

MUSEIKON

A JOURNAL OF RELIGIOUS ART AND CULTURE | REVUE D'ART ET DE CULTURE RELIGIEUSE

6 / 2022



Muzeul Național al Unirii, Alba Iulia
Department of the History of Art and Architecture Tufts University, Boston
ICD - Interactions Culturelles et Discursives, Université de Tours
Centre d'Études Supérieures de Civilisation Médiévale, Poitiers

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studies



études

dirigant. Sub quodam milicie eunt signo et non ne pergentibus ad des-
 tinatam terram usque flatum audiatur aenas deuorat. sublatis
 quod lapillul' ad modulata g'uitate saburrant. Tunc quod edunt in al-
 tissima ut de excelsion specula ituenit quod petant t'as. he autem
 dum p'ant unam sequit' ordine uic'ato fides meatu p'it cateruas.
 volatus desidia castigat uoceque cogit agn'. Ea uero obraucata e'
 succedit alia concors cura omnium p' fatigatis ad eo ut si quod defec-
 erit congruant uniuerse lassatasque sustollant. usque dum uires cito re-
 cupantur. Grues in nocte sollicita excertent custodia. Dispositos
 uigiles c'as et ceteris consortibus gregis quiescentibus aue' circueunt
 et explorant ne quod ex parte insidus temptetur atque omnino defertur
 tur in pig' suu uigore tutelam. post uero uigiliam sunt t'pe impletu
 p'finita munie in somnum se p'missio clamore componit ut excitet
 dormientem cui uice munus traditura e'at ulla uolens suscipit sorte non
 usu nro iuncta et pignori somno renunciat sed in pigre suis excutit st'
 t'is uicemque excipit et quod accepit gratiam pari eam atque officio representat. Iam
 nulla des'io quod deuoco n'is. Iam tuta custodia quod uoluntas u'ba. Grues
 in nocte extubias diuidunt et ordine uigiliam p' ordines et uices fa-
 ciunt tenentes lapillos suspensis digitis quibus somno arguant. Quod ca-
 uendum e' clamor indicat. Estate uero color pelit nam sentite mig' scit.



Sola in media mittit auem p'hitacu colore uiridi corq' p'umicea
 g'ndi ling' et ceteris auib; laetore unde rapiculata uerba

Le predicatrici valdesi medievali: mundus reversus et perversus o mundus novus? Sulla testimonianza custodita nel Super Apocalypsim di Goffredo di Auxerre

Francesca Tasca
Società di Studi Valdesi, Bergamo / Torre Pellice (IT)

SUMMARY: ‘After preaching, they feasted quite lavishly every day, they chose new lovers almost every night, they spent their time without being subjected to anyone, without worries, without fatigue, without danger’. In his *Super Apocalypsim*, the Cistercian monk Geoffrey of Auxerre describes in this way two Waldensian lady preachers, delineating an extraordinary condition of female autonomy. The article explores the ‘textual physiognomy’ of *Super Apocalypsim*, a biblical commentary written in the second half of the 1180s, but also highlights its historical and editorial context. The testimony of Geoffrey of Auxerre, a leading representative of ecclesiastical hierarchies, allows us to analyse lexical choices and conceptual *nuclei* in order to clarify the specific polemics underlying this description of the subversive life of an order which is represented by the two Waldensian women and the manner in which they experience female freedom. Emphasis is given to the issue of a dangerous ‘upside-down world’ (*mundus reversus et perversus*); this witnesses the subversive experience of the two Waldensian women. The article also recognises possible surviving traces of a radical evangelism and the attempt to create a new world (*mundus novus*).

KEYWORDS: Waldensians; women; medieval preaching; upside-down world; evangelical radicalism.

REZUMAT: „După ce predicau, se ospătau pe îndestulate în fiecare zi, își alegeau noi iubiti aproape în fiecare noapte, își petreceau timpul fără a fi supuse nimănui, fără griji, fără oboseală, fără primejdii.” În *Super Apocalypsim*, călugărul cistercian Geoffroi din Auxerre descrie în acest fel două predicatoare valdeze, conturând astfel o condiție extraordinară de autonomie feminină. Articolul explorează „fizionomia textuală” a lui *Super Apocalypsim*, un comentariu biblic scris în a doua jumătate a anilor 1180, evidențiind totodată contextul său istoric și editorial. Mărturia lui Geoffroi din Auxerre, un reprezentant de frunte al ierarhiei ecleziastice, ne permite să analizăm alegerile lexicale și nucleeele conceptuale ale pasajului, pentru a clarifica adevărata polemică ce stă la baza acestei descrieri. Viața subversivă a ordinului reprezentat de cele două femei valdeze explică și modul în care ele experimentau libertatea feminină. Se pune accent pe problema unei periculoase „lumi cu susul în jos” (*mundus reversus et perversus*). Această lume este martoră a experienței subversive. Articolul observă de asemenea posibile urme ale unui evangelism radical și încercarea de a crea o lume nouă (*mundus novus*).

CUVINTE-CHEIE: valdezi; femei; predici medievale; lumea cu susul în jos; radicalism evanghelic.

Ἰδοὺ καινὰ ποιῶ πάντα (Apocalisse 21:5)

Nelle presenti pagine si vuole provare ad interrogare un testo di natura spiccatamente teologica come il commento di Goffredo di Auxerre all’Apocalisse, per far emergere lo sfondo sociale e la conflittuale atmosfera religiosa in cui se ne collocò il contesto redazionale. Tale disamina si basa sulla convinzione che un testo dottrinale costituisca una possibile fonte non solo (ed ovviamente) per ripercorrere l’evoluzione del sapere teologico, ma anche per comprendere come la riflessione teorica risponda spesso in modo molto pragmatico a coeve istanze e dinamiche emergenti. Opere per tradizione poco frequentate in ambito storico possono così custodire pagine che, se correttamente decodificate, si dimostrano in grado di restituire in controtela e in maniera inaspettata squarci rivelatori.

(1) Goffredo di Auxerre, esponente e difensore delle gerarchie ecclesiastiche.

Il potente monaco cisterciense Goffredo di Auxerre fu esponente di spicco dell’élite clericale della seconda metà del XII secolo.¹ A Parigi, nel 1140, aveva abbandonato il secolo e la scuola di Abelardo per seguire Bernardo di Clairvaux, che accompagnò nelle celebri e infuocate predicazioni contro gli eretici della Francia meridionale e a promozione

◀ *Unknown, illuminator. A Parrot, about 1250–1260. Pen-and-ink drawings tinted with body color and translucent washes. Leaf: 21 × 15.7 cm (8 1/4 × 6 3/16 in.). The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. 100, fol. 34v, 2007.16.34v.*

Courtesy of the Getty Open Content Program.

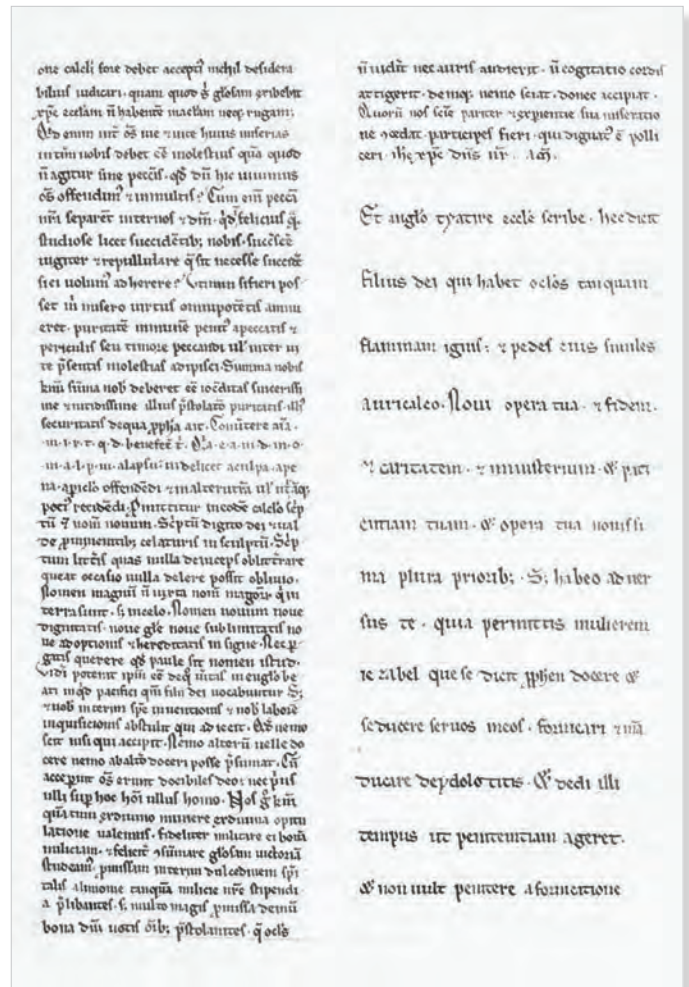
della seconda Crociata. Di Bernardo di Clairvaux fu per circa quindici anni segretario personale (*notarius*) e strettissimo collaboratore,² oltre che primo agiografo. Lo stesso Goffredo fu in seguito abate di vari e importanti monasteri cisterciensi (Igny, Clairvaux, Fossanova, Hautecombe) e conobbe il pontefice Alessandro III, l'imperatore Federico Barbarossa e il re d'Inghilterra Enrico II Plantageneto. Egli incarnò ed espresse, insomma, i vertici del corpo sacerdotale e monastico, di quel clero istituzionale e di quelle gerarchie ecclesiastiche che nella seconda metà del XII secolo – in un tempo agitato dall'emergere e dal pullulare³ minaccioso di numerosi e vivaci gruppi portatori di esperienze religiose non conformiste – intendevano tenere saldamente tra le mani l'esercizio della propria egemonia.

L'esistenza e l'azione di Goffredo di Auxerre si intrecciarono, infatti, anche con l'esistenza e l'azione di Valdo, il ricchissimo *civis* di Lione che verso il 1173/1174, fattosi tradurre le Scritture in volgare, si spogliò di tutti i beni e iniziò una vita di libera predicazione, itineranza e pauperismo evangelico.⁴ Tale eclatante conversione religiosa generò non poco subbuglio a Lione: presto si raccolse intorno a Valdo un nutrito numero di discepoli (tra cui si sarebbe registrata anche la presenza di donne), che ugualmente si proponevano di rinnovare la missione apostolica attraverso una vita di predicazione itinerante e di mendicizia radicale.

Per tentare di controllare e normalizzare la dirompente esperienza religiosa iniziata da Valdo, la locale chiesa di Lione organizzò, nel 1180, un sinodo. Oltre a Goffredo, allora abate di Hautecombe, vi parteciparono il legato pontificio (e cardinale di Albano) Enrico di Marcy e l'arcivescovo di Lione Guiscardo di Pontigny (anch'egli in precedente abate cisterciense). "Davanti a un gran numero di persone degne d'onore, soprattutto sacerdoti" (*coram numerosa multitudine honorabilium personarum, maxime sacerdotum*), Valdo e i suoi *fratres* trovarono in quell'occasione istituzionale un accordo (sebbene destinato a durare poco) con le locali gerarchie ecclesiastiche lionesi:⁵ il preziosissimo documento noto come *Professio fidei et propositum vitae* di Valdo, conservato nel ms. 1114 della Biblioteca Nazionale di Madrid, è espressione di quella intesa raggiunta nel 1180.⁶ Questa si rivelò in verità molto fragile e precaria: appena pochi anni dopo, nel 1184, i *Pauperes de Lugduno* ('Poveri di Lione': così venivano chiamati i primi valdesi)⁷ furono colpiti da condanna nella decretale *Ad abolendam*, emanata a Verona da papa Lucio III, in sintonia con l'imperatore Federico Barbarossa.

La testimonianza di Goffredo di Auxerre sulla prima espansione del movimento iniziato da Valdo è custodita nel *Super Apocalypsim*, opera ancora non abbastanza conosciuta del potente monaco e prolifico autore.⁸ Databile tra il 1187-1188 e la morte dell'autore (avvenuta probabilmente nel 1194)⁹ – il *Super Apocalypsim*¹⁰ (titolo, in realtà, attribuito tra XIII e XIV secolo) è una raccolta di venti sermoni, destinati ai monaci, a commento dei primi tre capitoli dell'Apocalisse, ossia i capitoli contenenti i sette messaggi che il Figlio dell'Uomo affida a Giovanni perché li comunichi alle sette chiese d'Asia (Efeso, Smirne, Pergamo, Tiàtira, Sardi, Filadelfia, Laodicea). I tre capitoli sono smembrati in venti pericopi e ciascuno dei venti sermoni sviluppa e commenta una singola pericope.

Nel quattordicesimo sermone, da cui è tratta la fonte oggetto delle presenti pagine, si commenta Apocalisse 2:18-29, dove destinataria della lettera è la comunità di Tiàtira. Della chiesa di Tiàtira il Figlio dell'Uomo loda le opere, l'amore, la sopportazione, il servizio. Tuttavia rimprovera al suo interno la presenza tollerata di una donna, la lussuosa Gezabele, che si dichiara profetessa e svia i



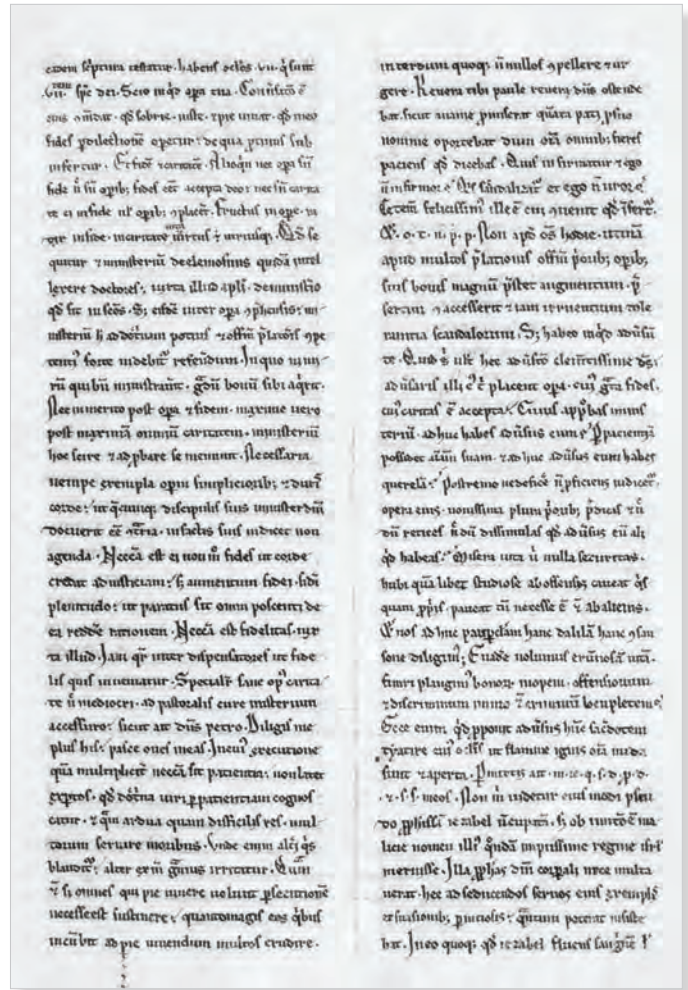
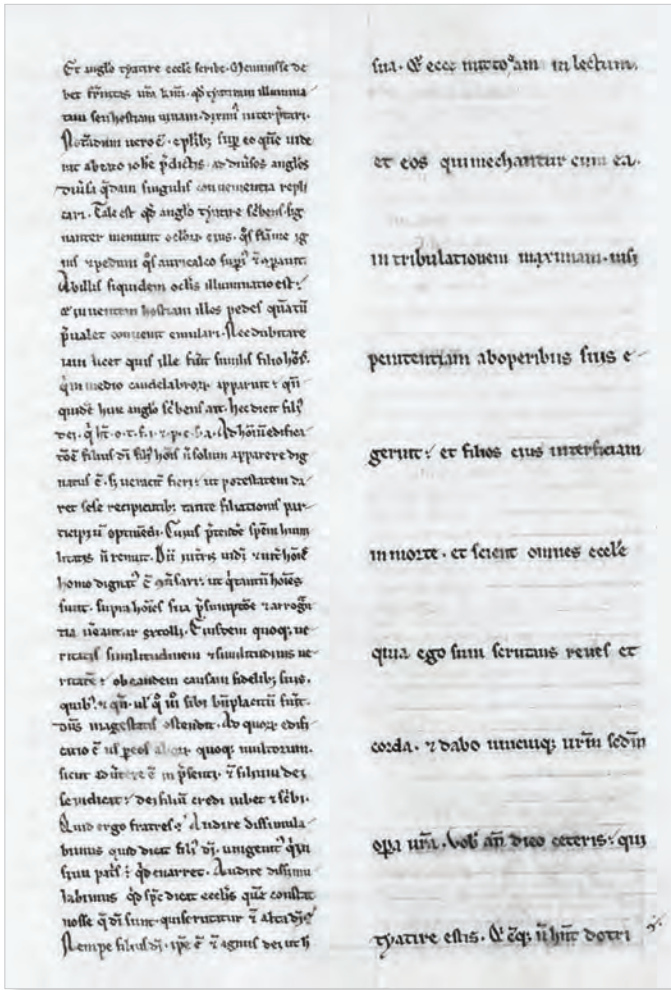
▲ Quattordicesimo sermone del 'Super Apocalypsim' di Goffredo d'Auxerre nella copia del manoscritto di Parigi, Bibliothèque nationale de France, latin 687 (XII secolo, realizzato a Fontenay o a Clairvaux), f. 24r, 24v, 25r.

Fonte: facsimile digitalizzato (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/>) / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

discepoli del Signore, spingendoli a comportamenti sessuali ed alimentari illeciti.¹¹ Contro Gezabele e i suoi seguaci, cui Dio ha concesso un tempo di conversione, è minacciato un gravissimo castigo se non avverrà il ravvedimento. Coloro che non sono compresi in questa minaccia, vengono invece esortati a mantenersi saldi e irreprensibili nell'attesa del ritorno del Figlio dell'Uomo.

(2) 'Novi apostoli', 'novi psittaci'.

Nel sermone, Goffredo di Auxerre applica a questa pericope apocalittica una lettura che si ispira alle vicende di cui egli era allora testimone diretto e oculare: pone il messaggio alla chiesa di Tiàtira in relazione ai fatti che stavano in quei giorni coinvolgendo (e sconvolgendo) la chiesa di Lione, da dove era partita l'iniziativa di evangelismo radicale di Valdo.¹² Goffredo riferisce che il *primus inventor* della secta instancabilmente attirava e insieme sparpagliava tutt'intorno discepoli, tra cui si registrava anche la scandalosa presenza di donne. È significativo che Goffredo definisca sprezzantemente il movimento iniziato da Valdo utilizzando la riduttiva parola *secta*: si tratta di una scelta lessicale che conferma come l'insigne cisterciense travisi la *Professio fidei* di Valdo formulata nel



sinodo lionese del 1180. Infatti, nel riferire del solenne evento di cui fu testimone, Goffredo lo definisce, in modo erroneo, nei termini di un'abiura dall'eresia. L'anziano cisterciense delinea con tratti minacciosi l'identità di costoro che, vagando tra città e piccoli villaggi (*circumierunt urbes et viculos*), senza lavorare ma vivendo di mendicizia (*impudenter panibus alienis sine labore manuum victitantes*), osavano usurpare l'incarico della predicazione (*praedicationis officium usurpantes*): persone descritte come spregevoli e indegne, completamente (o quasi) illetterate. Contro di loro l'anziano cisterciense scaglia l'epiteto dispregiativo di "nuovi apostoli e apostole" (*Galliarum sedes prima Lugdunum novos creavit apostolos nec erubuit apostolas etiam sociare*) ma anche di "nuovi pappagalli" (*novi psittaci*):

Unde tibi illustris regio gallicana, unde tibi de novo spernere et parvipendere privilegium commendationis antiquae: 'Gallia monstra non habet!' [Hier., Contra Vigilantium, I, PL 23:339]. Galliarum sedes prima Lugdunum novos creavit apostolos nec erubuit apostolas etiam sociare. Ad demoliendam vineam Domini vulpeculae prodierunt [Cant 2:15], personae contemptibiles at prorsus indignae, praedicationis officium usurpantes aut penitus aut pene sine litteris, sed potius sine spiritu, iuxta illud: 'Animales, Spiritum non habentes' [Iud 1:19] circuierunt urbes et viculos sub praetextu paupertatis et praedicationis obtentu, impudenter panibus alienis sine labore manuum victitantes. Verbis compositis et exquisitis accuunt linguas suas, novos exhibent psittacos, ignorant de quibus loquuntur, de quibus affirmant. Elleborum unde suorum figmenta accuant,

immo figmenta verborum, vituperatio est et derogatio clericorum.

Per comprendere correttamente queste dure parole è innanzi tutto necessario ricordare l'accezione pesantemente negativa che avvolgeva a quell'altezza cronologica il campo semantico e concettuale dell'aggettivo *novus*.¹³ I discepoli e le discepole di Valdo sono definiti apostoli e apostole "nuovi" non solo perché sorti recentemente (*de novo*) tra le strade di Lione, ma anche perché inusitati e, soprattutto, perché percepiti come pericolosi. Termine ambiguo e polisemico, la *novitas* era, infatti, associata a generale sfiducia e avversione: rivoluzioni, progetti sovversivi, disordini, conflitti erano marchiati dal richiamo alla *novitas*. La "novità" era considerata "fonte di discordia, sino alla sovrapposizione tra la sfera del *novum* e quella dell'*iniquum*".¹⁴

L'allarme di Goffredo per la sfida eversiva lanciata dai *novi apostoli* (e dalle nuove apostole) viene ulteriormente ribadito e amplificato utilizzando una seconda volta l'aggettivo *novus* applicato ad un deturpante, benché abbastanza tradizionale, meccanismo di bestializzazione. I nuovi apostoli (e le nuove apostole) di Lione vengono trasformati e deformati in *novi psittaci*: bizzarri e pericolosi pappagalli che non sanno di cosa parlano e cosa vanno affermando (*ignorantes de quibus loquuntur, de quibus affirmant*). Il fatto che Goffredo, invece di attingere alle varie e più consuete bestializzazioni utilizzate contro gli eretici (ossia volpi, lupi, cani, serpi,...),¹⁵ scelga di associarli ai pappagalli,¹⁶ comunica al lettore un messaggio molto chiaro: come i pappagalli imitano e ripetono le parole umane sen-

serquiliamū interpretatur de habundantia in
iquitatis l. qm mundicie ead appllone uocatur
rque dicit pmittere. liquet qm poterat phi
bere. Et nunc km̄ delicta quis intelligit?
Nimirum. cuius ocli ut flamma ignis. Non
est credendū qd tante prauitati consenserit
hic sacerdos. cui opera. cui fidel. cuius curtal
mendat. Non ē credendū q. arguere dissi
mulauerit: cui ministeriū appbatur. S; p
alias tribulationes de quarū patientia iure
laudatur. huic forsitan min' nullo sese oppo
sunt. rquam eximio demerita seueritate mēre
trunt: exnuma lenitate culpam in currit.
Sic nimirū peccantes filios hely quondam
sacerdos dñi pdidit dum peperit. Nam r subit
eos corripuit. s; in nullo puniuit. stipendius sa
cerdotalib; n̄ p̄uauit. ab altari n̄ repulit. ab offō
non amouit. Fuerunt qui mulierem istam
sacerdotis suspicārētur uxorem qd si uerum
fuisset. durus forsitan reprehensum reuēde
tius septū fuisset. Quo modo em̄ uirtutis
sciemer tenuisset ad ulteram. nedum blas
phemā nedū hereticam r post unam r altā
in crepatōē fidelib; om̄ib; deuitandam?
Bñ paulus mulieres in ecclis loq̄ phibens
ait. Domi uros suos interrogent. Boni n̄
fors. interrogent n̄ docere p̄sumant. nec se inuicē.
s; uros. n̄ q̄ eq; s; suos. Unde tibi illustris re
gio gallicana un̄ ē denouo sp̄nere r parupē
dere p̄uilegiū q̄mēdationis antiq; gallia mē
tra n̄ habet? Galliarū sedes p̄ma lugdunū
nouos creauit aplōs. nec erubuit apl̄is r
lociare. Ad demolieudam uincā dñi uulpe
cule pdierunt. p̄sone q̄mētibiles. r pro
sus indignē. p̄dicationis officium uir
pantes. aut pentus aut pene sū litteris.
set potius sine sp̄n. iuxta illud. animales

sp̄m n̄ habentes. Circueunt urbes r uicinos sub
p̄teru paupertatis r p̄dicationis obtentu. impu
dent pamb; alienis sū labore manū uictantes.
Verbis q̄positis r q̄requisitis acciunt linguas su
as. uouol scribere syracos ignorantel de quib;
locuttur. de quib; affirmant. Ellebor. un̄
suorū pigmenta acuant. immo pigmenta uborū
utupato ē r derogatio clericorū. Abiura
uit eiusmodi sectam p̄m̄us in uentor a loco
natiuitatis. Gaude suus noīat in gailio lug
dunensi. p̄sente r p̄sidente uenerabili patre
nostro dño albauenli ep̄o tunc legato sedis
ap̄lice henrico. r pie memorie w̄lharo illi ecclē
archiep̄o. quib; urā quoq; humilitas assistebat.
coram numerosa multitudine honorabilium
p̄sonarū. maxime sacerdotū rationib; manifestis
de sacrilega p̄sumptione q̄uictus. S; reūsus
ad uomitum colligere r disseminare dis
cipulos n̄ desistat. In quib; n̄ desunt im
sere r muliercule onerate peccatis. q̄ do
mos penetrant alienas curiose r et ubose.
p̄aces. impbe. impudentel sicut due earū
aū hoc ferme quinquennū in exercitu quodā
sacellitū nefandorū. uenerabilem aūm̄ce ur
bil ep̄m qd eodem postmodū referite multis
innotuit. trāsseuntē quā grauissimil potant
q̄tumelūs impetebant. imp̄perantes ei qd
in sua diocesi p̄dicantes olim repperient. minil
r p̄suasiomb; eidē secte abrenunciare spulit.
Ap̄t qd impbe blasphemantes q̄uicia iaculabant
meū. r publice pelamabant. Post p̄dicationē cor
die laici epulantes. noctib; pene singlis uouos
nobis eligebam' amasios. nullil oburgie. sine
sollertudine. sū labore. sū ullo uite p̄clo t̄p̄a
transigentes. in quib; nē auille dñorū. cotidie
morū pietatē r uariis miserie subiacem' erūp
ul. Ad q̄ dicim' fr̄es quis illam rezael post

annos mille iuuenclān suscitauit. ut pueros et plures
 tales meretriciā predicatō occurrit. Licet enim ab episcopo
 ab archiepiscopo a romana demum eiusmodi secta ex
 omnino ecelesia: eo ipso carum admittitur rati
 duntaxat ad centum ab his quibus fuerunt dulciores
 aque et alconditur paulus suauior. Notandum est et uul
 gatum mulieris poeti quia uirilem seruum demul
 tuloquo rimonu uiboz cretūspectōe redargu.
 S; nec mirū si ob p̄mal suggestiones uoxas.
 loquela quē admodū pentus ē adempta serpē
 ti aliquatenū est inhibita mulieri. Non uul
 tof demq; frū uroz hodie q; sup̄statet arbi
 trē inueniri. qui post maiorū karismata
 gūarum. motum maritū mulierū dī gentē
 ee orau. grauitatē quēque silentij nob̄ cum
 audierunt abō p̄re et p̄ceptore n̄ro dignis
 laudib; p̄dicari. In omnib; nempe sacerōū
 libris euāgloz: ūba ei n̄ n̄. An. inuenisse se
 imendabat. Erat enī plima ostēns incoz

annos mille iuuenclān suscitauit. ut pueros et plures
 tales meretriciā predicatō occurrit. Licet enim ab episcopo
 ab archiepiscopo a romana demum eiusmodi secta ex
 omnino ecelesia: eo ipso carum admittitur rati
 duntaxat ad centum ab his quibus fuerunt dulciores
 aque et alconditur paulus suauior. Notandum est et uul
 gatum mulieris poeti quia uirilem seruum demul
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 laudib; p̄dicari. In omnib; nempe sacerōū
 libris euāgloz: ūba ei n̄ n̄. An. inuenisse se
 imendabat. Erat enī plima ostēns incoz

▲ Quattordicesimo sermone del 'Super Apocalypsim' di Goffredo d'Auxerre nella copia del manoscritto di Parigi, Bibliothèque nationale de France, latin 687 (XII secolo, realizzato a Fontenay o a Clairvaux), f. 25v, 26r (dettaglio e foglio intero).
 Fonte: facsimile digitalizzato (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/>) / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

za comprenderne il significato, così i primissimi Poveri di Lione avrebbero tentato, attraverso il mimetismo formale, la competizione contro il monopolio della diffusione del messaggio evangelico – quel monopolio esclusivo che proprio Goffredo di Auxerre rappresentava e che intendeva gelosamente detenere e difendere. Il riferimento ai pappagalli come esempio di una ripetizione tanto gradevole¹⁷ quanto priva di consapevolezza e profondità si ritrovava, per altro, già in riflessioni di Agostino¹⁸ e di Cassiodoro¹⁹ sviluppate a proposito dell'autentico e profondo senso del canto di preghiera. E a tali riflessioni patristiche avrebbe potuto attingere Goffredo di Auxerre nel ricorrere all'immagine dei pappagalli. L'indegnità non sta, quindi, nel messaggio, dotato, anzi, anche di forme attraenti (*verba composita et exquisita*). Per il monaco cisterciense – membro orgoglioso del *genus clericorum* che istituzionalmente deteneva, alla fine del XII secolo, l'esclusiva dell'annuncio della Parola –, indegni, disprezzabili e, soprattutto, pericolosi,²⁰ erano coloro che volevano emergere a protagonisti autonomi dell'annuncio del Vangelo e che non solo imitavano ma anche attaccavano, insultavano e sminuivano i legittimi esponenti clericali (*vituperatio et derogatio clericorum*). Per tale ragione, dunque, i pappagalli sono qui definiti 'nuovi' (*novi psittaci*). Certamente perché sorti

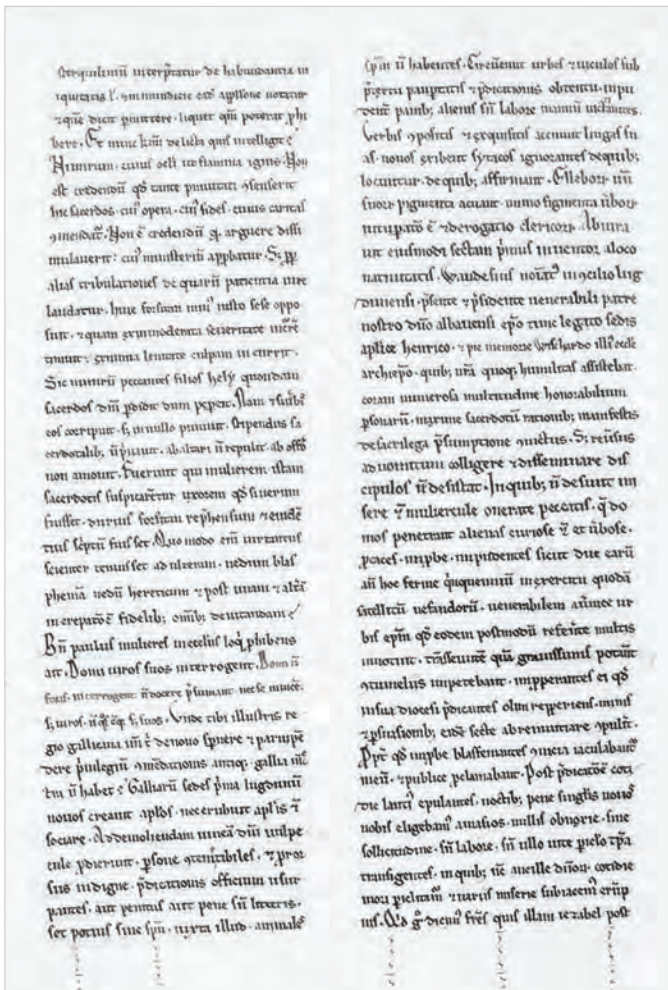
temporalmente da poco e perché insoliti, ma soprattutto perché pericolosamente minacciosi.

Bestializzando i discepoli di Valdo in forma di pappagalli, Goffredo, esponente delle élites ecclesiastiche, coerentemente a un coevo diffuso atteggiamento di condanna verso la *novitas*, esprime diffidenza, sospetto e chiusura, oltre che un vero e proprio rifiuto nei confronti della proposta e dell'iniziativa laicale emersa a Lione nell'ultimo quarto del XII secolo. L'immobilismo gerarchico di Goffredo non può che respingere, con una netta contrapposizione e condanna sprezzante, quello che viene interpretato come un pericoloso attacco sovversivo allo status quo esistente e cristallizzato.

(3) Il ritorno di Gezabele *post annos mille*: le predicatrici prostitute.

L'attestazione di presenze femminili tra i seguaci di Valdo consentiva a Goffredo di Auxerre di denunciare l'attacco sovversivo e scandaloso in corso nel territorio di Lione associandolo con facilità alla vicenda, custodita nelle pagine dell'Apocalisse, della falsa e lussuriosa profetessa Gezabele attiva all'interno della chiesa di Tiàtira. Tuona Goffredo dalle pagine del *Super Apocalypsim*: "Chi di nuovo suscitò dopo mille anni il ritorno della giovinetta Gezabele, tanto che la piccola prostituta percorra come predicatrice vicoli e piazze?"²¹

Le donne predicatrici che partecipavano al movimento dei *pauperes*,²² le famigerate *apostolae* che accompagnavano i *novi apostoli*, vengono quindi apertamente associa-



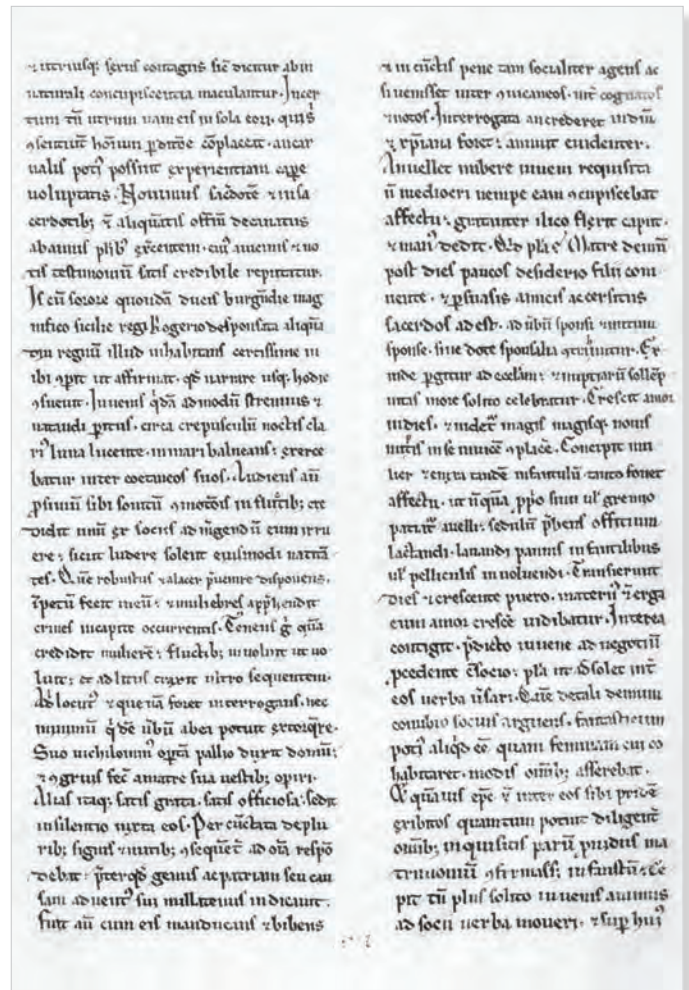
▲ Quattordicesimo sermone del 'Super Apocalypsim' di Goffredo d'Auxerre nella copia del manoscritto di Parigi, Bibliothèque nationale de France, latin 687 (XII secolo, realizzato a Fontenay o a Clairvaux), f. 26v, 27r, 27v, 28r.

Fonte: facsimile digitalizzato (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/>) / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

te alla prostituzione (*meretriculae praedicatorum*) oltre che descritte (utilizzando, per altro, un calco paolino da 2 Timoteo 3:6, già adottato da Bernardo di Clairvaux nelle controverse antiereticali)²³ come misere donnicciole²⁴ (*miseriae mulierculae*) cariche di peccati, pettegole, chiacchierone, sfacciate, disoneste, insolenti (*curiosae etiam et verbosae, procaces, improbae, impudentes*).

Ecco le parole con cui Goffredo descrive l'esperienza di due predicatrici che, per circa cinque anni, avrebbero militato tra le fila di quell'esperienza dirompente (e il termine 'militare' non è improprio né casuale, bensì suggerito dall'immagine impiegata nella stessa fonte, che definisce il gruppo come "una sorta di esercito di sgherri scellerati" [*in exercitu quodam satellitum nefandorum*]):

sicut duae earum ante hoc ferme quinquennium in exercitu quodam satellitum nefandorum venerabilem Arvenicae urbis episcopum, quod eodem postmodum referente multis innotuit, transeuntem quam gravissimis poterant contumeliis impetebant, improperantes ei quod in sua dioecesi praedicantes olim reperiens, minis et persuasionibus eidem sectae abrenuntiare compulerit. Propter quod improbe blasphemantes contra iaculabantur in eum et publice proclamabant: 'Post praedicationem quotidie lautius



epulantes, noctibus paene singulis novos nobis eligebamur amasios, nullis obnoxiae, sine sollicitudine, sine labore, sine ullo vitae periculo tempora transeuntes, in quibus nunc ancillae dominorum quotidie mori periclitamur et variis miserae subiaccemus aerumnis...'

Attraverso il tramite del vescovo di Clermont-Ferrand (*venerabilem Arvenicae urbis episcopum*) – testimone presentato come affidabile e attendibile da Goffredo di Auxerre, poiché esponente della medesima gerarchia ecclesiastica e membro del medesimo *genus clericorum* cui lo stesso monaco cisterciense appartiene – l'esperienza delle due predicatrici è del tutto degradata e deformata. La libertà, l'autonomia, l'autodeterminazione di cui le due predicatrici hanno fatto esperienza straordinaria per circa cinque anni viene deturpata e svilita. L'attività di libera predicazione itinerante, a due a due, aderente al modello apostolico, viene ridotta alla possibilità di mangiare abbondantemente, di scegliersi quasi ogni notte nuovi amanti, di trascorrere il tempo senza essere sottoposte a nessuno, senza preoccupazioni, senza impegni di lavoro, senza fatica, senza pericoli. La cultura egemonica e conservatrice di cui Goffredo è esponente scredata la forma di vita religiosa innescata dall'iniziativa di Valdo di Lione che inevitabilmente, attraverso l'itineranza, la mendicizia e la libera presa di parola, portava a ignorare gerarchie, a sottrarsi a rapporti di potere, a eludere relazioni di oppressione.

Goffredo di Auxerre descrive tutto ciò nei termini di un 'mondo alla rovescia' in cui è avvenuta l'inversione pericolosa di tutti i valori e di tutte le gerarchie: un minaccioso

mobi scribime hestare. Nouissime in-
col conuenit. ut regressus domi in secre-
to exhibuit ubi oculisq; mirari; in-
toto muerone muliere cōsilio peccet
rpeper queru foet. peni afieri. nee
metens pueru frardaret. Ipm nempy
pensat ei dūge sū hestatore credere. Regi-
sus domū qđ disposuerit qđamē suggeste
nt miculiditer expleat. Ex parte illa u
bituū mūtoe filij gladiū mruent in
uocē hūstoidi mūdantē erupit. Ve-
rabi mifer italem post yrode. dū me
cogni effari. Ecē foce. bene tibi fore
dū pūctaret in uindictū in silentiū
obseruare. Tu ē loquor ut enigis:
ser locuti deinceps ū uidebit. Ad hoc
ūbiuū exanuit mulier: puer cre-
uit relit. tanquū unū de oculis me
trabat. Marimum tū maxime cepit
balneum frigidare. ū quonā suena-
uiter muenta: donec una die rī san-
tatis illa mulier coram mulier ut asse-
rebant meibē stūdit; puerū rapire oc-
currunt. pro quo nēt ulen oparūt. deq;
ueniam ihezel ab ista mīnū pū uerana
simile canit. ac disparitū. similitē.
omni nota loqueret. uideēt eni appere
in spē mulierū demonū p ptea loq;
hibita: ut pūciosa cognosēt cur loq;
tal mulierū. sicut uideēt credibile. uerian
posse peccē sobolem ab eiusmodi fun-
talis. unde huj pueri neccepē erretitū
mare repulit. aut ēre deinceps refeg-
niat. qđ sūstantiū nati. uature cō
peccēt foret. suerul homo fuisset. I

irretit ūl affūctas obiceret. permi-
mteros eadē desponsant. libos etiā pre-
ant grea. dieb; quoq; ramul pūb; pūn-
mendine uilimulatur amoz: qđ parē
del. pparitiam ignorabit yroct. stilla
balneul plurimū delectabit: r ea potē
simum frequētabat. Nec patiebatur un-
ta uideri ul famulariū qualibet puel-
larum: s; paratē aly; anctal emittens.
r eta remanent in cōclau. oitum abmi-
tal obtembat. demū exire unam abf-
amcellū eius pfozamē paratē cariof;
intuenēt uideri istamū s; serpentem.
simofis pūlucum uolūmū; circure.
Plurief quoq; similitē eam in cura r
uehemēt admirans. dñō tandem suo mil-
terū mīctatū aperit. Nec ille unū
ad nomen serpentis ex parte. facial usq;
pūalul r emul credent aliquid mali ēē.
p eo qđ origuētū ignorat urois. Opot-
tūū demq; tempis expectant sic audie
ut aurib; sic mterual oclū sūo ostupu-
re. post necē manūctal mter feminam
r serpente notū fed mteam ū mediaoeri
ad ammiratū. Hec potuit distimulare
qđ agit: s; uocētans ut rē pūlūuū
illud r effregit. At illa ū quā de moel ei
oparita disparat. nullatenū sustinēt
qđ in spē fuerit pōcupata serpentis. He-
no tū cauleat ul arguat. qđ nihil ei
modi uelle uideat curiosa lectari: rani-
matione digna pponere. Studiosus istq;
sīdēt r fidelit adnummāt audire. qđū
unū ūgar oratio. r mterio qđ requirit.
Obdibilem fatior. reddē uelū libidinem.

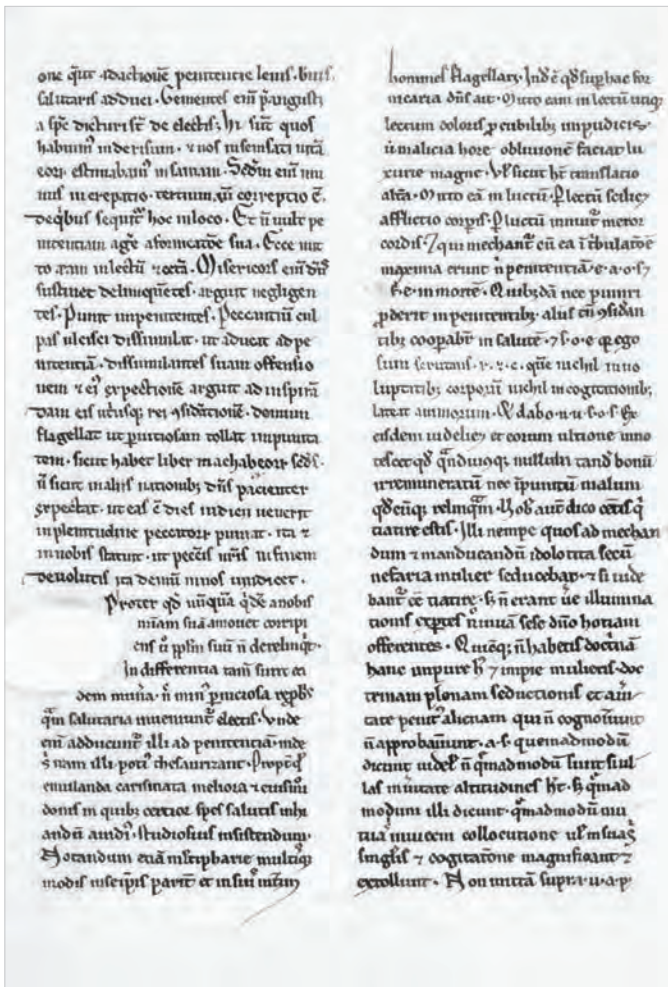
quanto precario *mundus reversus et perversus*. Tutto è, in-
fatti, ridotto al soddisfacimento godereccio dei bisogni più
basilari – il cibo, la sessualità, il riposo –, per altro ulterior-
mente deformati in sfrenatezza: i pasti sovrabbondanti;
la promiscuità sessuale; la poltroneria. Anche l'itineranza
apostolica è deformata grottescamente in una sorta di
vagabondaggio randagio.

Nella descrizione deformante non è da trascurarsi il ri-
ferimento biblico a Gezabele. Sebbene nel commento di
Goffredo il rimando immediato ed esplicito sia alla falsa
profetessa Gezabele citata nell'Apocalisse, è utile ricor-
dare un'altra Gezabele biblica: la spietata moglie del re
Acab. Come narrato nel primo libro dei Re, la regina Geza-
bele, di origine fenicia, venerava Baal e cercò di imporre
tale culto idolatrico in Israele. Ciò suscitò l'ira divina e la
maledizione del profeta Elia. Nel testo biblico si narra, in-
fatti, che la perfida regina morì in modo violento, scaran-
ventata dalla finestra del proprio palazzo, e il suo cada-
uere, rimasto a lungo insepolto, venne mangiato dai cani.²⁵
Citando la peccaminosa Gezabele dell'Apocalisse, Goffre-
do, in controluce, rimanda anche alla altrettanto malvagia
regina Gezabele dell'Antico Testamento. Tale connes-
sione tra le due Gezabele doveva essere immediata ed evi-
dente in età medievale. Questo legame si fonda, infatti,
sul principio 'tipologico' dell'esegesi medievale, in base
al quale l'Antico Testamento è prefigurazione del Nuovo
Testamento e sussiste una profonda correlazione tra le
due parti delle Scritture.²⁶

Un'ulteriore componente contribuisce a complicare il
già intricato labirinto testuale costruito da Goffredo: il

possibile sotteso riferimento alla vicenda della vigna di
Naboth, che la regina Gezabele riuscì a sottrarre al legiti-
timo proprietario con l'inganno, la falsa testimonianza e
la violenza.²⁷ È noto: "le piccole volpi che devastano la
vigna del Signore"²⁸ è espressione ricorrente e celebre,
tratta dal Cantico dei Cantici, per indicare gli eretici che
attaccano la Chiesa. Riferendosi al sorgere in Lione dei
nuovi apostoli e delle nuove apostole, la medesima espres-
sione è usata anche da Goffredo, appena poche righe
prima di inserire il riferimento al ritorno di Gezabele (*ad
demoliendam vineam Domini vulpeculae prodierunt*). At-
traverso l'elemento comune della vigna, dotato di grande
potenza evocativa, Gezabele potrebbe essere, quindi, as-
sociata in parallelo anche alle "piccole volpi". Si verrebbe
così a creare un aggiuntivo rinforzo alla trama di rimandi
tra gli eretici e le due Gezabele (la falsa profetessa e la
malvagia regina). Alla fine del XII secolo autori di grande
erudizione come Goffredo di Auxerre amavano imprezio-
sire i propri testi con simili allusioni, creando un intreccio
di rimandi ed echi.

Soffermandosi ancora sulla Gezabele apocalittica, si ri-
leva che questa è messa in relazione a comportamenti ses-
suali disordinati, gli stessi di cui vengono accusate anche
le due predicatrici valdesi, definite addirittura come "pic-
cole prostitute". Ciò non sorprende: molto comune era
associare il nonconformismo religioso all'accusa di non-
conformismo sessuale e promiscuità. Ecco cosa afferma
nel XIII secolo un commento all'Apocalisse in antico fran-
cese a proposito di Gezabele, sintetizzando gli insegna-
menti degli autori mediolatini del secolo precedente:



▲ *Quattordicesimo sermone del 'Super Apocalypsim' di Goffredo d'Auxerre nella copia del manoscritto di Parigi, Bibliothèque nationale de France, latin 687 (XII secolo, realizzato a Fontenay o a Clairvaux), f. 28v, 29r, 29v.*

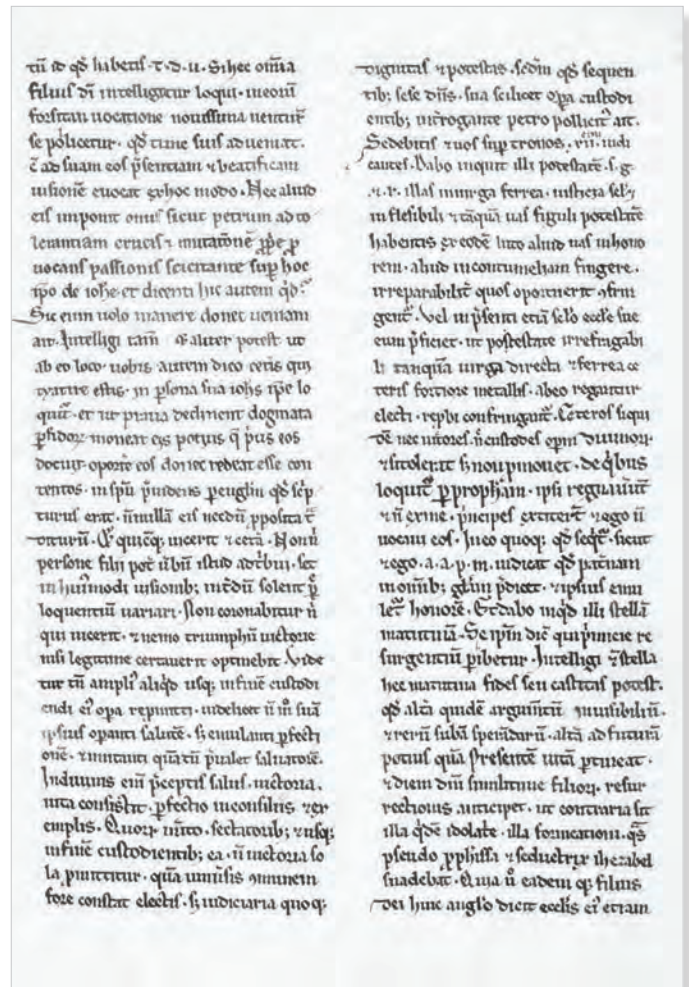
Fonte: facsimile digitalizzato (<https://gallica.bnf.fr/>) / Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Par Jezabel sunt signefié ki vivent solunc la volenté de la char, et ensement enseignent encuntre l'Euvangile. Ceus ne deivent pas crestiens suffrir entre eus, puis qu'il sunt endurci en lur folie, si come dit li apostre.²⁹

Del resto, la connessione tra accusa ereticale e sffenatezza sessuale (in particolare, orge) conosce numerosissime attestazioni, fin dai primi secoli cristiani:³⁰ una narrazione consueta che in modo inevitabile riteneva i comportamenti sessuali come inscindibilmente collegati all'identificazione ereticale. A prescindere dal grado di veridicità,³¹ si tratta di un *topos* consolidato che certamente agisce anche sul testo di Goffredo, ma su cui non è possibile qui soffermarsi perché porterebbe molto lontano rispetto al focus del presente contributo.³²

Quello descritto da Goffredo è, in ogni caso, un mondo a tinte fosche, fatto di degradazione morale e disordine sociale. Un *mundus reversus et perversus*, appunto. Ma di breve durata. Le due “donnicciole” (*mulierculae*) vengono, infatti, indotte dal vescovo a lasciare la loro setta con minacce e persuasioni (*minis et persuasionibus*) – benché, immaginiamo, più con minacce che con persuasioni...

La presenza inammissibile sul territorio della diocesi di

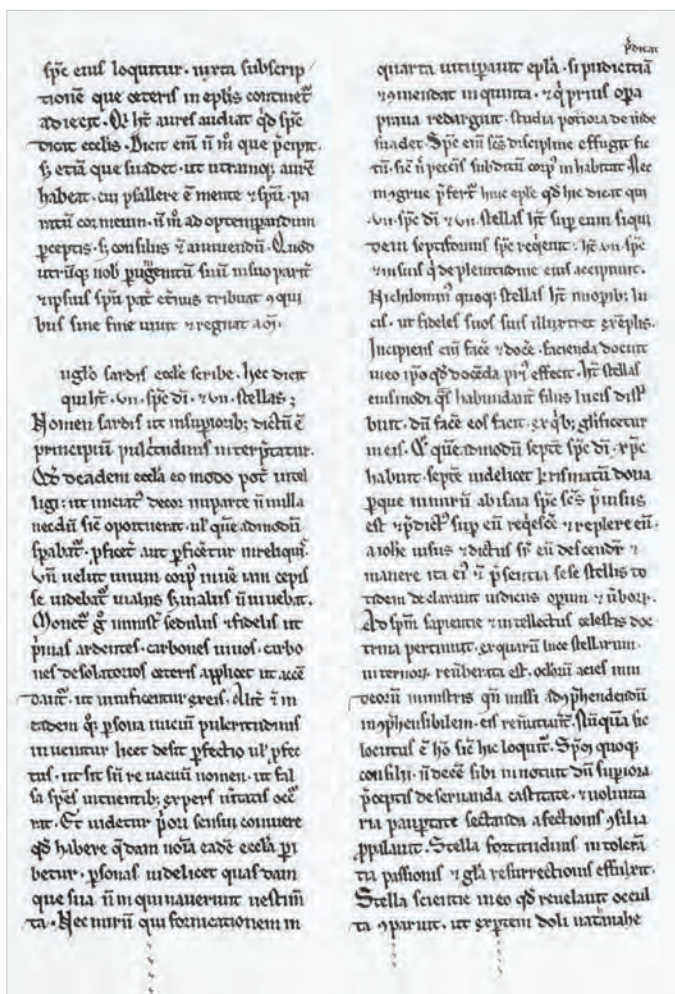


“predicatrici puttanelle” (*meretricula praedicatrix*) è cancellata.³³ È il ritorno all'ordine. O meglio: è la reimposizione dell'ordine. *Minis et persuasionibus*, con minacce e con persuasioni, da libere predicatrici, che ogni notte si sceglievano un nuovo amante, che mangiavano lautamente, che non faticavano, che vivevano in tranquillità, le due *mulierculae* sono riportate ad una condizione di sottomissione, costrizione e dipendenza: tornano ad essere serve dei padroni (*ancillae dominorum*); a rischiare ogni giorno la vita; ad essere infelici e assoggettate a fatiche e tribolazioni (*nunc ancillae dominorum quotidie mori periclitamur et variis miserae subiacemus aerumnis*). La repressione ristabilisce la sottomissione.

(4) Al di là dello specchio deformante: il *mundus novus* dell'originario annuncio evangelico?

Ma nelle parole di Goffredo di Auxerre è ipotizzabile intravedere la realtà storica, al di là della distorsione costruita da un acerrimo e dichiarato avversario? Pur attraverso lo specchio deformante, nonostante la voce sprezzante dell'illustre cisterciense, è possibile ritrovare almeno alcuni tratti dell'autentica immagine, dell'originaria esperienza femminile all'interno della prima generazione di *Pauperes de Lugduno*?

Come scriveva Carlo Ginzburg: “Il fatto che una fonte non sia ‘oggettiva’ (ma nemmeno un inventario lo è) non significa che sia inutilizzabile”.³⁴ E in questa fonte si ritiene di poter riconoscere, anche piuttosto nitidamente e



al di là di ogni distorsione denigrante, una dirompente esperienza evangelica radicale. Quella che emerge in controllo dalla fonte non sembrerebbe, cioè, solo una breve parentesi di evasione femminile o, eventualmente, il tentativo (più o meno riuscito) di una concorrenzialità antagonista rispetto alle istituzioni egemoniche. Sembrerebbe bensì davvero un'esperienza eversiva, nel suo significato anche etimologico: quello di rovesciare il mondo esistente, non nei termini di *mundus reversus et perversus* ma di *mundus novus*.

Le due *mulierculae* vivono davvero il capovolgimento dell'ordine costituito: un ordine maschile, gerarchico, oppressivo, clericale, violento. Goffredo d'Auxerre, esponente e sintesi di tutti questi caratteri, comprime e abbassa tale esperienza a trasgressione effimera, breve Carnevale con abbondante cibo e bevande, costumanze libere e ordine sociale capovolto.³⁵ Come già messo in evidenza da Grado Giovanni Merlo negli anni Novanta del secolo scorso, i temi dell'abbondanza alimentare, delle dolci avventure, dell'ozio, del piacere in libertà sono indubbiamente espressione dell'immaginario di Cuccagna. Ma è limitante ridurli solo a ciò. Se si elimina la possibile radice neotestamentaria delle azioni e delle motivazioni delle due *mulierculae*, discepoli di Valdo di Lione, ce se ne preclude la comprensione profonda e autentica.

L'iniziativa di Valdo di Lione – come ricordato – cominciò con la riappropriazione di un rapporto personale con le Scritture, vissuto cioè senza intermediazione ecclesiastica e reso possibile attraverso la traduzione in volgare. Il

ritorno al testo evangelico e il confronto diretto con esso ne restituì i più potenti (e sfidanti) contenuti, generando quella conseguente adesione radicale ad essi, attuata senza compromessi da Valdo e da coloro che lo seguirono. Ciò implicò inevitabili effetti sociali, tra cui anche il disconoscimento delle strutture di potere, delle istituzioni, delle gerarchie. Non a caso uno dei passaggi neotestamentari che con maggiore frequenza veniva utilizzato tra le prime generazioni valdesi, quasi una sorta di vero e proprio leitmotiv, è “Bisogna obbedire prima a Dio che agli uomini” (Atti 5:29): originariamente pronunciata da Pietro e dagli altri apostoli davanti alla massima istituzione ebraica, il Sinedrio di Gerusalemme, che ordinava loro di smettere di predicare il Cristo, “Bisogna obbedire prima a Dio che agli uomini” è, infatti, l'affermazione con cui si mettono in discussione le autorità umane e le loro deliberazioni, legittimando la disobbedienza su base scritturale.³⁶

Bisogna poi ricordare che, nelle Scritture, l'annuncio evangelico è tutto intriso di *novitas*. Il Cristo dà inizio a una ‘nuova Alleanza’ (*novum Testamentum*, Lc 22:20), promette una “nuova creazione” (Mt 19:28) e dà un *mandatum novum*: il comandamento nuovo dell'amore reciproco (Gv 13:34). La rigenerazione portata da Cristo è associata all'immagine del “vino nuovo in otri nuovi” (Mt 9:17). Il Cristo afferma di “fare nuove tutte le cose” (Apoc 21:5). Paolo predica una “vita nuova” (Rom 6:4), poiché in Cristo si diventa “creatura nuova” (2 Cor 5:17). Insomma: tutto il Nuovo (“nuovo”, appunto...) Testamento è attraversato dall'inizio di un *mundus novus*. L'originaria *novitas christiana*³⁷ aveva in sé una carica dirompente di rinnovamento non solo interiore e individuale ma davvero universale e totale, addirittura cosmico. Tra le prime comunità cristiane, forte era l'attesa di “cieli nuovi e terra nuova, abitati dalla giustizia” (2 Pt 3:13), di una “nuova Gerusalemme” (Apoc 3:12; Apoc 21:2) dove si sarebbe intonato un “canto nuovo” (Apoc 14:3). Negli Atti, gli Apostoli e Paolo vengono definiti come *qui orbem concitaverunt* (Atti 17:6), ossia coloro che mettono il mondo in agitazione, che lo infiammano, che lo scuotono.

La degradazione a caricatura da Paese di Cuccagna, a breve Carnevale, operata da Goffredo d'Auxerre camuffa, dunque, e declassa a *mundus reversus et perversus* la forma di vita delle due predicatrici, ma non riesce a obliterare del tutto la contestazione estrema della realtà esistente e la sperimentazione di una realtà altra che essa porta con sé: l'attuazione di quel *mundus novus* dell'annuncio neotestamentario, per cui “Non c'è più giudeo né greco; non c'è più schiavo né libero; non c'è più uomo né donna” (Gal 3:28). Un *mundus novus* instancabilmente perseguito secondo il modello apostolico neotestamentario: andando a due a due, in continua itineranza, in totale povertà, senza preoccuparsi del domani, nella certezza che nulla mancherà a chi, secondo la promessa evangelica, predicherà per città e villaggi (Mt 10).

Nel *Super Apocalypsim* l'asse ideologico intorno cui si struttura il discorso di Goffredo d'Auxerre è, invece, la strenua difesa e l'accanito mantenimento dell'ordine esistente. Un ordine intriso di rapporti gerarchici e di oppressione, dinamiche di sottomissione e di violenza, emblematicamente espresso nel ritorno delle due predicatrici alla condizione servile di *ancillae dominorum* (serve dei padroni / signori), soggette a minacce e quotidiane prevaricazioni (*nunc ancillae dominorum quotidie mori periclitamur et variis miseræ subiacemus aerumnis*). Per

il potente e anziano monaco cisterciense, “i vari soggetti portatori o interpreti di istanze di cambiamento non vengono presentati come dotati di un progetto alternativo rispetto all’ordine esistente, ma sembrano limitarsi a voler sconvolgere quest’ordine”.³⁸ Il mondo diverso, il *mundus novus* cristiano, radicato nell’ispirazione apostolica, diventa così un pericoloso mondo rovesciato dalle sue fondamenta, un minaccioso *mundus reversus et perversus*.

Le parole di Goffredo d’Auxerre custodite nel *Super Apocalypsim* ci restituiscono, dunque, in modo nitido lo sguardo di sospetto e di condanna, l’autentico turbamento con cui monaci, teologi e uomini di Chiesa osservarono con rigidità, paura e disprezzo quel proliferare di *religionis novae* che andò delineandosi dalla metà del XII secolo e di cui la vicenda di Valdo di Lione e dei *Pauperes de Lugduno* fu drammaticamente paradigmatica.³⁹

Notes:

1 Su Goffredo di Auxerre: Lenssen 1955; Gastaldelli 1980; Gastaldelli 1998, II, p. 864; Gastaldelli 2001. Si segnala anche la tesi dottorale recentemente discussa Noutsou 2021, pp. 88-110.

2 Leclercq 1962.

3 Pullulare è il verbo utilizzato nella decretale *Ad abolendam* del 1184, emanata a Verona da Lucio III, in sintonia con l’imperatore Federico Barbarossa. Così l’incipit del documento pontificio: *Ad abolendam diversam haeresium pravitatem, quae in plerisque mundi partibus modernis coepit temporibus pullulare* (*Decretales*, v, 7, c. 9, in CIC, II, coll. 780-782).

4 La bibliografia sulle vicende di Valdo di Lione e sui valdesi medievali è davvero vastissima. Ci si limita qui a segnalare: Audisio 1989; Biller 2001; Papini 2002; Benedetti 2009; Merlo 2010a; Benedetti, Cameron 2022. Su alcune specifiche vicende di Valdo di Lione e fonti a lui relative mi permetto inoltre di ricordare: Tasca 2009; Tasca 2014; Tasca 2017; Tasca 2018. Da segnalare anche l’ipotesi ricostruttiva esposta in Rubellin 2003, pp. 385-511, che, seppur seduttiva e accattivante, risulta però priva di ogni solido riscontro documentario di supporto (come ho tentato di dimostrare in Tasca 2003).

5 Gastaldelli 1970, p. 179: *Abiuravit eiusmodi sectam primus inventor a loco nativitatis Wandesium nominatus in concilio Lugdunensi, praesente et praesidente venerabili patre nostro domino Albanensi episcopo tunc legato sedis apostolicae Henrico, et pia memoriae Wiscardo illius ecclesiae archiepiscopo, quibus nostra quoque humilitas assistebat, coram numerosa multitudine honorabilium personarum, maxime sacerdotum, rationibus manifestis de sacrilega praesumptione convictus*.

6 La migliore edizione del testo della *Professio Fidei* di Valdo è in Selge 1967, II, pp. 3-6.

7 Sulle diverse denominazioni, volute o subite, dai valdesi e sulla controversa questione delle identità valdesi si rimanda almeno a Peyronel 2016, al cui interno si segnalano in particolare Merlo 2016 e Benedetti 2016.

8 Oltre all’agiobiografia di Bernardo di Clairvaux, conclusa da un vero e proprio panegirico (PL 185), di Goffredo di Auxerre si devono ricordare un commento al Cantico dei Cantici, numerosi sermoni (spesso improntati a riflessioni mariane) e lettere, un *libellus* di controversia contro Gilbert de la Porrée e un trattato sull’aritmetologia sacra.

9 Secondo altre ipotesi, Goffredo sarebbe morto dopo il 1200, cfr. Gastaldelli 1998, II, p. 864.

10 L’opera è conservata in tre manoscritti: Troyes, Bibliothèque municipale, 990; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, latin, 476 e 687. Edizione della fonte: Gastaldelli 1970. Recensioni di Loris Sturlese in “Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa”, 1 (1971), pp. 549-553 e di Maurizio Rangheri in “Aevum”, 48, 3/4 (1974), pp. 390-393. Si segnala la traduzione francese: Emery 2009.

11 Apocalisse 2:20: *Sed habeo adversus te pauca: quia permittis mulierem Jezabel, quae se dicit prophetem, docere, et seducere servos meos, fornicari, et manducare de idolothytis*. Il nome della Gezabele apocalittica rimanda a Gezabele, perfida e idolatra moglie del re di Israele Acab, contro la quale si scagliò la maledizione del profeta Elia (cfr. II Re, 18-19, 1-3; III Re, 21; IV Re, 9, 29-37). Si veda oltre nel testo.

12 Gastaldelli 1970, pp. 179-180. Consultabile anche in Leclercq 1953 e Gonnet 1958, pp. 46-47.

13 Sulle accezioni di *novus* e *novitas* si segnalano in particolare Romano 2006b e Zendri 2006.

14 Romano 2006b, p. 9.

15 Sul generale meccanismo di bestializzazione si veda Todeschini 2009. Sulla più celebre delle bestializzazioni ereticali, ossia l’associazione alle “piccole volpi” (*vulpeculae*), si rimanda a Paolini 2013. Utili anche Kienzle 2005, Merlo 2010b e Parmeggiani 2016.

16 Bisogna notare che nel *Libro della natura degli animali*, bestiario toscano del XIII secolo, il pappagallo, a causa della sua grande pulizia, è invece assimilato al Cristo (in Morini 1996, pp. 463-464). Si segnala il *psittacus* in Heck, Cordonnier 2021, pp. 502-503.

17 Sulla gradevolezza del canto degli *psittaci* si veda, ad esempio sant’Ambrogio, *Exameron*, v, xi, 39 in PL 14:223C-D: *Sed unde mihi cygnea carmina, quae etiam sub gravi mortis imminentis terrore delectant? Unde mihi illos naturales modulos cantilenae, quibus etiam paludes sonorae cantus edunt dulcissimi suavitatem? Unde mihi vocem psittaci, dulcedinemque merularum? Utinam saltem luscinia canat, quae dormientem de somno excitet! Ea enim avis signare solet diei surgentem exortum, et effusorem diluculo deferre laetitiam. Tamen si illorum suavitas deest, sunt gementes turtures, et raucae columbae, tum etiam cornix plena voce pluviam vocat. Unde rurale aviarium sermone quo possumus, scientia quam nos rusticani docuerunt, persequamur*.

18 Agostino, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, PL 36:157: *Nam et meruli et psittaci et corvi et piccae et huiusmodi volucres, saepe ab hominibus docentur sonare quod nesciunt*.

19 Cassiodoro, *Expositio in Psalterium*, PL 70:11B: *Verumtamen nequaquam nobis, ut psittacis merulisque vernandum est, qui dum verba nostra conantur imitari, quid tamen canant, noscuntur modis omnibus ignorare*.

20 Goffredo attacca i discepoli di Valdo perché *illitterati* privi dello *status* ecclesiastico, dunque da un lato disprezzati, ma dall’altro lato e contemporaneamente considerati pericolosi. È un tipo di atteggiamento che si ritrova anche nella testimonianza riferita nel *De nugis curialium* (I, 31) dall’alto prelato inglese Walter Map, incaricato di valutare l’ortodossia di una delegazione valdese presentatasi a Roma nel 1179, durante il Terzo Concilio Lateranense. Walter Map derise la delegazione valdese, sottolineandone la scarsa preparazione dottrinale. Anche Walter Map, che scrive negli stessi anni di Goffredo di Auxerre, riteneva che solo avendo accesso alle *litterae* si potessero esercitare i *munera* connessi all’*officium sacerdotale*. Si vedano Map 1983, pp. 124-129 e Map 1990, I, pp. 178-185.

21 Gastaldelli 1970, p. 180: *Quis illam Jezabel post annos mille iuvenulam suscitavit, et per vicus et plateas meretricula praedicatrix occurrat?*

22 Sulla predicazione femminile valdese: Benedetti 2004a; Benedetti 2004b. Sintesi sulla componente femminile del movimento valdese in Benedetti 2006. Sul ruolo delle donne in altri coevi movimenti religiosi evangelici si rimanda a Grundmann 1980, pp. 169-324.

23 Noutsou 2021, p. 63, nota 165.

24 Merlo 1991.

25 II Re 9, 29-37.

26 e.g. Aune 1997, p. 203.

27 I Re 21, 1-16.

28 Sull'espressione "piccole volpi" per indicare gli eretici si rimanda ancora a Paolini 2013.

29 Otaka, Fukui 1981, p. 134. Traduzione in lingua italiana: "Attraverso Gezabele sono significati i maestri eretici che vivono secondo i voleri della carne e quindi insegnano contrariamente al Vangelo. I Cristiani non devono tollerare la presenza in mezzo a loro, poiché, come dice l'Apostolo, sono induriti nella loro follia".

30 Sulle accuse di orge durante incontri di gruppi minoritari mi permetto di rimandare a Tasca 2020, in cui si riprende quanto racconta Epifanio di Salamina a proposito del gruppo gnostico-cristiano dei Fibioniti.

31 Sulla veridicità delle orge durante gli incontri notturni dei valdesi medievali, così come riportato nelle testimonianze di origine inquisitoriale, si rimanda ad Audisio 2007 e Tasca 2008.

32 Sul tema si rimanda a uno specifico contributo in corso di elaborazione e di futura pubblicazione. Si rimanda intanto a Dinzelbacher 2008.

33 Kienzle 1998.

34 Ginzburg 2019, p. xviii.

35 Richter 1989, p. 122: "Tre, infatti, sono gli elementi costitutivi caratterizzanti il Carnevale: abbondanza del mangiare e del bere; costumanze libere e ordine sociale capovolto".

36 Sulla tradizione esegetica di Atti 5:29 mi sia consentito ricordare Tasca 2005.

37 Sul tema si segnala la dettagliata dissertazione di Kinzig 1994.

38 Romano 2006a, p. 29.

39 Sul proliferare di nuove forme di vita religiosa, che si discostavano dalle regole agostiniana e benedettina, già si pronunciava a metà del XII secolo Anselmo vescovo di Havelberg, discutendo l'ambiguità della *novitas* all'interno delle diverse esperienze cristiane. Si veda Salet 1966, in particolare *capitulum* x, pp. 84-107. Sul significato e l'utilizzo dell'espressione *religiones novae* si rimanda a Merlo 1995. Sulla posizione di apertura di Pietro il Cantore nei confronti di queste esperienze religiose si veda Buc 1993 (su cui Tasca 2006).

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The ‘Double-Sided’ Chapel at Pyrga (Cyprus, 1421-1424)

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RÉSUMÉ : Après avoir reconfirmé la datation de Camille Enlart (vers 1421 ou 1421-1424) et identifié le commanditaire (l'évêque de Limassol Barthélemy Gui) dans une inscription fragmentaire, la présente étude explore : d'une part, les modèles des inscriptions en langue vernaculaire française de Pyrga (Chypre) ; d'autre part, la logique du programme iconographique et le contexte culturel que sous-tend cette dernière. Dans la première partie, l'analyse des inscriptions de la chapelle prouve que le concepteur du décor peint a suivi un modèle manuscrit, sans doute un psautier avec un grand cycle d'enluminures. L'étude évoque trois termes de comparaison célèbres : le Psautier de la reine Ingeburge (Chantilly, Bibliothèque du Musée Condé, 9 – tournant du XIII^e siècle), le psautier de l'évêque Henri de Blois (Londres, *British Library*, Cotton Nero C IV – vers 1160) et le livre d'images de Marie de Rethel (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, n. acq. fr. 16251 – vers 1285). Dans la source manuscrite reconstituée, les inscriptions en ancien français étaient probablement transcrites en tant que *tituli*, d'après une typologie tripartite : noms de fêtes religieuses, groupes nominaux ayant une fonction analogue et légendes sous forme d'énoncés introduits par l'adverbe *coument*. La langue des inscriptions de Pyrga, un français d'Outremer, présente les traits particuliers des scriptae chypriotes de la fin du Moyen Âge. De plus, on constate que la décoration de la chapelle inscrit le monument de Pyrga dans la catégorie des chapelles royales de l'Europe occidentale (XIV^e et XV^e siècles). Le transfert du codex à la paroi concerne non seulement les images, mais également les textes qui accompagnent ces dernières. L'auteur s'intéresse ensuite à la disposition symétrique de la décoration dans les deux travées de la chapelle, ainsi qu'à la manière dont cette disposition accentue l'Uniatisme catholique-orthodoxe. La logique dos-à-dos de la décoration émule celle des icônes à double face – termes de comparaison directs pour la chapelle – notamment leur choix d'apparier deux scènes : la Crucifixion / la Mère de Dieu. Le concepteur du décor peint souhaitait évoquer l'osmose de deux églises : une église latine, orientée vers l'Est ; la suggestion d'une église byzantine, orientée vers l'Ouest. Cela explique le choix particulier de la décoration des voûtes (christologique pour la travée Est et mariale pour la travée Ouest), la double représentation de l'Annonciation (pour marquer l'orientation des deux églises) et le choix d'une composition de type *pala d'altare* pour la paroi Est, tandis que la paroi Ouest imite la décoration des templons byzantins. L'osmose des deux églises est indiquée de manière encore plus claire par le choix de représenter les martyriums des saints Étienne (signifiant l'Orient) et Laurent (signifiant l'Occident) au-dessus des entrées latérales. Ce serait une allusion à l'osmose des corps de ces saints dans la *Coniunctio corporum sanctorum Stephani et Laurentii* (BHL 4784b). Après une réévaluation du texte fragmentaire (aujourd'hui perdu) de l'inscription dédicatoire, il est évident que la dédicace proprement dite concernait l'Assomption de la Vierge. Qui plus est, l'osmose Est-Ouest était de nouveau indiquée par la représentation dans un même cadre de la Dormition de la Mère de Dieu (sujet à connotation byzantine) et du Couronnement de la Vierge (thème occidental par excellence). Les textes littéraires des XIV^e et XV^e siècles confirment la fixation chypriote de l'appariement de la Mère de Dieu avec la Passion du Christ, de même que plusieurs autres choix de la décoration de Pyrga. La signification de la décoration devait être multiple, en rapport avec la triple utilité du bâtiment : chapelle funéraire (pour Barthélemy Gui), chapelle royale (pour le couple Janus de Lusignan-Charlotte de Bourbon) et point d'entrée au monastère de Stavrovouni, qui hébergeait des reliques de la Sainte Croix.

MOTS-CLÉS : peintures murales ; chapelle royale ; Chypre ; Uniatisme ; Frankokratia.

REZUMAT: După o reconfirmare a mai vechii datări a lui Camille Enlart (în jurul anilor 1421 sau 1421-1424) și o identificare a comanditarului într-o inscripție fragmentară (episcopul de Limassol, Bartolomeu Gui), studiul explorează, pe de o parte, modelele inscripțiilor în limba franceză din capela de la Pyrga (Cipru), pe de altă parte, logica programului iconografic și contextul cultural care a influențat-o. În prima parte a studiului, analiza inscripțiilor din capelă demonstrează că persoana responsabilă pentru conceperea decorului pictat a urmat un model manuscris, probabil o psaltire cu un ciclu mare de miniaturi inițiale. Sunt evocați trei termeni celebri de comparație: Psaltirea reginei Ingeborg (Chantilly, Biblioteca Muzeului Condé, manuscrisul 9 – datată către sfârșitul secolului al XIII-lea), Psaltirea episcopului Henric de Blois (Londra, *British Library*, Cotton Nero C. IV – datată în jurul anului 1160) și cartea de imagini a Mariei de Rethel (Paris, Biblioteca Națională a Franței, n. acq. fr. 16251 – datată în jurul anului 1285). În sursa manuscrisă a picturilor, inscripțiile în franceză veche erau transcrise sub formă de *tituli*, după o tipologie tripartită: nume de sărbători religioase, grupuri nominale cu funcție analogă și legende sub formă de enunțuri introduse de adverbul *coument*. Limba inscripțiilor de la Pyrga, o franceză levantină, prezintă trăsăturile particulare ale scriptelor cipriote medievale târzii. În plus, decorul capelei

înscrie monumentul de la Pyrga în categoria capelelor regale din vestul Europei (secolele XIV-XV). Transferul codice-perete privea nu numai imaginile, ci și textele care le însoțeau. Autorul analizează apoi disponerea simetrică a decorului din cele două travee ale capelei și modul în care se accentuează Uniatismul catolic-ortodox. Logica spate-în-spate a decorului o emulează pe cea a icoanelor cu două fețe, termeni direcți de comparație pentru capelă, mai precis alegerea frecventă de a îngemăna două scene: Răstignirea / Maica Domnului. Persoana responsabilă pentru conceperea decorului pictat a vrut să sugereze osmoza a două biserici: una latină, orientată spre est, și o sugestie de biserică bizantină, orientată către vest. Astfel se explică alegerile particulare pentru scenele pictate pe bolți (hristologice pentru traveea de Est și mariale pentru cea de vest), reprezentarea dublă a Bunei Vestiri (pentru a marca orientarea celor două biserici) și alegerea unei compoziții de tip *pala d'altare* pentru perețele de est, în vreme ce perețele de vest imită scenele pictate pe temploanele bizantine. Osmoza celor două biserici este indicată și mai clar prin reprezentarea martiriului sfinților Ștefan (indicând lumea răsăriteană) și Laurențiu (prefigurând pe cea apuseană) deasupra intrărilor laterale. Ar putea fi o aluzie la osmoza trupurilor celor doi sfinți în *Coniunctio corporum sanctorum Stephani et Laurentii* (BHL 4784b). După o reevaluare a textului fragmentar (astăzi pierdut) al inscripției ctitoricești, este evident că hramul propriu-zis al capelei a fost Înălțarea Fecioarei Maria la cer. Mai mult, osmoza Est-Vest este încă o dată indicată prin reprezentarea în același cadru a Adormirii Maicii Domnului (subiect cu puternice conotații bizantine) și a Încoronării Fecioarei (temă occidentală prin excelență). Textele literare din secolele XIV-XV confirmă pasiunea cipriotă pentru alăturarea Maicii Domnului cu Patimile lui Hristos, precum și alte câteva alegeri speciale din decorația de la Pyrga. Semnificația acestei decorații trebuie să fi fost multiplă, în raport cu utilitatea tripartită a clădirii: capelă funerară (pentru Bartolomeu Gui), capelă regală (pentru cuplul Ianus de Lusignan-Carlota de Bourbon) și punct de acces către mănăstirea Stavrovouni, unde erau adăpostite relicve din Sfânta Cruce.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: picturi murale; capelă regală; Cipru; Uniatism; Frankokratia.

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Far to the east of the Troodos Mountains in Cyprus, close to the sea and the town of Larnaka, at the foothills of the Stavrovouni monastery, outside the village of Pyrga, there is a chapel decorated with mural paintings (Fig. 1). The small church, now dedicated to saint Catherine, is an example of Gothic art in the 'Sweet Land of Cyprus', but it does not look very Gothic on the outside. In this basic single-aisled building, whose southern architrave is inscribed with the word *bazoges* ('church') (Fig. 2),¹ three ribs decorated with coats-of-arms cross of Jerusalem and lion rampant—form the two bays of an ogival vault, indicating that perhaps this was a foundation of the Lusignan dynasty. Inside, on the eastern wall, in the scene of the Crucifixion, a royal couple is depicted kneeling and praying. Camille Enlart, who read the year 1421 in the dedicatory inscription before the latter text was wiped out, identified the couple with King Janus (1375-1432, r. 1398-1432) and his second wife Charlotte of Bourbon (1388-1422; queen of Cyprus 1411-1422). Below the royal couple, in the scene of the Entombment, a third donor is depicted venerating the body of Christ. He is a Latin bishop, again depicted in the western-bay vault, where he venerates the body of the Virgin in the scene of the Dormition.² The rest of the murals present only sacred scenes and characters.

