery on the exterior of Djurdjevi Stupovi, symbolically embodying and spiritually protecting this monastic dwelling and, at the same time, watching over and sanctifying the surrounding landscape.



No reliable evidence on the dedication of the unique *parekklesion* at Djurdjevi Stupovi has reached us. Therefore, the Holy Trinity shown as three angels in the Hospitality of Abraham, the only image with strictly religious contents among the surviving frescoes, is sometimes believed to represent the chapel's patron.³³² Such an interpretation is not groundless. It is supported by the fact that the Hospitality of Abraham or three angels seated at a table, taken out of this scene, was sometimes given a prominent place in the bottommost zone in some 13th century churches dedicated to the Holy Trinity, such as the Sopoćani katholikon or a church near the town of Kranidi in Argolis.³³³ In the long history of Eastern Christianity, one can find unusual examples of *parekklesia* as hierarchically second-rate churches that bore a dedication of the highest rank – to the Holy Trinity – in monastic centers whose katholika had patrons of lesser importance, merely saints that the Trinitarian God holds dear. A notable example is the *parekklesion* of the Holy Trinity (ca. 1100) in the Monastery of St. John Chrysostom at Koutsovendis in Cyprus (ca. 1090).³³⁴ However, caution is advised because this was a highly uncommon practice. In addition, the *parekklesion* at Koutsovendis is quite a large structure, not much smaller than the adjacent katholikon, and in its

154

Jesus Christ, vertex of the soffit of the entrance to King Dragutin's *parekklesion*

155

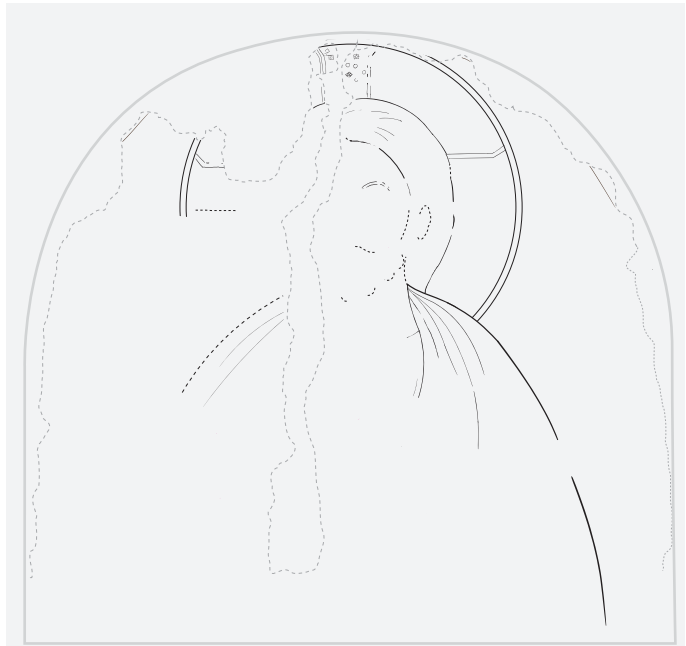
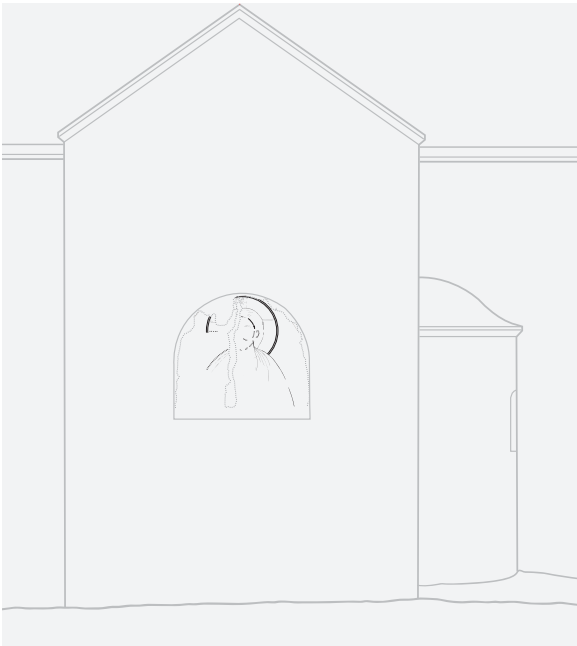
Paul the Apostle, eastern side of the entrance to the *parekklesion*

156

Drawing of the southern façade of King Dragutin's *parekklesion*

157

Drawing of the bust of Jesus Christ in the lunette on the southern façade of the *parekklesion*



elaborate program, a representation of the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles – the image of the feastday of the Holy Trinity – holds pride of place in the dome. In contrast, the location in the monastery courtyard, dimensions, and architectural plan of the Djurdjevi Stupovi *parekklesion* are not anywhere near the position, size, and floorplan of the *katholikon*. Finally, the thematic program of the chapel, overwhelmingly dominated by themes from Serbian history, would have hardly suited the chapel's dedication to the Holy Trinity.

Historical themes surmount and enfold the entire *parekklesion* to such an extent that the medieval Orthodox world includes no example of another church with a painted program in which dynastic themes so dominantly outnumber religious topics. Neither does earlier Serbian art offer comparable analogies for such a program, although it heavily draws on earlier traditions. The unusual emphasis on historical images, achieved by placing them in the segments of the groin vault, does have a precedent in the frescoes of the room on the second floor of the Žiča entrance tower. At Žiča, however, the portraits of St. Simeon, Sava Nemanjić, Stefan the First-Crowned and his sons were painted between the ribs of the groin vault.³³⁵ On the other hand, at Djurdjevi Stupovi, this spot features the already described cycle, unique in its themes and iconography: a sequence of scenes showing the enthronement of Stefan the First-Crowned and three subsequent rulers,



a sort of history of accession to the throne through the direct male line. On the other hand, sequences of dynastic portraits with pronounced genealogical underpinnings, whose iconography gradually developed in Serbian art throughout the 13th century, were placed in the first zone. The growing interest of Serbian courtly and church circles in historical themes and the ktetor's views and aspirations both contributed to such a distinctive and unusual program.

With this imagery, King Dragutin wanted, firstly, to immortalize the fact that he had abdicated in favor of his younger brother at Deževa, retaining the title of king and a share in power and, secondly, to promote his son Vladislav as a possible heir to the Serbian throne. Since the provisions of the Deževa agreement on the takeover of power are not fully known,³³⁶ whether and how the question of succession was resolved remains unclear. Given that neither Milutin's nor Dragutin's sons bore the title of "Young King" or the matching insignia, including Vladislav in the *parekklesion*, it is highly likely that the matter had not been fully settled in 1282 and that the heir apparent had not been officially appointed in a religious ceremony of investiture.³³⁷ Hence, in the post-Deževa period, it was more important to King Dragutin to, in the subtle yet eloquent language of imagery, highlight the history of the dynasty and his place in it as, among other things, the status that legitimized his son's future claims to the throne. The ktetor's views, wishes and hopes also directly influenced the program in the *parekklesion* by including multiple images of healer saints, as mentioned above.

On account of the importance of dynastic themes and narratives on the history of succession on the Serbian throne in the *parekklesion*, some scholars understood the image of the Holy Trinity above the Nemanjić portraits as an ideological-ceremonial supplement to the monarchical theme. They believed that it was a reminder of the protocolic duty of the ruler, as a precondition for assuming the throne, to sign the Nicene Creed (profession of faith), which contains the Orthodox teaching on the Trinitarian God, thereby confirming his orthodoxy.³³⁸ This custom had been established at the Constantinopolitan court already in the early Byzantine period and was followed in the Palaiologan era,³³⁹ and there are indications that it was also observed, in some form, in medieval Serbia.³⁴⁰ However, the Holy Trinity does not surmount the cycle of conciliar enthronements (it was painted below it) but the procession of monastic members of the Nemanjić family who abdicated and renounced earthly power for the salvation of their souls. The Holy Trinity and the procession share the same architectural framework and are programmatically linked in the same way as the healer saint images with the portraits of the incumbent rulers on the western walls. Therefore, the representation of the "Old Testament" Holy Trinity in Dragutin's *parekklesion* does not seem to have been inspired by the protocol of ascending the throne. Notably, an iconographically identical image of the Trinitarian God

was painted directly above the dual portrait of the former Byzantine emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1347–1354), shown both as a ruler and monk Joasaph in a manuscript with his theological treatises, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris (Paris. Gr, 1242, fol. 123v).³⁴¹ The reason for that is evident. Recognizing the “great God of the Christians” in the three humans-angels who visited Abraham, the ex-emperor based his anti-Islamic treatise, which begins with the mentioned miniature, on their promise that the offspring of the Old Testament patriarch and Sarah would bring blessings to all humankind. The purpose of the image of the “Old Testament” Holy Trinity in Dragutin’s *parekklesion* is probably also to glorify God, who made a covenant with Abraham and made him the forefather of the Chosen People, but here it does so in a markedly different ideational context.

In the *parekklesion*, the representation of the tri-hypostatic God at the table in Abraham’s home is above the procession of members of the saint-bearing dynasty, whose progenitor, St. Simeon, was celebrated as the New Abraham, i.e., the forebear of New Israel – the baptized Serbian people.³⁴² Did not this image, then, suggest that the God of the Nemanjić family was, in fact, Abraham’s God, the Pantokrator, who now elevates the Serbian saint-bearing dynasty as the new chosen family, the pious followers of the God-chosen lineage of Abraham, the successors to the leaders of the ancient and now fallen Chosen People? Could not this *parekklesion*, with the striking dynastic underpinnings of its



159–160

Ornamental bands painted in the fresco technique on the blind arches and ribs in King Dragutin’s *parekklesion*



fresco program, have been dedicated – like the chapels on the southwestern side of the *katholika* at Studenica, Sopoćani, and Gradac³⁴³ – to the progenitor of this dynasty and the founder of Djurdjevi Stupovi, St. Simeon, shown interceding with Christ on behalf of his descendants? Do the prominence of his two namesakes at the entrance to the sanctuary and the multiple images of stylites in the bottommost zone of the chapel, saints whose cults provided models for celebrating St. Simeon of Serbia,³⁴⁴ support this possibility? Resolving all these dilemmas and securely identifying the patron saint of the *parekklesion* would have probably been possible had the frescoes on the masonry altar screen in the chapel and its façades facing the monastery courtyard survived.³⁴⁵



The insignia on the portraits of Dragutin and Milutin, their posture, titles in the inscriptions and the last scene in the enthronement cycle on the *parekklesion* ceiling suggest that those portraits and, consequently, the entire body of wall paintings in the *parekklesion*, were created after Uroš I's younger son acquired the title of king and took supreme power in 1282. The age of Dragutin's son and the name of Milutin's wife could narrow down the latest point of the timespan in which they were painted. However, the name of Milutin's spouse has been a matter of scholarly debate for decades.³⁴⁶ Since Hilferding's reading of the queen's name posed a problem in some reconstructions of the number and order of Milutin's marriages and wives, it was questioned or rejected several times. Its accuracy was also contested on account of its supposed orthographic ex-

clusivity, i.e., the appearance of the *yat* letter in the queen's name,³⁴⁷ although the name of her mother-in-law and namesake, Dragutin and Milutin's mother, includes this symbol in the same *parekklesion*.³⁴⁸ Her slightly unusual title – *кралница сръбска* – has a parallel in the same chapel, in the inscription beside the portrait of Stefan the First-Crowned, marked as *краль сръбскы*. A comparison of all extant inscriptions in the *parekklesion* with Hilferding's reading shows that the

Russian linguist made no major errors in their transcription, which was also the case in his copies of the signatures accompanying the portraits at the nearby Sopoćani monastery. Any departures are small and insignificant, mostly orthographic in nature. The inscriptions marking the portraits on the western wall of the Djurdjevi Stupovi were copied particularly accurately, and they include the representation of the Serbian queen. Hence it seems reasonable to trust Hilferding's reading of the now lost inscription that accompanied her image, especially because he had no dilemmas when reading the name of Milutin's wife. Finally, as noted above, a few decades later, Vladimir R. Petković also recorded the name "Jelena" next to the representation of Milutin's wife in Dragutin's *parekklesion*.³⁴⁹

In addition, other available historical information seems consistent with Hilferding's (and Petković's) reading of the inscription accompanying the portrait of the Serbian queen. The woman shown beside King Milutin was likely his first wife,³⁵⁰ whose name is not reported in other sources. The marriage, which bore a son, Stefan (later known as Stefan of Dečani, born ca. 1275), was concluded after 1271 and certainly before 1282 and dissolved shortly after Milutin ascended the throne. He then married the daughter of *sebastokrator* John Angelos, lord of Thessaly. However, Milutin suddenly dismissed his second wife, who is known not to have been called Jelena,³⁵¹ and embarked on a short-lived, canonically illegitimate marriage with Elizabeth, Queen Catherine's sister. In the summer of 1284, he married for the fourth time, and the bride was Anna, daughter of the Bulgarian tsar George Terter I.³⁵² Identifying the queen painted in Dragutin's *parekklesion* as the first wife of Stefan Uroš II Milutin would lead to a very precise date when the portraits and, by extension, all frescoes in the chapel were painted: in 1282 or 1283.

This timeline is not at odds with the age of Dragutin's elder son Vladislav, shown as a young boy between his father and mother Catherine. Given that he appears as an actor in the political life of Hungary already in 1292 and that an agreement on his marriage was made in 1293, Vladislav must have been born before 1278, i.e., between 1275 and 1278,³⁵³ if not slightly earlier.³⁵⁴ That would have made him seven or eight years old in 1282–1283, which does match the age of the ktetor's heir on his portrait in the chapel. The fact that Dragutin's younger son Urošić does not feature in the portrait ensemble at Djurdjevi Stupovi perhaps also supports this quite early date of its creation. Besides, on their images in the *parekklesion* (the donor composition and the painting of the Deževa takeover), Dragutin and Milutin have very sparse facial hair along the edges of their faces (figs. 152, 153), unlike in later portraits (Vatican icon, Arilje), where both brothers have thicker mustaches and increasingly long beards. Finally, the *parekklesion* was frescoed as part of the final works on the restoration of Djurdjevi Stupovi, begun while King Dragutin was still in power, which also supports

161

Holy Trinity, detail,
southern wall of the
parekklesion



the conclusion that those wall paintings were created not long after the Deževa takeover in 1282.³⁵⁵



The frescoes in the tiny *parekklesion* at Djurdjevi Stupovi were painted by a gifted and well-educated artist, perhaps with the help of an assistant. With his extraordinary sense of decorativeness and feeling for the totality of visual structure, he recognized the interior architecture of the edifice, with its multitude of deep pilasters, blind arches and profiled ribs of the groin vault, as an almost ideal frame for his frescoes. Hence he emphasized and made it an important element of the visual concept, more dominant than the decorative framework in the *katholikon*, which could have inspired it. In doing this, he very creatively drew on solutions and esthetic practices for centuries fostered and developed in the Byzantine world. He consistently covered all the abovementioned narrow surfaces demarcating the wall surfaces with carefully painted, conspicuous bands with various ornaments, emphasizing the well-proportioned and rhythmic architectural shell of the central-floorplan chapel as the bearer of the compositional structure of its whole painted decorative system (figs. 138, 158–160). This considerably added to the legibility of the entire iconographic content. Cramped in the small space of the *parekklesion*, it could be divided into well-rounded formal and thematic segments arranged with a sense of classicist composition within an easily readable thematic ensemble. And otherwise, the artist shrewdly used the peculiarities of the chapel's architecture. For instance, directly opposite the large archway, he painted the solemn prayerful procession of the most prominent members of the saint-bearing dynasty before the enthroned Lord, surmounted by the Holy Trinity seated at the table in Abraham's home. Through this archway on the northern wall, the only source of daylight in the room, rays of light pour in and bounce off those images, the first to meet the eye when a visitor enters, bringing their colors to life and additionally highlighting them.

The painter of the *parekklesion* strayed from the parameters imposed by the architectural backdrop rarely and solely when he had to and then only in details. Since the blind arches, resting on simple capitals, begin at a height smaller than needed to accommodate standing figures, he chose not to place the border between the first and second fresco zones at the level of the capitals, which would have reflected the architectural framework, and instead raised it considerably higher. This reduced the arched surface on which the Holy Trinity and the medallions with the holy physicians were set but made the first zone tall enough to accommodate the Nemanjić portraits (figs. 145, 158). Also, the artist covered the capitals and the spiked consoles of the groin vault ribs with a neutral black

162

St. John the Wonderworking
Unmercenary, northern
wall of the *parekklesion*





163

Enthronement of King
Milutin at Deževa, detail:
a Serbian noble

hue to tone down the riot of colors and push back the secondary architectural elements that burdened the decorative system and disturbed the clarity of its structure (figs. 158–160).

Although he based his art on the conceptional frames, solutions and methods of 13th-century Byzantine monumental painting,³⁵⁶ the painter of King Dragutin's *parekklesion* showed remarkable skill in positioning his compositions and figures to fit the small wall surfaces fragmented by the architectural framework. His enthusiastic embracing and emphasizing of this framework was also a result of this. In some images, such as the Holy Trinity, one can see the artist's affinity for small-format paintings and his ability to imbue them with a glimmering vivacity of movement and charming expressions (figs. 129, 142). In this, his work matches the stylistic trends in the art of the last quarter of the 13th century, already intimated in the Sopoćani narthex and at Gradac.³⁵⁷ Another feature that overlaps with those trends is that, unlike the great artists of the previous period, he tended not to overemphasize the volume of his figures, although he clearly defined and gave it firmness (fig. 161). Even though he competently used coloristic modeling, i.e., the contrast between warm and cool colors, to create an illusion of rounded shapes on bare body parts (Holy Trinity, Sts. Joachim and Anna), tonal modeling is the prevalent means of achieving volume in most images in the *parekklesion* (Keramion, St. John, Mandyllion, and others). This modeling method became dominant in the art of the last quarter of the century.³⁵⁸ And yet, his works are very far from the expressive mannerism that pervades the fifteen years younger fresco ensemble at St. Achilleos in Arilje, with its upset balance, exaggerated movements, strong and almost baroque contrasts of light and shadow, and departures from classicist canons and ideals of beauty.³⁵⁹ The painter of Dragutin's *parekklesion* aspired to achieve a perfect yet not lifeless balance in his compositions and a classicist sophistication of form (figs. 161–163). He succeeded in this because he had at least second-hand knowledge of the artistic solutions of classical antiquity, understood them and, as a fine draftsman and gifted painter, creatively built them into his works.

He also had a refined feeling for colors and sought balance in his compositions by carefully weighing the ratio of warm and cool hues, which usually alternate in his paintings, with the dominant combinations being dark-blues and light-ochers, as well as olive-greens and light-purples. This coloristic refinement goes hand in hand with the beauty of the painted matter, taut and vibrant, imbued with a cheerful light that, on the most prominent points, transforms into glimmers suggested by lazure coats of white paint. They give the modeling additional convincingness and vivacity. In terms of his artistic views and achievements, the painter of King Dragutin's *parekklesion* is the closest to the artist who frescoed most of the chapel dedicated to St. Simeon at Sopoćani.³⁶⁰ Both were guided



164

Christ's *acheiropoieton*
 image on the Holy
 Napkin (Mandyliion)

by the same ideal of beauty embodied in a certain typology of saintly faces and a similar coloristic sense, but the Sopoćani artist was more inclined to employ monumental forms and more influenced by the chief painter of the naos at the foundation of Dragutin's father. The inscriptions accompanying their figures and other representations in the southern *parekklesion* beside the Sopoćani narthex were written in the Serbian language, with few orthographic errors, which might have been a result of the involvement of a native speaker in their execution. On the other hand, major mistakes and a few Grecisms in the inscriptions at Dragutin's *parekklesion* suggest that they were written by the hand of a Greek artist, apparently quite at home in the Serbian milieu.³⁶¹ Entrusting him to fresco his *parekklesion*, King Dragutin gave Djurdjevi Stupovi an artistic work worthy of the ktetorial achievements of his great-grandfather, the monastery's founder St. Simeon Nemanja.

NOTES

1. On the history and architecture of the church cf. chapters *History* and *Architecture* by M. Marković in M. Marković, D. Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras*, Novi Sad 2021, 13–126.
2. *Ibidem*, 95–99, figs. 17, 64–74 (M. Marković).
3. Long after they were discovered in 1956, those heavily damaged scenes in the drum remained unidentified. Cf. M. Лађевић, *Резултати истраживачких радова на фрескама цркве Св. Пејтра и Павла крај Новој Пазара*, Саопштења 4 (1961), 149–162, especially 151–154; Р. Николић, *Пејрова црква и Ђурђеви сљубови*, Београд 1961, 3–8, especially 5; С. Радојчић, *Слика српско сликарство*, Београд 1966, 17–19; Д. Тасић, *Средњовековни културно-историјски сјоменици*, у: *Нови Пазар и околна*, Београд 1969, 123–125, especially 123; М. Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живойс цркве св. Пејтра код Новој Пазара*, Старица 20 (1970) 35–51, especially 39; R. Hamann-Mac Lean, *Grundlegung zu einer Geschichte der mittelalterlichen onumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien*, Giessen 1976, 205–214, especially 213.
4. They were identified by V. J. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslawien*, München 1976, 34.
5. G. Millet, *Recherches sur l'iconographie de l'Evangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles d'après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macedoine et du Mont-Athos*, Paris 1960², 67–69; H. Papastavrou, *Recherche iconographique dans l'art byzantin et occidental du XIe au XVe siècle. L'Annonciation*, Venise 2007, 49–50. From the second part of the 10th and during the 11th century, the practice of separating figures of the Virgin and the Archangel on two divided panels located on opposite sides of the eastern parts of Byzantine churches began to be established. Cf. J. D. Varalis, *Παρατηρήσεις για τη θέση του Ευαγγελισμού στη μνημειακή ζωγραφική κατά τη μεσοβυζαντινή περίοδο*, ΔΧΑΕ 4/19 (1996–1997), 201–220.
6. Admittedly, in that later iconography of the Nativity of Christ, the Adoration of the Magi and the Arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem were shown alternatively. On the iconography of the Nativity v. Millet, *Recherches*, 93–163; J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Les représentations de la Nativité du Christ dans l'art de l'Orient chrétien*, in: *Miscellanea codicologica F. Masai: dicata MCMLXXIX*, Tome I, Gand 1979, 1–21.
7. On thrones with a lyre-shaped backrest cf. J. D. Breckenridge, *Christ on the Lyre-Backed Throne*, DOP 34–35 (1980–1981), 247–260 (with earlier literature); M. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images. Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th–15th Centuries)*, Leiden–Boston 2003, 161, 164–165; M. Skoblar, *Marble Relief with Enthroned Christ from Rab*, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta*, III serija, 39 (2012), 171–179. On the representation of the Adoration of the Magi in early Christian and medieval art cf. H. Kehrler, *Die Heiligen drei Könige in Literatur und Kunst*, Zweiter Band, Leipzig 1909; G. Vezin, *L'Adoration et le cycle des Mages dans l'art chrétien primitif*, Paris 1950.
8. Essentially, the arrangement and setting of all figures in the composition and their gestures match those in the representation of the Adoration of the Magi in the Menologion of Basil II (Vatic. Gr. 1613 fol. 272). Cf. *Il Menologio*

di Basilio II (cod. Vaticano greco 1613), Torino 1907. I Testo, 74; II Tavole, 272.

9. On the iconography of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple cf. D. Shorr, *The Iconographic Development of the Presentation in the Temple*, Art Bulletin 28 (1946), 17–42; K. Wessel, *Darstellung Christi in Tempel*, in: *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, Band. I, Lieferung 8, Stuttgart 1966, 1334–1145; H. Maguire, *The Iconography of Symeon with the Christ Child in Byzantine Art*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34–35 (1980–1981), 261–269; D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni on Chios*, Athens 1985, 120–121.

10. For the number of windows in the drum of St. Peter's church cf. Marković, Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles*, 117, figs. 88 (M. Marković).

11. The dome of the Panagia Kera is peculiar: it is reinforced with crossed ribs, and the scenes are not painted in the drum but in the cap of the windowless dome, between the ribs, where the bust of the Pantokrator could not be painted. For the wall paintings in the dome of that church and others mentioned, cf. M. Bormproudaki, *Παναγία Κερά: Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες στην Κριτσά*. Athens s. a., 4–5, πιν. 19–21; T. Papamastorakis, *Ο διάκοσμος του τρούλου των ναών της παλαιολόγειας περιόδου στη Βαλκανική χερσόνησο και την Κύπρο*, Athens 2001, 18, 54–55; A. Σέμογλου, *Το πρόγραμμα του τρούλου της Παναγίας Κωννουριώτισσας στην Πιερία, εικονογραφικά πρότυπα και παράλληλα*, in: *Η Πιερία στα βυζαντινά και νεότερα χρόνια*, Katerini 2002, 716–720, εικ. 1, 4; Д. Вojводић, *О живојуци Беле цркве Каранске и сучременим сликарству Рашке*, *Зограф* 31 (2006–2007), 88–89 (with earlier literature); I. Sisiou, *Το εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα στον τρούλο της Παναγίας Κουμπελίδικης και ο κοιμητηριακός χαρακτήρας του ναού*, in: *Niš and Byzantium* 6, ed. M. Rakocija, Niš 2008, 250–252, εικ. 1–6.

12. Marković, Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles*, fig. 86.

13. Cf. P. Михаиловић, *Црква Свејџої Пејџра код Нової Пазара*, *Новопазарски зборник* 10 (1986) 67–100, especially 72–77.

14. J. Mateos, *Le Typicon de la Grande Eglise. Ms. Sainte-Croix no. 40, Xe siecle*, Tom I, *Orientalia Christiana analecta* 165, Roma 1962, 158/159.

15. Cf. n. 16 infra and E. Kitzinger, *Reflections on the Feast Cycle in Byzantine Art*, CA 36 (1988), 51–58.

16. M. Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor I–III*, Recklinghausen 1967, Vol. II, no. I, X, XXIV; Vol. III, no. XXVI, XXIX, XXXIX, LII, LXI. For the datation of frescoes in all those churches cf. also C. Jolivet-Levy, *Les eglises byzantines de Cappadoce. Le programme iconographique de l'abside et de ses abords*, Paris 1991, 22, 44, 85, 96, 108, 141, 184, 303, 323.

17. *Исџוריја срџскої нарога*, T. I, Београд 1981, 245 (V. J. Djurić). The scene in the north-eastern squinch was later mistakenly identified as the representation of Twelve-Year-Old Christ teaching in the temple, while the Betrayal of Judas was misidentified on the western side of the space under the dome. Cf. J. Nešković, R. Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre pres de Novi Pazar*, Belgrade 1987, 43.

18. On the iconography of the Baptism cf. Ch. Walter, *Baptism in Byzantine Iconography*, *Sobornost* 2/2 (1980), 8–25; Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 122–126, with older literature.

19. *Исџוריја срџскої нарога*, 245 (V. J. Djurić). For the iconography of the Betrayal of Judas in the Byzantine art cf. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 184–186, with previous literature.

20. On the iconography of the Transfiguration cf. Millet, *Recherches*, 214–231; Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 126–129; A. Andreopoulos, *Matamorphosis. The transfiguration in Byzantine Theology and Iconography*, Creestwood – New York 2005, 67–253, especially 77–81, 92–96; S. Nes, *The Uncreated Light: An Iconographical Study of the Transfiguration in the Eastern Church*, Cambridge 2007.

21. *Nicholaos Mesarites: Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople*, ed. Et transl. G. Downey, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series*, Vol. 47, part 6 (1957), 902–903, transl. 871–873; *The Treasures of Mount Athos. Illuminated Manuscripts, Volume 2. The Monasteries of Iveron, St. Panteleimon, Esphigmenou and Chilandar*, ed. S. M. Pelekanidis et al., Athens 1975, 351, fig. 295; М. В. Щепкина, *Миниатюры Хлудовской псалтыри. Геческий иллюстрированный кодекс IX века*, Moskva 1977, 88 об; L.

- Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium. Image as Exegesis in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus*, New York 2008, 303–305, fig. 14;
22. Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting*, II, fig. 175, 204, 231; A. W. Epstein, *Tokali Kilise. Tenth-Century Metropolitan Art in Byzantine Cappadocia*, Washington 1986, 65, fig. 32. However, there are plenty of such examples outside Cappadocia. Cf. T. Velmans, *Le Tétraévangile de la Laurentienne. Florence, Laur. VI. 23*, Paris, 1971, 43, Pl. 48, fig. 215. S. Pelekanidis, M. Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, Athens 1985, 62, fig. 14, 15; etc.
23. Millet, *Recherches*, 219, fig. 183; Andreopoulos, *Matamorphosis*, 127–133, 156–160, fig. 8a, 14, 14a; S. Der Nersessian, *L'illustration des psautiers grecs du Moyen âge*, Vol. II: *Londres, Add. 19.352*, Paris 1970, 45, fig. 195; G. Kühnel, *Wall Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Berlin 1988, 142, Pl. XXXVII; etc. Sometimes, St. Peter himself could be represented on the left side of the Transfiguration scene with completely light-brown hair, though very rarely. Cf. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning*, fig. 303, fig. 14; Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, figs. 26, 27.
24. On the mandorla cf. R. Todorova, *Visualizing the Divine: Mandorla as a Vision of God in Byzantine Iconography*, *Икон 6* (2013), 287–296; P. Тодорова-Енчева, *Символ и значение: концепт за Божията слава в къснoвизантийската иконография*, Шумен 2020, with older scholarly literature.
25. The position of the Transfiguration within cycles of Christological and Festal scenes in the programs of Eastern Christian churches is highly variable. Cf. pp. 139–142 infra et K. M. Skawran, *The Development of Middle Byzantine Fresco Painting in Greece*, Pretoria 1982, 32, 106, 122 n. 202–203; M. Чанак-Медић, Д. Поповић, Д. Војводић, *Манасџир Жича*, Београд 2014, 219–229 (Д. Војводић).
26. *Исџорија срџској народа*, 245 (V. J. Djurić).
27. For more details, cf. K. Papadopoulos, *Die Wandmalereien des XI Jahrhunderts in der Kirche Panagia ton Chalkeon in Thessaloniki*, Graz–Köln 1966, 18–24; N. Gioles, *Η Ανάληψις του Χριστού βάσει των μνημείων της Α΄ χιλιετηρίδος. Διατριβή επί διδακτορία*, Athens 1981, 243–248, εικ. 58–60; Skawran, *The Development*, 14–15; O. Demus, *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice*, vol. I, Chicago-London 1984, 173–241; Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce*, 83, 137, 175, 217, 241, 265, 291; Чанак-Медић, Поповић, Војводић, *Манасџир Жича*, 193–195 (Д. Војводић).
28. From the 10th century, the Communion of the Apostles began to be painted in the lateral parts of the sanctuary of Orthodox churches, but only in the following centuries would it become an almost indispensable part of the thematic program of the central apse. Cf. B. H. Лазарев, *Мозаику Софиу Киевской*, Москва 1960, 38, 107–108; Papadopoulos, *Die Wandmalereien*, 30–32, Sk. 1; Ch. Walter, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church*, London 1982, 184–189, 198–199, 215–217; Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce*, 140, 152, 159, 215, 252, 268–269, 271, 286; M. Pnyotidi, *L'église rupestre de la Nativité dans l'île de Naxos*, CA 23 (1974), 112, fig. 6; Sh. E. J. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries. Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary*, Seattle 1999, 48–50.
29. In earlier scholarship, all the details of the modest remnants of the earliest frescoes in the entire apse of St. Peter's church were not observed and adequately identified. Cf. Лађевић, *Резултати* 151, 154; Торовић-Љубинковић, *Живоиус цркве св. Пеџра*, 40–41; Наманн-Мас Леан, *Grundlegung*, 208–214; M. Радујко, *Еџсскойски џресџо у срџским џемљама од IX до XVIII века II*, Београд 2020, 242–245.
30. J. Leroy, *Le décor de l'église du couvent des Syriens au Ouady Natroun (Égypte)*, CA 23 (1974), 163, 165, 166, fig. 12; Gioles, *Η Ανάληψις*, 115–125, 250, εικ. 11–16; M. Kupelian, *The Ascension Scene in the Apse of the Church at Dayr Qubbat al-Hawwa: A Comparative Study*, in; *Christianity and Monasticism in Aswan and Nubia*, Eds. G. Gabra, H. N. Takla, Cairo – New York 2013, 201–212.
31. A. Χυngoroulos, *Η τοιχογραφία της Αναλήψεως εν τη αψίδι του Αγ. Γεωργίου Θεσσαλονίκης*, *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς* 77 (1938), 32–53; S. Eyiçe, *Deux anciennes églises byzantines de la citadelle d'Amasra (Paphlagonie)*, CA 7 (1954), 103; Gioles, *Η Ανάληψις*, 248–250, εικ. 61; Skawran, *The Development*, 17–18; M. Chatzidakis, N. Drandakis, N. Zias, M. Acheimastou-Potamianou, A. Vasilaki-Katakatsani,

- Naxos, Athens 1989, 19, 20; C. S. Márquez, *Singing to Emmanuel: The Wall Paintings of Sant Miquel in Terrassa and the 6th Century Artistic Reception of Byzantium in the Western Mediterranean*, *Arts* 2019, 8(4), 128 (<https://doi.org/10.3390/arts8040128>), 1–30, especially 6–17.
32. Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce*, 167–168, 206, 226, 301, 304, 308–309, 331, 336; Pl. 102, 103, 128/2, 135/1, 164, 166, 169, 170.
33. Maximos the Confessor attributes the symbolism of the heavens to the altar of the Christian church (cf. Migne PG, t. 91, col. 668C–669B, 672A; *Maximus Confessor Selected Writings*, transl. and notes by G. Berthold, New York – Mahwah 1985, 188 (chap. 2), 189 (chap. 3); R. Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la divine liturgie du VII^e au XV^e siècle*, Paris 1966, 119). For St. Germanos of Constantinople, “The altar is and is called the heavenly and spiritual altar, where the earthly and material priests who always assist and serve the Lord represent the spiritual, serving, and hierarchical Powers ...” (cf. St Germanos of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, The Greek text with transl., introduction and commentary by P. Meyendorff, Crestwood 1984, 60/61 (Ch. 6).
34. Migne PG, t. 91 col. 688D; *Maximus Confessor*, 198 (chap. 8); Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins*, 121.
35. Migne PG, t. 91, col. 692D–693C; *Maximus Confessor*, 200–201 (chap. 14); Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins*, 122.
36. St Germanos of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, 76/77–78/79 (Ch. 26, 27).
37. *Ibidem*, 60/61, n. 6 (Ch. 7),
38. For the thematic program of the wall paintings in apses of Christian churches and representations of the Apostles (standing, enthroned, busts) in them, cf. Ch. Ihm, *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei vom vierten Jahrhundert bis zur Mitte des achten Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden 1960, 11–26; E. Привалова, *Росписъ Тимотеубани*, Тбилиси 1980, 40–47; Jolivet-Lévy, *Les églises byzantines de Cappadoce*, 10, 26, 28, 34–35, 41, 48, 52, 57, 59, 64, 114, 178, 190, 246, 248, 250, 255–256, 257, 264, 268, 279, 283; 290, 304, 309, 340, 341.
39. Previously, those frescoes were variously dated: to the 8–9th century (Николић, *Петрова црква и Ђурђеви сѣудови*, 5), sometime between the 8th and 10th centuries (), the beginning of the 9th century (Nešković, Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre*, 51), the second half of the 9th century (Тасић, *Средњовековни културно-историјски сѣоменици*, 123), or the 10th century (Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 33–34; М. Чанак-Медић, Б. Тодић, *Сѣару Рас са Соѣћанима*, Нови Сад 2013, 38)
40. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 34.
41. Pelekanidis, Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, fig. 5 on p. 10, fig. 7 on p. 13, fig. 8 on p. 97; I. Sisiou, *Conservation of the Temple of St. Stefanos*, Veroia 2008, figs. on p. 17–22, 44–46; I. C. Tassias, *Saint Dimitrios*, Thessaloniki 2007, fig. on the right-hand side of p. 80. The background of the paintings from the 10th and 11th centuries in the cave church of St. Christine in Carpignano has a similar but three-part division. Cf. V. Pace, *Litania in pittura: la cripta di s. Cristina a Carpignano Salentino*, in: *ΕΥΛΟΓΙΑ. Sulle orme di André Jacob*, ed. R. Durante, Lecce 2021, 483–515, fig. 2. 9, 14, 20.
42. Χυngopoulos, *Η τοιχογραφία της Αναλήψεως*, εικ. 1.
43. F. W. Deichmann, *Frühchristliche Bauten und Mosaiken von Ravenna*, Baden-Baden 1958, Taf. 100–107, 179, 312, 316, 333, 359, 359; G. Sotiriou, M. Sotiriou, *Η Βασιλική του Αγίου Δημητρίου Θεσσαλονίκης*, Athens 1952, πιν. 60, 69, 78, 79; A. Χυngopoulos, *The Mosaics of the Church of St. Demetrios, in Thessaloniki*, Thessaloniki 1969, 30–31, figs. 29, 32; R. Cormack, *The Mosaic Decoration of S. Demetrios, Thessaloniki: A Reexamination in the Light of the Drawings of W. S. George*, *The Annual of the British School in Athens* 64 (1969), 17–52; *Thessaloniki and Its Monuments*, Thessaloniki 1985, fig on p. 36; C. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, *Byzantine Thessaloniki*, Thessaloniki 1993, figs. on pp. 76, 77.
44. J. Hubert, J. Porcher, W. F. Volbach, *L'Empire carolingien*, Paris 1968, fig. 20–22; O. Demus, *Romanesque Mural Painting*, London 1970, pl. on page 73, pl. 19, 25, 27, 32–33, 45, 240.
45. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 34; *Исѣопуја срѣскої нарoга*, 245 (V. J. Djurić).

46. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, *Byzantine Thessaloniki*, figs. on pp. 89, 95, 96; A. Cutler, J.-M. Spieser, *Byzance médiévale: 700–1204*, Paris 1996, fig. 81; В. Лазарев, *Историја византијскої сликарсїва*, у редакцији Г. Вздорнова, Београд 2004, сл. 87, 88.
47. Mavropoulou-Tsioumi, *Byzantine Thessaloniki* fig. on p. 95; *Greek Lands in History. Macedonia: 4000 Years of Greek History and Civilisation*, ed. M. B. Sakellariou, Athens 1993, fig. 184, 186; Лазарев, *Историја византијскої сликарсїва*, 87, 88.
48. K. Pelekanidis, *Καστοριά*, Thessaloniki 1953, пп. 87, 88, 100, 118; Skawran, *The Development*, figs. 24–32; Sisiou, *Conservation of the Temple of St. Stefanos*, figs. on p. 43–48.
49. Only ten letters that began the lines of the upper part of the Greek text written on the scroll remained. Cf. Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живоїис цркве св. Пеїра*, 41 п. 36.
50. *Ibidem*, 41; Радојчић, *Сїаро срїско сликарсїво*, 18; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сїари Рас*, 39; etc.
51. Радојчић, *Сїаро срїско сликарсїво*, 18, Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 36–37; Михаиловић, *Црква Свеїїої Пеїра*, 83–90; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сїари Рас*, 38–40; Радужко, *Еїискојски їресїїо*, 245–246, 253; etc. Unlike them, other scholars date this representation to the 11th century (Nešković, Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre*, 55), or to the second half of the 11th century, possibly the end of the 11th or the beginning of the 12th century (Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живоїис цркве св. Пеїра*, 41–42).
52. Nešković, Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre*, 55.
53. Marković, Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles*, fig. 77.
54. Тасић, *Средњовековни кулїурно-истїорїјски сїоменици*, 124–125.
55. On that process of the restoration of Byzantine rule in the Serbian lands, cf. J. Калић, *Црквене їриликe у срїским земљама до сїва-рања архїеїскоїије 1219. їодине*, in: *Сава Немањић – Свеїи Сава. Истїорїја и їредање*, ed. В. Ј. Ђурић, Београд 1979, 32–34; *Истїорїја срїскої народа*, 170–179 (Lj. Maksimović).
56. An assumption about this was cautiously made, without presenting a technical argumentation. Cf. Радојчић, *Сїаро срїско сликарсїво*, 18; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сїари Рас*, 40 (B. Todić).
57. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 37, 41.
58. С. Мандић, *Псалам из Пеїрове цркве и ирмос из Соїоћана*, in: *idem*, *Древник. Заїисци конзерваїїора*, Београд 1975, 43–47; Nešković, Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre*, 55, fig. 25; Papamastorakis, *Ο διάκοσμος του τρούλου*, 73 п. 79.
59. On various verses that used to be inscribed around the bust of the Pantokrator in the top of domes of medieval Orthodox churches, cf. Papamastorakis, *Ο διάκοσμος του τρούλου*, 72–76.
60. For the development of the thematic program of wall paintings in apses cf. Ihm, *Die Programme der christlichen Apsismalerei*; B. Brenk, *The Apse, the Image and the Icon. An Historical Perspective of the Apse as a Space for Images*, Wiesbaden 2010; G. Babić, *Les programmes absidaux en Georgie et dans les Balkans entre le XIe et XIIIe siècle*, in: *L'arte georgiana dal IX al XIV secolo. Atti del III simposio internazionale sull'arte georgiana*, Bari–Lecce, 14–18. ottobre 1980, vol. I, ed. M. S. Kalo' Mariani, Galatina 1986, 117–136 (for the apsidal program of St. Peter's church especially: 125–128).
61. Gioles, *Η Ανάληψις*, 251–260; Skawran, *The Development*, 26–27.
62. Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живоїис цркве св. Пеїра*, 41–42, н. 38; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сїари Рас*, 39 (B. Todić).
63. They were correctly identified as evangelists for the first time by Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живоїис цркве св. Пеїра*, 41–42.
64. Representations of the evangelists John and Matthew were almost regularly given a more prominent place on the eastern pair of pendentives under the central domes of Orthodox churches (cf. pp. 69–70, 75 and 124–127 *infra*), and were represented closer to the center of the composition of the Descent of the Holy Spirit than Luke and Mark, when the figures of all four evangelists were included and iconographically clearly distinguished (cf. p. 132 *infra*, and the literature listed in n. 189). Similarly, the hierarchy among the evangelists was also highlighted when all four of their figures were represented in a row of images of the twelve apostles in the apse, as is the case in the Cefalu Cathedral, for

example (cf. O. Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, London 1949, 12, pls. 4a, b).

65. On the iconography of the *Officiating Bishops*, v. Ch. Konstantinidi, *Ο Μελισμός. Οι συλλειτουργούντες ιεράρχες και οι άγγελοι-διάκονοι μπροστά στην Άγια Τράπεζα με τα Τιμία Δώρα ή τον Ευχαριστιακό Χριστό*, Thessaloniki 2008.

66. That is what prevents us from offering the tempting conjecture that it is the rest of the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles scene.