It may well be that the eastern wall is indeed designed to emulate a *pala d'altare* (Fig. 3).³ I also agree that its focus on the Passion of Christ makes it unique. Leaving aside the upper section of the eastern wall, which seems to be dedicated to an Annunciation, the rest of the scenes from the registers below are organised chronologically, as a sort of a narrative, with the Betrayal, the Flagellation, and the Road to Calvary to the left of the Crucifixion, followed by the Descent from the Cross, the Three Marys,

and the Angel at the Empty Tomb to the right. The narrative starts earlier, on the vault of the eastern bay. On its northern side, the first two scenes are missing, but the next ones (on two registers) are: the Raising of Lazarus, the Entry to Jerusalem, the Last Supper, and the Washing of the Feet. On the southern side of the same vault, the first two scenes are again missing, but the narrative continues with a fragmentary scene, difficult to identify;⁴ the Transfiguration; the Ascension; and the Pentecost. The vaults of the western bay are entirely dedicated to the story of the Mother of God: her Nativity, her Presentation to the Temple (in several scenes), and a huge depiction of the Dormition of the Theotokos on half of the northern side of the vault. This is where the second depiction of the Latin bishop was inserted, under the figure of saint Paul. The western wall is deprived of most of its decoration, but from the looks of the remaining fragments, it had a second Annunciation, bigger than the eastern one, and two icons of Christ Pantocrator and the Theotokos to the left and right of the western entrance. Moving back to the East, in the lower register of paintings, above the dado zone, we see saints Cosmas and Damian, close to the sanctuary wall; as well as saint Francis; Latin and Byzantine bishop saints, the martyrdoms of saints Stephen and Lawrence, more saints in hieratic postures, and a great icon of Archangel Michael close on the westernmost end of the southern wall.

Except for the careful symmetrical arrangement of the two bay vaults, one dedicated to the Saviour and the other to His Mother, the rest of the decoration of the chapel

► Fig. 1. Pyrga (Cyprus). Exterior view of the medieval chapel. Western façade (main entrance).

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2022.





seems to suggest a sort of awkwardness, lost halfway between Byzantine and Latin canons—too many things in too small a church, creating incongruous patterns. This led to contradictory interpretations in the few (recent) studies that these paintings benefited from. When one of them dared to question the 1421 dating, other studies imagined the patronage of many other kings of Cyprus, applying all sorts of theories and interpretations to details extracted from the murals, but leaving the rationale of the entire decorative almost unexplored.⁵

For length-related issues, I will not add to this study an extensive discussion about each and every contradictory interpretation. Instead, I sum them up as a tongue-in-cheek hypothesis. There is good reason to doubt that the Lusignan kings of Cyprus (a) paid good money to paint a crusading propaganda monument (b) in a place where they went hunting, (c) wishing to be buried there on account of the plague of Nicosia or (d) for fear of the Mamluks of Egypt. The decorative programme of a church spoke less about secular events, which is our modern pre-occupation, as a consequence of a desire to place art and literature in neat ideological or political boxes. The decorative programme of a church spoke about eternal things, about the sacrifice of the Saviour and the manner in which painters, designers, and patrons related to that sacrifice. In my opinion, Pyrga is a statement about the veneration of the Cross on the island of Cyprus, about the late-medieval focus on the Passion, and about a desire to unite the two Churches, presented as an actual union of two decorative programmes.

▲ Fig. 2. *Pyrga (Cyprus)*. The vernacular word ‘bazoges’ inscribed on the architrave of the southern entrance.
Credits: Clément Dussart / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

► Fig. 3. *Pyrga (Cyprus)*. The ‘pala d’altare’ composition painted on the eastern wall of the chapel.
Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

Preliminary clarification: the dating is 1421(-1424).

One of the aspects that have been questioned (on the basis of an incongruence between the alleged early style of the murals and the late fifteenth-century dating) was Camille Enlart’s reading of the dedicatory inscription on the western wall. It was argued that Enlart could be mistaken or that the inscription could be painted at a different time (perhaps not even inside the church, but on the western façade).⁶ Moreover, on the basis of a hand-made drawing of a graffito—in absence of an actual photo or further data concerning its placement in the Pyrga chapel—recent studies argue that the painting predates the 1380s. However, the graffito could not be identified, the drawing is illegible, and the reading of the year is doubtful at best.⁷

Even though there are grounds to question the overall accuracy of the interpretations of Enlart (as we shall see later in this study), this questioning cannot concern the primary data provided by him; only his interpretations.





Furthermore, since the graffito at issue is suspicious, one should note that dating based on style does not take into account the long lifespan or activity of certain artists, nor the coexistence of techniques and styles in a given time-frame, as a result of the coexistence of several artists and workshops, more or less fashionable, more or less up-to-date or trained, younger or older, *ritardatari* or not, who worked in the same areas and perhaps in the same monuments.⁸ As a result, Enlart's reading of the sequence *l'an de Nostre-Seigneur M. CCCC et XXI* is rather convincing because he did not make (hypothetical) assumptions and reconstructions in this segment of the inscription. He simply transcribed what he saw and the lack of reconstruc-

tions testifies to the accuracy of the text. Since this was the end of a line, and since the beginning of the next line is unknown, one must take into account the (less likely) possibility that the letters of the year followed on the next line with **I**, **II**, or **III**, thus leading to a more cautious dating 1421-1424.

I am no specialist of patterns and draperies, nor of comparative dating that such forms and shapes can or may elicit.⁹ Thus, I cannot speak about graffiti that cannot be identified, nor of an older stratum of murals from the turn of the fourteenth-century either (connected or perhaps not connected with previous buildings).¹⁰ However, I can be certain that the most important and obvious piece of



evidence was never noticed and that it justifies the dating of Enlart. The letters [---] | GAI written to the left and right of Latin bishop depicted in the scene of the Dormition of the Theotokos belong to the category of indisputable evidence (Figs. 4, 5).¹¹ This person is Bartholomew Gai, Franciscan bishop of Limassol (*Nimocia*, in Roman obedience), appointed on 15 October 1390.

Research has assumed that Bartholomew Gai ceased to be bishop of Limassol (or perhaps died) sometime after 1404, but this is not confirmed by any documentary evidence. Other known names of bishops of Limassol are William Scarbotti (of Avignonese obedience), appointed on 30 July 1403, and William Gralli (also in Avignonese obedi-

► Fig. 4. *Pyrga (Cyprus)*. Mural fragment of the Dormition of the Theotokos.

▲ Fig. 5. *Pyrga (Cyprus)*. Detail of the Dormition of the Theotokos with the bishop and the letters [---] | GAI.

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2022.

ence; later switched to Pisa), appointed on 13 September 1407. Finally, the Benedictine prior of Chanac, monk Anthony, was appointed bishop of Limassol on 30 May 1411 by the Pisan antipope John xxiii. Nevertheless, none of them went to Limassol. Those who were in Avignonese obedience lived off the property that the Avignon popes gave them in a place close to Marseille. It is true that all



of them pledged payment obligations, but none of them made actual payments, save for Bartholomew Gai, who was “compelled to pay the arrears of his predecessors back to the year 1367.” It is reasonable to assume that Limassol was in obedience to Rome for most of the Papal Schism and that Bartholomew Gai did not just “enter the bishopric for a short time”. On the contrary, Pyrga is located within the area controlled by the Limassol bishopric, and since Bartholomew Gai is mentioned in the tituli, he must have stayed in office for a longer period of time, at least until 1421-1424. The only sure thing is that “after 1404 no prelates for Limassol were appointed in Rome”.¹² However, this does not mean that Bartholomew vanished from the bishopric. It could also mean that Rome did not need to appoint another bishop, because a bishop of Roman obedience was already appointed in that place. The fact that Bartholomew did not pledge any other payment obligations can be related to the fact that “with the Great Schism of the West (1378-1417), the Latin clergy became more Cypriot, the foreign clerics often remained absent, the monasteries gained some independence, and the crown controlled the local church”.¹³ This explains the joint patronage of the king and a bishop in the chapel of Pyrga (Figs. 6, 7, 8).

One cannot estimate the moment when Bartholomew Gai died or retired; the next bishop of Limassol was Lancelot of Lusignan, illegitimate nephew of King Janus, appointed on 28 August 1436. Enlart’s reading of the year (1421) is, therefore, correct, with minor changes (1421-1424). The fact that the bishop appears twice, in two scenes connected with funerary imagery (Entombment—cf. Fig. 8—and Dormition)¹⁴ suggests that he probably imagined

▲ Fig. 6. Pyrga (Cyprus). The mural paintings of the eastern wall: Crucifixion and Entombment scenes.

▼ Fig. 7. Pyrga (Cyprus). The royal couple depicted in the Crucifixion scene.

► Fig. 8. Pyrga (Cyprus). The bishop in the Entombment scene. Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2022.

the chapel of Pyrga as his final resting place. Thirty years after his arrival in Limassol, Bartholomew Gai would be an old man. The manner in which his two likenesses grasp the feet of Christ and touch the dress of Mary testifies to an evident preoccupation with his afterlife.

The testimony of Nicholas da Martoni.

This explains why Nicholas da Martoni does not mention anything about a Latin chapel in his travel diary from Nicosia to Stavrovouni and back to Famagusta in December 1394. This Italian notary stopped in and described every place where a Latin presence could be helpful to him (including Pyrga). As a matter of fact, in the evening of 15 December, when Nicholas was close to Stavrovouni, coming from the North, he rested in *quoddam casale distantem a monte seu ecclesia Sancte Crucis per unam dietam*. The term *dietam* measures time, not distance, but the *casale* can be identified with Ayia Varvara, halfway between Nicosia and Stavrovouni.¹⁵ The next day, early in the morning (*in albis*), Nicholas *applicui[t] ad quoddam casale quod est in fande montis Sanctae Crucis, et, accepto ibi aliquo cibo, incepi[t] dictum montem ascendere, cuius ascensus durat miliaria octo, et sunt plures montes, unus post alium [...]*. No specific details are given about this



second *casale*, apart from the distance between it and Stavrovouni, but the distance fits the one between Stavrovouni and Pyrga, the geographical description is accurate, and previous research confirmed that Pyrga was located on the path to Stavrovouni.¹⁶

Having venerated the relics of the monastery and having taken detailed notes about the premises and relics, Nicholas tried his luck. He wished to sleep at the monastery, but the 'brothers' did not accept his demands on account of the abbot being away and the keys of the rooms being in the possession of the abbot. So Nicholas, tired and weary, climbed down the rocky slopes of the mountain *de sero*, reaching the second *casale*, identifiable with Pyrga, *in occasu solis*. There he met the abbot of the monastery, *qui erat dominus illius casalis*. The abbot tried to remedy the brothers' error, inviting the pilgrim to *hospitium suum* and giving him bread and wine, as well as a *stola* upon which Nicholas slept during the night, but there was no church at this *casale*; only a *hospitium*. The next morning, Nicholas proceeded on foot to Famagusta. He left no graffiti at Pyrga, as many other pilgrims did, because no church had been built by the time that he visited the place.¹⁷

If there was no chapel or church in Pyrga, then the information of Enlart is once again confirmed and the building of the chapel took place during the later years of the bishopric of Bartholomew Gai. This does not mean that Bartholomew was the only person who took the decision to build and decorate the chapel with murals, but the depiction of favourite Franciscan saints (Cosmas and Damian, as well as Francis, close to the eastern wall) points to the probable involvement of the Franciscan bishop of Limassol. It should be noted that the depiction of the royal couple on the eastern wall and Bartholomew Gai in the Dormition (and Entombment) scene(s) does not exclude the presence of lost representations of donors or persons involved in the design of the painted decoration. Their presence would not make the chapel 'less royal'. The Assumption / Dormition dedication (*vide infra*) suggests one key of interpretation, while the presence of the royal coats-of-arms and the portraits of royal donors makes me think about the other. Yet these two interpretations are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, Pyrga had more than one or two uses. The presence of the pilgrims on their way to Stavrovouni must also be taken into account.

As a sidenote, research argues that Stavrovouni was supposed to be a Benedictine abbey during the Lusignan dynasty,¹⁸ but Nicholas da Martoni speaks of *fratres*, a designation which applies to friars, perhaps Franciscans of the Observant category, who often chose to live in remote hermitages and chapels in Crete or elsewhere in the islands of the Aegean.¹⁹ This is another question which further research will have to address. One of the graffiti of Pyrga speaks of a certain friar Bartholomew belonging to *ordo minor—ordinis minor[um]* in the text of the western wall—who had received the leadership of the monastery of the Holy Cross, that is, Stavrovouni, being *gubernator* in 1480-1481.²⁰

For the time being, I confirm the dating of Enlart, with minor changes (1421-1424), the identities of the royal couple (King Janus and Queen Charlotte) and the identity of the bishop (Bartholomew Gai). The fourteenth-century aspect in the style of the paintings can be explained as a product of a workshop of *ritardatari*, either Latin or Greek painters—the issue is not for me to decide, since the current study does not delve into questions of style.

This preliminary foray shows how important the study of the inscriptions at Pyrga can be. My analysis will start

with this study of the extant inscriptions, proving that the designer of the painted decoration followed a manuscript model, perhaps a psalter with an extended initial image cycle, where the Old French inscriptions had been transcribed as captions. As a result, the transfer from the codex to the wall concerned not only the images, but also the texts accompanying them. When the issue of the manuscript model is dealt with, I will focus on the symmetrical arrangement of the two bays of the chapel, arguing that the back-to-back inside-out rationale emulates the rationale of double-sided icons and achieves an osmosis of two different churches: a Latin one, oriented to the East, and the suggestion of a Byzantine one, oriented oppositely, to the West. The dedicatory inscription will be also re-evaluated, since Enlart's reconstruction of the word *Passion* is incorrect and the actual dedication concerns the Assumption of the Virgin. Last but not least, literary evidence from fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Cyprus will confirm the local fixation with the pairing of Theotokos with the Passion of Christ, as well as several other odd choices in the decoration of Pyrga.

THE MANUSCRIPT SOURCE OF THE TITULI

The oddity of the Pyrga tituli resides in the fact that they are written in vernacular French. From this point of view, there is no perfectly comparable situation in Western Europe at the time. No example is known where a vernacular language would be used for the transcription of all the tituli in the pictorial programme of a church. There are exceptions, but they occur in specific situations and isolated contexts, never on the scale of an entire church and never in connection with essential iconography, that is, with sacred stories.²¹ French inscriptions are often restricted to marginal scenes or to those scenes related to profane imagery. This liminal status of the vernacular language—at the threshold of the sacred, never crossing it—makes the experiment in Pyrga an odd choice of its designer. However, there are a number of examples that can be compared to Pyrga, at least in character.

Manuscript texts painted in royal chapels of Western Europe.

The only proper term of comparison that comes to mind is that of the beams from the Morning Room of Berkeley Castle (Gloucestershire, UK). Still, that is not a church. In other words, it certainly does not present a proper ecclesial programme. The Morning Room was the royal chapel of that castle, dedicated to saint John. It was probably decorated with scenes from the book of Revelation, since the beams of the ceiling—the only remaining parts of the original structure (second half of the fourteenth century)—preserve long inscriptions in French. Because the text comprises a series of segments from an Apocalypse translation and commentary, its source was identified as a French translation of the Revelation in the Anglo-Norman dialect. The source can be found in the thirteenth-century manuscript Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, fr. 403, where the biblical translation is accompanied by a commentary. However, the process of copying it on the ceiling of the Morning Room implies that somebody had to abridge the text. Moreover, several errors in the inscriptions attest that the transfer from the manuscript to the ceiling was done orally: one person below held the book and dictated the text to the painter on the scaffold above.²²

I published several studies where I mention the inscriptions of the Morning Room.²³ I do not wish to bother my

readers with the complexity of that text; it is my opinion that the choice of French as the language of the inscriptions was purely incidental. There was no ideological or programmatic reason behind it. The designer of the decoration at Berkeley Castle wished to copy a manuscript, to transfer its contents (visual and textual). Aesthetics were the real driving force behind the transfer; the fact that the manuscript was written in French was inconsequential at best. That happened because the fourteenth century was a time when the prestige of the French vernacular started to grow. By then, vernacular texts had conquered many genres that used to belong exclusively to Medieval Latin in the previous centuries (including exegesis: commentaries of sacred texts, visionary literature, etc.). The mixing of Latin and French was so frequent that there were no more genres where Latin reigned alone. As a result, the inscriptions of Berkeley Castle form a wider category together with a longer series of painted inscriptions which are written in Latin.

One example from this category and dear to me are the remnants of mural fragments preserved on the bricks of the chapel of Saint-Stephen in Westminster (London), was painted in the fourteenth century (Fig. 9). I noted that these brick fragments belong to two sequences of scenes from the royal English chapel, where they replicated the images and texts of a manuscript. The cycle of Job was based on a picture-book of Job with captions in Latin verse, related to the twelfth-century manuscript Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, f. lat. 15675. The cycle of Tobit was an ad hoc creation, trying to replicate the rationale by pairing another set of images with select verses from Peter Riga's *Aurora*, but this was done by a sloppy Latinist.²⁴ There are many more cases in France and England,²⁵ while others occur as far as Central Europe, such as the Revelation scenes with Latin captions painted in the royal chapel of Karlštejn (Czech Republic, fourteenth century).²⁶ The only thing that interests me here,

however, is that all of them belong to a cultural trend which started in the thirteenth century and gradually grew in the next. I already suggested that they seem to stem from (or to have a certain connection with) the now-lost decoration of the *Sainte-Chapelle* in Paris.²⁷ Pyrga shares a fundamental feature with all these examples: it is (at least partially) a royal chapel. Should we be surprised that the House of Lusignan took after the Houses of Capet and Plantagenet? Certainly not.

Brief analysis of the remaining tituli of Pyrga.

The thing that struck me almost instantly when I started working on the tituli of Pyrga was that the text must have come from a manuscript source. The timeframe was perfect. This was exactly the period in which textual transfers from manuscripts to wall-paintings were frequent in the West. However, the hypotheses that researchers had put forth did not seem to make much sense, at least not to a Romance philologist. One of them is the anachronistic assertion that “the phonetic spelling of French words at Pyrga, as well as the clear citation of historically Byzantine artistic forms, suggest[s] that the painters of the chapel were in fact from the local Greek population”.²⁸ This hypothesis cannot hold water.

Like most medieval languages, French does not have particular rules of an orthographic nature. Phonetic spelling is proof of naturally occurring variations in speech and writing, so nobody should be bothered by the fact that the Last Supper scene is titled **LA : SENE : DOU : IEUSDI : SAINT**. Even though no art historian argues it clearly, the problem seems to be the contemporary French word *cène* transcribed as *sene*. Nevertheless, this is a basic trait of French scriptae in Outremer, not only in Cyprus. In one of her analyses of these scriptae, Laura Minervini pointed out that there was *un degré variable d'oscillation entre les graphèmes s, c et ss (ce dernier normalement en*



▼ Fig. 9. London, British Museum (UK). Images and texts painted on the bricks of the chapel of Saint-Stephen in Westminster.

Source: Scanned copy of Agrigoroaei 2017a, p. 196, 197.

position interne). In other words, when a scribe—such as the one writing the *Lignages d’Outremer* in Acre in c.1290—writes *comensa*, *contece*, *grocement*, *prisson*, and *raison*, he simply pronounced them more or less the same. One cannot imagine that the scribe was Greek because he did not write the contemporary French words *commença*, *contesse*, *grosselement*, *prison*, and *raison*. Minervini also lists *Cesile* instead of *Cecile* (probably Paphos, 1307), as well as many other situations of the same type.²⁹ One can even assume that the spelling **SENE** could come from the manuscript source of the murals, if that codex were indeed transcribed on Cyprus.

A similar observation concerns **DOU** in the same titulus. *Dans les manuscrits, la graphie ou s’affirme aux dépens de u, surtout dans les textes chypriotes*, with examples such as *coumanda*, *coume*, *doumain* in the *Acre Bible* (c.1280) or

coumunauté, *coumun*, *houmes*, *persoune* in the *Livre des Assises* of John of Ibelin (turn of the fifteenth century).³⁰ There is nothing surprising in the phonetics of the inscriptions of Pyrga. They represent a perfectly correct Cypriot scripta, with analogies in manuscripts and funerary inscriptions.³¹

Also, there are not many surprises in the text of the tituli either. Leaving aside the now-lost dedicatory inscription—to be discussed in connection with the rationale of the decoration, most of the remaining inscriptions are tag-names for religious feasts. I refer to texts such as **A:SENS[ION]** and **LA : PENTE|COUSTE :**. Since they accompany the scenes of the Ascension and Pentecost, they need no further examination. The same tag feature applies to names of characters, such as **[D]AUID** for the prophet David on the western wall; **S : DAMIEN** for saint Damian and



s:[C]OS[ME] for saint Cosmas on opposite walls in the eastern bay; and --] [AR]CA[N]GELE : for Archangel Michael on the southern wall of the western bay (Fig. 16). But there is also --] DA[ME] painted above the icon of the Theotokos on the western wall, which suggests that the inscription probably spoke of *Nostrre Dame*. The only titulus straying a little bit from this tagging norm is the one concerning the Last Supper, where the name of the scene (LA : SENE) was paired with the name of the feast (IEUSDI : SAINT) in the form of a noun group.³²

The issue lies elsewhere, namely in the scenes that are adjacent or related to feasts. For instance, in the agglomeration of Marian scenes from the southern side of the western-bay vault, one particular inscription stands out. In its first word, before the separation points, one can notice the upper traces of **C**, **O**, **U** (identical to **COUSTE** from

LA : PENTE|COUSTE :) (cf. Fig. 12), followed by two letters which are hard to guess, the second of which is nonetheless surmounted by a tilde. Additionally, there are traces of a **T**. Given the context, the most reasonable reconstruction is (Fig. 13):

COUM[E]NT : [FU :] PRES[ENT(E)E] [---

Indeed, the upper traces of **M** correspond to other **M** in the tituli. The remaining words of the inscription are easy to guess, given the theme. However, in the scene painted to the right, only the descenders of two letters **E** are visible,

▼ Fig. 10-11. *Pyrga (Cyprus)*. Lower part of the vault of the western bay, northern wall of the nave. The inscription LA : SENE : DOU : IEUSDI : SAINT and its context in the murals. Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.





which makes the text impossible to reconstruct. Could this be the scene where Enlart read fragments of an inscription: *no..... | P(?)net nostre...a | en?* Unfortunately, Enlart does not say where he saw them.³³

Moving on to the damaged scene from the row below, where a canopy was painted with an inscription to its left side and above it, the word sequence can be reconstructed on account of another tilde above the last letter (E) of the first word and a tilde before the final D (Fig. 14):³⁴

[COU]MENT FU : RECE[U(E) : N]ostre D[AME] [---

▲ Fig. 12. Pyrga (Cyprus). Lower part of the vault of the western bay, southern wall of the nave. The inscription LA : PENTE|COUSTE :.

► Fig. 13-14. Pyrga (Cyprus). Lower part of the vault of the eastern bay, southern wall of the nave. The inscriptions COUM[E]NT : [FU :] PRES[ENT(E)]E [--- and [COU]MENT FU : RECE[U(E) : N]ostre D[AME] [---

► Fig. 15 (next pages). Pyrga (Cyprus). Lower part of the vault of the western bay, northern wall of the nave. The inscription COUMEN[T] [---] E : LAVA | LE : PIE[S A SES] : APOS|TLE.

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.





SANTO
LE: PIA
ELE



BETAN

This means that the Presentation of Mary at the Temple (or Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple, according to the Orthodox norm) was divided into three different scenes on the western-bay vault—an emphasis that will be elucidated in the second and third sections of the current study. The manner in which two (if not all three) tituli begin with *coument* is indicative of a narrative, such as a chapter title or a caption next to an image in a manuscript text.³⁵ The scene was subdivided based on the structure of the narrative and each segment received a different title. This explains why it was not defined as a basic tag-name or a name of the feast.

A similar thing happened in the Maundy Thursday text which accompanies the Washing of the Feet on the northern side of the vault of the eastern bay. In spite of the precautions which must be taken regarding the contemporary restoration of certain letters—the **RE** sequence³⁶ of the first line is not convincing—the first word can be reconstructed as **COUMEN[T]**. The reconstruction is based on its remaining traces: the upper part of a **C**, an **O**, a square **U** (as in the rest of the inscriptions), an **M**, the lower segment of an **E**, and the tilde above it. In fact, the entire inscription for Maundy Thursday can be reconstructed as (Fig. 15):

**COUMEN[T] [---] E : LAVA
LE : PIE[S A SES] : APOS
TLE**

The issue of these *coument* inscriptions seems tricky, but it is not. They are used only in connection with the scenes which are developed or which extend the story of certain feasts. The *coument* inscriptions from the Presentation of Mary to the Temple appear in the context of three scenes, making it impossible to unite them within a single tag-name inscription. Similarly, the Washing of the Feet is part of the Last Supper, which was already defined as **LA : SENE : DOU : IEUSDI : SAINT**. The designer of the decoration had no other way to define the scene; the notion of ‘Maundy Thursday’ was already part of the text accompanying the previous scene. Therefore, it seems that there was a cohesive rationale behind the use of these inscriptions. We now need to know where it came from and why.

Before moving on towards an analysis (and an explanation) of the uses of these tituli, let us recap and draw the conclusion that there are three typologies of tituli in the royal chapel. First we find the names of religious feasts, but there are also a series of noun groups based on words that define scenes, and last but not least there are short sentences similar to manuscript captions, all of which are introduced by the conjunctive adverb *coument*. I, therefore, consider that Pyrga makes a wonderful addition to the series of royal chapels in which the decoration was based on a manuscript. The Pyrga inscriptions cannot be ad hoc productions; they follow a pattern noticed in written sources. There is evidence to support this hypothesis.

Even though there are not many manuscripts where image cycles are accompanied by Old French tituli, one conclusion is certain: the most famous cases are not the ones we should have in mind. The *Bibles moralisées*, for instance, whose texts represent narrative forays into the illustrations, fall into a different category than the vernacular texts of Pyrga, which consist in a tag noun, a noun group, or a short sentence with the value of a caption, not an extended narrative foray. The only images in which similar Old French captions can be found are a limited number of psalters.³⁷ Two of the early ones stand out in particular, as they present the exact same rationale as the

► Fig. 16. *Pyrga* (Cyprus). Eastern bay, southern wall of the nave. The inscription **---] [AR]CA[N]GELE** : above the depiction of the Archangel Michael.

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

Pyrga tituli. Since these texts have never been properly edited, nor properly analysed from a philological perspective, it is best to present select editions here. They are more convincing than any analysis could be.

In search of textual models: The Psalter of Queen Ingeborg.

In the Psalter of Queen Ingeborg—ms Chantilly Castle, Library of the Condé Museum, 9, turn of the thirteenth century—the image cycle was inserted between the calendar and the Psalms proper.³⁸ I do not pay attention to the Old Testament sequence of images. I transcribe only New Testament tituli, some of which coincide with those that we find in *Pyrga* (including the alleged ‘bad-French’ word separation, which is in fact a commonplace in medieval times):

- f. 15r—*Lannonciacion*. (Annunciation) + *Lacolement*. (Saints Elizabeth and Mary at the Golden Gate) + *La gesine*. (Nativity)
- f. 16v—*Si come li angles nunca as pasteurs qe diex estoit nez*. + *Loffrande del temple*. (Presentation of Jesus to the Temple)
- f. 17r—*Si come li troi roi furent amene. deuant erode*. + *Si come il offrent*. (Adoration of the Magi)
- f. 18v—*Des innocence*. (Massacre of the Innocents) + *Si come nostre danme sen ua en egypte*. (Flight into Egypt)
- f. 19r—*Le babtesme*. + *La tentacions*.
- f. 20v, as part of a single scene—*La transfiguracion*.
- f. 21r—*Si come li judeu acuserent la famme qi fu reprise en auoutere*. + *Si come li giu sen partirent 7 ele remeist* (Jesus and the woman taken in adultery) (cf. Fig. 17a)
- f. 22v—*Le resucitement der lazre*. + *La pasqe florie*. (Entry to Jerusalem)
- f. 23r—*La cene*. (Last Supper) + *Le lauement*. (Washing of the Feet) (cf. Fig. 17b)
- f. 24v—*Sicome diex eure 7 li angele le confortent*. + *Sicome li apostle dorment*. (Gethsemane)
- f. 25r—*La traisons de judas*. + *Sicome diex fu amenez deuant pilate*.
- f. 26v—*Sicome diex fu batuz*. + *Sicome diex porta la croiz 7 les filles de ierusalem pluroient apres*.
- f. 27r—*Le crucefis*. (Crucifixion) + *Le despendement*. (Descent from the Cross)
- f. 28v—*Lenseuelissement*. (Entombment) + *Lesepulcre* (Holy Women at the Tomb)
- f. 29r—*Si come diex trait les enmes denfer*. (Anastasis type, misunderstood) + *Si come diex sa parut alamauzelaine* (Noli Me Tangere)
- f. 30v—*Si come dieus sacopaigna as pelerins*. (Pilgrims to Emmaus) + *Si come la mauzelaine dist as apostles qe ele avoit ueu dieu*.
- f. 31r—*Si come dieus mostra saint tomas ses plaies*. (Doubting of Thomas) + *La cension* (Ascension)
- f. 32v, as part of a single scene—*La pentecoste*
- f. 33r, as part of a single scene—*Le iuise* (Last Judgement)
- f. 34r—*Si come diex lasiet de lez lui. 7 il la corone*.



(Coronation of the Virgin) + *Si come li apostle enseuelissent nostre danme* (Dormition of the Virgin, misunderstood)

The cycle ends with four scenes from the Marian miracle of Theophilus. Two Eastern-inspired images (Anastasis and Dormition) are misinterpreted. Yet this is not what we need to note here. What we should note is the alternation between tag-names for religious feasts or noun groups as well as the sentence-captions introduced by a sequence *si come*. In the captions, the Old French *si comme* introduces a circumstantial subordinate clause, whose figurative regent is the image itself. This replicates the manner in which feast- or event-names (*Annunciation*, *Pentecoste*, etc.) are circumstantial tags for the images, a feature that characterises the tripartite typology of the tituli in Pyrga.

A similar rationale appears in the equally famous Psalter of Saint Louis—ms Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, f. lat. 10525, c.1274—a manuscript made for the use of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris. In the Psalter of Saint Louis, tituli were transcribed on the hair side of parchment leaves, opposite to the corresponding images, which were painted on the flesh side.³⁹ The reiterated formula is *en ceste page est coment*, followed by one or more descriptive sentence-captions (see f. 1r-78v). This other manuscript shares a second rationale with thirteenth-sixteenth century picture-books, murals, and even artwork of various types: the vernacular language acts as a frame, while sacred characters speak in the sacred language, that is, Latin.⁴⁰ The Psalter of Queen Ingeborg is no stranger to this practice either.

More models for captions: The Psalter of Henry of Blois.

To show that this rationale is not uncommon, I present an earlier codex (if not the earliest among all the manuscripts with vernacular captions), which bears witness to the same logic.⁴¹ A similar set of tituli appears in the Winchester Psalter or Psalter of Henry of Blois—ms London, British Library, Cotton Nero C iv, dated c.1160.⁴² In this codex, the image cycle was inserted before the calendar, just like in the Psalter of Saint Louis. The New Testament group of scenes presents the following tituli:

f. 10r—[...]TIE LI ANGELS A NOSTER DAME NOSTER SALVT. + ICI ENTRET LI SAINZ ESPIRS EN LI.
(Annunciation) + LI BAISE SAINTE MARIE ELISABET.
ICI ENFANTET NOSTER DAME IESV CRIST. ICI GIST IESUS CRISTUS EN LA CRECHE (Nativity)

f. 11r—[I]CI ANVNCENT LI ANGEL AS PASTVRS LA NATIVITE NOSTRE SEIGNVR. + ICI VIENENT LI TREI REI A HERODE. (cf. Fig. 17c)

f. 12r—ICI LVR A<R>AREIST LESTEILE KIS MEINET EN BETHLEEM. + ICI AORENT NOSTRE SEIGNVR E OFRENT LI OR E ENCENSE E MIRRE.

f. 13r—ICI LV APAREIST LI ANGELS SIS RUVET ALER EN LVR CVNTREE PAR AVTRE VEIE. + ICI CVMANDET LI ANGELS A IOSEPH KIL MAINT LEMFANT E LA DAME EN EGYPTE.

f. 14r—ICI VAIT IOSE[PH] EN EGYPTE OD LEMFANT E OD LA MERRE. + ICI FAIT HERODE OCIRRE LES INNOCENS.

f. 15r—ICI OFRET LA DAME LEMFANT A SAINT SIMEON AL TEMPLE. (Presentation of Jesus to the Temple)
+ ICI SIET IESVS XPISTUC EN MI LES MAISTRES DE LA LEI AL TEMPLE.

f. 16r—ICI LV TRVVAT MARIE E IOSEPH. + ICI LV BAPTZAT

SAINT IOHANS.

f. 17r—ICI EVT AS NO[C]ES OD ARCH[IT]RICLIN. + ICI FIST DEL EVE VIN. (Wedding + Miracle at Cana)

f. 18r—ICI LO RUVAT DEIABLES KE IL FESIST DE PIERES PAIN AL DESERT. + ICI LO RUVAT DES CENDRE DEL PLINACLE DEL TEMPLE. (Temptations)

f. 19r—the inscriptions for the Raising of Lazarus and Palm Sunday vanished;

f. 20r—the titulus for the Last Supper vanished + ICI LAVAT LES PIEZ AS APOSTLES. (cf. Fig. 17d)

f. 21r—the titulus for the Betrayal either vanished or was not transcribed + ICI [...] FLAE[.....] EST [...]E. (Flagellation)

f. 22r—the titulus for the Crucifixion vanished + ICI FV[...] DES[---]. (Descent from the Cross)

f. 23r—the inscriptions for the Entombment and Holy Women at the Tomb vanished;

f. 24r—the titulus for the Crucifixion is barely visible I[CI ...] EN[FERN] A E[.]E[.....]. (Harrowing of Hell, not Anastasis) + [.....]ASVIE[.....]. (*Noli Me Tangere*)

f. 25r—Christ and Saint Peter, titulus vanished + ICI AS PE[L]E[R]INS E A SEMBLANCE DE PELERIN. (Pilgrims to Emmaus)

f. 26r—traces of letters from the titulus for the Supper at Emmaus barely visible + ICI APARVT AS APOSTLES E TVMAS LV MA[.]IAT. (Doubting of Thomas)

f. 27r—the upper titulus for the Ascension either vanished or was not transcribed + lower titulus ICI LES AR[.]AT NOSTRE DAME E LI AP[OSTL]E.

f. 28r—ICI DESCENDIT LI SAINT ESPIRZ SVR LES APOSTLES. (Pentecost) + ICI DEUS [.....] EST [.....]. (*Maiestas Domini* with Tetramorph)

f. 29r, titulus for a sigle image—ICI EST LASVMPTION DE NOSTRE DAME. (Dormition, correct according to the Byzantine models, by a different painter)

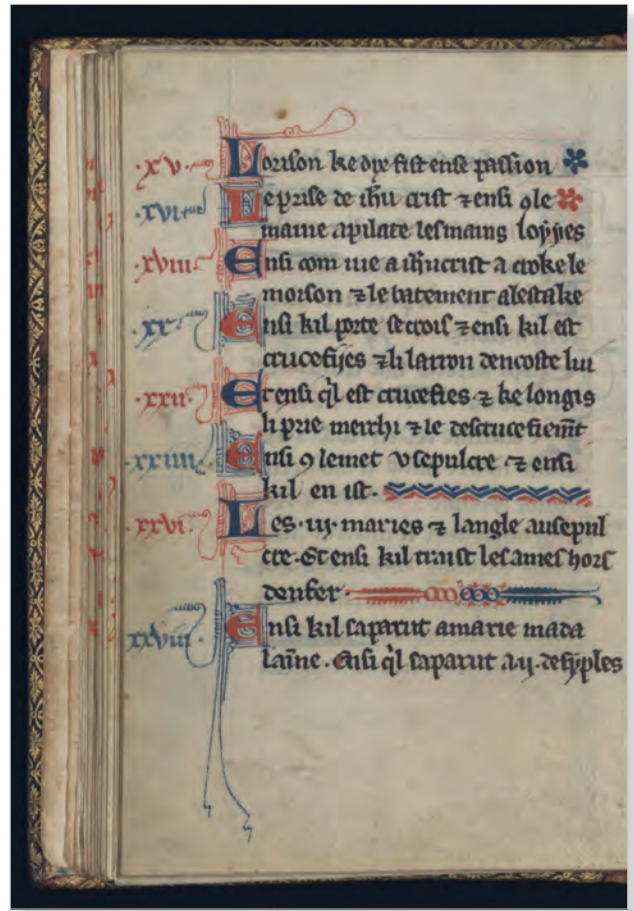
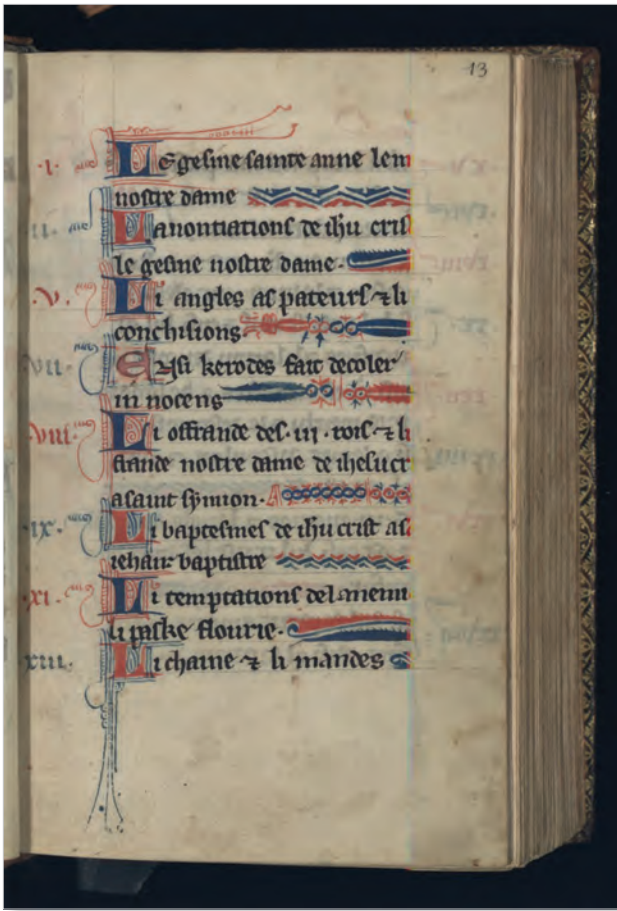
f. 30r, titulus for a sigle image—ICI EST FAITE REINE DEL CIEL. (Theotokos on a throne flanked by angels, same painter as f. 29r)

The cycle of images continues with scenes from the Last Judgement. An analysis would be pointless, as the Psalter of Henry of Blois endorses the same conclusions that I drew from the Psalter of Queen Ingeborg. This confirms not only that the murals of Pyrga are related to a codex model, which is often to be expected for murals as a general rule, but also that tituli have been replicated exactly as in that manuscript, hence the odd alternation between tag-names for feasts, noun-groups, and sentence-captions introduced by the *coument* sequences. Perhaps the most interesting coincidence concerns the Washing of the Feet, where the Winchester Psalter's *ICI LAVAT LES PIEZ AS APOSTLES* is similar in form to the Pyrga sequence *COUMEN[T] [---] E : LAVA | LE : PIE[S A SES] : APOS[TLE]*. Pyrga emulates a manuscript sequence which was similar to the *ici est* from the Winchester Psalter and the *si come* from the Psalter of Queen Ingeborg, simply because sentence captions were a frequent feature of image cycles in codices. Here is one last example to illustrate the continuity of this practice.

► Fig. 17a-d. *Four folios of the Psalter of Queen Ingeborg (f. 21r and 23r) and Psalter of Winchester (f. 11r and 20r).*

Source: Print-screens of the digital facsimiles of the two manuscripts available at <https://www.bl.uk/> and <https://bvmm.irht.cnrs.fr/>





◀ Fig. 18a-d. Four folios of the picture-book of Madame Marie (f. 13r, 13v,).

Source: Print-screens of the digital facsimiles of the manuscript available at <https://gallica.bnf.fr/>

Last example: the picture-book of Madame Marie.

In the picture-book of Madame Marie—ms Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, n. acq. fr. 16251, c.1285, made in Cambrai for Marie of Rethel—the entire manuscript is a catalogue of sacred images.⁴³ Most images are accompanied by captions, but there is also a table of contents, transcribed at the beginning of the image-cycle (f. 13r-17v), immediately after the calendar. For the sake of efficiency, I will pair in my transcription of the New Testament captions from the table of contents (f. 13r-14r) with the corresponding captions transcribed below each of the images (presented in square brackets with “cf.”) (see also Fig. 18a-b and 18c):

- i. *Le gesine sainte anne le m[ere] nostre dame* [cf. f. 18v—*Sainte anne. | .Joachin*]
- ii. *Lanonciations de ihesu crist le gesine nostre dame.* [cf. f. 19r—*La gesine sainte anne la mere nostre dame.*] [cf. f. 20v—*lanonciacion* (Annunciation)] [cf. f. 21r—*La gesine nostre dame.* (Nativity)]
- v. *Li angles as pateurs & li conchisions.* [cf. f. 22v—*lange pla[.] aus pastoriaux* (Annunciation to the Shepherds)] [cf. f. 23r—*lacircumcision* (Presentation of Jesus to the Temple)]
- vii. *Ensi kerodes fait decoler innocens.* [cf. f. 24v—*Ensi com decole les ynnocons*]
- viii. *Li offrande des .iij. rois & li [of]frande nostre dame de ihesu crist a saint symion.* [cf. f. 25v—*loffrande des .iij. Roys* + f. 26r—*loffrande de nostre dame a s. symeon*]
- ix. *Li baptesmes de ihesu crist a sa[...] iehanz baptistre* [cf. f. 27v—*le baptesme de ihesu crist par s. Jehan*]
- xi. *Li temptacions del anemi. li paske flourie.* [cf. f. 28v—*la temptacion de lennemy ou desert*] [cf. f. 29r—*Comment ihesu crist entra en iherusalem*]
- xiii. *Li chaine & li mandes* [cf. f. 30v—*Comment ihesu crist donna son corps a ses deciples le rendy [...]* (Last Supper) + f. 31r—*Comment il laua les piez a ses apostres* (Washing of the Feet)] (cf. Fig. 18c)
- xv. *Lorison ke dix fist en se passion* [cf. f. 32v—*loroison que dieux fist en sa passion*]
- xvi. *Le prise de ihesu crist & ensi cum le maine a pilate les mains loyyes* [cf. f. 33v—*la prise de ihesu crist* (Betrayal) + f. 34r—*Et ainsy comme len le mainne a pylate les mains liees*]
- xviii. *Ensi com iue a ihesu crist a croke le moison & le batement alestake* [cf. f. 35v—*Ainsy comme on gieue de ihesu crist au [.].a[.]foul* (Crown of Thorns) + f. 36r—*Ainsy comme il est batu en lestache* (Lashes)]
- xx. *Ensi kil porte se crois & ensi kil est crucefijes & li larron dencoste lui* [cf. f. 37v—*Comment ihesu crist porte sa croix* + f. 38r—*Comment il est crucefie entre .ij. larrons.*]
- xxii. *Et ensi quil est crucefies & ke longis li prie merchi & le descrucefiement* [cf. f. 39v—*Comment longis recouura sa veue par la vertu du sanc ihesu crist. et li requiert mercy* + f. 40r—*Comment on oste ihesu crist de la croix*]
- xxiii. *Ensi cum le met v sepulcre & ensi kil en ist.* [cf. f. 41v—*Ainsy quil est mis ou sepulcre.* + f. 42r—*Ainsi*

comme il is du sepulcre]

xxvi. *Les .iij. maries & langle au sepulcre. Et ensi kil traist les ames hors denfer.* [cf. f. 43v—*Les .iij. maries au sepulcre* + f. 44r—*Comment il descend en enfer*]

xxviii. *Ensi kil saparut a marie madalainne. Ensi quil saparut a .ij. desyplies* [cf. f. 45v—*Comment il apparut a marie magdalene* + f. 46r—*Comment il apparut aus .ij. pelerins qui aloient en emaus*]

xxx. *Ensi ke sains thumas li mist sen doit ens v coste. Et q' sains pieres & sains iehans sont au sepulcre* [cf. f. 47v—*Saint thomas qui bouste son doyt en la plaie de ihesu crist* + f. 48r—*Saint pierre et saint iehan au sepulcre*]

xxxii. *Ensi kil monte eschiex. Et ensi q' li sains espris vient sour les apostres.* [cf. f. 49v—*lascencion nostre seigneur ihesu crist* + f. 50r—*Le saint esperit descendant sur les apostres le iour de penthecouste*]

xxxiii. *Le sainte trinites Et li iugemens* [cf. f. 51v—*Nostre seigneur en sa maieste* + f. 52r—*Le iugement de humain lignage*]

xxxvii. *Li trepassemens nostre dame Et li courounemens nostre dame.* [cf. f. 53v—*Le trespassement nostre dame.* + f. 54r—*Le corounement nostre dame*]

It is the same rationale as those from previous codices: tag-names for religious feasts, noun groups with an analogous function, and sentence-captions introduced by formulae. There are even several formulae. And, of course, the sequence *Comment il laua les piez a ses apostres* comes very close to Pyrga's **COUMEN[T] [---] E : LAVA | LE : PIE[S A SES] : APOS[TLE]**. Even though no philological analysis of this manuscript text has ever been done, the oscillation between several fixed formulae such as *ensi come / ke...* and *comment...* (cf. Pyrga's *coument*) could originate in different sources, thus suggesting that the picture-book of Madame Marie could be a synthesis of several image cycles. However, this is neither the time nor the place to delve into specific issues. I will simply underline once more the typology of these examples, that is, the manner in which the tituli of Pyrga reflect and refract previous structural patterns. We do not know what the manuscript archetype for the murals at Pyrga was (perhaps a large image cycle at the beginning of a psalter, especially since the Pyrga murals are often compared to the miniatures from the Psalter of Queen Melisende—ms London, British Library, Egerton 1139, c.1131-1143),⁴⁴ but one thing is certain: somebody used a manuscript as a source for both the images and captions that he painted on the walls of the royal chapel. Could this person be Bishop Bartholomew Gai? Someone from the royal court? A monk or friar from Stavrovouni? Nobody will ever know.

THE TWOFOLD 'INSIDE-OUT' DESIGN

Despite the fact that the themes of their images do not always coincide, manuscripts such as the picture-book of Madame Marie epitomise an emulation of royal psalters such as those of Saint Louis or Queen Ingeborg. In the Madame Marie codex, the image cycle continues with a long cycle of saints (both in the table of contents section and in the images proper, that is, from f. 55v onwards).

This is perhaps an imitation of another image cycle. Apostles are depicted first, closely followed by saints Stephen, Lawrence, and Vincent—the first martyrs of the Church. It is thus possible that many other scenes from Pyrga could find their origin in a picture-book source. Such manuscripts would not be directly related to the book of Madame Marie, of course, but if we use this other





codex as a convenient example, we will notice that f. 15r of its table of contents mentions the martyrdom of saint Lawrence (*lx. Ensi que on rotist saint leurenc. [...]*) (cf. Fig. 18d). The scene is depicted on f. 77v, where the caption reads *S. Leurenc ensi comme on le rostist*. It is also preceded by a depiction of the martyrdom of saint Stephen with a caption reading *Saint Esteuene ensi comme on le lapide* on f. 76r. There may be even something to substantiate this hypothesis in Enlart's description of Pyrga inscription fragments.⁴⁵ For the time being, I will simply argue that the presence of the two saints next to each other cannot be a surprise (Figs. 22, 23). It is even expected of them.

Could the Pyrga rationale be informed by the Mendicant Orders? The attraction of the friars for the cult of these saints (and saint Vincent) can be partly explained by the fact that they were deacons, just as saint Francis. The depiction of saint Francis at the eastern end of the

northern wall in Pyrga (Fig. 19), next to saint Damian (Fig. 20) and opposite saint Cosmas (Fig. 21) (the latter paired with a now lost depiction of another saint) points to such an interpretation. Since Damian and Cosmas were favourite saints of saint Francis and his followers, and since bishop Bartholomew Gai was a Franciscan himself, this could explain many features of the paintings. In such an arrangement, the southern wall counterpart of saint Francis, painted to the right of saint Cosmas, could be saint An-

◀ Fig. 19. Pyrga (Cyprus). Eastern bay, northern wall of the nave. Eastern saints, saint Francis, and saint Damian.

▶ Fig. 20. Pyrga (Cyprus). Eastern bay, northern wall of the nave. Depiction of saint Damian.

▲ Fig. 21. Pyrga (Cyprus). Eastern bay, southern wall of the nave. Depiction of saint Cosmas.

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.



▲ Fig. 22. *Pyrga (Cyprus). Northern wall of the nave. The martyrdom of saint Lawrence painted above the lateral entrance of the chapel.*

▼ Fig. 23. *Pyrga (Cyprus). Southern wall of the nave. The martyrdom of saint Stephen depicted above the entrance opposite to the previous one.*

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

thony of Padua, whose life and miracles received as much space as those of saint Francis in the Trecento decoration of the church of Saint-Francis in Pistoia (Tuscany), where Bartholomew Gai had been prior before being nominated to the office of bishop of Limassol. Even though Bartholomew cannot be linked in any definite way to the decoration of the many chapels (or to that of the sacristy) of the church of Saint-Francis at Pistoia, several mural decorations of that church, commissioned by laymen (and women), have been made during his office there as prior.⁴⁶

Yet what if the now damaged saint painted at the eastern end of the southern wall was Dominic, as a counterpart to Francis?⁴⁷ Pyrga could be influenced by the shared spirituality of both Mendicant Orders. Let us not forget that one of the most lavishly illustrated picture-books of the fourteenth century, the so-called Holkham Bible—ms London, British Library, Additional 47682, c.1327-1335—was commissioned by a Black Friar. On f. 1r of that manuscript, an angel holds a rhymed text presenting the con-

tents of the book (Genesis and the New Testament), while the Dominican speaks to the manuscript artist: ‘Now, do it well and properly, for it will be shown to rich people’ (*Ore ferés been e nettement | Kar mustré serra a riche gent*).⁴⁸ Such lavishly illustrated picture-books were always intended for rich people, if not for royalty. Perhaps this is what links best the manuscript used as a source for the murals of Pyrga with those used at Berkeley Castle or in other royal chapels of Western Europe. However, Lawrence and Stephen can point out to a wider and more complex situation as well.⁴⁹

The osmosis of saints Lawrence and Stephen.

Speaking of these two saints, the pairing of Lawrence and Stephen is frequent in the art of the fourteenth century. In the Pulci-Beraldi chapel of the church of the Holy Cross in Florence, the murals of Bernardo Daddi (c.1330) present their two martyrdoms on opposite walls. This is said to be influenced by the fact that the two saints, both deacons, were often paired as two early martyrs.⁵⁰ However, the issue is complex, since according to a medieval story, the relics of saint Lawrence moved miraculously to the side, making room for the relics of saint Stephen when they were translated to the Roman church of *San Lorenzo fuori le mura*. This explains the existence of a long list of paired depictions of the two saints connected to private devotion in Trecento and Quattrocento Florence.⁵¹



Hence, the private devotion connotation was not necessarily linked (at least not in a direct manner) with the mendicant significance of their cult. It is true that both types of friars were prime movers (and influencers) of private devotion, but they did not have the monopoly on devotion itself. Furthermore, the significance of the pairing of Lawrence and Stephen in Pyrga has additional undertones as well, of a Uniate nature, which could be linked to the brotherly love uniting saints Cosmas and Damian, also depicted in the church.

In BHL 4784b, a text known as *Coniunctio corporum sanctorum Stephani et Laurentii*, of an uncertain date, but known to Bartholomew of Trento (c.1241-1251),⁵² Eudoxia, daughter of Theodosius II and wife of Valentinian III, brings the relics of Stephen the martyr from Jerusalem to Constantinople, but is possessed by a spirit and claims that the saint's body must be moved to Rome, *quia sic erat voluntas Apostolorum*. The emperor, clergy, and people of Constantinople agree, the relics are brought to Rome by Eudoxia herself, where they are welcomed by Pelagius II. However, the spirit possessing Eudoxia does not agree with the choice of the church where the relics are to be laid to rest. The Latin legend tells that saint Stephen wished to be *in ecclesia fratris sui Laurentii et iuxta eum elegeret collocari*. Next, the supernatural conjunction of the relics of saints Stephen and Lawrence leads to extreme consequences for the mortals who witness it:

*Illuc ergo corpus defertur, ad cuius tactum puella mox a daemone liberator, cumque sepulcrum adeo arctum esset, quod utraque corpora capere non potuisset, Laurentius adventui fratris sui quasi congratulans in alteram partem sepulcri versus super latus secessit, et medietatem Stephano vacans dereliquit. Sicque Stephanum similiter super latus versa facie ad consocium collocarunt. Graeci vero dum manus apponunt, ut Laurentium auferant, ad terram velut animas corruerunt, sed orantibus pro eis Papa, eius clero et populo, vix ad se ad vesperam redierunt. Omnes tamen infra decem dies mortui sunt: Latini vero qui eis consenserant, in phrenesim versi sanari non poterant, quoadusque similiter amborum corpora, ut dictum est, insimul translata sunt. Haec autem coniunctio facta est Nonis Maii.*⁵³

Leaving aside the astral bodies collision analogy, the message of the story is of a clear Uniate nature. It is no wonder that the allegory led to its inclusion in *Liber epilogorum in gesta sanctorum* by the already mentioned Dominican preacher Bartholomew of Trento, in turn source of *Legenda Aurea* by another Dominican, Jacobus of Voragine (c.1259-1266).⁵⁴ One cannot be sure which one of these texts (and perhaps other ones as well) influenced the decisions taken by the designer of the painted decoration in Pyrga. Nevertheless, the legendary journey of the relics from Constantinople to Rome and their miraculous osmosis with Stephen's Western counterpart and brother (saint Lawrence) embodies the very idea of what the chapel



of Pyrga stood for: a similar osmosis between a Byzantine and a Latin-rite church. Not to mention that the nearby monastery of Stavrovouni was in possession of a *lapidem quo fuit lapidatus beatus Stephanus* by the time Nicholas da Martoni had visited it in December 1394.⁵⁵

The bishop saints of the eastern bay.

At a basic comparative level, the pairing of Stephen and Lawrence (cf. Fig. 22, 23) is structured along the lines of a North-South axis. Unfortunately many saints of the lower register cannot be identified. The symmetry between the decorations of the two walls is of an elaborate nature and there were probably many more stories to tell (or symbolisms to uncover).⁵⁶ The only certain thing is that two of the hieratic saints of the northern wall have rather long beards—one of them holding a crosier (Fig. 19), while two of those painted on the southern wall wear Latin mitres (Fig. 24); Stephen, from the East, was paired with Latin saints, while Lawrence, from the West, was paired with Oriental ones.⁵⁷ It looks as if the rationale of the symmetrical composition is reversed, but one should pay attention to the fact that the martyrdoms of Stephen and Lawrence are painted in a different bay than the hieratic saints. This is the first clue of another symmetry on an East-West axis, which opposes the two bays of the chapel based on a similar rationale, whereby the different bays of the northern and southern walls are reversed in cross-symmetry. The second clue is the fact that the cycle of the Saviour and that of Mary are organised chronologically, as narratives, but they start in opposite sides: the story of Christ starts in the northern side of the eastern bay, while that of His Mother starts in the southern side of the western one. In the end, the only sure conclusion concerning the hieratic stance of the saints from the lower register of murals is that it strives to imitate the litany of saints from the lower register of Byzantine-rite churches.

Since the suffering of the two deacon martyrs was depicted in the western bay of the chapel, while the hieratic bishop saints were painted in the eastern bay, this corresponds to the symmetrical pairing of the two bays both in the lower registers of the murals and in the decoration of the vaults. The East-West axis is better defined, because it

represents the osmosis of two churches: a Latin-rite and a Byzantine one. The Latin one is focused on the Passion of Christ, while the Byzantine one is visible along the lines of a reversed templon and a preference for the Theotokos.⁵⁸

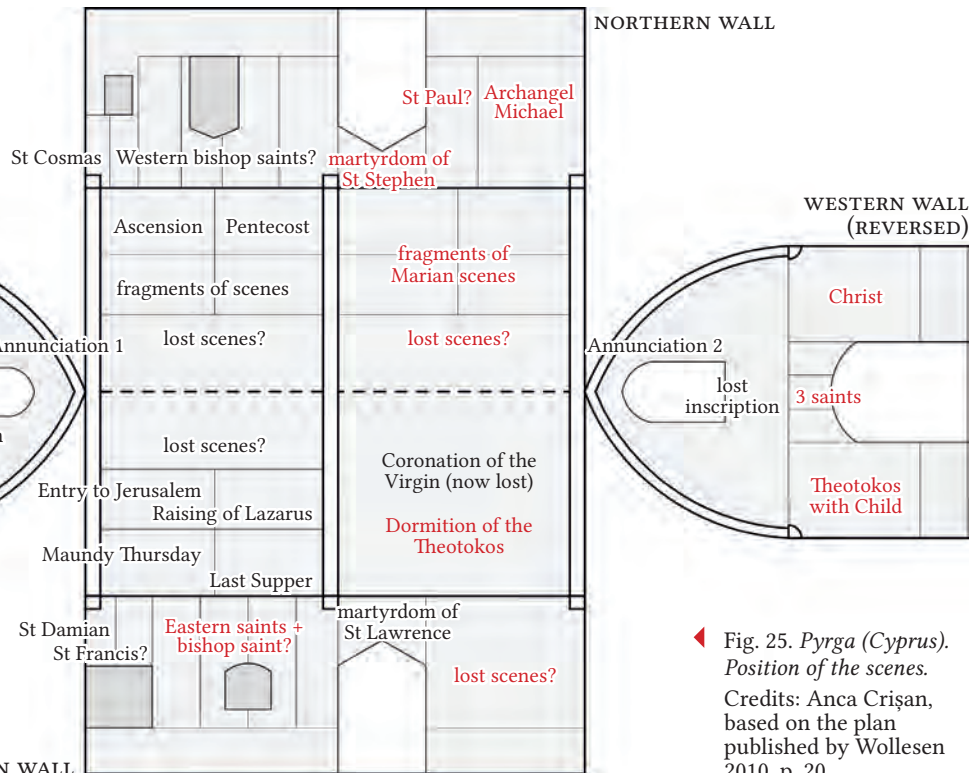
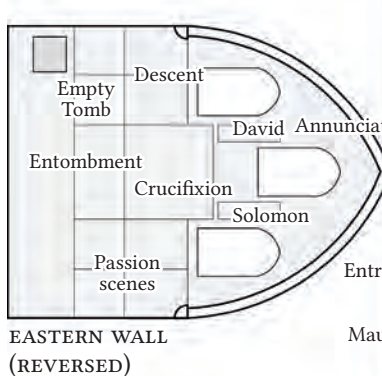
The 'reversed templon' and the issue of double-sided icons.

Speaking of the western bay, one must note that two icons of Christ and Theotokos flank the main entrance door to the West. They look as if they were painted on a Byzantine masonry templon, but in reversed position. Contrary to the logic displayed by the royal icons of Orthodox churches, in which Christ is placed to the right and Theotokos to the left of the viewer, the icons of Pyrga are positioned vice versa—Christ to the left and Theotokos to the right, as if they were both part of a decorative skin or coat worn inside-out (cf. Fig. 26, 27).⁵⁹ In a sense, this reverse templon mirrors the *pala d'altare* from the eastern wall. The main church is oriented towards the East, as it should be, because it belongs to the Latin rite, while the Byzantine one is symbolically designed inside-out, at the opposite end of the chapel. Nevertheless, the two of them form a single church, in a sort of osmosis, just like the relics of saints Lawrence and Stephen were joined in the *coniunctio* of BHL-4784b (cf. Fig. 25).

This idea is further supported by a third prostration icon—Archangel Michael—on the southern wall, as a continuation of the templon composition. The fact that such icons (connected to the templon and to the latter's idea of Deisis) are painted on lateral walls is hardly surprising. This characterises single-aisle rural churches, which represent the main architectural type in the Troodos Mountains, at whose eastern end Pyrga is located.⁶⁰ The depiction of the Taxiarch is again placed in a reversed position, meaning that the inside-out feature of the iconographical programme was a voluntary choice of the designer of the painted decoration, not the fortuitous result of arbitrary decisions. This makes an interesting case, since the masonry screen of rural churches is often painted on both sides, clearly marking a separation between what believers and priests had to see in connection with the liturgy.⁶¹ In other words, the sanctuary of the Byzantine

◀ Fig. 24. Pyrga (Cyprus). Eastern bay. Southern wall of the nave. Depictions of Latin bishop saints.

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.



◀ Fig. 25. Pyrga (Cyprus). Position of the scenes. Credits: Anca Crişan, based on the plan published by Wollesen 2010, p. 20.





◀ Fig. 26. *Pyrga (Cyprus)*. General view of the western wall of the nave and Archangel Michael on the southern wall.
Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

▲ Fig. 27. *Pyrga (Cyprus)*. The icon of the Theotokos on the lower part of the western wall of the nave.
Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.



church would actually be missing from Pyrga, on the one hand, because there was no space left in the church to allude to it (single-aisle, without a sanctuary); and on the other, because the royal chapel was accessible only to the Byzantine believer, not to Orthodox priests, as no proper installation for an Oriental-rite liturgy was available in it either. However, if we stick to the idea of a reversed composition, the eastern bay, its Passion Cycle, and the insistence on the life of Christ correspond to the function of western chapels in larger Byzantine churches. Often attached to the narthex, such chapels had a funerary function (as well as in the ceremony of the benediction of the water).⁶² This means that the hints to Byzantine iconography could also be funerary in nature, thus corresponding to the funerary logic of the Latin ensemble.⁶³

Painted templon screens are nevertheless compared with double-sided icons, or at least to their logic.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the most frequent type of a double-icon in Middle Byzantine times had a depiction of the Theotokos with Child on one side and the Crucifixion on the other.⁶⁵ In a way, Pyrga is also representative of this alliance of two themes, but perhaps not directly; maybe in connection with the issue of *Stavrotheotokia*, the numerous hymns in which Theotokos stands by the Cross and laments the death of her Son, especially since the latter have been compared to double-sided icons.⁶⁶ Since Latin 'Lamentation' poems were a counterpart of Byzantine *Stavrotheotokia*

hymns, a Latin scholar, pervious to the ways of Greek culture (such as the one who designed the delicate osmosis of Pyrga) would be familiar with them. He would allude to them, or to the Byzantine practice in general.

Should we compare the arrangement of Pyrga—with the Crucifixion to the East and the pseudo-Byzantine templon icons to the West—to the double-sided icon practice of pairing Theotokos and the Crucifixion? My answer is positive. Latins were already experimenting with such compositions. In fact, both the Crucified Christ (with Mary and saint John) and the Deisis composition (altered, with saint John the Evangelist, from Latin Crucifixion scenes, instead of saint John the Baptist) are known to have decorated the front of fourteenth-century Latin-rite altarpieces in Cyprus, where they were flanked by donors, just as in the Crucifixion from the murals of Pyrga.⁶⁷ This preferential oscillation for Deisis or for the Crucifixion in the decoration of altarpieces goes to show that Latins had already begun to experiment with Byzantine compositions of that type. The inside-out templon screen of Pyrga would not be the only experiment.⁶⁸ In spite of the fact that no one will probably settle the matter and identify the precise manuscript model of Pyrga, the most evident feature of the chapel is the separation between the two cycles: Christ to the East and Theotokos to the West. It is as if the painters cut the church in half and played with the idea of a double-sided icon. The two decorations (By-

zantine and Latin) do not face each other. Instead, they are structured in a back-to-back arrangement, just like a double-sided icon.

For the time being, let us retain only the basic idea of this separation between the eastern bay of the chapel, the iconography of which concerns just the Passion and the feasts connected with Christ, while the western half is exclusively linked with Mary. This is enough to raise another question: did the designer know all the intricate features of Byzantine texts and images? Perhaps he did not need to know them in detail. He could have understood and emulated only the spirit of these compositions, without knowing the detailed reasoning behind them. It looks like Pyrga shares many features with these examples, but no direct link with any of them.

Saints Peter and Paul (?).

Keeping this in mind, one should further note that the depiction of a saint fashioned to the liking of saint Paul⁶⁹ was placed between the martyrdom of Stephen and the icon of Archangel Michael (Fig. 29), suggesting that there could have been another symmetrical composition facing saints Peter and Paul on opposite walls. Nobody will ever know what the fourth royal icon of the northern wall looked like—perhaps saint Nicholas, given this saint's frequent depiction as a fourth royal icon, perhaps a military saint—but there are traces of another portrait in-between the lost icon and the northern entrance door (Fig. 29), above which the martyrdom of saint Lawrence is painted. These traces are a counterpart for the saint of the southern wall. If so, the composition would be again symmetrical: royal icon of Archangel Michael / depiction of saint Paul / martyrdom of saint Stephen, facing: fourth royal icon / depiction of unknown saint / martyrdom of saint Lawrence. The most reasonable choice for a representation of a saint would be saint Peter and there is good reason to believe that he was represented there. The only visible part of this saint is his left arm, and he wears a white dress, which is consistent with the depictions of saint Peter, usually represented in a white dress to match his white hair and beard (cf. Fig. 28).

This is perhaps the time to make a small digression and remind the reader that symmetrical alignments of this type are well-known in several churches of continental Greece, particularly in those that were decorated during the Frankish rule (thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), being placed usually in the proximity of the sanctuary, thus explaining why saints Peter and Paul are close to the royal icons of Pyrga.⁷⁰ The Western significance of this arrangement is manifest. To give but an example, the Union of Lyon (1274) was solemnly proclaimed *in festo apostolorum Petri et Pauli*, in line with the feast's obvious Uniate symbolism.⁷¹ Their pairing on opposite walls, facing one another, echoes previous Southern Italian experiments such as those from the cathedral of Monreale, where Peter and Paul were symmetrically placed in the prothesis and diaconicon.⁷² Yet the most controversial aspect of their pairing is the popularity of a related scene: the embrace of saints Peter and Paul.

Given the overstated connections between Uniate dogma and the representation of the embrace of the two Apostles on Cretan icons, this specific scene is often considered to represent a pro-Latin stance.⁷³ As a consequence, despite its clear Eastern origin, which signifies a "final meeting of the Apostles before their martyrdoms, as recorded in the letter of Pseudo-Dionysius,"⁷⁴ the embrace is often taken for granted as a depiction of Uniate ideology. The trouble is that the embrace (as well as the pair-



◄ Fig. 28. Pyrga (Cyprus). Northern wall. Fragment of a depiction of a saint in-between a fourth possible royal icon and the martyrdom of saint Lawrence.

▲ Fig. 29. Pyrga (Cyprus). Southern wall. Possible depiction of saint Paul in-between the martyrdom of saint Stephen and the depiction of Archangel Michael.

Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

ing) of the two apostles can have Uniate undertones only in the lands ruled by Latins, but this does not apply to its depiction in churches from the lands ruled or reconquered by the Byzantines.⁷⁵ As a consequence, ambiguous contexts are much more revealing, such as the one from the fourteenth-century murals of the church of the Holy-Trinity in Lampeia (Ano Drivi, Ilia, Peloponnese). In these paintings, the embrace of the two saints is facing the Betrayal of Judas, but does it actually mean that Latins were traitors? Given that the inscription next to the embrace is based on an epigram dating to the eleventh century, given also that the church of Lampeia was built on the shady and unclear border separating the Latin principality of Achaëa and the Byzantine despotate of Morea (after 1320), who knows whether the meaning of the scene was pro- or anti-Latin?⁷⁶

I end this digression by reminding the reader that the possible pairing of Peter and Paul in Pyrga, on opposite





▲ Fig. 30. *Pyrga (Cyprus), vault of the western bay, northern wall. Scenes from the cycle of the Mother of God.*

◀ Fig. 31. *Pyrga (Cyprus), vault of the western bay, northern wall. Fragments of the Dormition scene.*

Credits: Eva Avriř / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

walls of the western bay, contains *in nuce* all these meanings, in a bunch. From a Latin point of view, it represents the Union of the two Churches in the form of an osmosis, as previously explained. From the Greek standpoint, the depiction of saints Peter and Paul under the Dormition is also justified by their presence in the scene of the Dormition itself: saint Paul hugs the feet of Theotokos, while saint Peter stands on the other side, at the bedside. The two Churches stand, therefore, united by their veneration of the Mother of God. Last but not least, from the standpoint of the rationale of the chapel of Pyrga itself, saint Paul is placed near saint Stephen because both of them represent the East, while saint Peter and saint Lawrence represent the West, respectively. This symmetry completes the cross-symmetry of the two bays of the vaults. Once again, the western bay is a symbolic counterpart for the eastern one (cf. Fig. 25).

The decoration of the western-bay vault.

When one looks exclusively at the scenes painted on these vaults, the chapel seems to be cut in half, with the eastern bay dedicated to the deeds of Christ and the western-bay decoration based on a series of events connected to the Mother of God. Unfortunately, I have nothing to say about the Passion cycle of the eastern wall. I should look for its stylistic and compositional models, but—alas—this is not

the purpose of the current research, nor my competence.⁷⁷ I will, therefore, focus on the decoration of the vault, especially on that of the western bay (Fig. 30, 31, 35, 36).

It should be noted that by the time Enlart visited Pyrga, the first rows of scenes from the vault of the eastern bay were already destroyed.⁷⁸ He did not understand that the western bay was dedicated to the Theotokos. Apart from the Assumption of the Virgin, that he drew, what he saw was not much different from what we see today. Enlart spoke of the Nativity and other scenes from the beginning of the cycle, which clearly do not correspond to what is actually painted on the southern side of the vault—a proper identification of the scenes being made by Wollesen.⁷⁹ Yet he also gave useful pieces of information concerning the pairing of the scenes of the Dormition and Assumption.

According to Enlart, *dans la première travée occidentale, la moitié nord de la voûte est ornée d'une Assomption; au sommet, subsiste une belle tête de Vierge byzantine dans une auréole. Elle se lève vers un ciel meublé d'un rang de grandes étoiles.*⁸⁰ The scene would be placed above the Dormition. Unfortunately, this entire section of the murals disappeared, but Enlart painted a watercolour of the fragment (Fig. 32a) in which one can note that Mary wears a diadem. No stars can be seen, and no traces of the hand of Christ either, but there is an angel flanking the mandorla to the left, so this is indeed a Coronation of the Virgin. Since this scene is placed immediately after the Dormition in all the three codices quoted in the philological section of the current article, its presence in the manuscript source of Pyrga cannot be put to question, but it is difficult to guess the exact words of the French titulus.⁸¹ What is certain, instead, is that this pairing of the two scenes was not nec-



▲ Fig. 32a-d. Enlart's watercolours and drawings: a) fragment of the Assumption / Coronation scene (lost) on the northern side of the vault of the western bay; b) scenes from the northern side of the vault of the eastern bay; c) Crucifixion and Entombment from the eastern wall; d) drawing of the royal couple from the previous scene.

Source: Médiathèque de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine (<http://www.mediathèque-patrimoine.culture.gouv.fr/>).

▶ Fig. 33-34. Pelendri (Cyprus), vault of the central nave. Cycle of the Mother of God.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, user *Zairon*, uploaded 21 October 2017 (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>).

essarily unusual. There is at least one Crusader icon, the Acre Triptych, c.1255-1260, which pairs the Dormition with the Coronation in a similar context (including a *Threnos*).⁸²

I note only that the painters of Pyrga did not mistake the funeral bier for a grave (as their western counterparts often did), nor saint Paul hugging the feet and saint Peter sitting at the bedside for the two saints handling the body of Mary in a shroud.⁸³ The designer and the painters were properly trained in Byzantine iconography. It is no surprise that the Dodekaorton scenes respected their Byzantine models. Perhaps this also explains why several scenes of the vault are defined by inscriptions such as **LA : PENTE|COUSTE** : or **ASENS[ION]**. The similar mention of **IEUSDI : SAINT** in the Last Supper scene titulus suggests that they represent references to the manuscript source, which probably contained such captions, all while being references to the feasts more than to the events proper, linked with the Dodekaorton cycle.

With this in mind, we should return to the odd cycle of the early life of the Theotokos on the southern side of the

western vault (cf. Fig. 35-36). The only comparable example that we have is the cycle from the church of the Holy-Cross in Pelendri (mid-fourteenth century, higher up to the East in the Troodos Mountains), but that one is extensive beyond imagination. Fifteen scenes have been painted in the central nave of the church of Pelendri (Fig. 33-34), identified by Ioanna Christoforaki as:

- (1) Joachim's offerings rejected;
- (2) Joachim and Anna returning home;
- (3) the prayer of Anna;
- (4) the lament of Joachim in the wilderness;
- (5) the meeting of Joachim and Anna;
- (6) the Nativity of the Virgin;
- (7) the Virgin Blessed by priests;
- (8) the presentation of the Virgin to the Temple;
- (9) Zacharias' prayer;
- (10) the marriage (or Mary entrusted to Joseph);
- (11) Joseph taking leave of the Virgin;
- (12) the Annunciation to the Virgin;
- (13) the Visitation;
- (14) Joseph reproaching the Virgin;
- (15) the trial by water.⁸⁴

The upper register of the Pyrga vault could have had any of the scenes 1-5 from Pelendri, given that the narrative rationale of Pyrga seems to be of a chronological nature in both the eastern bay, dedicated to Christ, and the western one, dedicated to the Theotokos. In case the chronological arrangement was the chief feature of the cycle, the scenes that were painted below the Presentation of the Virgin to the Temple could equally be Zacharias' prayer, Mary entrusted to Joseph, or Joseph taking leave of the Virgin,





◀ Fig. 35-36. *Pyrga (Cyprus), vault of the western bay, southern wall. Scenes from the cycle of the Mother of God.*

Credits: Eva Avriil / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

as they were supposed to happen before the Annunciation (painted on the western wall). If not, the Visitation could equally be another valid option, followed by a Joseph scene. In any case, it should be noted that the Marian cycle of Pelendri is also designed to cover the western bay of that nave. From a structural point of view, this can also represent a common point with Pyrga. Not to mention the presence of Western influences in the style or in the composition of certain scenes, some of them pointing to similar arrangements in secular manuscripts produced in Crusader contexts, such as two copies of an *Histoire universelle*, even though the actual model could have been a different manuscript, from Constantinople.⁸⁵

Since Pelendri precedes Pyrga, and since Pelendri displays evidence of Latin influence in an otherwise perfectly Orthodox setting, we must assume that Pyrga was only a link in a wider and longer chain of experiments which had already started in the previous century, based upon Byzantine manuscripts in which the imagery of the early life of the Theotokos was copiously detailed. These experiments started earlier and probably continued long after, since there is even a Cypriot church dedicated to saints Joachim and Anne, which is an odd dedication for a church, suggesting that the story of the infancy of the Theotokos was a favourite theme.⁸⁶

The northern-aisle addition in Pelendri, that may or may not have been a Latin chapel, was painted roughly around the same time. Given that it has depictions of Latin donors, the involvement of the Lusignans in the fourteenth-century decoration of the Pelendri church is certain. To what extent and in what precise context, that is another matter altogether. However, one of those Pelendri commemorations concerned an actual member of the Lusignan family. Enlart identified him with regent John of Lusignan (c.1329-1375), brother of the deceased king Peter I, based on a crest depicted in the scene of the Incredulity of Thomas, but Annemarie Weyl Carr argued that the crest could be connected with the death of another brother, Thomas Lusignan (†1340).⁸⁷

This means that the designer of the decoration of Pyrga did not make an odd choice after all. He followed in the footsteps of other patrons, commissioners, and artists who had previously experimented with the subject. Pyrga built upon the rationale of Pelendri and adapted it to a different context, that of a Latin-rite church, in which the composition was designed in a much freer way, according to a logic which was different from that of Byzantine ecclesial decorations. Even though the Marian cycle is restricted to the western vault of the nave, one cannot say that there is an osmosis of two churches in Pelendri. The osmosis is a unique feature of Pyrga.

That there are two churches in Pyrga is evident from the Annunciation painted twice. It is highly unlikely that these two Annunciations were different. Research is troubled by the repetition of the scene and suggested that the Annunciation to saint Anne was painted on the western wall, as an answer to the Annunciation proper, painted on the eastern wall and marked by the presence of the prophet(s) David (and presumably Isaiah).⁸⁸ However, repetition actually makes sense, as it reinforces the idea of two churches in one. Furthermore, the Annunciation to saint Anne would be huge (half of the western wall) in comparison to the Annunciation to the Virgin (rather small, fitted tightly in the remaining spaces between the open-

ings of the eastern wall). Two Annunciations would mark a mirrored arco trionfale, therefore suggesting almost instantly to the viewer that she or he was in two churches, not one.

In this symmetrical composition of the inside-out arrangement, the Byzantine church acts as a counterpart for the Latin-rite one and the two walls (eastern and western) are invested with the values of sanctuary, *arco trionfale*, and *controfacciata* at the same time. In single-aisle barrel-vaulted rural Byzantine churches, the Crucifixion is painted in the inner lunette of the western wall, above the entrance door, thus rendering the decoration from Pyrga a Byzantine church inside-out, because the Crucifixion is painted to the East. In other words, the Crucifixion of the Latin sanctuary becomes the *controfacciata* of a single-aisle Byzantine church.

The dedication of the chapel.

This fits perfectly with what the inscriptions tell us, at least the dedicatory inscription, now lost, but transcribed by Enlart. Before delving deeper into this matter, I beg my readers' patience, as I must take a critical look at the dedicatory inscription transcribed by Camille Enlart. That segment of murals is now lost, but it allegedly read:

... ai
l'an de Nostre-Sei-
gneur M. cccc et xxi
s. [a] iii. [jour] s de
s [e] ncoumèsée
ceste chappelle
[en] l'onor de Dieu et de
l[a P]a[ssi]on de nostre [Seigneur]
... Mar en sui
e
..... ere.⁸⁹

Most reconstructions of this reading are evidently wrong. There are several problems and I am not the first one to doubt Enlart's readings in Pyrga, but we cannot doubt the text in its entirety, only Enlart's reconstructions and his reading of isolated letters.⁹⁰

To begin with, I will focus on the sequence *ncoumèsée*. Enlart (an art historian / archaeologist) and those who analysed the text based on his initial transcription had no idea that the French feminine form does not require the first *é* to be accented in medieval texts; nor was dieresis marked by diacritical *ë* (this is not even the case for dieresis in French). In medieval writing, accents are used for different reasons: in texts written in minuscule, in order to avoid the confusion between the letters *u*, *n*, *m*, and *i*; or in early texts, as an aid for reading aloud. Moreover, accents are not used in inscriptions; only in manuscripts. As a result, the alleged *é* in the Pyrga dedicatory inscription could be just a trace of descenders from the letters painted in the line above. As for *ë*, this letter was probably surmounted by a tilde marking a nasalisation of the vowel. These marks touched, bordered, or overlapped the sequence *ncoumesee*, which is a verb in the passive voice and presents the same phonetic features from the rest of the inscription. I would, therefore, read it with a tilde: *coumensee* for the contemporary French word *commencée*.⁹¹

Next, can we be sure that the inscription actually spoke of the Passion? When one looks at the late nineteenth-century transcription, the only reference to the Passion is Enlart's hypothesis. He was extremely generous in his reconstruction of the text. In a way, Enlart bit more than he could chew. His reading—[en] l'onor de Dieu et de | l[a

P]a[ssi]on de nostre [Seigneur] | [---] Mar[---]en sui—does not specify the available space between the transcribed letters and no one will ever know where the *-a-* of the presumed *Passion* was located in the inscription. The inscription can just as well be reconstructed as: *[en] lonor de Dieu et de | la[sonsi]on de nostre [dame] | [vierge] Mar[ie] [---]en sui*, etc.

This reconstruction makes more sense. From a ritualistic perspective, the Passion of Christ was not a feast. It could not embody the proper dedication of a church.⁹² The presence of the reconstructed word *asonsi* (or any phonetic variant) in the lost inscription explains the huge Dormition on the vault of the western bay and its upper continuation in the form as an Assumption or Coronation of the Virgin (Fig. 37). Such large scenes, disproportionate in comparison to the average size of the other scenes in their churches, characterise the Orthodox patron saint or the dedication feast.

The Dormition was the Greek feast, while the Coronation was its Latin counterpart. This explains why the two scenes were joined and occupy together half of the vault of the western bay. It would be another osmosis, for August 15 in the Latin and Greek rites, perhaps according to a pattern already set by earlier Crusader art (see again the Acre Triptych), but the name of the feast had to be transcribed according to the Latin-rite and it corresponds to the one given to the Dormition of the Theotokos in the Psalter of Henry of Blois: *LASVMPTION DE NOSTRE DAME*. In the end, my reconstruction of the central part of the inscription would be:

[...]
*l'an de Nostre-Sei-
 gneur M. CCCC et XXI*
 [---] III. [---]s de
 [---]n? coumensee
 ceste chappelle
 [en] l'onor de Dieu et de
 la[sonsi]on de nostre
 [Dame Vierge] Mar[ie]
 [...]

As for the last part of the inscription, the rare syllables transcribed by Enlart (*[---] en sui | [---]e | [---]ere*) should not be reconstructed, because these would lead to countless conjectures lacking actual proof. The new reading of the dedication is consistent with the funerary character of the murals, not to mention that funerary chapels of the region were often dedicated to the Theotokos.⁹³ The presence of saints Cosmas and Damian can also be related to the funerary nature of the chapel, as they were often patron saints of funerary churches in Naxos.⁹⁴ As for the scenes of the Passion, painted on the eastern wall, they complete the funerary arrangement. There are even precedents for them.⁹⁵ The rationale of the mural decoration of Pyrga is, therefore, in line with what we know about local cultural patterns.

▼ Fig. 37. Pyrga (Cyprus), vault of the western bay, northern side. Fragments from the Dormition of the Theotokos.
 Credits: Eva Avril / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.





▲ Fig. 38a-b. *The two sides of the icon of Yeroskipou.*
Source: Foulias, Hadjichristodoulou 2019, p. 100-101.

The Passion, the Dodekaorton, and the double-sided icons again.

Speaking of Passion scenes, the interesting thing about the ones from Pyrga is that they are not painted in the place specifically designed for them in Byzantine churches: in the transitional register, between the vaults with the Dodekaorton and the hieratic saints from the lower register of paintings. Had the designer wanted to respect a Byzantine logic, this would have been the most obvious place to depict the Passion scenes. In late-thirteenth and afterwards in fourteenth-century paintings, extensive Passion Cycles—such as at Protaton, Staro Nagoričino, or Perivleptos in Ohrid, with roots in earlier ones—are presented in linear (chronological) progression. Perhaps these Palaeologan depictions of the Passion Cycle are related to the order in which Gospel lections were sung.⁹⁶ Yet there are also earlier experiments mixing the life of Theotokos and the Passion of Christ. Saint-Panteleimon in Nerezi, the mosaics of Daphni (near Athens), and several other scenes of the eleventh and twelfth century look like interwoven narratives, as if the Passion Cycle had been embedded in the Dodekaorton.⁹⁷

Cyprus was no stranger to these developments. An epistyle beam—an unmatched piece of Cypriot art (fourteenth-fifteenth century), from Panayia Theoskepaste in Kalopanayiotis—presents 23 scenes ordered in two rows. The Dodekaorton and the Passion are interwoven with scriptural scenes in order to create a narrative-chronological sequence.⁹⁸ This is not unique, since another frag-

ment of an epistyle beam of a similar format, dated earlier, to the thirteenth century, presents two scenes—the Washing of the Feet and the Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. The two beams are perhaps connected, as the fragment is from close nearby (the catholicicon church of the monastery of Saint-John-Lampadistis in Kalopanayiotis), where similar fragments have been found as well, and where there is also talk of a Latin chapel painted in c.1500, which is in fact dedicated to the Akathist Hymn.⁹⁹ This means that a simpler solution (and in accord with the Byzantine trends) would have been to mix the Dodekaorton and the extensive Passion Cycle into a single story, presenting it as such on the walls of the chapel of Pyrga. Yet this was not done.

Instead, the choice of Pyrga resembles the rationale of double-sided icons. Speaking of these icons, one of them, dating to the same period, with the Theotokos on the one side and the Descent from the Cross on the other, was in the church of Saint-Marina in Kalopanayiotis, on the western slope of the Troodos Mountains. Another double icon (Theotokos / Crucifixion) was in Panayia Katholiki at Pelendri, nearby, while a third one (Theotokos / Descent) was located in the church of the Holy Cross, also at Pelendri. In fact, at least ten icons pairing Theotokos with the Crucifixion or the Descent from the Cross are known to originate from medieval Cyprus and many more of them were painted in the Aegean.¹⁰⁰ This arrangement was one of the most favoured in the double-sided icons in the region. It should not surprise us that the back-to-back arrangement in Pyrga seems to be based on it.

As a matter of fact, the connections between the decoration of Pyrga and the themes of the double-icons are not arbitrary. One of these icons, a fifteenth-century pro-

cessional one from the Cypriot church of Saint Paraskevi in Yeroskopou (Fig. 38) combines the Theotokos and the Crucifixion and has both Greek and Latin inscriptions—in fact a mixture of Latin and French. The Greek ones accompany the archangels flanking the head of the Theotokos in the upper section of the icon. They read: [Ο ΑΡΧΩΝ] : Μ[ΙΧ?]Α[ΗΛ] and : Ο ΑΡΧΩΝ : ΓΑΒΡΙ[ΗΛ].

The word DI with a tilde, painted above the bust of Archangel Gabriel in the upper right section of the icon, stands for [*Mater?*] *DeI*, a proper Latin translation of the Greek *Μήτηρ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, the usual designation of the Theotokos in such inscriptions.

On the other side of the double icon (the Crucifixion), Latin inscriptions accompany the depictions of the fainting Virgin—again [*Mater?*] *DeI*—and saint John the Evangelist—who is defined as *sanctus* ΙΟΗ[*ann*]Ε[*s*] ΤΕΟΛΟΓΥΕ[*n*].¹⁰¹ The latter sequence is another faithful rendition of a Greek phrase: Ἅγιος Ἰωάννης ὁ Θεολόγος.

The choice of the last word (with or without a tilde) is odd. ΤΕΟΛΟΓΥΕΣ cannot be read as a Latin word; it is the vernacular word *teologiens*, attested as early as in the writings of the fourteenth century.¹⁰² It is, therefore, safe to assume that the person who transcribed the inscriptions of the Yeroskopou icon was not a first-rate Latinist.¹⁰³ When confronted with the translation of a Greek word (*θεολόγος*), the Latin equivalent of which was unclear to him, he preferred a vernacular calque ('pure borrowing' as a translation technique), just to be on the safe side.

The choice of this specific vernacular word has nothing to do with the vernacular words and phrases of Pyrga. It is a mere accident, contrary to the case of the royal chapel, where the vernacular text was copied from a manuscript source. What interests me here is the issue of double-sided icons and their use by the Latins of Cyprus. They had been attracted to icons well before. Even though it is not double-sided, the late thirteenth-century Carmelite icon of the Virgin from the church of Saint Kassianos in Nicosia, now in the Byzantine Museum of the same city, has Latin inscriptions that accompany the narrative miracle scenes painted in its margins.¹⁰⁴ However, this icon must be compared (stylistically, if not otherwise) with a late thirteenth-century vita icon of saint Nicholas, also in the Byzantine Museum in Nicosia, which has Greek inscriptions (with misspellings). The latter used to be displayed in the church of Saint Nicholas of the Roof in Kakopetria and could have been commissioned by a Latin noble family.¹⁰⁵

Such mixed bags of Greek, Latin, and vernacular inscriptions, accompanying images devised half-way between Eastern and Western traditions, can be interpreted both as an instrumentalisation and an approval of Byzantine models, depending on the intention of Catholic lords, clergymen, or monks;¹⁰⁶ or perhaps both actions at the same time, indiscriminately. The same ambiguous character must be applied to the situation of the royal chapel in Pyrga. We do not know what the exact purpose of the royal chapel was.

The chapel in Pyrga as an experiment among many others.

As we see, Pyrga is not entirely unique. It fits well into the pattern of cultural experimentation on the island. This characterises not only its symmetrical and back-to-back arrangement, but its themes as well. The fourteenth century saw a general preoccupation with the expansion of New Testament scenes. It justifies the separation of the two bays of Pyrga into two complementary narratives of

Christ and His Mother. In the church of the Panayia tou Arakos in Lagoudera (again on Cyprus), a series of fourteenth-century additions have been made to the original murals dating to 1192. Among these additions, two odd scenes from the narthex flank the entrance to the nave: a group of Apostles on a mountainside (to the left) and Christ on the Mount (to the right).¹⁰⁷ If the two of them were connected, perhaps this would be the either the Meal at Tiberias (Jn 21:12-14)¹⁰⁸ or Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7), a rare depiction, given the scale of this church and the limited space available for painting. Yet the strangest example is that of the late fourteenth-century Passion scenes painted in the diaconicon (better said: southern apse) of the church Saint George of the Greeks in Famagusta, perhaps according to a logic which was not different from the one in Pyrga, since the lower register of paintings of the prothesis (better said: northern apse) had a series of Byzantine officiating bishop saints, as in an Orthodox sanctuary.¹⁰⁹

Many more examples can be added to the list, perhaps even the Hamilton Psalter (Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett, ms 78 A 9, c.1300), the bilingual Greek and Latin text of which is accompanied by an extraordinary experiment with no more and no less than 310 marginal Old and New Testament images.¹¹⁰ However, all these examples will not tell us more about Pyrga. Comparisons can go anywhere we need them to go, but they will never provide a specific answer to the odd two-bay arrangement. They can only confirm that the designer had in mind the idea of an experiment. I insist on pointing out that Marian scenes do not occur in the eastern bay of the church but only in the western one; in other words, in the vicinity of the contra-facciata royal icons, in reversed position. This is done for a purpose, as an experiment,¹¹¹ and the symbolic osmosis of two ecclesial decorations corresponds to the osmosis of two icons in a back-to-back double-sided one as well.

That the 'Sweet Land of Cyprus' was a place of experimentation, is beyond doubt. Long before the arrival of the Latins, at the end of Antiquity, the enhypostatic union of Mother and Son in the mosaic mandorla of the Panayia Kanakaria apse in Lythrangomi played with the human and divine natures of that union. Nobody knows what a Latin scholar or highly-educated clerk could have thought when contemplating such an image.¹¹² Nor what he would have thought when looking at the late-twelfth century icon from the same church of the Holy Cross at Pelendri (not necessarily its initial home, nevertheless) which depicted Christ in front of the Cross, at the end of the Road to Calvary, with saint John and Theotokos to the right. For that period, the theme of the icon is unique. The Mother of God was not supposed to be painted there, but she witnesses Christ who is vulnerable and frail in a yet another alliance of Theotokos and the Passion.¹¹³ Should we be surprised that Pyrga experimented with the life of the Theotokos and the Passion in a similar way to what Latins were doing elsewhere? Pyrga was painted after the Hesychast controversy, when Cyprus had become "a bastion of anti-Palamism," that is, a place of refuge for those Greeks who feared persecution, some of whom converted to the Latin rite.¹¹⁴

Perhaps earlier experiments such as those of the Lythrangomi church or the Pelendri icon encouraged the designer of Pyrga to experiment in his own right. The only remaining question is if the rationale of double-sided icons and the segmentation of the two cycles in two different bays of the church has any echoes outside of the world of art history. Was this just an artistic fashion or was it a general feature of those times? For once, the

answer comes from the history of literature(s).¹¹⁵ For the sake of brevity, I sum up the analysis, focusing only on the examples involving the Passion of Christ and the life of the Virgin / Theotokos.

CYPRIO PASSIONS OF CHRIST AND PRESENTATIONS OF MARY (?)

Who was responsible for the experimentation at Pyrga? There is not much to say about the actual designer of the painted decoration, except that he belonged to the category of learned men and that he was part of the entourage(s) of the bishop of Limassol or of the king of Cyprus. He (or his master) possessed a personal library of 50-60 manuscripts—similar to the libraries of Guido of Bagnolo (physician of the king) or Guy of Ibelin (previous bishop of Limassol).¹¹⁶ Such a library surely contained a psalter with an extended cycle of images that our designer used as a source for the conception of the Pyrga paintings. Perhaps that cycle of images was painted in Cyprus; perhaps it originated in Acre. This is the subject of a future research.

In a recent and synthetic presentation of medieval 'cultural brokers' in Lusignan Cyprus, Nicholas Coureas listed several names of those who could influence the culture of the island: the chancellors who transcribed Greek documents; George Lapithes—a local landowner and author of anti-Latin treatises who debated exegesis with scholars at court; the famous Philippe of Mézières—a Picard nobleman who acted as chancellor and ambassador of the kingdom in mid-fourteenth century; and even Leontios Makhairas—a chronicler.¹¹⁷ If I were to make a list of all the texts written on the island in Greek, Latin, French, and Italian, there would be many more names to be mentioned, of course, but another list would not get me anywhere near the identification of an actual designer for the Pyrga decorative program.¹¹⁸

In comparison with what happened in Western Europe, there were not many literary texts written in Cyprus, at least not many that reached us. Most of the texts written there were continued from or inspired by historical, legal, or hereditary texts from the time of the first Crusades (e.g. various chronicles; the *Clef des Assizes*; the later version of the *Lignages d'Outremer*; etc.).¹¹⁹ From the point of view of French letters, if we leave aside for a moment Philippe of Mézières, who wrote most of his texts upon his return to France, all we are left with is a certain Peter of Paris, author of four translations-adaptations, two of which (a treatise on the freedom of will and a translation of Aristotle's *Politics*) are lost. The remaining two, that is, the *Psalter*—translated and paraphrased for Simon the Rat, a Knight Hospitaller, in c.1299-1310—and a translation of Boethius' *Consolation*, are worthless in terms of scholarly and literary scope, making it easy to doubt that such a person was involved in the high cultural spheres of the elite that produced Pyrga.¹²⁰ The person I have in mind would be a high prelate or someone close to the royal court, such as Philippe of Mézières. Perhaps not Philippe himself, but someone of his calibre nonetheless. Since Mézières is one of the most documented authors connected with Cyprus, let us take a look at his writings in order to draw some generic conclusions about the literary context of the paintings in Pyrga.

Philippe of Mézières and his Crusader Passion.

The trouble with Mézières is that he was an odd character, full of peculiar ideas. A man of the fourteenth century, highly eclectic in his cultural tastes, this former chancellor

of the King of Cyprus could be a perfect candidate as the designer of the painted decoration in Pyrga.¹²¹ In the 'Rule of the Order of the Passion' (third version, 1396), in which he tried to create a military order, Mézières described his actions in Western Europe on behalf of the Lusignans (c.1366-1368) as *partout querant et demandant aide pour son seigneur le tres victorieux en Dieu roy de Cypre, partout anunchant le saint passage et la bataille de Dieu et la dicte chevalerie de la passion Jhesu Crist estre produite en lumiere*.¹²² Of course, one can never be sure if Peter II the Fat, king of Cyprus (1357-1382), shared the exact same propagandistic approach to the Passion as Mézières, but in a previous passage of the same text, the chancellor explained how his Order's emphasis on the Passion would bring back to the Catholic fold the schismatics of the Orient:

*Derechief quant les sectes sustouchees et generacions des crestiens orientelz scismatiques verront es parties d'Orient si grant secours que Dieu leur aura mandé – c'est assavoir de ceste chevalerie, en la quelle ilz verront et cognoistront si grant maturité et debonnaireté, si grant foy, esperance et charité, prudence, temperance, force et diligence, justice et verité, comme autresfois fu dit, et les autres vertuz en la memoire de la passion Jhesu Crist sanz fiction estre renouvelles avec une devocion en chevalerie autrefois non oyé – il est doucement a croire que les diz scismatiques de tant de vertuz enluminees en Dieu se convertiront et retourneront a la sainte foy de Romme catholique etc.*¹²³

When Mézières spoke of schismatics, he had in mind the Orthodox living under pagan rule, but it is safe to assume that this virtuous plan was based upon notions already implemented on Cyprus or Rhodes, where similar schismatics were living under Catholic rule.¹²⁴ The manner in which Mézières regarded the Orthodox is ambiguous, depending on the argument that he discussed,¹²⁵ but the protector and guide that he chose for his *Songe du vieil pelerin* (1389) was saint Arsenius, who linked East and West, just as Mézières' crusading project did.¹²⁶ And even though the banner of his fantasy knights focused on the Lamb,¹²⁷ the actual protector of his Order was the Virgin:

*Comme il soit ainsi selon le dit de l'apostre saint Pol en ceste sainte chevalerie de la passion Jhesu Crist, nulz homs vivant ne peut mettre autre fondement que celui qui est ja mis, le quel fondement est Jhesu Crist et la memoire de la sainte amere passion. Pour ce il est chose digne et convenable et tres neccessaire que ceste dame qui en la sainte escripture se dit estre cree pardurablement et devant touz les siegles – c'est la douce Vierge Marie royne de misericorde – soit prise et esleue par grant devocion de nostre sainte chevalerie pour mere, maistresse et advocate. [...] Encores se peut dire que la Vierge Marie non pas tant seulement sera a nostre chevalerie refuge, mere et advocate, estoile et lumiere, mais aussi elle sera a nos combatans une verge directive et en touz cas defensive, dont saint Jeroime dit qu'elle seule est la bonne aide generale et la defense et protection, bien preste a chascun qui met son cuer et sa pensee a elle.*¹²⁸

The text continues detailing the role of Mary and ends with a prayer that places the new chivalric order under her protection. I quote it extensively, in order to show how the paintings of Pyrga could be indirectly linked to crusading rhetoric as well:

Que tu Vierge Marie plaine de grace, mere de misericorde, maistresse de toute gent et escole des bons esleuz de Dieu, ma douce dame, daignez moy – ton petit et indigne serf –

*en pitie regarder et avec moy veulles encliner telz doulz yeulx de misericorde a tes servans et effens, les combatans de ceste nouvelle chevalerie qui sont ordenes pour multiplier la foy par l'aide de ta sainte pitie, pour renouveler la memoire en toy vivant de la passion, en toy de ton tres ame fils pour acquerir et delivrer des mains aux ennemis de la foy la Terre Sainte et la garder et retenir et pour visiter aussi devotement et honorer les sains lieux d'oultre mer. Ma douce dame, pour ceste chevalerie soies douce advocate et plege debonnaire envers ton benoit fils, dame de grace, comme bonne maistresse veille tes chevaliers et combatans introduire en tout bien et comme empereur souveraine soies leur touz diz vraye defense et aide. Et comme leur douce mere, ayés les tousjours en tout et partout pour bien recommandez, aussi soit fait par toy douce Vierge Marie qui vis et regnes pardurablement avec Jhesu Crist ton benoist filz et te siés a sa destre vestue de robe doree et de gloire et environnee de parfaite lumiere. Amen.*¹²⁹

This does not mean that Pyrga has anything to do with Mézières' fictitious Order of the Passion. Nobody will ever know if the chancellor saw or venerated any double-sided icons, if he heard (or heard about) any *Stavrotheotokia* hymns, or if he knew anything about the pairing of the Crucifixion with the Theotokos. He did not need to know any of these. Similar ideas were already in the air he breathed and in the words he heard. Mézières regurgitated those ideas in all his written works. Here is another passage, chosen randomly from his *Livre de la vertu du sacrament de mariage* (c.1385-1389), in which he repeatedly addresses the Virgin:

[...] *je me rens a vous e a vostre douce pitié de tout mon cuer et me recomande a vous entierement et a mon tres doulz Redempteur Jesu Crist, par vostre plaisant moyen, a sa sainte et amere Passion, a sa sainte et precieuse [vraye] croys, a ses miserations anciennes et nouvelles, et a vostre tres sainte protection et douce misericorde, c'est assavoir mon corps et mon ame, mes fais, mes dis, et mes pensees [...].*¹³⁰

Apart from the absence of the crusading idea, all the other notions are there. However, there is absolutely nothing special about the passage. Any clerk of the same period could have written a similar thing, perhaps in a manner less convoluted than Mézières', but a similar thing nonetheless. Furthermore, Mézières was not very innovative and his order was not the first one of its kind. While still a prince, the future King Peter I of Cyprus (1328-1369) had founded the chivalric Order of the Sword (1347), dedicated to the recovery of Jerusalem.¹³¹ Even though the Sword itself was an allegory of the True Cross, it is small wonder that the Virgin was once again protector of this order's founder, who invoked her on his deathbed (presented as martyrdom) in Machaut's *Prise d'Alexandrie*.¹³²

The most recent editor of Machaut's text, in which the exploits of King Peter are presented in an almost hagiographical manner, suggests that the idea for this chivalric order could have come from Philippe of Mézières himself, one of the first recruits of prince Peter,¹³³ while a previous editor and translator has suggested that Mézières could have provided the impetus for Machaut's hagiographical approach as well.¹³⁴ All these notions come short of proving anything. It is safer to assume that they are simply reflexes of general ideas conveyed in those times. As such, one should not be surprised that Mézières himself wrote in his fantasy Rule that the Passion of Christ would have been almost forgotten in his time:

*C'est assavoir que la passion de nostre seigneur Jhesu Crist des cuers des crestiens est aussi comme mise en obly, aussi comme de sa passion n'eust riens esté, et se puet dire et non pas sanz larmes que le pris de si precieuse sang pour nous espandu les crestiens l'ont getté aussi comme derriers leur dos et ne leur en souvient, ne qu'il fait a un hoste d'un pelerin trespassant qu'il n'a veü que une foiz [...].*¹³⁵

This does not mean in any way that the Passion was forgotten. On the contrary, more than a century and a half before Mézières, the cult of the Passion took on a new dimension starting with saints Francis, Thomas Aquinas, or Bonaventure. What Philippe of Mézières had in mind was another idea, namely that the symbolism of all the chivalric orders that sprang up in fourteenth-century Europe "left room for secular interpretation in a way [Mézières'] Order of the Passion did not".¹³⁶ Philippe tried to return to an exegetical approach reminiscent of the famous twelfth century, a time when saints and scholars such as saint Bernard of Clairvaux helped knights devise proper rules for proper military (as in monastic) orders.¹³⁷

This does not make Mézières the creator of a new crusading theme. The pairing of the cult of the Virgin with the Passion of Christ was a general trend of the time, hence explaining the reflections of Mézières' ideas in the murals of Pyrga. They are certainly not reflections of Mézières. The former chancellor was only mirroring ideas that he had assimilated from various sources, ideas that circulated in places frequented by Mézières, including Cyprus. These ideas were mirrors, such as the four-faceted one (*miroir reluisant a .iiij. faces polies*) described in his *Livre de la vertu*...¹³⁸

The Virgin as a protector of military orders (or actions) was no new development either. Teutonic Knights—*Ordo domus Sanctae Mariae Theutonicorum Hierosolymitanorum*—are the first monastic knights who assumed a Marian protection for their order, with exegetical, literary, and political connotations,¹³⁹ but the military role of the Theotokos is also documented in Byzantine and Moreote contexts.¹⁴⁰ This means that Mézières, highly eclectic and eccentric as he was (as well as prone to an odd sort of hermetic mysticism), borrowed and built upon ideas that he had assimilated in his formative years in Cyprus. We should not be surprised that his obsession with the Passion was not the only one that should interest us. In his younger years, he did all he could to spread and adapt the Byzantine feast of the Presentation of the Theotokos. In such a case, should we be surprised that the depiction of this feast occupies at least three entire scenes in the decoration of the Pyrga western bay vault? Probably not.

Mézières' Marian play and the western bay vault of Pyrga.

Philippe of Mézières had an obsession for the Presentation of the Virgin. In the *Epistola* which preceded the manuscript copies of his Latin play, he speaks of two occasions on which the play was performed: the first time in Venice (at an unspecified date) and the second time in Avignon (in 1372 and again in 1385).¹⁴¹ Yet before this, he mentions the places where he knew that the feast was celebrated (the Holy Land, other parts of the Orient, and of course Cyprus):

Temporibus namque antiquis, et, ut creditur, in primitia ecclesia quando civitas Iherusalem et Terra Sancta per Christianos detinebatur, ibique in aliis partibus Orientis in quibus vigeat fides catholica, sanctis patribus institutibus et verisimiliter miraculis declarantibus, festum bea-

*tissime semper Virginis Marie, quando in tercio etatis sue anno in templo per se ipsam quindecim gradibus templi miraculose ascensis, fuit in dicto templo a parentibus suis presentata, die XXI mensis Novembris devotissime et solempniter celebratur. Et adhuc in regno Cypri devotissime per fideles Orientis colitur de presenti, et habet officium totum proprium et devotissimum secundum usum Curie Romane, etiam musice notatum.*¹⁴²

The information from the last sentence is of uttermost importance. If we take it at face value, it means that the Latins of Cyprus had actually imported the Byzantine feast, assimilating it and including it in their calendar. This argues that the emphasis of the triple depiction of the feast in Pyrga was perfectly justified from a Latin-Cypriot point of view, making Pyrga a purely Latin-rite chapel and the coherence of its decoration out of question.

Because of this Cypriot cult of the Presentation of Mary, Mézières says that years later, when he happened to be in Italy, *videlicet in praeclara civitate Venetiarum*, he arranged for the theatrical production of a *repraesentatio figurata* with the same theme. He had done it at a time when he was still *cancellarius ambassiator serenissimi principis Petri Iherusalem et Cypri regis iuvenuli filii*, that is, in a period of time when he announced to each and every one *le saint passage et la bataille de Dieu et la dicte chevalerie de la passion Jhesu Crist* quoted in the previous paragraphs. It was only after having met the pope that the feast would have been introduced to the West, on account of Mézières' efforts and based on a version of the office that he himself had produced. However, this was not the only time when the ceremony was held. A recommendation of the author, which accompanies the text of the play, states that a second celebration (and the mystery itself) was performed before a mass in the city of Avignon on 21 November 1385, as follows (quoted here in full):

Notandum est quod Anno Domini millesimo trecentesimo octogesimo quinto in civitate Avinionensi, superius tacto Philippo de Maseriis, regni Cipri cancellario, personaliter procurante apud Dominum Nostrum Summum Pontificem Clementem Septimum, ipso summo pontifice non sine devotione et reverencia ipsius Matris Dei non solum permittente sed devote ordinante prefata solempnitas Presentacionis ipsius Virginis a parentibus in templo xxj die Nouembris anni prefacti in ecclesia Fratrum Heremitarum Beati Augustini Avinioni devotissime ac solempniter celebrata fuit cum missa pontificali, utique presentibus usque ad finem misse xviii. cardinalibus archiepiscopis episcopis cum universali clero ipsius civitatis Avenionensis totoque populo utriusque sexus. In qua quidem missa solempni, ad laudem Virginis devocionemque suorum devotorum, facta fuit quedam representacio .xv. iuencularum virginum trium aut quatuor annorum, quarum una formosior representabat Mariam associatam a dictis virginibus, et sic variis indutis cum processione devotissima cum Ioachim et Anna figuratis et angelis precedentibus Virginem ac sequentibus, ducta fuit cum instrumentis musicorum ad altare, ibique velox ascendit .xv. gradus ligneos tendentes ad altare et presentata a parentibus fuit figuraliter, et devote accepta a summo sacerdote legis Veteris Testamenti induto habitu summorum pontificum Iudeorum. Qua presentata ad altare cum laudibus et carminibus Daviticis alta voce per angelos Ioachim et Annam et ipsam Mariam recitatis, reducta est in medio chori et cardinalium in loco eminentiori, ut tactum est, associata, ibique expectavit usque ad finem misse celebrate, in qua quidem missa hora offertorii de sancta solempnitate Presentacionis Marie in templo predicavit ad dominos cardi-

*nales et ad clerum reverendus et in scientia admirabilis magister Iohannes de Basilia, solempnissimus doctor in theologia Theothonicus nacione ac generalis ordinis Fratrum Heremitarum Beati Augustini, qui quidem generalis de mandato vive vocis Domini Nostri Summi Pontificis, fecit sermonem nec habuit spacium providendi sermonem prectatum nisi tres dies nec completos et tamen ad confirmandum cor devotum transformatum per gratiam in amorem Virginis, ut videlicet tanta solempnitas non lateat quin ymo a fidelibus, ubique terrarum deinceps celebretur, ipsa virgine virginum in animam ipsius generalis mirabiliter inspirante sequentibus signis toto clero et dominis cardinalibus publice atestantibus quasi una voce omnes dicebant quod numquam temporibus ipsorum pulcriorem sermonem de Beata Virgine audiverant in Curia Romana. Denique ipse Dominus Noster Papa Clemens Septimus, devocione Virginis Marie eiusque devota solempnitate accensus, in prefato divino officio et festivitate omnibus existentibus tres annos et tres quadragenas indulgenciarum misericorditer concessit, et qui audivit et narrata vidit testimonium perhibuit, et verum est testimonium eius ad laudem Matris Dei Filiique eius benedicti, qui est benedictus in secula seculorum.*¹⁴³

Based on this short description and on the text proper, the play had three key moments. In the first one, while Joachim and Anna prepare their offerings, young Mary leaves them and climbs the steps of the Temple by herself, an action that the priests and parents consider to be a divine intervention. In the second instalment, Mary continues to live in the Temple, where she is fed by angels. And in the third instalment, the great priest of the Temple decides that she is to be given in marriage, but Mary makes a virginity pledge, therefore the priest, following a divine intervention, decides that she will be given in marriage to Joseph.¹⁴⁴

This story, which is based on the apocryphal Gospel of James, allows for a proper interpretation of the three scenes painted at Pyrga and a connection with the extensive cycle from Pelendri. COUM[E]NT : [FU :] PRES[ENTE(E)] [--- can refer to the climbing of the steps—and it should be pointed here that previous research found no logic in the representation of the three bearded haloed men in that scene, which would explain the ad hoc creation of the scene.¹⁴⁵ Then follows the scene which corresponds to the Byzantine iconography of the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple. Finally, the scene designated as [COU]MENT FU : RECE[U(E) : N]ostre D[AME] [--- can be linked to the angel who fed her in the Temple. After all, the only detail from this other scene is a canopy, indicating again the Temple (cf. Figs. 30, 31, 35, 36). According to this rationale, the last scene, positioned to the right of the latter, could be either related to Joseph or it could simply be a depiction of the Nativity of Our Lord.

However, the Nativity would find a better place in the highest row of the eastern bay vault, above the Raising of Lazarus and Palm Sunday. Similarly, the highest row of western bay vault could have more depictions inspired by the Protevangelium of James, such as saint Joachim praying in the wilderness and the Annunciation to saint Anna.

Thus the two bays would present two chronologically correct sets: Christ in the eastern bay (starting with the Nativity) and His Mother in the western one (starting with Joachim and Anna). This does not mean that the scenes from Pyrga were based upon the play of Philippe de Mézières, nor that Mézières based his play upon the murals of the chapel (or on the scenes of Pelendri, for

that matter). Our understanding of past culture is based on glimpses and fragments that are part of a much larger ensemble. It is, therefore, best to consider that Pyrga, Peliendri, and the play of Mézières are simply manifestations of similar ideas resulting from the cultural life of the ‘Sweet Land of Cyprus’. Could the same Cypriot cultural life be called upon to explain the extensive attention given to the Passion Cycle on the eastern wall of Pyrga? I believe so.

The Cyprus Passion Cycle.

Speaking of plays and theatre in general, there is another text that requires our attention, as it can shed light on the other theme represented extensively in Pyrga. The Cyprus Passion Cycle was written in *cento* verse—a poetical patchwork in the form of a mosaic of quotations—and counted ten plays or segments of a play:

- (1) the Raising of Lazarus;
- (2) Palm Sunday or the Entry into Jerusalem;
- (3) the Last Supper, often identified with the supper at the house of Simon;
- (4) the Washing of the Feet;
- (5) the Betrayal;
- (6) the Denials of saint Peter;
- (7) the Humiliation before Herod;
- (8) the Crucifixion;
- (9) the Resurrection;
- (10) the Incredulity of Thomas.

It would be an understatement to say that research considers the literary scope of this text rather low. Expectations have always been low when research dealt with this text from the beginning or turn of the fourteenth century, allegedly before 1320, perhaps since it was not written in the proper Byzantine koinè. The presence of demotic language features was interpreted as proof of a low-prestige sociolect and the creation of the text was also said to have been based upon scenes from Orthodox iconography, therefore reflecting the second-degree influence of Byzantine culture.¹⁴⁶

Some believed it to be a Greek monastic production while others leaned towards a local Latin school environment. Truth be told, there is no way to know who wrote the text and why. Nonetheless, the presence of lists of sacred objects or the explanation of the liturgy do not mean anything, as they can be interpreted in one way or another—either as proof of a Greek origin of the text or as proof of an encyclopaedic interest for things Greek.¹⁴⁷ The only certainty concerns the links with Western models, but it is difficult to say if the *cento* composition was based on a twelfth-century Passion from Monte Cassino.¹⁴⁸ What interests me is the Latin focus on the Passion itself.

The anonymous author made a patchwork of his sources. In the scene of the Washing of the Feet, the Cyprus Passion Cycle follows closely the biblical text, probably because the latter is already dramatic. There was no need to insert new ideas; the passage from the Gospel of John was a play by itself. This “puzzle of quotations in the form of incipits of Scripture passages”¹⁴⁹ was connected with the presence of Benedictine monks at Stavrovouni, less than 10 km away from Pyrga (Fig. 39). That monastery possessed a piece of the Holy Cross, as well as the Cross of the Good Thief, and one of the Holy Nails. The argument is that Benedictines were responsible for the promotion of religious performances in southern Italy and Sicily, therefore Stavrovouni, a favourite pilgrim stop on the way to the Holy Land, would be an ideal place to write the Cyprus Passion Cycle.¹⁵⁰ However, this is clearly an exaggeration and we have already seen that friars (not monks) could have lived in Stavrovouni by the end of the fourteenth century. The only thing that we can retain from this interpretation is the link between Stavrovouni and the cult of the Passion in Cyprus. It is no wonder Pyrga, an entry point of sorts for Stavrovouni—and presumably one of the stops of Nicholas da Martoni in 1394, before the erection and decoration of the chapel—was also emphatically and overwhelmingly decorated with a detailed Passion Cycle.

▼ Fig. 39. *Stavrovouni monastery (Cyprus)*.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, user *Zairon*, uploaded 19 October 2017 (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>).





▲ Fig. 40. *Pyrga (Cyprus). Crucifixion scene on the eastern wall.*
Credits: Eva Avriř / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

As for the Cypriot play, I prefer to be more careful in drawing any direct conclusions from the reading of its text. The Cyprus Passion Cycle is still a matter of dispute. Konstantinos Sathas' enthusiastic use of *cento* poems as Byzantine links between the theatre of Antiquity and that of the Cretan Renaissance can be doubted at best. It is safe to assume that Byzantine theatre never existed, certainly not as a counterpart to Western medieval drama. The rare and odd dramatic elements of Byzantine *cento* poems were never backed by any stage production and the text known as *Χριστός πάσχων* (*Christus patiens*, of a controversial dating) is simply based on a mosaic of quotations drawn mainly from the ancient tragedies of Euripides, Aeschylus, and Lycophron. It was purely a literary game of sources, very different in character from the Cyprus Passion Cycle, which was intended for stage production and based on Western archetypes. We can still debate whether the Cyprus Passion Cycle was actually performed or not—probably not (in spite of the prologue in the style of medieval Western plays and numerous stage indications), but this is a different fish to fry (or to catch). The intention of its author was to write a proper play.¹⁵¹

Speaking of this author, research believed for quite some time that the Cyprus Passion Cycle could be written by a certain Constantine Anagnostis, “chief of notaries in Cyprus” in 1259,¹⁵² but this is only the name of a person connected with one of the texts in the manuscript. The anonymous person who probably wrote the text is now believed to be the copyist of “various Cypriot religious and secular materials, including the private archive of a professional scribe who was probably secretary of the *secrète* or chancellor of the ‘island of Aphrodite,’” probably at the beginning of the fourteenth century.¹⁵³ This suggests that the Cyprus Passion Cycle was at least read (if not written) in the same milieu in which Mézières became obsessed with the Passion and the feast of the Presentation of Mary to the Temple. However, given that the text was copied in a manuscript at a time when manuscripts were available only to a handful of people, it is hardly surprising that all pieces of evidence lead from different paths to the same destination: the local elite. If I were to exaggerate, I could also imagine that the designer of Pyrga owned a manuscript copy of the Cyprus Passion Cycle, but this would be an unsubstantiated conjecture.

The only reasonable assumption is that the Pyrga east-

ern wall and the Cyprus Passion Cycle appeared in a similar context, based on similar ideas, perhaps even connected with the monastery of Stavrovouni and the visits of Western pilgrims to the Holy Land, some of whom may have left their traces in the graffiti of the chapel.¹⁵⁴ There are many other places on Cyprus where a similar emphasis was given to the Passion, including the murals of the church of Saint Herakleidios, already mentioned when dealing with other examples from the monastery of Kalo-panayiotis.¹⁵⁵ Some of those ideas need not even be Cypriot, by the way. In fifteenth-century Crete, Marinus Falieros' Lamentation poem of about 400 verses presented similar dramatic features. Theotokos delivered most of the lines, but Martha, John, Mary Magdalene, Christ Himself, and Tzadok the Jew also engaged in dramatic dialogue about the Passion.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, Falieros was not the only person who wrote such texts. Several demotic *Θρηνηνοι* (Lamentations) of the same type have been edited from various sources.¹⁵⁷

The ambiguous issue of Stavrovouni monastery.

The vicinity of Stavrovouni should not be overstated either. The role played by this monastic community (Benedictines? Franciscans?) in the creation (or care) of the chapel of Pyrga has already been suggested.¹⁵⁸ However, we stumble in the dark when we try to imagine what really happened at that monastery and what its role was, despite its alleged foundation by saint Helena, who had left the relics of the Holy Cross at that site. By the time Nicholas da Martoni visited Stavrovouni in mid-December 1394, the monastery had a small main church, with a small chapel to its right side, hosting the relic of the Cross of the Good Thief with a small portion of the Holy Cross embedded in it:

*Ecclesia ipsa est parva sed est multum devota. A latere vero destro ipsius ecclesie est quedam cappella parva, et ibi manet dicta beata crux sublevata et suspensa, que non est adhesa in aliquo loco, quod magnum videtur miraculum, et est in dicta cruce modicum de ligno beate Crucis Domini nostril Yhesu Christi, copertum argento.*¹⁵⁹

Given this specific context and the proximity of Stavrovouni, it is surprising that we do not see any depiction of the Good Thief in the murals of Pyrga. Certainly, the upper part of the Crucifixion scene is now lost (Fig. 40), but the structure of the scene and the presence of characters to the right and left does not suggest that two more crosses had been painted to the sides. There is no place in



the image for such features. Similarly, the saints who are part of the lower register of the decorative programme of Pyrga do not seem to be (apart from saint Stephen) the saints whose relics were kept at Stavrovouni.¹⁶⁰ Nicholas da Martoni gives us the following list:

*Qua beata Cruce cum devotione visa, inspecta et adorata, fratres ibi morantes michi subscriptas reliquias hostenderunt, videlicet: magnum [digitum?] sancte Agne; brachium sancti Blasii; clavum fixum in manus Christi; costatam sancti Georgii; lapidum quo fuit lapidatus beatus Stephanus; et de linga dictae Crucis.*¹⁶¹

Looking at the church decoration, saints Agnes, George, and Blasius are nowhere to be found. Perhaps saint Agnes could be one of the busts of female saints painted in the theory of three martyrs on the western wall, above the entrance (Fig. 41).¹⁶² Perhaps saint Blasius could be one of the saints holding a bishop crosier, but saint George is absent, save for the case in which he would have been depicted as a fourth prostration icon, on the opposite wall to the large depiction of Michael the Archangel. However, even if they appeared in those places, they would not be grouped in any way, shape, or form so as to clearly convey



▲ Fig. 41. *Pyrga (Cyprus). Theory of saints on the western wall, above the entrance, next to the royal icon of the Theotokos.*
Credits: Eva Avtil / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

the idea that there would be an influence coming from Stavrovouni. Instead, the decoration of the chapel of Pyrga seems to be influenced by the rationale of the double icons and by the idea of an osmosis between two very different (Eastern and Western) churches. Just as in the case of the Cyprus Passion Cycle, this should make us doubt the overstated importance of Stavrovouni.

The Holy Cross, on the other hand, was painted in the lunette of the western façade of Pyrga, where traces of an illegible inscription are equally visible.¹⁶³ This must be the actual link with the monastery of Stavrovouni and it was evidently a local preoccupation for the legend of saint Helena allegedly leaving those sacred relics on the island of Cyprus. Previous research already explained the ambiguous manner in which Latins showed scepticism or embraced the veneration of those relics, but this cannot be directly connected with the episode of Queen Alix of Ibelin.¹⁶⁴ It would probably be connected with all the queens and kings of Cyprus who venerated the relics of Stavrovouni because they were located in their kingdom, as an everlasting reminder of the sacrifice of the Saviour.

CONCLUSION

So what happened at Pyrga? After at least thirty years in office, bishop Bartholomew Gai must have felt that his end was near. Old age kept sneaking up on him. He probably felt weak. It was high time he left his mark in his diocese. A church would be the most obvious project to set his name in memory, perhaps a funerary chapel for his body as well. He needed a significant place, therefore he must have thought many times about a monastery where pilgrims went to venerate the relic of the True Cross embedded in the Cross of the Good Thief. It was located at the north-eastern end of his bishopric and it was arguably the most important site in his care, but the power of the bishop declined year by year. Not only was he unable to respect his payment obligations, but perhaps he hardly found money for his own needs in Limassol.

Many things must have changed during the Great Schism of the West. The quarrelling popes of Avignon, Rome, and Pisa had left a power vacuum in the organisation of the Church. In Cyprus, monasteries answered more to the demands of the king than to those of bishops. Bartholomew most likely aimed for something modest, not in the abbey of Stavrovouni itself, but on the road to Stavrovouni, in a place that all pilgrims would visit on their way to the mountain of the Holy Cross. By the looks of the paintings, he probably engaged the services of a workshop of *ritardatari* painters, either because these were the cheapest ones he could find, or because no other ones were available. Either way, at one point his project had to implicate King Janus and Queen Charlotte, to save money or because their authority at the monastery must have been greater than his. I believe this is why the royal couple is depicted venerating the Cross, a relic of Stavrovouni, while the bishop is preoccupied with the Entombment of Christ and the Dormition of the Theotokos.

We do not know who he was, this person who designed the decoration. Somebody from the entourage to the bishop? Somebody from the royal court? Somebody who had contacts with both milieus? The only thing that we know is that he put together several concurring projects: the decoration of the church had to be fit for a funerary chapel of a bishop, for the needs of the pilgrims on their way to Stavrovouni, and for the preoccupations of the king and queen. He received a commission from the bishop, that is certain, but did he receive another commission from the royal court? I believe the answer is 'yes', since the designer had to plan something in accord with a fashion coming from the West, whereby chapels imitated devotional manuscripts, with texts and images transferred to the walls. Believers entered such churches as if they opened books to read. In Pyrga, it was probably some sort of picture-book or a large image-cycle from a psalter produced locally, with French captions accompanying the images that the painters carefully transferred on the walls.



S. P. S. A.

◀ Fig. 42. *Pyrga (Cyprus). Vault of the eastern bay, southern wall. Detail of the Ascension scene.*

Credits: Eva Avri / GRAPH-EAST, 2021.

Since the meaning of the chapel had to be multifold—a funerary chapel, a royal chapel, and a chapel serving as entry point to Stavrovouni—the designer devised a crafty plan. He must have seen double-sided icons, perhaps he had seen icons with Latin captions on one side and Greek ones on the other. He probably knew about those *Θρηνοι* of the Greeks as well, similar to Latin 'Lamentations'. He must have known that the Virgin was paired with the Crucifixion, therefore he replicated the rationale of a double-sided icon. The result was an arrangement of two back-to-back churches. The actual Latin chapel was oriented to the East, straightforwardly, with an emphasis on Christ in the eastern bay; while the other one, an inside-out imitation of a Byzantine rural church, was focused on the Theotokos, whose cycle covered the vaults of the western bay. To make the back-to-back osmosis more evident, the designer imitated a reversed templon on the western wall. The osmosis was further strengthened by other symmetrical arrangements, chief among which was the pairing of two martyrdoms. Saints Stephen and Lawrence, painted above the southern and northern entrances, were a symbol of an East-West osmosis them-

selves. As for saint Francis, painted in the vicinity of the sanctuary, next to saints Cosmas and Damian, he was probably chosen to please the Franciscan bishop of Limassol. Perhaps he was painted in connection with Stavrovouni, which could have been a convent of fratres at that time. Or perhaps the designer himself was a Franciscan himself. Nobody will ever know. An accurate hypothesis can only go so far. Anything beyond this point would be pure conjecture. For the sake of an extravagant end, however, I hope the reader will not mind crossing this threshold.

Personally, I believe that the back-to-back arrangement could be a reference to the king as well. Since the paintings date to the time of King Janus, baptised in honour of Genoa, where his parents were captives at the time of his birth,¹⁶⁵ then the back-to-back features of the iconographical program could find a direct symbolism in the alleged Trojan founder of the city, connected with *Ianus bifrons*. The *ritardatari* features of the murals do not make this idea sound very convincing. Nevertheless, the epithet of the pagan god was well known to the humanists of *Primo Rinascimento*. Boccaccio mentions it in his *Genealogia deorum gentilium* (1360 / 1374), a text that he had written at the request of Janus' grandfather, king Hugh IV of Cyprus. This is, of course, a speculation; perhaps a reasonable one, but a speculation nonetheless.

Notes:

1 See e.g. the formula *les clers de la bauzoche* (church of Notre-Dame-la-Grande in Poitiers) in a document of March 1460; Guérin 1906, p. 218. According to *DEARÉL*, vol. 1: A-B, p. 270-271, *basoche* is polysemous: 'parish', 'community of clerics', 'village feast', 'offerings during the village feast'. In Pyrga, it could also be a placename; see for this *Bazoche*s in the department of Nièvre or *La Bazeuge* in the department of Haute-Vienne (France).

2 Research identified him with Hugh of Lusignan, bishop of Nicosia (1411-1421—in Avignonese obedience; 1421-1442), but we shall soon see that this interpretation is incorrect. Cf. Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 430; Vaivre 2006, p. 300-301. Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 423, 426, 431, believes that the two depictions refer to two separate bishops, but does not explain in what manner one of the bishops could accept the interference of a foreign prelate in his diocese.

3 Cf. Minasidis 2019, p. 66.

4 For reasons linked to the linear narrative progression of these scenes (and contrary to previous identifications), I believe this is the scene of the Incredulity of Thomas. Only the lower vestments of several characters can be seen.

5 For general references to Pyrga, see the recent works of Wollesen 2010; Μηνασίδης 2012; Lucey 2018; Minasidis 2019; and Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 423-431, who speaks (p. 431) of the *oratoire d'un manoir royal*. For previous studies, see Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 428-432; Papageorgiou s.a.; and especially the initial description of Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 428-439. For the Latin graffiti, see Schryver, Schabel 2003. For Enlart's study, see also Vaivre 2006.

6 Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 7, who mentions the "remains of a longer, now-illegible inscription, with white letters on green ground, can be found in a pointed, lunette-shaped recess on the exterior of the west wall right above the door". See also Schryver, Schabel 2003, p. 327, note 3; Lucey 2018, p. 66. There are indeed remains of an inscription in that lunette, but they cannot be the dedicatory one. Cf. Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 2, pl. 64 (for two images). The scene from the lunette probably concerned a depiction of the Holy Cross; cf. Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 424. The illegible inscription is probably related to it and the available space does not present a field similar in shape to the one needed for the transcription of the text read by Enlart. Μηνασίδης 2018, p. 90-91 (particularly note 79) argued this Crucifixion scene painted outside is similar to the interior one on account of the presence of the same halos and remnants of a painted crown.

7 The graffiti drawing was published by Trentin 2010, p. 318, fig. 14-11, with no photo accompanying it. See also the information

presented on p. 314: "One of the commemorative graffiti that was not noticed early includes the date 1380 (maybe 1385) in the first line in Latin numbers and traces of the wording *hic fuit* (Fig. 14-11). This is, therefore, a commemorative graffiti that goes back to before the presumed date of construction of the church." However, the second line of the handmade drawing is entirely illegible (no traces of a *hic fuit* are visible) and the sequence interpreted as *ccc* in the first line, part of a larger sequence interpreted as *mcclxxxv*, raises at least two doubts: (a) the second *c* of the *ccc* shares the characteristics of the alleged *l*, making it possible to interpret the sequence as *mcclxxxv* (1435); (b) the handmade drawing suggests that the plaster is damaged in the section of the second and third *c* of the sequence. An in situ research of the Graph-East ERC project on 4 July 2022 could not identify the graffiti in the chapel. It could be destroyed, difficult to identify, or simply mislocated. See also Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 424, who bases his interpretation on this graffiti, dating the murals to the fourteenth century as well, but accepts (p. 426) that the date read by Enlart could apply to a restoration of the murals. Another argument brought by Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 424, is that *les armoiries du royaume arménien de Cilicie – d'or au lion de gueules –, ajoutées à celles des Lusignan de Chypre sous le règne de Janus (1398-1432), n'apparaissent pas à Pyrga*. He refers to Rudt de Collenberg 1977, p. 144, without mentioning that the latter distinguished the coat of arms as 'Lusignan nouveau', which could *commencer en 1393, mais n'apparaît que sous Janus*, from the old one. According to the latter, *comme il* [i.e., Janus] *use aussi de 'Lusignan ancien', on pourrait placer l'adaptation du nouveau blason vers 1410*. Rudt de Collenberg explains that *l'écartelé 'Lusignan nouveau' pose un problème. Nous savons que le lion du troisième quartier donc celui de gueules sur or est le lion du Royaume d'Arménie qui était des mêmes émaux (fig. 47). Comme le roi de Chypre Jacques I avait ajouté à son titre celui du Roi d'Arménie, il était naturel que les armes de ce Royaume figurent aussi dans les armoiries officielles. Mais d'où vient le lion gueules sur argent du quatrième quartier, donc du quartier le moins important? Quelle est sa raison d'être?...* This means that the absence of the Armenian lion on the coats of arms painted at Pyrga does not suggest anything in terms of dating. On the contrary, this absence and Enlart's reading of the date in the inscription could suggest that the lion at issue could appear on the 'Lusignan nouveau' coat of arms after 1421.

8 Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 9, who bases his dating exclusively on style and asserts that the "Pyrga frescoes" should be re-dated "into the reign of the Lusignan king Henry II (1285-1324)," their execution being assignable "quite possibly" to "a French atelier with ties to Acre." This desire to make the paintings older than they really were serves, on the one hand, to save face when

evaluating their quality; on the other hand, to draw them near to the compositional models from Acre and Holy Land Crusader art, all while keeping a close dating in comparison to two other churches with which Pyrga is compared by Jens T. Wollesen: Asinou and Pelendri; cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 35-41. See also p. 90-91, where he accuses Enlart of having seen too many C letters in the inscription, trying to replace the 1421 dating with 1321. For more analyses of style and techniques, see Lucey 2018, p. 67-73.

9 Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 93-94; Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 106, who tried to identify the royal couple with King Peter I (1359-1369), followed by Lucey 2018 (who imagined a plague scenario and the participation of saint Peter Thomas); Minasidis 2019, p. 65.

10 See for this Σπανού 2002, p. 49-51 (unconfirmed by in situ scrutiny). This different structure could also be due to the insertion of an arcossolium type of tomb.

11 Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 71, who read here GNI. Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 96-97 corrected it to GAI, but did not identify the bishop because of a preference for another timeframe. Fading traces of a letter B can be discerned to the left of the head of the character, but they could equally be the result of the restoration process.

12 Ritter 2019, p. 241, p. 251-252 (for the quotations and for the precise data upon which my interpretation is based). Cf. Rudt de Collenberg 1982, p. 646 (for monk Anthony of Chanac) and *passim* (for similar data). Further data concerning the life and activity of Bartholomew Gai can be found in still unexplored sources. A report of 3 June 1893 potentially mentioned the existence of 25 portraits of famous citizens of Pistoia, among which there is also a mention of *Bartolomeo Gai, vescovo di Cipro nel 1390*; cf. Mazzi 1982, p. 23.

13 Schabel 2005, p. 183.

14 For the identification of two bishops, see again Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 423, 426, 431.

15 Nicholas walked half a day; he left Nicosia after lunch. Cf. Piccirillo 2003, p. 180, note 167 (for the identification of Ayia Varvara).

16 Cf. Minasidis 2019, p. 67.

17 Piccirillo 2003, p. 116, 118 (for all the Latin quotations of this paragraph). Cf. Schryver, Schabel 2003, who analysed the graffiti in Pyrga and did not find any graffiti from before 1421. See also Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 51-52 (cf. Minasidis 2019, p. 69), who tried to link the building complex at Pyrga both with the monastery of Stavrovouni and the royal court of the Lusignans, but the royal presence in a basic *casale* is hard to justify. For a previous identification of the *casale* with the village of Pyrga (mentioned as a village *Sanctae Crucis* in other documents), see Μηνασίδης 2018, p. 79-80 and *passim*.

18 See e.g. Weyl Carr 2004, p. 314-315, who argues that Pyrga was 'bound' to Stavrovouni.

19 Cf. Tsougarakis 2012, p. 123-124.

20 Schryver, Schabel, 2003, p. 330-333; cf. Meyer Fernandez 2019, p. 431.

21 See e.g. Agrigoroaei 2017b, for a vernacular inscription inspired by an exemplum.

22 Agrigoroaei 2019, p. 36-38; cf. Trotter 1990.

23 Agrigoroaei 2015; Agrigoroaei 2019; etc.

24 Agrigoroaei 2017a.

25 For more examples, see Agrigoroaei 2019, where one of the last cases of the series, the chapel of Merléac (Brittany, France) and its early sixteenth-century inscriptions copied from the manuscript of a French translation of the book of Genesis, is compared to other texts painted in private and ecclesial contexts of the same type.

26 Their text is in Latin, probably based on a manuscript produced in Italy; Klein 1992, p. 193.

27 Cf. Agrigoroaei 2019, p. 32-33.

28 See Lucey 2018, p. 66, note 9 (for this quotation). For a list of those who argued in favour of this interpretation, see Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 99, to which I add Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 426. Cf. Vaivre 2006, p. 304, for a different opinion; *L'orthographe phonétique qu'elles reproduisent n[est] cependant pas l'argument pour attribuer à un auteur chypriote ces tableaux*. The

French Cypriot scripta was also noted by Papageorgiou, quoted by Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 99: *στη μεσαιωνική Γαλλική, όπως ίσως την μιλούσαν την εποχή αυτή στην Κύπρο*.

29 Minervini 2010, p. 150-151.

30 Minervini 2010, p. 159.

31 For the analogies, see once again Minervini 2010.

32 For different readings, see Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 94-99. In vol. 2, pl. 64-68, he makes an inventory of all the other fragments of murals where the presence of letters can be noticed, but the rest of them are hardly legible.

33 Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 432, note 1.

34 This is where Wollesen 2010, p. 85, had read: DEA : RA...

35 See e.g. a title of the same type, *Comment Nostre Dame fu menee au temple et offerte a Nostre Seigneur*, in the fourteenth-century *Cy nous dit* Middle French collection of moral stories, also known as *Composicion de la Sainte Escripiture* in certain manuscripts. This story is inserted between *De Joachim et de sainte Anne et de la nativité Nostre Dame* and *Comment l'ange tesmongna que elle estoit royne des anges*, which is in turn followed by *Comment Nostre Dame fu mariee a Joseph; De l'annonciation Zacharie; De l'annonciation Nostre Dame*; etc. Cf. Blangez 1979-1986, p. 4.

36 Wollesen 2010, p. 85, had read BE instead of the reconstructed RE.

37 I list here codices which could be suitable for comparison in other contexts, unfortunately not for Pyrga. The image cycle of the Huntingfield Psalter—New York, The Morgan Library and Museum, ms 43, c.1212-1220—has French tituli only for a series of Old Testament scenes at the beginning of the image cycle, not for the New Testament scenes. Most picture-books with Old French captions are either dedicated to Old Testament subjects or to hagiographical cycles and they are part of a fashion which spread from the thirteenth century onwards as a manifestation of private piety. See Delisle 1893 (for the first inventory of sorts). Cf. Hull 1995 (for analysis). It should be noted here that many of these manuscripts contain captions in Latin, not in Old French (cf. e.g. the famous manuscript of The Hague, *Koninklijke Bibliotheek*, 76 F 5, c.1200). For the narrative features of these manuscripts, see Maekawa 2000.

38 For the tituli, see Sourdeval 1883; Delisle 1902, p. 4-7. For the images, see Deuchler 1967; Deuchler 1985.

39 See e.g. Thomas 1970; Chester Jordan 1983; Stahl 2008. Unfortunately, the image cycle from the Psalter of Saint-Louis does not contain any depictions of New Testament scenes, only Old Testament ones (from the offerings of Abel and Cain to the crowning of Saul), therefore no direct comparison of the texts can be made.

40 For an extensive discussion of this other feature, which does not appear in Pyrga (perhaps on account of the fragmentary conservation of the murals), see Agrigoroaei 2019, p. 42-43.

41 This example was chosen in order to answer the claims of Wollesen 2010, who says that "in France, the switch from Latin to French vernacular dates back to the Bibles moralisées of the early thirteenth century. The *Grandes Chroniques de France*, the *Histoires universelles*, from the second half or the last quarter of the thirteenth century, as well as the testimonies of French crusader lords and bishops, were written in French vernacular and were associated with royal or upper-echelon ecclesiastical patronage" (p. 86). One is simply left to wonder how such unsubstantiated notions can be justified, since the bibliography of the following footnote lists only basic references for the titles quoted above.

42 This a bilingual psalter (Latin and Old French); the vernacular text belongs to the manuscript tradition of the Oxford Psalter—manuscript of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 320, first half of the twelfth century—that I studied many times, yet the current framework does not concern philological or translational studies. Partial analysis of the image captions from the Psalter of Henry of Blois has been presented in Agrigoroaei 2015; Agrigoroaei 2019; etc. For the cycle of images in context, see Edmondson Haney 1980; Witzling 1984. For the commissioner of this psalter, see Davis 2009.

43 For more data about this manuscript, see Stones 1997; Bräm 1997.

44 However, comparisons with the Psalter of Queen Melisende

should be avoided, for several reasons: a) the Marian cycle is absent; b) there are no text captions accompanying the images; and most of all c) comparisons with this manuscript breed countless examples, therefore making the initial term of comparison derivative and devoid of meaning. For a comparison of the Pyrga murals with this psalter (and with other famous examples, such as the Florence diptych or the scenes from Chora), see Wollesen 2010, p. 30, 58 (where the comparison is even structural, even though it does not make sense). Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 77, who suggests as future avenues of research a series of comparisons with "Franciscan book illumination, Psalters, Missals, and Books of Hours," but falls short of establishing actual comparisons.

45 I believe that one of these scenes could be linked to the *co.... le... sa.... os... re...* fragments of inscription read by Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 432, note 1. The first word is clearly an inscription of the *co(ument)* type, perhaps in connection with one of the martyrdoms of sa(int) Stephen or Lawrence. This would explain why Enlart was able to read the fragmented row of letters, now lost, as the martyrdom scenes are closer to the viewer's eyes than most other inscriptions. Most unfortunately, Enlart does not give any details concerning the place where he read that text. Cf. Enlart 1899, vol. 1, p. 433, for the martyrdom of saint Stephen: *Les trois tableaux du registre inférieur sont détruits, sauf quelques lettres ayant fait partie d'inscriptions qu'on ne peut restituer, et un morceau du dernier panneau, où subsiste une coupole de tuiles rouges, portée sur des arcades et de grêles colonnettes. Au-dessous, dans un écoinçon surmontant le portail sud, on voit un saint à genoux, béni par une main divine qui sort d'un nuage rouge.*

46 For the patronage of Donna Lippa di Lapo degli Vergiolesi in this church of Pistoia during the time of Bartholomew Gai, with a mention of the latter, see El Saman 2000, p. 101-102. Lucey 2018, p. 81, also noted the depiction of saints Cosmas and Damian in Orthodox funerary contexts as guardians of tombs.

47 See for this Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 81.

48 For a facsimile, see Brown 2007; cf. Hassell 1954. For the quoted text, see Pickering 1971, p. 3. For more context, see also Flyvbjerg 1998.

49 For Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 425-426, the presence of the martyrdom of saint Lawrence in Pyrga could be linked to the decision taken by the Latin archbishop of Nicosia in 1353 to celebrate this feast as one of the major feasts of the Saint-Sophia cathedral of Nicosia. Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 427, explains the presence of saint Stephen as a *culte rendu localement au proto-martyr Etienne*, perhaps connected to the stone kept at Stavrovouni Monastery.

50 Cf. e.g. Kaftal 1952, col. 613 no. 182.

51 See for instance Pacino di Bonaguida's 'Burial of Saint Lawrence with Saint Stephen' in the *Laudario di Sant'Agnese* (first half of the fourteenth century), a luxurious Florentine hymnary with songs in vernacular Italian made for the private devotion of the Confraternity of Saint Agnes, a group connected to Santa-Maria-del-Carmine, or the Confraternity of Orsanmichele, another church, also in Florence. The manuscript folios were dispersed in the early nineteenth century, with fragments hosted now in many collections. For more data, see Zimei 2011. The fragment of the burial of the two saints is now EX.2012.2.73 96 of the John Frederick Lewis Collection, Rare Book Department in The Free Library of Philadelphia. For later depictions, see also the wooden altarpiece fragment presenting 'Saint Lawrence buried in saint Stephen's Tomb' (c.1412), painted by Lorenzo di Niccolò, now in the collections of Brooklyn Museum.

52 Cf. Fros 1986, p. 520.

53 *Acta Sanctorum*, August, vol. 2, p. 528F-529C (for the text) or p. 529B (for the quotation). For the actual events and the Greek sources who inspired this legend, see e.g. Mango 2004.

54 Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, August, vol. 2, p. 530B-D.

55 Piccirillo 2003, p. 116 (for the quotation).

56 Previous research made some attempts to identify various saints. I refrain from proposing any identifications since the data is insufficient. The alternation of western and eastern saints at Pyrga was also mentioned by Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 1, p. 80.

57 Cf. Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 425, who also noted this symmetry and compared it to another example from the Carmelite church of Famagusta (second half of the fourteenth century). I thank Dimitris Minasidis for pointing to me that the case of the Carmelite church of Famagusta has been discussed by Paschali

2014a, p. 284-286 (and fig. 5); and Paschali 2014b, p. 142 (and fig. 5), providing an interpretation for the symmetry between Latin and Orthodox saints.

58 A vague idea of a similar character is also present in the analysis of Wollesen 2010, p. 78-81, who does not insist on the specific Christly and Marian uses of the two bays.

59 I thank Dimitris Minasidis for pointing out that such reversed position (Christ to the left and the Theotokos to the right) are not necessarily rare, one such example being the Chora church in Constantinople.

60 See Vionis 2019, p. 72, who counted 135 single-aisle churches in the Troodos area from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century.

61 Cf. Mailis 2020, p. 9-13. For templon walls and screens, see Gerstel 2006. Variations of the general-rule Christ-Theotokos composition occur especially when the feast saint of the church is painted on the templon as a prostration icon.

62 Sinkević 2002, p. 82-84.

63 This funerary function could concern the tombs of additional donors or perhaps that of the bishop of Limassol, not those of the royal family, as suggested by Emmanuel 1999, p. 243.

64 Cf. Gerstel 2006 (*vide supra*).

65 Out of an inventory of 140 double-sided icons, the most frequent pairing (48 icons) is with the Theotokos on one side and Crucifixion on the other. Cf. Βοκοτόπουλος 1998-1999, p. 304-307 (for the inventory; the icons that interest us are in the first category, p. 304-306).

66 Constas 2016.

67 See the fragment on display in Nicosia, cathedral of Saint-John-the-Evangelist, and a Deisis relief from Limassol. They are both discussed in Olympios 2014.

68 Many more, including a lid of a small casket from the period of Frankish occupation, now in the Archaeological Museum of Thebes (with Latin inscriptions on both sides), will probably be quoted by future studies as belonging to the same category.

69 A standing depiction of saint Paul of a similar type can be found in a so-called "painter's guide" of the twelfth or thirteenth century from Cyprus or Sinai. See Hutter 1999, p. 139, fig. 18. For two fourteenth-century depictions of saint Paul in the churches of Cyprus (Asinou and Pelendri, in comparison), see Kalopissi-Verti 2012, p. 204.

70 A complete inventory of the facing representations of Peter and Paul could be the subject of a doctoral dissertation, therefore it is pointless to list any of them here.

71 Franchi 1965, p. 82.

72 Similar arrangements are also known in the Peloponnese; pairing saint Peter with other saints, probably based on other ideas. See the late-fourteenth century murals of Langadà (Messenian Mani), wherein the saints Peter and Sylvester are depicted in the vaults of the diaconicon and prothesis. Cf. Kappas 2016a.

73 See e.g. Vassilaki 1990.

74 Kessler 1987, p. 274 (for the quotation).

75 An epigram written by Manuel Philes at the court of the anti-Latin emperor Andronicus II (1282-1328) spoke of a *μυστικόν φίλημα* ('mystical kiss') of the two Apostles in connection with a union of *γένος* (a reference to the community of Christians). It does not say anything in particular about the significance of the vision. The only conclusion is that Philes did not compose a pro-Latin poem. From the many studies dealing with Cretan icons presenting this subject, the importance of which has been overstated, leading to hasty conclusions about previous uses of this scene, see Vassilaki 1990.

76 Cf. Kepetzi 2006, who interprets the scene as a pro-Latin one, because *le sens pro-unioniste est chose établie*. An equally ambiguous nature applies to the embrace of saints Peter and Paul in the nave of the church of Saint-Peter in Kastania (Messenian Mani), painted in the second half of the fourteenth century. Even though several decorative motifs in the churches of Kastania paid homage to Manuel Cantacuzene and Isabella of Lusignan (the couple ruling in Mystras), a "conciliatory" perspective on the Union of the two Churches did not imply a pro-Latin stance. Cf. Kappas 2016b, p. 174, 176, who sees the paintings as "a more conciliatory position toward the burning issue of the Union of

Churches and towards relations with the West.” The presence of Western influences in the decorations of Kastania is known, some of them—the embossed halos (with *punzonature*) of certain saints from the lower register of the nave, a clear influence of the Italian Trecento—being similar if not identical to the embossed halos from the royal chapel of Pyrga. Isabella’s connections with Cyprus, her visits to the island, and her Cypriot fiefdoms are well known. For Isabella of Lusignan in general, and for her role in the transmission of Western cultural trends, see Λούβη-Κίζη 2019, p. 53-72. Cf. e.g. Coureas 1995. Yet these Western features are simply decorative and the embrace is the only scene susceptible to Uniate dogma, which makes it ambiguous and less probable altogether as a reasonable interpretation. The embrace was painted once again in the fifteenth-century murals in the tiny church of Panayitsa, also in Kastania, at a time when the Latins were long gone and no Uniate logic justified it.

77 Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 434-435: *Le mur de l’est offre les peintures les plus intéressantes : au bas et dans l’angle nord, une Flagellation du Christ; dans l’angle sud, deux tableaux très dégradés où l’on ne reconnaît qu’un cadavre couché dans un cercueil. Entre les deux, une mise au tombeau d’un caractère assez dramatique; p. 435-436: Au-dessus, est un grand tableau central du Calvaire (fig. 288), accosté d’une Descente de croix et d’un autre tableau aujourd’hui disparu, ainsi que de deux figures de saints. [...] La descente de croix est intéressante: on y voit un Joseph d’Arimathie dont la figure, très vivante et d’un type commun, appartient non seulement à l’art occidental, mais à celui du nord; on peut en dire autant de la tête du Christ, dont l’expression de mort est outrée. La Vierge ou plutôt la Madeleine prend le bras du cadavre dans un pan de son manteau de pourpre byzantine; p. 436: Le Christ en croix, dont la tête a malheureusement disparu, hanche de la façon la plus exagérée. Derrière la croix, une bande d’architecture de couleur verte, sorte de bahut crénelé décoré de niches, forme le fond du tableau; il appartient au style de la Renaissance italienne.*

78 Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 433: *La seconde travée vers l’est avait, au nord comme au sud, trois registres de deux tableaux superposés, mais le registre supérieur a disparu de part et d’autre. Cf. p. 433-434: Du côté nord (fig. 284), le registre central montre la résurrection de Lazare et l’entrée du Christ à Jérusalem. Celui du dessous représente LA CENE DOU JEUSDI SAINT, ainsi qu’en témoigne l’inscription, et un saint Jean-Baptiste prêchant, accompagné d’une inscription très longue devenue illisible. Evidently, the identification of John the Baptist is absurd. See also p. 434 (for more errors of interpretation): Du côté sud, le registre du milieu représentait le Christ au jardin des Oliviers et un autre tableau dont je n’ai pu restituer le sens; il est complètement dégradé, tandis que le précédent montre encore assez bien les apôtres dormant. Au-dessous, il subsiste l’inscription d’un tableau dont les figures sont détruites: LA PENTE CÔUSTE, puis un autre tableau dégradé qui figure l’Ascension: au-dessus d’un groupe de personnages, on voit une figurine toute petite du Dieu de Majesté dans un disque ou auréole ronde que soutiennent deux anges.*

79 Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 432-433: *Du côté sud, la voûte est divisée en trois registres comprenant chacun trois tableaux. Le registre supérieur est détruit. Celui du milieu, qui représentait l’Adoration des bergers, est très dégradé, puis la Circoncision ou la Présentation (?), au dessus de laquelle j’ai cru lire le mot ABBAS, reste d’une inscription; enfin, l’Adoration des Mages. Le tableau du centre est passablement conservé: derrière un autel couvert d’une grande nappe brodée, trois vieillards nimbés se tiennent debout; dans un angle, la Vierge tenant l’Enfant Jésus s’avance, accompagné[e] de saint Joseph, placé au second plan, et qu’elle cache à demi. Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 61-65.*

80 Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 432. Vaivre 2006 did not publish this watercolour, only the ones from the eastern bay. For the (exterior) photos of Enlart, see Vaivre, Plagnieux 2012.

81 It could have been **LE COURON(N)EMENT NOSTRE DAME**, as in the so-called picture-book of Madame Marie. In that case, the Dormition would be **LE TRE(S)PAS(S)EMENT NOSTRE DAME**. Or perhaps the Dormition was **LASOMPTION DE NOSTRE DAME**, as in the Psalter of Henry of Blois, while the Coronation would be a sentence-caption similar to **ICI (coument in Pyrga) EST FAITE REINE DEL CIEL**. Whether this was a tag-name for a feast or a sentence-caption, it is inconsequential. In any case, the Dormition was certainly not mistaken for **LENSEVELIS(S)EMENT NOSTRE DAME**, as in the caption which accompanies the scene in the Psalter of Queen Ingeborg (f. 34r).

82 I thank Ioanna Christoforaki for this example. See e.g. Folda 2005, p. 310-318.

83 This mistake was common in the West. See an example on f. 33v of ms Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, n. acq. fr. 1098, a mid-thirteenth century picture-book produced at the Parisian abbey of Saint-Denis). In the chapel of Liget (turn of the thirteenth century), there is also a Dormition in which the order of the characters was reversed. Liget was influenced by the decoration of the church of the Holy-Sepulchre in Jerusalem; see e.g. Munteanu 1977; Favreau 1995. However, correct depictions of the Dormition of Theotokos also existed, especially in Italy, particularly in the Venetian cultural sphere. See for instance the one depicted in the church of Santa-Maria-del-Conforto in Maia Bassa; cf. Cozzi 2004, p. 108.

84 Christoforaki 1996, p. 218-240. For a description of the church, see Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 223-232 (p. 227 and *passim* for the fourteenth-century Marian cycle). Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 39, who noticed the similarities between Pelendri and Pyrga, but could not accept the 1421 dating of Pyrga and, therefore, concentrated all his efforts in an attempt to reverse the date of the Pelendri Marian cycle, in order to justify an earlier dating for Pyrga. Cf. Ζάππας 2010.

85 Christoforaki 1996, p. 244, 245.

86 For the church of Saints-Joachim-and-Anna in Kaliana (two miles north of Galata, Cyprus), with fragments of an eleventh- and twelfth-century mural decoration as well as Lusignan coat of arms on a beam of the ceiling, see Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 107-109. For other depictions of the scenes with Joachim and Anna, see Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 414-418 (church of Saint-Kirykos in Letimbou, with murals dating to c.1500); p. 486-491 (church of the Theotokos in Trikomo, with murals from the early twelfth century); etc.

87 Weyl Carr 1995, p. 345. See also Christoforaki 2000.

88 Cf. Lucey 2018, p. 75, for the Annunciation to saint Anne hypothesis (as well as another one: “the second Annunciation to the Virgin that concerned her impending death based on early Christian apocryphal sources but most popularly disseminated in the later Middle Ages by the account of the Golden Legend.”

89 Enlart 1899, vol. 2, p. 431-432.

90 Schryver, Schabel 2003, p. 334.

91 Cf. Minasidis 2019, p. 65. It fits the fixed formulae of Byzantine dedicatory inscriptions.

92 Cf. Schryver, Schabel 2003, p. 327, note 4, who wondered why Papageorgiou disagreed with Enlart in the matter of the dedication, but did not provide any explanation (which was not necessary, in light of the current observation).

93 Vionis 2019, p. 73.

94 Vionis 2019, p. 75.

95 The scenes of the Resurrection and Passion were essential in the decoration of the funerary chapel of Panayia at Sangri, possibly in connection with the performance of funeral services and commemoration rituals; Vionis 2019, p. 73.

96 Taft 1990. For the Passion Cycle at Staro Nagoričino and their links with Byzantine liturgy, see Zarras 2010, p. 202 sqq. For the three examples discussed together, see Soria 2018.

97 Foskolou 2019, p. 208, *passim*.

98 For this piece, see Μουρίκη, Παπαγεωργίου 1976, p. 88-89 (no 31). Cf. Παπαγεωργίου 1991, p. 79-91. The scenes of the upper row are: (A1) Annunciation; (A2) Nativity; (A3) Presentation; (A4) Baptism; (A5) Transfiguration; (A6) Raising of Lazarus; (A7) Entry to Jerusalem; (A8) Last Supper; (A9) Betrayal; (A10) Crucifixion; (A11) Descent from the Cross; (A12) and Lamentation. In the lower row one sees: (B1) Entombment; (B2) Descent into Hell; (B3) Holy Women at the Tomb; (B4) Mission of the Apostles; (B5) Appearance of Christ before the Myrrh-bearers; (B6) Deisis; (B7) Appearance of Christ before the Apostles; (B8) Doubting of Thomas; (B9) Ascension; (B10) Pentecost; (B11) Dormition of the Virgin. The prophets David—holding a scroll with a quotation of Ps 72:17-18—and Jeremiah flank the scenes of the lower row.

99 Μουρίκη, Παπαγεωργίου 1976, p. 58-59 (no 18). Cf. Παπαγεωργίου 1991, p. 60-61. See also a fragment with the Descent into Hell in Μουρίκη, Παπαγεωργίου 1976, p. 46-47 (no 12), with the same features as the ‘crusader icons’ of Sinai. Furthermore, a late thirteenth-century painting of the Crucifixion in the same catholicon shows influence of Latin models from Outremer (although the Cypriot example is earlier in date, the scholarly

consensus at the moment is that the Western archetype which influenced Cyprus is lost); see the analysis of the 'swooning Virgin' and other depictions in Christoforaki 2018, p. 153-155. For the so-called "Latin chapel" of Kalopanayiotis, see Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 312-320. For this chapel and its paintings, see also Frigerio-Zeniou 1998; Ηλιάδης 2008.

100 Cf. Βοκοτόπουλος 1998-1999, p. 305.

101 Παπαγεωργίου 1991, p. 97, 101-102; Foulis, Hadjichristodoulou 2019, p. 100-107 (for an extensive description, but with incorrect readings of the abbreviations). Cf. Sophocleous 1994, 93-94, 161-162, who states that the inscriptions are in Greek and Latin on the Theotokos side, and in Latin only on the Crucifixion side.

102 See for instance *theologiens* in John of Vignay's translation of *Otia imperialia* (c.1323; cf. Pignatelli, Gerner 2006, p. 126) or *theologiens* as a noun, masculine, in the *Melancholies* of Jehan Dupin (c.1336-1340; Lindgren 1965, p. 62, v. 563).

103 The painters who worked in the same church by the end of the fifteenth century mastered the compositions and techniques of the Quattrocento; cf. Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 382-394. For Meyer Fernandez 2019, p. 428, the Latin texts of the icon of Yeroskipou suggest that it could be used in a Latin-rite sanctuary. He also notes that a bande d'architecture of a probable Palaeologan inspiration appears both in the icon and in the royal scene from Pyrga.

104 For recent studies concerning this icon, see e.g. Wollesen 2014; Eliades 2017. For context, see Ηλιάδης 2017 (and p. 56-59 for the two icons). Cf. Wollesen 2010, p. 86-89, who tries to compare the icon's Latin inscriptions with those of Pyrga, but does not take into account that the two cases have nothing in common apart from basic palaeographical traits of uncial letters which are more or less the same in all corners of Europe, across the centuries. I thank Ourania Perdiki for adding to this list the thirteenth-century large, semicircular icon of the Theotokos Blachernitissa with Child from the Cypriot village of Askas, which is accompanied by an inscription in Greek and in Latin (now in the collections of the Byzantine Museum of the Bishopric of Tamassos and Orinis). See for this icon the presentation of Stylianos Perdikis (Στυλιανός Περδικής, "Μήτηρ Θεού-Madre Dio: Εικόνα δεομένης Παναγίας από τον Ασκά της Κύπρου με επάλληλη επιγραφή," in the 32nd Symposium of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Archaeology and Art (cf. Τριακοστό Δεύτερο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης. Πρόγραμμα και περιλήψεις εισηγήσεων και ανακοινώσεων. Αθήνα, 11, 12 και 13 Μαΐου 2012, Athens, Χριστιανική Αρχαιολογική Εταιρεία, 2012).

105 For the two of them together, see Sophocleous 1994, p. 88-89, 152-153; also Christoforaki 2018, p. 157. The Latin family could be Ravendel.

106 Cf. Ηλιάδης 2017, p. 48, 49, for the acts of the Carmelite friar Peter Thomas, who locked the Orthodox clergymen inside a church and tried to indoctrinate them.

107 Winfield, Winfield 2003, p. 330-301.

108 I thank Ourania Perdiki for pointing to me that the scene was interpreted as the Meal at Tiberias. See Konstantinides 2018, p. 87.

109 Cf. Bacci 2019, p. 30, 39. For the passion scenes in this church see Paschali 2014a; Paschali 2014c, p. 288-293.

110 See e.g. Havice 1978; or a recent project of Gilles Grivaud and Ioanna Rapti. Cf. Rapti 2018.

111 In Theodore Metochites' parekklesion of Kariye Camii (Chora) in Constantinople, painted in c.1315-1321, the two bays are also dedicated to Christ (eastern one, in connection with the Anastasis and the Last Judgement), and Theotokos (western one, a similar arrangement to the one in Pyrga). However, the decoration of the Marian bay is focused on the prefiguration of the Incarnation through a series of Old Testament scenes. Cf. Akyürek 2002.

112 See e.g. Sacopoulo 1975, p. 104-108.

113 Weyl Carr 2000.

114 Grivaud 2005, p. 233-234.

115 Cf. Emmanuel 1999, p. 245. When mentioning the extended Christological cycle with an emphasis on the Passion scenes in the fifteenth-century paintings of the nave in the church of Saint-Herakleidios in the monastery of Saint-John Lampadistis

at Kalopanayiotis, Emmanuel explained it as "a most popular subject in Cyprus, both in iconography and dramatic poetry."

116 Two inventories of goods are often quoted as proof of the existence of private Cypriot libraries: that of the Dominican bishop Guy of Ibelin (1367) and the library of the physician Guido of Bagnolo. See for them Livi 1916; Laurent, Richard 1951; cf. Richard 1950 (for the entire inventory of Guy of Ibelin).

117 Coureas 2013.

118 For similar lists, see Nicolaou-Konnari 2000; or the introductory part of Schabel 1998.

119 For these texts, see the editions of Beugnot 1841-1843, p. 573-600; Nielen 2003.

120 For Pierre de Paris, mostly for his Boethius, see e.g. Babbi 2007; Concina 2019.

121 Perhaps another researcher would equate Mézières' ideas with those of the person who designed Pyrga, but—alas—I am not that researcher. It is safe to assume that Mézières shared many convictions with his peers, which should be interpreted as a sign of the times. Furthermore, the interpretation of the painted decoration of Pyrga should be based solely on its intrinsic features, free of any prosopographical (or chronological) limitations.