67. Cf. n. 38 supra.

68. The idea that a bishop represents an icon of the Heavenly Archpriest, i.e., Christ, during the liturgy can be found in the texts of many ancient church writers (cf. Н. Красносельцев, *Объяснение литургии составленное Феодором епископом андиудским*, Казань 1884, 2–3, 18, 36–38, 42; idem, *О древних литургических толкованиях*, Одесса 1894, 29, 45; Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins*, 61, 79, 81 et n. 3, 213) On the ideological basis of the program of the apsidal wall paintings from the 12th century in St. Peter's church, with a review of some older interpretations of the program, see also: Радужко, *Ейискојски ѱресѿю*, 245–246, 254–256.

69. Frescoes of the second layer in the apse were variously dated by scholars: first decades of the 10th century (Тасић, *Средњовековни културно-историјски сѿоменици*, 123–125), first half of the 11th century (Nešković, Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre*, 51–55), 11th century (S. Radojčić, *Srpska umetnost u srednjem веку*, Beograd–Zagreb–Mostar 1982, 23–24, 24), second half of the 11th century, possibly the end of the 11th or the beginning of the 12th century (Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живоиис цркве св. Пеѿра*, 41–42), around the middle of the 12th century (Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѿари Рас*, 38), 12th century (Радојчић, *Сѿаро срѿско сликарсѿиво*, 18) second half of the 12th century (R. Ljubinković, *Quelques observations sur le probleme des rapports artistiques entre Byzance, l'Italie meridionale et la Serbie avant le XIIIe siecle*, in: *Corsi di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina*, vol. 10, Ravenna 1963, 189–190; Михаиловић, *Црква Свеѿои Пеѿра*, 83–90; Babić, *Les programmes absidaux*, 125), the end of the 12th century (Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 36–37).

70. E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of St. Mary's of the Admiral in Palermo (with a Chapter on the Architecture of the Church by S. Ćurčić)*, Washington 1990, pl. V–X, XXI, XXV, XXVI, figs. 43–51, 121–122; *Treasures of Mount Athos*. Thessaloniki 1997, 229–230, cat. no. 5.3, E. N. Tsigaridas, K. Lovredou-Tsigarida, *Holy Great Monastery of Vatopaidi. Byzantine Icons and Revetments*, Mount Athos, Holy Great Monastery of Vatopaidi 2007, figs. 17, 19, 30 (St. Paul), 35, 36; В. Д. Сарабянов, *Спасо-преображенский собор Мирожского монастыря*, Москва 2010, илл. 47–50, 109, 127–131, 136, 137, 249; Cutler, Spieser, *Byzance médiévale*, fig. 226.

71. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 12–14, 235–236 n. 5; Babić, *Les programmes absidaux*, 119; A. Zackharova, *The Murals in the Church of the Virgin Eleousa in Veljusa and Byzantine Painting of the Second Half of the Eleventh Century*, *Zograf* 44 (2020), 37–56.

72. I. Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi. Architecture, Programme, Patronage*, Wiesbaden 2000, 4. The word καλλιερφώ at the beginning of the ktetorial inscription at Nerezi is unlikely to also refer to the paintings of the church.

73. Basing their evaluation on the appearance of that extensively retouched fragment, scholars dated it to the second half of the 12th century (Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живоиис цркве св. Пеѿра*, 42–43), around 1180 (Nešković, Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre*, 55), the end of the 12th century (Тасић, *Средњовековни културно-историјски сѿоменици*, 124), probably the last quarter of 13th century (Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѿари Рас*, 42), or to the end of the 13th century (Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 59).

74. Radojčić, *Srpska umetnost u srednjem веку*, сл. 9; Г. Бадић, В. Кораћ, С. Ђирковић, *Сѿугеница*, Београд 1986, 80, сл.70, 71; Чанак-Медић, Д. Поповић, Војводић, *Манасѿиур Жича*, 358–362, сл. 251–255.

75. Cf. p. 35–38 supra. However, the wall paintings from the 12th century with Greek inscriptions in the nave of the Church of St. George at the nearby Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery were never overpainted.

76. On the southeastern side of the dome there are inscriptions next to the representations of the archangel Michael – ο αρχ(άγγελος)

- Μιχ(αήλ) – the prophet Daniel – π(ρο)ροκъ даннѣ – the prophet Elijah – пророкъ ѿнѣ – and the archangel Gabriel – ο αρχ(άγγελος) Γαβ(ρήλ). On the northern side of the dome, only the name of the prophet David is completely legible – давнѣ. (cf. Лађевић, *Резултати*, 158–159; Ђоровић-Људинковић, *Живопис цркве св. Пеџра*, 43, 46, n. 47). On that kind of thematic program of the dome, with the bust of the Pantokrator and the figures of prophets and archangels v. Skawran, *The Development*, 14–16; G. Babić, *The King's Church of Studenica*, Novi Sad 2020, 51–56, 61–70.
77. Cf. K. Lehmann, *The Dome of Heaven*, *The Art Bulletin* 27/1 (1945), 1–27; B. Smith, *Dome. A Study in History of Ideas*, Princeton 1950, 88–89; Babić, *The King's Church*, 37–39.
78. Ch. Walter, *The Iconography of the Prophet Habakkuk*, *РѢВ* 47 (1989), 251–260.
79. In Late Byzantine art, the prophet Isaiah was regularly represented as an old man with almost completely white hair. For examples of his representation from that period and quotes on the rotulus he holds in his hands, cf. Papamastorakis, *Ο διάκοσμος του τρούλου*, 203–208; πιν. 5, 8, 14, 25β, 41, 60α, 62β, 78α, 91α, 94β, 105β, 115^α, 122γ, 126α, 150β.
80. On the insignia of the medieval Serbian rulers and specifically for the scepter cruciger cf. S. Marjanović-Dušanić, *The Rulers' Insignia in the Structural Evolution of Medieval Serbia*, *Majestas* 7 (Vienne 1999), 55–74; Д. Војводић, *Крстѣ (инсиѣнија)*, in: *Лексикон српској средњег века*, eds. С. Ђирковић, Р. Михаљчић, Београд 1999, 330–331.
81. To the right of the top of his rod, the letters are still visible: аронъ
82. Д. Војводић, *О ликовима стѣрозаветних ѣрвосветѣиѣника у византијском зидном сликарству с краја XIII века*, *ЗРВИ* 37 (1998), 130 et passim.
83. *Ibidem*, 123–131.
84. *Ibidem*, 127–130.
85. *Ibidem*, 131–150.
86. Varalis, *Παρατηρήσεις για τη θέση του Ευαγγελισμού*, 201–220.
87. On the programmatic and ideological connections between the representations of the Annunciation and the Mandyllion in Byzantine art, cf. Papastavrou, *Recherche iconographique*, 124, 133–143, with earlier literature. For the Mandyllion and Keramion, their representations and symbolism, cf. A. Grabar, *La Sainte Face de Laon: le Mandyllion dans l'Art orthodoxe*, Prague 1931; N. Thierry, *Deux notes a propos du Mandyllion*, *Зораф* 11 (1980) 17–18; T. Raff, *Das "heilige Kerámion" und "Christos der Antiphonétes"*, in: *Dona ethnologica Monacensia. L. Kretzenbacher zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. H. Gemdt, K. Roth, G. R. Schroubek, Munich 1983, 145–149; St Papadaki-Oekland, *Το Άγιο Μανδύλιο ως το νέο σύμβολο σε ένα αρχαίο εικονογραφικό σχήμα*, *ΔΧΑΕ* 14 (1987–1988), ; 283–296; T. Velmans, *Valeurs sémantiques du Mandyllion selon son emplacement ou son association avec d'autres images*, in: *Studien zur byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte, Festschrift für H. Hallensleben zum 65. Geburtstag*, Amsterdam 1995, 173–184; Ш. Герстель, *Чудотворный Мандилион. Образ Спасителя в византийских иконографических программах*, in: *Чудотворная икона в Византии и древней Руси*, ed. А. Лидов, Москва 1996, 76–89; А. М. Lidov, *Holy Face, Holy script, Holy Gate. Revealing the Edessa Paradigm in Christian Imagery*, in: *Intorno al sacro Volto*, ed. A. Calderoni Mazetti, C. Dufour Bozzo, G. Wolf, Venezia 2007, 145–162.
88. On St. John's scroll one can read: (нс)кони бѣ (сл)ово и слов(о) бѣаше (отъ б(о))га и (б(о))гъ (бѣ)аше сло(во), but on the sheet in his hands there are only two letters: б-н – maybe from б(ъ) н(а)лае>. The scroll on St. Matthew's desk has not been preserved, and the quote from the beginning of his Gospel, on the sheet he holds in his hands, is deformed, like the one on the sheet in John's hands: исъ (хрнствова) рождьш... – from: книги рождьства исъ хрнствова
89. Војводић, *О ликовима стѣрозаветних ѣрвосветѣиѣника*, 134–139.
90. Чанак-Медић, Поповић, Војводић, *Манастѣир Жича*, 223–224 (Д. Војводић), with previous literature.
91. For the iconography of the Crucifixion cf. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 130–132, with earlier literature.
92. According to the interpretations of many ancient church writers, the archpriest was an icon of Christ the High Priest during the celebration

of the liturgy. Cf. Војводић, *О ликовима сѣа-розавејних ѿвосвешћеника*, 147–149, with reference to the relevant written sources and scholarly literature.

93. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 89. И. М. Ђорђевић, *Зидно сликарство српске власће у доба Немањића*, Београд 1995, 142.

94. Војводић, *О живојису Беле цркве Каранске*, 135–151.

95. For the literature on the iconography of the Nativity of Christ and the Adoration of the Magi, v. n. 6 et 7 supra. However, sometimes, although very rarely, the Adoration of the Magi is also depicted in Late Byzantine art as a separate scene of the Festal cycle, beside the Nativity, for example in the church of St. Nicholas Orphanos in Thessaloniki (cf. B. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting. The Age of King Milutin*, Belgrade 1999, 348 (with earlier literature)).

96. Sisiou, *Το εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα στον τρούλο της Παναγίας Κομπελίδικης*, 250–252, εικ. 1–6.

97. Vornproudaki, *Παναγία Κερά*, 4–5, πιν. 19–21.

98. Σέμογλου, *Το πρόγραμμα του τρούλου της Παναγίας Κωντουριώτισσα*, 716–720, εικ. 1, 4.

99. For the literature cf. n. 88 supra.

100. и(со)р(ь) (х(р)сто)р(ь) царь) сла(вѣ) (after old photographs and Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живојис цркве св. Пеџра*, 44). Some authors read the attribute of Christ as ἐλεῖμων>, the Merciful –on the right side of the representation (Лађевић, *Резултати*, 159; Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 291 Радујко, *Ејискојски ѿресѣо*, 253). However, the letter after the letter Λ was certainly not E, but A, and the attribute did not start on the right but on the left side, because the rest of the letter was preserved there in the same line, certainly from the word царь. Finally, it is important to note that the late 13th-century painters of Pter's church did not write in Greek but in Serbian the attribute of “Merciful” next to the representation of the Alexandrian archpriest John. The preserved traces of the letters do not allow the slightest possibility that the attribute can be read as (ц)нлостнв(н), as it was done recently (Радујко, *Ејискојски ѿресѣо*, 253).

101. азъ есмь свѣтъ всемъ людѣ ходен по днѣ не идать ходити [въ тлѣ].

102. С. Радојчић, *Порѣреѣи српских владара у средњем веку*, Београд 1996², 12–34 (103–105 in the English summary), figs. 16, 21; Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 39–44; Д. Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Свеѣої Ахилија у Ариљу*, Београд 2005, 91–98 (219 in the English summary); B. Cvetković, *The Royal Imagery of Medieval Serbia*, in: *Meanings and Functions of the Ruler's Image in the Mediterranean World (11th– 15th Centuries)*, eds. M. Bacci, M. Studer-Karlen, Leiden–Boston 2022, 178–187.

103. Ј. Нешковић, *Пеџрова црква код Нової Пазара*, Зборник Архитектонског факултета 6/5 (1960–1961) 14, сл. 3.

104. Cf. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 39–52; Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Свеѣої Ахилија*, 92, 165–166, with earlier scholarly literature.

105. Cf. pp. 152 infra.

106. Almost all researchers date this layer of wall paintings to the last quarter of the 13th century: Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живојис цркве св. Пеџра*, 48; Тасић, *Средњовековни културно-историјски сѣоменици*, 125; Радојчић, *Сѣаро српско сликарство*, 18; Radojčić, *Srpska umetnost u srednjem veku*, 53; Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 59; Б. Тодић, *Српске фреске с краја XIII века*, Зборник Филозофског факултета у Београду 16/А (1989) 80–81 et passim; Михаиловић, *Црква Свеѣої Пеџра*, 93–96; Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 291; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѣари Рас*, 40 (Б. Тодић); Радујко, *Ејискојски ѿресѣо*, 249; etc. Only R. Nikolić dated them to the second or third quarter of the 13th century. Cf. Николић, *Пеџрова црква и Ђурђеви сѣудови*, 6; Nešković, Nikolić, *L'eglise Saint-Pierre*, 55–58 (R. Nikolić).

107. (х)р(с)тофоръ

108. Радујко, *Ејискојски ѿресѣо*, 246–253, сл. 217–226, with earlier literature.

109. с(вѣ)тнѣ (sic!) ю(ань) нлостнвн

110. cf. Радујко, *Ејискојски ѿресѣо*, 249.

111. ... снрннѣ

112. Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѣари Рас*, 46, сл. 25 (B. Todić). That representation was wrongly identified as a depiction of St. Panteleimon. Cf.

- Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живойис цркве св. Пејтра*, 45, 47, 49; Николић, *Пејтрова црква и Ђурђеви стубови*, 6; Nešković, Nikolić, *Leglise Saint-Pierre*, 58, fig. 29–30 (R. Nikolić); Михаиловић, *Црква Светиої Пејтра*, 90, сл 5; Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 291 (identification with a question mark).
113. Нешковић, *Пејтрова црква*, 14, сл. 3.
114. Marković, Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles*, fig. 49.
115. Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѣари Рас*, 42 (B. Todić).
116. Marković, Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles*, fig. 86.
117. On that as a characteristic of the programs of Byzantine wall paintings from the last decades of the 13th century, cf. Војводић, *О ликовима сѣарозавѣјних ѣросвешћеника*, 121–150.
118. Cf. n. 106 supra.
119. С(В)ЕТЪ НИКОЛАЕ
120. The second part of the inscription next to the figure is destroyed now, but it was once legible: *сѣмонъ*. Cf. Ђоровић-Љубинковић, *Живойис цркве св. Пејтра*, 47 (with a detailed description of the thematic program of the narthex).
121. On the subsequent building of the exonarthex cf. Нешковић, *Петрова црква*, 13; Marković, Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles*, 123 (M. Marković).
122. On the cults and iconographies of the two saints named Simeon the Stylite, cf. pp. 186–187 infra.
123. I. M. Ђorđević, *Die Säule und die Säulenheiligen als helenistisches Erbe in der byzantinischen und serbischen Wandmalerei*, in: *Akten des XVI. Internationaler Byzantinisten congress*, II/5, JÖB 32/5 (1982), 93–100; idem. *Светиї сѣолѣници у срѣском зидном сликарству средњеї века*, *Зборник за ликовне уметности Матице српске* 18 (1982), 41–51.
124. D. Preradović, Lj. Milanović, *Pan-Christian Saints in Serbian Cult Practice and Art*, in: *Sacral Art of the Serbian Lands in the Middle Ages*, eds. D. Vojvodić, D. Popović, Belgrade 2016, 109–110.
125. Б. Тодић, *Сѣаро Наѣоричино*, Београд 1993, 103; Ђорђевић, *Зидно сликарство српске власѣе*, 174; М. Томић Ђурић, *Фреске Маркової манастѣира*, Београд 2019, 203.
126. Михаиловић, *Црква Светиої Пејтра*, 94; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѣари Рас*, 44–49 (Б. Тодић).
127. Д. Војводић, *Прилози разматрању сѣила, сѣраїиїграфије и хронолоїје фресака Пејтрове цркве у Расу – I*, *Наша прошлост* 19 (2020), 25–53.
128. *Ibidem*, 28–32, сл. 7–9.
129. Cf. *Ibidem*, 32, сл. 10.
130. *Ibidem*, 32–36, сл. 11–17.
131. For the literature on these monuments v. *Ibidem*, 37 n. 16–19.
132. *Ibidem*, 38–44, сл. 30, 31.
133. Cf. *Ibidem*, 44–47.
134. For a number of examples v. *Ibidem*, 41–43, n. 31–33.
135. Cf. *Ibidem*, 41, n. 34–36.
136. Ф- X- Ф- П- (cf. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 291).
137. That cross with a cryptogram was previously dated to the end of 13th century. Cf. *ibidem*.



138. His testimony, recorded and commented on in Italian by the Jesuit historian P. Filippo Ricerputi, was published in М. Панѣић, *Дубровчанин Никола Бошковић и рашке светиїње*, *Зборник за ликовне уметности Матице српске* 8 (1972), 258–260.
139. А. Ф. Гильфердинг, *Поездка по Герцеговине, Боснии и Старой Сербии*, in: *Босния, Герцеговина и Старая Сербия*, *Сборник составленный А. Гильфердингом (Отдельные оттиски из XIII т. Записок Императорского русского географического общества, кн.)*, С-Петербург 1859, 137–141.
140. G. Muir Mackenzie, A. P. Irby, *The Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe*, London – New York 1866, 309–314.
141. А. Дероко, *Три манастѣира средњовековноїа Раса*, Мисао X, 6, Београд, 16. новембар 1922, 1673–1679; V. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, in: *Studien zur Kunst des Ostens. Josef Strzygowski zum sechzigsten Geburtstage von seinen Freunden und Schülern*, Wien und

- Hellerau 1923, 159–167, pl. 19–23; Н. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, Seminarium Kondakovianum 1 (1927) 234–245. Smirnov's notes were not published.
142. Those photographs were not published until much later: G. Millet, *La peinture du Moyen âge en Yougoslavie*, I, Paris 1955, pl. 22–30, 89–90.
143. И. М. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века у цркви Светиої Ђорђа у Расу – археолошки доносије и историографска белешка*, in: *Стефан Немања – Свети Симеон Мироточиви. Историја и његово наслеђе*, ed. J. Калић, Београд 2000, 307–318 (with a detailed review of earlier research on the monument); G; S. W. Wages, *The Fresco Program of Đurđevi Stupovi*, Serbian Studies 12/2 (Chicago 1998) 97–143.
144. Muir Mackenzie, Irby, *The Slavonic Provinces*, 312.
145. For this cf. books listed in n. 76 supra, with older literature.
146. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 234.
147. Skawran, *The Development*, 169, 173, 174, 175, figs. 229, 283; T. Velmans, *Quelques programmes iconographiques de coupoles chypriotes du XIIe au XVe siècle*, CA 32 (1984), 137–162, passim; N. Drandakis, *Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες της Μέσα Μάνης*, Athens 1995, X, 176, епк. 13, Σχ.14, 20, πιν. 32, 33; A. Nicolaiès, *Légise de la Panagia Arakiotissa à Lagoudéra, Chypre: Etude iconographique des fresques de 1192*, DOP 50 (1996), 37–41, figs. 35–40.
148. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 234, Т. XXI/2; Millet, *La peinture*, pl. 23.1; D. Milošević, J. Nešković, *Les „Tours de St. Georges“ dans le vieux Ras*, Belgrade 1986, fig. 21; Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 314; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 104.
149. Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Светиої Ахилија*, 49–50, with a number of examples and older literature.
150. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 314, n. 81; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 104.
151. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 314; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 104.
152. Add MS 36660 (Gregory-Aland 1490), f. 9r; *Prophetologium*, Fasc. I: *Lectiones Nativitatis et Ephiphaniae*, eds. C. Höeg. G. Zuntz (*Minumenta Musicae Byzantinae. Lectionaria*, Vol. I, Fasc. 1), Hauniae 1939, 63–65 (L 2e: Reg. IV. 2. 6–14). About the baptismal symbolism of the crossing of the Jordan River by the prophets Elijah and Elisha, cf. J. Daniélou, *L'entrée dans l'histoire du Salut > bapteme et confirmation*, Paris 1967, 112–117.
153. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 234–235; Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 313; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 104–105.
154. Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 105.
155. *Prophetologium*, Fasc. I, 43–44 (L 1f: Dan. 2. 31–36, 44–45).
156. В. Милановић, *Спирозавейне шеме и Лоза Јесејева*, in: *Зидно сликарство манастира Дечана. Грађа и студије*, Поседна издања САНУ књ. 632, Одељење историјских наука, књ. 22, ed. В. Ј. Ђурић, Београд 1995, 216; В. Todić, М. Čanak-Medić, *The Dečani Monastery*, Belgrade 2013, 356–357.
157. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 314; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 106–107.
158. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 314, n. 82.
159. *Ibidem*; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 106.
160. *Prophetologium*, Fasc. IV: *Lectiones Hebdomadae 5^{ae} Quadragesimae et Hebdomadae in Palmis et Maioris*, eds. C. Höeg. G. Zuntz (*Minumenta Musicae Byzantinae. Lectionaria*, Vol. I, Fasc. 4, Hauniae 1960, 356–357 (L 35c: Zach. 9. 9–15).
161. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 314; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 105–106.
162. *Prophetologium*, Fasc. V: *Lectiones Sabbati Sancti*, eds. C. Höeg. G. Zuntz (*Minumenta Musicae Byzantinae. Lectionaria*, Vol. I, Fasc. 5, Hauniae 1962, 479–488 (L 41q: Dan. 3. 1–51); Милановић, *Спирозавейне шеме*, 217. Todić, Čanak-Medić, *The Dečani Monastery*, 357.
163. Милановић, *Спирозавейне шеме*, 217–218. Todić, Čanak-Medić, *The Dečani Monastery*, 357.
164. However, this was not a rule. For a number of examples of this from various periods, v. G. Millet, *Le monastère de Daphni. Histoire, architecture, mosaïques*, Pris 1899, 83, fig. 47; Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily*, 38–39, 79, pl. 12, 13, 47, 48; Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of St. Mary's of the Admiral in Palermo*, 138–147, 271–276, fig. 16–19, pl. I–IV; Nicolaiès, *Légise de la Panagia Arakiotissa*, figs. 43, 44; M. Map-

- ковић, *Пројрам живојиса у кујоли*, in: *Зидно сликарство манастира Дечана. Грађа и стиудије*, Поседна издања САНУ књ. 632, Одељење историјских наука, књ. 22, ed. В. Ј. Ђурић, Београд 1995, 102, црт. II, 3, 4. 10; Томић Ђурић, *Фреске Марковој манастира*, 51–71.
165. Zech. 9: 9.
166. Т. Minisci, *Le preghiere ἀποθάρμβωνοι dei codici criptensi*, Bolletino della badia greca di Grottaferrata. 1948. Vol. III, 8–9; Т. И. Афанасьева, *Заамвонные молитвы в Синайском глаголическом миссале XI в. и славянских служебниках XIII–XV вв.*, *Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета*, Сер. 9, вып. 3 (2011), 68.
167. Cf. P. Lundberg, *La typologie baptismale dans l'ancienne Eglise*, Uppsala 1942, 167–200; O. Rousseau, *La Descente aux enfers, fondement soteriologique du baptême chrétien*, *Recherches de Science religieuse* 40 (Paris 1951–1952) *Melanges Jules Lebreton* II, 273–297; Daniélou, *L'entrée dans l'histoire du Salut*.
168. Ђорђевић, *Живојис XII века*, 315, n.84; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 107–108.
169. Ђорђевић, *Живојис XII века*, 315, n.85; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 107.
170. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164; Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 235.
171. For different interpretations of the symbolism of those representations, cf. Papadaki-Oekland, *To Άγιο Μανδύλιο*, 287; Babić, *The King's Church*, 89; Velmans, *Valeurs sémantiques du Mandylion*, 173–184;
172. About this symbolism of the dome cf. p. 62, n. 77 supra.
173. At that spot, usually reserved for medallions with busts of archangels, the personifications of Divine Wisdom were painted in Bogorodica Ljeviška in Prizren and Marko's Monastery near Skoplje in the 14th century (cf. Томић Ђурић, *Фреске Марковој манастира*, 76–79). Otherwise, at St. Peter's church (v. P. 60 supra), archangels with scepters were represented among the prophets in the drum.
174. On the arrangement of the images of the four evangelists in the pendentives, cf. Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Светејој Ахилија*, 53–54.
175. For the literature on the Mandylion and its place in the thematic program of the wall paintings cf. n. 87. supra.
176. Cf. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 240–241. However, at the Bachkovo Monastery, Mirozsky Monastery in Pskov, St. Nicholas Kasnitzi in Kastoria and Kurbinovo, in four ensembles chronologically close to our monument, the same orientation of the scene appears (L. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo. Les fresques du Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XIIe siècle*, Brussels 1975, 118–122, fig. 48; Е. Бакалова, *Бачковската костница*, София 1977, 79–81, ил. 53, 105; Pelekanidis, Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, 54, fig. 5; Сарабянов, *Спасо-преображенский собор Мирожского монастыря*, 87 ил. 86). The way in which the Mother of God and St. Simeon jointly hold Christ, with the child's feet in the old man's hands, is rare and interesting. For the literature on the iconography of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple v. n. 9 supra.
177. Cf. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 235.
178. *Ibidem*; Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164;
179. Cf. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 237, 241.
180. On the iconography of the Raising of Lazarus cf. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 176–177, with older literature.
181. Cf. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164; Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 237. For the iconography of the Entry into Jerusalem v. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 177–179, with older literature.
182. Cf. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 236.
183. For the literature on the iconography of the Transfiguration v. pp. 25–27 and n. 20–25 supra.
184. Cf. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164; Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 236.
185. On the iconography of the Betrayal of Judas cf. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 184–186, with older literature.
186. Cf. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 237, 241.
187. *Ibidem*.

188. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 314, п. 75.
189. Cf. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164; Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 236–237. On the iconography of the Descent of the Holy Spirit cf. I. M. Ђорђевић, *On the Scene of the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles at Ђurđevi Stupovi at Ras*, Зборник радова Византолошког института 38 (1999–2000), 239–253, п. 9 (with older literature); idem, *О ѡпредстави Силаска Светиоу духа на айосѡполе у срѡском зидном сликарству средњеѡ века*, in: idem, *Студије српске средњовековне уметности*, Београд 2008, 169–179.
190. For an interpretation of their symbolism v. Ђорђевић, *On the Scene of the Descent of the Holy Spirit*, 242–253.
191. Pelekanidis, *Καστοριά*, еик. 37β; Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 175–176, fig. 88.
192. Cf. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 237.
193. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 315, п. 91; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 115–116.
194. Cf. E. Follieri, *Initia hymnorum ecclesiae graecae*, t. IV, Roma 1963, 167. The same quotation on the scroll in the hands of Saint Theodore the Studite appears in later art too. Cf. D. Mouriki, *The Portraits of Theodore Studite in Byzantine Art*, JÖB 20 (1971), 269; E. Бакалова, Ц. Василев, *Образите на св. Теодор Студит в България и техният балкански контекст*, in: Герои, култове, светци. Изкуствоведски чтения 2015, 153–154, ил. 5.
195. Babić, *The King's Church*, 177–179, 262.
196. Бакалова, *Бачковската костница*, 81–88, сх. 149.
197. Cf. Mouriki, *The Portraits of Theodore Studite*, 249–280; G. Babić, *Les moines-poetes dans l'eglise de la Mere de Dieu a Studenica*, in: *Сѡуденица и византијска уметност ѡко 1200. године*, ed. В. Кораћ, Београд 1988, 205–216; E. Bakalova, *Hymnography and iconography: images of hymnographers in the mural art of XII–XIII c. in Bulgaria*, in: *Ritual and art. Byzantine essays for Christopher Walter*, ed. P. Armstrong, London 2006, 267–272; S. Tomeković, *Les saints ermites et moines dans la peinture murale byzantine*, Paris 2011, 31–32; Бакалова, Василев, *Образите на св. Теодор Студит в България*, 145–164.
198. Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 116.
199. Photothèque Gabriel Millet, Collection chrétienne et Byzantine, EPHE, plaque de verre, B.01679.2.
200. A quite acceptable reconstruction was proposed by R. Hamann-Mac Lean, H. Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien vom 11. bis zum 14. Jahrhundert*, Giesen 1963, Plan. 8 A–B. N. Okunev believed that only the Annunciation was represented on the eastern wall. For his attempt at reconstruction, cf. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 239–240.
201. Hamann-Mac Lean, Hallensleben, *Die Monumentalmalerei*, Plan. 8 A–B.
202. For that cf. p. 27, n. 25 supra.
203. Andreopoulos, *Matamorphosis*, 127–129, fig. 8a; Сарабянов, *Спасо-преображенский собор*, 63, 306, ил. 63–66; Pelekanidis, Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, 8–9, 17 fig. 13; A. Grabar, *L'eglise de Voïana*, Sofia 1978, 49, fig. 2 (no. 20), pl. XVI;
204. Бакалова, *Бачковската косѡница*, 80, сх. 149; Pelekanidis, Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, E. Tsigaridas, *Καστοριά. Κέντρο ζωγραφικής την εποχή των Παλαιολόγων (1360–1450)*, Тηεσσαλονικѡ 2016, 29, 40 (Σηεδ. 1, еик. 3), 107, 119–120 (Σηεδ. 12–13, еик. 65), 171, 181–182 (Σηεδ. 20, еик. 119), 214–216 (Σηεδ. 22–23, еик. 143); Г. Суботић, *Охридска сликарска школа XV века*, Београд 1980, црт. 35, 44, 79, 115; *Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, ed. H. C. Evans, New York 2004, 272–273 (cat. no. 158); G. Leone, *Icone di Roma e del Lazio*, Tom 1, Roma 2012, 171–172, cat. no. 122.
205. Skawran, *The Development*, 122 n. 202.
206. G. Sotiriou, M. Sotiriou, *Εικόνες της Μονής Σινά*, I–II, Athens 1956–1958, I, еик. 208–211, II, 18–9190; Drandakis, *Βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες της Μέσα Μάνης*, X, 156, 189, Σχ. 20, 22, 29, еик. 38.
207. Чанак-Медић, Поповић, Војводић, *Манастѡр Жича*, 220–223 (Д. Војводић).
208. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 142–147, sch. 3–4.
209. *Ibidem*, 130–131.
210. *Ibidem*, fig. 68.
211. A. Tsitouridou, *Ο ζωγραφικός διάκοσμος του Αγίου Νικολάου Ορφανού στη Θεσσαλονίκη*, Thessaloniki 1986, 96–98, 297 Σχ. 2 ΓΔ, πιν. 26;