122 Brown 1971, p. 156.

123 Brown 1971, p. 119.

124 Brown 1971, p. 110: *Il est assavoir qu'il a .ii. generations de crestiens es parties d'Orient qui ont grant mestier de secours: l'une c'est assavoir qui par les ennemis de la foy jour et nuyt sont envaiz et combatuz si comme les Cypriens les hospitallers les Grecs et leurs adherens. Et se par leurs freres crestiens des parties d'Occident ilz n'auront tost secours, il se puet dire certainement qu'ilz seront destruis et le nom de Dieu deffacie et oblie des parties sus dictes comme il appert a grant confusion de la foy es empires et royaumes d'Armenie, de Trepesonde, de Constantinoble, de Bourguerie, de Rasse en Ablaquie et ja en une des partie des frontieres de Honguerie, toutes subgettes aux ennemis de la foy, [...].* For the continuation of this idea, see Brown 1971, p. 111-112: *L'autre generation des crestiens d'Orient, c'est assavoir les Armins, les Grecs, les crestiens de la chainture, les Nothorins, les Jacopiens, les Georgiens, les Maronins, les Coptins, les Indiens, les Nubiens et Ethiopiens, toutes ces regions des crestiens a grant douleur meurent en vivant soubz le truaige des Sarrazins, Turs, Tartres et autres ennemis de la foy.* Cf. Brown 1971, p. 95. I adapted Brown's semi-diplomatic edition to the standards currently in force for the editing of medieval French texts. For a comparison between Mézières' point of view and the corresponding one of the Leontios Makhairas, a chronicler who wrote in Greek, see Nicolaou-Konnari 2012.

125 Cf. Petkov 1997.

126 Just like Dante's Virgil, Arsenius represented an alter ego of Mézières (cf. Marchiori 2014, e.g. p. 138, 243-253, *passim*), probably on account of his hagiography: a Roman noble, recommended by pope Damasus as a teacher for Arcadius and Honorius, the sons of emperor Theodosius, Arsenius later came by sea to Alexandria and finally retired to the eremitical wilderness of the Thebaid. Many details bond the characters of Arsenius and Mézières: the city of Alexandria, where Mézières had accompanied Peter I of Cyprus in his Alexandrian Crusade (1365); the tutor / confidant status, in a desire to unite East and West (just as Arsenius had taught the future rulers of a divided empire); and finally the retirement to a monastic milieu (the desert or the convent of the Celestines in Paris). It is, therefore, no surprise that Mézières' scolding of the Orthodox does not go further than a bashing of their authorities. See for this the passage from the *Songe du vieil pelerine* in which he vituperates Emperor John v Palaeologus (1341-1391): *empereur scismatique de la cité jadis Bisance appellé, et ores Constantinoble, et ses calogeros aussi, orgueilleux et ypocrites, en la montaigne le peuple decoivant, voire celui empereur appellé Jehan Palirlogos, souverain chief de la division de la cote de mon tresamé Pere, et contre son sacrement et sa profession; apud Marchiori 2014, p. 205.*

127 For crude illustrations of the costumes of his Order, see the depictions painted on f. 2r-7r of ms Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ashmole 813 (fourteenth century).

128 Brown 1971, p. 149, 151.

129 Brown 1971, p. 153. For crusader imagery and rhetoric in connection with Pyrga, see also Lucey 2018, p. 79-81

130 Williamson 1993, p. 395.

- 131 For basic information concerning this chivalric order, see Boulton 1987, p. 241-248.
- 132 Hardy 2011, p. 255-256, v. 8755-8766: *Or vous vueil deviser et dire | ce qu'il disoit en son martyre; | moult devotement reclamoit Nostre Dame que moult amoit, | et li disoit: 'De Dieu ancelle, | vierge, glorieuse pucelle, | vierge pucelle, vierge Mere, | mere dou fil et fille au pere, | m'amour, ma deesse, ma dame, | au jour d'ui recevez mon ame | et metez en vo compaignie!' | Et a ce mot perdi la vie.* Cf. the English translation of Barton Palmer 2002, p. 411, 413, vv. 8757-8768 (based on a slightly different edition of the French text).
- 133 Cf. Hardy 2011, p. 281.
- 134 Barton Palmer 2002, p. 16.
- 135 Brown 1971, p. 95.
- 136 Tarnowski 2006, p. 166.
- 137 In his *Oratio tragedica* (end of the fourteenth century) Philippe of Mézières believed that saint Bernard of Clairvaux had been sent by the angels; cf. Blanchard, Calvet 2019.
- 138 In this other text, the Passion becomes the pretext of an extended comparison between the mystical marriage of Christ and the Church, the mystical marriage of the Virgin, the marriage of man and woman, and finally the one between the human soul and God. Cf. Loba 2012.
- 139 For the *Deutschordensdichtung* ('Literature of the Teutonic Knights'), see e.g. Peters 1995. For political implications, see Dygo 1898.
- 140 See Stadnichenko 2021, p. 17 and note 32 of p. 19, who deals with this aspect.
- 141 For this text and those related to it, see Bernard 1991; L'Hermite-Leclercq 1993; L'Hermite-Leclercq 1996; Puchner 2006. Cf. Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 425, who also mentions Mézières in connection with the murals of Pyrga.
- 142 Young 1911, p. 191.
- 143 Young 1911, p. 200-201.
- 144 In the manuscripts, the play of Philippe of Mézières is actually divided in six parts, but three of them do not have a narrative character.
- 145 According to this logic, the bearded men would be the priests witnessing the divine action of young Mary climbing the Temple steps.
- 146 For this text, see Mahr 1947; Baud-Bovy 1975; Puchner 2006; Puchner 2017.
- 147 For the first and last avatars of the Orthodox monastic interpretation, see Mahr 1947, p. 20-21, *passim*; Hamilton, Jotischky 2020, p. 419-421. For a different interpretation and its recent developments, see e.g. Puchner 2017, p. 81: "It is possible that this cento text, copied for unknown reasons, was composed by Greek students in a Latin school of the Benedictines, not least because the idea of a passion play seems to be Western while

the thematic structure points to the Orthodox tradition; but this is little more than speculation."

- 148 See e.g. Baud-Bovy 1975.
- 149 Puchner 2006, p. 116-117 (for the quotation).
- 150 For this hypothesis, see Grivaud 1996.
- 151 For Konstantinos Sathas' initial hypothesis, which led to long debates in research about cento poems, see Σάθας 1878. It is preferable to follow the recent conclusions of Puchner 2017.
- 152 Mahr 1947, p. 4.
- 153 Puchner 2017, p. 80-81.
- 154 For the graffiti, see once again Schryver, Schabel 2003.
- 155 For the second series of paintings from this church, painted in c.1400, the large majority of which concern the Passion narrative, see Stylianou, Stylianou 1997, p. 298-305. I thank Dimitris Minasidis for pointing out that the emphasis in Passion can be equally be found in the churches of Famagusta. Cf. Bacci 2014, p. 243-244; Paschali 2014c, p. 288-293.
- 156 For Falieros' *Θρήνος εις τα πάθη και την σταύρωσιν του Κυρίου και Θεού και Σωτήρος ημών Ιησού Χριστού* ('Lament on the Passion and Crucifixion of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ'), see e.g. Bakker, van Gemert 2002; Carpinato 2005.
- 157 Cf. Bakker 2005.
- 158 See e.g. Weyl Carr 2004, p. 314-315, mentioned previously, with references to all the other studies of Pyrga. For the connection between Stavrovouni and Pyrga, see also Μηνασίδης 2018.
- 159 Piccirillo 2003, p. 116 (for the quotation).
- 160 Cf. Meyer Fernandez 2019, p. 427, who also notes that a stone from the lapidation of saint Stephen was kept at the Stavrovouni Monastery.
- 161 Piccirillo 2003, p. 116 (for the quotation).
- 162 Wollesen 2010, p. 70, rejects Enlart's identification of two of these saints with Catherine and Helena. Cf. Meyer Fernandez 2019, p. 427-428, who tries to keep Enlart's identification.
- 163 The upper part of the Cross is still visible in the remaining fragments of murals; Μηνασίδης 2012, vol. 2, pl. 64. Cf. Meyer-Fernandez 2019, p. 424. For the hypothesis that this scene could be a Crucifixion replicating the one painted on the interior western wall of the chapel, see Μηνασίδης 2018, p. 90-91 (especially note 79).
- 164 See e.g. Lucey 2018, p. 86-88.
- 165 For King Janus, baptised in honour of a Trojan prince, founder of Genoa, see Setton 1976, p. 383. For its baptism in honour of the pagan god Janus, supposed founder of the same city, see Hopkins 2020, p. 202, note 8. The symbolism of *Ianus bifrons* was well known in medieval times, either from Macrobius or from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*. For the depictions of temples and statues of the god Janus in Crusader manuscripts, see Kühnel 2004, p. 165-172.

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The “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” in Ukrainian Galicia and its Connection with Romanian Maramureș

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RÉSUMÉ : Cette publication examine quatre icônes, qui peuvent être comparées à la production artistique d'un atelier de peinture d'icônes conventionnellement nommé « Belz-Drohobych ». Cet atelier de la Galice ukrainienne – dont la localisation géographique demeure toutefois difficile à établir – se démarque par son style artistique particulier : un ‘laconisme’ graphique rigoureux, à la fois imagier et décoratif. Ses œuvres les plus représentatives proviennent de la ville de Belz et de la ville de Drohobych, des villages de Hrushiv et Kulchytsi (région de Lviv). Les icônes ici étudiées proviennent, en revanche, du territoire de la région roumaine de Maramureș. Il s'agit des icônes de Sainte Paraskevi et de l'Archange Michel du village de Budești-Susani, de l'icône de Saint Jean-Baptiste du village de Breb, et de celle de Sainte Paraskevi (probablement du Maramureș), réalisée par un certain Maître Toma. Pour la première fois, toutes ces œuvres sont actuellement en cours de restauration. Un bref état de l'art de la recherche les concernant précède l'analyse comparative proprement-dite. Ce qui ressort de cette analyse c'est que, sur la base de l'iconographie et de la stylistique, les quatre icônes du Maramureș s'avèrent assez proches des icônes de « Belz-Drohobych ». Cela permet de proposer une datation des icônes de Sainte Paraskevi et de Saint Jean Prodomé dans la seconde moitié du xv^e siècle. En ce qui concerne l'icône de l'Archange Michel, les auteurs proposent une datation au xvi^e siècle. Cependant, l'icône nécessiterait une étude ultérieure après sa restauration. Enfin, l'icône de Sainte Paraskevi, réalisée par Maître Toma, semble bien s'inspirer des œuvres de l'atelier « Belz-Drohobych », mais d'un point de vue stylistique, elle se réfère à une période ultérieure : fin du xvi^e siècle-début du xvii^e siècle.

MOTS-CLÉS : icônes ; xv^e-xvi^e siècles ; Galice ukrainienne ; Maramureș ; atelier « Belz-Drohobych ».

REZUMAT: În acest studiu sunt examinate patru icoane ce pot fi comparate cu producția artistică a atelierului de pictură numit convențional „Belz-Drohobych”. Acest atelier a activat pe teritoriul Haliciului și este recunoscut datorită stilului său artistic deosebit, care combină laconismul grafic strict al imaginilor cu încadrările decorative. Localizarea atelierului nu este cunoscută. Cele mai reprezentative lucrări provin din orașele Belz și Drohobych și din satele Hrushiv și Kulchytsi (regiunea Lviv). Icoanele studiate acum provin de pe terenul Maramureșului românesc. Este vorba de icoanele *Sfânta Paraschiva* și *Arhanghelul Mihail* din satul Budești-Susani, icoana *Sfântul Ioan Botezătorul* din satul Breb și icoana *Sfânta Paraschiva*, probabil din Maramureș, pictată de Toma Zugravul. Toate aceste lucrări au fost restaurate acum pentru prima dată. Au fost studiate referințele lor din literatura istorică românească și, în paralel cu procesul de restaurare, a fost efectuată o comparație a iconografiei și a trăsăturilor lor artistice și stilistice cu imaginile produse de atelierul „Belz-Drohobych”. S-a ajuns la concluzia că cele patru icoane din regiunea Maramureșului românesc sunt similare icoanelor „Belz-Drohobych” în ceea ce privește iconografia și stilul. Se propune datarea icoanelor *Sfânta Paraschiva* de la Budești-Susani și *Sfântul Ioan Botezătorul* de la Breb în a doua jumătate a secolului al xv-lea. În ceea ce privește icoana *Arhanghelului Mihail*, se sugerează o datare atentă a lucrării în secolul al xvi-lea (icoana necesită un studiu separat după finalizarea activităților de restaurare). Imaginea *Sfintei Paraschiva* realizată de Toma Zugravul corespunde manierei mai puțin stricte a atelierului „Belz-Drohobych”, încadrându-se stilistic la sfârșitul secolului al xvi-lea – începutul secolului al xvi-lea.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: icoane; secolele xv-xvi; Halici; Maramureș; atelierul „Belz-Drohobych”.

In the neighbouring territories of current Romania and Ukraine, mutual influences in the field of medieval art come as a natural phenomenon in the context of an already established cultural unity of these lands. The present paper differentiates between Romanian and Ukrainian Maramureș as well as Ukrainian Galicia art, the latter referring to art from the territories of today's Lviv, Terno-

pil, and Ivano-Frankivsk regions of Ukraine. The historical and ethnocultural Carpathian region of Maramureș is now divided into Southern Maramureș, belonging to Romania, and Northern Maramureș, part of the Ukrainian Transcarpathia. Maramureș has the special charm of a geographically isolated region that has not lost its identity during centuries of intercultural communication. How-



ever, medieval icon painting in the area located close to the current Romanian Ukrainian border remains largely understudied. As a result, the proper identification of artefacts created in Maramureş is of uttermost importance.

Our research focused on a group of four icons from the Romanian Maramureş area. The comparison between various works of art from the fifteenth-sixteenth century icon painting in Ukrainian Galicia and Maramureş stresses the existence of similar iconographic and stylistic features between the so-called “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” from Ukrainian Galicia and the already mentioned icons from Maramureş.

► Fig. 1. *Icon of St. Peter. The Belz Deesis. Fifteenth century. Church of St. Paraskevi in Belz, Lviv region. 95x44.7 cm. Courtesy: Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery.*

▲ Fig. 2. *Icon of St. Paul. The Belz Deesis. Fifteenth century. Church of St. Paraskevi in Belz. 95x43.5 cm. Courtesy: Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery.*

► Fig. 3. *Icon of Holy Father John Chrysostom. Drohobych Deesis. Second part of the fifteenth century. 93x50 cm. Source: Ярема 2005, p. 436.*





▲ Fig. 4. Icon of St. Nicholas. Drohobych Deesis. Second part of the fifteenth century. Church of the Elevation of the Holy Cross in Drohobych (?), Lviv region. 93x42 cm. Credits: Oksana Sadova.



▶ Fig. 5. Icon of St. Peter. Second part of the fifteenth century. Drohobych Deesis. 93x50 cm.

▼ Fig. 6. Icon of Archangel Michael. Second part of the fifteenth century. Drohobych Deesis. 93x50 cm. Sources for 5 and 6: icon.org.ua.

The “Belz-Drohobych Workshop.”

In the gallery of Ukrainian Galician medieval icon painting, the works attributed to what came to be known as the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” occupy a special place. Ukrainian art historians Volodymyr (Dymytriy) Yarema, Lev Skop, Halyna Skop-Druzyuk, Lydmila Milyaeva, and Maria Helytovych provided in-depth analyses of these Belz-Drohobych paintings. V. Yarema suggested that the icons of Deesis from Belz and Drohobych (Fig. 1-8) as well as the icons of the Hodegetria in the village of Hrushiv in the Drohobych district (Fig. 9, 10)¹ should be attribut-

ed to a “Workshop of the Deesis Rows from Drohobych and Belz.”² M. Helytovych identified another work of art produced by this workshop: the Deesis depiction of St. John the Baptist from Belz (Fig. 11).³ As a result, current scholarship agrees that there are two groups of Deesis icons attributable to the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop”. Three icons were located in Belz: Ss. Peter and Paul from the Church of St. Paraskevi and St. John the Baptist from the Church of the Transfiguration. This means that two Deeseis could have been created for the churches of Belz. Six icons were in the Church of the Elevation of the Holy Cross in Drohobych (now in the collections of Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery and Museum ‘Droho-



bychyna’). They depict: Ss. Peter and Paul, St. John the Baptist, Holy Fathers Nicholas and John Chrysostom, and Archangel Michael. It should be noted that L. Skop already suggested that this workshop could have supplied artwork for a wider area.⁴ In his opinion, the icon of St. Paraskevi in the village Kulchytsi (Fig. 12, 13) should be associated to those found in Drohobych and Belz.⁵ The icon’s style and technique of production show clear similarities to the Drohobych image of Archangel Michael (Fig. 6, 14). Even though the precise location of the workshop remains still unknown, for practical reasons, we will refer to it as the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop.”

▲ Map 1. The cities and villages of Ukrainian Galicia and Romanian Maramureş associated with the artwork mentioned in this study are highlighted in red colour.
Source: Raffelsperger 1846.

What follows is a brief description of the distinctive features of the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop.” The most recognisable aspect is the balanced combination of an ascetic element of the representations with a certain degree of monumentality in the rendering of their shapes. Faces are marked by a linear stylisation of their features, which elevates the image from a spiritual point of view and



conveys an effect of a distant, unattainable being. Key elements in the rendering of faces and hands are: (1) heavy brow furrows and raised eyebrows; (2) spirally twisted lines simulating high foreheads; (3) elongated noses in a three-quarter turn, regardless of the position of the face (as a result, the alae of the nose are rendered asymmetrically); (4) swollen eyelids and undereye furrows in the form of crescent shapes; (5) almond-shaped brown eyes which stare sternly; (6) clearly articulated cheekbones with light cuts in depictions of holy men (as a result, forward-oriented chins are often depicted); (7) eyelids depicted as alternating strips of light and dark tones to render

► Fig. 7. Icon of St. John the Baptist. Second part of the fifteenth century. Drohobych Deesis. 91x50 cm.

Courtesy: Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery.

► Fig. 8. Icon of St. Paul. Second part of the fifteenth century. Drohobych Deesis. 93x50 cm.

Source: icon.org.ua.

► Fig. 9. Icon of Hodegetria with Praise. Fifteenth century. Bolehiv (Ivano-Frankivsk region) / Hrushiv (Drohobych district). 124.5x88.8 cm.

Source: Гелитович 2014, р. 73





flesh tints; (8) graceful hands with pointed phalanges and a linear stylisation of palms; (9) stylised wrinkles on the necks. Other specific features of the workshop are: (10) the use of red and green backgrounds; (11) the depiction of double stripes for the ground, in two shades of green; and (12) decorating the ground with bright flowers on tall stems. Volume and movement are created in a peculiar way: (13) the figures convey a sense of heaviness; (14) lighting is angular; (15) clothes are covered with deep branch-like draperies, wavy ruffles, and tassels along the border line.

Icons from Maramureş.

St. Paraskevi in the Budeşti-Susani Church of St. Nicholas.

The four icons from the Romanian region of Maramureş reveal similar features, suggesting that they can be connected to the works produced by the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop.” The first icon that interests us is that of St. Paraskevi in the wooden Church of St. Nicholas (built in c.1748),⁶ in the village of Budeşti-Susani (Fig. 15, 16).⁷ The icon is of a rather small size (55.5 x 33 cm). The bust of the saint is depicted against a deep green background, surrounded by black margins with stylised flowers painted in ochre, holding a cross in her right hand and opening her left hand in a gesture of receiving grace. The saint is dressed in a red maphorion, blue-green tunic, and coif with structural light strokes and sharply delineated folds. Her maphorion is thrown over the shoulder in such a way that the edge of the textile forms geometrical shapes. The rendering of this maphorion drawing testifies to an interest in graphics. On the left, there is a trace of burning on the maphorion. The icon has minor losses in the margins, as well as on the nimbus, where the icon’s canvas is visible. The saint’s face was painted in a light colour palette. Brown almond-shaped eyes have enlarged pupils. Fine white lines highlight the most illuminated parts of the face. Deep shadows are laid under the eyebrows and the sharp contours of the face are softened by delicate tones. All in all, the figure of the Saint is harmoniously correlated with the space of the icon.

Traditionally, this icon is attributed to a Moldavian master who worked in the middle of the sixteenth century, as implied by the Romanian researcher Marius Porumb. He drew parallels between this work and the icons preserved in the villages of Agârbiciu and Bica (1555, 1563) as well as the feast icons for the Church of St. Nicholas in the village of Budeşti-Susani.⁸ Nevertheless, Romanian art historians do not systematically agree with this interpretation. According to Alexandru Efremov, the icon could be dated to the end of the sixteenth century or the beginning of the seventeenth century, that is, much later. His chief argument is the discrepancy in rendering the saint’s face, hands, and clothes. However, Alexandru Efremov believed that the maphorion of St. Paraskevi could have been repainted at a later date, making it technically and stylistically inferior to the original rendering of the flesh tint.⁹ When Alexandru Baboş found similarities between this image and the icon of St. Paraskevi from the Ukrainian village of Kulchytsi, his identification was supported and developed by Ana Dumitran, who noted the archaic features in the depiction of the saint’s garment, the specific manner in which her name is written (*Piatka*, a variant found on certain Galician icons that are territorially close to Lviv). Lastly, Ana Dumitran compared the iconography of the two images of St. Paraskevi (from Budeşti-Susani and Kulchytsi) and identified enough matches to be able to attribute the image from Budeşti-Susani to the same work-



◀ Fig. 10. Icon of Hodegetria with Praise. Bolehiv / Hrushiv. Fragment. Source: Гелитович 2014, p. 72.

▶ Fig. 11. Icon of St. John the Baptist (Belz Deesis). Fifteenth century. Church of the Transfiguration in Belz. 94x39 cm. Credits: Maria Helytovych.





Fig. 12. Icon of St. Paraskevi with scenes of her life. Fifteenth century. Kulchytsi, Drohobych district. 92x57 cm.

Courtesy: Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery.

Fig. 13. Detail of the icon of St. Paraskevi. Fifteenth century. Kulchytsi.

Courtesy: Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery.

Fig. 14. Detail of the icon of Archangel Michael. Second part of the fifteenth century. Drohobych Deesis.

Courtesy: Museum “Drohobychyna”.

Fig. 15. Icon of St. Paraskevi. Second part of the fifteenth century (?). St. Nicholas church in Budeşti-Susani, Maramureş. 55.5x33 cm.

Credits: Ana Dumitran.

Fig. 16. Detail of the icon of St. Paraskevi in Budeşti Susani. After the restoration. Restorer Mihai Covaci.

Credits: Mihai Covaci.

Fig. 17. Detail of the icon of Holy Father John Chrysostom from the Drohobych Deesis.

Courtesy: the Museum “Drohobychyna”.



shop that painted the icon of St. Paraskevi from Kulchytsi. The dating of the icon of St. Paraskevi from Budeşti-Susani was accordingly moved to the second half of the fifteenth century.¹⁰

We agree with the demonstration of Al. Baboş and A. Dumitran regarding the affinity of the two images of St. Paraskevi, yet we also add a series of observations that suggest that the icon from Budeşti-Susani belongs to the same stylistic group as those generally attributed to the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop.” Furthermore, the back side



▲ Fig. 18. *Icon of St. Paraskevi in Budești-Susani. Back side of the panel.* Credits: Ana Dumitran.

▼ Fig. 19. *Icon of Archangel Michael from the Drohobych Deesis. back side of the panel (photo in infrared light).* Credits: Oksana Sadova.



of its board shows a single cut-in batten, placed diagonally (Fig. 18). This atypical position of the batten (Ukr. *unyza*, a wooden strip that prevents the warping of the icon board) can be found on only one other icon of the studied workshop, namely the icon of Archangel Michael from the Drohobych Deesis (Fig. 19). Unfortunately, it is not possible to examine the back side of the icon of St. Paraskevi in Kulchytsi, but the connection established between the works of Budești-Susani and Drohobych only strengthens the stylistic similitudes which are evident between the three works mentioned here, including the icon of St. Paraskevi in Kulchytsi. It should be noted that the icon of Archangel Michael in Drohobych testifies to its anonymous master's individual manner in depicting the face, which is not repeated in the rest of the Deesis images of the workshop. The decoration of the nimbus of St. Paraskevi, that is, the four-petalled traced flowers and punctured dots, is peculiar to the studied workshop. The restoration of the icon also showed that the light strokes building the saint's face and part of her outfit resemble even more the image from Kulchytsi (Fig. 16). It is noteworthy that the winding lines near the corners of the cross held by the saint repeat the same elements that one sees in the icon of St. John Chrysostom from the Drohobych Deesis (Fig. 17). Consequently, we agree that the icon should be dated to the second half of the fifteenth century.

The icon of the St. John Baptist in the Church of Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Breb.

The medium-sized icon of St. John the Baptist (67 x 41 cm) is kept in the collections of the Ethnographical Museum of Maramureș in Sighet (Fig. 20). It comes from the Church of Archangels Michael and Gabriel in the village Breb. The icon represents a bust of St. John the Baptist, shown full-face on a red background surrounded by black margins. The fields' decoration is made in the same manner as the icon of St. Paraskevi from Budești Susani. This applies to the decoration of the halo as well. The saint is dressed in a grey-blue cilice, similar to chain mail, and a brown himation, which wraps the figure and covers his left shoulder. In his left hand, St. John holds an unfolded scroll bearing a quotation from the Gospel of Matthew in Church Slavonic: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And even now the ox is laid to the root of the trees' (Matthew 4:17; 3:10). The saint points to the scroll with the forefinger of his right hand, the little finger being retracted. In the lower part above the *kovcheg* (recessed area in the icon), a Cyrillic inscription in Romanian was deciphered by A. Dumitran as: 'Prayer of the servant of God Sima, Ion, two girls, Lazar'. The exaggeratedly expressive techniques used for the depiction of the saint's face equally resemble those of the "Belz-Drohobych Workshop" (Fig. 21).

The restoration proved that the floral decoration and the Romanian Cyrillic inscription were made at a later date than the original painting. It is noteworthy that the icons from Breb and Budeşti-Susani are identical in their use of colour to depict the fields, in the stylised flower decoration as well as in their use of metal rings on the back side of the icon boards, applied for display purposes. The floral decoration used in the fields of both icons is particularly interesting, as one can hardly identify similar background decoration in other icons preserved in Romania. An example of the use of a similar motif can be found in the Hodegetria icon by Master *Ivan Zugravul* (John the Painter, 1718).¹¹ On the other hand, the territories of Western Ukrainian are home to several artworks from the middle of the sixteenth century in which a similar ornamentation style was used. A significant example is the icon of St. Paraskevi, of unknown

origin, now in the collections of the National Museum of the Przemyśl Land, dated by V. Yarema to the last third of the sixteenth century (Fig. 22). V. Yarema attributed this work to the creative output of the Sambir-Drohobych icon painting circle. He also analysed the “rosette-stars” that cover the maphorion of the saint.¹² This decoration is similar to that of the icons from Budeşti-Susani and Breb. In general, the iconography of this image of St. Paraskevi is rather close to that of the image from Budeşti-Susani. Unfortunately, the only available reproduction of the work is in black-and-white and does not allow us to analyse it in detail. For now, the issue concerning the dating of later additions to the icons of Budeşti-Susani and Breb remains unsolved. However, the common origin of these works is a hypothesis that deserves further study, especially if the complex history of the wooden churches of Budeşti Susani and Breb are taken into account.

▲ Fig. 20. *Icon of St. John the Baptist. Second part of the fifteenth century (?). Church of Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Breb. 67x41 cm.*

Credits: Mihai Covaci.

▼ Fig. 21. *Detail of the icon of St. John the Baptist in Breb. In the process of restoration. Restorer Mihai Covaci.*

Credits: Mihai Covaci.



As it happens, the aforementioned churches witness that not only icons can travel, but church buildings as well. Thus, the Church of Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Breb was originally built around 1530 in the nearby village of Copăciș.¹³ When the local inhabitants moved to Breb in search of better water, the church was dismantled and rebuilt on the new site (c.1622-1623).¹⁴ It is reasonable to assume that the inhabitants could transfer the fifteenth and sixteenth century holy images from Copăciș to Breb. Laura Zaharia even suggested that the very first church in Copăciș could have been erected in 1479 and structural parts of this building have been identified among the roof shingles of the church in Breb.¹⁵ There are two more remaining icons to deal with, distanced from the two previous images both in terms of time and stylistics.

The icon of Archangel Michael in the Church of St. Nicholas in Budești-Susani.

This icon of Archangel Michael (57 x 34 cm) presents a full-length frontal image of the saint on a yellow background with red margins (Fig. 23, 25). He is depicted in military armour, holding a bare sword in his right hand and a sword sheath in his left hand. The Archangel's face is surrounded by an unexpected light green halo outlined in white, black and red lines. His tunic is paired with his armour. A contrasting red cloak is draped over the shoulder and the figure of a naked man was painted under the feet of the Archangel, defined by an attribute in Church Slavonic: *nonъ*, meaning 'priest' (Fig. 24).

The icon was also studied by M. Porumb. He dated it to the late sixteenth century and believed that its author was a master from Maramureș. M. Porumb noticed that the painting of this master presented many similar features to those identifiable in the work of the person whom he

identified as a Moldavian master. He noted an imbalance in the rendering of the proportions and the uncertainty of the drawing, characterising the icon painter as a talented but not well-trained master. The researcher also paid attention to the original iconography of the work and interpreted the figure of a man depicted under the feet of the Archangel as an image of sin.¹⁶ Such an unusual iconography opens up prospects for further research of the icon.

The painter's style, however, deserves separate consideration. The master worked rather quickly and painted the shape and movement of light in a fluent manner. The wings of the Archangel are densely drawn, with light strokes that convey a sense of weightlessness. Structurally, the shape of the wings of the Archangel from Budești-Susani seems to be the same as the one from the wings of Archangel Michael in the Drohobych Deesis. The face shows the familiar highlighted ridges above the eyebrows,

▲ Fig. 22. *Icon of St. Paraskevi. Last third of the sixteenth century. Icon of unknown origin. 76.5x55.5 cm.*

Source: Ярема 2017, il. 672.

▼ Fig. 23. *Icon of Archangel Michael. End of the sixteenth century (?). St. Nicholas church in Budești-Susani. 57x34 cm.*

Credits: Ana Dumitran.

▲ Fig. 24. *Icon of Archangel Michael in Budești-Susani.*

Source: Porumb 1975, il. 7.

▲ Fig. 25. *Icon of Archangel Michael in Budești-Susani. In the process of restoration. Restorer Mihai Covaci.*

Credits: Mihai Covaci.



the nose with asymmetrical alae (Fig. 26). It is, therefore, safe to assume that the style of the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” was maintained in this work, but in a peculiar and simplified, folklorised way, tolerating some artistical imperfections. The icon belongs indeed to the sixteenth century, but the dating will certainly be narrowed down as soon as the restoration process is finally completed.

The icon of St. Paraskevi by Master Toma (Zugravul Toma).

In the territory of Maramureş or Northern Transylvania, another icon of St. Paraskevi (Fig. 27) crowned by angels was made by Master Toma (Zugravul Toma) in tempera on wooden board (63 x 46 cm). Corina Nicolescu argued that this work is similar in texture and colour to the icon of the same saint from Budeşti-Susani. She broadly dated the image to the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries,¹⁷ yet M. Porumb believed that the icon was painted in a Maramureş workshop at the end of the sixteenth century or at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The latter also suggested that the dedicatory text on the icon, written in Church Slavonic, was formulated in a variant that is typical for the first half of the sixteenth century.¹⁸

We agree with the interpretation of M. Porumb and we consider it useful to compare the image of St. Paraskevi by Master Toma with the one from Budeşti-Susani. The icon of Master Toma shows the bust of the saint, dressed in a grey-green coif, chiton, and red maphorion. The iconography reveals a significant degree of similarity to the

image from Budeşti-Susani, but with certain differences. The lavishly decorated crown held by the angels and the characteristic colour of the background stand out. The right hand of Master Toma’s St. Paraskevi holds an eight-pointed cross with the decoration rendered in the form of red jewels placed in a wavy frame. Her maphorion is enriched with stripes and lattices. What is more, a special way of depicting the Saint’s face catches the eye (Fig. 28) and echoes with the style of the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” – almond-shaped eyes and particular eyelids rendered in alternant light and dark lines, light but clearly defined furrows under the eyes, an elongated nose with asymmetrical alae, and an actively shaded chin. In light of the similarity between the face of the angel holding the saint’s crown and the face of St. Paraskevi in the hagiographic scene from the icon in Kulchytsi (Fig. 29), we consider that the icon of St. Paraskevi by Master Toma can be attributed to a less strict manner, imitating the style of “Belz-Drohobych” works. This can be perhaps located on the territory of Romanian Maramureş and dated to the end of the sixteenth century or to the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Conclusions.

In our opinion, the four Maramureş icons point to a clear connection with the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” from Ukrainian Galicia. It should not come as a surprise that the icons belonging to the stylistic group of the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” are to be located on a much larger geographical area, nor that new artworks should be con-







◀ Fig. 26. Detail of the icon of Archangel Michael in Budeşti-Susani. After the restoration.

Credits: Mihai Covaci.

sidered into scholarly debates. Needless to say, the issue of the relationship between the images presented in the article remains unclear and requires additional research. The only certainty is that the icons of St. Paraskevi in Budeşti-Susani and St. John the Baptist in Breb should be dated to the second half of the fifteenth century, whereas the icon of Archangel Michael in Budeşti-Susani was probably depicted in the sixteenth century, a dating that can be clarified once the icons' restoration process is completed and the objects are re-examined. As for the icon of St. Paraskevi by Master Toma, the work can be dated to the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century. The presence of a simplified version of the specific manner of depicting the faces by the “Belz-Drohobych Workshop” in the two icons of St. Paraskevi by Master Toma and Archangel Michael in Budeşti-Susani argues in favour of the emulation of the Galician style of depiction in the lands of Maramureş in the sixteenth or at the beginning of the seventeenth century.



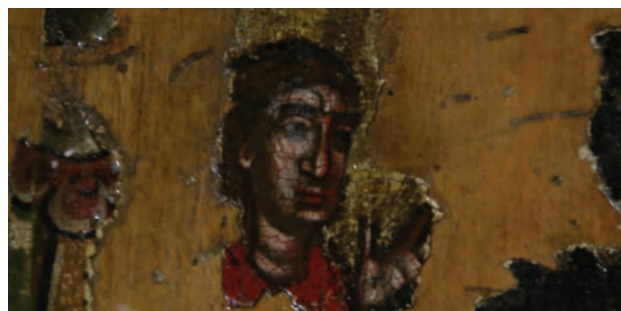
▶ Fig. 27. Master Toma. The icon of St. Paraskevi. End of the sixteenth century or beginning of the seventeenth century. Romanian Maramureş or Northern Transylvania, 63.5x46 cm. Source: Porumb 1975, il. 8.

▶ Fig. 28. Detail of the icon of St. Paraskevi by Master Toma. End of the sixteenth century or beginning of the seventeenth century.

Source: Nicolescu 1976, pl. 57.

▶ Fig. 29. Detail of the icon of St. Paraskevi with the scenes of Her Life. Fifteenth century. The village of Kulchytsi, Drohobych district.

Courtesy: Borys Voznytsky Lviv National Art Gallery.



Notes:

1 This icon of Hodegetria with the Praise is in the collection of the Andrey Sheptytsky Museum in Lviv. According to some researchers, it belongs to the church of the Holy Myrrhbearers in Bolekhiv, Ivano-Frankivsk region. Vira Svientsytska, Chair of the Museum's Department of Ancient Art, argued that the icon is from the village of Hrushiv in the Drohobych district.

2 Ярема 2005, p. 437–448.

3 M. Helytovych dates this icon to the end of the fifteenth century or at the beginning of the sixteenth century. We cautiously date it to the fifteenth century.

4 It should be noted that L. Skop attributed a number of works to a common style, but belonging to a distinct author's manner or to the legacy of one master. This master would have painted the Deesis of Drohobych. Previously, L. Skop analysed the masters of the Drohobych Deesis Rows (Скоп-Друзюк, Скоп 1992; Скоп 1998).

5 Скоп 2017, p. 58.

6 Baboş 1996, p. 43; Baboş 2020, p. 108-147.

7 We refer to Budeşti-Josani and Budeşti-Susani in the village of Budeşti, Maramureş. The settlement of Budeşti was firstly mentioned in 1361 as Buthfalva. Cf. Pavel 2020.

8 Porumb 1975, p. 9.

9 Efremov 2003, p. 129.

10 Dumitran 2022.

11 Efremov 2003, p. 134, cat. 137.

12 Ярема 2017, p. 476

13 The village of Copăciş does not exist anymore.

14 Baboş 2000, p. 32; Zaharia, Filip 2021, p. 312-331.

15 Zaharia 2020.

16 Porumb 1975, p. 9.

17 Nicolescu 1976, p. 31.

18 Porumb 1975, p. 9–10.

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ukrainian trends



tendances ukrainiennes



Ukrainian Influences and Serbian Painting in the Eighteenth-Century

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RÉSUMÉ : Au XVIII^e siècle, des peintres ukrainiens et serbes formés à l'école d'art de la Laure de Kyïv-Petchersk ont inauguré le processus de changement de la peinture religieuse serbe qui, dans la région administrée par le siège métropolitain de Karlovci, est passée d'un style 'traditionnel' (ou 'manière post-byzantine') à un style plus 'occidental' ('baroque'). À première vue, il pourrait sembler inhabituel que les influences occidentales décisives pour la peinture serbe du XVIII^e siècle ne soient pas arrivées directement de l'Occident – à savoir de Vienne, l'un des principaux centres de l'art baroque européen et capitale de l'empire dont le territoire englobait le métropolitain de Karlovci -, mais de l'espace artistique ukrainien, déjà 'occidentalisé' par les courants venus de la Laure de Kyïv-Petchersk. Vers le milieu du XVIII^e siècle, cette Laure de Kyïv-Petchersk et son Académie de théologie étaient devenus des soutiens religieux solides et fiables pour l'Orthodoxie, sous la protection politique du tsar de Russie, et promouvaient la science théologique, peut-être la plus forte de la sphère orthodoxe de l'époque. En conséquence, l'Académie de théologie de Kyïv avait commencé à occuper une place de plus en plus importante dans la topographie chrétienne de l'Europe de l'Est. Cette école accueillait des étudiants de toute l'Ukraine et de la Russie, mais aussi des Biélorusses, des Polonais, des Lituaniens et des Serbes. Au XVIII^e siècle, sur une période de trente ans, 28 Serbes ont reçu une éducation à l'Académie de théologie de Kyïv. De même, au milieu du XVIII^e siècle, des missionnaires de Kiev rejoignent la communauté de Karlovci, sur invitation des dignitaires de l'Église serbe, en apportent avec eux une aide spirituelle indispensable. L'arrivée dans la communauté de Karlovci des premiers enseignants, peintres, livres et icônes en provenance de Kiev, est marquée aussi par l'arrivée de certains modèles politiques russes. Dans les rangs des intellectuels, plusieurs peintres serbes ont été formés à Kyïv, dont les principaux représentants de la première vague d'europanisation dans la peinture serbe : Dimitrije Bačević et Stefan Tenecki. Le moment décisif pour l'ouverture de la peinture serbe à la peinture kyïvienne occidentalisee s'est produit grâce à l'initiative du patriarche Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta (1725-1748). En effet, en 1743, ce patriarche avait officiellement interdit, dans une lettre circulaire, le travail de tous les soi-disant peintres d'icônes inexpérimentés et non éduqués qui travaillaient à l'ancienne. C'est à cette époque qu'il avait fait appel à sa cour l'Ukrainien Jov Vasiljević (vers 1700-après 1760), un maître qui allait donner une nouvelle forme aux courants de l'art serbe. La lettre mentionnée du patriarche Šakabenta indique que les peintres serbes de Karlovci pouvaient apprendre le métier auprès de son peintre de cour autour duquel, semblerait-il, s'était formé la première école de peinture jamais fondée dans le milieu culturel serbe. À travers cette école, le maître Jov Vasiljević et ses collaborateurs allaient exercer une influence décisive sur toute la génération des peintres (civiques) serbes – ainsi qu'en témoigne l'abandon de l'ancienne manière. L'influence culturelle et artistique ukrainienne dans le siège métropolitain de Karlovci a perduré des années 1720 aux années 1760. Durant cette période, tous les éléments occidentaux ont, sans doute, dû être soumis à la supervision des théologiens orthodoxes orientaux de Kyïv. Dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle, plus précisément à partir de la huitième décennie, les liens culturels et spirituels ukrainiens-serbes ont commencé à s'affaiblir en raison du déclin des liens politiques russes-serbes. Avec le déclin de la sphère artistique de Kyïv, les modèles artistiques et culturels en provenance directe de Vienne se sont alors renforcés. À partir de cette époque, c'est l'Académie de Vienne qui était destinée à former les peintres serbes, apportant dans leur pays des éléments occidentaux et le style de la peinture autrichienne.

MOTS-CLÉS : Baroque ; XVIII^e siècle ; Serbie ; Ukraine ; Laure de Kyïv-Petchersk.

REZUMAT: În secolul al XVIII-lea, pictorii ucraineni și sârbi educați la școala de la Lavra Pecherska, activi în zona Mitropoliei de Karlovci, au inițiat un proces de schimbare a picturii religioase sârbe de la „tradițional” („maniera post-bizantină”) la aspectul mai „occidentalizat” („baroc”). La prima vedere, poate părea neobișnuit ca influențele occidentale decisive asupra picturii sârbe din secolul al XVIII-lea să nu vină direct din Occident, adică din Viena, unul dintre centrele de vârf ale artei barocului european și capitala statului pe al cărei teritoriu se afla Mitropolia de Karlovci, ci din zona artistică ucraineană, deja „occidentalizată” sub presiunea influențelor care veneau dinspre Kyiv. Până la mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea, Lavra Pecherska, cu Academia sa teologică, a devenit un sprijin religios puternic și de încredere pentru Ortodoxie, sub protecția politică a țarului rus, promovând știința teologică poate cea mai puternică din sfera ortodoxă la acea vreme. În consecință, Academia Teologică din Kyiv a început să ocupe un loc din ce în ce mai important în topografia creștină a Europei de Est. Știm cu siguranță că această școală a acceptat elevi din toată Ucraina și Rusia și a avut studenți bielușii, polonezi, lituanieni și sârbi. Pe parcursul a aproximativ trei decenii din secolul al XVIII-lea, 28 de sârbi care au primit educație la Academia Teologică din Kyiv. De asemenea, la invitația demnitarilor Bisericii Sârbe, misionarii din Kyiv au ajuns la Mitropolia de Karlovci la mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea, ca principali purtători ai ajutorului spiritual atât de necesar. Odată cu sosirea primilor profesori, pictori, cărți și icoane de la Kyiv, au venit și anumite modele politice rusești. Printre alți intelectuali, câțiva pictori sârbi au fost educați la Kyiv,

inclusiv reprezentanții de frunte ai primului val de europenizare a picturii sârbe: Dimitrije Bačević și Ștefan Tenețchi. Momentul decisiv pentru dezvoltarea picturii sârbe în direcția occidentalizantă promovată de Kyiv a avut loc din inițiativa Patriarhului Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta (1725-1748). În 1743, el a făcut o proclamație oficială, printr-o scrisoare circulară, prin care a interzis activitatea tuturor pictorilor de icoane care lucrau în vechea manieră, declarându-i fără experiență și needucați. Decizia venea după angajarea ucraineanului Jov Vasilijević (cca 1700 – după 1760) ca pictor de curte, un maestru care avea să redirecționeze decisiv destinul artei sârbești. Scrisoarea Patriarhului Šakabenta din 1743 îi îndeamnă pe pictorii sârbi din Karlovci să învețe meșteșugul de la pictorul său de curte, Jov. Se pare că a fost prima școală de pictură fondată în mediul cultural sârb. După cum se pare, prin acea școală, maestrul Jov Vasilijević și asociații săi au avut o influență hotărâtoare asupra întregii generații de pictori laici sârbi, care demonstrează în mod clar procesul de abandon al picturii vechi, petrecut între anii 1720-1760, și se pare că în această perioadă toate elementele occidentale au fost mai întâi supervizate de ochiul vigilent a teologilor ortodocși răsăriteni de la Kyiv. În a doua jumătate a secolului al XVIII-lea, mai precis începând din deceniul al optulea, legăturile culturale și spirituale ucraineano-sârbe au început să se atenueze, ca urmare a declinului legăturilor politice ruso-sârbe. Odată cu declinul sferei artistice de la Kyiv, modelele artistice și culturale directe ale Vienei au început să prevaleze, iar Academia din Viena a devenit locul predilect pentru educarea pictorilor sârbi, transmitând în Serbia elementele occidentale și stilul picturii austriece.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: baroc; secolul al XVIII-lea; Serbia; Ucraina; Lavra Pecherska.

Much has been written about Ukrainian-Serbian painting ties in Serbian literature, initially under the seemingly unique notion of Russian-Serbian artistic ties, and mainly on the influences from Kyiv and the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra on Serbian culture and art during the 18th century. At this time, Ukrainian and Serbian painters educated at the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra art school initiated the process of change in the Serbian religious painting from “traditional” (the “post-Byzantine manner”) to the more “Westernized” appearance (“Baroque”) in the area of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.¹

Although these developments exceed the time frame of this paper, we should firstly mention that the first artistic contacts between the area of today’s Ukraine and the Metropolitanates of Belgrade and Srem, which later became the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, were made at the end of the 15th or the first half of the 16th century. During the time of Serbian despots of Srem from the house of Branković (1471-1502), the literary activity of old Slankamen notes the names of two Ukrainian calligraphers. Slankamen, the residence of the despot Vuk Branković (1471-1485), was one of the most important scriptoria during the times of Srem’s Brankovići. One Gospel Book, held today in the library of the Academy of Sciences in Belgrade (no. 232), was written in Slankamen in 1490 by a Scribe Elisha, a Ukrainian from Kamieniec Podolski, “in a fisherman’s house, in the days of pious and Christ-loving despots of Srem Đorđe and their mother Angelina and father of St. Stephen.”² The other is Andrey Rusyn from the town of Sanok, who wrote an Apostle with interpretations in Slankamen in 1513, during the time of “the pious and Christ-loving Metropolitan of Belgrade, kir Maksim, a former despot.” The Apostle was ordered by priest Đurađ, the Protopope of Slankamen. The note accompanying this text explains that the book was gifted to Hilandar Monastery for the soul of the nun Marta, the mother of priest Đurađ, so that her and her son could be with the first Hilandar ktetors - St. Sava and St. Simeon-Nemanja.³

Although the Serbian Church maintained good contacts with the Russian Church and the entire East Slavic Orthodox area after this period, significant artistic ties between the Ukrainian and Serbian cultural spheres would not be established until the 18th century. At first glance, it is unusual that the decisive Western influences on Serbian eighteenth-century painting did not come directly from the West, i.e., Vienna, one of the leading centres of European Baroque art – the capital of the country on whose

territory the Metropolitanate of Karlovci was located – but from the already “Westernized” Ukrainian artistic area, referring to the currents that came from the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra.⁴ The reasons for this should be sought primarily in the political and religious relations that prevailed at that time. The political situation in the Balkans soon after 1688 completely changed the course of the Serbian people. When the defeated Austrians withdrew from the Balkans in 1690, the Patriarch of Peć, Arsenije Čarnojević (1674-1706), fled with them, together with the masses of the Serbian population who, like him, had previously joined the war plans of the Austrian Empire. The newly arrived Serbian people found the already inhabited Orthodox Serbian population on the former estates of Serbian despots in Srem and southern Hungary, but also in other parts of the Habsburg monarchy. These people were also a part of the Patriarchate of Peć in religious affiliation. With the arrival of the patriarch in Sremski Karlovci, the main spiritual and material forces of the Serbian people found themselves on the Austrian territory. However, the situation in Austria was not particularly favourable for the Orthodox faith. Instead of Islamic religious tolerance, which existed to some extent in the Ottoman Empire, the aggressive Catholicism in Austria endeavoured to drive the Serbs into the Union for most of the 18th century. The Serbs persisted in their resistance to the direct influences of the Catholic West, and sought to remain in the sphere of Eastern Orthodox culture.⁵

This resistance was reflected in art by promoting old Byzantine forms of artistic expression along with the resistance to new artistic trends coming from the West. Regardless of the defiance of the West, cultural and artistic influences from the West were slowly but surely beginning to emerge in the Serbian environment. After the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, Western conceptions had swiftly and almost painlessly taken over Serbian architecture, which was the first to adapt to the new circumstances, while painting faltered.⁶ At the same time, we should bear in mind that the Austrian official state policy had its own specific and clearly set requirements in relation to architecture, which often directly led to the construction in the new Baroque style.⁷ The introduction of Baroque artistic principles was the slowest in Serbian religious painting.⁸ Almost the entire first half of the 18th century was marked by the work of conservative painters who clung to Eastern Orthodox iconography and manners. This was no longer art at the height of Serbian medieval art, but rather a pale echo of medieval Serbian art. However, even as such, it was adequate enough to preserve tradition and resist Catholic models for a long time.

◀ Fig. 1. Jov Vasilijević, *The Bodani Monastery, iconostasis*, 1745-1748.

Credits: Nicola Piperski.



▲ Fig. 2. Jov Vasiljević, *Krušedol, altar space, 1751*.
Credits: Nikola Piperski.

Resistance to the West also resulted in a swift search for material and spiritual help from the Russian Synod and Russian tsars, which intensified especially since the time of Peter the Great (1682-1725). He became increasingly and more decisively involved in European politics at the time, taking on the role of protector of all Orthodox Christians in the Balkans primarily for political reasons. Since then, Serbian spirituality has been most closely connected with the great centres of then Russia, with Moscow, and especially Kyiv, where the new theological teachings finally won after painful church and political debates. This theology represented a skilful symbiosis of Eastern Orthodoxy and Western, Catholic, counter-Reformation thought. After the wars with Poland (1648-1654), Kyiv and a greater part of Ukraine fell under Russia.⁹ From then on, the Ukrainian-Russian spiritual, cultural, and artistic ties, as well as mutual contacts began to strengthen.¹⁰ By the mid-18th century, the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra with its Theological Academy became a strong and reliable religious support for Orthodoxy under the political protection of the Russian Tsar, promoting theological science, perhaps the strongest in the Orthodox sphere at the time. Consequently, the Kyiv Theological Academy began to occupy an increasingly important place in the Christian topography of Eastern Europe.¹¹ Given its importance for Slavic education, literature, the development of Orthodox theology, and the religious rapprochement of Orthodox Slavs and other Orthodox peoples, it could rightly be called the All-Slavic and All-Orthodox Academy.¹²

At the invitation of Serbian Church dignitaries, missionaries from Kyiv arrived at the Metropolitanate of Karlovci in mid-18th century as the main bearers of much-needed spiritual aid. With the first teachers, painters, books, and icons arriving to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci from Kyiv, came certain Russian political models.¹³ These ties were strengthened by the fact that Serbian students increasingly began studies at the Kyiv Theological Academy. Over a period of thirty or so years, there were 28 Serbs receiving education at the Kyiv Theological Academy in the 18th century.¹⁴ These were leading Serbian intellectuals of that time, such as Dionisije Novaković, professor and prefect of the Latin-Slavic school in Novi Sad, and the later Bishop of Buda.¹⁵

As for Ukrainian church art, it had a specific direction in the general course of art development in a wide area of Russian and East Slavic countries and provinces.¹⁶ In relation to Russian art, which was waiting on the reforms of Peter the Great to open up to Europe, the Ukrainian art of the end of the 16th century and throughout the 17th and 18th centuries had a certain distinctiveness in relation to the artistic production of the central parts of the Russian Empire. This may have been the result of its specific geographical position, political circumstances, tradition, as well as ties with the West through the mediators Lviv and Galicia,¹⁷ where the Polish szlachta and the Austrian nobility brought the same fashion and



▲ Fig. 3. Jov Vasilijević, *The Shroud of the Mother of God*, Krušedol, narthex, 1750.
Credits: Nikola Piperski.

the same style that dominated the central parts of their countries.¹⁸ The portrait and landscape painting saw a growing interest under the influence of Polish painting, which then brought about changes in Orthodox icon painting. Thus, a special post-Byzantine and Baroque symbiosis emerged under the influence of penetrating Jesuit art in the second half of the 17th century in large areas of Galicia and other parts of modern day western Ukraine, covering also a large part of today's territory of Romania. In terms of art, Lviv was incomparably the most advanced centre in this region.¹⁹ Two masters from the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century had the largest share in the renewal of painting in Lviv – Ivan Rutkovych²⁰ and Jov Kondzelevych,²¹ who very skilfully used templates of Western European graphics in their icons. Apart from some decorative details, they had already completely stepped away from the traditional Byzantine painting conventions.²²

In the 18th century, the style developed in Lviv was taken over by masters from Kyiv. A school for learning drawing, painting, and architecture was formed as part of the Theological Academy of the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra, with the characteristics of a real art academy. It cultivated a form of Baroque art adapted to Orthodox theology, as it was being developed in Lviv. Applied graphics played a great mediating role during the process of stylistic changes in favour of the Western European

Baroque. These were rich graphics from Bibles illustrated with “ectypes,” notable throughout Europe, such as those of Piscator, Weigl, and Kraus. In addition to Bibles from the West, the Kyiv Lavra also used “Kunstbuchas,” “alphabets,” as samples and templates for basic drawing exercises.²³ In addition to changes in style, these books introduced hitherto unknown iconographic themes into the Orthodox iconography: Old Testament motifs, Christ's parables, the *via crucis* cycle, emblematic content created in the spirit of Western European aspiration for allegorical representation.²⁴

We know for a fact that this school accepted students from all over Ukraine and Russia, and had Belarusians, Poles, Serbs, and Lithuanians in attendance.²⁵ The first Serb sent to study painting in Kyiv was Jovan Puriša. He was sent from Karlovac to study in Kyiv by Metropolitan Vikentije Jovanović (1731-1737).²⁶ At the end of 1733, Puriša was witnessed studying to become a house painter,²⁷ but one year later he left Kyiv and arrived in Arad in the company of an icon painter invited by Bishop Isaija Antonović²⁸ to renovate the Church of St. John the Baptist.²⁹ After Jovan Puriša, several Serbian painters were educated in Kyiv, including the leading representatives of the first wave of Europeanization of Serbian painting: Dimitrije Bačević, Stefan Tenecki,³⁰ and Jovan Popović.³¹ Besides them, we are familiar with a few more names of Serbs who studied painting in the Lavra: Josif Srbín, who left behind one block with drawings from 1749, Zaharije Aleksejev, the hieromonk of the Orahovica Monastery, who enrolled in studies in 1751,³² and Simeon Baltić who studied in the early 1780s.³³ We should also

mention Gerasim Zelić, the Archimandrite of the Kupa Monastery, who studied painting at the Lavra in 1782, but had to leave his studies due to poor health conditions.³⁴

The decisive moment for the development of Serbian painting in the direction of the Westernized Kyivian painting occurred due to the initiative of Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta (1725-1748). The artistic and cultural reforms commenced in Sremski Karlovci during his predecessor Vikentije Jovanović, were reinforced under the new Patriarch, who put the entire production of religious art under the firm control of the Serbian Church. In 1743, the Patriarch made an official proclamation through one circular letter by which he forbade the work of all inexperienced and uneducated so-called icon painters who worked in the old manner.³⁵ He did so at a time when he had already hired the Ukrainian Jov Vasiljević as his court painter, a master who would fatefully reverse the currents of Serbian art.³⁶

It is believed that Jov Vasiljević (c.1700 – after 1760) arrived at the Metropolitanate of Karlovci through the intervention of Dionisije Novaković and with the consent of the Bishop of Bačka, Visarion Pavlović, both students of the Theological Academy of Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra.³⁷ The first accurate mention of Jov Vasiljević in Serbia dates to December 2, 1742, when he signed a contract for the production of a school icon in Petrovaradin Šanac. On behalf of the school, the contract was signed, among others, by its director, hieromonk Dionisije Novaković.³⁸ It seems that Jov Vasiljević was a painter of good qualities, because the contract drafters treated him with a certain caution, calling him a “respected man” and a

“gentleman.”³⁹ The school congregation demanded that Jov Vasiljević paints a two-sided icon for the school. As the source reveals, “with his art, or with pure gold and excellent colours,” he made a portable two-sided icon for the school. The icon has not been preserved, but we learn from the contract that it most likely showed as follows: on one side in the middle, there was the Annunciation, with a carved decoration above depicting God releasing the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, making a complete iconographic unit of Western inspiration together with the Annunciation. The icon was framed by columns with four prophetic omens on each side, derived from Eastern Orthodox iconography.⁴⁰ To the right were Daniel with a rock, Balaam with a star-shaped halo, which had the medallion of Christ Emmanuel, David with the ark, and Solomon showing the temple he built. These columns ended in triangular tympani with images of the Sun and the Moon. On the other side in the middle, there was a scene of the conception of the Mother of God, which most likely depicted the embrace of Joachim and Anna, with their individual figures painted above them, also in carved frames. To the side, the pillars had cherubs “as many as appropriate and sufficient.”⁴¹

From Jov Vasiljević’s early works, only those in the church of Bođani Monastery in Bačka have been preserved. His first works for Bođani Monastery were two iconostasis icons with half-length figures of the Virgin Mary and Christ, completed by the end of April 1742.⁴²

▼ Fig. 4. *Jov Vasiljević, the gallery of Serbian rulers and saints: Saints Despotes Brankovići, Krušedol, narthex, 1750.*

Credits: Nikola Piperski.



These icons demonstrate the new painting concepts that Jov Vasiljević brought to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. The Virgin and Christ are painted on a gold background decorated with a large floral ornament. Floral decorative ornaments also adorn their clothes, and they wear crowns on their heads. The icons were placed in wood-carved frames with small painted cartouches. Scenes of Christ's sufferings were painted around him, and the Feasts of Jesus Christ around the Virgin.⁴³

Jov Vasiljević then painted the Bođani church iconostasis (Fig. 1) between 1745 and 1748.⁴⁴ Yet, this iconostasis was still not the right type of developed iconostasis, as was already being ordered at that time by the representatives of the church hierarchy and the city's church communities.⁴⁵ Iconographic and thematic Kyiv novelties, which gradually found a place in the repertoire of Serbian religious painting, brought about the change in the iconostasis architecture by expanding it in height. The iconostasis in the newly built Szentendre's Church dedicated to the Transfiguration, constructed between 1745 and 1746, at the same time when the work began on painting the Bođani iconostasis, testifies to the possibilities of Ukrainian masters and their understanding of painting.⁴⁶ This is the first known developed iconostasis painted

for Serbian clients.⁴⁷ Its thematic repertoire follows the solutions of the Ukrainian iconostasis.⁴⁸ Afterward, a type of developed iconostasis began to take form in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, which remained dominant until the second half of the 19th century. Similar to the Ukrainian ones, there are examples with entire sermons illustrated on the iconostasis, or individual scenes borrowed from the moralizing themes and school dramas of the Jesuit type.⁴⁹

During work on the Bođani iconostasis, Jov Vasiljević painted four main icons for the old iconostasis of the Krušedol Monastery temple by order of the Archimandrite Hadži-Isaija Grabovčanin.⁵⁰ It is almost certain that he worked on the Krušedol Monastery frescoes a few years later alone, or perhaps with his assistants. Just as he continued the works started by Hristofor Džefarović in Bođani, he also continued the works started by Georgije Stojanović in Krušedol.⁵¹ The frescoes of Krušedol Monastery are perhaps the most significant and monumental painted ensembles in the area of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, which was created under the influence of Kyiv painting.⁵² Krušedol served as the mausoleum of the last holy Serbian ruling house of Branković. With its tradition exuding medieval spiritual and artistic canons, it became a place that saw a complete transformation in the mid-18th century toward a hitherto unknown art in Serbia.⁵³

▼ Fig. 5. Stefan Tenecki, *The Nativity*, Krušedol, nave, 1756.
Credits: Nikola Piperski.





▲ Fig. 6. Stefan Tenecki, *The Baptism of Christ*, Krušedol, nave, 1756.

Credits: Nikola Piperski.

Jov Vasilijević produced several projects with his team in Krušedol. They first worked on the narthex in 1750, painting over the old, most probably damaged frescoes from the 16th century. The following year, in 1751, they finished painting the renovated altar space (Fig. 2).⁵⁴ The character of the new art can be observed not only in the style, but also in the theme that is based on the ideological aspirations of the Baroque era. A complex allegorical program glorifying the Metropolitanate of Karlovci being watched over by Virgin Mary was painted in the narthex.⁵⁵ The Akathistos combined with the Immaculata conceptio, scenes from the life of the apostles Peter and Paul, among them the Punishment of Ananias, the Release of Peter from the Dungeon and the Apostle Paul's Escape from Damascus, the Shroud of the Mother of God (Fig. 3), the gallery of Serbian rulers and saints (Fig. 4), all seemed already touched by the interesting blend of medieval themes with Baroque elements, when the didactic-moralizing lesson abruptly grew, and with it the narrative of the presented topics. The sanctuary was painted with the Eucharistic program and the Resurrection of Christ in the centre.⁵⁶ It was the last large commission of Jov Vasilijević at the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. It remains unknown whether the painter returned to Ukraine after that or he passed away.⁵⁷

As for somewhat younger paintings, Dejan Medaković emphasizes the Krušedol church naos from 1756, which is considered amongst the best achievements of Serbian

monumental painting of the 18th century.⁵⁸ The painted architecture, and even the details of the figures, are reminiscent of similar solutions of Italian, especially Venetian late Renaissance and Mannerist painting. Hence, Medaković concluded that this must have been a painter educated in a larger European artistic centre and that the Krušedol masters indicate a direct engagement with Western sources, with templates from Western European graphics, either individual sheets or printed illustrated Bibles that are also served as painting manuals to major artists of Europe at the time.⁵⁹ Miodrag Kolarić also advocated for direct Western prototypes.⁶⁰ He noticed that the author of great compositions from the life of Christ modelled the figures perfectly, and abundantly used perspective in the compositions. However, according to him, the Krušedol landscapes "seem quite decorative," and he further stated that the author of these landscapes did not know how to look at nature.⁶¹ He cites Dimitrije Bačević and Stefan Tenecki as potential authors.⁶²

As Dinko Davidov correctly observed, the Italian and Dutch influences, as well as the interest in landscape, still life, perspective, and solid modelling and mass balance, as well as other Western European features, originate from Kyiv.⁶³ Ukrainian painting of the second half of the 17th century, and especially of the first half of the 18th century, cultivated a very specific symbiosis of Renaissance-Mannerist-Baroque styles.⁶⁴ As Dinko Davidov further remarked, all stylistic assessments of Dejan Medaković and Miodrag Kolarić of the Krušedol naos painting can also be attributed to the frescoes of the Gate Church of the Trinity in the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra.⁶⁵ Radmila Mihajlović determined that the best analogy for the



◀ Fig 7: Stefan Tenecki, *Self-portrait, second half of the 18th century*.

Credits: Matice Srpske Gallery, Novi Sad.

Krušedol composition is in the painting depicting the Expulsion of the Merchants from the Temple in the Kyiv Gate Church of the Trinity naos. The Krušedol wall painting seems to stem directly from the composition of the Kyiv temple.⁶⁶ Templates for the frescoes of the Gate Church of the Trinity have been found in Piscator's *Theatrum Biblicum*, a painting manual popular in Eastern countries.⁶⁷ According to this analogy, and mostly on the basis of the common Mannerist style that permeates the Kyiv-Pechersk and Krušedol frescoes, the works of the Krušedol master can indicate that the painter came from Kyiv, regardless of whether he was Ukrainian or Serb.

Dinko Davidov proposed that the author of the Krušedol frescoes could not have been any of the Serbian painters for the simple reason that none of them possessed as much painting knowledge and experience as can be seen in the frescoes of the Krušedol naos (Fig. 5, 6).⁶⁸ The painting of the Krušedol naos demonstrated a level of knowledge of the technique of monumental wall painting, which, according to Davidov, was not accessible to any of the Serbian painters who studied in Kyiv.⁶⁹ He further stated that Serbian painters in Kyiv were trained mainly in icon painting, possibly in portrait painting, as they had no interest in learning this technique simply because the monumental wall decoration in Serbian art of that time was replaced by a high, multi-storey iconostasis, taking on almost the entire painting decoration of the church.⁷⁰ The execution of wall painting were encountered exclusively as sporadic requests by individual ktetors, as was the case in Krušedol.⁷¹ We cannot maintain that the frescoes technique was unknown in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci even before the arrival of Kyiv painters, nor can we claim with complete confidence that Serbian painters who studied painting in Kyiv truly did not know these techniques. For example, the Ukrainians were certainly not responsible for Džafarović's ten years younger frescoes, which only confirms that these techniques were known in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.

Miroslav Timotijević, as well as Dejan Medaković before him, argued that the execution of the wall painting in the Krušedol Monastery naos, whose founder was the Bishop of Vršac Jovan Georgijević, was entrusted to Stefan Tenecki (Fig. 7).⁷² He was one of the main bearers of the Ukrainian stylistic orientation in Serbian art. Tenecki, who came to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci from Arad, created a great collection of religious painting. It is assumed that perhaps the Bishop of Arad, Isaijah, sent Stefan Tenecki, possibly as his scribe, to Kyiv to study painting there.⁷³ According to Branislav Todić, this could have been at the beginning of the 1740s, perhaps immediately after 1742.⁷⁴ As these extensive works in the Krušedol temple's naos were executed in a short period of time, the main painter most likely had assistants who were entrusted with a significant part of the work. Timotijević assumed that Dimitrije Bačević and Georgije Mišković, and probably Nikola Nešković, the court painter of Bishop Jovan Georgijević, were his assistants at that time.⁷⁵

In addition to Jov Vasilijević and Stefan Tenecki, another Ukrainian painter, Vasilije Romanović (c.1700-1773), represents an important person of the first generation of early Baroque masters who worked in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.⁷⁶ Vasilijević and Romanović studied painting at the Kyiv-Pechersk School during the

1730s, when it was headed by Teoktist Pavlovski,⁷⁷ while the slightly younger Stefan Tenecki was educated during the next decade, when Alimpij Galik was the head of the school.⁷⁸

It is possible that Vasilije Romanović arrived together with Jov Vasilijević from Kyiv.⁷⁹ We do not know where Jov Vasilijević worked before coming to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. However, we do know that Vasilije Romanović painted the Kyiv Pretechensko-Borisoglebsk church from 1737 before coming to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. Unfortunately, this church was later destroyed in a fire, and Romanović's frescoes had not been studied or recorded.⁸⁰ From the contract between the ktetor and the painter, Romanović, undertook to "paint with good paints, not simple ones" and to "paint with such mastery as in St. Nicholas Naberezhny". According to older sources, Romanović also worked on the iconostasis for this church, which was also destroyed in the fire. This iconostasis was in the same group as the frescoes of the Gate Church of the Trinity, Nikolay Naberezhny, St. Sophia and the Vydubychi Monastery, which are considered the finest 18th century Kyiv monumental paintings.⁸¹

Vasilije Romanović was last mentioned in Kyiv in 1739, and his name appears in the archives of Bođani Monastery as early as the beginning of the 1740s, at a time when Jov Vasilijević was also staying there.⁸² Romanović's works in Bođani have not been discovered, although according to Pavle Vasić, it is possible that he worked together with Jov Vasilijević on the Bođani iconostasis.⁸³ Unlike Jov Vasilijević, who approached Patriarch Arsenije Jovanović Šakabenta, Vasilije Romanović created in the western areas of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, in Slavonia and Croatia. Around 1757, he painted a large portrait of the Bishop of Pakrac, Sofronije Jovanović, and two of its replicas.⁸⁴ Together with another "companion," he made icons for the same Bishop for the iconostasis of the Bishop's court church in Pakrac. In the same year, his name is found on the south door of the unpreserved iconostasis in the church of the Slavonian monastery Slatinski Drenovac, near Orahovica.⁸⁵

After completing his work in Slavonia, he moved to Hopovo Monastery in Fruška Gora in 1758.⁸⁶ It seems that he did not simply settle in Hopovo, but became a member of its brotherhood, albeit not yet as a real monk. He came to Hopovo probably on the recommendation of Bishop of Pakrac Sofronije Jovanović, a former Hopovo monk, ktetor and great benefactor of the Monastery. However, it seems that he did not stay in the monastery for long. In the next year, 1759, he participated in making the iconostasis in the church of Archangel Michael and Gabriel in Kostajnica, perhaps with one or several assistants.⁸⁷ Later, Vasilije Romanović also painted a portrait of the new bishop of Pakrac, Arsenije Radivojević, and several icons in Pakrac, of which only the great icon of the Holy Trinity has been preserved. He also executed the icon of the Last Supper for the nearby monastery of Pakra. Most probably, he also painted the iconostasis in Trpinja, presumably in 1760, which was later repainted several times.⁸⁸ The iconostases of Vasilije Romanović were the first developed iconostases in the western areas of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.⁸⁹

On May 11, 1766, Vasilije Romanović came again to Hopovo with the intention of finally staying there, with the promise that one day he would become a monk.⁹⁰ He continued to paint in Hopovo, and not only there, but also in other monasteries in Fruška Gora and in the surrounding villages. It has been established that he painted the



► Fig. 8: Vasilije Romanović, *Royal doors in the Bešenovo Monastery*, 1770.

Credits: Museum of Srem, Sremska Mitrovica.

◄ Fig. 9: Vasilije Romanović, *Icon of the apostle Luke*, Sviloš village church, 1770.

Credits: Museum of Srem, Sremska Mitrovica.

▲ Fig. 10: Vasilije Romanović, *Icon of apostle Thomas*, Sviloš village church, 1770.

Credits: Museum of Srem, Sremska Mitrovica.

▼ Fig. 11: Vasilije Romanović, *The Last Supper for the Hopovo monastery dining room*, 1771.

Credits: Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Belgrade.

royal doors in the Bešenovo Monastery in 1770 (Fig. 8), perhaps for the iconostasis in the chapel of St. Cyricus and Julitta, or for the one in the church of the village of Bešenovo. He then restored the Royal icons of the main Bešenovo church iconostasis, while he made at least two icons for the Sviloš village church – the apostles Luke and Thomas (Fig. 9, 10).⁹¹ It is assumed that he also painted the icons of the Velika Remeta Monastery iconostasis, which is difficult to prove on the basis of preserved blurry photographs, since this iconostasis was destroyed in the Second World War.⁹² In 1771, he painted several compositions on canvas for the Hopovo Monastery dining room, of which only two have been preserved (now in the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church in



Belgrade): The Last Supper (Fig. 11) and The Dinner at the Home of Simon the Pharisee.⁹⁵ Vasilije Romanović died in Hopovo in 1773. He may have been ill for a short time and died suddenly, so he did not manage to fulfil his vow to become a monk, but died as “the venerable master Vasilije the Painter, a resident of the Hopovo Monastery.”⁹⁴

In addition to Ukrainian and Serbian painters who studied painting in Kiev, there were also those who painted in this manner, but learned painting at home from Ukrainian masters. The letter of Patriarch Šakabenta from 1743 states that Serbian painters in Karlovci could learn the craft from his court painter Jov. It seems that it was the first painting school ever founded in the Serbian cultural milieu. As it seems, through that school, master Jov Vasiljević and his associates had a decisive influence on the whole generation of Serbian civic painters, who clearly demon-

strate the process of abandoning old painting schemes in favour of Baroque styles. Most prominent among them were the painters Nikola Nešković, Vasa Ostojić, Janko Halkozović, Dimitrije Popović, Amvrosije Janković, Grigorije Popović. They represent a strong group of Serbian artists whose work has already completely advanced the process of the Baroque style.⁹⁵

The influence of Vasilije Romanović could not be compared with the influence of Jov Vasiljević. This is understandable considering that Vasiljević enjoyed the direct support of the Patriarch. However, during the painting activity of Vasilije Romanović in the Eparchy of Pakrac, painters such as Jovan Četirević Grabovan, Jovan Isailović Senior, Grigorije Jezdimirović, and Mojsej Subotić presumably received their first lessons in painting from him.⁹⁶ Yet, most of his students later went to the workshops of

other masters, or in other painting schools for further learning, so it is hard to recognize his influence in their latter work. Jovan Isailović Senior and Grigorije Jezdimirović became associates of Teodor Kračun, and Mojsej Subotić later completed his education in Vienna.⁹⁷ It has been hypothesized that Romanović also ran a painting school of sorts in Hopovo Monastery in Fruška Gora, where he taught younger painters, including Teodor Kračun,⁹⁸ which has been determined as untrue.⁹⁹ However, the abbot of the Jazak Monastery, Rafailo Stefanov, during the period between 1767 and 1768 regularly reported to the Metropolitan of Karlovci on the painting of the iconostasis in his church. This iconostasis was painted by Dimitrije Bačević with his company. The Protocol of the Jazak Monastery Brotherhood Council states that “a respected monk and painter Vasilije came from Hopovo” in September 1768 in order to supervise the painters. We can rightly assume that this monk was Vasilije Romanović.¹⁰⁰

Ukrainian cultural and artistic impact in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci ruled sovereignly from the 1720s to the 1760s and it seems that during this period all the Western elements first had to go through the suspicious supervision of Eastern Orthodox theologians in Kyiv. In the second half of the 18th century, more precisely only from the eighth decade, Ukrainian-Serbian cultural and spiritual ties began to weaken as a consequence of the declining Russian-Serbian political ties. The main reason behind this was that the official Austrian state government of the era of Maria Theresia systematically

prevented establishing them, sometimes even by decrees. In addition, the diplomatic reports of the Russian ambassador at the Viennese court, Count Bestuzhev-Ryumin brought the news to Russia that Serbian Metropolitan Pavle Nenadović (1749-1768) had secretly accepted the union and was working to bring the entire Serbian people in Austria into the union. These news deepened the distrust of the Russian Church toward the Serbs, which resulted in unwanted consequences: the Kyiv Academy became extremely cautious toward the Serbs who came from Austria. In Kyiv, Serbs were “rarely admitted to schools and met with distrust everywhere.”¹⁰¹ Because of this and because of the disturbances caused by the Austrian authorities, the number of Serbian students at the Kyiv Academy began to decline, which did not hold much logic in a sense: at that time, Serbs from Pottisje and Pomorišje inhabited southeast Ukraine and founded “New Serbia” and “Slavo-Serbia.”¹⁰² This was at a time when the Serbian military potential in the Russian army was strengthening leading to ideological and religious mistrust, which was badly reflected on the educational and spiritual level and caused damage to Ukrainian-Serbian cultural ties in the second half of the 18th century.¹⁰³ With the decline of the Kyiv art sphere, the direct artistic and cultural models of Vienna were strengthened. From that time onward, it was the Vienna Academy that educated Serbian painters, bringing Western elements and the style of Austrian painting to Serbia.

Notes:

1 Јовановић 1963, p. 379-409; Давидов 2004, p. 171.

2 Грујић 1939, p. 382; Лесковац 1939, p. 425.

3 Refers to St. Sava and St. Simeon Nemanja: Лесковац 1939, p. 425.

4 Јовановић 2012a, p. 20-21; Давидов 2004, p. 209.

5 See: Грујић 1906; Грујић 1909.

6 Медаковић 1971, p. 277.

7 Медаковић 1971, p. 277.

8 Медаковић 1971, p. 277.

9 Давидов 2004, p. 174.

10 Давидов 2004, p. 174.

11 Јовановић 1963, p. 3; Јовановић 2012a, p. 20-21; Давидов 2004, p. 171-174, 207-208; Симић 2019, p. 21.

12 Јовановић 1963, 3; Давидов 2004, p. 174.

13 Радојчић 1913, p. 9.

14 Јовановић 2012a, p. 21; Давидов 2004, p. 174-175.

15 He graduated from the grammar school and the Kyiv Theological Academy from 1726 to 1737: Давидов 2004, p. 175.

16 Јовановић 2012a, p. 20-21.

17 Давидов 2004, p. 172.

18 Давидов 2004, p. 172.

19 Давидов 2004, p. 172.

20 Свенцицька 1966; Давидов 2004, p. 173.

21 Возницький 1967, p. 42-58; Давидов 2004, p. 173.

22 Давидов 2004, p. 173.

23 Јовановић 2012a, p. 21.

24 Јовановић 2012a, p. 21.

25 Свенцицька 1966, p. 41; Давидов 2004, p. 176.

26 Immediately after the enthronement, the Metropolitan sent two of his cadets for training in painting: Puriša to Kyiv and Vukašin Prokopović to Vienna, but both attempts to educate these painters ended in failure: Грујић 1908, p. 169; Микић

1961, p. 7; Тодић 2010, p. 51.

27 Тодић 2010, p. 128.

28 Since those wall paintings as well as the iconostasis in the Arad St. John's Church have not been preserved: Тодић 2010, p. 128.

29 Панић 2000, p. 153; Микић 2005, p. 55-56; Тодић 2010, p. 51-52.

30 According to the most of Serbian researchers Tenecki was of a Serbian origin, but Horia Medeleanu thinks that his native language was Romanian, and he was most probably of a Macedo-Romanian origin: see Medeleanu 1983, p. 142.

31 Јовановић 2012a, p. 21.

32 Давидов 2004, p. 185.

33 Давидов 2004, p. 183; Јовановић 1963, p. 394.

34 Медаковић 1954, p. 291-293; Пузовић 2017, p. 15-57; Јовановић 2012b.

35 Руварац 1911, p. 21-30; Медаковић 1980, p. 14. It is possible that this letter of Patriarch Arsenije IV was written at the request of conservative circles around him, which heard of similar phenomena in the Russian environment, not as a result of the Patriarch's aesthetic criteria.

36 Васић 1961; Васић 1971, p. 77-92. Мирковић, Здравковић 1952; Медаковић 1980, p. 14; Јовановић 1963, p. 379-409; Павић 1970.

37 Earlier authors assume that Jov Vasiljević was invited to paint the Cathedral in Petrovaradinski Šanc (Novi Sad): Шелмић 1981, p. 19; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 74-75; Branislav Todić expressed great reservations about this assumption based on a letter from Bishop Visarion Pavlović from 1743, in which he complains that due to lack of money, his church has been standing bare for ten years, unpainted and without a roof: Тодић 2010, p. 52.