- S. Bogevska-Cruano, *Les églises rupestres de la region des lacs d'Ohrid et Prespa. Milieu du XIII^e – milieu du XVI^e siècle*, Turnhout 2015, 403, fig. 66; Millet, *Recherches*, fig. 4; I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine icons in Steatite*, t. I-II, Vienna 1985, 223–335, 226–227, 229–230, figs. 156, 157, 160, 168; *Byzantium. Faith and Power*, 233–234 (cat. no. 140), 235–236 (cat. no. 143); A. Stylianos, J. Stylianos, *The painted churches of Cyprus. Treasures of Byzantine Art*, London 1985, 215.
212. N. Papatriantaphyllou-Theodorides, *Νικηφόρου Χοῦμνον Λόγος στη Μεταμόρφωση* (BHG 1998w), *Byzantina* 18 (1995) 15–38 (text 24–38); *Οσίου Εφραίμ του Σύρου έργα*, ed. K.G. Phrantzolas, I–VII, Thessaloniki, 1988–98, VII, 13–30; Th. Antonopoulou, *Leonis VI Sapientis Imperatoris Byzantini*, ed. Th. Antonopoulou, *Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca*, Vol. 63, Turnhout 2008, *Homilia X prima in Transfigurationem; Light on the Mountain. Greek Patristic and Byzantine Homilies on the Transfiguration of the Lord*, translated by B. E. Daley, S. J., Yonkers 2013, St. John Chrysostom: *Homily 56 on the Gospel of Matthew* – Matthew 16.28–17.9 (PG t. 58, col. 549–558); St. Cyril of Alexandria: *Homily 51 on Luke* – *Homiliae Diversae* 9 (PG 77, col. 1009–1016); Pantoleon: *Sermon on the Most Glorious Transfiguration* (PG 98, col. 1253–1260); Timothy of Antioch: *Homily on the Cross and the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (PG 86, col. 256–265); Leo the Emperor: *Homily 10*.
213. Сарабянов, *Спасо-преображенский собор*, 68, n. 53.
214. *Ibidem*, 68. Basically the same idea was expressed in Nerezi with a different program solution. Cf. Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi*, 54.
215. As an additional reason, this was also taken into account when considering the program of the wall paintings at Kurbinovo. Cf. Hadermann-Misguich, *Kurbinovo*, 130–131.
216. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 315, n. 93.
217. *Ibidem*, 315, n. 92.
218. М. Марковић, *О иконографији свјетих рајиника у источно-хитинићанској уметности и о њредставама ових свјетихијења у Дечанима*, in: *Зидно сликарство манастира Дечана. Грађа и стиудије*, Посебна издања САНУ књ. 632, Одељење историјских наука, књ. 22, ed. В. Ј. Ђурић, Београд 1995, 574–577, 594–597; idem, *Свјетии рајиници из Ресаве, Иконографска анализа*, in: *Манастир Ресаве. Историја и Уметности*, ed. В. Ј. Ђурић, Деспотовац 1995, 198–204; Ch. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, Burlington 2003², 44–66.
219. Д. Поповић, *Српски владарски њроб у средњем веку*, Београд 1992, 184–186, et passim (with previous literature).
220. Поповић, *Српски владарски њроб*, 34–36, 51–52, прт. 14, сл. 2; Б. Тодић, *Китићорска композиција у наосу Бојородичине цркве у Сјуденици*, Саопштења 29 (1997) 35–45 (with older literature); Д. Војводић, *Хиландарски њроб свјетии Симеона Српској и њејов сликани њрограм*, Хиландарски зборник 11 (Београд 2004), 27–61; idem, *Donor Portraits and Compositions*, in: *Hilandar Monastery*, ed. G. Subotić, Belgrade 1998, 249–250; idem, *Сјуденички њроб свјетии Симеона Српској: њрилози њрађи и зайажања о живоиису*, у: *Сјефан Немања – њрејодобни Симеон Мироточиви. Зборник радова II*, ур. М. Радујко, Београд–Беране 2016, 587–600.
221. This indicates that it is not a representation of a stylite, contrary to what was previously assumed (Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 315).
222. Cf. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164.
223. *Ibidem*.
224. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 315.
225. Cf. Окунењ, *Стопты святого Георгия*, 238.
226. Ђорђевић, *Живойис XII века*, 315, n. 96; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 117, n. 68. For other mentioned monuments cf. Бакалова, *Бачковската костница*, 72, 73, ил. 142; *Greek Lands in History. Macedonia*, fig. 201; D. Bardžieva-Trajkovska, *New Elements of the Painted Program in the Narthex at Nerezi*, *Zograf* 29 (2003), 39–40, drawing 1; Чанак-Медић, Поповић, Војводић, *Манастир Жича*, 341–224 (Д. Војводић) .
227. On this cf. pp. 192–195 infra.
228. З. Зековић, *Конзервација зидних слика манастирској комплекса Ђурђеви Сјудеви*,

- Гласник Друштва конзерватора Србије 5 (1981), 45; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 121–122.
229. Preradović, Milanović, *Pan-Christian Saints in Serbian Cult Practice*, 115–116.
230. Muir Mackenzie, Irby, *The Slavonic Provinces*, 311.
231. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 242–243.
232. Дероко, *Три манастира средњовековноја Раса*, 1677.
233. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164, Taf. XIX, 2.
234. Гильфердинг, *Поездка*, 139.
235. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 237–238.
236. Дероко, *Три манастира средњовековноја Раса*, 1677.
237. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164; idem, *Прејлед црквених сјоменика кроз ѿвесницу српској народа*, Београд 1950, 115.
238. Радојчић, *Сѿаро српско сликарсѿво*, 29–30; Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 36; idem, *La peinture murale byzantine, XII^e et XIII^e siècle*, in: XV^e Congrès international d'études byzantines, Rapports et co-rapports, III, Art et archéologie, Athènes 1976, 16–17; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѿари Рас*, 67–68 (B. Todić).
239. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 36.
240. A. Zakharova, *The Murals of the Işhan Cathedral and Georgian-Byzantine Artistic Links in the 11th Century*, in: Архонтарѿки. Афѿѿрѿѿа стов Е. Н. Тѿѿарѿда, Аѿѿѿа 2021, 658, фиг. 1.
241. В. Н. Лазарев, *Фрески Сѿарој Лагоѿи*, Москва 1960, 38, ил. 33–46.
242. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 91, figs. 58–65, 194–211.
243. Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi*, 87–88, figs. XXXIV, L, XLIX; Tsigaridas, Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Holy Great Monastery of Vatopaidi*, figs. 1, 22, 30 (E.N. Tsigaridas).
244. G. Sotiriou, M. Sotiriou, *Εκόνες της Μονής Σινά*, I, ек. 86, 87–92, 95–116, 125; Cutler, Spieser, *Byzance médiévale*, fig. 225; Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi*, figs. XXX, pls. 12, 14, 26, 27; Н. В. Пивоварова, *Фрески церкви Спаса на Нередице в Новгороде: иконографическая программа росписи*, Санкт Перетбург 2002, ил. 16–18, 149–150, 152, 207, 208.
245. Лазарев, *Фрески Старой Ладого*, рис. 6–9, ил. 48, 49, 54, 56, 60, 62, 63, 70.
246. Окуневъ, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 243; Бакалова, *Бачковската костница*, ил. 52, 53, 55, 59, 61, 64, 105, 147, 149.
247. П. Миљковиќ-Пепек, *Матѿеријали за македонската средновековна уметностѿ. Фреските во светѿилиштѿето на цркваѿта Св. Софија во Охрид*, Зборник на Археолошкѿот музеј – Скопје, 1 (1956), т. XV, XVI, XIX, XXV, XXVI; С. Радојчић, *Прилози за исѿорију најсѿаријеј охридској сликарсѿва*, ЗРВИ 8/2 (1964), сл. 4; V. Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina*, Torino 1967, 159, fig. 185.
248. Lazarev, *Storia*, fig. 346, 351; Бакалова, *Бачковската костница*, ил. 8, 9, 14–19, 39, 99, 138, 139, 143, 146, 148, 150.
249. Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi*, 45, figs. LXV, LXVI, 29, 71, 74, pls. 12, 26; Skawran, *The Development*, fig. 190; M. Sacropoulo, *Asinou en 1106 et sa contribution d'iconographie*, Bruxelles 1966, pl. XXIV, XXVIa–b, XXX. A. Orlandos, *Η αρχιτεκτονική και αι βυζαντιναί τοιχογραφѿαι της Μονής Θεολόγου Πάτμου*, Athens 1970, пч.10–11; Cutler, Spieser, *Byzance médiévale*, fig. 231; Лю. Домозетски, *Средновековната стѿнна живопис в цѿрквата „Св. Архангел Михаил“ в град Рила*, Bulgaria Medievalis 7 (2016), 74–75, илл. 2, 6, 13.
250. И. М. Ђорѿевић, *О фрескоиконама код Срба у средњем веку*, Зборник за ликовне уметности Матице српске 14 (1978), 77–98.
251. On the stylistic features of the Djurdjevi Stupovi fresco paintings, cf. Радојчић, *Сѿаро српско сликарсѿво*, 28–30; idem, *Srpska umetnost u srednjem веку*, 31; Тасић, *Средњовековни кулѿурно-исѿоријски сјоменици*, 132–133; Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 36; D. Mouriki, *Stylistic trends in monumental painting of Greece during the eleventh and twelfth centuries*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34–35 (1980–1981), 107–108; *Исѿорија српској народа*, 289–290 (V. J. Djurić); Milošević, Nešković, *Les „Tours de St. Georges“*, 42–47; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѿари Рас*, 69–71 (B. Todić).

252. В. Н. Лазарев, *Древнерусские мозаики и фрески XI–XV вв.*, Москва 1973; илл. 230–238; Лазарев, *Фрески Старой Ладуги*, ил. 34, 38, 39, 41, 43, 45, 47, 58, 65, 95, 99, 103; Orlandos. *Η αρχιτεκτονική και αι βυζαντιναί τοιχογραφίαι της Μονής Θεολόγου*, πιν. 12–16, 28.29,35, 40–45, 63, 64, 68, 69; Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi*, figs. XXVIII, 18–25, 28–30, 35, 38, 39, 50–55, 64–67, 72 ; K. M. Vapheiades, *A reassessment of Middle Byzantine Painting on Mount Athos. Patronage, dating and style*, *Zograf* 45 (2021), 92–93, 95–97, figs. 10, 12a–12b.
253. Николић, *Петрова црква и Ђурђеви сѣудови*, 12–13; Тасић, *Средњовековни културно-историјски сѣоменици*, 133; Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 36; Mouriki, *Stylistic trends*, 110; *Историја српског народа*, 290 (V. J. Djurić); Milošević, Nešković, *Les „Tours de St. Georges“*, 46; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѣари Рас*, 71 (B. Todić).
254. Remnants of the donor’s inscription in the lunette of the western portal show that the construction of the Church of St. George ended in 6679 by the Byzantine calendar, or, in other words, between 1 September 1170 and 31 August 1171. Cf. J. Нешковић, *Ђурђеви Сѣујови у Сѣаром Расу. Посѣанак архийектѣуре цркве Св. Ђорђа и сѣварање рашкој тѣија сѣоменика у архийектѣури средњовековне Србије*, Краљево 1984, 12–13, црт. 2; D. Vojvodić, M. Marković, *Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras*, Novi Sad 2023, 14, fig. 6.
255. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 35–36; *Историја српског народа*, 289 (V. J. Djurić); Milošević, Nešković, *Les „Tours de St. Georges“*, 33; Чанак-Медић, Тодић, *Сѣари Рас*, 67 (B. Todić); etc.
256. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164; Wages, *The Fresco Program*, 122–124, fig. 12.
257. On St. George’s hagiography and iconography of the cycles of his life, cf. K. Krumbacher, *Der heilige Georg in der griechischen Überlieferung*, *Abhandlungen der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-philologische und historische classe XXV, Band 3. Abhandlung* (München 1911); T. Mark-Weiner, *Narrative cycles of the life of St. George in Byzantine art*, vol I–II, New York 1977 (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of New York); L. Milyaeva, *The Icon of Saint George, with scenes from his life, from the town of Mariupol’*, in: *Perceptions of Byzantium and its neighbors (843–1261)*, ed. O. Z. Pevny, New York 2000, 102–117; B. Popović, *The Cycle of Saint George in the Territory of the Peć Patriarchate*, *Зборник за ликовне уметности Матице српске* 34–35 (2003), 95–108.
258. Pelekanidis, Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, 24–25; S. Tomeković, *Les répercussions du choix du saint patron sur le programme iconographique des églises du 12^e siècle en Macédoine et dans le Péloponèse*, *Zograf* 12 (1981), passim; Skawran, *The Development*, 39–41; Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi*, 68–71.
259. On representations of archangels as guardians of entrances, cf. M. Tatić-Djurić, *Archanges gardiens de porte à Dečani*, in: *Дечани и византијска уметност средином XIV века*, ed. B. J. Ђурић, Београд 1989, 359–366; Г. Геров, *Ангелите – пазители на входа*, *ЗРВИ* 46 (2009), 435–442.
260. On the iconography of St. Onouphrios, cf. Tomeković, *Les saints ermites et moines*, 26 et passim.
261. *Ibidem*, 36, 42–43.
262. Гилфердинг, *Поездка*, 139–140.
263. *Ibidem*; Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164.
264. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164. Okunev also saw the remains of that inscription a few years later (Окунев, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 238).
265. Muir Mackenzie, Irby, *The Slavonic Provinces*, 310–311.
266. Окунев, *Столпы святого Георгия*, 238. Okunev, however, mistakenly believed that the frescoes in the narthex were repainted in the 14th century and overpainted again in the 16th century.
267. Гилфердинг, *Поездка*, 140.
268. *Ibidem*; Muir Mackenzie, Irby, *The Slavonic Provinces*, 311.
269. Cf. M. Марковић, *Свети Никита код Скопља. Задужбина краља Милутина*, Београд 2015, 213–214, with older scholarly literature.