38 At the same time, we can point out that the fact that the name of this Kyiv master is associated with the oldest so far known painting contract among Serbs from the 18th century: Медаковић 1955; Медаковић 1975, p. 265-270; Медаковић

- 1980, p. 26.
- 39 Медаковић 1975, p. 265-268; Тодић 2010, p. 52.
- 40 Медаковић 1975, p. 267.
- 41 Медаковић 1975, p. 267.
- 42 This type of the Mother of God, popular in Ukrainian Baroque painting, was a variation on the theme of the Mother of God's Immaculate Conception. A similar icon was painted by Teoktist Pavlovsky: Тимотијевић 1996, p. 76; Миляева 2010, p. 9-10.
- 43 Момировић 1980, p. 85; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 76.
- 44 Васић 1961, p. 84-86; Момировић 1980, p. 75-84; Шлемић 1981, 21; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 76; After the first signs of Western style in the frescoes of the Bođani Monastery from 1735-1777, whose author was Hristofor Džefarović. On the Bođani iconostasis of Jov Vasiljević shows more radical changes in the direction of new concepts of painting: About Džefarović's wall painting see: Шлемић 2004, p. 28-29; Мирковић, Здравковић 1952, p. 21-64; Микић 1961, p. 7; Момировић 1980, p. 55-74; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 72.
- 45 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 77.
- 46 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 77.
- 47 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 77.
- 48 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 77.
- 49 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 51-58; Вуксан 2016, p. 13-37; Симић 2018, p. 21.
- 50 Васић 1961, p. 77-92, 111-121; Шлемић 1981, 22; Медаковић 1964, p. 601-615; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 77.
- 51 Голубовић 1990, p. 20; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 77; Шелмић 2004, p. 19-20.
- 52 Давидов 2004, p. 191.
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- 54 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 78.
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- 56 Медаковић 1971, p. 113-130; Тимотијевић 1987, p. 109-125; Тимотијевић 1994, p. 63-90; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 78; Шелмић 2004, p. 31-36.
- 57 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 78.
- 58 Медаковић 1964, p. 601.
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- 60 Коларић 1967, p. 235-275.
- 61 Коларић 1967, p. 265.
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- 63 Давидов 2004, p. 195.
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- 73 Микић 2005, p. 55-56; Тодић 2010, p. 52.
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- 75 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 82.
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- 77 Жолотовський 1983, p. 151-152; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 82.
- 78 Мусенко 1958, p. 61-66; Жолотовський 1983, p. 111; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 82; About the wall painting of The Gate Church of the Trinity: Уманцев 1970, p. 78-112, 175.
- 79 Until Ivan Bach's study of Serbian painting in Croatia, published after the Second World War, Vasilije Romanović was not mentioned in Yugoslav and Serbian literature: Bach 1949; Давидов 2004, p. 212; Тодић 2010, 169.
- 80 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 79; Давидов 2004, p. 215.
- 81 Давидов 2004, 216; Платонович 1968, p. 189.
- 82 It is assumed that during his stay in Bođani, Romanović was able to paint an insufficiently researched iconostasis in Trpinja: Шлемић 1981, 66; М. Тимотијевић, Српско барокно сликарство, Нови Сад 1996, 79.
- 83 Давидов 2004, p. 217.
- 84 Romanović is also credited with a portrait of Arsenij Radivojević, painted at the time when he was the bishop of Pakrac: Микић 1987, p. 45-46; Тимотијевић 1996, p. 80.
- 85 The iconostasis in Slatinski Drenovac was burned in 1941. Fortunately, Bach visited this church just before the war and photographed the entire iconostasis, and the throne icons and doors separately: Bach 1949, p. 208; Давидов 2004, p. 212.
- 86 Тодић 2010, p. 169; Dinko Davidov thought the opposite: Давидов 2004, p. 212.
- 87 Bach 1949, p. 198-200; Медаковић 1975, p. 266; Тодић 2010, p. 170.
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- 89 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 79-80.
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- 92 Лесек 2000, p. 8-10; Лесек 2001, p. 80-83; Кулић, Срећков 1994, p. 42, 51; Тодић 2010, p. 173.
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- 96 Mojselj Subotić received painting lessons at Roanovich's workshop at a time when Romanović was painting the iconostasis of the parish church in Morović in Srem: Тимотијевић 1996, p. 80.
- 97 Тимотијевић 1996, p. 80.
- 98 Васић 1961, p. 120; Лесек 1972-1973, p. 60; Лесек 2001, p. 89; Тодић 2010, p. 172.
- 99 Шелмић 1981, 70; Тодић 2010, p. 172.
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The Icon Painter Jov Vasiljevič and the Eighteenth-Century Iconostases of the Krušedol and Bođani Monasteries

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RÉSUMÉ : Au cours de la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle, les réformes de l'Église Orthodoxe Serbe de Hongrie se reflètent aussi dans la peinture des églises. L'établissement de liens étroits avec le Patriarcat de Moscou et la Laure des Grottes de Kyïv-Petchersk a augmenté l'influence russo-ukrainienne dans le siège métropolitain de Karlovci. On constate un éloignement de plus en plus prononcé face à l'iconographie traditionnelle et une acceptation des réformes connues dans la peinture baroque ukrainienne. Le moment décisif est représenté par l'arrivée du peintre ukrainien Jov Vasiljevič en 1742. Avec le soutien du patriarche Arsenije IV, Vasiljevič fonde une école de peinture à Sremski Karlovci. Par décision du patriarche, cette école devient obligatoire pour tous les peintres d'icônes du siège métropolitain. Un décret scelle l'entrée des nouvelles modes d'expression artistique dans l'art ecclésiastique. Jov Vasiljevič exécute plusieurs œuvres importantes. Il peint les iconostases des monastères de Krušedol et Bođani ; il réalise des peintures pour le patriarche ; il forme plusieurs élèves qui continueront à répandre cette influence de la peinture baroque ukrainienne. L'article se propose d'étudier ce style de peinture, devenu une véritable norme dans l'art religieux du siège métropolitain de Karlovci dans les années 1740-1770.

MOTS-CLÉS : Baroque ; art post-byzantin ; Ukraine ; Serbie ; XVIII^e siècle.

REZUMAT: Reformele introduse în Biserica Ortodoxă Sârbă din Ungaria în prima jumătate a secolului al XVIII-lea au avut ecou și în pictura bisericească. Stabilirea unor legături puternice cu Patriarhia Moscovei și cu Lavra Pecherska din Kyiv a avut printre consecințe și o intensificarea influențelor ruso-ucrainene în Mitropolia de Carloviț (Karlovci). A urmat o îndepărtare din ce în ce mai pronunțată de iconografia tradițională și acceptarea picturii baroce ucrainene. Momentul decisiv a fost sosirea pictorului ucrainean Jov Vasiljevič în 1742, care, cu sprijinul patriarhului Arsenije al IV-lea, a fondat la curia sa din Sremski Karlovci, o școală de pictură. Prin hotărârea patriarhului, acea școală a devenit obligatorie pentru toți pictorii de icoane din Mitropolie, ceea ce a însemnat că noua expresie artistică a fost introdusă în arta bisericească prin decret. Jov Vasiljevič a executat câteva lucrări importante, a pictat iconostasele mănăstirilor Krušedol și Bođani și a realizat picturi pentru patriarhul însuși. A lăsat în urmă câțiva ucenici care au răspândit și mai mult influența picturii barocului ucrainean. Acest stil de pictură a devenit standardul pentru arta religioasă a Mitropoliei de Karlovci în perioada cuprinsă între anii 1740 și 1770.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: baroc; artă post-bizantină; Ucraina; Serbia; secolul al XVIII-lea.

Reforms of traditional zographos painting.

The Great Turkish War (1683-1699) brought significant changes in Southeastern Europe with consequences not only in the cultural life of the Serbs but also in their religious art. The forced migration from the Ottoman Empire to the Habsburg Monarchy in 1690 increased the need for introducing reforms and restructuring the earlier forms of organization in the Serbian Church. The traditional models of piety and painting continued to endure for some time, but from the 1730s onward they were gradually suppressed by new forms of Baroque painting coming from Eastern Europe.¹ The ties of the Orthodox communities of Southeastern Europe with similar groups in Ukraine and Russia had been stable since the 15th century, and they only intensified by the end of the 17th century.² They were additionally strengthened by the Patriarch of Peć, Arsenije III Čarnojevič, who fled to the Habsburg Monarchy before the Turks. They continued to develop over the next two centuries under the subsequent Karlovac metropolitans.

At first, teachers and preachers came from Moscow and Kyiv, bringing stronger Russian-Ukrainian influences into the fields of literature and language. They were followed by icon painters who brought a new, Baroque concept of religious imagery, instead of old postbyzantine traditional painting, which increasingly won the souls of Orthodox people.³ There was also strong resistance to such a "novelty" coming from various quarters, primarily from bishops, theologians, and painters who turned to the traditional art cultivated in the Balkans for centuries.⁴ The weakening of unity within the Orthodox world became more and more apparent. A division line was drawn between the areas under Ottoman rule and the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the territories where the influence of the Russian emperors and the Moscow Patriarchate prevailed.

The differences between Greek and Russian theology were also reflected in religious art: the first advocated for traditional, long-established norms, while the latter aspired to implement reforms. Such a situation was fertile ground for conflicts and accusations of the other side for



▲ Fig. 1. *Krušedol monastery, iconostasis.*
Credits: Miroslav Lazić.

▼ Fig. 2. *Mother of God with the Christ Child, iconostasis, Krušedol monastery, 1745.*
Credits: Miroslav Lazić.

► Fig. 3. *Jesus Christ, iconostasis, Krušedol monastery, 1745.*
Credits: Miroslav Lazić.

betraying Orthodoxy. The letter of Eugenios Voulgaris, a prominent Greek theologian and intellectual, addressed to Pavle Nenadović, the Metropolitan of Karlovci, is an excellent example of this dynamic. Voulgaris accused the Orthodox Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy of questioning old dogmas and the Orthodox tradition to gain political freedoms.⁵

The traditionalists and opponents of the reforms defended the established icon-painting practice, seeing it as a tradition confirmed by time and set in stone. Their concept was based on copying older models, which highlighted iconography and type as evidence of authenticity. However, they were oblivious to the theological problems of the visual language of icons, believing that the authority of tradition completely solved them. However, the supporters of the reforms saw the matter very differently. They believed that reducing the icon to a mere link with the real model distanced the iconography from its authentic sources. That is why that group had a critical attitude toward the idea of unconditional veneration and emulation of older and thus suspicious icons. They accepted only “authentic” medieval icons, such as the Holy Mandylin or the icon of the Mother of God painted by the apostle Luke, which were linked to divine

intervention. The logical conclusion that emerged was that it was necessary to introduce reforms so that iconography could return to its original values, which had been lost.⁶

The key argument of the proponents of reform was that the incarnation of Christ was the foundation of his artistic representation. The icon depicted the human figure of the incarnate Christ but at the same time pointed to his divine nature. Because his two natures are inseparable, neither of these two aspects can be neglected. The task of the icon painter was to show the invisible spirit in the visible body, which, in contrast to traditional painters, required the affirmation of the material world. For the traditionalists, this emphasis on the corporal element in painting was a critical visual argument against any change in religious painting. On the other hand, the reformists claimed that ancient Christian painting had once had that same “bodily” character, from which it eventually deviated. Thus, the proponents of the reforms concluded that it was necessary to return to tradition to improve the current situation in icon painting.⁷

Jov Vasiljević in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.

The person who contributed most to the reforms in icon painting among the Orthodox Serbs in Hungary was the Ukrainian-born painter Jov Vasiljević, whose biography stayed obscure till today. It was he who brought to the Metropolitanate the newly reformed Orthodox style of painting influenced by Central European Catholic Baroque Art.⁸ As the records show, he appeared in 1742 in Novi Sad, the see of the Bishop of Bačka, probably at the invitation of Professor Dionisije Novaković, the prefect of the city’s Academy.⁹ Vasiljević studied icon painting at the Kyiv Academy in the 1730s, at the same time when Novaković attended studies of theology there, meaning that they might have met each other previously. More than others, Novaković realized the need to invite Ukrainian masters to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to implement the reform of church painting, like the school reforms previously carried out by other Ukrainian professors. Novaković and Vasiljević were advocates of breaking with traditional painting and consistently implementing the poetics cultivated at the painting school of the Kyiv Academy.¹⁰

Upon his arrival in Novi Sad, Vasiljević was immediately hired by Visarion Pavlović, Bishop of Bačka, who was the founder of the school and an influential figure among the Serbs. With his blessing, Novaković ordered a two-sided large-format icon for the Academy that featured the Annunciation on one side and the Conception, Joachim and Anna, and eight figures of the prophets on the other. An unusual feature of this commission was the contract, which included a detailed description of the thematic repertoire and the appearance of the ordered icon. The contracts of the 18th century were not usually explicit in their details, so it makes sense to assume that the composition, iconography, colors, and other elements were left to the discretion of the painters. They probably sketched the commissioned work, suggesting its concept.¹¹ After this task, Vasiljević seems to have been hired for a painting job in the cathedral church of St. George, but due to the damage the church suffered in a later war, there is no preserved evidence.¹² It is certain that in 1742 he made the icons of Christ and the Mother of God for the thrones in the nave of the Bođani monastery, and a few years later (1745/46) painted several icons for its iconostasis.¹³



The word about Vasiljević's painting skills soon reached the patriarch, Arsenije IV Jovanović (1698-1748), who had fled from the Ottoman Empire to Sremski Karlovci in 1739. Determined to introduce the necessary church reforms in the Metropolitanate, the patriarch appointed Vasiljević as a court painter and allowed him to open a painting school at the court. Then, on July 5, 1743, he circulated a letter throughout the Metropolitanate in which he banned Orthodox communities from hiring icon painters who had not been trained at Vasiljević's school in Karlovci. Only those who had completed his course could apply for painting jobs in churches. With this letter, Ukrainian model of orthodox painting became accepted as the official painting style of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. In that way, the patriarch ensured that traditionalist painters would not continue to get important jobs and practically introduced a new artistic expression into religious art by decree.¹⁴ Although the patriarch's order initially caused disbelief and resistance, it did not take long to be implemented. Ukrainian Baroque painting became the norm in religious art, at least in the central parts of the Metropolitanate. Traditionalist icon painters did not disappear but retreated into the periphery, as far from the patriarch's reach as possible.

For young painters who depended on significant commissions, the patriarch's letter was more than an order. Attending Vasiljević's workshop was understood as an

obligation that had to be respected. The students acquired painting skills in his school the way it was taught in the Academy in Kyiv. Many talented young Serbian painters came to Karlovci and learned or perfected their skills in Vasiljević's school, while the older and more experienced ones adapted their painting styles to the required artistic expression. A significant group of Serbian early Baroque painters emerged there, which consisted of artists later crucial for the history of Serbian painting of the 18th century, such as Vasilije Ostojić, Janko Halkozović, Joakim Marković, Nikola Nešković, Amvrosije Janković, Teodor Stefanović Gologlavac, and others.¹⁵ That generation became the primary bearer of Ukrainian Baroque painting among Serbs in the following decades.¹⁶ Jov Vasiljević was commissioned to paint in fresco the narthex and sanctuary walls of the Krušedol monastery church in 1750 and 1752, after which he disappears from historical sources. It is not known whether he went elsewhere or died in the Metropolitanate.

► Fig. 4. *Saint John the Baptist, iconostasis, Krušedol monastery, 1745.*

Credits: Miroslav Lazić.

►► Fig. 5. *The Annunciation and the three Serbian saints (Saint Simeon the Myrrh-bearer, Saint Despot Maxim, Saint Sava the Serbian Archbishop), iconostasis, Krušedol monastery, 1745.*

Credits: Miroslav Lazić.







◄ Fig 6: *Mother of God, the throne in the nave, Bođani monastery 1742.*

Credits: Nedeljko Marković.

► Fig. 7: *Jesus Christ, the throne in the nave, Bođani monastery 1742.*

Credits: Nedeljko Marković.

► Fig. 8: *Manastir Bođani, iconostasis, 1745-1748.*

Credits: Nedeljko Marković.

The Iconostasis in the Krušedol Monastery.

Although the residence of the Serbian prelates was in Sremski Karlovci, the spiritual center of the Metropolitanate was the monastery of Krušedol. The Serbian despot Georgije Branković (1645-1711) founded the monastery at the beginning of the 16th century, and it was completed in 1512 with the help of the Wallachian prince Neagoe Basarab (r. 1512-1521) who also donated the icons for its first iconostasis. Since that time, the iconostasis has been remodeled and modified several times, forming a complex unit today (Fig. 1). The concept of the original iconostasis followed the rules that applied at the beginning of the 16th century. It had Sovereign-tier icons and royal doors, an entrance to the prothesis and the diaconicon sectioned off with curtains. Above was the Deësis row and at the top the Great Cross. Only the icons of the Deësis row of the original iconostasis have survived. They were made by Wallachian masters, as indicated by the texts written on the scrolls of the figures. The central icon shows Jesus Christ enthroned, blessing with his right hand and holding an open Gospel Book in his left. To the left of the central Christ stand the Mother of God and the Archangel Michael, and to the right Saint John the Baptist and the Archangel Gabriel. On the sides of the cross, there are icons with pairs of apostles with open books in their hands: Peter and Mark, Luke and Simon, James and Philip on the left, and Paul and John, Matthew and Andrew, Bartholomew and Thomas on the right.¹⁷

Based on historical data, some interventions have been made on this iconostasis in the 1630s and 1640s, but nothing more specific can be said about those projects. The monastery community undertook the renovation of the iconostasis in the middle of the 17th century, but that work was not done all at once. Then, the young painter from southern Serbia, Andreja Raičević, arrived at the monastery and painted two icons with the Mother of God and St. Nicholas, which were already lost by the 18th century.¹⁸ In that period, an icon with the *Unsleeping Eye* composition was added above the royal doors. The iconostasis received new icons, but only some have been preserved: the Great Cross with the painted Crucifix and the accompanying icons of the Mother of God and St. John the Theologian. During the second half of the 17th century, the construction of the iconostasis was refurbished. On that occasion, the lower part of the central icon of Jesus Christ from the Deësis and the upper part of the lintel with the *Unsleeping Eye* composition was cut off.¹⁹ The icons of Saint Kodratos (Quadratus) and Saint Eustathios (Eustatius), whose inclusion in the program of the iconostasis has not been fully clarified, were added at the ends of the Deësis row. St. Kodratos is one of the Seventy Disciples, which could be the reason for his appearance, while St. Eustathios was probably included as the private patron of now unknown clients. During the last conservation, their icons were removed from the iconostasis and deposited in the monastery treasury.²⁰





The Austro-Turkish wars brought devastation to Krušedol, and the monastery was briefly abandoned at the end of the 17th century. The next wave of changes took place in the middle of the 18th century with the arrival of Jov Vasiljević to the monastery. At that time, the iconostasis was repaired and modified again, and the old royal doors were replaced, as well as the damaged old Royal icons. In 1745, Vasiljević painted new Royal icons at the request of the hegoumenos Haji Isaija Grabovčanin, who also funded the project. The icons were made in the oil on panel technique and placed in wood-carved, gilded and silver-plated frames with multicolored lazures. Although Jov did not sign those paintings, researchers have attributed them to his hand.²¹ Besides Isaija Grabovčanin, the founder's inscription also mentioned the Krušedol hegoumenos Nikifor Radosavljević, but his role in this project is uncertain.²²

In the Royal tier, the central icons depict the Mother of God with the Christ Child and Jesus Christ, following the traditional arrangement of the iconostasis (Fig. 2, 3). Both figures are enthroned, and their faces and bodies are represented realistically, reflecting the new pictorial norms for representing saints. The infant Jesus sits in the Virgin's lap, blessing with his right hand and holding a celestial sphere in his left. The Virgin has a scepter in her right hand and an orb in her left, an allusion to her heavenly status as understood in orthodox church

► Fig. 9. *Jesus Christ, iconostasis, Bođani monastery, 1745-1748.*
Credits: Nedeljko Marković.

► Fig. 10. *Mother of God with the Christ Child, iconostasis, Bođani monastery, 1745-1748*
Credits: Nedeljko Marković.





theology. The other icon shows Christ as the Great High Priest, a common iconographic type, which had political implications for Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy.²³ Christ blesses with his right hand and holds an open gospel in his left. The icon of St. John the Baptist is to the left of the icon of the Mother of God (Fig. 4). He is represented as a standing figure in front of a beautiful Baroque landscape. He emphasizes the rhetorical attitude with his raised right hand and holds an open scroll in his lowered left. In the lower corners of the icon, two scenes from his life are painted in rectangular golden frames – the Baptism of Christ and the Birth of John the Baptist.²⁴

To the right of the icon of John the Baptist, on the south side of the iconostasis, there is a Royal icon that has a peculiar compositional solution. It is a double icon divided into two zones: in the upper part is the Annunciation, the patronal feast of the monastery, and in the lower section are the standing figures of Serbian saints – St. Simeon the Myrrh-bearer, the Holy Despot Maksim, and St. Sava the Serbian Archbishop. St. Simeon is depicted as a monk, while the other two are represented in clerical vestments (Fig. 5).²⁵ Some researchers believe that this arrangement of Royal icons replicated the one on the Wallachian iconostasis. It was not unusual to place the icon of John the Baptist to the left of the Royal Doors and the icon of the church feast to the right. Vasiljević could have seen this arrangement on the iconostasis and just repeated it.²⁶

Finally, the monastery ordered new Royal Doors, which were made by a woodcarving workshop from the southern regions of the Balkans. That workshop had done woodcarving work in the church of Saint George in Novi Sad in 1742 and was then, on the recommendation of Visarion Pavlović, Bishop of Bačka, hired to work in Krušedol. The artist who later painted the doors did not sign them, but stylistic analogies suggest that he could have been someone from the circle of Jov Vasiljević. The round medallion at the top of the door has a half-length image of God the Father surrounded by clouds. In the lower part of the door are eight painted fields in two rows, and the central image is the Annunciation scene with the Mother of God and the Archangel Gabriel. On the sides are the Old Testament kings Solomon and David in precious and lavishly decorated royal robes, crowns, and ermine cloaks. They hold scrolls with the parts of their prophecies foreshadowing the Annunciation and the Savior's birth. In the bottom row are the church fathers who wrote the two major Divine Liturgies in the Orthodox world, shown as archbishops with books in their hands. The side door was added to the iconostasis only in the 19th century.²⁷

The last significant change to the iconostasis was made in 1829 when the local painter Konstantin Lekić first cleaned the darkened icons and painted new icons in the plinth zone and above the side doors. Below the Sovereign icon of St. John is the scene of the Purification of the Prophet Zechariah; below the icon of the Virgin Mary with Christ is the Visitation; below the icon of Jesus Christ is the Hospitality of Abraham; and below the icon of the Annunciation are the Krušedol saints: Bishop Maksim Branković, his mother Angelina, despots Jovan, and Stefan the Blind. Lekić painted the Parable of the Sower above the northern doors and the Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek above the southern ones. Both themes were widespread in 18th-century Serbian painting. Because both icons were in poor condition, they were removed from the iconostasis during the most recent conservation works.²⁸

The Iconostasis in the Bođani Monastery.

There are not many preserved works of Jov Vasiljević that could be compared with the iconostasis of the Bođani monastery. Based on archival documentation, it is known that, in 1742, the Ukrainian painter painted two icons of the Mother of God and Christ enthroned in the nave of the monastic church in Bođani (Fig. 6, 7). A gift from the Orthodox Serbs of Senta, the icons were placed in front of the pillars supporting the dome. The thrones with the icon of Christ and the Mother of God are Baroque examples of church furnishings characteristic for central European Catholic Baroque art, but unfortunately, they have not reached us in their original form. Written sources report that there were scenes of the Passion of Christ connected by a carved or painted vine on the throne of Christ. Around the throne of icon of the Mother of God were the scenes of the Great Feasts shown in the same way. It is most likely that this motif was taken from Russian printed books of the 17th and 18th centuries, which was a common practice. Judging by the once recorded icon inscriptions, the woodcarving seems to have been made by a workshop from Eger in Hungary, famous for its good masters. The Orthodox people there had strong ties with the bishops of Bačka, so it would not be surprising if Visarion Pavlović found the artists there.²⁹

These two icons were painted on a hardwood background with grooved bars on the back. They demonstrate the new painterly concepts that Jov Vasiljević brought to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. The half-length figures of the Mother of God and Christ, with crowns on their heads, are painted on a gold background embellished with large floral ornaments. A floral motif also decorates their garments. Christ holds an open book in one hand and blesses with the other. The Mother of God holds Christ with her left arm and holds a rose in her right hand. Vasiljević painted the flower differently, too. Instead of a green shadow on the face of the key figures, he used soft sfumato in light pink tones. This type of the Mother of God, popular in Ukrainian painting of the period, was a variation of the Mother of God's Immaculate Conception. Teoktist Pavlovski painted a similar icon on the iconostasis of the church in Veliki Soročinci.³⁰

After the Royal Icons, Vasiljević painted the iconostasis in Bođani between 1745 and 1748, probably with several of his associates: Vasilije Romanović, Nikodim Rus, and Vasilije Ostojić (Fig. 8).³¹ As archival records show, there were several alterations on the iconostasis at the end of the 18th and in the first decades of the 19th century. Earlier researchers assumed that the oldest woodcarving was made following the mentioned Ukrainian painters' designs by a woodcarving workshop from Eger. That can be inferred based on the pointed arches, twisted columns, parapet volutes, and fine artistry, rare in south Hungary. The woodcarving of the iconostasis is characterized by pronounced decorativeness and polychromy.³² The oldest painting on the iconostasis is the Great Cross with the Crucifixion, made by a traditionalist master, perhaps Hristofor Zefarović, painter who came from Macedonia, or someone from his circle, and dates to the first two decades of the 18th century.³³ Like on the Krušedol iconostasis, the depictions of the Mother of God and John the Theologian, attributed to Vasiljević's workshop, are around the cross. On the sides, the vine-interlaced medallions showed half-length figures of prophets. The painter of these figures remains unknown. Below is the Deësis as the central icon, and to its left and right are six apostles: Paul, Peter, John, Luke, Thomas, and Bartholomew (left),

and Andrew, James, Simon, Mark, Matthew, and Philip (right). The artists who painted them belonged to Vasiljević's workshop, as evidenced by the signatures written in the beautiful Russian script. The apostles are dressed in chitons of bright and contrasting colors, and they hold their attributes in their hands. The hands and faces are rendered in light ochre without the olive-green shadows characteristic of older paintings. The background is dark blue with silver floral ornaments, and the figures have striking golden haloes.³⁴

The characteristics of Ukrainian religious painting became even more pronounced on the Royal icons where the Mother of God, Christ, and John the Baptist are represented (Fig. 8, 9). The last is an icon with two scenes, similar to the Krušedol example: above the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a scene with an angel feeding the Mother of God in the temple. All the qualities of these masters are most apparent on Royal icons, where the figures are elongated and elegant, in peaceful and tranquil stances. The rendering of the brocade fabrics they wear confirms the high status of the depicted figures and reveals the painter's ability. During the following two centuries, this painting was often highlighted as a model for other churches. The Royal and side doors of the iconostasis were built in the second half of the 18th century and did not belong to the original framework of the altar partition.

The Technique of Jov Vasiljević's Icon-Painting.

A deeper conservation analysis has recently been done on the iconostasis in Krušedol and can reveal many aspects of Vasiljević's technical procedure. The wooden stands of the Royal icons were made of glued boards, with two horizontal braces placed into transverse dados on the back, similar to what was done earlier. The back is painted a dark gray-green color. The drawing is scratched into the base of the thrones painted in the Royal icons of Christ and the Mother of God. The base is made of coarsely granulated white lead and is not finely polished. It is different from the plaster that the 17th-century painters used. The color was added in thin brushstrokes on the gilded and silver-plated base of the painted thrones, which faded over time. That lazure painting technique was widely used on icons and iconostases in Serbian churches of the 18th century.³⁵

A preparatory drawing, executed in freehand on the substrate, can be discerned through the subsequently applied layers. Vasiljević's lines are thin, unlike those on the 17th-century Krušedol icons on which the drawing was done with a brush and diluted brown pigment, which

indicates the use of fine drawing tools such as graphite or a thin metal wire. The draftsmanship of Post-Byzantine painters was usually firm, without repeating lines, and with minor deviations from the basic concept. Vasiljević made ad hoc corrections, trying to achieve the best result. His drawing remained visible in several places under the painted layers of the icon. He engraved the drawing in the background of the gilded thrones of Christ and the Mother of God.³⁶

A characteristic of Vasiljević's Royal icons in Krušedol is the colored layer under the gilding on the entire surface of the icon. For the most part, it is a blue color that corresponds to the painted segments of the sky, while that color is not found on the thrones and halos. The icons of Christ and the Mother of God with Christ have signatures written in red on a gold background. The same initials can be seen in the lower layer, written in similarly ornate gold letters on a blue background. That indicates that the gilding on the Royal icons was done afterward, on the already completed blue sky background. Today, the reason why Vasiljević made this change is not known. We can but speculate that this was a request of one of the church elders or commissioners or that he may have done it to fit the icons into the existing visual ensemble.³⁷

Conclusion.

A deeper conservation analysis has recently been done. The reforms introduced in the Serbian orthodox Metropolitan of Karlovci around the 1740s were inevitably reflected in church painting, which followed models imported from the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra and the Moscow Patriarchate. The decisive moment was the arrival of the Ukrainian painter Jov Vasiljević in 1742, who was, in a short time, promoted to the leading painter. With the support of the patriarch Arsenije IV, he founded a painting school at the court in Sremski Karlovci, which became obligatory for all icon painters by the decision of the patriarch. The new artistic expression introduced by decree soon became the gold standard in the religious painting of orthodox Serbs. Vasiljević was also honored with other prestigious jobs. He was engaged to paint iconostases in the most important Serbian monasteries - Bodjani and Krušedol, and in the latter, he also executed wall paintings with his associates. That painting became a role model for other Serbian monasteries in the following decades. Many younger painters passed through his school and workshop, adopting the stylistic and iconographical novelties from the master and introducing them into Serbian traditional orthodox art. That model of religious painting will serve as a standard in the religious art of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci until the eighth decade of the 18th century.

Notes:

1 Medaković 1980, p. 16–36.

2 Dolgova, Ivanova 2009, 2013, p. 74–75; Jovanović 2012, p. 61–62; Пузовић 2015, p. 209–215.

3 Davidov 2004, p. 171–190; Simić 2020, p. 80–86.

4 Timotijević 2003, p. 201–203; Simić 2019, p. 332–334.

5 Timotijević 2003, p. 201; Carras 2005, p. 134.

6 Timotijević 2003, p. 204–206.

7 Timotijević 2003, p. 214–216.

8 Davidov 1969, p. 121–125.

9 Mikić, Šelmić 1981, p. 20.

10 Todić 2013, p. 246–250; Todić 2007, p. 179–188.

11 Medaković 1971, p. 265–269.

12 Lesek 2005, p. 287–288.

13 Stošić 2011, p. 95–107; Momirović 1980, p. 75.

14 Todić 2007, p. 179–183.

15 Due to the great degree of destruction of archives in the past, the biographies of these painters are known today only in fragments. They were collected and published in detail in: Todić 2013.

- 16 Mikić, Šelmić 1981, p. 22-23.
 17 Timotijević 2008, p. 22-23.
 18 Petković 1992, p. 115; Todić 2013, p. 52-58.
 19 Timotijević 2008, p.24-27.
 20 Ridolfi 2012, p. 32.
 21 Vasić 1971, p.77-92; Mikić, Šelmić 1981, p. 21-22.
 22 Timotijević 2008, p. 28.
 23 Timotijević 1998, p. 387-398.
 24 Timotijević 2008, p. 28.
 25 Mileusnić 1990, p. 237-238.
 26 Timotijević 2008, p. 31.
 27 Timotijević 2008, p. 29-30.
 28 Timotijević 2008, p. 31.
 29 Momirović 1980, p. 85-87; Mirković 1952.
 30 Timotijević 1996, p. 72-73; Cf.: Миляева 1991, fig. 5.
 31 Vasić 1971, p. 84-86; Mikić, Šelmić 1981, p. 21.
 32 Momirović 1980, p. 75-84.
 33 Todić 2013, p. 221-232.
 34 Momirović 1980, p. 79.
 35 Korolija-Crkvenjakov 2013, p. 47-56.
 36 Ridolfi 2012, p. 43-44.
 37 Ridolfi 2012, p. 45-48.

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The Double-Sided Icon of a Seventeenth-Century Galician Painter in Transcarpathia

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RÉSUMÉ : Le Musée Ethnographique de Budapest conserve une icône en mauvais état qui provient de Patakófalú (*Stara Stuzhytsya*), plus précisément de l'éparchie de Moukatchevo. Sur l'une des faces se trouve une représentation Éléousa de la Mère de Dieu, un type iconographique qui était extrêmement populaire dans le sud de la Pologne – de même qu'en Hongrie – à partir du dernier quart du XVII^e siècle. Certaines icônes appartenant à ce type étaient même considérées comme étant miraculeuses. Associée à une certaine signification, la Mère de Dieu était peinte pour demander la protection contre le danger et les souffrances futures. Sur l'autre face de l'icône se trouve une scène de la Crucifixion avec des personnages demandant l'intercession, dont un homme portant le costume d'un noble et sa famille. L'inscription votive en ruthène a été transcrite sur le fond de la scène. La signature du peintre permet d'identifier Stefan Wiszeński de Sądowa Wisznia. Dans le présent article, une photographie conservée au Musée National de Lviv, ainsi que des *urbaria*, permettent de déchiffrer l'inscription et de comprendre les circonstances de la commande.

MOTS-CLÉS : icônes ; *Theotokos Éléousa* ; représentations votives ; *urbaria* ; éparchie de Moukatchevo.

REZUMAT: La Muzeul Etnografic din Budapesta se păstrează, într-o stare precară de conservare, o icoană provenită de la Patakófalú (*Stara Stuzhytsya*), din eparhia de Mukachevo. Pe una dintre fețe este reprezentată Maica Domnului Eleusa. Acest tip iconografic a fost extrem de popular în sudul Poloniei în ultimul sfert al secolului al XVII-lea, fiind cunoscut și în Ungaria, unde a fost reprezentat în mai multe versiuni și unde mai multe icoane s-au remarcat ca făcătoare de minuni. Replici ale lor au fost pictate la cerere, cu scopul de a proteja de pericol și de suferință viitoare. Pe cealaltă față a icoanei este redată Răstignirea, printre figuri fiind reprezentați și donatorii: un bărbat în costum nobiliar și familia sa. O inscripție votivă în limba rutenă traversează partea de jos a imaginii. Conform semnăturii, autorul icoanei a fost Stefan Wiszeński din Sądowa Wisznia. O fotografie din arhiva Muzeului Național din Lviv și urbariile au făcut posibilă descifrarea inscripției și înțelegerea circumstanțelor în care a fost comandată icoana.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: icoane; Maica Domnului Eleusa; reprezentări votive; urbarii; eparhia de Mukachevo.

The double-sided icon of the Ecclesiastical Collection of the Museum of Ethnography in Budapest, procured by the ethnographer Hiador Szripszky (1875-1946) in 1912, made an impression on him not on account of its quality but thanks to the donator's figure in noble costume. The Greek Catholic wooden church of St. Nicholas of Stara Stuzhytsya (Patakófalú/ Ósztuzsica, Ung County), from which the icon originates, was built, during the vicariate of János Bradács (1732- 1768- 1772), later Greek Catholic Bishop of Mukachevo/ Munkács, probably between 1764/ 1767 and 1768 and was subsequently transformed in 1904, with its original three section design substantially truncated.¹ Although the building had lost its signature features, several of its furnishings survived, including an icon salvaged from the former church.²

The tradition of icons painted on both sides in the local church is traced back to Byzantium, where such examples appeared in the late 12th century. The obverse of large-size Byzantine processional icons would most commonly feature a painting of the Theotokos, with an accompanying gospel feast on the reverse. References to or instances of the making of double-sided icons in the Carpathian region are found from the 15th and 16th centuries.³ Icons painted on both sides, which have been preserved from the 17th century, are not uniform in their form, size, or framing, nor is it possible to determine their function precisely in every case. Sometimes, in line with tradition, they only had a processional function, while, in other

instances, they would also be used as icons exposed for commemoration and veneration. Processional icons mounted on poles did not have a specific place inside the church; they were mostly exhibited in a way that one could walk around them. Double-sided icons were painted for churches with a votive purpose as well, with traditional icon compositions complemented by portrait-type depictions. Icons could be offered for deceased and living members of the family alike. These were probably not used in processions; it is most likely that they were displayed or hung in the nave or the vestibule, in fixed positions.⁴ The custom of painting epitaph pictures usually of a smaller size and set iconography failed to achieve prevalence in Carpathian icon painting.⁵

A dozen of the double-sided icons were made in a characteristically graphic style with bright colours, reflecting a simplifying mindset – only to be disapproved by later church hierarchy – as well as in various arrangements. Dating to the start of the 17th century and the first third of the 18th century, these are the works of the masters of Rybotycze near Przemyśl. Working to higher standards and in a more professional manner, the icon painters of another painting centre, Sądowa Wisznia, located halfway between Przemyśl and Lviv, followed a constant octagonal shape. They decorated their double-sided icons with templet framing, treated with fine polychrome paint or silver foil and toned with coloured varnish for gold effect.⁶ By virtue of its form, the icon from Stara



Stuzhytsya also belongs to this category.⁷

The obverse of the octagonal board bears a depiction of the Virgin *Eleousa*, i.e., an image of the Theotokos of Mercy, regrettably with areas of considerable missing paint in a few significant portions of the composition. In this iconographic type that suggests intimacy – sometimes also called *Glykophilousa*, i.e., ‘of the Sweet Kiss’ – with her left arm, the Theotokos holds her Child in tight embrace, the Infant’s face touching His mother’s cheek and His hand resting in Mary’s right hand pointing at Him. As a typical arrangement in the attire of the Theotokos, a red *maphorion* (shawl) is slung backwards from the left over her right shoulder like a stole.

The *Eleousa-Glykophilousa* icon type gave rise to several variants, differing mainly in the posture of the Christ Child. Its late-Byzantine form, which may be regarded as a prototype, was further developed in Italo-Byzantine and Cretan icons, inter alia in the *Glykophilousa* by the workshop of Andreas Ritzos (1421-1492) from the second half of the 15th century, conveying a message akin to that of the ‘Mary of the Passion’ icon type. Via Cretan icons, this iconography became known in the West as well during the 16th century. One such example is the 1614 engraving of Rafael Sadeler (1584-1632), which reproduces the principal characteristics of Italo-Byzantine icons: The Child holds a scroll in His right hand, and, on His right foot, turned toward the viewer, the sandal is untied as a sign of humility.

In the Carpathian region, the *Eleousa-Glykophilousa* icon type was present from as early as the 16th century, though its painting was much less common than that of the *Hodigitria*. Nonetheless, it would become very popular from the early 17th century onward, with dozens of examples surviving mostly in Southern Poland. Several of the local icons are venerated as miraculous images: in



Lopienka, Chłopice and Sidzina – the most well-known of them being the Werchrata icon subsequently transferred to the Basilian Monastery of Krechow.⁸ In 17th- and 18th-century *Glykophilousa* icons, one of the distinctive elements of the Greek image type would be removed – the dropping sandal in allusion to humility – and, the uniformity of iconography notwithstanding, numerous details also indicate differences: the varying position of the hands, the way the shawl and the robe are tied, as well as the occasional invisibility of the right hand of the Christ Child holding a scroll near the knees. Formerly, the miraculous icon of Werchrata-Krechow was seen as the prototype of a number of *Glykophilousa* icons.⁹ However, this image of the Virgin Mary is in fact from a later period than many local *Glykophilousa* icons: it was bought by Izaak Sokalski, Hegumen of the Monastery of Werchrata, in Zamość from a master by the name of Matwej only around 1682, and the icon would become widely known as late as 1688 as a result of miraculous events, such as pillars of fire, bloody tears and healings.¹⁰ Its iconographic details are also at variance with the original Italo-Byzantine composition or the nearly equivalent composition by Sadeler: It features neither the motif of Christ holding a scroll in his right hand, nor of the maphorion slung backwards over Mary’s right shoulder.

Some researchers attribute the dissemination of the *Glykophilousa* iconography to the influence of Sadeler’s engraving.¹¹ Besides a range of icons, this iconographic variant includes the icon of Lopienka currently found in Polanczyk, painted in the first half of 17th century, though its veneration as a devotional image began later.¹² It features garment details that are also seen in the icon of Stara Stuzhytsya: The white *chiton* of the Christ Child is tied around by the ochre himation in a cross shape at the front. The miraculous icon of Chłopice also repre-



sents this group. The corresponding legend recounts the succour rendered miraculously to a 15th-century Greek horse-dealer, as well as a Marian apparition, but its popularity as a devotional image would spread similarly only in the 18th century.¹³ In the icon of Stara Stuzhytsya, due to the damage of the paint coat, the position of the hands of the Infant Christ cannot be determined with complete accuracy. Nevertheless, it is apparent that, on the basis of the attire of Mary and the Christ Child, the icon may also be assigned to this iconographic group.

In 1655, a work by the Kyivan Orthodox monk Joannicius Galea-towski entitled *A New Heaven* was published in Lviv, providing renderings of Western-European legends. Accounts of the miracles of the Theotokos contained in the book include the description of an image of the Virgin Mary kept in Rome, recording that, on Good Friday, her visage changed to pale and then to black. As the *Eleousa-Glykophilousa* type incorporated the meaning of the iconography of 'Mary of the Passion' as well, some local engravings recorded the name as 'Mary of Rome'.¹⁴ Even though *Eleousa* depictions appeared in the engravings of local liturgical books and on devotional cards, it seems that the cause of shared iconography is not to be found in some renowned prototype but in the meaning of the image type instead. Interestingly, the interpretation of the Carpathian *Glykophilousa* icons happens to be illuminated by the inscription of an icon from Hungary. The original late Renaissance style architectural frame of the image of the Virgin Mary pre-served in the Greek Catholic wooden church of Mogyoróska displays *Kon-takion* 13 of the *Akathistos Hymn*.¹⁵ The text prays for the intercession of the Theotokos, especially in times of danger. Thus, it is linked to the late- and post-Byzantine meaning of the image type and explains the common devotional image function of *Glykophilousa* icons particularly amid the vi-

◀ Fig. 1. Stefan Wyszynski: *The double-sided icon from Stara Stuzhytsya – Eleousa*, c.1688, Budapest, Museum of Ethnography.

Credits: Krisztina Sarnyai.

◀ Fig. 2. Stefan Wyszynski: *The double-sided icon from Stara Stuzhytsya – Crucifixion with the donators*, c.1688, Budapest, Museum of Ethnography.

Credits: Krisztina Sarnyai.

▶ Fig. 3. *The bilateral icon of Stara Stuzhytsya, photograph before 1912.*

Credits: National Museum in Lviv.

cissitudes of the secular and ecclesiastical history of East-Central Europe in the 17th century: wars, as well as discord over jurisdiction and the concomitant economic hardships. In the proximity of the restless north-eastern borderlands, the iconography of the Stara Stuzhytsya *Eleousa* may also be associated with this semantic field of seeking protection and help. In the icon, drawing the Christ Child toward her body, Mary looks ahead with an earnest facial expression. In the image type, the motherhood of the Theotokos and her intercessory role are combined.

In line with the old tradition, the other side of the double-sided icon features a composition of the *Crucifixion*. Traditional iconography employs minute details to visualise the drama of the Good Friday event. The lower third of the octagonal picture area affords the view of a nondescript, bleak field, which is closed by a barren, white mountain range on the horizon. On a white strip of the sky above, the grim blue of the approaching darkness descends. In the upper third of the picture, a colourful band of clouds divides the earthly world from the celestial sphere with an ochre background glittering in gold, where hover the sign of the end time, the human-faced double motif of the Sun and the Moon. In the central axis of the icon, the cross with the dead figure of the crucified Christ stands firm. The ends of the loincloth are blown by the wind behind, blood flows in streams from the wounds and down the cross. In accordance with Western depictions, a crown of thorns is placed on the head of the Saviour, while, in keeping with Eastern iconography, the footrest under his feet pierced through by two nails is slanted. In allusion to the Resurrection, the letters on the upper cross beam and on the footrest reveal the text 'IC XC NIKA'.

A unique feature of the composition is that it is not the ancillary figures mentioned in the Gospel that are portrayed on the two sides of the cross. On the left, clasping his hands for prayer, a young man with long hair and a moustache stands, wearing a dolman of mid-thigh length, reddish boots with spurs and a sword strapped to his side.¹⁶ To the right is his wife. Due to the damaged paint, the young woman's attire cannot be described with full accuracy; it seems that she is dressed in a collared white blouse with broad sleeves and possibly a shoulder



◆ Fig. 4. Rafael Sadeler (1584-1632): *Eleousa*, 1614.
Source: Kruk 2011.

▲ Fig. 5. Master Matwej from Zamość (?), *The miraculous icon of Werchrata-Krechow*, before 1682.
Source: <http://kpba.edu.ua/ua/statti/305-krexiv.html>.

▼ Fig. 6. *The miraculous icon of Werchrata-Krechow, after restoration*.
Credits: J. Mazur.

corset, as well as a pleated apron of a lighter colour over her dark skirt reaching the ground. Her head is covered by a white mobcap or a long scarf tied around it. In front of each adult figure is a small child: one wears a white dress girded with a red belt; the other only has the face left intact. The painted surface has considerable deficiencies in several areas, making it hard to determine what the elongated, cylindrical object with a dark colour in front of the child might be.

In the National Museum in Lviv, several double-sided icons of a similar composition featuring secular characters are kept. By virtue of the texts of the inscriptions and the portrait-type painting of those depicted in them, these have been classified as votive portrait-icons for church use as distinct from typologically different epitaph icons, with their inscriptions and occasionally different compositions unambiguously indicating their commemorative function.¹⁷ Sources and extant specimens suggest that this genre synthesising the traditional icon and portrait was primarily popular in villages and small towns well until the 19th century, while major cities such as Lviv were marked by a tendency to paint Western-like epitaphs or portraits predominantly of the Polish type.¹⁸ Scenes of the *Crucifixion* with donors would be painted on the reverse of popular Marian images in a number of instances, with the aim to reinforce the petition for intercession.

A peculiarity of the Stara Stuzhytsya icon is that it depicts the donor – a young man – and his facial features more emphatically than usual. The figure turns slightly to the right yet clearly directs his glance at the viewer, a circumstance that intensifies the portrait effect as opposed to epitaph icons, where the characters look to Christ. Similarly departing from convention, the figures do not comply with the rules of the customary hieratic

system of proportions. In terms of ratios, the crucified Christ is smaller than those standing by the cross. In exposing votive portraits in the church, the icon would be displayed or hung with the obverse showing Mary positioned outward, and the side depicting the figures praying around the crucified Christ would be turned forward when Mass or a prayer of petition or thanksgiving – a *Moleben'* – was said for the health of the donors.¹⁹ At the bottom of the icon of Stara Stuzhytsya, no trace of pole mounting is visible, implying that the icon must have been exhibited hanging in the church. In the strip of the sky in the background of the image, an inscription in Cyrillic runs in four lines: “СЕЙ ОБРА(З) ДАЛ ИЗРОБИТИ РАБЪ / БОЖИЙ МИЛО ИЗ ЖОНОЮ СВОЕВЪ ВАСЬКОВЪ / ЗА ДОБРОЕ ЗДОРОВА СВОЕ / И ЗА ПРЕСТАВШАГОСА / НЕБОЩИКА СТЕФАНА / ВАШЕЦИН ТО КОТОРОГОУБИЛ/ЛАКАТОШУВСИНЪ РОК БЖ АХПИ” (i.e., ‘This image was ordered to be made by the servant of God Milo, along with his wife, for their good health and the deceased Stefan, who departed eight years [ago]’).²⁰ The inscription concludes with a signature on the right: “СТЕФАН МАЛАР ВИШЕНСКИЙ”, below on the left is written in the Roman script: “STEFAN WASCZYN”.²¹

The icon aptly represents the style shift under way in local icon-painting in the 17th century. The landscape, the generously simplified graphic details and the emphatic, thick and dark contours were executed in harmony with the graphic orientation of an earlier icon-painting tradition. Distinct shapes – especially faces – elaborated by toning, details hinting at contemporary costumes, the ornamentation on the cloth slung over the man’s arm, as well as an increasingly more unified representation of space and figures, all signal the advent of the late Renaissance in a local context. As part of this transformation, Lviv, the city of masters with the finest education spearheading the renewal of icon painting in a European style, came to be established as the leading painting centre of the



◀ Fig 7. Greek master from Lviv: *The miraculous icon of Sidzina*, turn of the 17th century.

Source: Kruk 2011.

▲ Fig. 8. Józef Goczemski (active 1745-1778), *The miraculous icon of Chlopice*, second half of the 18th century.

Source: Biskupski 2003.

Carpathian regions. Following the decline of the Przemyśl icon-painting workshops, however, masters from smaller towns within its sphere of influence would also appear in the city centres, intent on embracing this new orientation in painting style, even if at a lower level of training or experience. Of these towns, the first to become a widely known icon-painting centre was Sudova Vyshnya/ Sądowa Wisznia, situated halfway between Przemyśl and Lviv, where the presence of icon painters is recorded in archival sources from the 16th century onward. The number of painters began to rise after the 1630s and 1640s, though they failed to form a common guild or workshop. Moreover, in search of commissions, they would frequently relocate to other towns temporarily or permanently.²² In contrast with the icon painters of other towns, a shared characteristic of the Vyshnya masters is that they would nearly always sign their works and add the master label *wiszenski/ wyszynski* (i.e., 'from Vyshnya') to their names as an indication of their origin or painters' circle membership even after their relocation. They are united by a markedly late-Renaissance and early-Baroque painting approach, as well as by a distinctive common style combined with some established pictorial motifs.²³

Their scope of activity is easy to delineate and trace. As their eastward and westward expansion was checked by the operation of the masters of other towns, their icons are known from Staryi Sambir/ Ószambor and Turka

in Galicia, from where they left via the Uzhok Pass for Transcarpathia. Their departure was all the more justified as the decades in question saw a rise in demand for the transformation and extension of previous archaic two-tiered iconostases in the churches of the Bishopric of Mukachevo. Icons, entire iconostases, and murals for wooden churches may be attributed to the Vyshnya masters, particularly in Ung County. In the 1640s, Ilia Brodlakowycz Wiszenski/ Brodlakovich Vyshenskyi, who was painting in an unprecedented quality in the new late-Renaissance icon painting style, also embarked on this route; he is nowadays considered one of the founding members of the painters' circle in Ukrainian scholarship, coupled by the assumption that he might have obtained his qualifications in Lviv. After his work in Turka (1646), Brodlakowycz settled in Mukachevo, but his icons also survive from the area of Baia Mare/ Nagybánya.²⁴ Although the Vyshnya masters worked to different standards, none of them reached Ilia's level, and some even painted in a lowest level, provincial style. In the 1650s, two Feodors, Jacko (1653), Hricko (1656), Ivan Malar (*Crucifixion*, Sukha/ Szuha, 1678), and Jakov (1682) were active.²⁵ Multiple masters had the name 'Stefan', which is featured on the icon of Stara Stuzhytsya.

Conducting church surveys in Transcarpathia from 1925 to 1930, Mihajlo Dragan (1899-1952), art historian of the National Museum in Lviv, examined and described



◀ Fig 9. *Eleousa*, second half of 17th century, Mogyoróska, Greek Catholic Church of Saints Peter and Paul.

Credits: Zoltán Bakos.

several iconostases and icons in their original locations, without repainting, and attempted to identify their makers. He pointed out that, as suggested by the relevant sources, one of the Stefans worked in Botelka in 1656 and in the areas of Dobromil (Przemysł, Múzeum Okręgowe) in 1675, whereas, in Tyushka/ Csuszka, a different, less-skilled master seemed likely to have operated.²⁶ In the Velikiy Berezny/ Nagyberezna District of Ung County, Vyshnya masters worked in numerous villages. In the church of nearby Sukhiy/ Szuhapatak, the iconostasis completed in 1701 – currently in a repainted condition – is the work of Stefan from Vyshnya, and the murals of the *Last Judgement* and the *Passion* on the north wall of the church were also made by a Vyshnya master.²⁷ Without referencing a source, Dragan notes that, in 1688, the iconostasis in a place none other than Stara Stuzhytsya was signed by a master named Stefan.²⁸ The little Ruthenian mountain village at the crossroads of the boundaries of Zemplén, Ung and Galicia lies at a half-a-day's journey from both the Uzhok Pass and Velikiy Berezny along the road to Uzhhorod/ Ungvár with a westward bifurcation from Uzhok/ Uzsok. Based on the correspondence of the name and the place of discovery, it may be taken for granted that the double-sided icon of Stara Stuzhytsya is the work of one and the same Stefan Wiszenski. The dating of the icon is also corroborated by stylistic features. Although an ever-larger number of icons by the Vyshnya masters held in museum collections have been successfully identified – since the current locations of the icons of Stara Stuzhytsya are unknown – the double-sided icon under analysis is as yet the only verifiable known piece by this Stefan Wiszenski.²⁹

Surviving in fragments, the donation inscription of the signed icon of Stara Stuzhytsya, however, reveals little about the patron. Stara Stuzhytsya is recorded in sources in 1599 for the first time, and it is included in *urbaria* from the 1630s.³⁰ The village was part of the Demesne of Uzhhorod owned by the Drugeths. Documents mention the *Schultheiß* (municipality head) of Stara and Nova Stuzhytsya or Nagyszutzsica and Kisszutzsica, the local exempts – probably members of the lesser nobility doing

military service – as well as the *batko*, i.e., the priest.³¹ The 1671 socage conscription records four exempts with Galician Ruthenian surnames for Stara Stuzhytsya.³² Stefan Wasczyn's name has not been found. The Hungarian surname Lakatos (=locksmith) appears in document later.

The family name 'Milo' deciphered from the inscription seldom occurs in contemporary documents. The *Schultheiß* recorded in the 1701 *Conscriptio* of Stara Stuzhytsya had a similar name: 'one *scultetus* named Simeon Millyo, owner of sundry goods and chattels'.³³ With the extinction of the Homonnai-Drugeth family, the village became an estate of the Bercsényis at the end of the 17th century.³⁴ The name 'Milyo' is also found in the documents for the year 1711, when the village came to be owned by the Royal Treasury as part of the assets confiscated with the demesne of Miklós Bercsényi, found guilty of disloyalty.³⁵

Judging by his attire, the Stara Stuzhytsya donor is more likely to have been an individual not featured in the *urbaria* though. His figure neatly fitted into the populous gentry of Galicia. In consequence of their modest financial situation, its members would frequently accept economic posts in major courtyards. In the second half of the 17th century, however, they had a military role and subsequently assumed legal responsibilities as well. They were easily assimilated and were set apart from the nobility of their country only in terms of confession.³⁶ The final quarter of the 17th century was a difficult and complex period in the history of Transcarpathia. From the endorsement of the Union of Uzhhorod in 1646 to 1689, a series of bishops would follow one another on the episcopal throne at close intervals.³⁷ Affected by military actions, the region became a transit zone, providing ample reason to make votive offerings as the families shown in the respective icons could well be among those whose male members could take part in the defence of the region.

However, in Stara Stuzhytsya, an incident of a different kind – by no means unusual at the time – happened. As the *Urbarium* from the year 1685 accounts, the village burnt down completely, with only the houses of four farmers mentioned by name spared and everyone else fleeing.³⁸ The condition of the wooden church at that point is unknown.³⁹ Nonetheless, the data on the construction of the iconostasis in 1688 might imply that the village was rebuilt in the next three years, its church was repaired or built anew, and – in all probability thanks to donations – the icons of the iconostasis painted by the Galician master, as well as the votive icon must have been completed. Later data also indicate that local wooden churches would survive only for a few decades. The 1747 census describes the wooden church of Stara Stuzhytsya again as collapsed, yet the parish numbering twenty families maintained its own priest.⁴⁰ In 1751, the *canonica visitatio* found a new church once more in a good condition, supplied with all the necessary icons and equipped with three bells.⁴¹ Notwithstanding the construction work and the completion of the furnishings, a few fragments of the 17th-century iconostasis, along with the votive icon, were preserved. Albeit situated on the periphery of 17th-century painting in historic Hungary in terms of place of discovery and quality, the latter may perhaps be expected to attract the attention of Ukrainian or Polish icon scholars as well on account of its iconography and history.

Notes:

1. Сирохман 2000, p. 122-123, 127. Based on a 1904 newspaper article (Наука/Унгарь, without any specific bibliographical data), Syrokhman summarises that the renovation of the Greek Catholic church closed due to its dilapidated condition was ordered; it was consecrated on 17 April 1904. He supposes that the transformation must have been performed by the Polish master from Ustrzyki Górne who had constructed the third wooden church in Nova Stuzhytsya (Újsztuzsica) in 1894. Today it is an Orthodox church. Literature submits 1764, but until 1767 Mihály Emánuel Olsavszky was the vicar.
2. Dating from the 19th century, elements of the current furnishings of the church – the iconostasis and the side altars – have been thoroughly repainted. The author wishes to thank Oleh Bolyuk for the data and photographs. Архів ІН НАНУ, фонд 1, опіс 2, storage units 523. Олег Болюк, *Звіт з комплексної мистецтвознавчої експедиції відділу народного мистецтва Інституту народознавства НАН України на Центральну Бойківщину та північно-західне Закарпаття (закарпатську Бойківщину)* 2005 р.: *Народна архітектура та дерев'яне церковне облаштування із додатковою інформацією про інші види декоративно-прикладного мистецтва.* (Research report); Болюк 2008, p. 97.
3. Processional icons would feature Mary, Christ and the saints, as well as gospel or allegorical scenes according to traditional iconographic types. Double-sided icons of the Crucifixion or of other themes related to the events of Good Friday were chiefly employed during the procession of the Good Friday Entombment Vespers. Kociv 2013, p. 169-172.
4. Косів 2018, p. 55.
5. Косів 2018, p. 59. Epitaph icons emerged in the region on the initiative of Vyshnya/ Wisznia masters. The majority of these specimens date from the second half of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century; this tradition would disappear over time. Among the Rybotycze works, as few as three epitaph icons are known. Funerary flags decorated with portraits represent a unique local genre.
6. Лашко 2020, p. 66.
7. 81,5x69 cm (32,08x27,16"), Museum of Ethnography, Budapest, Inv. No. 81.79.156. Its first description: Puskás 2020, p. 100-101.
8. Of these, the devotional image of Sidzina must have been made by a Greek master in Lviv in the late 16th century, and its veneration would fully develop only in the 19th century. It was installed in a Roman Catholic church in 1807. Kruk 2011, p. 43.
9. Kłosinska 1973, p. 174-176. Today, the original devotional icon of Werchrata-Krechow is found in St Paraskevi's church in Lviv.
10. Kruk 2011, p. 46.
11. Biskupski 2003, p. 273. For a recent systematic discussion of the iconographic connections of various Eleousa types and their specimens in Poland, see: Sygowski 2020, p. 54-61.
12. Biskupski 2003, p. 274-275.
13. Depicting Mary as an icon at the top of a wild-pear tree appearing to the horse-dealer Korniakt, the engraving by Józef Goczemski (active from 1745 to 1778) shows an octagonal field within the icon frames; the clothing of the Theotokos is also identical: a maphorion slung over the right shoulder. Biskupski 2003, p. 283, Picture 10.
14. Biskupski 2003, p. 272-273, 279 – after Kondakov – publishes the engraving showing the Eleousa; its Cyrillic inscription reads: 'A depiction of the miraculous image of the Mary of Rome'.
15. The icon of Mogyoróska harks back to Italo-Greek iconography even in one of its minute formal details: the himation of the Infant Jesus folded over crosswise from right to left. A literal translation of its inscription: 'O all-praised (Holy) Mother Who didst bear the Word, holiest of all the saints, accept now our (prayer as a spiritual) offering, and deliver us from all misfortune, and rescue from the torment to come us (all) who cry to Thee: Alleluia!'. Puskás 2020, p. 98-99.
16. The icon painter featured a dolman cut in a shako-shape – prevalent in the second half of the 17th century – terminating in curved and pointed ends (leppentős) on the back of the arms. The narrow-embroidered cloth slung over the donator's right arm might be a funerary wiping cloth, possibly also in relation to the child dressed in white.
17. Жолтовський 1978, p. 77, 170-171; Откович 1990, p. 34-36.
18. Откович 1991, p. 61, 90. Александрович 2007, p. 369-371. Crucifixion composition similar to the icon from Stara Stuzhytsya – with a donator's family – from 1660, from the area of Turka, National Museum Lviv. Major cities were characterised by conformance to Polish painting art.
19. Суховарова-Жорнова 2004, p. 254.
20. I thank Roksolana Kosiv for drawing my attention to an old photograph of the icon, kept in the archives of the Lviv National Museum, which helped me to decipher the full inscription. About similar titles: Косів 2018, p. 52-61.
21. The name is written in the Roman script in this form.
22. Александрович 2013, p. 15-19.
23. Гелитович 2011, p. 209-222. The Vyshnya masters' typical, recurrent motifs include: a band of clouds framing the image of Mary, the Sun and the Moon, as well as the manner of painting stylised plants.
24. Puskás 2013, p. 47-70. The double-sided icon from Ciolt/Csolt by Brodlakowycz would also survive as a piece used in funerary processions, as well as – probably – as an epitaph.
25. Драган 1970, p. 95. On the painter Ivan: Жолтовський 1978, p. 45-47. Гелитович 2010, p. 34. Гелитович 2007, p. 167-171.
26. Драган 1970, p. 96. The National Museum in Lviv also holds a Paraskevi icon made in Yasinka Masiova in 1648, bearing Stefan Javorowski's signature. Stefan Dzegalowicz (iconostasis of Ulucz, mid-17th century) was a member of the painters' circle as well.
27. Some sources suggest that the church was built in 1679, while other data point to 1700 as the year of its construction. Its Baroque side-altar incorporating an icon of the Protection of the Theotokos is noteworthy, even though – contrary to Otkovich's view – it was not produced by one of the Vyshnya masters. Откович 1990, p. 86.
28. Драган 1970, p. 95. The author did not publish any photographs; his notes were handed over to the National Museum in Lviv in 1991; they remain unprocessed.
29. Recent data on the work of the Vyshnya masters seem to have disproved the hypothesis that their activities ended in the late 17th century. This is reinforced by an old photograph of the Museum of Ethnography, Budapest, showing a Crucifixion icon painted somewhat coarsely by a Vyshnya master also by the name of Stefan in 1729, destined for Stavne/ Fenyvesvölgy. Its reproduction: Puskás 2020, p. 88.
30. Sebestyén 2009, p. 179.
31. HU MNL OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 105. – No. 001 (p. 146-149). According to the Uzhhorod *Urbarium* of February 1631, 'Our Father', 'Creed' and 'Ten Commandments' fees were collected from the *batkos*; Stuzhytsya belonged to the district of Krainik Gergely Antaloczy; the Schultheiß in Nagyszttuzsica was Ivan Smikov, and it had four libertines and 28 families – no priest is mentioned, only a *cerkó*, i.e., church; for Kisstuzsica, 26 families were recorded; the *Schultheißes* were Pavel Zusek and Janko Sedor, the *batko* was Roman Pap, who was, in payment of tithe, to give one pound of wax – in case he had no honey – and pig tithe every two years.
32. HU MNL OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 063. – No. 016 (p. 14-15) The 1671-year census records four exemptions for Stara Stuzhytsya: Ivan Szenyv, Simeon Szenyv, Lukacs Szenyv and Dimitri Pauk – all of Galician origin based on their family names. The one pound of wax continued to be collected from the clergy, even though, after the 1646 Union of Uzhhorod, priests were not supposed to be under delivery obligation.
33. HU MNL OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 115 – No. 027 (p. 80).
34. HU MNL OL E 156 – b. – Fasc. 007 – No. 076.
35. In the conscription from 30 October 1711, the name of *Schultheiß* Milyo Szenyv is listed for Stara Stuzhytsya (HU MNL OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 063 – No. 028; HU MNL OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 115 – No. 032). The Conscripio of October 1718 to February 1719 records population re-settlement for Stara Stuzhytsya; in 1718, all the village fields were destroyed by hail (HU MNL OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 105 – No. 003).
36. Смуток 2018, p. 410-411.
37. For the relevant Greek Catholic aspects, see: Bársony 1996 p. 9-14; Pirigyi 1996, p. 15-28.
38. The *Urbarium seu Connumeratio* from the year 1685 lists names, but no exempt is recorded. HU MNL OL E 156 – a. – Fasc. 088 – No. 066 (p. 120.) notes that a handful of farmers remained, and the rest fled.

39 As, in line with the practice of wooden church construction, the popularity of particular types would extend over an entire valley in Transcarpathia, the wooden church of Stara Stuzhytsya was probably similar to the churches of the neighbouring

villages, Sukhiy and Tykhyv/ Tiha, built in the second half of the 17th century, i.e., of the Boyko type. Сирохман 2000, p. 129. 40 Ember 1947, p. 101.

41 Гаджега 1924, p. 175. A translation with the author's commentary.

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Icons from the Carpathian Mountains Region in the 'Spiritual Treasure of Ukraine' Museum in Kyiv

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RÉSUMÉ : Le musée 'Trésors spirituels de l'Ukraine' à Kiev comprend plus de 400 icônes allant du xv^e au xix^e siècles. Dans cette collection, plusieurs exemplaires témoignent d'une série de traits stylistiques indiquant que leur origine pourrait se situer dans la Ruthénie des Carpates, de Pokutia ou de Maramureș. Ces icônes se caractérisent par une forme simplifiée ; une palette de couleurs limitée ; une composition schématique ; des formes stylistiques bien connues aux siècles précédents ; un fond doré gravé ; et des cadres en bois particulièrement sculptés. Le présent article décrit six de ces icônes : l'icône de la Mère de Dieu sur Trône, peinte par Michail Popovich de Kolomyia, dont les œuvres se trouvent dans les églises de Budești-Josani et de Budești-Susani ; l'Annonciation de la fin du xvii^e siècle, œuvre du peintre d'icônes de Hărniciești à Maramureș et Bălan-Josani ; une icône du xviii^e siècle, la Descente du Saint-Esprit, peinte dans un style similaire à celui de l'icône de Saint Nicolas de Shelestovo, près de Moukatchevo (aujourd'hui au Musée de l'Architecture et de la Vie Populaires d'Oujhorod) ; et trois icônes – Christ Pantocrator, Théotokos Hodegetria et Archange Michel – provenant du même atelier que les Trois Saints Hiérarques du Musée d'Ethnographie Régionale d'Ivano-Frankivsk.

MOTS-CLÉS : icônes ; art post-byzantin ; Ukraine ; Roumanie ; xvii^e-xviii^e siècles.

REZUMAT: Muzeul „Comori spirituale ale Ucrainei” din Kyiv include peste 400 de icoane, databile din secolul xv până în secolul xix. Între ele, câteva prezintă trăsături stilistice care indică o proveniență din Rutenia Carpatică, Pokuttya sau Maramureș. Ele se caracterizează printr-un aspect simplificat, o paletă limitată de culori, compoziție schematică, forme stilistice caracteristice secolelor precedente, fundal auriu gravat și rame din lemn adânc sculptate. Șase dintre aceste icoane sunt descrise în acest articol. Icoana Maicii Domnului tronând a fost pictată de Mihail Popovich din Kolomyia, ale cărui lucrări se află în bisericile din Budești-Josani și Budești-Susani. Icoana Bunei Vestiri, databilă la sfârșitul secolului al xvii-lea, a fost creată de autorul icoanelor de la Hărniciești, din Maramureș, și Bălan-Josani. Icoana din secolul al xviii-lea a Pogorării Sfântului Duh este pictată în stil similar cu cea a Sfântului Nicolae din Shelestovo, de lângă Mukachevo, aflată acum în Muzeul Arhitecturii și Vieții Tradiționale din Uzhgorod. Ultimele trei icoane, Hristos Pantocrator, Maica Domnului Hodighitria și Arhanghelul Mihail, provin din același atelier în care a fost pictată și icoana celor Trei Sfinți Ierarhi păstrată la Muzeul de Etnografie Regională din Ivano-Frankivsk.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: artă post-bizantină; icoane; artă ucraineană; artă românească; secolele xvii-xviii.

In Kyiv, on Desyatinnaya Street, there is a private museum called 'Spiritual Treasures of Ukraine'. It was established by Ihor Tarasovitch Ponamartchuk (1954-2020), a respected cardiologist. The museum includes, among others, a rich collection of Orthodox church art, primarily icons, but also antique books and artisanal handicrafts, such as reliquaries, crosses, encolpia, and metal icons.

The museum's collection of over 400 icons is a representative sample of successive periods in the history of Orthodox church painting and the most important artistic group. The majority of works date to the 18th century and hail from central Ukraine, but there are also examples from other periods and areas, such as Red Ruthenia, Volhynia, and Carpathian Ruthenia. Unfortunately, the icons have not been catalogued and the collector did not record their provenance, so it is not clear from which Orthodox churches and areas they come from. Therefore, the determination of their date of creation and origin had to be conducted based on comparative studies in terms of iconography and style.¹

The museum's collection includes a group of icons whose stylistic features indicate that they originate from Carpathian Ruthenia, Pokuttya, or Maramureș. They are characterised by a simplified, flat, heavily contoured form, a particularly limited colour palette and schematic, and a generalised composition. Their creators often used stylistic forms evident in previous centuries, which often

hinders the correct attribution and dating. These icons usually have moulded or engraved golden background and wooden, deeply carved frames covered with geometric and vegetal ornamentation.

The icon of the *Mother of God on the Throne* (Fig. 1) is an example of such a work, painted in a style characteristic of the 16th century. The Mother of God is depicted here sitting on the throne with the Christ Child against a background of moulded primer with an oblique gold-painted lattice of crosses. The inner surface of the icon has been additionally separated by a profiled slat from the now-partly-damaged frame decorated with a moulded stylised and geometrized leafy twig ornament, and with attached convex cabochons.

The Virgin and Christ are depicted as full-length figures, facing each other in three quarter view. Mary is dressed in a long red cloak with a delicate flower and star design, and a light blue dress. She is embracing her Son with her left hand and pointing at him with her right hand. Jesus, in a light-coloured chiton and a red himation with trimmings of small pearls, is raising his right hand in a gesture of blessing. The heads of both figures are framed by wide, artistically decorated nimbuses. A high throne, with openings in its sides and with leaf-ornamented legs, draws attention with its polygonal, angular form.

The form is characterised by linear values outweighing three-dimensional ones, a sparse palette of dim colours



and a preference for decorativeness. Figures are built with distorted proportions and quirks of shape, sometimes almost bordering on caricature, as with Mary's left hand. Face modelling is also interesting; against the dark grounding, with a characteristic brick-red hue, a black, sharp contour delineates all the key elements: long eyebrows merging into the nose ridge, almond shaped eyes, lips, the oval of the cheeks and chin, and a characteristic volute of the chin. The middle of the face is marked with fine and dense white lines and the cheeks are rouged, probably with whitened red.

The icons of the same painter, identified as Michail Popovich from Kolomyia, can be found, among others, in Orthodox churches in Maramureș. Examples survive in Budești-Josani (an almost identical icon of the *Mother of God on the Throne*, Fig. 2) and in Budești-Susani (*Christ on the Throne*).²

The icon of Mary in particular is very similar to the one described above. The two icons display many common elements: the frame decorated with stylised broken twig, moulded background with the lattice of crosses and dots in the centre, a plant twig shaped like a wave in the Mother of God's nimbus, a three-dot pattern on the robes, a high chair with sharp angular armrests. Moreover, the figures have elongated proportions, long necks and large hands, including the ineptly delineated left hand of the Mother of God. The facial features of Mary and Christ in both icons are almost identical, with long, gentle arches of the eyebrows, almond shaped eyes with elongated outer eye corners, long, narrow noses and full lips. Christ on the Throne was probably paired with the icon of Mary in one iconostasis, which can be corroborated by the similar size of the wooden boards, as well as the same frame and background. Additionally, research by Alexandru Baboș revealed additional icons by the same painter from the Orthodox churches in Budești-Josani: Saints Peter and Paul, Saint Paraskevi, and the Last Judgement. Even though at first glance they do not resemble (especially

▲ Fig. 1. *Mother of God on the throne*, wood, distemper, mid-17th century, Carpathian Ruthenia.

Crédits: Valentyn Kuzan.

▼ Fig. 2. *Mother of God on the throne*, wood, distemper, c.1640, Budești-Josani (Maramureș, Romania).

Crédits: Alexandru Baboș.

the last one) the idiom of the creator of the icon of the Mother of God from Kiev, a detailed comparative analysis of these works reveals common features, especially in details such as background, frame, and robe ornaments. Furthermore, the St. Paraskevi icon strikes the viewer with an archaic form of landscape and architectural motifs, and the Last Judgement shows the robes of the figures in line with 16th-century trends. This interesting painter harked back to the previous century, in terms of depicting both formal and iconographic features.

The Annunciation (Fig. 3) from the end of the 17th century is another icon painted in a style characteristic of the previous century. It was painted in distemper on a recycled wooden board, with a kovcheg (a sunken field) enclosed by a carved frame, with an arcade resting on trusses carved into it, with a cymatium in the archivolt and stylised roses in the top corners.³ Its composition is particularly static, laconic and symmetrical: The Archangel Gabriel positioned on the left and Mary on the right. The angel, in three-quarter profile, dressed in two tunics of different lengths, is standing with his right hand raised in blessing and holding a cross-shaped staff in his left hand. Mary, in a light blue gown and a dark brown maphorion, is sitting on a throne under a canopy with her hands folded on her chest. In front of her on the table lies an open book in which the text of the angel's greeting has been written:

ВІСЬ ДВО РАДЪСА ОБРАДОВАНАА МРИЕ ГДЪ С [ТОВОЮ]
(Luke 1:28).



▲ Fig. 3. *The Annunciation*, wood, distemper, end of 17th century, Carpathian Ruthenia.

Crédits: Valentyn Kuzan.

▼ Fig. 4. *The Entry into Jerusalem*, wood, distemper, end of 17th century, Hărnicеști (Maramureș, Romania).

Crédits: Alexandru Baboș.

The painter put a foundation inscription next to it, on a white cloth covering the table:

**СВИ ОБРАЗЪ КЪПІЛЪ РАБЪ БЖІ ОМОФРА ХЪТАРНОГО
Й ГАЗДЫНБВЪ СВОЕВЪ ЗА ОТПІЩЕНІЕ СВОЕ ГРЕХОВ.**

At the top, under the arch of the frame there are clouds in the open sky from which a dove flies forth, representing the Holy Spirit. The silver, neutral background is complemented by modest architectural motifs on the left and a stone wall in the middle of the scene. A narrow strip of earth at the bottom, originally probably green, is filled with undulating hillocks and meagre grassy vegetation.

The icon is characterised by a sparse colour palette, limited to dim yellows, browns and reds and muddy blues. The features characteristic of this icon-maker include compact, general figures, strong, black contours of flat forms, linear values outweighing decorative ones. His other works can be found in the Orthodox church of the Birth of the Mother of God in Hărnicеști in Maramureș. These are *The Ascension and Entry into Jerusalem* (Fig. 4).⁴ These icons have already been studied by Alexandru Efremov in the 1960s, and then by Marius Porumb.⁵ The latter researcher also identified further works of this painter: *The Annunciation* in Bălan-Cricova (Sălaj County),⁶ *The Ascension* of unknown origin in the Museum of Folk Architecture and Life in Uzhgorod,⁷ and *Archangel Michael* in the Art Museum in Cluj-Napoca.⁸ Furthermore, preliminary study in the Orthodox church of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel in Bălan-Josani (Sălaj County) has revealed the heavily damaged and blackened royal doors to be most probably the work of the same master. Alexandru Baboș found one more example of the royal doors in the Orthodox church in Giulești (Maramureș County). A remaining fragment of



Saint Nicholas from the Orthodox church in Kolodno in the Carpathian Ruthenia Museum in Uzhgorod can be added to this collection, albeit circumspectly and in hypothetical terms, as substantial damage makes it difficult to pinpoint its style with certainty.⁹ The icon of *Christ Pantocrator* on the southern wall of the nave of the Church of St. Paraskevi in Desești (Maramureș County) is stylistically close as well.

A detailed stylistic analysis strengthens the conviction that most icons mentioned above originated in one workshop. Disregarding the artistic elements of the frames, which were made by a woodcarver and not a painter, many other common formal features can be identified. Symmetrical and static compositions are built by means of accumulating grounds, against the background of an engraved gold-painted vegetal design. Architectural motifs are flat and schematic and landscapes are conventional, not reflecting reality. All general and detailed forms are delineated with black contours. The figures are small with compact frames and large heads. Folds in the robes are imitated with the use of thick black lines representing shades, and fine, sometimes zig-zag and chaotic lines representing gradations. Thick, black eyebrows merging into the nose ridge which give the figures' faces a menacing and ominous expression are one of the clearly visible features, which facilitate the attribution. The painter worked at the end of the 17th and maybe at the beginning of the 18th century in the area of Maramureș and Transylvania.

The 18th century icon, *The Descent of the Holy Spirit* (Fig. 5) is another example that can be added to the group. The scene is depicted on a small wooden board in the field bordered by a frame painted red and separated by a black contour. A front on figure of a man with a crown on his head, holding a long strip of fabric in his spread-out arms, is depicted in the middle of the foreground in the entrance to the arched passage. This is the personification of Cosmos, shown against the dark background, symbolising the part of that universe that does not yet know of Christ.

The twelve apostles have been placed on both sides: two at the front and four further back, depicted one above



◄ Fig. 5. *The Sending of the Holy Spirit*, wood, distemper, second half of the 18th century, Carpathian Ruthenia.

Credits: Valentyn Kuzan.

► Fig. 6. *Saint Nicholas*, wood, distemper, 1777, Shelestovo (Mukachevo, Ukraine).

Credits: Uzhgorod Museum of Folk Architecture and Life.

▼ Fig. 7. *Saint George*, wood, distemper, second half of the 18th century, private collection.

Source: after Сидор 2003.

► Fig. 8. *Christ Pantocrator*, wood, distemper, 18th century, Carpathian Ruthenia.

Credits: Valentyn Kuzan.

► Fig. 9. *Virgin Hodegetria*, wood, distemper, 18th century, Carpathian Ruthenia.

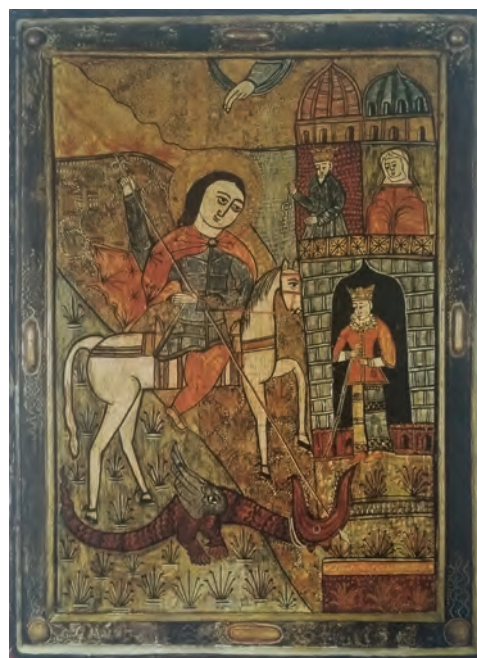
Credits: Valentyn Kuzan.

▲ Fig. 10. *Archangel Michael*, wood, distemper, 18th century, Carpathian Ruthenia.

Credits: Valentyn Kuzan.

▲ Fig. 11. *Three Saint Hierarchs*, wood, distemper, 18th century, Museum of Regional Ethnography in Ivano-Frankivsk.

Credits: Alexandru Baboş.



the other, in line with the rule of accumulating grounds. At the very top a dove symbolising the Holy Spirit is flying down surrounded by a halo. This vertical composition has been placed against a background divided horizontally into strips filled with stylised plants and single architectural motifs, mostly presented in foreshortening, closed with arcaded windows and oculi. This background constitutes one of the most typical features of this painter's oeuvre.

His manner is also characterised by a strong graphic style, a flat, simplified form, an archaic way of building depth, and a limited, dim colour palette, consisting mainly of reds, yellows, and greens. There is no doubt that the same painter created the icon of *Saint Nicholas* from the Orthodox church of St. Michael rescued from the village of Shelestovo near Mukachevo, dating to 1777 and now in

the Museum of Folk Architecture and Life in Uzhgorod (Fig. 6). In that icon, each motif is also flat and delineated by a black line. The faces of Christ and Mary become narrower in the lower sections, just like with almost all the apostles in the icon from the collection in Kiev. A sparse colour palette, flat form and particularly characteristic, schematically drawn plants in the background, separated into strips, make it possible to ascribe both icons to one painter. The same features can also be observed in the icon of *Saint George*, now in a private collection (Fig. 7). The colours are slightly richer and more diverse here, as we can identify three shades of red, light browns, muddy white, as well as dimmed blue and green. But all the icons have a flat, graphic form, the same way of depicting architectural motifs such as window gaps and stone walls, as well as graphically drawn plants, arranged in symmetrical, stylised shrubs.



Moreover, an almost identical icon The Descent of the Holy Spirit was in the Orthodox church of St. Nicholas in Maidan, which burned down in 1974.¹¹ Its reproduction was published in the 1970s by the Ukrainian researcher Hryhoryj Lohvin.¹² It has not been established whether the icon burnt together with the church, but the lack of any mention of it in later literature allows us to assume that that may have been unfortunately the case.

Three icons from the Kyiv collection have undoubtedly come from the same painter's workshop: *Christ Pantocrator*, *Virgin Hodegetria*, and *Archangel Michael* (Fig. 8, 9, 10). All three were painted on almost square wood planks, with similar dimensions, which indicates that they were probably sovereign icons from the same

iconostasis. The images have a similar frame, but in the icon of the Mother of God most of its elements have been lost. They consist of three main parts: an internal pilaster arcade with an archivolt decorated with a cymatium; the middle string of astragalus placed along the three (and originally perhaps four) sides of the rectangle, and an external board of smooth wood, nailed at a slant, with a profiled border and a graphic ornament, consisting of flowers delineated with black and zig-zag lines. On the icon of the Archangel, there is an inscription at the top: СТЬИ МІХАЙЛЪ (St. Michael). Moreover, wooden rosettes have been glued in the top corners of the arch and winged heads of angels have been painted. These are Renaissance elements that appear in Ruthenian icons in

the 17th century and are often present in the 18th century as well, especially in icons that emulate earlier styles. The background is always painted gold and engraved with a simplified vegetal ornamentation. The icons have a sparse colour palette, consisting of reds, browns, and blues. The graphic manner prevails in them, in which a clear black contour delineates every motif and divisions within it. *Chiaroscuro* modelling is missing and no attempts have made to indicate a perspective. A clear distortion of proportions of figures is also visible and the iconography is traditional. The representation of Christ Pantocrator shows the book open on the verse from Mt 25:34. It is, in fact, a Deësis icon, as it includes small figures of the Mother of God and John the Baptist on clouds. The Virgin Hodegetria icon has new small elements, such as crowns on the heads of both figures and a string of beads around Mary's neck. The Archangel Michael is depicted as a soldier, in a suit of armour, a short tunic, cloak, and high stockings, with a sword and a sphere in his hands, stamping on the recumbent Satan with one foot. Even though usually in icons the archangel stands on a cushion, a footrest in the shape of an infinity symbol or a snake curled in the same shape, the motif of stamping on Satan as an anthropomorphic creature, understandable for all, is also traditional, albeit less frequent.