270. *Ibidem*, 213, with reference to written sources and previous scholarly literature.
271. Чанак-Медић, Поповић, Војводић, *Манастир Жича*, 321–323, 326–334 (Д. Војводић); Д. Војводић, *Ка царском досијојансџву краљевске власџи. Владарске инсџиџије и идеолоџија у доба џрвих Немањџића*, in: *Краљевсџво и архиеџискоџија у срџским и џморским земљама Немањџића. Тематџски зборник у часџи 800 џодина џролашења краљевсџтва и ауџокефалне архиеџискоџије свџх срџских и џморских земаља*, ed. Љ. Максимовић, С. Пириватрић, Београд 2019, 322–337.
272. Б. Тодић, *Резервенџашџвни џортџреџи свейџи Сава у средњовековном сликарсџтџву*, in: *Свейџи Сава у срџској исџиџорији и џрадиџији*, ed. С. Бирковић, Београд 1998, 225–248, with older literature.
273. *Ibidem*.
274. Д. Војводић, *Пуџеви и фазе уобличавања средњовековне иконоџрафије свейџи Сава Срџској*, Ниш и Византија 13 (2015), 49–72.
275. *Ibidem*.
276. V. p. 266 supra.
277. *Исџиџорија срџској народа*, 449–461 (S. Сџrković).
278. Војводић, *Зидно сликарсџтво цркве Свейџи Ахилија*, тад. I, XXIV.
279. Радојчић, *Портџреџи срџских владара*, сл. 14, 17, 18, 21.
280. Дероко, *Три манастџира средњовековноџа Раса*, 1677; Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 164.
281. Дероко, *Три манастџира средњовековноџа Раса*, 1677.
282. Д. Поповић, *Кулџи краља Драџуџина – монаха Теокџисџа*, ЗРВИ 38 (1999/2000), 321–322, with reference to written sources and earlier scholarly literature.
283. Нешковић, *Ђурђеви Сџуџови у Сџаром Расу*, 18–19; Поповић, *Срџски владарски џроб*, 91–92, црт. 30.
284. Гильфердинг, *Поездка*, 140.
285. Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 163, 164.
286. Зековић, *Конзерваџија*, 45.
287. *Ibidem*.
288. Панџић, *Дубровчанин Никола Бошковић и раџке свейџиње*, 258.
289. For this and some other reason, in Serbian medieval churches, the sarcophagus, as a rule spatially connected with the portrait of the donor, was sometimes not placed directly above the burial pit. Cf. Поповић, *Српски владарски џроб*, passim.
290. Окуневъ, *Столпы свейџаго Георгџа*, 238; Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 59–60.
291. For the program of frescoes in the *parekklesion*, an exhaustive review of the problems connected with those wall paintings and the relevant older scholarly literature, v. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 293–294. On the former function and architecture of the *parekklesion*, cf. Нешковић, *Ђурђеви Сџуџови у Сџаром Расу*, 16–19, 194–199; Vojvodić, Marković, *Djurdjevi Stupovi*, 16–17, 65, fig. 10, 17.
292. Нешковић, *Ђурђеви Сџуџови у Сџаром Расу*, 22, where 1925 is mentioned as the year of reconstruction. However, there are old photographs showing the inscription about the reconstruction with the year 1926.
293. Гильфердинг, *Поездка*, 139; Muir MacKenzie, Irby, *The Slavonic Provinces*, 310.
294. G. Babić, *Les chapelles annexes des eglises byzantines. Fonction liturgique et programmes iconographiques*, Paris 1969, 129–158.
295. И. Ђорђевић, *Кайела краља Драџуџина у Ђурђевим сџуџовима*, in: idem, *Сџудџије срџске средњовековне уметносџи и*, Београд 2008, 268.
296. J. Daniélou, *Les anges et leur mission d'après les Pères de l' Eglise*, Chevetogne 1953, 76–91; Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins*, 176–178, 206, 242–243.
297. О. Томић, *Особеносџи фресака XIII века у сџуденичкој Никољачи*, in: Ниш и Византија 3, Ниш 2004, 65, сл. 5, 7–9.
298. For the ideological underpinnings of the iconographic solution and a number of its examples, with previous literature, cf. E. Panou, *Aspects of St Anna's Cult in Byzantium*, A thesis submitted to The University of Birmingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Birmingham 2011, 258, 267–270; eadem, *The Theological Substance of St Anna's Motherhood in Byzantine Homilies*, in: *The Virgin in Byzantium: Marian*

- Narratives in Text and Images*, eds. T. Arentzen, M. B. Cunningham, Cambridge 2019, 74–75.
299. For the scholarly literature on the Holy Mandylion and Holy Keramion cf. n. 87.
300. On the tonsure of the medieval Serbian Orthodox clergy, v. С. Радјочић, *Тонзура свештої Саве*, in: idem, *Узори и дела старих српских уметника*, Београд 1975, 19–31; Б. Милковић, *Кружни иконостаси у православној цркви*, ЗРВИ 50/2, *Mélanges Lj. Maksimović* (2013) 987–1001.
301. В. Ј. Ђурић, *Историјске композиције у српском сликарству средњега века и њихове књижевне паралеле*, II, ЗРВИ 10 (1967), 131–138.
302. *Ibidem*, 131–132, 133–134.
303. Војводић, *Ка царском достојанству краљевске власти*, сл. 6, 7, 13, 14.
304. Ђурић, *Историјске композиције*, 133–134.
305. *Ibidem*, 132–133, 134–135.
306. *Ibidem*, 135
307. *Ibidem*, 132–133, 135–136.
308. For the iconography of the holy physicians, v. Т. Стародубцев, *Светии лекари. Поштовање и представљање у источнохришћанском свету средњега века*, Београд 2018, with a comprehensive English summary.
309. *Ibidem*, 87–132 (summary: 292–293).
310. Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Свештої Ахилија*, 84–86.
311. Ђурић, *Историјске композиције*, 136–137; Ђорђевић, *Кайела краља Драгутина*, 267–268.
312. Ђурић, *Историјске композиције*, 137; Ђорђевић, *Кайела краља Драгутина*, 267; Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Свештої Ахилија*, 86.
313. Ђорђевић, *Кайела краља Драгутина*, 267.
314. Cf. H. Delehayе, *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, Bruxelles 1902, col. 2–3 (et *synaxaria selecta*), col. 703–705 (et *synaxaria selecta*).
315. G. Sotiriou, M. Sotiriou, *Εικόνες της Μονής Σινά*, I, еик. 64, II, 78; Stylianou, J. Stylianou, *The painted churches of Cyprus*, 472; Nicolaïès, *Légise de la Panagia Arakiotissa*, 29–30, figs. 20, 22, 29; Tomeković, *Les saints ermites et moines*, 37, p. 99.
316. G. Sotiriou, M. Sotiriou, *Εικόνες της Μονής Σινά*, I, еик. 64, II, 78; Stylianou, J. Stylianou, *The painted churches of Cyprus*, 473, fig. 289; Nicolaïès, *Légise de la Panagia Arakiotissa*, 25–29, fig. 19, 28; Tomeković, *Les saints ermites et moines*, 37, p. 99.
317. Ђорђевић, *Кайела краља Драгутина*, 266.
318. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 78; Tomeković, *Les saints ermites et moines*, 37–39.
319. For his iconography cf. Mouriki, *The Mosaics of Nea Moni*, 78–79, pls. 86b, 88b, 238; Tomeković, *Les saints ermites et moines*, 45–46.
320. Ђорђевић, *Кайела краља Драгутина*, 267.
321. Those photos are kept at the National Museum of Serbia under cat. nos. B 1008 and B 3669.
322. Гильфердинг, *Поездка*, 139.
323. *Ibidem*; Petković, *Eine Kirche des Königs Nemanja*, 163.
324. Р. Николић, *Прилози проучавању живописа XIII и XIV века у области Раса*, Рашка баштина 2 (Краљево 1980), сл. 1; Д. Павловић, *Зидно сликарство градачкої кайоликона. Попис фресака и зајачања о њоједним пројрамским особеностима*, Зограф 36 (2012), 91, 97–98, Сх. 1 (бр. 59–64), with older scholarly literature.
325. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 39–52; Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Свештої Ахилија*, 92.
326. Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Свештої Ахилија*, 92, 165–166, with earlier scholarly literature.
327. Чанак-Медић, Поповић, Војводић, *Манастир Жича*, 342 (Д. Војводић).
328. *Ibidem*, 341–342.
329. Гильфердинг, *Поездка*, 139.
330. Дероко, *Три манастира средњовековної Раса*, 1678.
331. Given the textual context of his report, one might think that Gilferding saw an extension of a series of portraits, the identity of which he could not determine (Гильфердинг, *Поездка*, 139). If it was really so, then this must have been a slightly younger painting, from the 14th century. The stylistic characteristics of the bust of

- Christ in the lunette on the southern façade would support such a dating. In addition, the custom of painting church façades with iconographic content was much more common in Serbia around the middle of the 14th than at the end of the 13th century. Okunev, however, incorrectly dated the frescoes inside the *pareklesion* to the period between 1314 and 1316. Cf. Н. Л. Окуневъ, *Портреты королей-критиковъ въ сербской церковной живописи*, *Byzantinoslavica* 2 (1930), 94–95.
332. Ђорђевић, *Кайела краља Драгуйшина*, 269.
333. В. Ј. Ђурић, Сопоћани, Београд, 1963, 54, 129, таб. LI; S. Kalopissi-Verti, *Die Kirche der Hagia Triada bei Kranidi in der Argolis (1244)*. *Ikographische und stilistische Analyse der Malereien*, München 1975, 42–44, Taf. 19.
334. Т. Papacostas, С. Mango, М. Grünbart, *The History and Architecture of the Monastery of Saint John Chrysostomos at Koutsovendis, Cyprus*, *DOP* 61 (2007), 95–99, 103–148 et passim.
335. Чанак-Медић, Поповић, Војводић, *Манастир Жича*, 321–323, 326–333, сл. 222–225 (Д. Војводић).
336. On that v. И. Ђурић, *Дежевски сабор у делу Данила II*, in: *Arhiepiskop Danilo II и његово доба*, ed. В. Ј. Ђурић, Београд 1991, 169–193, with previous scholarly literature.
337. For more details, v. Д. Војводић, *Краљеви њорђреји*, in: *Свети краљ Милутићин. Владар на раскрићима светлова*, eds. С. Пириватрић, С. Марјановић-Душанић, Д. Поповић, Београд 2022, 413–422.
338. Ђурић, *Историјске композиције*, 136; Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 60.
339. cf. R. Macrides, J. A. Munitiz, D. Angelov, *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies*, Farnham 2013, 210/211–214/215.
340. Ђурић, *Историјске композиције*, 136, п. 90, with older literature.
341. I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts*, Leiden 1976, 129–139, fig. 87.
342. On that in much more detail v. Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Светиој Ахилија*, 110–113, with reference to written sources and earlier scholarly literature.
343. Babić, *Les chapelles annexes*, 142, 144–145
344. Ђ. Sp. Radojičić, *Jedna pozajmica u najstarijoj srpskoj crkvenoj pesmi u Savinoj Službi Simeonu Nemanji*, *Slovo* 6–8 (1957), 231–235; Ђурић, *Историјске композиције*, 137; Ђорђевић, *Свети сѳолојници у српском зидном сликарству*, 69–70; idem, *Кайела краља Драгуйшина*, 267.
345. Cf. p.195 supra.
346. For the history of the problem v. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting*, 293, 294.
347. *Ibidem*, 69, п. 13.
348. *Ibidem*, Tab. II, fig. 8.
349. For a commentary and assessment of the credibility of Gilferding's and Petković's readings, v. Војводић, *Краљеви њорђреји*, 396–398.
350. П. Коматина, *О њрвом браку краља Милутићина*, *ЗРВИ* 57 (2020), 45–59.
351. Cf. М. Динић, *Comes Constantinus*, *ЗРВИ* 7 (1961), 2; *Византијски извори за историју народа Јуославије*, VI, ed. F. Barišić, В. Ferjančić, Београд 1986, 39–40 п. 81 (Lj. Maksimović).
352. About the marriages of King Milutin, cf. Коматина, *О њрвом браку краља Милутићина*, 45–59, with older literature. For the fact that King Milutin married Anna Terter before 11 August 1284, v. Динић, *Comes Constantinus*, 2–3; *Византијски извори за историју народа Јуославије*, VI, 42 нап. 83 (Lj. Maksimović). For the opinion that he entered into a relationship with Elizabeth of Hungary (Jelisaveta) around 1293 at the earliest, v. А. Узелац, *О српској ѡринцези и дујарској царици Ани*, *Историјски часопис* 63 (2014), 29–46, with previous literature.
353. Д. Јечменица, *Немањићи другој реда*, Београд 2018, 99–100; А. Фостиков, Н. Исачиловић, *Уговор о веридби Владислава II Немањића и Констјанце Морозини*. *Венеција*, 24. авјусѳи 1293. ѳодине, *Мешовита грађа* 39 (2018) 7–46.
354. Коматина, *О њрвом браку краља Милутићина*, 52 нап. 40.
355. Војводић, *Краљеви њорђреји*, 400.
356. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 60.
357. *Ibidem*. On these stylistic trends, cf. Б. Тодић, *Српске фреске с краја 13. века*. *Уметничка*

- ке одлике, Зборник Филозофског факултета, Серија А: Историјске науке 16 (1989), 67–88; Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Светиої Ахилија*, 173–188.
358. Тодић, *Српске фреске с краја 13. века*, 79–83; Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Светиої Ахилија*, 182.
359. On that mannerism v. Војводић, *Зидно сликарство цркве Светиої Ахилија*, 173–188.
360. Djurić, *Byzantinische Fresken*, 60.
361. *Ibidem*; idem, *La peinture murale serbe au XIII^e siècle*, in: *L'art byzantine du XIII^e siècle. Symposium de Soporani – 1965*, ed. V. J. Djurić, Beograd 1967, 156.