In the Museum of Regional Ethnography in Ivano-Frankivsk another icon by this painter was discovered: *Three Saint Hierarchs* (Fig. 11).¹³ It is more pictorial, with deeper, more saturated colours, and a fuller modelling of robes, which could indicate the loss of the upper layer of colours in the described icons from the Kyiv collection. What they have in common are graphic ornaments on the frame and in the background, close facial features delineated with a dark contour against the light ground, underlining details with a dark sharp line and the shading of the robes.

All the icons described above most likely hail from the regions of the Ukrainian Eastern Carpathian Mountains. Historically, these lands belonged to the Polish and Hungarian Kingdoms. These were mostly rural areas, poor, and with limited economic development. Probably the lack of financial means made it impossible for parishioners to employ recognised painters from important cultural centres. Therefore, works that are less refined in terms of technique and artistry are more frequent in rural Orthodox churches. Painters who made their icons in a style that alluded to earlier developments were probably also more likely to be employed by small provincial centres. Icons with a simple form and composition, as well as traditional in style and colours were more easily understood by uneducated audiences, unfamiliar with the world at large. It is worth emphasising that these are three separate categories of works: technically weak, primitive-like or archaic-like, which can often be found in provincial and poor centres. But all these features can also characterise one piece. The icons discussed here have elements of both archaic-like features, i.e., a conscious use of old stylistic means, and primitivism-like features, expressed here in simplified forms, graphic values or a sparse colour palette. These are universal features, present in each era, irrespective of the style of the times, and, therefore, trying to date these icons is complicated. In other words, they usually look older than they really are. The works from one workshop being present in Orthodox churches in various modern countries is not a surprise, given the current state of research and knowledge. It reminds us not only of the cultural coherence of the Ukrainian-Polish-Romanian-Hungarian-Slovak borderland, but also of the mutual exchange of services and goods, in this case religious icons.

Notes:

1 This research was made possible thanks to the Visehrad Fund ID 52010248 (02-06.2021).

2 Porumb 1975, ill. 13-14; *Monumente* 1982, ill. on the cover; Porumb 1998, p. 64. The painter's name was determined thanks to the research by John Paul Himka (after Betea 2013, p. 216).

3 Groniek 2021, p. 14-24.

4 Porumb 1975, ill. 22-25; Porumb 1998, p. 158; Efremov 2002, no. 148-148, ill. 277, 278; Man 2007, p. 187.

5 Porumb 1975, ill. 22-25.

6 Porumb 1998, p. 158.

7 Ж- 797, 81x62 cm; Puskás 2008, p. 217, ill. 52.

8 Porumb 1998, p. 158.

9 Ж- 1381, 104x62 cm; Puskás 2008, p. 118, ill. 18.

10 Сидор 2003, nr. 66.

11 Сирохман 2000, p. 475-477.

12 Логвин 1973, p. 105, ill. 61.

13 ІФКМ, КН 23279, І-48.

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russian icons



icônes russes

Products of Russian Visual Culture in the Treasury of Rakovica Monastery in Belgrade (17th – 20th Centuries)

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RÉSUMÉ : L'article présente une série d'icônes et d'objets liturgiques provenant du trésor du monastère Rakovica à Belgrade, en Serbie. Plusieurs exemples, datant de différentes périodes, témoignent de l'influence culturelle russe sur le milieu local serbe. Le monastère possède six icônes peintes dans le Palais des Armures du Kremlin à Moscou vers la fin du XVII^e siècle. Ces icônes, qui comptent parmi les témoins conservés les plus anciens, nous renseignent sur les relations serbo-russes au sein de la vie religieuse de Belgrade. D'innombrables guerres ont jalonné l'existence du monastère Rakovica, ce qui explique que le trésor soit aujourd'hui relativement modeste. Il comprend, par exemple, quelques icônes russes des XIX^e et XX^e siècles, principalement des artefacts produits en série, sans valeur artistique significative. Toutefois, les revêtements en argent de trois de ces icônes nécessitent une analyse approfondie. Aussi, le trésor comprend-il plusieurs livres liturgiques imprimés à Moscou ou dans la Laure des Grottes de Kyïv, de même que deux objets liturgiques.

MOTS-CLÉS: icônes russes ; objets liturgiques ; Serbie ; Palais des Armures du Kremlin ; monastère Rakovica.

REZUMAT: Articolul discută câteva icoane și obiecte liturgice din tezaurul mănăstirii Rakovica din Belgrad, Serbia. Ele reprezintă exemple din diverse perioade care ilustrează importanța culturii ruse în mediul sârbesc. Mănăstirea deține șase icoane pictate în atelierele din Palatul Armurilor de la Kremlinul Moscovei la sfârșitul secolului al XVII-lea, care sunt printre cele mai vechi exemple păstrate ale relațiilor sârbo-ruse în viața religioasă a Belgradului. Datorită numeroaselor războaie care i-au afectat existența, tezaurul mănăstirii Rakovica este relativ modest. Astăzi, include câteva icoane rusești din secolele al XIX-lea și al XX-lea, dar cele mai multe dintre ele sunt artefacte cu producție de masă, fără valoare artistică semnificativă. Între ele există, totuși, trei icoane de un oarecare interes datorită ferecăturilor lor de argint. În plus, tezaurul include câteva cărți de cult tipărite la Moscova sau la Lavra Pecherska din Kyiv și doar două obiecte liturgice.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: icoane rusești; obiecte liturgice; Serbia; Palatul Armurilor de la Kremlin; mănăstirea Rakovica.

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Since the 16th century, Russia has positioned itself on the map of the Christian world as the protector of Orthodoxy and a destination for all Church representatives in search of spiritual and material patronage.¹ Until the end of the 17th century, especially during the reign of Peter I the Great, Muscovite Russia regularly sent donations to churches throughout the Orthodox Oikoumene. The model of assistance then changed, but it continued to exist despite certain limitations.² Russia had an official right to protect the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire according to the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca of 1774. This role was strengthened with the Treaties of

Adrianople (1829) and Hünkâr İskelesi (1833), as well as after the Crimean War.³ The ties between the Serbian Church and Russia can be traced from the monks' visits to Russia to collect financial aid in the 17th century, to the import of a large number of Russian liturgical books and objects and the adoption of the Russian model of the liturgy in the 18th century.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, the import of Russian artefacts continued. More and more local painters and theologians were educated in Russia, and Serbian art started to develop as a result of direct contact with Russian art.⁴ After the October Revolution, many members of the Russian intellectual elite, monks, bishops and artists found refuge in Serbia, strongly influencing Serbian religious life and culture. Nowadays, numerous icons, liturgical books and objects that are found in Serbian

◄ Fig. 1. *Privileges of Peter the Great, 1701. Historical Museum of Serbia, Belgrade.*

Courtesy of the Historical Museum of Serbia, Belgrade.

churches and monasteries originate from the Russian Empire, including the cities of Kyiv and Odessa. Most of them are “lower-quality ‘mass circulation’ icons (*разхожая*),”⁵ from the 17th to the early 20th centuries.

The history of the Serbian Orthodox monastery of Rakovica, located in a Belgrade suburb, is only partially known. We still do not know when it was built, but there are legends that suggest that it was founded by King Milutin, or some other Serbian medieval ruler.⁶ Sources testify that one of the founders or restorers was the Wallachian ruler Radu (most probably Radu the Great).⁷ What is certain is that the monastery had been continuously active since the beginning of the 17th century, except for some interruptions caused by the wars between Austria and Turkey. It was important for the ruling Obrenović dynasty in the 19th century, so they maintained it, adding some buildings and restoring the complex. The Church of the Holy Archangels even became the mausoleum of the dynasty’s cadet branch, because the last living member of the family, Tomanija Obrenović, buried her husband and all of their children there.⁸

The most valuable artefacts of Russian origin in Serbia were once kept at Rakovica, but its treasury no longer reflects Russia’s real impact and presence. The biggest blow to the monastery came after the Russo-Turkish War (1735-1739), in which Russia and the Habsburg Monarchy fought against the Ottoman Empire. Fearing Turkish reprisals for helping the Austrians in the war, the Serbian patriarch Arsenije IV organized a mass exodus of his people, known as the Second Migration of Serbs.⁹ The monks from Rakovica went with them and fled to Fruška Gora, to the monastery of Velika Remeta, which was located on Habsburg-controlled territory.¹⁰ They took the bulk of Rakovica’s movable property with them, and these items were never returned.¹¹ They included over 50 icons, a multitude of books, silver and gilded objects, as well as silk and velvet garments. Some of that property later ended up at the metropolitan’s court in Sremski Karlovci, some artefacts were sold off, and what was left in Velika Remeta was stolen during the Second World War.

Representatives of Rakovica Monastery in Russia.

The first representative of Rakovica Monastery in Russia was Neofit, the newly appointed Metropolitan of Belgrade in 1647.¹² He travelled to Moscow with a letter from the Rakovica monks in which they complained that “at their monastery the church roof was hollow, books were destroyed and vestments were scarce.” In pursuit of financial help, they also gave him an icon of Christ’s Ascension as a gift for the Russian Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. Metropolitan Neofit and his entourage waited in the border town of Putyvl for three months for the tsar’s reply. Unfortunately, he refused to receive the delegation in Moscow, so they were eventually sent away, but received gifts in money and sable furs.¹³

In 1701, a second delegation was more fortunate. During the Great Turkish War, negotiations between Russian and Turkish delegates were enabled and assisted by the Serbian Patriarch Arsenije III and Serbian monks, including the hieromonk Grigorije from the monastery of Rakovica.¹⁴ Grigorije was fluent in Greek and Turkish so he was entrusted with the task of illegally carrying letters between the Russian emissary Procopius Bogdanovich Voznitsin, who was in Petrovaradin, and Alexander Mavrokordatos, the interpreter of the Turkish repre-



▲ Fig. 2. *Saint Nicholas of Zaraysk*, Spiridon Grigorjev 1687. Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad. Courtesy of the Matica Srpska gallery.

sentatives in Belgrade.¹⁵ Also, Grigorije was involved in transmitting secret messages and maintaining the connection between the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Russian envoy Yemelyan Ignatievich Ukraintsev. At the same time, he represented Serbian interests and conveyed the demands of the Serbian patriarch to the Russian envoys.¹⁶ In Sremski Karlovci, after seventy-two days of negotiations, on January 26, 1699, a peace was concluded for thirty years between the Ottoman Empire, on the one side, and the Habsburg Monarchy, Poland, and the Venetian Republic, on the other.¹⁷

Having successfully completed his diplomatic missions, in a bid to secure a better position and financial assistance for his monastery, Grigorije went to Russia, accompanied by hieromonk Arsenije and a servant. On their way to Russia, the representatives of Rakovica first met with the Wallachian prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, from whom they received a donation charter (*grammata*) through which he donated “a hundred large pieces of salt from a large saltworks” to the monastery. The charter allowed the monks of Rakovica to take the stated amount of salt every September and “to take it to any market to sell or even bring it to the monastery and not be stopped by anyone.”¹⁸ The Rakovica delegation arrived in Kyiv in March 1701, and then, via Baturyn and Putyvl, to Moscow. With their letters of recommendation from Constantin



▲ Fig. 3. *Mother of God with Christ Child and the prophets*, Leontije Stefanov 1687. Monastery Velika Remeta. Credits: Ivana Ženarju Rajović.

Brâncoveanu, Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem, and Ivan Mazepa, Hetman of Zaporizhian Host, from Baturyn, the road to Moscow was wide open.¹⁹

It is not known what kind of gifts Grigorije brought to Russia, but it is known that his entire delegation received generous gifts in money, rubles, and sable fur in Moscow.²⁰ They stayed there longer than they had planned, and returned to Belgrade with a donation charter from Peter the Great (Fig. 1). Such charters were addressed to a senior official who represented the monastery, as well as determined the time interval of future visits to Moscow and members of the delegation. They state how often, for how many years, and how many monks could go to Russia to collect donations for their monastery.²¹

The Rakovica charter is written in ink on fine parchment, and richly decorated with tempera-painted floral ornaments with an abundance of gilding. It enabled Grigorije, and every future hegoumenos (abbot) of Rakovica, to collect aid in Moscow every seven years, with the help of three to four other monks.²² Today, it is kept in the Historical Museum of Serbia. In addition to this charter, the Rakovica delegation received four large-format icons, many liturgical books and textiles.²³ Also, the hegoumenos brought two more icons from Russia, which he intended to place on the Rakovica iconostasis.²⁴

Icons from the Armoury Chamber of the Moscow Kremlin.

Hegoumenos (abbot) Grigorije received four large-format icons as a gift from Peter the Great: Saint Nicholas of Zaraysk, the Mother of God with Christ Child and the prophets, Saint John the Baptist, and the Holy Three Hierarchs, all painted in 1687 in tempera on wood in the Moscow Armoury Chamber, and originally intended for Vatopedi Monastery on Mount Athos.²⁵ The Armoury Chamber was an imperial art centre for artists who painted palaces and churches, decorated various useful objects, furniture, books, made decorations and flags, ornaments on weapons, designed banknotes, as well as painted icons and portraits. When the new Romanov dynasty rose to power, the Armoury Chamber became the centre of imperial art, headed by the renowned painter Simon Ushakov.²⁶

The icon of *Saint Nicholas with the Virgin and Christ* was painted by Spyridon Grigoriev (Fig. 2). He was a student of the patriarchal iconographer Fyodor Yelizaryev and worked in the Armoury Chamber from 1671 to 1696.²⁷ At the bottom of the icon, there is the following inscription: *ЛѢТА ۞ЗРѢГ СІИ СЪІН ОБРАЗЪ ПИСАЛ ИКОНОПИСЕЦ СПІРІДОНЪ ГРИГОРІЕВЪ*. Saint Nicholas is represented as a full-length figure surrounded by medallions with images of the Virgin and Christ. His arms are wide open, just like a Virgin Orans, holding a Gospel book in one hand, which represents the famous iconographic type of Saint Nicholas of Zaraysk, who protects from hardship, saves the helpless and afflicted.²⁸

The icon of the *Mother of God with Christ Child* (Fig. 3) and the prophets was painted by Leontije Stefanov, as stated in the inscription at the bottom of the icon: *ЛѢТА ۞ЗРѢГ ПИСАЛ СЕН СЪІН ОБРАЗЪ / ИКОНОПИСЕЦ ЛЕОНТИЕ СТЕФАНОВЪ*. Stefanov is mentioned in the registers of the Armoury Chamber from 1676 to 1688.²⁹ A monumental figure of the Virgin sitting on a throne and holding the Christ Child on her lap takes up the central part of the icon. On both sides, there are six oval medallions with figures of the prophets. They all have written scrolls in their hands, as well as different symbols glorifying the Virgin and the Incarnation. This theme has been known in religious art since the 14th century as *The Prophets foretold you*.³⁰ The icon is now kept in the monastery of Velika Remeta and revered as a miracle worker, and has its own liturgical service, composed by Bishop Hrizostom in 1982. Its celebration on August 24 (September 6) was established by the Bishop of Srem, Andrej Frušić, in 1983.

The icon of *Saint John the Baptist* was painted by Ivan Maksimov (Fig. 4), one of the most famous students and associates of Simon Ushakov. He painted portraits and icons, dabbled in the applied arts and became famous for painting miniatures in *Царский титулярник* (1672), *Книга избрания и венчания на царство царя и великого князя Михаила Федоровича* (1627) and *Толковое евангелие* (1678).³¹ At the bottom of the icon, under the saint's feet, there is the inscription: *۞ЗРѢГО ПІСАЛ ЗОГРАФЪ ІОАН МАХІМОВЪ*. This icon represents Saint John with wings, as an angel of the desert and an angelic messenger of Christ's incarnation. The depiction includes important symbols such as Christ the Lamb in the chalice (Melismos) held in his hands, a tree with an axe, and excerpts from the Gospel that verbalize the image. Combining two basic iconographic types into one, the icon strongly emphasises sacrifice and repentance.

The icon of the *Holy Three Hierarchs* (Fig. 5) is one of the earliest preserved works of Tikhon Ivanov. After the



death of his father, Ivan Filatov, who painted the Church of the Assumption in Moscow and the Church of the Holy Trinity in the Kazan Monastery, Tikhon Ivanov distinguished himself as an imperial icon painter. He is considered one of the most faithful followers of Simon Ushakov. After the death of the latter, he became the first icon painter on the payroll of the Armoury Chamber, where he can be traced from 1687 to 1708. Ivanov primarily painted icons commissioned by members of the ruling dynasty.³² The inscription under the feet of St Gregory the Theologian reads: “#зрѣго писал зограф тнханъ ѿвановъ”. The icon shows Saint Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian, and Saint John Chrysostom, all painted on the same background as the above-mentioned Saint Nicholas by Spyridon Grigoriev.

We assume that the unsigned icons brought by the *hegoumenos* were also painted in the Armoury Chamber. One is the icon of the Mother of God of Tikhvin (Fig. 6), and the other is an icon of Christ (Fig. 7), both with accompanying donor's records.³³ On both icons, the in-

scriptions are positioned at the bottom, on the painted border. On the icon of the Virgin it is stated: *поменї гдн рабѣ твоєгѣ григорїа ѿеромїона ѿроднтелє егѣ* (“O Lord, remember your servant hieromonk Grigorije and his parents”).³⁴ The icon of Jesus Christ states almost the same: *поменї гдн рабѣ григорїа ѿеромїона і роднтелє егѣ* (“O Lord, remember your servant hieromonk Grigorije and his parents”).

Due to their large format, as well as exceptional workmanship and beauty, after Rakovica's monks fled to Velika Remeta, the Russian icons were given a prominent place in the interior of the church. The abbot's icons became despotic icons on both sides of the iconostasis. To the left of the Mother of God was the icon of Saint Nicholas of Zaraysk, and to the right of Christ was the icon of Saint John. The icons on the iconostasis were cleaned in 1850, at the time of the restoration of the new church, and placed in the golden frames in which they are still kept today.³⁵ They stayed in Velika Remeta until 1941 when the Independent State of Croatia occupied Srem in the Second World War, and almost all the monasteries in



Fruška Gora were severely damaged. Velika Remeta was plundered and destroyed, and some of its property ended up in Zagreb in 1941, in the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts.³⁶

After the war, some icons were transferred to the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade, and from there to the treasury of Krušedol monastery. Since 1958, three of those icons have been in the Matica Srpska Gallery. The Mother of God with the prophets was returned to Velika Remeta, and now has its own following. The abbot's icon of Christ is also in Velika Remeta, but in the winter chapel in the residence. The icon of the Virgin with Christ is kept today in the Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Belgrade.

Icons with silver revetments.

The Rakovica treasury includes several Russian icons from the 19th and 20th centuries, but most of them are mass-produced artefacts. However, in this category, there are three icons of some interest due to their silver revetments. These are two icons of the *Virgin with Christ Child* and one of the *Holy Mandylion*, all believed to have the apotropaic power of their prototypes. Like in other parts of the Balkans under Ottoman rule in the 19th century, there were many copies of miracle-working Russian icons, and even though the faithful usually knew nothing about their histories, they believed in their protective powers.³⁷ Silver revetments (*riza*, *oklad*), along with votive adornments, had various interpretations in Russian culture. They could be seen as an integral part of the icon and an element of the holistic spiritual experience, but also as redundant accessories that literally fetter the icon and its spiritual significance.³⁸

◀ Fig. 4. *Saint John the Baptist*, Ivan Maksimov 1687. Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad.

Courtesy of the Matica Srpska gallery.

◀ Fig. 5. *Holy Three Hierarchs*, Tikhon Ivanov 1687. Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad.

Courtesy of the Matica Srpska gallery.

▶ Fig. 6. *Mother of God with Christ Child*, unknown author. Museum of Serbian Orthodox Church, Belgrade.

Courtesy of the Historical Museum of Serbia, Belgrade.

▲ Fig. 7. *Jesus Christ*, unknown author. Monastery Velika Remeta.

Credits: Ivana Ženarju Rajović.

Both icons of the Virgin are copies of the miracle-working icon of the *Mother of God of Kazan*.³⁹ Their revetments are not of the same type. One has relief decoration with a combination of neoclassical and Baroque elements, along with zirkons on haloes connected by floral ornaments (Fig. 8). Its stamps have survived – the initials of the goldsmith, T. S. (T. C.), year of 1852, purity mark of 84 gold coins (*zlotnik*) and a rather faded stamp of the city of Moscow, showing Saint George killing the dragon. The other Kazan icon has a plain cover with engraved signatures $\text{ІѠ} \text{Ѡ8}$ КАЗАНСКА (Fig. 9). The garments of the Virgin and Christ are covered with filigree, while their halos are made in the technique of cloisonné enamel in red, blue, white, and turquoise. These are typical for the very end of the 19th century. At the bottom of the metal cover, a purity mark of 84 gold coins and the initials PR (ИР) are present.

The Russian icon of the *Mandylion* from the Rakovica treasury has a plain revetment with relief parts that



▲ Fig. 8. *Mother of God of Kazan*, 1852. Monastery Rakovica.
Credits: Ivana Ženarju Rajović.

▼ Fig. 9. *Mother of God of Kazan*. Monastery Rakovica.
Credits: Ivana Ženarju Rajović.

▼ Fig. 10. *Holy Mandilion*. Monastery Rakovica.
Credits: Ivana Ženarju Rajović.



emphasise the corners in a neo-Baroque but simple shape (Fig. 10). Christ's face is painted in a naturalistic style, and the veil on the revetment has the form of a fabric with upper ends tied in knots, and with fringes in the lower part. The knots come from the Orthodox iconography of the 16th century, where two angels hold a towel in their hands.⁴⁰ The halo around Christ's head is embossed with radial rays and the initials OWH over them. In the lower part of the towel, there is a ribbon with the inscription: *нерушительныи образъ гдѣиши еіа хрѣста*.

Chromolithographs by Yefim Ivanovich Fesenko.

In the treasury of Rakovica monastery, there are two chromolithographs by Yefim Ivanovich Fesenko, titled *View of the Russian St. Andrew's Hermitage on the Holy Mount Athos from the southwest* (1903) and *View of Mount Athos from the north-east* (1908). They are colour lithographs made in the famous printing house founded in 1883 in Odessa, whose owner was the lithographer Fesenko, an honorary citizen of this city. His printing house, based at 47 Rishelyevskaya Street, produced many folk Orthodox books, brochures, and chromolithographs.⁴¹ Among other things, he published the *Album of Images of Holy Icons* (*Альбом изображений святых иконъ*) in 1894, which contains over a hundred different icons that were a source of style and iconography for many church artists. In Rakovica, we found one such example, the icon of the Presentation of the Virgin at the Temple, which was painted after Fesenko's chromolithograph of 1895.

Saint Andrew's hermitage is shown from a bird's eye view, under the protection of the Mother of God and the saints shown in the sky (Fig. 11). The seal was approved by the Saint Petersburg Committee for Spiritual Censorship, and the permission issued by Archimandrite Methodius in 1903 – "Отъ С. – Петербурскаго Духовнаго Цензурнаго Комитета печатать дозволяется. С. – Петербургъ, 23 мая 1903. г. Цензоръ Архимандритъ Меѳодій". The other lithograph shows Mount Athos as a map with numbered monasteries and a legend at the bottom. In

the left corner, there is data for the printing permit from Saint Petersburg Committee for Spiritual Censorship, “Дозволено ценз. С.-Петербургъ, 10 мая 1908. г.”, while the lithographer’s data are in the other corner, “Хромолитографія Е. И. Фесенко, Ришел. Ул., соб. д. No. 49 въ Одессѣ”. There is also information such as “Адресъ, Св. Гора Аѳонъ Турція обитель Св. Троицы / Настоятелю іеромонаху Нифонту съ братіей (въ Кареѣ)” (“Adress, Holy Mount Athos Turkey monastery of the Holy Trinity, to the abbot hieromonk Nifont with brotherhood (in Karyes)”) and “Адресъ чрезъ г. Одессу галвная почта ящикъ No. 74. / довѣренному свято-троицкой обители для передачи на / Аѳонъ настоятелю іеромонаху Нифонту съ братіей” (“Address through Odessa main mail box No. 74 assigned to the fraternity of the Holy Trinity monastery for shipments to Athos to the abbot hieromonk Nifont and his brotherhood”). So, it was commissioned by hieromonk Nifont and the fraternity of the Holy Trinity in Karyes.

Liturgical books and objects.

Among the liturgical books and objects of Russian origin in Rakovica monastery, we find only an *Octoechos* (Book of Eight Tones) published in 1831 in the Kyiv-Pechersk

Lavra, a *Gospel Book* published in Moscow in 1872, and two silver utensils. Religious life and liturgical practice in Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries was impossible to imagine without Russian liturgical books and objects in the 19th century. Therefore, the monastery’s inventory must have had more of them, but the fate of those items is unknown.

The *Gospel Book* was a gift from Tomanija Obrenović, one of the most prominent donors of the monastery in the 19th century. This liturgical book was one of many gifts she donated to the monastery. It was published by the Moscow Synod printing house, revetted with silver in 1874, and donated in 1879. It has some silver hallmarks, such as the initials of the goldsmith АПИ and the assayers mark И.Е. Also, there is a purity mark of 800 zolotniks, and an image of Saint George, a symbol of Moscow.⁴² On the inside of the front cover, there is an oval, horizontally placed silver plate with an engraved dedication: “Сіе Святое Евангеліе / Приложи ся Сіятельство

▼ Fig. 11. View of the Russian St. Andrew’s Hermitage on the Holy Mount Athos from the southwest, Jefim Ivanovich Fesenko (1903). Monastery Rakovica.

Credits: Ivana Ženarju Rajović.





▲ Fig. 12. *Small artophorion for communion of the sick. Monastery Rakovica.*
Credits: Andrej Čukić.

▼ Fig. 13. *Artophorion. Monastery Rakovica.*
Credits: Andrej Čukić.



Госпожа / Томнія Еф. Обреновичъ, обители Рако- / вичкой Храма Святаго Архистратига / Михаила 1879. лѣта” (“This Holy Gospel is a gift from Lady Tomanija Obrenović, wife of Jefrem, to the brotherhood of Rakovica and their church of the Holy Archangel Michael, in the year 1879”).

The cover of the Gospel is completely silver-plated, with relief figurative, as well as floral and geometric decoration. On the smooth surface of the revetment, on the front cover, an oval field with the Resurrection of Christ is present in the middle. Around it, in the corners, there are round medallions with half-length representations of the evangelists and their symbols. All fields or medallions are connected by interlaces. An oval field with a much more elaborate frame and the scene of the Annunciation adorns the back cover. The edges of the back cover are decorated as well, and there is a round foot in each corner.

Both liturgical utensils in the monastery treasury serve for safekeeping the reserved Eucharist. One is the artophorion, a silver box shaped like a simple church structure (Fig. 13). It has a lid in the form of a hip roof, with a cross at the top and a shallow engraved image of Christ on the front. It has four ball feet and a keyhole in the middle of the front side.⁴³ The other liturgical item is a small artophorion for the communion of the sick (Fig. 12), which could be taken outside of the liturgical space of the church to serve communion to the sick and the dying. It contains miniature liturgical instruments inside – a small chalice with a communion spoon, a box for the presanctified gifts and an ampoule for wine.⁴⁴ Only 14.5 cm high, this box is shaped like the front façade of a domed, cross-in-square church, a common architectural form of Eastern Christian religious structures. A crucifix is engraved on the front, while the reverse features a cross with a crown of thorns. Another prominent feature of the decoration of this box is the characteristic Russian-Byzantine geometric interweaving. It is assumed that this unusual chalice was created later, but the spoon, with its Baroque profile and cross on the top, is from the original set. The box for the consecrated gifts can be pulled out of the tabernacle like a drawer.⁴⁵

The 4 cm high wine ampoule is bell-shaped, without any ornaments, with a screw cap. All items are punched with a hallmark indicating the purity of the silver of 84 *zlotniks*, also known as the *Kokoshnik* mark. This type of silver mark allows us to date this item between 1899 and 1908,⁴⁶ while the initials of the artist, MV, and the sign of the city of Moscow reveal its place of origin, if not the name of the creator himself.

The impact of Russian visual culture was widespread in the Serbian Orthodox Church, as evidenced by preserved examples in almost every church or monastery. The treasury of Rakovica monastery may not be the best example to illustrate the Russian presence in Serbia. However, in the era of great closeness with Russia, the monastery possessed some gifts from the Russian emperor Peter the Great, the only surviving examples of art from the Armoury Chamber in Serbian monasteries.

Since the monastic treasury was decimated in the subsequent wars, today these icons belong to another monastery. What is left in the treasury are modest examples that indicate the kinds of icons and books that could have been seen and used in Serbian churches in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Notes:

- 1 The earliest preserved document in the first book of the Diplomatic Office, which testifies to Russian-Serbian ties and Russia's protective role, refers to the journey of monks Atanasije and Joanikije from the Belgrade monastery of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, at the request of Metropolitan Teofan of Belgrade, in 1509. Долгова, Иванова 2009, p. 50.
- 2 See: Gerd 2020, p. 227-228.
- 3 Јовановић 1990, p. 19; Gerd 2020, p. 228.
- 4 Makuljević 2016, p. 137-148.
- 5 Boycheva 2016, p. 105.
- 6 Архимандрит Рувим 1909, p. 8; Флора 1956, p. 78-79.
- 7 It is confirmed by the donation charter from the Wallachian ruler Constantine Besarab, that is kept in The Archives of SASA in Sremski Karlovci (ASASAK, Collection of charters and diplomas, 1701, 25). It is published in: Флора 1956, p. 78-79.
- 8 Her husband Jevrem Obrenović was the youngest brother of Miloš Obrenović (Miloš the Great), Prince of Serbia from 1815 to 1839 and from 1858 to 1860.
- 9 The first migration took place during the Great Turkish War (1683-1699), when a significant part of the Serbian people from various Serbian areas under Turkish rule moved to the northern and western areas under the rule of the Habsburg Monarchy and the Venetian Republic. This exodus was led by the Serbian patriarch Arsenije III Crnojević.
- 10 Руварац 1906, p. 340.
- 11 Шафарик 1866, p. 234.
- 12 Neofit had already visited Moscow 6 years earlier, in 1641, and, as the Metropolitan of Hopovo, received help for Hopovo monastery. On that occasion, he received liturgical objects and books, vestments, money, as well as a donation charter with which he or another representative of the Hopovo monastery and his servants could return to seek help in 7-8 years. Димитријевић 1922, p. 200-201.
- 13 Долгова 2009, p. 264.
- 14 Костић 1958, p. 87.
- 15 Димитријевић 1901, p. 194.
- 16 Димитријевић 1901, p. 193-194.
- 17 Костић 1958, p. 87.
- 18 ASASAK, Collection of charters and diplomas, 1701, 25; Флора 1965, p. 73.
- 19 Documents concerning this visit to Russia were kept in The Moscow Main Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (МГАМИД), and were published in: Димитријевић 1922, p. 222.
- 20 Grigorije received 45 rubles and 55 rubles, as well as 200 rubles in gratitude for his services to Russian diplomacy. Hieromonk Arsenije received 16 rubles and 30 in sable furs, and their servant 5 rubles. In addition, they received a donation of 100 rubles in sable furs for the monastery.
- 21 Many Serbian monasteries had such charters. Каптерев 1885, p. 133-134; Долгова, Иванова 2009, p. 54, 74-75.
- 22 Шафарик 1866, p. 230.
- 23 Димитријевић 1922, p. 222.
- 24 The icon of the Virgin was published in Момировић 1983: 287, but since then it has not been the subject of other analyses. The icon measures 108.2 x 74.8 x 3 cm. The icon of Christ was found during the last field research campaign in the monastery of Velika Remeta, in the summer of 2020.
- 25 Каптерев 1891, p. 522-523, also available at: www.odinblago.ru/priezd_zamilostineuvat. About these icon see also: Васић 1960, p. 79, 92-93, §. 54; Ракић 1986, p. 128; Makuljević 2016, p. 139.
- 26 Грабаръ 1910, p. 425-254; Антонова, Мнева 1963, p. 378-456; Писарская 1975, p. 9.
- 27 Антонова, Мнева 1963, p. 380; Васић 1960, p. 83; Ракић 1986, p. 135-136.
- 28 Шалина 2009, p. 272.
- 29 Васић 1960, p. 83; Ракић 1986, p. 140-143.
- 30 Милановић 1991, p. 410.
- 31 Антонова, Мнева 1963, p. 388, 408; Ракић 1986, p. 132-134.
- 32 Антонова, Мнева, 1963, p. 408, 424, 432-433; Васић 1960, p. 81, Ракић 1986, p. 138-139.
- 33 The Tikhvin Virgin is a variant of the Hodegetria type, where the Child's right foot is visible beneath his himation. On the icon of Mother of God of Tikhvin see: Lossky 1989, p. 85.
- 34 Момировић 1983, p. 290.
- 35 Ракић 1986, p. 129.
- 36 Ракић 1986, p. 30; Симић 2014, p. 625-626.
- 37 See: Gergova 2016, p. 149-157.
- 38 Shevzov 2007, p. 83-84.
- 39 On the icon of Mother of God of Kazan see: Преображенский 2019.
- 40 Пејић 2003, p. 80; Скоп 2020, p. 632-633.
- 41 Лабџинцев, Щавинская 2017, p. 11-19.
- 42 Вујовић 1973, p. 277-278; Даутовић 2016, p. 162, 194-195.
- 43 Даутовић 2021, p. 611.
- 44 Даутовић 2021, p. 621.
- 45 The box is 4 cm wide, while its depth and height are 2.5 cm each.
- 46 Даутовић 2021, p. 621.

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Le patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche, son disciple spirituel Constantin César Dapóntes et l'histoire de leurs icônes

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SUMMARY: This study identified the icon of Virgin Moscovita and the icon of the Holy Mandylion, described in Konstantinos Dapontes' writings, with the icon of the Virgin and the icon of the Holy Mandylion preserved in his family monastery Evangelistria in Skopelos island. We can now retrace the "biography" of these two artefacts, the history of their creation, donation, and multiple "transfers" of the two icons. This study is an important contribution to the history of the early modern period in the Balkans. The icon of the Virgin Moscovite was donated to Konstantinos Dapontes by his benefactor Konstantinos Mavrocordatos in 1741 in Iasi, and the the icon of the Holy Mandylion was donated to Dapontes by his "maître spirituel", the patriarch of Antioch Sylvester in 1762.

KEYWORDS: icons; Mandylion; Skopelos island; Konstantinos Dapontes; Sylvester, the patriarch of Antioch.

REZUMAT: Ca urmare a acestei cercetări, icoana Fecioarei Moscovita și icoana Sfântului Mandylion, descrise în scrierile lui Konstantinos Dapontes, au fost identificate cu icoana Fecioarei și icoana Sfântului Mandylion păstrate în mănăstirea Evangelistria din insula Skopelos, ctitorită de familia Dapontes. Ca urmare, „biografia” celor două icoane, istoria creării lor, donarea și multiplele „transferuri” pot fi acum reconstituite. Această descoperire se dovedește a fi o contribuție foarte importantă la istoria perioadei moderne timpurii în Balcani. Icoana Fecioarei Moscovite i-a fost dăruită lui Konstantinos Dapontes în 1741 la Iași, de către binefăcătorul său, Konstantinos Mavrocordatos, iar icoana Sfântului Mandylion a fost primită în 1762 de la maestrul său spiritual, Silvestru, patriarhul Antiohiei.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: icoane; Mandylion; insula Skopelos; Konstantinos Dapontes; Silvestru, patriarhul Antiohiei.

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*Εἶναι λοιπὸν καὶ πρόχες μοι χαρίτων ἡ ἀγία,
Τῆς παναγίας μου εἰκὼν, αὐτὴ ἡ σεβασμία*

Le XVIII^e siècle a probablement représenté l'apogée de la période pendant laquelle les dons roumains étaient envoyés en abondance vers les Lieux Saints de l'Orient chrétien. Ainsi, de nombreux représentants de ces lieux se rendaient en Valachie et en Moldavie et y restaient des années durant, attirés par la générosité proverbiale des princes qui gouvernaient les Principautés Danubiennes. Les princes phanariotes avaient attiré et amené eux-mêmes de nombreux intellectuels grecs qui, aux côtés des autochtones, avaient créé un milieu culturel de haute tenue intellectuelle. C'est dans ce contexte favorable que nous rencontrons les deux Levantins voyageant dans les Pays Roumains dont nous nous occupons dans cette étude : le patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche (1680 ? - 1766, patriarche orthodoxe d'Antioche et de tout l'Orient entre 1724-1766) et Constantin César Dapóntes (*Κωνσταντῖνος Καισάρης*

Δαπόντες, 1713/14-1784). Plus particulièrement, notre étude a été inspirée par la découverte récente, dans le monastère Evangelistria sur l'île de Skopelos, de deux icônes qui nous renseignent sur un patriarche, Sylvestre d'Antioche, et son disciple, Constantin Dapóntes. La découverte qui nous a fourni les informations à partir desquelles nous avons démarré cette recherche concerne l'activité de Constantin Dapóntes. C'est donc par cette figure que nous allons commencer.

Savant grec du XVIII^e siècle, Constantin Dapóntes s'est imposé par le grand nombre de ses ouvrages (la plupart en vers), notamment par ses remarquables écrits historiques, qu'il a rédigés en tant que témoin oculaire, ayant également un accès direct aux documents de l'époque. Aussi, un autre aspect significatif est que Dapóntes fait



▼ Fig. 1. Icône 'Moscovite'. Église du monastère de l'Annonciation (Ευαγγελισμός) à Skópelos, avant la restauration.

Clichés : Monastère de l'Annonciation, île Skópelos, Grèce.

▲ Fig. 2. Icône 'Moscovite'. Église du monastère de l'Annonciation (Ευαγγελισμός) à Skópelos, pendant la restauration.

Clichés : Monastère de l'Annonciation, île Skópelos, Grèce.

▼ Fig. 3. Icône 'Moscovite'. Église du monastère de l'Annonciation (Ευαγγελισμός) à Skópelos, après la restauration.

Clichés : Monastère de l'Annonciation, île Skópelos, Grèce.

▼ Fig. 4. Icône provenant du monastère de la Nouvelle Jérusalem à Moscou, fin du XVIIe siècle, aujourd'hui dans les collections du Musée d'icônes 'André Rublev' à Moscou, auteur inconnu.

Crédits : Policarp Chițulescu.

♦ Fig. 5. Mère de Dieu Kykkos, 1668, peintre: S. Ouchakov, aujourd'hui dans les collections de la Galerie d'État Tretiakov.

Source : <https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/artist/Simon-Ushakov.html>, consulté le 23 nov. 2022.

souvent référence à sa propre vie et offre de nombreux détails biographiques.¹

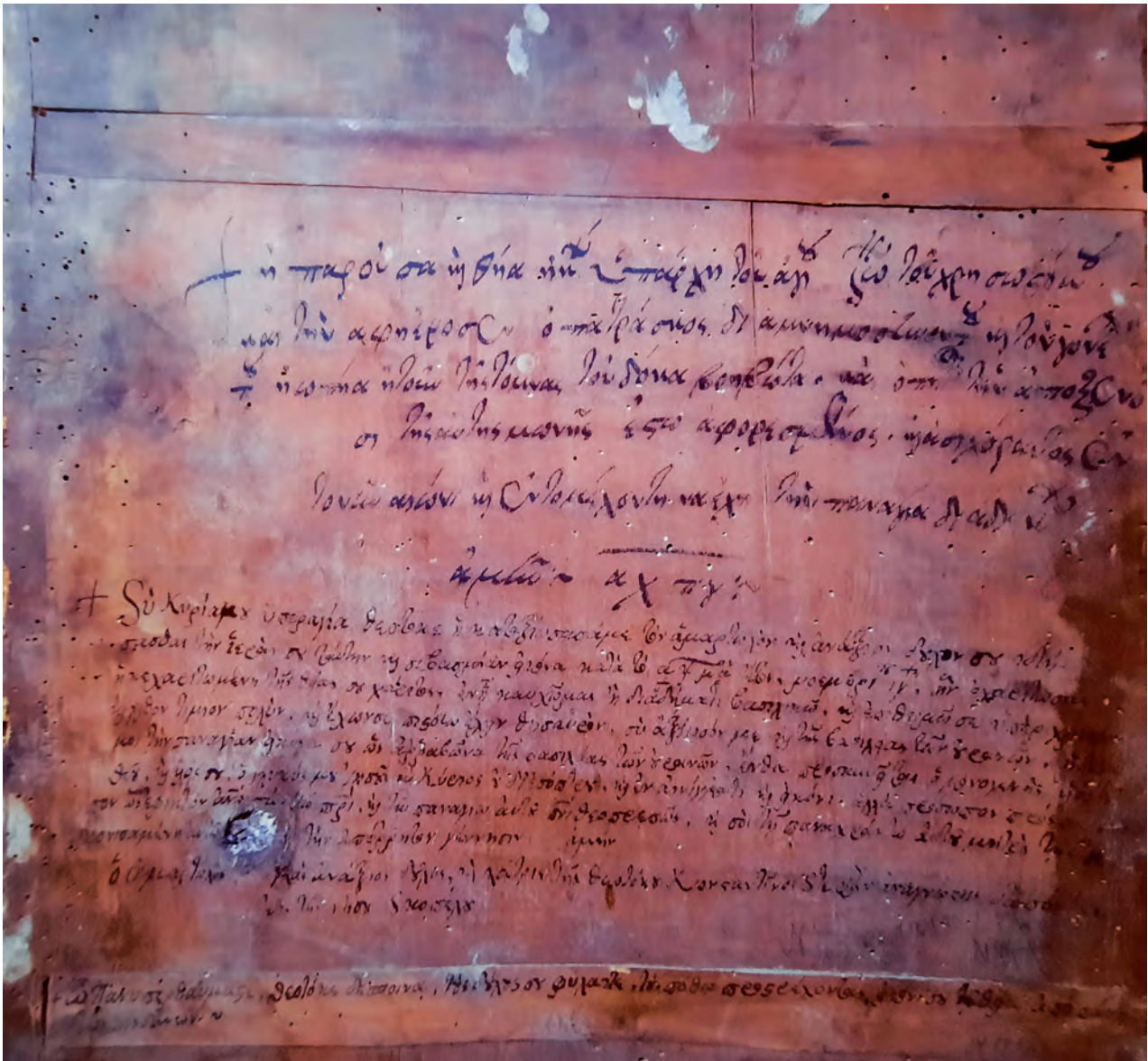
Constantin naquit en 1713/1714 dans l'île de Skópelos (Mer Egée), au sein d'une famille aisée. Son père, Étienne Dapóntes, était agent consulaire de la Grande Bretagne auprès de la Sublime Porte Ottomane, fondateur d'une académie (école élémentaire) à Skópelos (1723/1724) et tétor (en tant que restaurateur) d'un petit monastère



voué à l'Annonciation de la Mère de Dieu (1712), réédifié dans la même île. En tant que diplomate et homme politique, le père de Dapontes envoya son fils dans la capitale, Constantinople - où il avait des amis érudits et haut placés dans la société, parmi lesquels des patriarches orthodoxes -, afin qu'il poursuive ses études. Cependant, considérant que le petit Constantin aurait plus de chances d'acquérir une bonne formation intellectuelle en Valachie, Constantin Ventura, ami des Dapontes, intervint en ce sens auprès de Constantin Racovitza, fils du prince régnant de Valachie, Michel Racovitza. Ainsi, en 1731, le jeune Constantin était à Bucarest. Puisque le prince Michel Racovitza, son protecteur, avait été déjà détrôné, le patriarche Méléce de Jérusalem, ami du père de Dapontes, prit le petit Dapontes sous sa protection. En juin 1731, Dapontes le Jeune était donc inscrit comme élève à l'École Princière, et logé au monastère de Saint-Jean le Nouveau, métroque du patriarcat de Jérusalem. Doué de remarquables qualités intellectuelles, il fut bientôt remarqué par le prince Constantin Mavrocordato de Valachie - le prince qui allait dominer pendant presque quatre décennies l'histoire des Pays Roumains - qui le prit comme secrétaire en 1735. Vers 1736, Dapontes était aussi devenu chantre à l'église métropolitaine de Bucarest.² Il allait pérégriner, avec les princes au service desquels il se trouvait, à Bucarest (en Valachie) et à Jassy (en Moldavie). Transféré sur le trône de Moldavie, Constantin Mavrocordato partit pour Jassy en septembre 1741, emmenant Dapontes avec lui. Dapontes le Jeune a beaucoup écrit. Grâce à son talent remarquable dans la composition et la déclamation de vers sur des thèmes proposés *ad hoc*, il était très apprécié, en particulier par le prince Constantin. Son œuvre compte aujourd'hui dix-huit livres édités - la plupart aux frais des princes, hiérarques et bo-

yards roumains,³ à Venise, Vienne et Leipzig - ainsi que d'autres ouvrages qui ne furent publiés qu'au XIX^e siècle ou qui ont demeuré au stade manuscrit. Dapontes a vécu jusqu'à un âge bien avancé, la dernière partie de son existence étant liée au Mont Athos et au monastère de Xeropotamou. Vers 1756, il se trouvait à Skópelos, d'où il partit pour le Mont Athos.⁴ En le connaissant comme ancien dignitaire et proche des hauts milieux des Pays Roumains, l'higoumène du monastère de Xeropotamou l'envoya en 1757 aux Pays Roumains pour des aides. Il fut accueilli à Bucarest par le prince Constantin Mavrocordato, son ancien protecteur. Après d'autres pérégrinations à travers la Moldavie, Dapontes partit pour Constantinople, puis rentra chez lui, à Skópelos, au monastère paternel. Vers 1765, il revint à Xeropotamou, au Mont Athos, où il allait passer le reste de ses jours en écrivant, jusqu'en 1784, année de sa mort.

Nous allons à présent nous arrêter sur un événement important de la vie de Constantin. Le 13 novembre 1741, fête de Saint-Jean Chrysostome, dans le monastère de Jassy voué à ce saint (nommé *Zlataust*, c'est-à-dire Bouche d'Or), Dapontes reçut un don spécial de la part du prince de la Moldavie : une icône de la Mère de Dieu, qu'il allait appeler 'Moscovite', à cause du style et du lieu où elle avait été peinte. Constantin vouait un tel attachement à cette icône qu'il l'emporta avec lui au monastère paternel dans l'île de Skópelos, la mentionnant et lui rendant hommage dans bien de ses écrits - il composa d'ailleurs maints poèmes en l'honneur de la Mère de Dieu. Or, dans un passage de son Catalogue historique qui dresse le portrait de Doucas Voïvode (cf. *infra*),⁵ Dapontes raconte



les circonstances dans lesquelles il avait reçu ce don :

Ἐπίσημος πρὸς τοῦτοις εἶναι τοῦτος καὶ διὰ τὸ ἐπίσημον ἱερὸν μοναστήριον τῶν πρωτοκορυφαίων ἀποστόλων, Τζετατζούγια λεγόμενον, ὁποῦ πλησίον τοῦ Γιάσιου ἔκτισε, καὶ εἰς τὸν ἅγιον Τάφον τὸ ἀφιέρωσεν. Ἡ ἅγια εἰκὼν τῆς Παναγίας μου, ἡ Μοσκόβικη, ὁποῦ μόνον τὸν λαὸν, χωρὶς χειρῶν, καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον ἔχει, ἡ περιηργυρωμένη, ἡ εἰς πολλὰ βιβλία μου, μάλιστα εἰς τὸν Καθρέπτην γυναικῶν, ἐπαινουμένη, ἡ παρὰ τῶν βλεπόντων πάντων θαυματούμενη, ἡ εἰς τὸ ἐν Σκοπέλω πατρικόν μου μοναστήριον τῆς Παναγίας τῆς Εὐαγγελιστρίας εὕρισκομένη, [notre emphase] [...]. αὐτὴ λοιπὸν ἡ τῆς Παναγίας εἰκὼν, ὁποῦ εἰς τὸ Γιάσι εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν μοναστήριον τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου εὕρεθη, καὶ τὴν ἐζήτησα, καὶ μ' ἐδόθη, τοῦ μακαρίτου τοῦτου αὐθέντου Δούκα ἦτον.⁶

(Doucas) est renommé pour le monastère des coryphées des Apôtres nommé Cetățuia, qu'il avait fait bâtir près de Jassy et voua au Saint Sépulcre. Ma Sainte Icône de la Très Sainte (Mère de Dieu), la Moscovite, qui n'a que visage et cou, sans mains, et est sertie en argent et louée dans beaucoup de mes livres, notamment dans 'Le miroir des femmes', et admirée par tous ceux qui la voient, et se trouve à Skópelos, le monastère paternel voué à l'Annonciation de la Toute Sainte [notre emphase] (...).

Cette icône de la Toute Sainte, qui se trouvait à Jassy au monastère de Saint-Jean Chrysostome et que j'ai sollicitée et me fut donnée (par le prince régnant), appartenait au bienheureux prince Doucas.

Dans le livre susmentionné 'Miroir des femmes' (Καθρέπτης γυναικῶν), publié en deux volumes à Leipzig, en 1766, et dédié à Elena Mavrocordato, Dapontes décrit la 'Moscovite' comme étant 'la couronne des icônes, le miracle des peintres, la joie de ceux qui la contemplent, la douleur des démons, l'œuvre de Moscou, le don de Doucas'. Dans le second volume de cet ouvrage, l'auteur consacre également à l'icône une hymne nommé: *Περὶ τῆς εἰκόνας τῆς παναγίας* 'De l'icône de la Mère de Dieu', dont nous citons quelques vers :

Εἶναι λοιπὸν καὶ πρόχες μοι χαρίτων ἡ ἅγια,
 Τῆς παναγίας μου εἰκὼν, αὐτὴ ἡ σεβασμία.
 Ἡ ἄγγελοζωγράφιστη, ἡ θαυμασιωτάτη.
 Ἡ ἄγγελοπροσκύνητη, ἡ εὐπροσωποτάτη.
 Ἡ θεοεπσκοίαστη, ἡ σεβασμιωτάτη,
 Ἡ οὐρανοκατέβατη, ἡ χαροποιεστάτη.
 Ἡ ἀληθῶς ἀσύγκριτος, σύγκρισιν καὶ δὲν ἔχει,
 Τὰς γὰρ εἰκόνας πάσης γῆς ἀπάσας ὑπερέχει.

Ἡ καὶ παρὰ πατριαρχῶν σεπτῶς προσκυνηθεῖσα,
 Ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὸ αὐθεντῶν πανσέπτως τιμηθεῖσα.
 Ἡ τῶν εἰκόνων κορωνῆς, τὸ τῶν ζωγράφων θαῦμα,
 Ἡ τῶν ὀρώντων χαρμονῆ, τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων τραῦμα.
 Τίς μοχολιᾶς τὸ γέννημα, τοῦ δοῦκα βόδα θρέμμα⁷ [...]

Écoute-moi donc – cette sainte icône pleine de grâce est une Icône de la Mère de Dieu, la Toute Sainte, celle peinte par les anges, la Toute Miraculeuse celle adorée par les anges, la Toute Présente celle ombrée par Dieu, la Très Vénérée celle descendue du ciel, faite par la grâce celle véritablement et incomparablement sans pareille qui dépasse toutes les icônes de toute la terre celle qui est vénérée pieusement par les patriarches ainsi que par les puissants du monde la couronne des icônes, le miracle des peintres, la joie de ceux qui la contemplant, la douleur des démons l'œuvre de Moscou, le don de Doucas [...]

Jusqu'à ce jour, nous avions perdu la trace de cette icône. Mais un voyage que nous avons entrepris en octobre 2021 à l'Île de Skópelos, au monastère de l'Annonciation, fondation des Dapóntes, nous a permis d'obtenir des renseignements très précieux. En effet, dans l'église de ce monastère situé en haut d'une montagne, tel une petite forteresse, à laquelle on parvient par un chemin assez difficile, nous avons trouvé une icône en laquelle nous reconnaissons celle qui est évoquée par Dapóntes dans les deux écrits mentionnés (Fig. 1, 2, 3).

L'icône de la Mère de Dieu, la 'Moscovite', mesure 60 x 50 cm et représente la Theotokos telle que Dapóntes nous la décrit, 'visage et cou, sans mains' (c'est-à-dire, un portrait).⁸ Le revêtement de l'icône – des bandes métalliques qui composent le cadre et l'auréole de la Theotokos – est décoré d'hélianthes et de chrysanthèmes, exécutés avec une grande maîtrise, toujours vers la fin du XVII^e siècle. Sur son bord inférieur, le peintre a inscrit, avec de la peinture blanche, l'année 1682 (à présent cachée par le revêtement). L'inscription du cartouche inférieur du revêtement représente un texte en grec, un kontakion de l'Hymne Acahiste, à présent recouvert - lui aussi, presque entièrement - par le cadre en bois doré. Sur le dos, l'icône conserve deux notices importantes, écrites à l'encre noire (Fig. 6).

La première inscription fut faite en 1683 par Pătrașco, celui qui avait donné l'icône au monastère de Saint-Jean Chrysostome de Jassy (d'où, selon ses dires, Dapóntes l'avait reçue), en mémoire de ses parents (dont il ne donne pas les noms) et de lui-même. Avant le texte des malédictions à l'adresse de celui qui oserait aliéner l'icône, Pătrașco précise que l'icône avait appartenu à l'épouse de Doucas Voïvode (qu'il ne nomme pas) :

Ἡ παροῦσα καὶ θεία εἰκὼν(α) ὑπάρχει τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰω(άννου) τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου καὶ τὴν ἀφιέρωσεν ὁ πατράσκος διὰ μνημόσυλόν του καὶ τῶν γονέων του ἢ ὅποια ἦτον τῆς Δόμνας τοῦ δούκα βοηβόδα καὶ ὅποιος τὴν ἀποξενώσει τῆς αὐτῆς μονῆς ἔστω ἀφορεσμένος καὶ ἀσυγχώρητος ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι νὰ ἔχει τὴν Παναγία ἀντίδικον. Ἀμήν. – ἀχπγ'.

† Cette divine icône appartient (au monastère de) Saint Jean Chrysostome et fut offerte par Pătrașco, à la mémoire de lui-même et de ses parents, elle avait appartenu à l'épouse du prince Doucas et celui qui

oserait l'enlever à ce même monastère qu'il soit maudit et impardonnable en ce siècle et dans le siècle à venir qu'il ait contre lui la Toute Sainte. Amen. – 1683.

Or, le monastère de Saint-Jean Chrysostome (*Zlataust*)⁹ fut initialement fondé par le prince de Moldavie Étienne II Tomșa (1611-1615, 1621-1623) et rebâti en 1682 par le prince Georges Doucas de Moldavie (1665-1666, 1668-1672, 1672 janvier-août, 1678-1683), au cours de son dernier règne (le quatrième), avec l'accord d'Étienne Radu, arrière-petit-fils du premier fondateur.¹⁰ Il en ressort que Pătrașco était un proche de la famille régnante, puisque dans *Letopiseșul Țării Moldovei*¹¹, le chroniqueur Nicolas Costin le présente en tant qu'administrateur, en 1679, du chantier de construction de l'Église Blanche de Jassy (ou de la Transfiguration, selon son terme), fondation de la princesse Anastasia, épouse de Doucas Voïvode. Ainsi, après l'édification du monastère *Zlataust*, il donna l'icône partiellement sertie en argent à Doucas. Au cours du temps, l'icône avait été repeinte, mais fort heureusement ces ajouts furent enlevés lors d'une restauration datant de 2011.

La seconde inscription au dos de l'icône appartient à Dapóntes lui-même. Plus longue et assez difficilement déchiffable, elle n'offre que peu de renseignements. Le texte tout entier¹² constitue une prière à la Mère de Dieu dans laquelle l'habile versificateur raconte avoir reçu l'icône le 13 novembre 1741 de la part du prince de Moldavie et l'avoir emportée dans l'Île de Skópelos, auprès du monastère familial :

† Σὺ Κυρία μου ὑπεραγία Θεοτόκε ἡ καταξιώσασά σέ τον ἁμαρτωλὸν καὶ ἀνάξιον δοῦλον σου κτήσασθαι τὴν ἱεράν σου ταύτην καὶ σεβασμίαν εἰκόνα κατὰ τὸ ἀψιμ' ἔτος, Νοεμβρίου γ', ἣν ἐχαρίτωσας ἡ κεχαριτωμένη τῆς θείας σου χάριτος, ἐν ἣ καυχῶμαι ἢ διαδήματι βασιλικῶ, καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ σέ ὑπὲρ χρυσίον καὶ λίθον τίμιον πολὺν, καὶ ἔχων σε (...) ἔχειν καὶ θησαυρόν, σὺ ἀξιώσόν με καὶ τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἡ δοῦσα μοι τὴν παναγίαν εἰκόνα σου ὡς ἀρραβῶνα τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἐνθα προσκυνῆται ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ υἱὸς σου, ὁ γλυκὺς μου Ἰησοῦς καὶ Κύριος, οὗ δι' ἐσόπτρου, καὶ ἐν αἰνίγματι καὶ εἰκόνι ἀλλὰ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον, ὡς [...] καὶ τῷ παναγίῳ αὐτοῦ [...] θεοπρεπῶς, καὶ σοὶ τῇ παναχαράντῳ αὐτοῦ μητρὶ τῇ διακονισαμένη αὐτῷ τὴν ἀπόρητον γέννησιν. Ἀμήν. Ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς καὶ ἀνάξιος δοῦλος, καὶ λάτρις τῆς θεοτόκου Κωνσταντίνος Στεφάνου ἀναγνώστης δαπόντες ἐκ τῆς νήσου Σκοπέλου.

† Toi, Ma Dame, Très Sainte Mère de Dieu, celle qui m'a trouvé digne, moi, l'humble pécheur et ton indigne serviteur, de recevoir le don de ta sainte et vénérable icône en 1741, le 13 novembre, que tu as remplie de ta grâce divine, toi, qui est pleine de grâce et moi je suis tout fier de toi qui est diadème impérial et je te désire plus que l'or ou les bijoux et en t'ayant ... (*indéchiffable*) de t'avoir tel un trésor, rends moi digne du royaume des cieux, toi qui m'a fait don de ta sainte icône en guise de fiançailles avec le royaume des cieux, où le Fils Unique [*Monogène dans l'original, n.n.*] de Dieu et ton Fils à toi, mon doux Jésus et Seigneur est vénéré non comme dans un miroir, à travers un voile et dans l'icône, mais face à face, comme [*trois mots indéchiffrables, n.n.*] et à Son Saint [*mot indéchiffable, n.n.*] tel qu'il se doit à Dieu et à toi, Sa Mère Toute Pure, celle qui Lui a œuvré Sa Sainte Nativité. Amen. Le pécheur et indigne serviteur et adorateur de la Mère de Dieu, Constantin Dapóntes [*fils, n.n.*] d'Étienne, lecteur (*anagnoste*), de l'Île de Skópelos.

Plus bas, la même main - sans doute, donc, celle de Dapóntes



▲ Fig. 7. 'Mandylyon', peintre : Sylvestre, Patriarche d'Antioche (seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle), avant la restauration. Église du monastère de l'Annonciation à Skópelos.

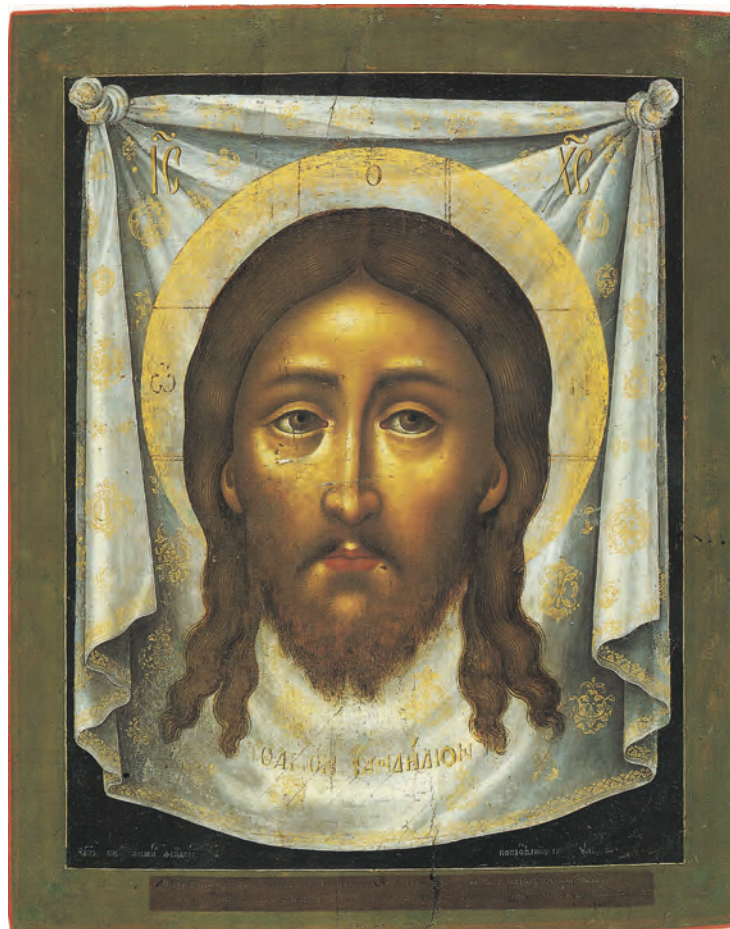
Clichés : Monastère de l'Annonciation, île Skópelos, Grèce.

▼ Fig. 8. 'Mandylyon', peintre : Sylvestre, Patriarche d'Antioche (seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle), après la restauration. Église du monastère de l'Annonciation à Skópelos.

Clichés : Monastère de l'Annonciation, île Skópelos, Grèce.

► Fig. 9. 'Mandylyon', 1678. Possible modèle peint par Simon Ouchakov ou ses disciples.

Source : <https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/artist/Simon-Ushakov.html> consulté le 23 nov. 2022.





► Fig. 10. 'Mandyllion', Simon Ouchakov, 1658, aujourd'hui dans les collections de la Galerie d'État Tretiakov.

Source : <https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/artist/Simon-Ushakov.html> consulté le 23 nov. 2022.

▲ Fig. 11. 'Mandyllion', Simon Ouchakov, 1657, aujourd'hui dans les collections de la Galerie d'État Tretiakov.

Source : <https://www.meisterdrucke.uk/artist/Simon-Ushakov.html> consulté le 23 nov. 2022.

◆ Fig. 12. 'Mandyllion', fin du XVII^e siècle, du monastère de la Nouvelle Jérusalem, Moscou, fin du XVII^e siècle, aujourd'hui dans les collections du Musée d'icônes 'André Rublev' à Moscou, auteur inconnu.

Crédits : Policarp Chițulescu.



▲ Fig. 13. *Inscription de Constantin César Dapóntes sur la couverture de l'icône 'Mandylion', datée le 30 août 1762 (détail).*

Crédits : Monastère de l'Annonciation, île Skópelos, Grèce.

lui-même -, ajoute :

Ὁ πανπερθαύμαστε, Θεοτόκε δέσποινα τοὺς δούλους σου φύλαττε, τοὺς πόθῳ προστρέχοντας εἰκόني σου τῇ θείᾳ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν κινδύνων.

O, Toute Miraculeuse, Mère de Dieu, Notre Dame, protège de tous les dangers tes serviteurs qui pleins d'espoir accourent vers ta divine icône.

Or, la réalisation spécifique de cette icône nous renvoie à l'école moscovite de Simon (Pimène) Fiodorovitch Ouchakov.¹³ Dans les années 90 du XVII^e siècle, lorsque cette icône fut peinte, Ouchakov arrivait à la fin de sa vie, mais ses disciples travaillaient intensément¹⁴ (Fig. 4, 5). Nous remarquerons d'abord les détails anatomiques, réalisés avec un style qui se rapproche beaucoup de la réalité, du premier réalisme occidental - préoccupation en revanche absente de l'esthétique byzantine - mais sans que le caractère hiératique de l'image soit pour autant perdu. Mais ce qui est remarquable dans cette icône, ce sont les jeux d'ombre et de lumière qui effacent les contours et confèrent au visage de la Mère de Dieu un aspect vivant. Le cadre en bois doré de l'icône n'est pas dépourvu non plus de valeur artistique. Il fut certainement ajouté par le dernier propriétaire, Constantin Dapóntes, sous l'influence de l'art baroque du milieu du XVIII^e siècle.

Comme nous l'avons évoqué plus haut, Constantin Dapóntes n'était pas un homme sédentaire. Il voyageait beaucoup et changeait de fonction selon ses propres intérêts, parfois même suivant ses orgueilleuses aspirations. En 1741, par exemple, il quitta Constantin Mavrocordato et partit pour Constantinople. En 1743, il revenait à Jassy avec le nouveau prince régnant de Moldavie, Jean Mavrocordato (1743-1747), qui l'avait nommé chef de la chancellerie princière - une fonction, celle-ci, que Dapóntes visait depuis longtemps. En cette qualité, en 1745, Dapóntes fit la connaissance (toujours à Jassy) du patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche (né à Chypre vers 1680, patriarche entre 1724 et 1766, année de sa mort), qui allait devenir son confesseur et qui l'aïda à affronter bien d'ennuis. Sans doute, Dapóntes était-il intervenu auprès du prince Jean Mavrocordato en faveur du patriarche Sylvestre, qui fonda au monastère de Saint-Sava de Jassy une typographie arabe, où il allait imprimer quelques livres pour les chrétiens orthodoxes arabophones.¹⁵ Mais, en tant que chef de la chancellerie princière, Dapóntes se trouva à commettre toute une série d'abus - dont il allait par la suite se repentir et faire pénitence -, qui l'obli-

gèrent, vu les ennemis qu'il s'était créés, à traverser la Crimée et à se réfugier à Constantinople. Toutefois, dans la capitale de l'Empire Ottoman, il fut aussitôt arrêté, ses biens furent confisqués, et il resta en prison de mars 1747 jusqu'en novembre 1748. À la fin de l'année 1748, le patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche arriva à Constantinople et recommanda à Dapóntes une jeune épouse. Le mariage eût lieu le 12 novembre 1749, mais le sort ne leur fut pas favorable. Constantin devint bientôt veuf, car sa jeune épouse mourut (avec son nouveau-né) en 1751.¹⁶ Suite à cet événement tragique, dévasté par la douleur, Dapóntes prit l'habit monastique le 26 octobre 1753, fête de saint Démétrios le Myroblite, et prononça ses vœux à un monastère de l'île Pipéri (près de Skópelos), recevant le nom de Césaire.

À présent, il serait utile de nous arrêter un peu sur la relation entre Dapóntes et le patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche, car cela nous permet de mettre en évidence de nouveaux détails biographiques concernant ces deux figures, le disciple et le père spirituel. Or, dans son Catalogue historique et dans d'autres ouvrages, Dapóntes précise qu'en plus de sa miraculeuse icône 'Moscovite' il avait reçu une image du Christ, 'Mandylion', peinte par le patriarche Sylvestre d'Antioche lui-même, hiérarque érudit et polyglotte, moine athonite et peintre d'icônes :

Ἡ ἁγία εἰκὼν τῆς Παναγίας μου, ἡ Μοσκόβικη, [...] ἡ εἰς τὸ ἐν Σκοπέλῳ πατρικὸν μου μοναστήριον τῆς Παναγίας τῆς Εὐαγγελιστρίας εὐρισκομένη, ὅπου εἶναι καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ ἁγίου Μανδηλίου ἢ περιηργυρωμένη, καὶ ἴση κατὰ μῆκος καὶ πλάτος μετὰ τῆς Παναγίας, θαυμαστὴ καὶ αὐτῇ, ὅπου τὴν ἐζωγράφησε Σιλβεστρος ὁ Ἀντιοχείας ὄντας ζωγράφος [...].¹⁷

Ma sainte icône de la Toute Sainte (Mère de Dieu) Moscovita (...) qui se trouve à Skopelos, au monastère paternel, de l'Annonciation de la Sainte Vierge où se trouve également l'icône du Mandylion, sertie en argent et égale en longueur et largeur à celle de la Toute Sainte, elle aussi miraculeuse, qui fut peinte par Sylvestre d'Antioche, qui est peintre tel qu'il est écrit (...).

Au sujet du patriarche Sylvestre, Dapóntes ajoutait avec admiration qu'il était :

[...] ἐνάρετας, ἐλεήμων, ζωγράφος, διάδοχος, ἀπέθανεν εἰς τὸν θρόνον· αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη του· οὗτος ἦλθε διὰ ζητείαν εἰς τὸ Γιάσι, εἰς τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ αὐτέντου μου Ἰωάν βοδα· ἐδίδασκεν ἐπ' ἐκκλησίας, ἐλειτουροῦσε δὲ καὶ Ἀραβικά, ὅτι ἤξευρεν· ἐτύπωσε καὶ λειτουργίαν Ἀραβικὴν, καὶ Ἑλληνικὴν ἀντάμα εἰς τὸ Γιάσι, καὶ Ἀντιμίνσια.¹⁸

(...) vertueux, peintre généreux venu à Jassy pour la miséricorde au temps du prince Jean Voïvode (Mavrocordato), qu'il enseignait dans les églises et célébrait en



arabe car il [le] connaissait. Il a imprimé des Liturgies à Jassy, en arabe et en grec, ainsi que des antimensions.

D'après les passages cités, nous comprenons que lorsque Dapontes qualifie le patriarche Sylvestre de 'peintre généreux', il devait faire allusion au don précieux qu'il avait reçu, à savoir l'icône 'Mandyllion'.

Missionnaire préoccupé de préserver l'Orthodoxie à Antioche, proche des princes Constantin et Jean Mavrocordato, Sylvestre avait voyagé bien de fois en Valachie et en Moldavie. Comme nous l'avons déjà rappelé, c'est d'ailleurs en Moldavie que le haut hiérarque avait connu Dapontes ; et il l'avait aussi rencontré maintes fois à Constantinople. C'est ici, paraît-il, dans la capitale de l'Empire, que le patriarche aurait offert l'icône à son disciple, qui précise avoir reçu le 'Mandyllion' à Byzance de la part de son peintre lui-même. Constantin affirme également que le patriarche Sylvestre avait fait une copie d'après l'icône 'Moscovite', car il était très impressionné par sa qualité, à l'instar d'autres patriarches qui l'avaient vue (notamment Méléce de Jérusalem et probablement Joannice de Constantinople, un autre de ses proches). Bien évidemment, Dapontes ne manque pas de célébrer, une fois de plus, les louanges de l'icône 'Moscovite', qu'il devait indirectement au prince de Valachie, de Bogdania (Moldavie) et d'Ukraine, c'est-à-dire à Georges Doucas, fondateur du monastère de Saint-Jean Chrysostome de Jassy, d'où il l'avait reçue.¹⁹

Or, suivant les indications fournies par Dapontes dans ses écrits, nous avons également redécouvert, à notre grande surprise, l'icône 'Mandyllion' (du Saint Voile), en bon état, au monastère de l'Evangelistria (Annonciation) de l'Île de Skópelos. Elle semble avoir voyagé tout autant que son créateur, le patriarche Sylvestre, et son propriétaire, Dapontes. (Fig. 7, 8, 13) Elle mesure 65 cm x 55 cm et représente l'image du Christ Seigneur peinte sur toile blanche, fond vert foncé, sans aucun autre élément décoratif. Le visage du Christ domine toute la représentation, inspirée évidemment par les modèles russes de l'école d'Ouchakov. Le regard diagonal du Seigneur, qui constitue la clé de tout l'ensemble, crée une certaine distance entre l'image et l'observateur. Il témoigne de la distance entre l'homme-pécheur et l'homme-Dieu. Ce dernier, qui a porté Sa Croix, doit être suivi par tout homme qui aspirerait à rencontrer le Sauveur. Le patriarche Sylvestre parvient presque tout aussi bien que ses possibles modèles ouchakoviens à figurer la beauté céleste du Christ sous des traits humains. On peut également constater que le haut hiérarque maîtrise assez bien la technique de la lumière et des ombres ainsi que l'équilibre chromatique.

Même si nous ne savons pas si le patriarche Sylvestre avait voyagé en Russie, on sait que les icônes russes circulaient partout. Au milieu du XVII^e siècle, le diacre Paul

d'Alep avait vu de telles pièces dans l'église patriarcale du Phanar – et il les connaissait bien, puisqu'il avait visité bien de pays orthodoxes, y compris la Russie.²⁰ On sait également que dans les Pays Roumains il y avait souvent des peintres venus de l'étranger, notamment de Russie. C'est ainsi que le patriarche Sylvestre avait pu trouver des icônes peintes en 1736 par un certain 'Pierre (fils) de Théodore, historiographe (*peintre*, n.n.) de la Russie à Bucarest' à son monastère, Saint-Spyridon l'Ancien de Bucarest²¹, dédié au patriarcat d'Antioche par le prince Constantin Mavrocordato, qui le fit reconstruire en 1747.²²

Les icônes 'Mandyllion' signées par Simon Ouchakov ou attribuées à son École et conservées jusqu'à nos jours auraient pu être source d'inspiration pour le hiérarque peintre (Fig. 9, 10, 11, 12). À la différence des autres icônes peintes par le patriarche Sylvestre²³, réalisées suivant la manière byzantine traditionnelle, l'icône 'Mandyllion' – qui porte son nom grec inscrit en bas, avec de l'encre brune – impressionnait par la maîtrise de l'exécution et la finesse de son goût artistique. Il ne s'agit pas d'une simple imitation et le peintre témoigne, à travers le chromatisme et le style, d'une véritable liberté artistique. La représentation est d'autant plus importante que le patriarche avait appris la technique de l'icône au Mont Athos, au début du XVIII^e siècle.

Suivant le modèle de sertissage appliqué à l'icône 'Moscovite', Dapontes avait sûrement réalisé une décoration bien plus simple pour son 'Mandyllion', faite de bandes métalliques d'argent. Il y grava, dans une cartouche en bas de la couverture, une prière adressée au Sauveur, adaptée d'après une autre prière bien connue : *Τὴν ἄχραντον εἰκόνα σου, προσκυνούμεν ἀγαθέ* ('Nous nous prosternons devant Ton image immaculée, le Très Bon'), ainsi que la date (1762 août 30).²⁴ Le cadre en bois doré du 'Mandyllion', similaire à celui de la 'Moscovite', fut sans aucun doute réalisé également par Constantin, probablement toujours aux environs de 1762, lorsqu'il avait serti en argent l'icône.²⁵

Les deux icônes, la 'Moscovite' et la 'Mandyllion', constituent avant tout des témoignages de certains états spirituels, de goûts artistiques et culturels. En même temps, elles reflètent l'image d'une époque, ainsi que les relations entre les hommes, en l'occurrence entre le patriarche Sylvestre, Constantin Dapontes et les princes de Moldavie. Mais encore, la redécouverte de ces icônes nous aide à éclaircir plusieurs questions. L'inscription sur la couverture du 'Mandyllion' nous aide à dater après 1762 l'ouvrage de Dapontes intitulé *Catalogue historique*. L'icône de la Mère de Dieu n'était pas mentionnée parmi le peu d'objets connus aujourd'hui comme ayant appartenu au monastère *Zlataust* de Jassy. Elle vient maintenant nous offrir des renseignements au sujet de certains donateurs et d'objets de culte du précieux patrimoine de ce saint lieu. Encore, il n'est pas exclu que Pătrașco fût responsable des travaux lors de l'édification de cette fondation princière, en 1682 ; ainsi qu'il l'avait été trois années auparavant, lors de la fondation de l'église Alba par la princesse Anastasia, épouse du prince Georges Doucas. Enfin, l'icône 'Mandyllion' de Skópelos vient compléter la liste des œuvres attribuées avec certitude au patriarche Sylvestre, et cela grâce aux renseignements offerts par Dapontes, adepte de la précision historique (Fig. 14).

'Venus de mondes différents, avec une seule et même foi', telle pourrait être la devise qui résume le cœur du présent article. Car, en effet, comme on peut le constater, les icônes relient les mondes, les cultures et l'âme des êtres humains. Dans leurs voyages, elles élèvent l'esprit et la vie



► Fig. 14. Les icônes 'Moscovite' et 'Mandylion' dans l'église du monastère de l'Annonciation à Skópelos.

Crédits : Monastère de l'Annonciation, île Skópelos, Grèce.

de l'homme vers Dieu, l'aidant et l'encourageant dans son bref périple terrestre, en route vers le monde céleste. Tel a sans doute été le rôle de l'icône 'Moscovite', qui a travers-

sé des pays et des empires, passant de la Russie à la Moldavie, puis probablement à Constantinople et de là à Skópelos, petite île de la Mer Egée. Tel a sans doute été le rôle de l'icône 'Mandylion', peinte par un Chypriote, qui voyagea vers Constantinople, pour arriver dans l'île égéenne, au monastère de l'Annonciation de la Mère de Dieu.

Notes:

1 Legrand 1880-1888, en particulier le troisième volume (Paris, 1888), qui comprend beaucoup de détails biographiques concernant Dapontes.

2 Pour plus de détails biographiques, voir Camariano 1970, p. 483 ; Σουλογιάννης 2004 ; Rapp 2018.

3 Chițulescu, 2020, p. 13-41.

4 Legrand 1881, p. 60-61, v. 279-312 (Κωνσταντίνος Δαπόντες : Κήπος χαρίτων) : *Εἰς τοὺς πενήκοντα καὶ ἕξ, τῆ ἕκτη νοεμβρίου, | ἐμβῆκα εἰς τὴν Σκόπελον, ἐλέει τοῦ Κυρίου. | Ἐλθὼν εἰς τὴν πατρίδα μου λοιπὸν μετὰ τοσοῦτους, | χρόνους καὶ περιστατικά, καὶ κόπους τηλικούτους, | εὐθὺς ἔς τὸ μοναστήριον ἀνέβηκα τῆς ὥρας, | καὶ οὐδὲ κἂν ἐπάτησα τὰ χρώματα τῆς χώρας, | ὅπου ὁ μακαρίτης μου πατήρ ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων | τὸ ἔκτισεν, ὡς φαίνεται τώρα, ἐκ θεμελίων, | ἔς τῆς Παναγίας τῷ νομα τῆς Εὐαγγελιστρίας. | εὐμορφο καὶ εἰς εὐμορφον τόπον ἐπ' ἀληθείας. | μέσα νερά, ἕξω νερά, με στέρνα, με πλατάνους, | γιὰ πατριάρχας ἄξιο, καὶ διὰ μεγιστάνους. | ἀπάνω δὲ εἰς τὸ βουνό, ἀντίκρυ εἰς τὴν χώρα, | μακρὰν ἀπὸ τὴν χώρα δὲ εἶναι δὲν εἶναι ὥρα. | καὶ εἶναι σταυροπήγιον, με μίαν θαυμασίαν | εἰκόνα τῆς δεσποίνης μας, ὄλο θαυματουργίαν. | Αὐτὴ βαστᾷ τὴν Σκόπελον χωρὶς ἀμφιβολίαν, | κατὰ ἀλήθειαν αὐτὴ διὰ φιλανθρωπίαν. | Ὅ δὲ ναὸς πολλὰ λαμπρός, ὅλος τζινὶ στρωμένος, | καὶ με κουμπέδαις δύο τρεῖς ναὸς χαριτωμένος, | καὶ με καμπάναις δύο τρεῖς, ναὸς καὶ Παναγία | ὅπου, θαρρῶ, εἰς λιγοστὰ εὐρίσκεται νησία. | Πρώτη πηγὴ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὄλων τῶν ἐδικῶν μου | εἶναι τὸ μοναστήριον αὐτὸ τὸ πατρικόν μου, | ὅτι ἐδῶ ἐγνώρισα ἀπὸ ἐπταετίας | καὶ γράμματα καὶ προσευχὴν καὶ πόθον Παναγίας. | Αὐτὰ τὰ τρία πράγματα ἦταν τῆς εὐτυχίας | ὅλης μου τὰ θεμέλια, λέγω ἐπ' ἀληθείας. | Εἰς τοὺς πενήντα δὲ κ' ἐπτά, τῆ πρώτῃ τοῦ μαιου, | νὰ ἔλθω ἐσηκώθηκα, θέλημα τοῦ Κυρίου. | κ' ἐγὼ δὲν τὸ ἐγνώριζα, καθὼς καὶ τὰ λοιπά του | δὲν τὰ γνωρίζω ἄγνωστος θεῖα θελήματά του. | νὰ ἔλθω εἰς τὸν Ἄθωνα, ὅπου εἰς τὸν καιρὸν μου | δὲν ἦλθα καὶ νάπιστραφῶ ἔς τὸ μοναστήριόν μου.*

5 Erbiceanu 1888, p. 164.

6 Erbiceanu 1888, p. 164-165.

7 Δαπόντες 1766, vol. 2, p. 182-183. Pour le contexte culturel et littéraire de ce texte, voir Kaplanis 2001 ; Μαρούση 2008.

8 Il s'agit d'une icône qui fait partie d'un Deisis dit 'à l'épaule', type qui a été élaboré dans l'atelier de Simon Ouchakov et qui a souvent été reproduit par ses disciples. Ce serait une 'Vierge Deisis'. Pour ce type iconographique voir Кондаков 1905. Sur une icône très proche de l'icône 'Moscovite' de Dapontes, nous renvoyons au un catalogue (Комашко, Дудочкина 2017) d'une récente exposition : *Иконы де l'atelier Palais de Armures dans des collections privées (Иконопись Оружейной палаты из частных собраний, 28.12.2017-04.03.2018).*

9 Grigoraș 1963, p. 277-286 ; Chelcu 2007, p. 27-33.

10 Chelcu 2007, p. 29.

11 Costin 1872, p. 20.

12 Nos plus sincères remerciements vont au prêtre Aléxios de l'île de Skópelos et au prof. dr. Ion Marian Croitoru pour leur aide dans la transcription et la traduction de cette note difficile.

13 Simon (Pimène) Fiodorovitch Ouchakov (1626-Moscou, 1686) peintre d'icônes, sculpteur, auteur d'œuvres théologiques, professeur de peinture, est le plus renommé des peintres russes d'icônes du xvii^e siècle. De 1664 jusqu'à sa mort en 1686, Ouchakov a dirigé l'atelier d'icônes du tzar au Palais des Armures du Kremlin. Avec son école, il a joué un rôle décisif dans la dernière phase d'épanouissement de la peinture d'icônes en Russie. La bibliographie sur ce sujet est très riche.

À titre d'exemple, nous renvoyons au catalogue de la grande exposition 'Simon Ouchakov, peintre royal': Нерсесян 2015.

14 Quelques icônes peintes par Ouchakov et ses disciples peuvent être vues à Moscou, dans la Collection du couvent de Novodievitchi (la Sainte Trinité de l'Ancien Testament – 1671, Jésus Christ Emmanuel – 1679, l'Archange Gabriel – 1679) ; à la Galerie d'État Tretiakov ('Mandylion' – 1657, la Mère de Dieu Kykkos – 1668) ; et au Musée d'icônes André Roublev ('Mandylion', fin du xvii^e siècle). Sur Simon Ouchakov, voir les travaux de : Onasch 1961; Ananyeva 1971; Грабарь 1913, chapitre XIII.

15 Pour l'activité du patriarche Sylvestre aux Pays Roumains, voir Ioana Feodorov 2016, p. 213-244.

16 Legrand 1880-1888, vol. 3, p. XXX.

17 Erbiceanu 1888, p. 164.

18 Erbiceanu 1888, p. 103.

19 Legrand 1881, p. 34-35, v. 369-396 (Κωνσταντίνος Δαπόντες : Κήπος χαρίτων) : *Ὁ τριετὴς χνοὺς καὶ καπνὸς ἐκείνης τῆς τμηῆς μου, | τὸ τριχρονιάρικ' ὄνειρο, ἢ φοῦσκα τῆς ζωῆς μου, | ὅπου ἐγὼ τὰ σιωπῶ καὶ διὰ συντομίαν | καὶ γιὰ νὰ μὴν ἐγκρημισθῶ εἰς μεγαληγορίαν. | καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦτα βέβαια ἔπεφτα, ἐκρημνοῦσα, | ἂν ἴσως με ταῖς πτέρυγες ἐκείναις δὲν πετοῦσα, | καὶ ἂν ἔς τὴν Παναγίαν μου ἐγὼ δὲν ἀκουμποῦσα, | τότε καὶ νῦν δὲ καὶ αἰεὶ, κυρία μου ὡς οὐσα. | Διὸ καὶ τὰ βιβλία μου ὄλα τὴν προσκυνοῦσι, | Περί τῶν ἁγίων εἰκόνων. | εἶναι γεμάτα ὕμνους της, τὴν χάριν μαρτυροῦσι. | διὸ καὶ με ἐχάρισε καὶ μίαν της εἰκόνα, | πὲς Παναγίαν ζωντανήν, θαῦμα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, | τοῦ Δούκα βόδα, τοῦ ποτὲ Βλαχίας, Μπογδανίας | καὶ Ὁκράϊνης αὐθεντός, χεῖρ δὲ τῆς Μοσχοβίας. | Σιλβεστρος καὶ Μελέτιος, αὐτοὶ οἱ ἱεράρχαι, | ἰδόντες ἐξεπλάγησαν, καὶ ἄλλοι πατριάρχαι. | ὁ Σιλβεστρος δὲν βάσταξεν ὁ τῆς Αντιοχείας, | πάραντα τὴν ἐσήκωσε διὰ τῆς ζωγραφίας. | ὁ ἡγεμὼν ἠθέλησεν, ὁ ἕνας καὶ ὁ ἄλλος, | νὰ με τὴν ὑστερήσουσι, κ' ἐσποῦδαξαν μεγάλως. | εἰς τὸν Καθρέπτην Γυναικὼν εἶναι ἀπὸ ἐμένα | τὰ κατ' αὐτὴν πλατύτερον, ἰδέ τα, γεγραμμένα. | Αὐτὴ ἀξίζει μὴν Βλαχιά χωρὶς ἀντιλογίας | με τοῦ Χριστοῦ τὴν ἄλλην δὲ (χεῖρ τοῦ Αντιοχείας | καὶ τούτῃ πάλιν τοῦ αὐτοῦ) ὅπου ἐν Βυζαντίῳ | εὐρήκα ὑστερον αὐτὴν, ὡς χάριν ἐν Κυρίῳ. | Βλαχιά μαζί καὶ Μπογδανιά χωρὶς ἀμφιβολίας | ἔνα ἔς τὴν γῆν ἀσύγκριτο ταίρι ἐπ' ἀληθείας.*

20 Feodorov 2020, p. 267.

21 Văetiși 2016, p. 120. Pour la circulation des icônes russes, voir également Drakopoulou 2008, p. 21-39; Drakopoulou 2012, p. 141-159 ; Boycheva 2016.

22 Feodorov 2016, p. 231.

23 Căndea 1969, p. 183, 185, 189 et fig. 45, 46, 50.

24 À ce propos, nous remarquerons que si Dapontes avait fait la décoration métallique de la 'Moscovite', il aurait certainement inscrit les mêmes choses sur la couverture de l'icône.

25 En 1762, Dapontes était déjà moine et nous savons qu'il était parti en mission aux Pays Roumains depuis l'année 1757, afin d'obtenir des fonds en vue de l'édification de la nouvelle église du monastère Xeropotamou du Mont Athos. Ainsi, il est fort probable qu'en 1762 il se trouvait chez lui, en train de s'occuper de ses chères icônes ; car ce n'est qu'en 1765 qu'il revint au Mont Athos.

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Icon Goldsmiths, Pious Widows, and Holy Maidens Adventure Narratives of Greek Monks Travelling in Late Imperial Russia

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RÉSUMÉ : L'article explore un aspect peu étudié de la réception de l'art religieux russe par les communautés orthodoxes balkaniques du XIX^e siècle : l'image de la Russie et de ses peuples, que les moines collectant les aumônes (*zeteia*) avaient relayée, à leur retour, dans leurs monastères d'origine et/ou aux communautés environnantes. L'objectif principal des voyages entrepris par ces moines était de convertir une partie considérable de dons et bénéfices collectés en une variété d'objets ecclésiastiques précieux et/ou revêtements d'icônes. La présente étude analyse trois récits différents de deux de ces voyages, effectués dans les années 1860 et au début des années 1890 par des moines athonites. Elle explore également deux approches dans cette collecte d'aumônes (traditionnelle vs entrepreneuriale) et la manière dont le regard porté par les voyageurs en question sur la société russe, ses institutions religieuses, ses mœurs et ses habitudes, a pu en être affecté.

KEYWORDS: Mont Athos ; Russie ; icônes russes ; collecte d'aumônes (*zeteia*) ; voyages.

REZUMAT: Articolul explorează un aspect mai puțin studiat al receptării artei religioase rusești de către comunitățile ortodoxe balcanice din secolul al XIX-lea, și anume imaginea Rusiei și a popoarelor ei, pe care călugării care au călătorit în Rusia în scopul adunării de milostenii (*zeteia*) o transmiseseră, la întoarcerea lor, către mănăstirile de origine și/sau comunitățile din jur. Obiectivul principal al călătoriilor întreprinse de acești călugări a fost acela de a converti o parte considerabilă din donațiile și profiturile adunate într-o varietate de obiecte bisericești prețioase și/sau ferecături de icoane. Acest studiu analizează trei relatări diferite despre două astfel de călătorii, făcute în anii 1860 și la începutul anilor 1890 de călugării athoniți. De asemenea, explorează două abordări ale acestei colectări de milostenii (tradițională vs. antreprenorială) și modul în care aceste abordări divergente au afectat privirea călătorilor respectivi asupra societății ruse și a instituțiilor, moravurilor și obiceiurilor sale religioase.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: Muntele Athos; Rusia; icoane rusești; colectă de milostenii (*zeteia*); călătorii.

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Reception of Russian religious art among the Balkan Christian public has never been just a question of its intrinsic aesthetic or monetary value; ideological factors, most of all popular perceptions about its place of origin, also strongly influenced this appraisal. Beside some general (and well-known) geopolitical considerations, like the expectations fostered by St. Petersburg for deliverance from the “Ottoman yoke” or the emergence of the “Panslavist” specter during the 1860s, a crucial role in the construction of these perceptions was played by the agents of such transfers themselves.

Zeteia (officially sanctioned alms-gathering by Balkan monks travelling in foreign lands) constituted one of the main channels through which Russian religious art found its way to the Balkan Orthodox communities. According

to the available primary sources, a considerable part of the alms gathered during such travels was usually transformed *in situ* into a variety of precious ecclesiastic utensils and/or icon vestments, both as a universally appreciated investment and as a way to commemorate the individual monks' contribution to the well-being and glory of their monasteries. For similar reasons, icons or other religious objects were also often ordered by Russian donors, usually at the instigation of the travelling monks. On their return, the latter brought with them not only the products of their peculiar labor, but also first-hand information on the Russian Empire, its institutions and peoples, the morals and customs prevailing there. In most cases the bulk of this information was orally transmitted, while in a number of cases, the travelers decided to

write down their experiences, either as an account to be examined by their colleagues or as a travelogue with more personal overtones.

In my article, I study this mode of transfer of religious art from Russia to the Southern, Greek-speaking Balkans through the elaborate autobiographic narratives of two such endeavors by Greek monks from Mount Athos monasteries who collected alms for some years across the Russian Empire during the second half of the 19th century. The first narrative was compiled by Meletios Konstamonites, describing in detail his extensive trips between 1862 and 1869 from Odessa to Finland and from Vilnius to Irkutsk, posthumously published as a book in 1882¹. My second source is a couple of manuscripts from the Athonite Archives, dealing with the 1888-1892 travel in Central Russia of a group of monks from the monastery of Simonos Petra (or Simonopetra).² Among other things, the juxtaposition of these two sources allows us to distinguish between two fundamentally different perceptions of (and ways to conduct) *zeteia*: the second was a “traditional” (or bureaucratic) one, while the first had been permeated by a modern aura of religious entrepreneurship.

Modalities of Holy Begging.

As already said, *zeteia* (literary: “begging”) had been a form of alms-gathering carried out by delegates of an Orthodox religious instance (monastery, bishopric or even Patriarchate) under Ottoman domination, in order to repay its debt or otherwise remedy its financial difficulties. Officially called also a “travel” (ταξίδιον), and the delegates “travelers” (ταξειδιῶται), *zeteia* could be performed within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire or in foreign countries, with Orthodox Russia gradually substituting Western Europe as the most profitable destination.³ Although there are concrete data for such missions to Moscow from Mount Athos since 1497⁴ and from the Eastern Patriarchates (and Ohrid Archbishopric) from the 16th century onwards,⁵ the earlier form of *zeteia* had been restricted to just a reception of royal gifts without any contact with the population at large, let alone any possibility of unhindered movement across this foreign realm.⁶ During the 19th century, officially sanctioned “travelers” were however provided with special permits authorizing them to visit any part of the Empire they wished and to organize special ceremonies for alms-gathering with the help of local religious and administrative authorities.⁷ The permits were provided to the interested instance by the Russian Synod, usually at the instigation of the Russian diplomatic mission in Constantinople, as a form of special privilege linking it with its northern patron.⁸ Such a function was especially discernible in the case of Mount Athos, transformed since the 1860s into a battlefield between Greek and Russian nationalists seeking to control as much as possible of its monasteries, with various forms of economic lure or pressure as the main weapon of both sides.⁹ So fierce had been this rivalry, that in 1891 the Greek Consul in Salonica, Georgios Dokos, went as far as to advise Athens to seek an absolute ban on “travels to Russia of Abbots or other envoys from the Greek monasteries of Mount Athos looking for money”.¹⁰

After obtaining a permit for *zeteia*, allowing a specific small number of monks to travel for alms gathering in Russia, the monastery should choose its envoys. They

would first travel to Constantinople, where they were provided with the necessary papers by the Patriarchate and with a collective passport by the Russian Embassy; after their arrival in St. Petersburg, the latter was replaced with individual internal passports for travel within the Empire. The travelers were free to move around within the Tsar’s realm; when visiting Siberia, they were also entitled to free accommodation and food, arranged by the local authorities, in their capacity as guest dignitaries.¹¹ Their itinerary was usually scheduled on the basis of fraternal advice provided by local monks, priests, bishops and lay citizens,¹² or according to their expectation (and often miscalculation) of profit maximization.¹³ As a rule, industrial centers and mining towns provided the best hope for a good remuneration of their effort, especially when they happened to meet there the owners of factories and mines or had been invited by them to visit the place.¹⁴ Sometimes, it was the inhabitants (or the elders) of a certain town or village who asked for them, after having learnt their presence on the environs.¹⁵

The Russian Synod also provided the traveler monks with a special book, denoting their status as officially-sanctioned alms-gatherers, where any alms should be written down in detail in order to be legally transferred through the channels of the host Church: the money was to be regularly deposited to the Consistory (духовна консистория), i.e., the collective administrative organ of the provincial church; the latter should forward it to the Synod, who would then transmit it to the beneficiary institution.¹⁶ In fact, as our sources explicitly testify, only a small portion of the proceeds actually underwent this official procedure; most of the money collected (either as a contribution to the monastery or as a personal offer to the *travelers* themselves – a distinction allegedly “common in Russia” but hard to confirm¹⁷) was on the other hand either directly sent to Mount Athos through the banking system¹⁸ or just kept in the monks’ pockets.¹⁹ Before their repatriation, or at certain intervals during their travel, the monks also used to dispatch some highly appreciated local goods to their monastery (like caviar, barrels of butter or salted fish, as well as carpets, cloth or various garments);²⁰ last but not least, as already said, they bought from Russian workshops a number of emblematic pieces of ecclesiastic art (mostly icon revetments made of silver and gold, but also precious crosses, chalices, censers, priest vestments, even bells), in order to render their personal achievement and contribution more visible to both the coming generations of fellow monks and the monastery’s future visitors.²¹

The Simonopetra Brothers.

When in November 1888 Neophytos Molakas, the Abbot of Simonopetra, his Deacon Ioannikios and a third fellow monk, left their monastery for Russia, the rivalry between Greek and Russian nationalist apparatuses on Mount Athos had already reached its apex, leaving very few margins (or no margins at all) to individual monasteries for an independent course. Heavily indebted due to the ill-timed recent construction of new buildings, the loss of its major estate in Bucharest, expropriated in 1863 by the Cuza government and a protracted judicial conflict with the nearby monastery of Xeropotamou over a disputed piece of land,²² Simonopetra monastery had been supplicating the Russian Embassy since 1865 for a permit to conduct *zeteia* in the Russian hinterland, but its



▲ Fig. 1. *The Simonopetra Monastery in 1883, photographed by Athelstan Riley.*

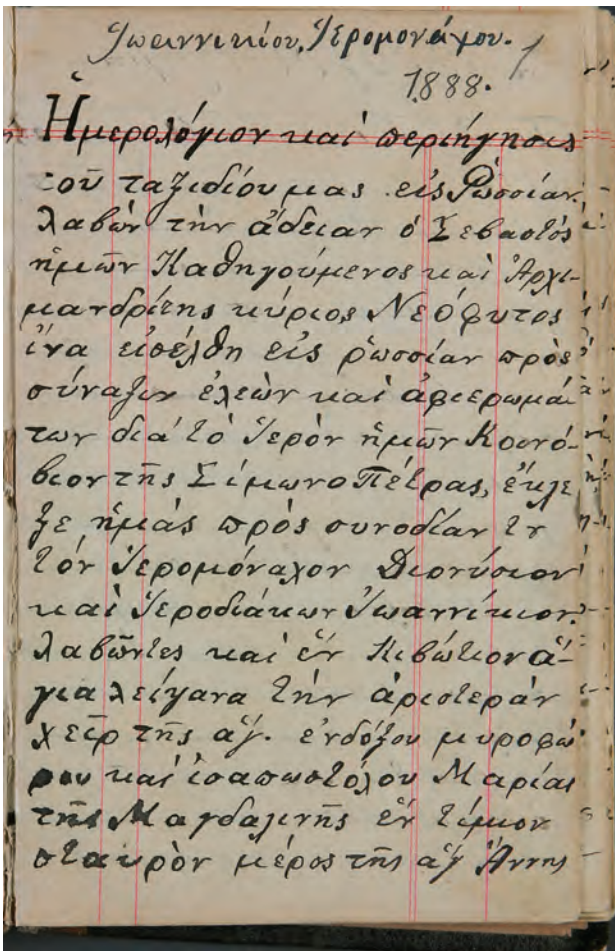
Source: Riley 1887.

requests remained unanswered for 23 years.²³ According to Gerasimos Smyrnakes, the first Greek historian of Mount Athos (a Greek nationalist and a monk by profession in the Esfigmenou monastery), this delay was nothing but a form of pressure in order to obtain from the monastery the concession of its harbor (or part of it) to the Russian one of St. Panteleemon.²⁴ In the meantime, Simonopetra's efforts to stay in good terms with both sides of the Greek-Russian conflict were not especially esteemed by anyone: in 1887, one year before the long-awaited permit was finally granted, Consul Dokos described Abbot Neophytos not only as "narrow-minded and a laggard", but also as "a good Christian who is however lacking any national consciousness at all".²⁵

Originally restricted to one year, the travel of the Simonopetra Brothers in Russia lasted in fact for no less than four years, from December 1888 to November 1892. The permit granted to them by the Russian Synod was easily extended for a second year in early 1890, but not further; therefore, in March 1891, the travelers ordered silver revetments made by Moscow goldsmiths for three icons²⁶, and took an eastward journey home, through Vladimir, Nizny Novgorod and the Volga basin, trying to prolong their stay on Russian soil as much as possible. Without an official permit, they could not organize official alms-gathering; nevertheless, they went on collecting "small amounts of money" in every stop of theirs, as well as various gifts in kind – a load of "red and black caviar", donated in Astrakhan, considered as the most noteworthy.²⁷ Arriving at Rostov, they learned by telegraph that Simonopetra had just been accidentally burned to the ground;²⁸ so they went back to St. Petersburg to ask

for a new permit for zeteia, in order to contribute to the reconstruction of their monastery.²⁹ Five months later, they obtained it – according to Smyrnakes, by satisfying the long-standing Russian demand concerning their harbor,³⁰ a fact both manuscripts tacitly avoid to touch (although Neophytos is somehow cryptically apologetic, for his choice to stay in Russia instead of rushing "to Athens" for help³¹). When the new permit expired, and the Synod refused to extend it, the Simonopetra Brothers finally returned to Mount Athos through Odessa and Sinop, after having bought "some [more] things" – of unspecified nature – in Moscow.³² According to their official account, their earnings of the first two years added up to 70.000 rubles, while during the second *zeteia* they collected around 45.000;³³ on top of that, the traveler monks ordered in Moscow and brought back with them four icon revetments made of gold and silver, a number of priest vestments, chalices, censers, as well as a heavy bell weighting no less than 20 puds (320 Kg).³⁴

During those four years, the group's composition underwent a number of changes, with its strength reinforced to four; apart from the Abbot and his deacon, the other two posts were covered by four monks in rotating terms; one of them, father Gervasios, died of influenza in St. Petersburg hospital in 1891.³⁵ They travelled extensively across many European provinces of Russia: after three months in St. Petersburg and one month in Moscow, they proceeded eastwards for eight months to Samara and back; in 1890 they toured the southeastern provinces, making Saratov and Astrakhan their main stops. The third round, undertaken in 1891-1892 after the destruction of their monastery, was mostly consumed in the two capital cities and in the northeastern provinces of Yaroslav, Kostroma and Vologda, with an intermediate three-week trip to Kronstadt, where the ultra-conservative and extremely influential Father John (Ivan Sergiev)



▲ Fig. 2. The manuscript of Deacon Ioannikios relating his group's alms gathering trip to the Russian Empire.

Source: Codex 45 of the Holy Monastery of Simonos Petras.

concelebrated with them.³⁶ At every stop of theirs, the Simonopetra Brothers exposed their relics in a church (often -but not always- the local cathedral), overlooking them for most of the day, asking for donations, selling small icons, crosses or copper engravings ("paper icons")³⁷ and receiving calls by a number of citizens to bless their homes; a task they usually performed late in the evening, touring by coach the houses to be blessed.³⁸

Unfortunately, while their activity during the first two years has been described in detail by deacon Ioannikios in an unofficial manuscript of 92 pages, the last part of the journey is sketched only by Abbot Neophytos in his official narrative - and this in too laconic a way (in just one page, half of which is dedicated to Gervasios' illness and death). Moreover, both accounts are permeated by what could be described as the bureaucratic mentality of religious *aparatsiks*: references to the surrounding Russian society are minimal, except for a binary dichotomy of each place's inhabitants into "pious" (ευλαβείς) or "impious" (ανευλαβείς), according to the quantity of money they poured in the monks' donation box³⁹ - although in a few cases they acknowledge that their modest earnings were due to nothing more than sheer poverty or even hunger, as the last phase of *zeteia* coincided with the last wave of widespread famine in the history of Tsarist Russia.⁴⁰ Factories in St. Petersburg, in the town of Yegorevsk and in the hinterland of Vladimir

are however especially referred to by Ioannikios, as *loci* of affluence that deserved a visit at the invitation of the local bosses.⁴¹ The wealth of some Orthodox cathedrals (σοβop) or Monasteries was also considered worth mentioning, even incidentally: Kyivo-Pecherska Lavra is "a monastery huge and extremely rich";⁴² St. Panteleemon's dependency in St. Petersburg is "a large church" where "more than 30 people live" with "big earnings as they work day and night chanting the mass, supplications, memorial services etc";⁴³ in the industrial centers of Shuya and Ivanovo-Voznesensk (today Ivanovo) there are "many big churches, full of silver and gold";⁴⁴ etc. Most interesting is the confirmation of a blatant disproportion between the number of monks and that of nuns met almost everywhere: while monk monasteries had usually no more than thirty inhabitants, the nuns in the female monasteries were counted by the hundreds.⁴⁵ Equally remarkable is Ioannikios' enthusiastic description of Russia's higher clergy:

No monk, archimandrite or bishop is allowed to eat meat. They are very pious [...]. When they ordain a priest, they don't take a penny. All of whom I saw performing the Mass, they always cried over the altar when the holy bread is transformed. They live however in big, large houses and each one of them has two or two-and-a-half millions of Christians under him.⁴⁶

The main problem confronted by the Simonopetra Brothers was the refusal of the Holy Synod to explicitly permit them to make use of the holy relics they had brought with them from Mount Athos: "the left hand of Saint Mary Magdalene Equal to the Apostles and a part of Saint Anna and martyr Saint Panteleemon".⁴⁷ The reason evoked for this denial was a recent edict (υκαз) of Emperor Alexander III, prohibiting any exposure of such relics in public.⁴⁸ For the Athonite monks, such an interdiction was tantamount to a financial catastrophe: "If we moved around with only the book [of the Synod] in our hands, ignoring even the [local] language and lacking any reference, it was very dubious if we could earn even our daily expenses", explained Neophytos ad posterio.⁴⁹ In fact, while the Holy Synod itself remained adamant in its refusal, most of the local bishops or metropolitans approached by the travelling monks proved to be far more lenient: some of them, Isidor of St. Petersburg⁵⁰ en tête, provided them with written permits to expose the relics in their dioceses; some others restricted their authorization to some secondary churches or to the villages only, with only a few staying absolutely faithful to the orders of their leadership. Little by little, our heroes managed thus not only to find their way but also to gradually adapt themselves to the local customs and realities; Ioannikios quickly learned the Russian language and, after having changed three different interpreters during their first year in Russia, by the end of 1889 the traveler monks did not need them anymore.⁵¹ As Neophytos explicitly acknowledged, this adjustment considerably boosted their earnings; an improvement that occurred despite the famine and the cholera pandemic that had broken out in the meantime, restricting both their movements and the financial potential of their audience, mostly composed by "common people".⁵²

An assortment of local helpers facilitated this development. Some of them, like Professor Alexei Dmitrievsky in Kyiv or Bishop Modestos of Nizhny Novgorod were old acquaintances from Athos (the first)⁵³ and/or close friends

of Makarii Sushkin, the Abbot of the Russian Monastery there.⁵⁴ Some others, like the monks who advised their colleagues to go to Astrakhan, “where there are rich and pious Christians”,⁵⁵ or a number of local “benefactors” who contributed substantially to the travelers’ coffers and stayed in contact with them ready to remedy the Monastery’s future needs,⁵⁶ remain anonymous in both narratives. Female assistance, in the person of a number of nuns and abbesses of nun monasteries, pious widows of various towns, “great and rich” Apolinaria in Saratov or “old lady Anysia” (γράια Ανυσία) in St. Petersburg, are almost always mentioned by name, as their help was considered more than decisive for the success of the *zeteia*.⁵⁷ The last one persuaded the people to call the monks to bless their houses and had a full priest vestment ordered for them; the nuns of Spaskiy Monastery, in Simbirsk, not only fed them and made a number of priest vestments for them, but also repressed the hostile reactions of a local priest;⁵⁸ those of another, near Arzamas, provided them with money and various clothes and sent them off with religious songs.⁵⁹ A notable exception to this rule was however provided by a nun monastery in Kazan, whose Abbess, described as “a voracious woman”, did not allow them to expose their relics, in order that they would not compete with her own “miraculous icon” of the Holy Virgin.⁶⁰

Occasional crowding of antagonistic seekers of donations constituted a real source of trouble,⁶¹ as we also learn from other *zeteia* accounts.⁶² For the Simonopetra Brothers, however, a far more serious hindrance was produced by the official ban on the public exposure of their relics, despite its circumvention by the local bishops. If the masterminds of the prohibition had aspired to relieve the Orthodox cult from superstition or from the vestiges of the notorious “double faith” (δвоевѣрие),⁶³ popular perception of the measure – at least among the faithful folk – was in fact quite different, as Abbott Neophytos explained in his narrative:

Wherever we went, we feared that they would not accept us, nor allow [the relics’ exposure], as it happened indeed – but fortunately only in a few places; in some others, we were allowed [to expose them] but in an entirely unofficially way, without welcoming us

on arrival nor an escort [to the local church]. Because it is a general custom in those provinces, to welcome the miraculous icons in motion at a distance from the town with a procession of priests and deacons in full dress, with icons, flabella, bell-ringing etc; the same also takes place when the icons depart. As the people did not see anything like that happening to us, what we could wait for? We lost many days [looking for a permit] and very often a rumor was circulating that we are just crooks with no license. Some of the bishops and their proto-presbyters allowed [the exposure], but were not kind enough to bow before the relics, neither they burned incense in front of them, although they were officiating nearby; some of them even told us that they do not recognize them [as holy relics], because they are not referred to in the Synod’s book.⁶⁴

Meletios, the entrepreneur.

With the notable exception of the relics’ prohibition, all of the above-mentioned factors could also be seen in action thirty years earlier, when Meletios Konstamonites and his colleagues undertook their own *zeteia* in the Russian hinterland.

Born in the Greek-speaking Macedonian town of Veroia in 1822, and a monastery internee at the age of 14, Meletios is still known in his hometown as a great benefactor who built the town’s first School for Girls with money he had earned during his travels in Russia. Filled with interesting remarks of an ethnographic or sociologic nature, his book – in fact, an unconventional travelogue – discloses an author not only extremely intelligent, but also eager to learn and wide open to new experiences. More than once he acknowledges having travelled to certain places “out of curiosity” (περιεργείας χάριν),⁶⁵ while equally revealing is the introduction of his narrative:

▼ Fig. 3. *The Konstamonitou Monastery in 1858, photographed by Piotr Sevastjanov.*

Source: <http://www.isihazm.ru/?id=518>.

▲ Fig. 4. *Meletios Konstamonites, in a rare photograph of him.*

Source: Παύλειος Λόγος, 101 (2013).



I shall write about this tour of mine in Russia, about things and about men, [about] whatever noteworthy I saw or I heard of, without adding or concealing anything. I am hardly literate and I shall write just the truth in a simple way. If the reader also hears any of those things that educated men know to suppress, he must not be surprised; I shall write it down, because I think this is good.⁶⁶

The group initially dispatched to Russia from the Konstamonitou Monastery, composed of Abbot Symeon, Meletios and another monk, arrived in Odessa in May 1862 with its load of holy relics and two pieces of Holy Cross. After having obtained the necessary permits in St. Petersburg in July, they toured the Russian hinterland for a whole year, from Moscow to Kyakhta, a town on the frontier with China, in the Far East. Back in Irkutsk, the group split in July 1863, for reasons that had mostly to do with a latent rivalry between Symeon and Meletios, exacerbated by their opposing views on the working method to follow. The Abbot returned to St. Petersburg, where he declared Meletios as allegedly dead, asking the Holy Synod to replace him with another monk from Athos; the third monk followed his way some days later, leaving Meletios in Irkutsk with some of their relics and a small piece of Holy Cross. Symeon and Meletios would meet again two years later in St. Petersburg, the first coming back from Ukraine and the second from Siberia, and live together for three months in very cold terms before Symeon's departure from Russia in April 1865. Meletios undertook a second trip to his Siberian retreats, served for nine months as a parish priest of the "Greek Monastery" in Moscow, made a third trip to Siberia plus a tour to various popular destinations of religious tourism around Lake Ladoga, before leaving Russia by train to Nizhny Novgorod, going downstream Volga and Don to Taganrog and then proceeding by land to Odessa, where he grabbed the opportunity of a cholera pandemic to expose his relics in the cathedral for a whole month. After his return to Mount Athos, he rebuilt the Catholicon of Konstamonitou monastery from the ground with his earnings, in tandem with Abbot Symeon;⁶⁷ when he proposed to give a full account of his donation to the other monks, we read in his Memoirs, the latter dissuaded him arguing that, if every monk knew the actual financial status of the Monastery, "there would emerge demands for unnecessary expenditure".⁶⁸

The key for Meletios' success, described in detail in his book, was his decision to adjust to the local customs and realities, looking for those agents and channels who would allow him to penetrate the social fabric of disparate communities, both urban and rural, making use of the primitive devotion of their inhabitants to their own concept of Divine.

First and foremost, the contacts he developed allowed him to continue his *zeteia* on a personal basis, although he lacked any authorization from the Russian Holy Synod for such an endeavor: instead of the religious authorities, he turned to the secular ones, securing a special permit from the General Governor of Eastern Siberia with the help of local acquaintances; half a year later, the sheer display of this document brought about the issue of an identical one for Western Siberia, by the respective authority there.⁶⁹

Having already observed that the Abbot's insistence to say the Mass in Greek according to the Byzantine rite alienated the locals, thus minimizing the group's

income,⁷⁰ Meletios also decided to use Church Slavonic and the Russian rite in order to maximize his appeal to his prospective audiences.⁷¹

In his narrative, he describes five kinds of such local agents, who assisted him in penetrating the depths of otherwise secluded local communities.

Monks or nuns of various monasteries were of course the first to be approached. The latter, especially, much more numerous everywhere as we have already seen, repeatedly introduced Meletios not only to the population at large, but also to affluent prospective donors; in Kurgan, a town of the Tobolsk Governate, they even went themselves to collect the donation of "a benevolent gentleman" who could not be otherwise approached, because his wife was in the process of giving birth.⁷² Ordinary priests could also provide precious advice: in the small town of Glazov, for example, the local archpriest (or archpresbyter) explained to Meletios that it would be better for him to advertise not only his relics, but also an icon of Mother of God he had brought with him from Athos, because "in those countries the inhabitants have no idea about the holy relics and have no much faith on them; they put all their hopes on Our Lady, respecting and honoring her icon".⁷³

A second group to link with, were the close relatives of Russian monks residing (or having resided) in Athos. All of them, Meletios remarked, were welcoming him and his companions "as if we were their own relatives".⁷⁴ Most noteworthy among them he seemed to consider the father-in-law and a brother-in-law of Serafeim Veslin, best known under his nickname of "Sviatogorets", a tremendously influential writer who had been the first to popularize Athos among the Russian public.⁷⁵

Far more crucial a role was however played by another social category: "Blissful" persons (блаженные), i.e., – in Meletios' words – "men and women who deceive both themselves and the people" by pretending they possess divinatory powers. His first acquaintance of the kind was a lady from Irkutsk, who promoted him by claiming to know "by divine revelation" whatever she had been previously told by him about Athos and its monasteries. When this mediation enhanced considerably his profits, Meletios decided "to look everywhere for such блаженныи, male or female, who provide major gains to the traveler, most of all through the women, whose consciousness they have under their command".⁷⁶ Although he acknowledged having made considerable use of such persons during his *zeteia*, Meletios made on the other hand clear that their moral deeds "are abominable", as himself had the opportunity to discover; he professed, however, that his firsthand knowledge concerned only the misdeeds of men but not those of women, which he knew only from hear-say.⁷⁷

Pious Widows with a considerable fortune constituted Meletios' fourth target group. The first two of them, Evlampia and Nataliya, were introduced to him in Irkutsk by the local *Blissful*. When they called him for diner, coupled with a 100- ruble donation from each of them, the mother-in-law of Nataliya leaped to imitate them; "apart from her dinner, she added a donation of 100 rubles, while to the Abbot she had given only fifteen", Meletios remarked as a proof to the effectiveness of his method.⁷⁸ Another widow would literally save his mission in the rich mining town of Yeniseisk, whose inhabitants initially snubbed him at the instigation of their priests:

five days after his arrival, she began to preach that she had dreamed of Saint Stephen and Saint Tryphon, whose relics Meletios carried with him; the believers rushed to the site of their exposure, calling him to bless their homes and compelling the priests to change their attitude.⁷⁹ Most of the widows were persuaded to offer not only money, but also precious items of religious art as gifts; some other female “sponsors” of the same kind are on the other hand referred to only as “rich” (or “very rich”), with no mention at all of their marital status. The case best described is a “remarkable” lady in Minusinsk, whose defunct husband had bequeathed her a goldmine: during his stay for a week in her house, in September 1863, we read,

she used to serve me during our dinner in person with piety, although she had three maids to serve her; she offered me 500 rubles for the monastery, together with gifts made of silver and gold; to me, she gave woolen clothes, fur coats, tobacco cases and similar items. On my part I worked very hard, obliged as I was every night to talk to her till midnight about the Holy Mountain and the salvation of the soul; while I was talking, she usually wept; after midnight, she would escort me to my room in tears.⁸⁰

Last but not least, the fifth category of agents mobilized by Meletios, and the most effective of all, were his so-called “Holy Virgins” (Святые Девуцы): young village women who left their homes in order to follow a “holy man” throughout their province for months. In Meletios’ case, two such girls, Stefanida and Martha, began following him in the village of Uní in the Viatka region (today Kirov oblast). He is not very clear on the circumstances of their recruitment, mentioning only that he promised to their parents to bring them back one year later; from historical literature on female religiosity under the Russian Empire we know, however, that similar phenomena were not at all rare at the time, reflecting a widespread will of individual or collective deliverance from the oppression felt by young women in the Russian hinterland.⁸¹ Stefanida and Martha moved around preaching to the villagers about him, persuading them to call him to bless them and suppressing or by-passing any resistance of the local priests or headmen through recourse to the appropriate mobilization. When the village priests of Kolopóva, for example, refused to accept Meletios, “saying that they themselves had crosses and Mothers of God in their churches”, the two girls persuaded the local ruling body (правления), a member of which happened to be a relative of Martha, to call him, handing them the keys of the village church.⁸² Such had been the effect of their example, that by the end of his tour in Viatka Province, a whole year later, Meletios was followed by no less than sixteen such *святые девушки*.⁸³

Visits to the villages followed a standard procedure, described in detail by Meletios in his book.⁸⁴ The “Holy Virgins” were the first to go in, cultivating the ground and preparing his reception, in cooperation with the local priest (or priests). Then, Meletios would come from his earlier stop-over at the head of a religious procession, numbering between thirty and fifty male peasants ceremoniously carrying his icon of Virgin Mary brought from Athos. In the Mass held in the village church, the first part (a “royal *paraklesis* for the Emperor and the preservation of the Russian Empire”) was free, while the second (a “*paraklesis* for the poor”) was paid for by the

villages, at a standard cost of 12 kopeks per family. Those who wished to have their homes blessed by Meletios and his icon were on the other hand individually burdened with 3 rubles per visit, a price fixed “so that not everybody could invite us, inhibiting the rest of our work”. The monk and his *девуцы* followed a strict division of labor: he blessed village homes and sick villagers, wrote down the names to be memorialized and received the most important donations, while they “were selling candles and announcements, passed the plate for donations, distributed holy water, oil, cotton wool and incense from the holy relics, talked to the people about the miracles of Virgin Mary and the holy relics and spoke about charity and salvation of the soul; they also collected small donations from women”. The daily harvest of such an activity was estimated at around 200 rubles; the party stayed in each village “usually one night, rarely two”.⁸⁵ When Meletios finished his tour, he had visited at least once every village in the region.⁸⁶

A considerable part of his audience was composed by people who, although officially Orthodox, were at the same time worshiping “their ancestral gods in the woods” – a rather typical instance of the notorious *двоеверие*. Nevertheless, he admits, they also showed “a great respect for my holy relics; nearly all of those who had been baptized invited me in their homes to chant a blessing and offered me their money”.⁸⁷ “Schismatic” (раскольники) or “Old Believers” (староверцы), who refused to follow the new rituals adopted by the Russian Church in the 17th century, showed on the other hand a more ambivalent attitude towards his endeavor: some of them “did not respect the holy relics, nor the holy cross or our icons”, Meletios remembered, while there were also those who asked him to allow them to say their own prayers in front of them.⁸⁸

Miracles contributed to his success. Meletios mentions explicitly only one, the mental recovery of “a deranged woman” who “had been considered by the locals as a possessed one”, after he read a prayer to her; he makes it clear, however, that the same also happened to “other patients”.⁸⁹ He was clever enough not to claim any authority for such healings, attributing them instead to the strong faith of those recovered: “Since we left Glazov we were always followed by sick men and women, as we toured those blessed villages, where we found a [strong] faith, as Jesus had found in Capernaum; thanks to this faith, a lot of patients were healed”.⁹⁰ As the news circulated, he was accused by some people to be an incarnation of Antichrist; his fans, on the other hand, spread the rumor that a “schismatic” woman who had been disseminating such an accusation suffered a stroke. “I kept on working”, Meletios noted meaningfully in his book, “leaving the solution of similar affairs to the hands of the *девуцы*”.⁹¹

Whatever their appreciation of miracles, a number of mighty provincial notables jostled each other for primacy in the donor game. In the town of Nolinsk, noted Meletios, “a dispute took place among many people, who will be the first to have a silver vestment made for our icon of Virgin Mary; when our landlord did it, the rest wanted to have it gold-plated, but he did it by himself, too. *Ispravnik* Michailovitch then offered me a new wooden box for the Holy Cross, adding another cross made of silver and gold, weighting 27 zlotniks”.⁹² Some gifts were a little bit difficult to be carried home; such was the case of a huge bell donated by the senior foreman of the Barnaul goldmines, a present that Meletios found better to resell in the local market.⁹³ Offerings could take even the form

of symbolic or virtual slavery. A notable in the town of Yaransk donated for example to Meletios his “most virtuous” daughter, Olympiada; the latter should consider him as her “spiritual father” and was obliged “to send the fruits of her labor to Athos throughout her life”.⁹⁴

Taking into consideration that the region of Viatka was considered a stronghold of Old Belief, whose adepts officially grew by 25 % during the 1860s,⁹⁵ what kind of impressions the writer kept of them? Already accustomed to the existence and the peculiarities of such communities since his stay in Tiumen, Tara and Tobolsk during the previous year, Meletios made a clear distinction between their various sub-groups in his book: “Some of them have their own priests and churches, others don’t; no sect of theirs has any arch-priest, however, because such a thing is forbidden by the government; their priests are ordained by the Orthodox bishop, who is allowed to officiate once a year in their churches, but the Orthodox priest cannot conduct a service there, nor anyone of theirs in the Orthodox church. The churches of the schismatic are similar to ours, while their icons are painted blessing with two fingers, just like they cross themselves”.⁹⁶ This delicate balance possibly referred to the official policy of “unity in faith” (единоверие), adopted by the Russian state in 1800 in order to incorporate those Old Believers who were disposed to accept the authority of the official Church, while keeping their own rituals.⁹⁷ Meletios’ attitude towards them gradually evolved from repulse to accommodation, reflecting also their own conduct. In Tiumen, for example, he attributed the unfavorable reception of him to the presence of “many schismatics, who are also the richest” in town.⁹⁸ In Tara, he left his lodging when he learnt that the landlord was also an Old Believer, who, “like all schismatic, did not pay any respect to the holy relics, neither to the holy cross nor to our holy icons”;⁹⁹ in the same town, however, he had no problem to grant his holy relics to a different group of “priestless” Old Believers (безпоповцы), who “paid well” for them: “There are also some schismatic who have no priests, and the latter’s duties, concerning marriage, baptism etc, are performed by a secular man. [...] Those schismatic have no churches but houses of prayer and respect the holy relics of old Saints. For this reason they invited me to their house of prayer in order that they could pray over them”. Their prayer lasted for “about three hours”, during which he was constantly watching the relics, in order – he claims – to prevent any theft.¹⁰⁰ Later, he would discover that the bishop of Tomsk, who had no objection to officiate with him in the Greek rite, used to conduct each Thursday a service “in the temple of the schismatic, together with their priests”.¹⁰¹ A similar background, unknown yet to him, may also be discernible at Meletios’ earlier problems in Tobolsk: the town’s inhabitants wanted him to officiate the Christmas liturgy in the Greek rite (instead of the westernized Russian one that has been introduced since the late 17th century, i.e., at the time of the Schism), he wrote, but the “anti-Greek” (ανθέλλην) local bishop “did not allow it”;¹⁰² most probably, this prohibition had nothing to do with “Greece” at all, but was born out of fear that the Greek / Byzantine rite was too close to the relevant practices of the Old Believers.¹⁰³

Narrating his one-year tour of the Viatka hinterland, Meletios sporadically sketched the “schismatic” communities there as a purely external factor, at most an annoyance. He was on the contrary amazed at the instances of двоеверие he witnessed among the indigenous, non-Russian inhabitants of that region: “Viatkans

are a pagan people, who have their own language, but no alphabet. Some of them have embraced the Orthodox religion and perform their Christian duties, but at the same time they go to the woods worshipping their ancestral Gods, to whom they sacrifice animals etc. [...] They showed great respect for my holy relics; all of those who had been baptized among them invited me in their homes for a blessing and gave me money. [...] They are gentle people, not prone to promiscuity like the others”.¹⁰⁴

The last apostrophe referred to another source of amazement for the alms-gathering monk from the Balkans, during his decade-long residence in Russia: his discovery that “an extreme moral breakdown reigns all over Siberia”,¹⁰⁵ where locals used to make sex in public places (from village openings to ship decks or in rooms filled with other people), meeting no reaction at all from eventual by-standers; “little by little I got accustomed to it”, he admits in his book, “but I couldn’t persuade myself that such acts don’t betray a lack of decency, at least”.¹⁰⁶ Equally telling is his description of an intimate theological feud he had with the village priest in Pavlodar: the latter insisted that adultery is for a cleric a sin more pardonable than eating meat.¹⁰⁷

Less than a year after his return to Mount Athos, Meletios was sent again to Russia in June 1867, this time as unofficial escort to a new zeteia mission. As every monk was legally forbidden to participate in more than one such travel, he obtained a passport with a lay friend as a guarantor.¹⁰⁸ He proceeded to St. Petersburg as a private traveler and met there with the head of the group – a certain Ananias, traveling under false name due to bureaucratic reasons and sketched by him as a man not only “inexperienced” but also totally incompetent and almost stupid.¹⁰⁹ No wonder that they soon parted company, at least temporarily, with Meletios returning to his old fief around Viatka and proceeding northwards to Arkhangelsk; “with no relics at all nor any letter of introduction”, he boasted in his book, “I managed to collect some money and order two icon revetments made of gold and silver as well as a crozier” (πατερίσσα).¹¹⁰ During the last phase of their travel, however, the two monks will tour together the Ryazan province, where Meletios will discover a new talent of him:

As I was responsible for the monastery’s holy relics, and I feared that they could be stolen because of my colleague’s gullibility, I had to stay close to him. In order not to stay idle, I decided, therefore, to be a trader of ecclesiastic objects in the churches’ narthex. I bought booklets, rosaries, crosses, [blessed] oil etc in Moscow or in the Troitsa Monastery and I resold them (or, sometimes, presented them) to the Christians, earning 90 % because people were buying them not for their intrinsic value but out of piety, as they thought they originated in Mount Athos. The booklets I was selling had been edited by the Russian monks of Athos and contained the miracles performed in the Russian Monastery of St. Panteleemon. In fact, one of their miracles was how enthusiastically people were buying them, paying for them without stint.¹¹¹

A considerable part of those profits ended up as an order of religious objects to the Moscow goldsmiths. Meletios had already given them work in 1866 and did it again in 1869. “They have so much developed their art”, he explained in his Memoirs, “that all the royal utensils made of gold or silver are manufactured here”. As a whole, he ordered three large icon vestments and a number of smaller ones,

“two chalices, a Gospel, a censer and a pateritsa, twelve hanging lamps and other ecclesiastic utensils, all of them made of silver and gold”, as well as three precious boxes for the tools of his trade: “one for the Holy Cross and part of the relics of St Andrew the First-Called, another for the relics of the Saints Stephen and Tryphon, and a third for the relics of the Apostles Andrew and Luke and the martyr St Panteleemon”.¹¹²

Another part of his personal profits was used by Meletios as a kind of primitive social security. A written contract between him and his Monastery provided for his retirement there under a special status, enjoying a considerable degree of personal independence and total immunity from any future intra-monastic feuds; he lived in his own cell, outside the monastery’s compound, thanks to the money he had earned during his last trip to Russia.¹¹³ The last reference on him (as still alive) that I have tracked down in the digitalized Mount Athos archives is dated January 9, 1881,¹¹⁴ according to the most trustworthy version, advanced by an old secretary of the Mount Athos Community and a local historian of Veroia, he died that same year.¹¹⁵

In the meantime, an equally considerable part of his profits had been spent for the construction of Veroia’s first school for girls,¹¹⁶ as well as for the salary of a female teacher, hired and brought there by Meletios from Athens¹¹⁷ – an indication that, just like so many entrepreneurs of the Greek Orthodox Diaspora before him, the Athonite alms-gatherer had been in fact a supporter of enlightenment and an enemy of those same popular superstitions he had skillfully exploited in order to enrich himself; a fact also confirmed by some passages of his book, where he castigated the indifference of the Russian state to educate its subjects.¹¹⁸ Who knows? Even his unusual book published in Athens (i.e., at a place where – in contrast to the Ottoman Empire or Russia – no preventive censorship was imposed to any edition) just after his death, with his cynical narrative and self-confessed record, may have been nothing but a conscious attempt to demystify, subvert, and help destroy the whole world

he had lived in since his late childhood.

Whatever his innermost intentions, Meletios’ message was fully understood by those affected by it, who responded accordingly with the imposition of a sinister form of *damnatio memoriae*: his book was either passed into complete silence or explicitly denounced, without ever mentioning neither its title nor the name of its author. In the summer of 1883, for example, Meletios’ name was completely absent from the short account of the 1860s *zeteia*, narrated to Athelstan Riley during his stay in Konstamonitou monastery by Symeon and Ananias (the monastery’s former and actual Abbot, respectively).¹¹⁹ The next year, a travelogue on Mount Athos, published in the post prestigious Greek newspaper of Istanbul, attributed most of the profits of the 1860s *zeteia* to Abbot Symeon, still alive and self-proclaimed as “the second founder of his monastery”, crediting him with “a marvelous good taste” in “his choice of decent, but extremely charming chandeliers brought from Russia”, while suppressing even Meletios’ name. It was an omission not at all due to ignorance, as the anonymous writer also referred in an off-handed way (and rather disapprovingly) to “the extremely original pamphlet, in both its form and content, recently published in Athens” by “the other enterprising monk”, who had written down the “utmost strange details” of their trips in the Russian hinterland.¹²⁰ Even less ambivalent was the ultra-conservative former Great Chartofyllax and official chronographer of the Constantinople Patriarchate, Manuel Gedeon (1851-1943), in his Memoirs published in 1934. Meletios, whose name is once more left unsaid, is misleadingly portrayed there as “an ill-mannered and rude hieromonk from Athos, who met during his stay in Russia some anti-Greek persons” (μισέλληνας τινάς) and “published a voluminous and extremely vulgar libel, where it abused every Russian who had been or would be born”.¹²¹ This condemnation was coupled, in that same book, with Gedeon’s extolling of the Simonopetra brothers for “having kept their love for the Russians [...], in contrast to some others, who collected alms in favor of a similar monastery, only to insult afterwards Russia and the Russians in print”.¹²²

Notes:

1 *Περιήγησις Μελετίου Κωνσταμονίτου εις Ρωσσίαν από έτους 1862-1869*, Athens, 1882 [thereafter: Μελέτιος 1882].

2 Untitled account by the Abbot Neophytos Simonopetrites, in Codex 13/02/02/1-2 of the digitalized Athonian Archives, p. 99-113 [thereafter: Νεόφυτος 1888-1892]; Ιωαννικίου Ιερομονάχου, «Ημερολόγιον και περιήγησις του ταξιδίου μας εις Ρωσσίαν», in Codex 45 of the H. M. Simonos Petras, p. 1-92 [thereafter: Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891; *Idem*, «Σημείωσις», op.cit., p. 149-158 and 178-181 [thereafter: Ιωαννίκιος 1892]. Cf. Σταματόπουλος 1998, for an earlier use of the last documents. A digital copy of Codex 45 was obtained by the author grace to the kind help of father Kosmas Petrites and Archmandrite Elissaios of the Simonopetra Monastery.

3 For a comprehensive survey of *zeteia* as an Orthodox institution under the Ottoman Empire, see Αγγελομάτη-Τσουγκαράκη 2007. For earlier such “travels” in Western Europe, see also Saracino 2021.

4 Fennell 2001, p. 57. Gerasimos Smyrnakes puts this first trip in 1509 (Σμυρνάκης 1903, p. 661).

5 Αγγελομάτη-Τσουγκαράκη 2007, p. 266-271.

6 Χρυσοχοΐδης 2011, p. 271-272.

7 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 21; Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 9-10; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 99.

8 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 4; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 99; Κτενάς 1935, p. 610.

9 On the Greek-Russian rivalry over Athos, see Дмитриевский 1895, p. 156-199; Σμυρνάκης 1903, p. 187-287 and 380-703 in passim; Fennell 2001; Gerd 2014, p. 84-98. For a number of cases, where specific monasteries of Mount Athos were financially bailed-out thanks to their *zeteia* missions in Russia: Κτενάς 1935, p. 545, 571 and 650.

10 G. Dokos to the Greek MFA, Salonica 31.10.1891, No. 1080, copies in ΙΑΥΕ/1891/ΑΑΚ/Varia and ΑΣΤΔ/32/8, p. 8.

11 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 37.

12 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 13; Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 26 and 72-73.

13 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 43 & 50; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 100.

14 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 29-30, 41-43, 53, 55 and 79. Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 86-88, 90.

15 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 21-22, 58 and 62; Μελέτιος 1882, p. 64 & 71.

16 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 59; Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 67. On the Consistory institution, in general, see Freeze 1983, p. 27-28, 40 and 451, as well as its official Statutes (Уставъ 1843).

17 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 36. Cf. Μαραγκουδάκης 1996, p. 202; Αγγελομάτη-Τσουγκαράκη 2007, p. 283.

18 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 69-70; Ιωαννίκιος 1892, passim.

19 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 90 and 101; Ιωαννίκιος 1892, p. 158.

20 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 76; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 101-102 and 104.

- 21 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 104; Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 76, 86 and 90; Μελέτιος 1882, p. 21, 83 and 97.
- 22 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 99; ΑΣΤΔ/32/1, G. Dokos to the Greek MFA St. Dragoumis, Salonica 24.8.1887, No. 1051, p. 53-55. On the dispute with Xeropotamou, see also Codex 13/02/02/1-2 of the digitalized Athonian Archives, p. 200-207. On the 1863 expropriation of monastic estates by the Cuza government: Συμρνάκης 1903, p. 197-198; Stavrianos 1958, p. 352; Jelavitch 1984, p. 130-152.
- 23 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 99.
- 24 Συμρνάκης 1903, p. 594.
- 25 ΑΣΤΔ/32/1, G. Dokos to the Greek MFA St. Dragoumis, Salonica 24.8.1887, No. 1051, p. 53.
- 26 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 90.
- 27 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 102; Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 91-2.
- 28 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 102 (and p. 105-107, for a detailed narrative of the disastrous accident). On the destruction of Simonopetra by that same fire, see also Συμρνάκης 1903, p. 593-594; Ταχιάος 1991, p. 27, and Codex 13/02/02/1-2, p. 121-123, for a full list of the materials lost.
- 29 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 102.
- 30 Συμρνάκης 1903, p. 595.
- 31 "If I crossed the border of Russia and descended to Athens, my return would be very difficult, as I have already explained" (Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 102).
- 32 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 103.
- 33 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 104. Ioannikios detailed account of the first two years is somehow different, but it may also include some of the earnings invested into precious items of ecclesiastic art: 35.891 rubles during the first year and 45.912 during the second, i.e., a total of 81.803. Of them, only 4.602 rubles (5,6 %) were transferred through the official channels of seven regional Consistories, while other 3.000 were directly deposited to the Russian Holy Synod; the rest were either sent to Athos through various banks (Russian, French and Greek), or had been carried in cash (Ιωαννίκιος 1892, p. 149-158).
- 34 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 104. A catalogue of the monastery's movable property compiled after the 1891 fire listed, among other things, two Russian Gospels dressed in gold and silver, one Russian Gospel in bronze, two Russian crosses from silver and gold and one from copper and gold, a Russian pallium and "four icon revetments made in Russia in 1890-91 from silver and gold [...], each one weighting 10 puds and all of them 41 puds, i.e., approximately 13½ okas of pure silver" (Codex 13/02/02/1-2, p. 131-132).
- 35 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 100-103.
- 36 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 103. On Father John of Kronstandt, see Laqueur 1993, p. 49-52; Kizenko 2000; Dixon 2008a, p. 225-226.
- 37 Between 1849 and 1902, Simonopetra ordered more than 40 sets of such "paper icons", to be either sold or donated as an act of public relations (Ιουστίνος 1991, p. 246-247).
- 38 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 65-66; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 104.
- 39 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 37, 40-41, 60, 64-65, 67, 73 and 87; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 105.
- 40 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 49; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 102 and 104. It is estimated that more than 400.000 people died in 1891-1892 in Russia from famine-related causes (Robins 1975, p. 189).
- 41 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 24, 88 and 90.
- 42 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 6.
- 43 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 8-9.
- 44 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 24. According to the official 1897 census, Shuya had 19.560 and Ivanovo-Voznesensk 54.141 inhabitants (Тройницкий 1900, p. 58-61).
- 45 In Arzamas, for example, there was one male monastery with just 20 monks and two female with 850 nuns; in Tula, 15 monks and 350 nuns; in Orel, 10 monks and 500 nuns; in Tambov, 15 monks and 400 nuns, etc.
- 46 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 82-83.
- 47 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 1-2.
- 48 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 10.
- 49 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 100. Also: Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 10.
- 50 For biographical data on Isidor: Берташ 2011; Зеленина and Лопухина 2011.
- 51 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 99-100 and 104. The first interpreter, a Greek priest hired in Odessa, received a monthly salary of 50 roubles; the next two, hired from March to July 1889 and from July to December 1889, respectively, were paid 35 roubles per month (Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 4, 19, 33 and 50).
- 52 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 104.
- 53 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 5. Dmitrievsky, a professor of church archaeology in the Kyiv Theological Academy since 1884, had carried out research at the Athos Monasteries in the summer of 1886, during his second trip in the Orient (1887-1888), in the summer of 1889 and again in 1891 (Эльмуратов 2009, p. 59-62). According to Ioannikios, "he was obliged" to the Simonopetra monks, after having spent "a week in our library taking notes".
- 54 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 26. On Makarii Sushkin, Abbott of St Panteleemon (1875-1889) and a leading figure of the Russian movement in Athos, see his biography by Dmitrievsky (Дмитриевский 1895); also, Fennell 2001, p. 93-108 and 138-155.
- 55 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 73.
- 56 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 60, 75, 78-79 and 90; Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 104.
- 57 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 15, 46-47, 57, 60, 77 and 88.
- 58 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 42-43 and 47.
- 59 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 27-31.
- 60 Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 38-40.
- 61 He group's failure in the town of Borisoglebsk, for example, is ascribed by Ioannikios to the recent passing of "a miraculous icon of the Blessed Virgin", which had absorbed most of their potential earnings (Ιωαννίκιος 1888-1891, p. 85).
- 62 Μαραγκουδάκης 1996, p. 199 and 201, for the stiff competition between rival *zeteia* groups from various monasteries of the Ottoman Empire who carried out simultaneous tours in the Russian hinterland in 1894-1896.
- 63 On the (inconsistent) efforts made by successive imperial governments and/or the church hierarchy to eradicate religious superstition and the remnants of alleged "dual faith" among the Russian Orthodox masses, see mostly Freeze 1998 and Dixon 2008a. For the concept of *δωοεверие*, see Кольванов 2006, as well as the critical approach of Leonid Heretz (Heretz 2008, p. 15-21).
- 64 Νεόφυτος 1888-1892, p. 104-105.
- 65 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 42, 80 and 82.
- 66 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 4.
- 67 Βουδούρης 2011, p. 89.
- 68 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 90-91.
- 69 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 46-47.
- 70 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 39.
- 71 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 47.
- 72 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 58.
- 73 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 62.
- 74 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 76.
- 75 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 71 (brother-in-law of Serafeim in Kiknour), 74 (father-in-law of Serafeim in Tsarevosanchurskhoursk) and 75 (son of the father-in-law in Velikorechie); also p. 70, 76 and 79, for other monks' relatives. For Serafeim Veslin and his writings: Святогорец 1850 and 1873.
- 76 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 44-46.
- 77 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 46.
- 78 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 45-46.
- 79 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 50-51.
- 80 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 52-53. Minusinsk (4.221 inhabitants) is described by Meletios as "an out-of-the-way town that had never been visited by any traveler, neither Greek nor Russian".
- 81 Alpern Engel 2006, p. 321; Freeze 2006, p. 291; Wagner 2007, p. 134-8; Dixon 2008b, p. 339-340; Chulos 2008, p. 366-7; Wagner and Barnitt 2017.
- 82 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 70.
- 83 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 80.
- 84 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 64-66.

- 85 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 64. Village women mostly donated not money, but a quantity of hand-made cloth. The latter was subsequently sold by Meletios to itinerant traders who followed him “from one village to the other, as they usually do with the local priests or monks who travel around from time to time, carrying their own icons” (*ibidem*, p. 67).
- 86 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 79.
- 87 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 63.
- 88 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 34-6 and 78. On the Old Believers, in general, see Heretz 2008, p. 42-75; Marsden 2015; *Старообрядчество* 2020.
- 89 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 74.
- 90 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 76.
- 91 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 78.
- 92 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 68-69. *Ispravnik* (Исправник) was a police official, responsible for law and order within the boundaries of an *uezd* (уезд, a subdivision of governorate).
- 93 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 55.
- 94 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 72.
- 95 Машковцева 2014, p. 53.
- 96 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 35.
- 97 White 2020.
- 98 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 31.
- 99 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 34.
- 100 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 35-36. A good survey of the “priestless” Old-Believers – the more radical current of traditionalist religious dissidence within Russian Christendom- and their various factional offshoots is provided by Heretz (2008, p. 65-72).
- 101 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 39.
- 102 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 34.
- 103 On the reactions against the change of rite in late 17th century, see Morosan 1991, p. 126-127.
- 104 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 63.
- 105 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 31.
- 106 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 54.
- 107 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 57-58.
- 108 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 92-93 and 103.
- 109 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 93, 96-98 and 101. Ananias, no doubt a Symeon’s protégé and his heir, was elected as Monastery’s next Abbot in 1881 (Riley 1887, p. 347-8). The Greek consul in Salonica, who met him in 1887, described Ananias -an ethnic Greek from Agrafa- as “very stupid and uneducated” (ΑΣτΔ/32/1, G. Dokos to the Greek ΜΦΑ St. Dragoumis, Salonica 24.8.1887, No. 1051, p. 67).
- 110 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 97.
- 111 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 98-99. The “Troitsa Monastery” mentioned by Meletios was the important Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius, situated in Sergiyev Posad near Moscow (Μελέτιος 1882, p. 18-19) and a major source of mass-circulation print of religious content for the increasingly literate flock of the Russian Church (Miller 2010, p. 221; Kenworthy 2010, p. 192-194).
- 112 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 21.
- 113 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 101-103.
- 114 Codex 21/02-02/00811-408, Kyrillos Dionysiou to the Superintendence of the Holy Community of the Holy Mountain, Constantinople, 9.1.1881.
- 115 Κτενάς 1935, p. 610; Χιονίδης 1961, p. 40.
- 116 Χριστοδούλου 1960, p. 86; Χιονίδης 1961, p. 40; Βουδούρης 2011, p. 35 and 65-67.
- 117 Undated letter by Veroia male teacher Ioannis Evangelides, attached in General Consul Konstantinos Vatikiotis to the Greek Foreign Ministry, Salonica 20.7.1872, No. 492, ΙΑΥΕ/1872/77.1.
- 118 Μελέτιος 1882, p. 47 and 63.
- 119 Riley 1887, p. 348.
- 120 «Επιστολαί εξ Αγίου Όρους», *Νεολόγος*, 30.8.1884, p. 2.
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Pious Russian Soldiers, Devout Cretan Donors, and the Church: Transfer and Reception of Russian Icons and Ecclesiastical Utensils on the Island of Crete

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RÉSUMÉ : Cet article se propose d'étudier, dans leur contexte, différents accessoires ecclésiastiques russes, tels que des épitaphes, des vêtements de prêtres et des objets eucharistiques, qui se trouvent dans les églises et dans les monastères de la préfecture de Réthymnon - district passé sous le contrôle russe entre 1897 et 1909 - et qui datent de l'époque de l'Autonomie Crétoise (1898-1913). À la lumière des relations entre la Russie et les institutions socio-politiques crétoises ; en tenant compte du fait que la Russie n'entretenait pas, avec cette île, des liens commerciaux aussi développés qu'avec les autres secteurs de la Grèce, l'auteure s'intéresse aux mécanismes de transfert et d'acquisition d'objets liturgiques russes, ainsi qu'à la reconstitution d'une cartographie. Aussi, les découvertes sont-elles étudiées dans le contexte des stratégies politiques - clés du soi-disant « soft power » déployé par la Russie impériale pour asseoir son pouvoir dans la région - employées afin de préserver et soutenir l'orthodoxie contre la propagande catholique et protestante.

MOTS-CLÉS: Crète ; XIX^e-XX^e siècles ; icônes russes ; objets liturgiques ; occupation russe.

REZUMAT: Acest articol studiază contextul în care, în timpul Autonomiei Cretane (1898-1913), diferite accesorii eclesiastice rusești (o serie de epitafuri, veșminte preoțești și obiecte euharistice) au ajuns în bisericile și mănăstirile prefecturii Rethymno. Districtul Rethymno s-a aflat sub control rusesc între 1897 și 1909. Articolul se concentrează asupra mecanismelor de transfer și achiziție, precum și pe o cartografiere a obiectelor liturgice rusești în lumina relației lor cu diferitele circumstanțe politice și sociale din insula Creta, ținând cont de faptul că Rusia nu a practicat niciodată același nivel de comerț cu Creta precum cel atestat în alte părți ale Greciei. Autoarea interpretează concluziile în contextul politic mai larg al strategiilor folosite pentru a păstra și susține ortodoxia împotriva propagandei catolice și protestante, un instrument politic cheie al așa-numitei soft power pentru influența rusă imperială în regiune.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: Creta; secolele XIX-XX; icoane rusești; obiecte liturgice; ocupație rusă.

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The district of Rethymno has been one of the case studies of the RICONTRANS research project because the area came under Russian administration between 1897 and 1909. The project included: (a) an exploratory fieldwork across the island's churches and monasteries in order to identify Russian icons and ecclesiastical items and (b) archival research in order to locate further information about the objects' transfer to and reception in Crete. Unfortunately, due to the COVID pandemic, many archives were not accessible in 2020-2021, consequently, part of the archival research has been postponed for the future. Nonetheless, during the fieldwork research in Crete, many hitherto unknown Russian religious objects, still in use today, have been identified in local churches and monasteries. It is interesting to note that the clergy using these objects are often unaware of their Russian

provenance. The recent identifications of Russian ecclesiastical utensils raised a series of questions involving their transfer to and reception in Crete. This article aims at answering some of these questions.

Neglected until now, the field of Russian ecclesiastical art in Greece began to be researched only in the last two decades, as pointed out by Yuliana Boycheva.¹ In this context, the conference *Russian Presence in Rethymno (1897-1909)*, organized in 2007, is a clear example of scholars starting to pay attention to the subject. The conference included the following topics of discussion: archival material, diplomacy and politics, economy and society, education and everyday life, and church and art. The conference proceedings were published four years later and include three papers presented in the session dedicated to the topic *Church and Art*.² They deal with Russian icons



◄ Fig. 1. *Russian chalice cup, Ecclesiastical Museum of the Cathedral Church of Rethymno (height 41 cm, diameter at the rim 12 cm, diameter at the base 18 cm).*

Credits: Maria Ernest Fragkopoulou.

► Fig. 2. *Russian paten and cover, Ecclesiastical Museum of the Cathedral Church of Rethymno.*

Credits: Maria Ernest Fragkopoulou.

▼ Fig. 3. *Russian asterisk and communion spoon, Ecclesiastical Museum of the Cathedral Church of Rethymno.*

Credits: Maria Ernest Fragkopoulou.

◆ Fig. 4. *Russian Blessing Cross, Ecclesiastical Museum of the Cathedral Church of Rethymno.*

Credits: Maria Ernest Fragkopoulou.

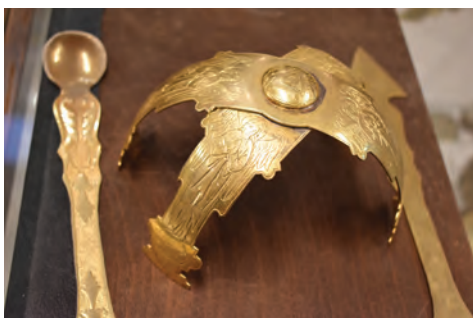
▲ Fig. 5. *Icon with St. Nicolas, Virgin Mary of the Angels Church, Rethymno.*

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

and ecclesiastical utensils found in parish churches and monasteries in the Rethymno region. These three articles were the obvious starting point for our research.

The island of Crete came under Ottoman control in the middle of the seventeenth century after a long war with the Venetians, in control of the island since the thirteenth century.³ A hundred and fifty years later, starting from the third decade of the nineteenth century, a long series of uprisings and revolts took place, which aimed at obtaining independence from Ottoman rule and unification with the Greek State. At the very end of the nineteenth century, in 1897, during one of these revolts, a Greek force landing on the island with the aim of annexing the island. The Great Powers (Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy, and initially Austria-Hungary and Germany) disagreed with such military developments, each power out of its own interests, using as an excuse the violence that had escalated to such a degree that the Ottoman Empire could no longer maintain control, intervened in order to stop the fighting and the massacres between Christian and Muslim Cretans. Needless to say, however, that the main reason for the intervention of the Great Powers was the support of their own interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and the preservation of a balance of powers among themselves.⁴ A year and a half after the intervention, at the end of 1898, a semi-autonomous or semi-colonial regime was established under the suzerainty of the Sultan, with four of the Great Powers acting as guarantors or protectors.⁵ Prince George,⁶ second son of the king of Greece, was appointed High Commissioner and the island was divided into British, French, Russian, and Italian areas of control, with the Russians occupying the region of Rethymno.⁷ This period, known as the Cretan Autonomy or the Cretan State, lasted from 1898 to 1913, the year when Crete was finally annexed to Greece, even though the foreign troops had left in 1909.

Despite previous disappointments with Russia, the Christians of Rethymno received the Russian army and officials as liberators.⁸ Local newspapers regularly praised their attempts to modernise the Ottoman town of Rethymno. Such modernisation works saw the elimination of old Venetian fortifications and of Ottoman architectural structures such as wooden additions to houses, known as kiosks. However, the Russian government was



also involved in the edification of a hospital and of the episcopal palace, besides the improvements made to the port, and the building of infrastructure such as bridges and roads.⁹ At the same time, adherence to Eastern Orthodoxy by both Cretan Christians and Russians, as opposed to the Catholicism and Protestantism of the representatives of the other Great Powers, was emphasized again and again in the newspapers. One should naturally be aware of the strict censorship from the part of the Russian government. Such praises were to be expected, but the Christians of Rethymno still preferred the Russians to British or Italian soldiers on account of religious reasons.

As Boycheva has shown, Russian icons and other ecclesiastical items were transferred to the Greek lands via three different channels. The first channel involved sending official gifts to the Greek lands. These were either related to the tsar's personal acts of devotion or were offerings sent by the Russian State and Church authorities to the Balkan churches or secular institutions. Additionally, within the same category there are objects which were acquired through officially sanctioned missions for the collection of alms (*zeteia*). Starting in the sixteenth century, this channel remained in operation until early in the twentieth century and reflects the development of Russian foreign policy towards the Balkans and the Orthodox East. A second, 'unofficial' channel is linked to private donations made by Russian clergy or laity or by representatives of the Balkan countries living in or trading with Russia. Within this category there are the numerous private donations made by Greeks living in Russia (scholars, clerics, state officials, etc.) to their places of birth as well as the icons presented to Greek churches by pilgrims, and the family heirlooms brought to Greece by the trading diaspora. The third channel, in existence since the eighteenth century, is the result of the long-distance trade practice pursued by the so-called *afenia* – Russian itinerant merchants who traded icons not only within, but also beyond the Russian Empire, including the Ottoman and Balkan lands. This last transfer channel does not apply to Crete as the *afenia* merchants never reached Crete. The Russian religious items that were identified in Rethymno during the research were transferred to the island through the first two channels.¹⁰

Official gifts and donations.

During the fieldwork in Crete, we found out that very few Russian icons ever reached the island. Moreover, although archival sources testify to the existence of ecclesiastical art items of Russian origin sent to the Rethymno region as official gifts, no such items were identified with certainty. When it comes to the Russian icons, some interesting findings about their symbolic value were located in local newspapers. For instance, Russian icons were offered as official gifts to Prince George when he came to Crete to take up his post as High Commissioner of the island. He sailed from Piraeus on 7 December 1898 and the following day, upon his arrival to the island of Milos, was greeted by the Russian admiral, Nikolai Skrydlov. On 9 December, Prince George's cruiser was escorted to Crete by the international flagship squadron of the Great Powers and the Council of the Admirals. Descriptions of all the festive greetings and the meetings of the prince with each of the admirals were published in local newspapers. Interestingly enough, only the Russian admiral Nikolai Skrydlov is mentioned as having offered the prince





a present, a “golden icon of Saint Nicholas in a precious box.”¹¹ A month later, another gilded icon representing Saint George was offered to him by the Russian soldiers occupying Rethymno. During a pompous ceremony upon the High Commissioner’s visit to the town, the icon was blessed by a Russian priest before it was given to the prince.¹² Three months later, in March 1899, another precious icon with the same subject, Saint George, was sent by the Greek community of Odessa to the bishop of Rethymno, so that the latter would present it to the prince and congratulate him upon his new appointment as Commissioner.¹³ Nothing more is known about these three icons besides the information found in a nineteenth century local newspaper. Nonetheless, the fact that no other official gifts are mentioned in the newspapers except the Russian icons underlines their importance. In a turbulent period of acute ethnic and imperial antagonisms among the Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire and Greece, Rethymno’s local newspapers kept emphasizing again and again their homodoxy (Orthodoxy) with the Russians. It is obvious that the status of official gift that the icons had carried political and ideological meanings, besides their purely religious connotation. Such icons were expensive, prestigious, and highly valued gifts, which, in the context of Cretan Autonomy, had above all a political significance and that was to emphasize the homodoxy between the Greeks and the Russians and the latter’s role of protectors of Orthodox Christians under the Ottoman rule.

Lora Gerd has uncovered important information about systematic donations made by the Holy Synod of Russia to churches and monasteries in the Balkans and in the Holy Land.¹⁴ An example is a letter written by the Russian Consul in Crete Spyridon Dendrinios in 30 January 1866,¹⁵ concerning the request of Metropolitan Misail of Kanea (Chania) for an epitaph for his new church. The Holy Synod decided to send an epitaph, a Gospel, and a set of eucharistic utensils.¹⁶ It is highly possible that the donation was connected to the presence of Catholic missionaries and their aggressive proselytism in Crete from 1859/1860 up to 1870.¹⁷ Interestingly enough,

the General Russian Consulate was established in Chania in April 1860 in response to the sudden rise of conversions to Catholicism in the preceding months. In November 1859, Serafino da Caltanissetta, a Capuchin monk, mediated in favour of an Orthodox priest to the French Embassy, resulting in the removal of the Ottoman guard from his village. The priest subsequently converted to Catholicism in order to obtain protection from the French. In the months that followed the incident, Orthodox Cretans of the wider Chania and Rethymno regions were told by the Catholic missionary (with the support of the French Consul) that if they converted to Catholicism they would come immediately under the protection of France and become, more or less, its citizens. Additionally, they were told that no further action was needed but for signing a declaration and commemorating the Pope during liturgical services. More than 6000 (some testimonies exaggerate and talk of 60,000) Orthodox Cretans “converted” to Catholicism in such manner. Entire villages, led by their priests, were coming to Chania to sign the declaration of their conversion to Catholicism, hoping to avoid mistreatments from the Ottoman army and enjoy the protection promised by the French.¹⁸ These developments seriously alarmed not only the Ottoman authorities, but also the Cretan Archdiocese, the Patriarchate, the Greek government, the British consuls as well as the Russian State and Church. The Patriarchate sent a patriarchal exarch and three preachers to these regions, who for a whole month tried to bring the newly converted back to Orthodoxy. However, the most important consequence of the Catholic “movement of proselytism” was the immediate involvement of Orthodox Russia. Having left the position of deputy consul vacant for six years, Russia immediately established a Consulate General in April 1860. The following year, deputy consulates were established in Heraklion and Rethymno (1861). French archives attest that Spyridon Dendrinios made Russia’s presence immediately felt with friendly gestures.¹⁹ As the letter located by Gerd proves, these friendly gestures included Dendrinios’ mediation to the Holy Synod of Russia on the part of Cretan churches, monasteries etc.



► Fig. 6. Russian Epitaph, St. Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province.
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▲ Fig. 7. Icon with the Pantocrator, St. John the Baptist church, Apodoulou village, Rethymno Province, (22 x 17,7 cm).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▼ Fig. 8. Russian Blessing Cross, St. John the Baptist church, Apodoulou village, Rethymno Province (28 x 18 cm).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

It is known that Russia joined the Great Powers in competing for influence in the Balkans and the Middle East as early as the 1830s. As it has been pointed out by Gerd, “preserving and supporting Orthodoxy against Catholic and Protestant propaganda became a key element in the Russian policy. Pious donations, therefore, became a political instrument, the so-called ‘soft power’ for influence in the region.”²⁰ The Russian consuls to the Ottoman Empire invested a great deal of personal energy in supporting the local bishops or in restoring churches and monasteries.²¹ It seems that Spyridon Dendrinis was one of them.

In the last decade, the Russian art historian and researcher Valery Igoshev who specializes on metal art and works in the field of restoration of church and liturgical objects among others, has embarked in the study of Russian church art that was transferred to Greek lands since the seventeenth century.²² He found archival evidence asserting that the Russian Holy Synod ordered and then donated liturgical objects and icons to poor (and in-need) Orthodox churches. Igoshev has pointed out that these documents preserve information about the cost of production and delivery of church items from Russia, but unfortunately gives no archival references. According to him, by order of the Holy Synod, sets of silver liturgical vessels used for eucharistic rituals and sets of church vestments were sent to ten churches in Crete in 1870. Again in 1897, the Holy Synod of Russia granted the churches and monasteries of the Cretan Metropolitan See five sets of eucharistic vessels, five



sets of priestly vestments, five icons of the Twelve Great Feasts as well as twenty icons of the Saviour, the Mother of God, Nicholas the Wonderworker, and others.²³

The lavishly gilded set of silver chalices and the blessing cross with its enamel decoration (Fig. 1, 2, 3, 4), which belonged to the cathedral church of Rethymno before being transferred to the Ecclesiastical Museum of the same town, could belong to this group of religious objects sent by the Holy Synod of Russia to Crete in 1897.²⁴ The icon of Saint Nicholas (Fig. 5) found in the Church of Our Lady of the Angels in Rethymno could also be one of the icons sent to Crete in 1897.

Nadezhda Chesnokova wrote extensively on the policy of patronage adopted by Russia towards the Orthodox population of the Ottoman Empire and the high pace of icon donations and transfers in the seventeenth century.²⁵ According to her, these donations became a permanent element of government spending in the Russian Empire. “Archive documents from the 1880s describe how these items were sent from Russia in entire boxes filled to the brim.”²⁶ Russian epitaphs and priests’ vestments, along with vessels used for eucharistic rituals are some of the most common religious objects found in churches and monasteries in Rethymno (Fig. 6). Once again, it should be mentioned that although many of the ecclesiastical items currently preserved in Crete could be donations of the Russian Holy Synod to the Cretan Church, during our on-site research we were not able to identify specific items and relate them to relevant archival records.

Unofficial private donations: Icons.

As already mentioned, an interesting finding that we came across during the early stages of our research was the rather small number of Russian icons located in Crete. In the Rethymno region in particular, contrary to what was expected due to the Russian presence on site, the number of icons found in churches and monasteries does not compare to the abundance of Russian icons in other areas such as Macedonia or the Cyclades Islands. As already mentioned, Russian *afenia* merchants never reached





◀ Fig. 9. Detail of Russian Gospel cover, St. John the Baptist church, Apodoulou village, Rethymno Province.

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

◀ Fig. 10. Icon with Saint Nicolas, Diskouriou Monastery, Rethymno Province, (22, 5 x 18 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▶ Fig. 11. Russian silver chalice cup, Church of Prophet Elijah, Ancient Eleftherna village, Rethymno Province (height 30, diameter at the rim 11.8 cm, diameter at the base 16.6 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▶ Fig. 12. Russian silver chalice, Sacristy of the parish of Margarites village, Rethymno Province, (height 23.5 cm, diameter at the rim 10.6 cm, diameter at the base 14.2 cm).

Credits: Kostas Papadakis.

◀ Fig. 13. Russian Gospel cover, Diskouriou Monastery, Rethymno Province (36 x 27 x 4.5 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▶ Fig. 14. Russian silver chalice, Church of the Dormition of Virgin Mary, Philoti village, Naxos (height 11.2 cm, diameter at the base 14.2 cm).

Credits: Maria Ernest Fragkopoulou.

▶ Fig. 15. Russian silver chalice donated by Theodoros Triphyllis, Saint Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (height 27 cm, diameter at the rim 10.5 cm, diameter at the base 13 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.