INDEX ICONOGRAPHICUS

- Anna, mother of the Virgin Mary 175, 177, 207
Apostles 131, 132, 135, 192, 214 (n. 38), 215 (n. 64)
 James 131
 Judas 25
 Paul 43, 76, 128, 132, 150, 157, 192, 195, 196
 Peter 27, 40, 41, 43, 76, 103, 128, 131, 132, 145, 150, 157, 192, 195, 213 (n. 23)
 Philip 132
 Thomas 132
Christ Child 12, 18, 19, 20, 46, 58, 117, 128.
Cross with a cryptogram 93, 96, 104, 105, 219 (n. 137)
Evangelists 41, 47, 48, 54, 57, 58, 59, 69, 75, 90, 124, 127, 128, 132, 215 (notes 63, 64), 221 (n. 174)
 John the Theologian 48, 54, 69, 70, 72, 75, 77, 100, 103, 108, 127, 128, 131, 132, 142, 215 (n. 64), 217 (n. 88)
 Luke 48, 49, 50, 54, 57, 58, 75, 118, 124, 127, 215 (n. 64)
 Mark 49, 54, 75, 118, 124, 127, 150, 158, 160, 215 (n. 64)
 Matthew 49, 54, 69, 72, 75, 76, 127, 128, 132, 215 (n. 64), 217 (n. 88)
Hetoimasia 113, 115, 130, 132
Holy melodists 136, 137
Holy physicians 60, 81, 89, 92, 177, 183, 184, 186, 204
 Kosmas 81, 99, 184, 186
 Cyrus 184
 Damianos 81, 184, 186
 John 184, 207
 Panteleemon 81, 184, 186, 218 (n. 112)
Holy Trinity 172, 182, 184, 196, 197, 199, 200, 202, 204, 207
Holy stylites 95, 186, 187, 188, 201
 Alympios the Stylite 187, 188
 Daniel the Stylite 187
 Simeon the Stylite, the elder 93, 95, 99, 104, 186, 187, 219 (n. 122)
 Simeon the Stylite, the younger (“Wonderworker”) 186, 187, 219 (n. 122)
Jesus Christ 25, 26, 32, 43, 45, 46, 47, 49, 54, 57, 60, 68, 73, 76, 77, 78, 82, 84, 88, 89, 99, 113, 115, 117, 123, 130, 131, 132, 184, 189, 191, 192, 195, 196, 201, 215 (n. 59), 217 (n.76), 218 (n. 100), 228 (n. 331)
Joachim, father of the Virgin Mary 175, 177, 207
John VI Kantakouzenos, Byzantine Emperor 200.
John the Baptist 25, 113, 115, 124, 129, 132, 204.
John the Merciful, bishop of Alexandria 80, 82, 84, 86, 88, 89, 90, 96, 97, 100, 218 (n. 109)
Keramion 75, 120, 127, 177, 207, 217 (n. 87), 227 (n. 299)
Ktetorial composition 77, 78, 80, 88, 91, 164, 167, 168
Mandylion 69, 74, 75, 127, 175, 177, 207, 209, 217 (n. 87), 221 (n. 175), 227 (n. 299)
Martyr(s) 78, 83, 89, 137, 149, 150
 Andronikos 136, 149, 150
 Christopher 78, 83, 89, 99, 218 (n. 107)
 Provos 149, 150
 Tarachos 136, 150
Monks
 Anchorites 163, 165
 Ephrem the Syrian 80, 90, 99, 218 (n. 111)

- Makarios the Great 163
 Mark of Thrace 163
 Onouphrios 163, 225 (n. 260)
 Paul of Thebes 163, 166
 Theodore the Studite 127, 137, 149, 222 (n. 194)
 Mother of God 12, 18, 19, 20, 34, 38, 39, 47, 57, 58, 69, 70, 77, 78, 82, 113, 115, 120, 128, 136, 173, 192
 Nicholas, bishop of Myra 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101, 103
Old Testament figures
 Abraham 184, 196, 200, 204
 Adam 70
 High priests 68, 69, 75, 90
 Hur 68
 Melchizedek 68
 Samuel 68
 Zechariah 68
 Prophets 26, 43, 45, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 73, 75, 84, 89, 103, 115, 117, 118, 121, 123, 124, 153, 155, 217 (n. 76), 221 (n. 173)
 Aaron 66, 67, 68, 86, 90, 217 (n. 81)
 Daniel 63, 64, 65, 115, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 217 (n. 76)
 David 63, 66, 217 (n. 76)
 Elijah 26, 63, 64, 65, 86, 88, 90, 115, 117, 121, 124, 131, 141, 160, 217 (n. 76)
 Elisha 63, 115, 117, 121, 124
 Ezekiel 63, 121
 Habakkuk 63
 Isaiah 64, 121, 217 (n. 79)
 Jeremiah 121
 Moses 26, 68, 131, 141
 Solomon 63, 66
 Zechariah the Younger 117, 118, 119, 121
 Three Holy Youths 119, 120, 123
 Ananias 119, 120
 Azarias 118, 119, 120
 Misael 119, 120
 Sarah 184, 200
Serbian saints, kings and queens
 Catherine (Catalina) of Hungary, Queen of Serbia 184, 189, 191, 192, 202
 Jelena, Queen of Serbia 189, 190, 191, 192, 201, 202
 St. Sava of Serbia 148, 163, 164, 165, 167, 170, 197
 St. Simeon Nemanja 77, 148, 156, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 170, 179, 189, 191, 197, 200, 201
 Stefan Dragutin, King of Serbia 148, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 181, 189, 191, 192, 201, 202
 Stefan the First-Crowned, Grand Župan and King of Serbia 179, 189, 197, 201
 Stefan Vladislav II, son of King Stefan Dragutin and Queen Catherine, 189, 191, 201, 202
 Uroš I, King of Serbia 166, 168, 189
 Uroš II Milutin, King of Serbia 166, 167, 168, 181, 184, 189, 191, 192, 201, 202
Spiritual beings
 Angel(s) 18, 19, 25, 34, 39, 54, 73, 113, 124, 127, 130, 132, 153, 184, 196
 Archangel Gabriel 18, 34, 49, 52, 58, 60, 62, 63, 69, 72
 Archangel Michael 49, 58, 60, 63, 64, 216 (n. 76)
 Archangel Raphael 60, 63
 Archangel Uriel 60, 63
 Archangel(s) 60, 63, 82, 84, 89, 108, 113, 115, 120, 138, 146, 153, 162, 163, 165, notes 76, 173, 259, 217 (n. 76), 221 (n. 173), 225 (n. 259)
 Cherubim 113, 174, 175
 Seraphim 113, 173, 174
Christological, theological and other cycle scenes
 Adoration of the Magi 6, 12, 19, 20, 22, 34, 39, 73, 211 (notes 6–8), 218 (n. 95)
 Annunciation to the Virgin 17, 18, 22, 34, 35, 36, 39, 66, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 137, 138, 211 (n. 5), 217 (n. 87), 222 (n. 200)
 Annunciation to Zechariah 22
 Arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem 211 (n. 6)
 Ascension of Christ 21, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 46, 62, 73, 137, 138
 Baptism of Jesus Christ 22, 24, 27, 75, 117, 124, 128, 129, 138, 139, 153, 157, 212 (n. 18)
 Personification of the Jordan River 130

- Betrayal of Judas 24, 25, 27, 131, 138, 139, 155, 212 (notes. 17, 19), 221 (n. 185)
- Communion of the Apostles 30, 213 (n. 28)
- Crucifixion 27, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 90, 132, 136, 138, 140, 141, 155, 186, 217 (n. 91)
Longinus, centurion 70, 132
- Cycle of St. George of Cappadocia 161, 162, 225 (n. 257)
Flagellation of St. George 161
St. George Being Grilled Alive 161
Torture on the Wheel 161, 163
Beheading of St. George 161, 162
Beheading of Empress Alexandra 161
- Cycles from the history of the Nemanjić dynasty 177, 179
Enthronement of Stefan the First-Crowned 179, 197
Kalinik, Bishop of Ras 180
Enthronement of Grand Župan Stefan 180
Enthronement of King Milutin at Deževa 180, 182, 195, 207
Archbishop Jevstatije I 182
Enthronement of King Dragutin 183
Inauguration of Uroš I 183
Translation of the Relics of St. Simeon 179
- Deposition from the Cross 132
- Descent into Hades 27, 73, 74, 132, 138, 140, 142, 155
- Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles 70, 73, 74, 128, 130, 132, 135, 138, 142, 145, 153, 157, 158, 197, 215 (n. 64), 216 (n. 66), 222 (n. 189)
Personifications of the languages 135
- Divine Liturgy 173
- Dormition of the Mother of God 27, 75, 93, 96, 100, 101, 103, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 155
- Entry into Jerusalem 27, 72, 73, 75, 76, 88, 90, 108, 130, 131, 135, 138, 139, 140, 142, 145, 148, 153, 157, 221 (n. 181)
- Great Feasts 22, 27, 73, 74, 75, 90, 96, 128, 132, 137, 139, 140, 141, 142, 155, 213 (n. 25), 218 (n. 95)
- Hospitality of Abraham 184, 196
- Lamentation of Christ 132
- Last Judgment 156
- Mocking of Christ 75
- Myrrhbearers 74
- Nativity of Christ 12, 18, 22, 73, 75, 137, 138, 211 (n. 6), 218 (n. 95)
- Nativity of the Virgin 96
- Officiating Bishops 41, 52, 54, 56, 57, 58, 82, 216 (n. 65)
- Passion of Christ 74, 75, 128, 137, 140, 141
- Presentation of Christ in the Temple 19, 20, 22, 27, 35, 74, 75, 123, 128, 138, 212 (n. 9), 221 (n. 176)
Anna 19, 20, 129
Joseph 20, 128
Simeon the God-receiver 20, 128, 129
- Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple 96
- Raising of Lazarus 75, 130, 135, 138, 139, 140, 142, 155, 160, 221 (n. 180)
Martha, Lazarus's sister, 131, 135, 160
Mary, Lazarus's sister, 131, 135, 160
- Resurrection of Jesus 27, 120, 141
- Transfiguration 25, 26, 27, 28, 131, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 153, 155, 212 (n. 20), 213 (notes 23, 25), 221 (n. 183)
- Twelve-Year-Old Christ teaching in the temple note 212 (n. 17)
- Visitation 17, 18, 22, 36, 73
Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist 18
- Virgin Orans of the "Sign" 46, 49, 56, 59
- Warrior saints 148
Demetrios of Thessaloniki 140
George of Cappadocia 138, 140, 145, 148, 150, 151, 157, 161, 195
Theodores 148

PHOTO CREDITS

Author of the Book: Figs. 15, 16, 34, 38, 77, 78

BLAGO Fund: Figs. 70, 71

Ethnographic Museum, Belgrade: Fig. 82

Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade, Bequest of Gordana Babić: Figs. 1, 4–9, 20, 21, 43, 44

Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade, Bequest of Ivan Djordjević: Figs. 45, 55, 126, 155, 159, 160

Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade, Bequest of Ružica and Nikola Tasić: Figs. 85, 86, 99, 100, 109, 111, 115–116

Institute of Art History, Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade: Fig. 127

Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Serbia – Belgrade: Figs. 23, 40, 42, 63, 72

Mathematical Institute of SASA: Figs. 3, pp. 10–11, 106–107

Milka Čanak-Medić: Fig. 128

National Museum in Belgrade: Figs. 79–81, 84, 87–89, 91, 92, 95–97, 101–103, 105, 106, 110, 112–114, 117–120, 124; Gallery of Frescoes: 104, 107, 108, 121

Platoneum D.O.O.: Figs. 2, 10–14, 17–19, 22, 24–33, 35–37, 39, 41, 46, 47–54, 56–62, 64–69, 73–76, 122, 123, 133, 135–138

Uroš Popović: Figs. 129–132, 134, 139–142, 145–148, 150–154, 158, 161–164

DRAWINGS

Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Serbia – Belgrade: Plan 1, 2

Marijana Marković: figs. 125, 143, 144, 149

Nevena Debljović Ristić: Plan 3a–3b, 4

Nikola Krstić: figs. 83, 90, 93, 94, 98, 156, 157

THE TEXT OF THIS BOOK IS A SLIGHTLY REVISED VERSION, SUPPLEMENTED WITH ENDNOTES, OF THE AUTHOR'S CHAPTERS PUBLISHED IN

M. Marković, D. Vojvodić, *Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras*, Novi Sad 2021, 127–217 and

D. Vojvodić, M. Marković, *Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras*, Novi Sad 2023, 67–165.

The book contains some of the results achieved in the projects no 177036 – *Serbian medieval art and its European context* – and no 177032 – *Tradition, innovation and identity in the Byzantine world* – supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

CIP - Каталогизација у публикацији
Народна библиотека Србије, Београд

75.052.046.3(497.11)
271.222(497.11)-523

VOJVODIĆ, Dragan, 1959-

Medieval wall paintings in the churches and monasteries of Raška. 1, Saint Peter's Church and Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras / Dragan Vojvodić ; [English translation Miljana Protić]. - Belgrade : University, Faculty of Philosophy, The Institute of Art History, 2024 (Beograd : Copy Centar). - 233 str. : ilustr. ; 26 cm

Prema napomeni, ovo je prerađeno i dopunjeno izd. prevoda objavljenih pod stv. nasl. "Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras" i "Djurdjevi Stupovi in Ras". - Tiraž 100. - Napomene i bibliografske reference uz tekst. - Notes: str. 211-233. - Registar.

ISBN 978-86-6427-304-6

а) Манастир Ђурђеви Ступови -- Црква Св. Ђорђа -- Фреске б) Рас -- Црква Св. апостола Петра и Павла -- Фреске

COBISS.SR-ID 142273545