◀ Fig. 16. Russian silver chalice, Saint Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (height 41 cm, diameter at the rim 11.7 cm, diameter at the base 16 cm).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

➤ Fig. 17. Russian silver paten, Saint Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (diameter at the rim 17 cm, diameter at the base 8 cm, height 8 cm).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

➤ Fig. 18. Russian silver liturgical tray, Saint Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (diameter at the rim 12.5 cm, diameter at the base 9 cm).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

◀ Fig. 19. Russian silver asterisk with enamel decoration, Saint Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province.
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▲ Fig. 20. Russian silver Gospel cover (front), Saint Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (34.5 x 17.5 x 6 cm).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▼ Fig. 21. Russian silver Gospel cover (back), Saint Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (34.5 x 17.5 x 6 cm).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

Crete. In addition, Crete never had the intense commercial relations with Russia as other parts of Greece – Epirus or the Aegean and Ionian islands are cases in point. However, mentions in local newspapers of Russian icons found in households prove their high value.

One such example is a gilded Russian icon of the Virgin Mary. The artefact is mentioned in a lawsuit report in one of Rethymno's newspapers.²⁷ The report was written by the lawyer Georgios Athanasiadis, who was also the plaintiff. Athanasiadis left his house, together with all his



belongings locked in a room, to a certain Tzorbatzakis, so that the latter could take his residence in the house as well as guard its items for the duration of Athanasiadis stay in Athens. According to the report, Athanasiadis together with his family had to flee Crete on 2 February 1897, afraid that Rethymno would be bombed by the ships of the Great Powers. As he explains there was no time for a regular contract and when Athanasiadis returned two years later, Tzorbatzakis had disappeared along with all his belongings. In the lawsuit there is a long list of items paralleled by their value in money that the lawyer required to be returned.²⁸ The Russian icon of Mary was the most expensive item in the household (500 grosia or *kurus*). Another expensive item was a new Singer sewing machine (400 grosia) and a big table made with walnut wood (300 grosia). The rent for the house was 600 grosia. Based on the list of the items and the rent expense, it is clear that the lawyer was prosperous, though not to the point of having many luxury items in his household. A question that arises is how and when did Athanasiadis obtain the Russian icon? He obviously acquired it before the Russian arrival to Rethymno. Had he ordered it directly from Russia sometime in the late nineteenth century or had he bought it during his travels to mainland Greece or to the Ottoman lands (Asia Minor or Constantinople)? Could it be an older item of heirloom? Unfortunately, these questions remain unanswered for the time being.

In Apodoulou, a small village in the southern part of Crete where a Russian squad was stationed, there was information about three humble, not very high quality, small (less than 20 centimetres in height) icons in the church and three more in a priest's house.²⁹ Unfortunately, we were able to locate only one of them – the icon of Christ Pantocrator, preserved in the church of Saint John the Baptist (Fig. 7). It has a dedicatory inscription of a certain Konstantinos Psaroudakis of Ioannis on the back. In the



▼ Fig. 22. Russian chalice cup (detail), Church of Saint Constantine, Agios Konstantinos village, Rethymno Province (height 28 cm, diameter at the rim 11 cm, diameter at the base 14.3 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

◆ Fig. 23. Russian chalice cup (detail), parish museum of Skordilo village, Rethymno Province (height 28.5 cm, diameter at the rim 9.8 cm, diameter at the base 11.8 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▲ Fig. 24. Russian chalice cup (detail), parish of Agios Nikolaos, Agia village (height 24.5 cm, diameter at the rim 9.7 cm, diameter at the base 12 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▲ Fig. 25. Russian paten, Church of Saint Constantine, Agios Konstantinos village, Rethymno Province (diameter at the rim 13.8 cm, diameter at the base 8.5 cm, height 5.5 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▼ Fig. 26. Russian paten, parish museum of Skordilo village, Rethymno Province (diameter at the rim 13 cm, diameter at the base 8.5 cm, height 5.8 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▼ Fig. 27. Russian paten, Church of Saint John and the Annunciation, Argyroupolis village, Rethymno Province (diameter at the rim 15.5 cm, diameter at the base 8.5 cm, height 5 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

same church, there is an additional Russian blessing cross (Fig. 8) and a Gospel with a Russian binding (Fig. 9). The latter has a dedicatory inscription mentioning that it was donated to the church by Nikolai Kapetanovitch Petrov in 1900. These items are cheap, mass produced, made from copper alloys, which seem expensive due to the gilding.³⁰ We have not been able to trace back the exact routes through which the icons had arrived in this remote Cretan village, but they were probably not commissioned specifically for the church of Apodoulou. I assume that the icons were carried to Crete by Russian soldiers, maybe even for reasons of personal piety, and were donated or sold upon the soldiers' departure.. The information about the priest having three Russian icons in his house as heirloom



probably means that his grandfather, who was the village priest at the time of the Russian Administration, bought them or received them as a gift. Another interesting information concerning Russian vestments is recorded by the local scholar Vasileios Volanakis, who authored an article dedicated to the presence of Russian ecclesiastical items in Apodoulou, the place of his origin. One of his childhood memories from the 1950s is of the parish priest wearing Russian vestments when performing the liturgy of the Great Feasts and, because of their preciousness, of them creating a special atmosphere of solemnity. Unfortunately, and according to local custom the priest was buried wearing the Russian vestments in 1964 so they were lost forever. According to Volanakis, these vestments were given to the church by Russian officers.³¹ The inscription in the gospel, the blessing cross, the icon in the church, the vestments, along with the information cited above support the assumption that as late as 1900 Russian soldiers and army officers would carry small icons and other religious objects to be given as presents to the local Orthodox clergy and communities

Another such example is a small icon of Saint Nicholas, painted on metal, that passed as heirloom to the hegumen of the Diskouriou Monastery from his grandfather, who was priest at the time of Russian Administration (Fig. 10).

Precious eucharistic items.

The most common Russian religious objects located in Rethymno during our fieldwork belong to the category of eucharistic utensils: chalices, patens, trays, asterisks, spoons, lances, blessing crosses, censers as well as epitaphs, gospel bindings, and episcopal vestments. With regard to chalice sets and gospel covers, one can roughly classify them into two categories: the more precious ones, made of silver or gilt silver and the cheaper ones, higher in number, made of different types of copper alloys.

The silverware found in the churches and monasteries of Rethymno usually present some information of their provenance, which allows us to hypothesise upon their circulation. Stamps and hallmarks identify the workshop and the city of their manufacture as well as the artist/designer and/or the inspector involved in their creation. Some have a dedicatory inscription naming the donor(s). It was usually incised after the object reached the island

of Crete, as we assume that in most cases the dedication was incised after it had come to the possession of the donor. Unfortunately, the dedicatory inscriptions do not say much about the routes through which the object reached Crete. What they do say, however, is that the donation of Russian religious objects was not only a sign of personal devotion, but, because of their value, it was also a sign of wealth and a way to display one's affluence.

A number of questions arise regarding the presence of these ecclesiastical items in Crete. How did the donors get them in the first place? So far, we have no information about a specific donor traveling to Russia. In addition, as already mentioned, Cretans had not developed commercial relations with Russia as opposed to the inhabitants of the Cycladic or the Ionian islands who had done so already by the eighteenth century. Could donors buy chalice sets in Rethymno, where they arrived through some other commission or perhaps through Russian officers acting as agents? That could be the case for some objects, but most of the donations of silver and gilt silver chalice sets and gospels to Cretan churches and monasteries date before the Russian Administration period.

Another hypothesis is that the objects were brought to Crete from other Greek regions or islands, such as Santorini, where numerous similar liturgical items have been recently located.³² A silver chalice (Fig. 11, 31) from the Church of Prophet Elijah in the village Ancient Eleftherna has a dedicatory inscription mentioning a pilgrim, Konstantinos Zacharioudakis, which leads us yet towards another possible direction. The fact that the donor identifies himself as a pilgrim means that he had been on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He may have bought the Russian chalice in the Holy Land and donated it to the church of his village in the Rethymno area.

Even though the stamps on the silver objects do not say much about the object's route from Russia to Crete, nevertheless, through the stamps, interesting connections have been made. For example, the chalice in the village of Margarites (Fig. 12) has exactly the same stamp as the chalice from the Cycladic Island of Naxos (Fig. 14): Moscow, B. C. (initial of the workshop or of the inspector), 1869 (year of production). This could mean that there was an exchange network of Russian ecclesiastical items connecting the Cyclades and Crete. It is well known that many wealthy Cretans, but also Cretans



involved in the uprisings, fled to the Aegean Islands during times of revolt. During that time, they could have ordered or bought various items for donations through those common exchange routes. Most of the identified stamps placed on silver objects found in the Rethymno region come from muscovite workshops. However, we have also identified a stamp from a workshop in Novotserkask, which is placed on the Gospel cover of the Diskouriou Monastery (Fig. 13). There is an icon revetment from Santorini that was made in the same workshop in Novotserkask.³³

An interesting finding made during the fieldwork research on Crete was that of a silver chalice donated by Theodoros Triphyllis to the female Monastery of Kera, a metochion of the much bigger Monastery of Prophet Elijah in Roustika (Fig. 15, 32, 33). Triphyllis was a very rich merchant, originally from Corfu, who was involved with different athletic and philharmonic associations to which he made donations. He also financed the construction of the belfry of the cathedral of Rethymno, its mechanical clock, and one of its bells. He was also vice-consul to England and Austria in Rethymno, representative of the latter's insurance company, Lloyd, and a famous smuggler of Cretan antiquities.³⁴ There is no information about him travelling to Russia, however, his network of contacts involved people with commercial relations with Russia, so it would have been easy for him to obtain the chalice from those networks.

The donation made by monks Ioakim and Symeon to their monastery in Roustika is the most expensive one we have encountered so far. It consists of a complete chalice set comprising of paten, tray, asterisk, lance, and spoon as well as a censer and a Gospel (Fig. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21). According to the stamps, they were manufactured in Moscow in the years 1892-1893. These are not handmade, but they are lavishly decorated. The inscriptions with religious texts around the rims and the dedicatory signs are in Greek.³⁵ All inscriptions applied onto the objects present the same calligraphy, orderly incorporated, meaning that they were incised at the same time, by the same hand. This suggests that the objects were commissioned directly to the Russian workshop. We do not know much more about the two monks, nor about how they brought these precious liturgical objects to Crete and donated them to their monastery. Considering the value of the objects, it is possible that they travelled to Russia; or else, they could have obtained them from someone else who travelled to Russia. For example, we know that in the years 1894-1896, an alms collection mission of the Arkadi Monastery (*zeteia*) had been organized. We know that the Archbishop of Rethymno ordered a miter to the "travellers" (the hegumen of the monastery and another monk). It is therefore possible that they took orders for the Roustika monastery monks as well.³⁶



▼ Fig. 28. Russian zeon cup, Church of Saint Constantine, Agios Konstantinos village, Rethymno Province (length with handle 12.6 cm, diameter at the rim 7 cm, height 4 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▲ Fig. 29. Russian zeon cup, parish museum of Skordilo village, Rethymno Province (length with handle 12 cm, diameter at the rim 7 cm, height 3 cm).

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

► Fig. 30. Complete Russian chalice set at the Church of Saint Constantine, Agios Konstantinos village, Rethymno Province.

Credits: Sofia Katopi.

Cheaper ecclesiastical items.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about the "anonymous", cheap Russian chalice sets or parts of them that were located in different churches all across the Rethymno region (more than twenty different items). They are made of copper alloys, brass or bronze. Some of them are still in use and were recently restored by the method of silver plating or gilding. All the chalices have very similar representations around the perimeter of the cup: a Deisis divided in three medallions – with Jesus in the centre, the Mother of God to the left, and John the Baptist to the right – and with the Cross of Golgotha placed opposite to the figure of Christ (Fig. 22, 23, 24). All of them present similar geometric patterns and an inscription around the rim of the cup, done with the technique of impression and incision. The same type of decoration can be seen on the patens, trays, and zeon cups³⁷ (Fig. 25, 26, 27). The zeon cups are almost identical with a representation of the Cross of Golgotha on the handle and an inscription running around the rim (Fig. 28, 29). The inscriptions come from religious texts relevant to the liturgical use of each item. For example: the same inscription runs around the rims of all the chalices: "Receive the Body of Christ, taste the fountain of immortality." The inscription around patens reads, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world;" around zeons – "Fervour of faith full of the Holy Spirit;" and accordingly, there are specific inscriptions accompanying the trays representing the Mother of God and the Cross of Golgotha.

During our research it became clear that even though these chalice sets are found in many different churches all across the Rethymno region, sometimes together with more precious objects, they all belong to the same group. I believe that these liturgical objects can be identified with a group of chalice sets that was transferred to Rethymno in 1900 in order to be distributed to the parish churches, a fact which was hitherto known only from an archival source. Konstantinos Papadakis located and published an encyclical from the ecclesiastical archives of his village, Margarites, which had been sent by the



bishop of Rethymno, Dionysius Kastriogiannakis, to the priests of his bishopric in May 1900. Papadakis was the first to connect the encyclical with chalice sets preserved in Rethymno churches, even though he did not try to identify the objects themselves.³⁸

The encyclical contained six articles, most of which were political in nature, as the bishop was supporting the modernisation attempts of the Cretan Autonomous State. He exhorted the priests to take an active role in the census that was about to take place, checking and correcting the misbehaviour (accidental or intentional) of the parishioners. He also urged them to act as informants about the general conduct of the parishioners. He asked, for example, how often they received communion, how many of them were married, and if there were any illegal couples and why (implying that they could possibly be relatives and thus incestuous), how many births there were, who took care of the children and the elderly, etc. He aimed at introducing “Christian associations” against sinning and asked for information concerning confessions. Finally, he exhorted the priests to persuade their parishioners to be friendly and on good terms with their Muslim neighbours, and to inform local justice in case they witnessed a crime, not only because that made them

good Christians but mainly because in that way “they act[ed] as good patriots towards their beloved and honourable country.”

The interesting thing about the fifth article of the encyclical is its rather “commercial” nature, as opposed to the “political” nature of the rest. The bishop informed the priests that: “From what we have seen during our brief tour, many villages do not have holy chalices for the official (ceremonial) days. We inform you that we brought, from Russia to Argyroupolis, sets of chalices, patens, lances, communion spoons, asterisks, zeon cups, two small trays, all beautifully gilded, costing only eight mecits. In this way parishes that lack chalices should attend to sending us the eight mecits and after one month you will have these beautiful, gilded, holy vessels.”³⁹

It seems that many priests responded positively and ordered chalice sets, parts of which are the ones identified during our research. The most complete set comes from the village of Agios Konstantinos (Fig. 30), comprising of a chalice, a paten, a lance, a communion spoon, an asterisk, a zeon cup and two small trays. Other churches have a chalice, a paten, and an asterisk; or only two trays; or just a zeon cup.



▲ Fig. 31. Russian silver chalice, Sacristy of the parish of Margarites village, Rethymno Province (detail of fig. 11).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

▼ Fig. 32. Russian silver chalice donated by Theodoros Triphyllis, St. Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (detail of fig. 15).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

◆ Fig. 33. Russian silver chalice donated by Theodoros Triphyllis, St. Elijah Monastery in Roustika, Rethymno Province (detail of fig. 15).
Credits: Sofia Katopi.

Of course, once again, many questions arise. The most important one concerns the transfer of the objects from Russia and the reasons they were brought to the specific village. Argyroupolis was a rather large village at that time, set in the western part of Rethymno Prefecture on a mountainous region, about 25 kilometres from the seat of the bishop and the base of the Russian army, the town of Rethymno. This implies that the commission was not done by the bishop of Rethymno. On the other hand, it was the bishop who sent the encyclical, saying “we brought”, as if directly involved with the commission. There is no mention of any purchases of religious objects in the archive of the vice-consul of Russia in Rethymno.⁴⁰ Maybe, the chalice sets were purchased through the general consulate of Chania and that is why they were

brought to Argyroupolis, which is closer to Chania than to Rethymno. Still, at the time the transport of objects via sea was the easiest route to take, so that for the chalice sets to be brought to the mountainous village of Argyroupolis appears like an odd choice. Could it be that a Russian official stationed in Argyroupolis was involved in the commission and purchase of the objects?

These chalice sets have no markings, so we do not know where they were manufactured. It is clear, however, that they correspond to a big commission of liturgical objects to be sold to parish churches of the Rethymno area as mentioned in the encyclical. They were not for donation. Unless it was a donation to the bishopric of Rethymno made by the Russian Holy Synod upon which the bishop decided to make a revenue. The price at which these liturgical objects were sold was not very high, but it was not low either, for those were times of extreme poverty, especially in the villages. The eight mecsits accounted for about 80 kilos of olive oil or about 20 days of agricultural work in the grape harvest. Some almost identical chalices and patens have been located on the island of Santorini, implying once again that there existed established networks of transfer.⁴¹ The only way to answer these questions and so understand the ways these transfer networks worked, is to keep looking for more evidence in the archives.

Notes:

1 Boycheva 2021; Boycheva 2016a, p. 15.

2 Troulis 2011; Mantzouranis 2011, p. 455-470; Papadakis M.K. 2011, p. 471-482; Volanakis 2011, p. 483-494. Even though the period of the Russian occupation of Rethymno is very important for the modern history of Crete, the topic is mainly covered by local scholars.

3 After the Fourth Crusade, Crete was allotted to Boniface of Montferrat who sold it to Venice. The island came under Venice's full control in 1211 and remained part of Venice's *Stato da mar* for the next four centuries. In 1645, the Ottomans attacked the island. By 1648, most of the island had come under the Ottoman control except for the city of Candia. The long siege of the Cretan town lasted from 1648 to 1669, when the Venetians finally surrendered it to the Ottomans. Crete remained under Ottoman control until 1898.

4 In those times of intense colonial antagonisms, there was also fear that one of the Great Powers might annex the island. After all, twenty years earlier, in 1878, Great Britain took possession of Cyprus. The Cretan question was part of the bigger Eastern Question. For bibliographical reference, see: Frary, Kozelsky 2014; Petmezas, Tzedaki-Apostolaki 2014; Detorakis, Kalokairinos 2001; Kent 1984; Anderson 1966; Marriott 1917.

5 Austria-Hungary and Germany had withdrawn their forces because they disagreed on various issues regarding the proposed solution and opted for a more pro-Ottoman stance.

6 Prince George's mother, Olga of Greece, was the granddaughter of Tsar Nicholas I. Prince George was proposed for the position of High Commissioner of Crete by Russia and was selected amongst many candidates. The Russians strongly supported him throughout the period of this commissionership (1898-1906), even when the other Powers had turned against him after the end of his first term in office.

7 The British occupied Heraklion region in the center of Crete, the French occupied Lasithi in the eastern part of the island, the Italians occupied Chania region in the west, while the capital city of Chania was occupied by all four of the Great Powers. For the Russian occupation of Rethymno, see Sokolovskaja 2006.

8 Many Christian Cretans believed that the Orthodox Russians would run to their help every time they revolted. There was widespread disappointment when this did not happen, especially during the revolution of 1866-1869.

9 Hadjidakis 2011; Papadakis H.A. 2011.

10 Boycheva 2021; Boycheva 2016b, p. 109-110.

11 *Αναγέννησις*, 12 December 1898 (local newspaper in Rethymno).

12 *Αναγέννησις*, 23 January 1899. This interesting information about the Russian army can be added to the documentary evidence of 1769, when the Russian fleet, which reached the Eastern Mediterranean, brought no less than fifty sets of icons meant to equip the mosques which would be turned into churches. Korais 1805, p. 23-24. The same practice was adopted on the Imbros and Samothraki Islands, according to the *Diaries* of the Russian naval officer, Vladimir Bronevsky, during the military actions of the Russian navy in the course of the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-1812. Бронеvский 1819, p. 36-37.

13 *Αναγέννησις*, 27 March 1899.

14 Gerd 2020; Gerd 2014.

15 Spyridon Dendrinis was born in 1811 in Istanbul to a family originally from Corfu. His father served as an ambassador of

the Ionian State. In 1821, during the outbreak of the Greek revolution and its repercussions on Istanbul, his family followed the Russian embassy and fled to Odessa, where he went to school. In 1830, he was appointed secretary to the Consulate General of Russia in Bucharest. In 1850, he was appointed Consul in Trabzon. During the Crimean War, he took refuge in Tbilisi, later returned to Trabzon, and was appointed Consul General in Brazil, from there to Epirus, and finally he was appointed as the first Russian Consul General in Crete in 1860. Papadopoulos-Vretos, 1868, p. 357.

16 This information was located by Dr. Gerd in the Holy Synod archives, in the context of her collaboration with the RICONTRANS project. It will be accessible to the public through its publication on the RICONTRANS database. In addition to that, some information has surfaced recently about the existence of a Russian epitaph in the church that used to serve as the cathedral of Chania during the Cretan Autonomy period. This information is yet to be confirmed.

17 Kalliataki-Mertikopoulou 2005, p. 179-194. Zambetakis 1957, p. 244-258.

18 Da Terzorio 1914, p. 272-279.

19 Kalliataki-Mertikopoulou, 2005, p. 193.

20 Gerd 2020, p. 228.

21 Gerd 2020, p. 233.

22 Igoshev 2013. Igoshev 2011a. Igoshev, Smilyanskaya 2013.

23 Igoshev 2011b.

24 Kamilakis 1995, p. 74-76. Mantzouranis 2011, p. 460.

25 Indicatively, Chesnokova 2017.

26 Chesnokova 2020, p. 225.

27 *Αναγέννησις*, 20 August 1899.

28 The lawsuit with the whole list of the household items that the accuser demands from the accused takes up two of the four pages of the newspaper.

29 Volanakis 2011, p. 483-494.

30 Two almost identical blessing crosses have been located by Valery Igoshev in the island of Santorini. See Igoshev 2011a, p. 15, 22, 31, 49.

31 Volanakis 2011, p. 492.

32 Igoshev 2011a, Mouzakis 2011, Mouzakis 2017.

33 Igoshev 2011a, p. 33-34.

34 Sakellarakis 1998.

35 This is the only example where all the inscriptions are in Greek. Usually, the religious text around the rim of the chalices and the trays can be in Russian, while the dedicatory inscription, in Greek, is usually transcribed on the base of the chalice.

36 Due to the COVID pandemic, I have not been able search the archive of the Arkadi Monastery for more information about this *zeteia*. For the Arkadi *zeteia* see, Maragoudakis 2016, p. 223.

37 Small ritual vessel used for carrying hot water to be mixed with wine by the priest during Liturgy.

38 Papadakis 2011, p. 478-481.

39 Papadakis 2011, p. 480.

40 The Archive of the deputy Consulate of Russia in Rethymno is preserved in the Public Library of Rethymno.

41 Igoshev 2011, p. 46.

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Museographic Objects, Saints, and Sacred Places: Saint Antony Pechersky, Esphigmenou Monastery (Mount Athos), and the Museum of Christian Antiquities (Athens)

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RÉSUMÉ : L'article nous présente la manière dont trois histoires, avec des finalités très différentes, s'avèrent en réalité interconnectées. La première histoire est celle de saint Antoine Petchersky (x^e-xi^e siècle), père du monachisme russe et fondateur de la Laure des Grottes de Kyiv ; la deuxième concerne un monastère du Mont Athos, où ce saint aurait vécu pendant un certain temps au xi^e siècle ; la troisième nous parle d'un objet qu'il aurait porté. La présente étude permet d'explorer la rivalité entre Grecs et Russes au Mont Athos dans la seconde moitié du xix^e siècle. Elle permet également d'interroger la question des 'faux' objets et la pertinence culturelle de ces derniers.

MOTS-CLÉS: Mont Athos ; musées ; pratiques pénitentielles ; vie monastique ; hagiographie.

REZUMAT: Articolul ne arată cum trei povești, cu finalități foarte diferite, se dovedesc a fi, de fapt, interconectate. Prima poveste este cea a Sfântului Antonie Pechersky (secolele x-xi), părinte al monahismului rus și întemeietor al Lavrei Peșterilor de la Kyiv; a doua se referă la o mănăstire de pe Muntele Athos, unde se spune că acest sfânt a trăit o perioadă în secolul al xi-lea; a treia ne vorbește despre un obiect pe care l-ar fi purtat. Acest studiu explorează rivalitatea dintre greci și ruși pe Muntele Athos în a doua jumătate a secolului al xix-lea. De asemenea, face posibilă chestionarea problemei obiectelor „false” și a relevanței culturale a acestora din urmă.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: Muntele Athos; muzee; practice penitențiale; viața monahală; hagiografie.

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When Georgios Lampakis published in 1908 the Catalogue of the newly founded Museum of Christian Antiquities in Athens,¹ he referred in detail to two items of the section “Objects of monastic life”. One of them was an iron vestment from Mount Athos, bearing an inscription in Russian: “We bow before your Cross, Lord”.² It was given to the Museum by the abbot of Esphigmenou Monastery, archimandrite Loukas. According to the testimonies that Lampakis gathered on Mount Athos, it belonged to the “Russian hermit Saint Antonios” who had lived in a cave near the monastery of Esphigmenou.³

Although the text of Lampakis is not very precise, everything seems to indicate that the hermit was Antony Pechersky, the founder of the Caves Lavra in Kyiv. It is around 1840 that a legend was created, according to which Saint Antony had lived at Esphigmenou Monastery and had even received the tonsure there. Despite the absence of historical evidence, a chapel was inaugurated in July 1850 and decorated with icons sent by Russian ecclesiastics from Kyiv and Saint Petersburg. This legend echoes still: “[...] sometime in the early eleventh century,

the Primary Chronicle tells us that a layman from the city of Lyubech in modern-day Ukraine went as a pilgrim to Mount Athos and, having visited the monasteries, was so charmed by what he saw that he decided to enter the monastic life. The abbot of the monastery where he was staying, identified in some traditions as Abbot Theoktistos of Esphigmenou, tonsured him with the name Antony”.⁴

My article unfolds three different and interconnected stories: a story about a saint; a story about a place (where this saint supposedly lived for some time in the eleventh century); and a story about an object (that this saint allegedly was wearing and that Lampakis exposed in the Athenian Museum he founded at the end of the nineteenth century). This case study, on the one hand, illustrates the rivalry between Greeks and Russians on Mount Athos after the second half of the nineteenth century; and, on the other hand, allows us to question what is a “fake” object from a museographic point of view as well as the cultural relevance of such items.



▲ Fig. 1. Bronze etching from Benaki Museum, made in March 1847 in Saint Petersburg. Benaki Museum.

Credits: Dimitris Giavasis.

A STORY ABOUT A SAINT

Antony is said to have been born in Lyubech, in the Chernigov region, around 983. The *Russian Primary Chronicle* refers to his sojourn to Mount Athos in 1051 (he would have been by then 68 years old!), without any other element about the monastery that hosted him. This date has often been contested. According to the archimandrite and scholar Christophoros Ktenas, Saint Antony came and stayed on Mount Athos for about ten years when Theoktistos was the abbot of Esphigmenou, that is at the very beginning of the eleventh century; he returned to Kyiv in 1012, but came back to the Holy Mountain for a second stay between 1017 and 1027.⁵ Hence, Antony passed a part of his youth on Mount Athos that he definitively quit when he was around thirty-five years old.

There are, in fact, very few certainties about this saint. One of them is that he “lived as a monk on the Holy Mountain and did so during his youth”.⁶ Nevertheless, some scholars even dispute Antony’s stay on Mount Athos. With no substantial arguments, they claim that he had lived in Bulgaria. Zozul’ak, who refutes this thesis, accepts that historical sources do not provide clear testimonies of Antony’s sojourn to Mount Athos and that,

even if he did live there as a hermit for a time, “he had not come into contact with the monastic typikon of Athanasius the Athonite of the Great Lavra”.⁷ Interestingly, there is a Greek local tradition confirming that the Lavra in Kyiv was not established by Antony in the eleventh century, but by a fellow monk of Athanasius the Athonite (c.920–c.1000). According to this version, Saint Athanasius founded the Great Lavra on Mount Athos with two other (obviously Greek-speaking) monks, but because of a quarrel, his fellows abandoned him; the one of them, Auxentios, went to set up the Lavra in Kyiv and the other one, Hieronymos, the Lavra in Kalavryta. Lappas clearly explains that this implausible narrative emerged in Kalavryta during the end of the eighteenth century in order to render their local Lavra more prestigious.⁸ In other words, there are no historical elements about any kind of relationship between Athanasius the Athonite and Antony Pechersky, even if a certain number of icons represent Panagia Oikonomissa of Great Lavra with Saint Athanasius the Athonite (on the left) and Saint Antony Pechersky (on the right), as we will see below.

The creation of the Lavra in Kyiv gave rise to another debate. The minimization of Antony’s role, in this case, had nothing to do with Greeks or with the Holy Mountain, but was related to the contribution of Christian Scandinavians, since the cave where Antony had initially settled was considered to be a “Varangian cave.”⁹

Even the death of Antony has been surrounded by controversy. After the comparison of different sources, Louis Petit gives two possible dates for his death: on 10 July 1063 or on 7 May 1073.¹⁰ It is important to mention that for some scholars, like Behr-Sigel,¹¹ the saint could not even be a historical person.

It is, precisely, the scarcity and uncertainty of information that explain the development of different “traditions” concerning the monastery on Athos in which Antony supposedly spent his novitiate. Interestingly enough, Francis Thomson wrote his article after a Symposium of Byzantine Studies, where he received a remark about his credulity “to accept the theory that St. Anthony went to Athos”.¹²

Another point should be mentioned here. The saint has been systematically presented as “Russian”, even if there was no “Russia” between the ninth and the thirteenth centuries, just a territorial and political entity named Rus’, assembling different groups of Eastern Slavs.¹³

A STORY ABOUT A PLACE

(a) The decade of 1840.

If the lack of historical elements makes the narrative about Saint Antony lacunar, the story about his relations with Esphigmenou monastery and its Abbot Theoktistos (who allegedly tonsured him with the name Antony) suffers equally from imprecision. It seems that this version “first surfaced in about 1840.”¹⁴ In 1841, Saint Antony was painted in the narthex of Esphigmenou’s katholikon; he was defined in this fresco as *Ἐσφιγμενίτης (ὁ Ρῶσος)*,¹⁵ thus accumulating two identities – the first one linking him to Esphigmenou and the second one to Russia, presented here as his country of origin. In 1845, the chapel in honour of Saint Antony started to be built on Mount Samaria [*Μεγάλη Σαμάρεια*],¹⁶ next to the cave where he was supposed to have lived as a hermit. According to Esphigmenou version, after the death of Prince Vladimir in 1015, Antony returned to the Holy Mountain and “was given a blessing by Abbot Theoktistos to withdraw to a cave on Mount Samaria, a short distance from the monastery. Here he lived as a hermit, apparently for some decades, though the chronology is somewhat confused between

the various traditions.¹⁷

In March 1847, a bronze etching was made in Saint Petersburg depicting Esphigmenou, with Greek and Russian inscriptions: the text enumerates those who have served as monks in Esphigmenou; among them is (designated as number five) “Saint Anthony Pechersky, who later became the founder of the Holy Lavra of Koba [the Kyiv Caves Lavra] in Russia” [ὁ ὁσῖος Ἀντώνιος ὁ πετζέρσκη, ὃς καὶ γενόμενος ὑστερον κτίτωρ τῆς / ἐν τῇ ροσσίᾳ Ἱερᾶς Λαύρας τῆς κοβά (sic)]. After the presentation of the saints linked to Esphigmenou, the etching enumerates the chapels under the monastery’s jurisdiction; one of them (number eleven) corresponds to “the newly built (chapel) of Saint Anthony Pechersky” [τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀντωνίου πετζέρσκη τοῦ νέου ἀνεγερθέντος]. This etching is currently in the Benaki Museum in Athens (Fig. 1).

There is another Russian engraving, with Greek and Russian inscriptions, made in 1848 by a Russian artist, Vasil Denotkin, which is exposed today in the National Museum of Warsaw (Poland). It shows Esphigmenou and different saints of Greek origin, “but also Ruthenian saints such as Saint Antony Pecherski”.¹⁸ A year later, in April 1849, the golden-plated iconostasis of the chapel of Saint Anthony Pechersky in Megali Samareia, that was fabricated in Russia, was offered as a gift by the archimandrite Juvenal, who was the treasurer [οἰκονόμος] of the bishop of Saint Petersburg.¹⁹ The chapel of Saint Anthony Pechersky was inaugurated on 10 July 1850, the 10th of July being the religious feast of the saint (and one of the two possible days of his death, as seen above).

To sum up, the decade of 1840 was defined not only by the construction of the chapel, but also by the production of engravings that largely diffused the legend outside the Holy Mountain, since paper icons of this kind were often given to pilgrims. That means that even before the end of the chapel’s construction in 1850, Russian engravings were already reproducing this narrative, their circulation being a form of validation. We have thus two different means of diffusion for this legend: a commemorative chapel, anchored in the ground where the saint was said to have lived in the eleventh century; and engravings, which conveyed their message not through spatial connections but through unlimited circulation. In this case, the chapel seemed to function as a declaratory landmark, reminding to all that Russian monasticism started on this spot centuries ago.

(b) Between 1850 and 1875.

The association of Saint Antony with Esphigmenou was considered by certain Russians to be unreliable. Antonin Kapustin (1827-1894) who came to Esphigmenou on 3 September 1859 was doubtful: he visited the chapel and the cave, which was small and humid and, consequently, unsuitable for human habitation.²⁰ He was wondering why Vasilij Grigorovič Barskij (1701-1747) did not mention anything about this tradition; and why the monks of Esphigmenou never referred to it in the letters they were exchanging with the Tsar and the Patriarch of Moscow. Hence, he tried to understand how this version was progressively created.²¹

If Kapustin was sceptical, Andrei Nikolaevich Murav’ev (1806-1874) fully supported this tradition. The codex of 1849 with Saint Antony’s *Vita* was made after the command given by Murav’ev who visited Mount Athos from 7 August to 16 September and who wanted to offer it, after his return, to the bishop Philaretus Amfiteatrov of Kyiv (1837-1857), the *ex officio* head of the Kyivan Caves Monastery.²² This is the first text, after the fresco in the narthex of Esphigmenou’s katholikon, to present him as

“Antonios Esphigmenou” [Ἀντωνίου Ἐσφιγμένου] – term stressing the links between the monastery and the saint.

Despite various lingering objections, gifts from Russia continued to flow. On 30 September 1858, a bronze icon of Saint Antony was sent from the Lavra of Pechersk in Kyiv to Esphigmenou for the newly founded chapel.²³ An icon of the Virgin of Pechersky (showing Saint Antony and Saint Theodosius of Pechersky kneeling in front of the Virgin and the infant Jesus blessing with both hands) was made in Moscow and offered to Mount Athos on 24 November 1859, according to a Russian inscription in the lower part of the frame.²⁴ The icon is currently in Simonos Petra monastery (Fig. 2).

This story created a network of objects, donors, and monks circulating between the Holy Mountain and Russia. It was defined by lively debates, multiple protagonists and disputing claims. Russians who commanded respect and authority in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, like Barskij,²⁵ Kapustin, and Murav’ev, were (voluntarily or not) implicated in it.

CONTESTED PLACES AND THEIR OWNERSHIP: MONASTERIES, SKETES, AND METOCHIA

The Russian Abbot of St. Panteleimon’s, Makarios (Sushkin), was elected on 10 May 1875. This was an important event that aroused Greek distrust toward Russian intentions and Pan-Slavism. Greeks were conscious of the geopolitical asymmetry between their newly founded and economically unstable kingdom, and the powerful and expanding Russian Empire, which was a major player in the European state system. Russians were not anymore humble receivers of Greek Orthodox influences, as in the times of Saint Antony.

Greeks suspected Russians of having planned to put Mount Athos under their control. The Russian domination was not only economical, but also demographical: “Until the nineteenth century there had never been more than two hundred Russians on Athos at any time; by the end of the century the Russian Athonite community had grown to five thousands”.²⁶ In 1898, two Russian fathers of St. Panteleimon tried to buy the chapel of Saint Antony for 600 Ottoman liras, but the monks of Esphigmenou refused the offer.²⁷ Some years earlier, a Russian monk named Bourazeri bought a cell that belonged to Esphigmenou in order to transform it into a skete, but a Patriarchal document [σιγίλλιο] in 1891 cancelled the sale.²⁸ Hence, the chapel of Saint Antony was not only a means to spread a legend; unlike the offered paper icons, the chapel also represented a property asset that had monetary value. A chapel or a cell on Mount Athos was a good that monks could buy or sell. Even if this estate market was defined by a rigid pattern of land-ownership, the prices got progressively very high because of the rise of the demand, since the Russians were ready in some cases to pay a lot of money in order to acquire a plot. Many Greek texts from this period criticized the inflation of prices and denounced its incompatibility with monastic life and its principles.

If Greeks were accusing Russians of religious and political entrepreneurship, Russians were equally questioning the sincerity of Greek intentions: the invention of the whole story about the links between Saint Antony and Esphigmenou could be explained by the desire to increase Russian pilgrimage traffic and to attract gifts. According to the book published in 1901 by the Russian church historian Evgenii E. Golubinskij, this version was created by the monks of Esphigmenou who wanted to put the monastery under the protection of Russia.²⁹ In 1895, Abbot Loukas of Esphigmenou (the same who gave one



◆ Fig. 2a-b. *Virgin of Pechersky*.
 © 2020 Holy Community of Mount Athos (HCMA) /
 Holy Monastery Simonos Petra.

year later, in 1896, the iron vestment to Lampakis) asked the Kyiv consistory whether a metochion could be set up in Kyiv; on 24 June 1895, the consistory turned down the request because of insufficient evidence about Saint Antony's relation with Esphigmenou.³⁰

In this case, both sides accused each other of unscrupulous behaviour. This tradition illustrates the complexity of relationships between Greeks and Russians on Mount Athos for one more reason: it was used as an argument for those from the Greek side who wanted to prove that there was no Russian monastery on Mount Athos in the past.

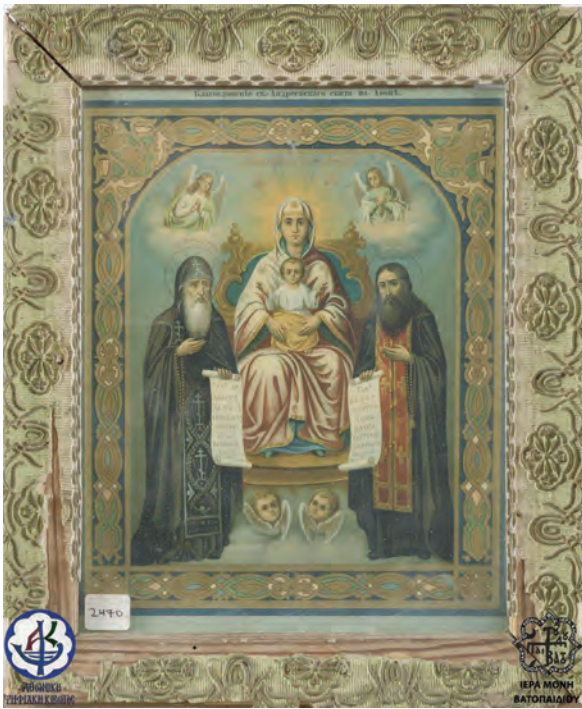


DIFFERENT PLACES, DIFFERENT STORIES?

Let us start with the argument of Ktenas according to which, only one Russian came to Mount Athos during the eleventh century, Antony Pechersky: Antony established himself in Esphigmenou and his choice could not but reveal the absence of other Russians, since he would have preferred to live with them otherwise.³¹ Even if Ktenas' po-

sition is totally improbable, it is sure that the massive Russian pilgrimage to Mount Athos developed after the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardji in 1774, which granted Russia religious rights in the Ottoman Empire and freedom of passage for Russian pilgrims to Jerusalem.

In fact, Ktenas did not hesitate to go one step further: no Russian came to Mount Athos between the twelfth and the end of the eighteenth century, with the exception of



the two Russian monks mentioned by Barskij.³² For Ktenas, the occupation of Russia by the Mongols from 1224 to 1480, as well as the absence of regular means of transportation and the Russian-Turkish wars that followed, prevented Russian pilgrims from going to Jerusalem during this long period; and Mount Athos was a traditional stop in this journey from Russia to Jerusalem.³³

However, not all Greek scholars adopted such extreme and improbable positions. In 1874, sixty years before the publication by Ktenas, Ioannis Tantalidis published (under the pseudonym “Philalithis”) a book about St. Panteleimon Monastery. Tantalidis considered that Saint Antony was certainly imitated by other Russians, who, following his example, came after him to the Holy Mountain to become monks. He also mentioned two other facts: that there was a Russian monastery in Jerusalem from the beginning of the twelfth century; and that there were many testimonies about the presence of numerous Russians in St. Panteleimon during the sixteenth century.³⁴ In this text, Tantalidis preferred not to specify the monastery where Antony was tonsured: it was simply one of the Holy Mountain’s foundations [ἐνθα τὸ μοναχικὸν ἐνεδύσατο σχῆμα ἐγκατασταθεὶς ἐν τινὶ τῶν ἱερῶν τοῦ Ἄθω καταγωγῶν].³⁵

Among the Greek scholars of the nineteenth century, Tantalidis occupied the position of a dissenter. Presented in a book published in 1896,³⁶ Pavlos Karolidis’ stance was also unusual. Karolidis considered, on the one hand, that St. Panteleimon Monastery was initially Greek but was conceded to Russians around the end of the twelfth century; and on the other hand, that Esphigmenou Monastery was honored by Russians as “an ancient Russian institution” [ὡς ἀρχαῖον ἴδρυμα Ρωσσικόν]. According to the testimonies he had gathered, Esphigmenou had Russian abbots during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Notwithstanding these exceptions, the association of Saint Antony with Esphigmenou was reliable for many Greeks, since it proved that Antony had been one of the few Russians on Mount Athos for a long time. It was the same argument that made the version of Esphigmenou



◀ Fig. 3. Virgin, Saint Antony of Pechersky and Saint Theodosius of Pechersky, 1880-1920.

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▶ Fig. 4. Iron for ascetic life (σιδεριά ασκητικής ζωής), ca. 1000; front and back side.

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attractive for the Greek side and problematic for the Russian side. Apparently, what was at stake was less the concern for historical accuracy or the interest for filling a hagiographical lacuna than geopolitical debates about the status of Athos. In this monastic environment, a rivalry that took shape in the second half of the nineteenth century was sustained by different interpretations of an eleventh-century *Vita*. Interestingly enough, argumentation was always rational – since it was about historical facts, paintings or texts and never about supernatural interventions of saints, visions or miracles.

However, there is historical evidence that the Russian monks of St Panteleimon’s considered Antony Pechersky to be a saint patron who could intervene miraculously: when, in 1895, a Russian monk stayed in delirium for twelve days, he had a vision in which Saint Antony “thrice instructed the abbot to forbid the consumption of raki in the monastery” since 7 000 monks had already perished on account of this alcohol, according to the vision.³⁷ The tendency that characterizes all monastic environments to give a metaphysical sense to different forms of human experiences sharply contrasts with the absence of similar narratives about our affair.

Unsurprisingly, Russians opted for another narrative: for them, the saint chose to stay in the already existing Russian monastery. According to the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, “the first mention of a monastery ‘tou Rhos’ (i.e., of the Rus’) on Athos dates from 1016. This was probably Xylourgou Monastery, the first cenobitic Russian house, mentioned by name in documents from 1030 on, which stood on the site of the existing skete of Bogoroditsa”.³⁸ This monastery’s links with Saint Antony stayed however vague. Antonin Kapustin, for instance, thought that “in all probability St Antony Perchesky lived in Xylourgou, which was perhaps founded by him”.³⁹

The Xylourgou story was not the only alternative. Others tried to connect the saint with Iviron Monastery⁴⁰ or with the Great Lavra. Not far from the Great Lavra, there was another cave that was also ascribed to Saint Antony: Ippolit (Vishensky) of the Monastery of Saints Boris and Gleb at Chernigov, who travelled to Jerusalem, Sinai and Mount Athos from October 1707 to August 1709, mentioned this cave in his pilgrim's report.⁴¹ According to Thomson, Ippolit visited this abandoned cave on 6 June 1709 and reported in the diary he was keeping that Antony "had allegedly dug [it] with his own hands". This story was linked not only to a specific place – supposedly named initially "the cave of St Antony" and later known as the cave of Saint Peter⁴² – but also to a person, the superior Eustratius (1016 – after 1018) who allegedly tonsured Antony.⁴³ There is also an engraving (which is part of Dori Papastratou collection) from the first quarter of the nineteenth century, with Greek and Russian inscriptions, showing Panagia Oikonomissa of Great Lavra with Saint Athanasius the Athonite (on the left) and Saint Antony Pechersky (on the right): this would be a means to broadly diffuse this legend. Apparently popular between the beginning of the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth century, the Great Lavra version was probably forgotten after the broad circulation of the Esphigmenou story and the construction of the chapel in the 1840s.

Among these four monasteries, two were the most serious candidates: Esphigmenou for the Greeks side; and Xylourgou for the Russian side. The Greek version about Esphigmenou seems to have gained ground on an international level: we have seen that Speake refers to this tradition – his analysis being, however, based on a Greek source (see note 3). This was also the opinion of Petit and Regel at the beginning of the twentieth century: *C'est, en effet, dans une des grottes de Samaria, à l'ouest d'Esphigmenou, que le moine russe Antoine, surnommé depuis Kievopetcherski, s'initia à l'ascétisme sous la direction de l'higoumène Théocliste.*⁴⁴

Antonios-Aimilios Tachiaos is one of the rare Greek historians to consider that the Russians had already their monastery on Mount Athos in the eleventh century and that Saint Antony stayed there.⁴⁵ However, he stresses the fact that the *Russian Primary Chronicle* did not focus on the first contacts of Russians with Mount Athos but on the foundation of the Kyiv's Lavra: its aim was to associate the latter to the center of Orthodox monastic life that the Holy Mountain incarnated at that time.

To sum up then, in order to promote their own interests in the nineteenth century, both Russians and Greeks accused each other of manipulation: their versions were equally weak, since they could not be linked to historical facts, only to probabilities. Used as a tool for the re-consideration of the Russian presence's chronological boundaries on Mount Athos, this story was a source of much debate and little historical certainty.

But this was not only a story that became important in the nineteenth century. Kirill Vakh mentions a new version that appeared recently, according to which "St Antony was tonsured in Esphigmenou Monastery in 1016. There is no explanation offered either for this date [...] or for the basis (or revelations) of the sources upon which this date is grounded. One has the impression that the date was artificially connected with the millennium year of Russian Athonite monasticism," that was celebrated in 2016.⁴⁶ A "Ruthenian" saint was thus solicited to take part in this official celebration: apparently, Saint Antony continues to be an object of discord – between Russians and Ukrainians, this time.

A STORY ABOUT AN OBJECT

Let us go back to Lampakis and to the Athenian Museum of Christian Antiquities. Although the Museum started to function in 1886, it was officially inaugurated on 4 March 1890. In August 1893, it was transferred and incorporated into the National Archeological Museum.

Objects "exert a power over their viewers – a power not simply inherent in the objects, but given to them by the museum as an institution within a particular historical sociocultural setting."⁴⁷ By exposing the Esphigmenou iron vestment, Lampakis made of it a "museum-worthy" object. Was this the material proof of Antony's stay in Esphigmenou? Did this item, after its exposition in an Athenian museum, constitute a third way of disseminating the legend besides the chapel in Megali Samareia and the printed engravings distributed to pilgrims?

Whereas we may consider it today as one of the material traces that the confrontation between Greeks and Russians on the Holy Mountain left behind, we cannot know with certainty if it evoked, at least for some of its viewers at the end of the nineteenth century, the controversial story examined here. For all those who, like Lampakis himself,⁴⁸ believed that Russia was the generous protector of all Orthodox people, the fact that it could be seen as the reminder of the Greek-Russian discordance on Athos would probably have been problematic.

After having been removed from its original context and brought into a museographic environment, the Esphigmenou iron vestment was mainly linked to ascetic monastic practices. The first question that arises is the definition of the object, which is unknown to us: there is no trace left of it today, as far as I know. We have no description or picture of this item. Lampakis designated it in his Catalogue as "iron vestment." But what exactly was an iron vestment? The *Vita* of Saint Theodosius of the Kyiv Caves / Pechersky (a saint of the eleventh century and co-founder of this Lavra, represented in many icons with Saint Antony) can give us an idea (Fig. 3). According to his *Vita*, before leaving for Kyiv to become a monk, Theodosius went to a blacksmith and commanded an iron belt. When the belt was ready, he started to wear it in a permanent way; the belt was very tight and painful and made him bleed.⁴⁹ By reminding its bearer that his attention should not be focused on earthly or bodily concerns, the iron vestment had a disciplinary function.

According to the Catalogue that Lampakis published in 1908, this high-prestige and valuable object was initially kept with the manuscripts of Esphigmenou: it was part of its Treasure (see note 2). But this was not a "contact relic". Apparently, there was no relic of this kind exposed and venerated in Esphigmenou or in the chapel of Saint Antony. Hence, this object was not a focus of religious devotion, as far as we know from the sources. Lampakis (who, as we have seen, referred to the relationship of this object with Saint Antony with caution) never treated this object as a relic but as a typical item showing the penitential dimension of monastic life.

As explained at the beginning of my article, Lampakis presented in his Catalogue only two items of the section "Objects of monastic life:" the other one was an iron belt with three eyelets, from which weights could be hung.⁵⁰ This object, which came from Dousikou Monastery in Thessaly and had the registration number 2141, was also controversial, since its use as an ascetic instrument had been contested by a member of the Christian Archeological Society on 19 April 1896. In a letter sent on 10 August 1896, the Abbot of Dousikou explained how this belt was used by older monks in the past: it helped them to stay awake while praying and prevented them from falling down, since they were tied to the ceiling through it.⁵¹ It

is interesting to note that when Lampakis published his Catalogue, he did not take this explanation into account: for him, the eyelets served to add more weight to the belt, whereas the abbot attributed a totally different function to them. Apparently, the practice evoked by the abbot was relatively common, since the elder Hilarion from Georgia (1776-1864), who was proclaimed a saint by the Georgian Church in October 2002, used to be hung on Mount Athos by chains [χρησιμοποιοῦσε αλυσίδες ως κρεμαστήρες] in order to avoid falling asleep during his long-lasting prayers.⁵²

Everything seems to indicate that when Abbot Loukas of Esphigmenou gave the iron vestment to the Museum in 1896, Lampakis saw this donation as an opportunity to create a series of ascetic instruments having been used by “ironed monks” [μοναχοὶ σιδηρούμενοι].⁵³ Hence, Lampakis was interested, on the one hand, in the artifact’s function and meaning; and on the other hand, in the new possibilities of arrangement after the creation of a museographic series. This becomes clear when we examine the report of the visit that the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece paid in the Christian Archeological Museum on 18 March 1904: they saw with interest “the iron weights and the iron belts [τα σιδηρά βάρη και τας σιδηράς ζώνας], that the ascetics were bringing, and from which they were liberated only after the dissolution of their bodies in the grave”⁵⁴ (Fig. 4).

De Nadaillac, who visited the Russian skete of Saint Andrew on Mount Athos in September 1891, describes a scene that Lampakis probably observed when he decided five years later to bring the iron vestment to Athens: De Nadaillac speaks about the ossuary, on the wall of which were hanging *des chaînes petites ou grosses, des carcans, des croix avec des pointes. On m’expliqua que c’étaient des instruments de pénitence enterrés avec les moines qui les avaient portés.*⁵⁵ Thus, these iron instruments were revealed after the ritual exhumation of the monks’ corpses.

It seems that until the beginning of the twentieth century, this type of objects was particularly appreciated: in the Greek church of Saint Dimitri in Tatavla (a neighborhood of Istanbul), there was an “Iron Belt with collar and crosses” (Σιδηρά Ζώνη μετὰ περιλαμίου και σταυρών), used in the past, according to the legend, by a sacristan of the church who had lived like a hermit. This object was hung next to the icon of Saint Dimitri and when the priest was reading a benediction, the belt was held next to the person’s head.⁵⁶ Thirty years before, the French traveller De Vogüé described how during his sojourn in Jerusalem, *Madame Kajevnikof nous fait voir une énorme croix en fer brut pesant au moins dix-huit ou vingt livres. Elle a été trouvée pendue au cou d’une vieille femme morte dans l’hospice ; la malheureuse était venue à pied de Jaffa avec ce singulier cilice, qu’elle portait depuis des années.*⁵⁷ These two last cases show that not only Athonite monks were wearing iron vestments: also laymen and, even, laywomen could use them.

GENUINE OBJECTS BUT FAKE ASSOCIATIONS

This case study raises different questions: Is the taste and expertise of museum professionals and scholars an unquestionable parameter for shaping the historical interpretation of the past? Who decides what is meaningful or useless in the case of an object, either fake or genuine? For instance, could it be possible to expose a fake object in a museum today, while explaining the whole story: who forged it and for what purpose, and what did it represent for a certain period of time?⁵⁸

Objects are carriers of memory – real and imagined. If objects can deceive, they can also convince. Hence, which is the power of conviction of objects? Or to put it differently, how can an object prove the veracity of a story or, on the contrary, deform and falsify our understanding of the past? What kind of attitude toward history do the objects foster? From that point of view, to what extent museums, through the exposed objects they host, are *loci* of conviction? It is interesting to consider here a passage by Sergey Shumilo⁵⁹: “The version accepted all over Mount Athos, and reflected in its hagiography and iconography, never associated Antony Pechersky with Esphigmenou Monastery. This is *proved* [my italics] by the icon of the Host of Holy Fathers who have Shone Forth on the Holy Mountain of Athos, painted in 1859 in the Romanian Prodromou skete. It depicts saints next to the houses they belonged to; and St Antony is placed next to the Russian monastery, not Esphigmenou”. Shumilo presents here this icon as material and visual proof. The question is whether this icon can be considered to be a more credible argument than the iron vestment exposed in an Athenian museum after its donation in 1896. In other words, how objects can be used for the assessment of historical evidence? How do objects intervene in historical debates as the one presented here?

The object exposed by Lampakis was genuine, since it was most surely used by an anonymous Athonite hermit. It was not just an explicatory object, but carried its own kind of sanctity. What was fake, in this case, was the association of an object with a particular person; this was also the case with the caves of Megali Samareia, where different hermits had lived for centuries, but not necessarily Saint Antony and not necessarily in the indicated cave next to the chapel built in his honor.

Thomson, who dismisses this legend as unhistorical, concludes his article in this way: “It is high time that Anthony’s Esphigmenou connection be once and for all re-allocated [...] from the category of *veritas historica* to that of *impia fraus*”.⁶⁰ The question that arises here is not to define whether this fraud was pious or impious (the first case being characterized by Nietzsche as worse), but to examine the historical reasons that made conflicting truth claims be raised by different groups on Mount Athos at a certain point of time.

Notes:

1 The Society of Christian Archeology, of which Georgios Lampakis (1854-1914) was an important member if not the unofficial leader, was created on 23 December 1884. Through the Museum set up by Lampakis, the Society aimed at highlighting the importance of Christian art, which was neglected and underestimated until then. See Seraïdari 2020.

2 The object’s registration number was 2232. It was described as *Σιδηροῦν μοναχικὸν σχῆμα ἐξ Ἁγίου Ὄρους, ἐφ’ οὗ ἀναγινώσκουμεν ρωσιστί: «Τὸν Σταυρὸν σου προσκυνοῦμεν Δέσποτα»*. Lampakis 1908, p. 37-38. I will respect the historical orthography and the polytonic Greek fonts only in the text and not in the bibliography, since most Greek titles in the nineteenth century were in capital letters on the front page.

3 This is explained in a note: *Κατὰ δοθείσας μοι πληροφορίας ἐν Ἁγίῳ Ὄρει τὸ σχῆμα τοῦτο ἀναφέρεται ὅτι ἔφερον ὁ Ρώσσοσ ἀσκητῆς Ἅγιος Ἀντώνιος, ὅστις ἠσκήτευσεν ἐν σπηλαίῳ ἀνήκοντι εἰς τὴν Μονὴν τοῦ Ἐσφιγμένου. Ἐφυλάσσετο δὲ μετὰ τῶν ἐγγράφων τῆς Μονῆς*. Lampakis 1908, p. 38, note 1.

4 Speake 2018, p. 66. Speake uses as source the book by Hieromonk Makarios of Simonos Petra, *The Synaxarion: The lives of the Saints of the Orthodox Church*, vol. 6 (Ormylia, Holy Covent of the Annunciation of Our Lady, 2008, p. 97).

5 Ktenas 1935, p. 410. See also Tachiaos 2013, who considers that these inaccuracies (Antony deciding to go to Athos in 1051, at the age of 68 years) hurt the Chronicle’s credibility.

- 6 Shumilo 2018, p. 32.
- 7 Zozul'ak 2021, p. 1.
- 8 Lappas, 1975, p. 3-4.
- 9 Riasanovsky 1980, p. 267-268.
- 10 Petit, Regel 1906, p. vi.
- 11 Behr-Sigel 1963, p. 986.
- 12 Thomson, 1995, p. 637. The main idea of the article is that "the Kievan Caves Monastery was established with a Volhynian, not an Athonite blessing." Thomson, 1995, p. 661.
- 13 On this issue, see Pelenski, 1922, who shows that Russia's "creation myth" was based in Kyiv. In my text, I chose to present Saint Antony as Russian, even if Kyiv (where the saint lived) and Lyubech (from where he was) are Ukrainian cities. Saint Antony may also be classified as "Ruthenian," as it will be seen below. However, he was presented during the period examined here by both Greeks and Russians as the founder of Russian monasticism, and the questioning of this is well beyond the scope of my article.
- 14 Shumilo 2018, p. 36. See also Thomson, 1995, p. 666, who considers that the "origins of the legend cannot possibly antedate 1840 by more than a few years" since it was not recorded in the history of Athos written by the superior of Esphigmenou that Porphyrius Uspensky read during his stay on the Holy Mountain from 8 January to 1 July 1846.
- 15 Papoulidis 2004, p. 19.
- 16 Papoulidis 2004.
- 17 Speake 2018, p. 67.
- 18 Deluga 1997, p. 244.
- 19 Smyrnakis 1903, p. 638. Apparently, according to this text, Juvenal came to live near to the chapel as hermit in 1858.
- 20 Papoulidis 2004, p. 19-20.
- 21 Papoulidis 2004, p. 20.
- 22 Iordanidis 2018, p. 209; Thomson, 1995, p. 666. For the compilation of this *Vita* by hieromonk James of Vatopedi in c.1840, see Thomson, 1995, p. 664. Shumilo accepts the fact that Murav'ev "was taken by the Esphigmenou legend and was one of the first to popularize it in Russia." However, in his article, he gives only elements mentioned by Murav'ev that suggest doubt: concerning the size of the cave (too cramped to serve as habitation) or the absence of Saint Antony in an ancient icon depicting Esphigmenou fathers. See Shumilo 2018, p. 37-38.
- 23 Smyrnakis 1903, p. 637.
- 24 I would like to thank Aleksandr Preobrazhenskii who translated this inscription for me.
- 25 According to Pierre Gonneau, Barskij was without doubt a "Ruthenian" but also *un fidèle sujet de l'empereur (ou de l'impératrice) de Russie*. Gonneau 1998, p. 406. This article also insists on the way Barskij was criticizing the "hegemonic ambition" of Greek monks on Athos: for him, the monastery of Saint Panteleimon was Russian until 1735. Interestingly enough, the Greek translation of Barskij's travels on Athos in 2009 by the editions *Agioreitiki Estia* presents him as an "Ukrainian traveller."
- 26 Fennell 2001, p. 39.
- 27 Papoulidis 1981, p. 171.
- 28 Papoulidis 1981, p. 170-171. Karolidis describes this affair in detail, but he gives a different spelling for the Russian monk's name: Πουραζέλης. See Karolidis 1896, p. 102. On this issue, see also Petit, Regel 1906, p. xxxiv: *Combien suggestive, par exemple, l'histoire de cette vente au moine russe Néophyte Bourajéri du kelli des Saints Anargyres par les moines d'Esphigménou. L'acte était des plus réguliers; il n'en fut pas moins cassé, le 28 mars 1891, à la suite de démêlés et de procès presque invraisemblables, où le patriotisme tint lieu d'équité.*
- 29 Papoulidis 2004, p. 18.
- 30 Shumilo 2018, p. 34-35.
- 31 Ktenas 1935, p. 411.
- 32 *Ibidem*, p. 104-105.
- 33 This statement contradicts historical data. Russian pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Athos gained in importance after the second half of the fourteenth century, with the archimandrite Agrephenius and the hierodeacon Ignatius of Smolensk (who made a journey to Constantinople in 1389-92) being the most well-known pilgrims.
- 34 Philalithis [Tantalidis] 1874, p. 96-97. Ottoman Greek poet and scholar Tantalidis was considered to be a "Pan-Orthodox figure," who had nothing to do with "Greek nationalists," by a small part of Russians who saw the 1872 Ecumenical Council "as the only way to restore some freedom and dignity to the Russian Church, which had been reduced to the status of a government agency by Peter the Great in the early 1700s." See Vovchenko 2012, p. 310.
- 35 Vovchenko 2012, p. 95.
- 36 Karolidis 1896, p. 83 and 100.
- 37 Fennell 2021, p. 97.
- 38 Speake 2018, p. 66. For the Xylourgou monastery, see also Christou 1987, p. 104-106. After having cited Paul Lemerle and his arguments (according to which the monastery was Russian in 1142), Christou maintains his position that it was never purely Russian, but either Greek or mixed. See also Thomson, 1995, p. 655-656 and p. 663, who characterizes this hypothesis as "wild," since that was a Greek minor house in the eleventh century. According to him, there is "no trace of close Russian contacts with Athos" before the twelfth century.
- 39 Shumilo 2018, p. 36. The Russian priest A. A. Smirnov, who spent two weeks on Athos in 1880, also considered that Saint Antony settled in Xylourgou. See Smirnov 1887.
- 40 This hypothesis was linked to the events of 1043, and more precisely "the unsuccessful Russian expedition against Constantinople and the subsequent blinding of many Russian prisoners". See Thompson, 1995, p. 663.
- 41 Shumilo 2018, p. 33.
- 42 On the claim made by Leonid (Kavelin) in 1876 that "the name of the cave was deliberately altered from St. Anthony's to St. Peter's when the Greeks took over Panteleimonos in the 18th century," see Thomson 1995, p.664, note 236.
- 43 Thomson 1995, p. 664. Thomson considers Ippolit's testimony to be the "earliest known speculation" about where Antony actually stayed on Athos. Thomson also mentions the "curious attempt to reconcile" this legend with the one of Esphigmenou, that was made by Simeon Vesnin (1814-1853), a monk of the Holy Mountain: according to this version, "Anthony first entered the Grand Laura but on his second visit to Athos lived as a hermit at Samareia." Thomson 1995, p. 667.
- 44 See Petit, Regel 1906, p. vi. However, in a book published in 2021 (which is the first one to present the "thousand year history of St Panteleimon's" in English), it is stated that "most Russian historians today along with the brethren of St Panteleimon Monastery give no credence to the Esphigmenou legend." See Fennell, 2021, p. 196, note 7.
- 45 See Tachiaos 2013.
- 46 Cited by Fennell 2021, p. 167.
- 47 Stocking 1985, p. 5.
- 48 For the way Lampakis constituted his collection of ecclesiastical objects and his relations with Russia, see Seraïdari 2020.
- 49 It seems that it was common for Russian holy men to wear iron vestments. This was also the case of Saint John of Moscow (sixteenth century): "He was wearing heavy irons [βαριά σιδερικά] under his cloths". See: <https://proskynitis.blogspot.com/2011/07/3.html> (in Greek). The term "cilice" is generally used to describe ritualistic devices of this kind that are worn in order to deny and punish the flesh in the whole Christian world.
- 50 Here is the text in Greek: Σιδηρᾶ ἀσκητικὴ ζώνη φέρουσα τρεῖς κρίκους, ἀφ' ὧν ἐξηρτῶντο βάρη πρὸς πνευματικὴν βίασαν τῶν μοναχῶν.
- 51 Lampakis 1903, p. 50-51. From the answer of the abbot, we understand that the belt was wrongly considered by some to have been used to detain mentally ill people who came to monasteries to be miraculously healed; according to this misinterpretation, the eyelets were used as "handcuffs" [κρίκοι και ἀλύσεις [...] ἐξ ὧν δένουσι μέχρι σήμερον τοὺς τρελλοὺς].
- 52 See <http://agioritikesmimes.blogspot.com/2013/07/3355.html> (in Greek).
- 53 Lampakis 1903, p. 50, note 1.
- 54 Unsigned press article, entitled *Επίσκεψις της Ι. Συνόδου εις το Χριστιανικόν Μουσείον* [Visit of the Holy Synod to the Christian

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 55 De Nadaillac 1896, p. 372.
 56 Pamfilos, 1913, p. 68.

57 De Vogüé, 1876, p. 214.
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The Musical Instruments in the Early Vernacular Translations of the Psalms (4)

Collective Research

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This paper represents a continuation of previous publications: “The Musical Instruments in the Early Vernacular Translations of the Psalms. Collective Research” (*Museikon*, 3, 2019, p. 67-140—hereafter abbreviated as *Musical Instruments* 2019); “The Musical Instruments in the Early Vernacular Translations of the Psalms (2): Collective Research” (*Museikon*, 4, 2020, p. 257-302—hereafter abbreviated as *Musical Instruments* 2020); and “The Musical Instruments in the Early Vernacular Translations of the Psalms (4): Collective Research” (*Museikon*, 5, 2019, p. 91-107—hereafter abbreviated as *Musical Instruments* 2021). The current paper represents the finalisation of this group of articles.

Old English Section (continued) (FT)

PARIS PSALTER DISCUSSION:

Indeed, the assumption that these choices were made first and foremost for prosodic reasons is indeed safe, and all the safer as we consider the Paris Psalter as a whole as best described by the notion of dynamic equivalence (Nida 1964). Alfred’s prose translation and the metrical translation that follows are audience-oriented – Alfred’s prose was meant to educate, and the verse was meant to be listened to. Dynamic equivalence, therefore, must have been sought for in both parts of the Paris Psalter, so as to produce the same effect on the audience as the original text had on its own audience, and it cannot possibly account for odd compounds or translation choices appearing only in the second (metrical) part of the Old English text.

TIBERIUS PSALTER DISCUSSION:

It was pointed out that *crwth* came up in some later Middle English translations as the Surtees Psalter, and in the same vein I would like to stress that the word does not occur at all in the Old English translations of the Vitellius, Stowe, and Tiberius Psalters I studied. Old English *hearpe* is the high-frequency item with the generic meaning of ‘a stringed instrument’ (corresponding to Latin *cithara*) that we find in those texts.

Crwth has a number of spelling variants: Middle English *croupe*, *crouth(e)*, *rowth* or, showing no interdental consonant, Middle English *croud(e)*, *crowd(e)*, *croudde*, *kroude*. This is originally a Welsh form also encountered in the other Celtic languages with two related senses (‘harp, violin’, and ‘hump, hunch’). The *Middle English Dictionary* distinguishes two senses of *croud*, viz. 1. A stringed instrument of the Celtic peoples, the crowd; 2. (a) A stringed instrument of the Near East. Etymologically, Middle English *croud* is akin to late Latin *crota*, but not to

classical Latin *chorus* (OED, s.v. *crowd* n.1); the link established between *croud* and *chorus* is apparently due in sense 2.(a) above to an erroneous rendering of biblical Latin *chorus* ‘a circular dance to song or instrumental music, music accompanied by dancing’ (MED, s.v. *croud* n.(2)), but in a note found in the same entry the dictionary suggests that ‘chorus’ is not necessarily a Middle Eastern instrument, since in Latham MLBS [*Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, eds. R. E. Latham et al. (1975-)], ‘chorus’ is taken as ‘crowd’ (musical instrument)).

In conclusion, although Middle English *croud* (a loan word from Welsh) and Latin *chorus* are not cognates, it could be contended that the generic meaning of biblical Latin *chorus* and its erroneous rendering at some point as Middle English *croud* might have favoured or even triggered a semantic process of extension in the English word, resulting in *croud* too eventually taking over the generic meaning of ‘musical instrument’. If this hypothesis is valid, this process of extension cannot be described as an internal development of the English language, since contact with Latin was key in it.

GENERAL CONCLUSION DISCUSSION:

I was specifically invited to compare the rendering of the Latin phrase meaning ‘in the midst of young female players on the tambourine’ (Ps 67:26) in the Tiberius and in the Eadwine Psalters. In the Eadwine Psalter the Latin sequence in *medio iuuenum timpanistiarum* corresponds to *on midle gingra gliewmedene plegiendra mid timpanan*. Formal equivalence being sought for in that text, this is

◀ *Shepherd playing a rather long pipe in the scene of the Nativity in the Church of Saint John Chrysostom, settlement of Geraki (Laconia, Greece), turn of the 14th century.*

Credits: Vladimir Agrigoroaei.

a clear and precise translation, but it is also longish and for that reason rather awkward. It can be thus parsed: *on midle gingra* ADJECTIVE-GENITIVE PLURAL *gliwmedene* NOUN-GENITIVE PLURAL. *plegiendra* PRESENT PARTICIPLE-GENITIVE.PLURAL *mid timpanan* NOUN-DATIVE SINGULAR (‘in the midst of young female instrumentalists playing with the tambourine’). From a syntactic point of view, the sequence involves a participial clause, *plegiendra mid timpanan*, which to a large extent accounts for the length of the English sequence. By contrast, in the Tiberius Psalter the Latin sequence in *medio iuuencularum tympanistriarum* is rendered by a simpler – but also vaguer – sequence, *on middele gliwmedena*, which can be thus parsed: *on middele gliwmedena* COMPOUND NOUN-GENITIVE PLURAL (‘in the midst of young female instrumentalists’).

Therefore, we can observe no morphosyntactic simplification in the sequence in the Eadwine Psalter compared with that in the Tiberius Psalter, quite the opposite indeed. Surprisingly, it even looks as if the limited space available to the copyists in the Eadwine interlinear gloss played

no part in restricting the relative length and complexity of the English passage. To be frank, the only segment where, in my opinion, an elaborate and almost tautological repetition of words can be observed is in the Vitellius Psalter, which has *on midlene gingrena timpana hearpigendra plegendra*. The segment can be thus parsed: *on midlene gingrena* NOUN-GENITIVE PLURAL *timpana* NOUN-ACCUSATIVE PLURAL *hearpigendra* PRESENT PARTICIPLE-GENITIVE.PLURAL *plegendra* PRESENT PARTICIPLE-GENITIVE.PLURAL (lit. ‘in the midst of young people playing on the harp playing the tambourine’). The accumulation of participles here (*hearpigendra* and *plegendra*) is not quite tautological since the Old English verb *hearpian* means ‘to harp, to play on the harp’, and not a more generic ‘to play an instrument’; it results in a semantic clash between playing the harp and playing the tambourine. This observation can only reinforce my former conclusion, based on different items, that the scribe who translated the Latin text in the Vitellius Psalter had only superficial knowledge of Latin.

Translation Resilience: The First Draft of a Theory (AC, VA)

There are many ways one can draw the conclusion(s) of this lengthy article. Several conclusions have already been drawn at the end of each section or during the debates which followed many of them. Another conclusion can be drawn with a forthcoming article concerning one of the translation clusters from our common research: Vladimir Agrigoroaei, Ileana Sasu, Kateřina Voleková, Andrea Svobodová, Katarzyna Jasińska, Ágnes Korondi, Mădălina Ungureanu, Ana Maria Gînsac, “A pan-European translation cluster? Synonymic variations in the vernacular translation choices for *τυμπανιστριαί / tympanistriae* (Ps 67:26),” in *Translation Automatism in the Vernacular Texts of the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period*, eds. Vladimir Agrigoroaei, Ileana Sasu, Turnhout, Brepols, 2023 (forthcoming). Last but not least, the current demonstration concerning “translation resilience” can be considered to be the third and last conclusion.

The case study presented in the following pages tries to establish the context in which certain features of a text, lost in the process of translation, can reappear in its rewritings or translations of the second-degree text. For lack of a better term, it was defined as “translation resilience” and identified as having linguistic and aesthetic trigger mechanisms, the latter being the subject of the current presentation. We will dwell chiefly on the specific case of translation choices present in the vernacular renderings of verse Ps 97:6 (KJV “with trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King”). Medieval vernacular versions raise several specific issues in the translation of this passage due to: (1) linguistic choices, (2) stylistic or aesthetic reasons, and (3) exegetical grounds. It is not a simple issue of philology vs translation studies, nor of translation strategies (formal/functional vs. dynamic). A cross-section look at the texts analysed in the previous instalments of this article revealed that the issue of aesthetic coherence (or stability) vs. incoherence (or instability) is of uttermost relevance. It should not come as a surprise that French translations seem to be the most useful examples in the current discussion. Due to their variable aesthetic choices and lack of unitary translation strategy, these French texts present all the possible degrees of stability and instability in comparison to translations in other languages.

To sum up the issue, the Masoretic text of Ps 97:6 dis-

tinguishes between *ḥāṣōserāh* (‘hammered metal trumpet’) and *šōḡar* (‘horn made trumpet’), making use of two different terms. The Old Greek version uses a single word in its translation (*σάλπιγξ*), but needs to differentiate between the two different instruments. In order to achieve this differentiation, the Septuagint used two different adjectives (cf. *Musical Instruments* 2019, p. 69): *σάλπιγξ κερατίνη* ‘trumpet made of horn’ (rendering *šōḡar*) and *σάλπιγξ ἑλατή* ‘trumpet of hammered (metal)’ (rendering *ḥāṣōserāh*). This is the starting point of the present problem, since the overwhelming majority of (allegedly stable) versions, either based on or derived from the Greek source, make use of similar pairs of adjectives, but there are several exceptions which testify to a different logic and witness different dynamics of biblical rewritings. In this wide category of allegedly stable versions, Church Slavonic texts slavishly follow the Greek and render *σάλπιγξ* as *трѣба* (*trōba*) followed by two attributes (cf. *трѣбахъ ѡкованахъ и гласомъ трѣбы рожаны*). Much in the same manner, the distinction is preserved in the Latin versions of Gallicanum and Romanum, also based on the Greek source, which prefer a generic word *tuba* defined as *ductilis* (the metal one) and *cornea* (the one made out of horn). The problem is that similar translation choices occur in various vernacular texts, since they are either based on the Gallicanum or the Church Slavonic texts, but one can also notice the existence of a parallel (and composite) group of translations which belong to the same family, but which mention two different musical instruments instead of a single instrument followed by two adjectives. It looks as if they could be linked to the Masoretic text or saint Jerome’s Hebraicum, yet these connections are impossible to support. The main question is how could this happen and why?

From the above, it is evident that the distinction based on adjectives does not occur in Hebraicum. As this version was based on Hebrew, it fits the pattern set by the Masoretic text in a different manner. Hebraicum uses *tuba* in place of the metallic instrument and *buccina* in place of the horn instrument. This choice is perfectly explainable when one draws a parallel to the commentary of saint Jerome to the book of Hosea, where he specifies that: *In Gabaa itaque et in Rama clara buccina et tuba personate;*

quorum *buccina* pastoralis est, et cornu recurvo efficitur: unde et proprie Hebraice *sophar* [...], Graece *κεραρίνη* appellatur. *Tuba* autem de aere efficitur, vel argento, qua in bellis et solemnitatibus concrepabant (PL 25:861C-D). This explanation proves that *buccina* renders, at least in the specific context of the Hebraicum translation, a shepherd instrument, curved and made of horn; while *tuba* refers to a straight instrument made of metal (either brass or silver), used on solemn occasions or during wartime. This was probably the intention of saint Jerome's translation *ad sensum*. It tried to convey the message of the Masoretic text not in an archaeological approach, but in a manner more adapted to literary texts, thus the use of "adaptation." Hebraicum enforces the translation technique known as "adaptation," whereby a cultureme (or cultural element) from the source text is replaced with another element from the target culture (Molina, Hurtado Albir 2002, p. 509-511: "to change *baseball* for *fútbol* in a translation into Spanish"; cf. 'adaptation' in Vinay, Darbelnet 1958; or 'cultural equivalent' in Margot 1979).

This does not mean that the Hieronymian use of the two terms in the Hebraicum text was obvious to its readers. Even though saint Jerome had in mind an instrument made of horn, readers could imagine a different *buccina* as a result of the confusions generated by (1) the semantic evolution of the terms *buccina*, *cornu*, and *tuba* at the end of Antiquity and during the Early Middle Ages (cf. Meucci 1987, p. 267). This explains the confusions in the translation of the two terms. However, this is not the only impediment that we need to consider. Further complications arise due to (2) aesthetic choices overlapping the issue of these realia and (3) the rare use of Hebraicum as a source text for vernacular translations, since this was not a liturgical text. In other words, when a pair of musical instruments reappeared in a given vernacular translation in place of the same instrument mentioned twice (and followed by two different adjectives), these coincidences would not always be dictated by a common textual origin (i.e., in connection to a specific source text). With rare exceptions when Hebraicum was indeed the source of the vernacular translation, no discernible links can be established with Hebraicum and vernacular developments seem to be spontaneous.

Add to this the fact that such developments are the result of a parallel phenomenon of synonymy which already exists at basic linguistic levels. Already by the time of saint Jerome, Latin terms such as *buccina*, *cornu*, and *tuba* were used in an interchangeable manner, even though their etymon was related to a certain material (horn, seashell, metal) and even though their use in Latin had been traditionally related to the shape of the instrument (curved or straight). In the presence of this blurring effect created by basic synonymy, the biblical or ancient realia to which a translator referred to could not be fully understood by future translators (or by the immediate readers). What those readers and translators were left with was a simple pair of synonyms, the differentiation of which was made either on aesthetic grounds (for the sake of identifying two instruments and testifying to a sort of diversity) or based on realia-glosses (describing two different instruments with explicative attributes, which is more of a gloss than an actual translation). This translation by gloss, a sort of amplification where "amplification" is meant as a translation technique, is evident in the choice of rendering the pair by a single instrument followed by two attributes. For the sake of clarity, we repeat that this is the case of the Greek text, of the Church Slavonic one, and of the Latin Gallicanum and

Romanum (*tubae ductiles* vs. *tubae corneae*), but also that of the vernacular texts which are usually based on them. We will also point out once more that this was not the only available manner of translating. Either way, vernacular authors could at any time switch from the option of the realia-glosses to the one of the Hebraicum during a retranslation process. In other words, it matters less that the basis of the translators' text was Gallicanum or Romanum, where the differentiation was based on realia-glosses originating in a Greek translation source. Translators could revert to an aesthetic choice and use the name of two different instruments, thereby witnessing what we came to call "translation resilience."

Ps 46:6 Gallicanum: *Ascendit Deus in iubilo, et Dominus in uoce tubae.* / Romanum: *ascendit deus in iubilatione dominus in uoce tube* / Hebraicum: *Ascendit Deus in iubilo, Dominus in uoce bucinæ.*

Ps 80:4 Gallicanum: *Buccinate in neomenia tuba, in insigni die solemnitatis uestrae;* / Romanum: *canite in initio mensis tuba in die insignis sollempnitatis uestre* / Hebraicum: *Clangite in neomenia bucina, et in medio mense die solemnitatis nostrae.*

Ps 97:6 Gallicanum: *in tubis ductilibus, et uoce tubae corneae. Iubilate in conspectu regis Domini;* / Romanum: *in tubis ductilibus et uoce tubae corneae iubilate in conspectu regis domino* / Hebraicum: *In tubis et clangore bucinæ iubilate coram rege Domino.*

Ps 150:3 Gallicanum: *Laudate eum in sono tubae; laudate eum in psalterio et cithara.* / Romanum: *laudate eum in sono tubae laudate eum in psalterio et cythara* / Hebraicum: *Laudate eum in clangore bucinæ: laudate eum in psalterio et cithara.*

Before delving further into the issue of this matter, we need to establish the manner in which synonymic pairs of this type operate. When comparing Ps 97:6 with the other three Psalm verses (Ps 46:6, Ps 80:4, and Ps 150:3) where wind instruments are mentioned, another type of pattern is manifest. Translators "crystallise" their translation choices focusing on specific terms, such as *tuba*, found in all Latin versions, or *buisine*, which is given preferential status in the majority of Old French texts. In other words, Gallicanum and Romanum crystallise their choices in the form of a signifier *tuba* that they further enrich via adjectival extension (such as in the case of Ps 97:6) whenever they refer to two different signified terms. During the translation process, French scribes and authors mirror this Latin crystallisation by using the one and the same signifier: *buisine* for *tuba*. These two choices become generic signifiers in Latin and Old French. As a result, the fluidity of the translation process, where synonymy can be used in various ways, becomes solid and stable through the choice of a generic and ubiquitous signifier. Yet this is by no means a definitive process, since the translation can revert to its previous fluid state, witnessing various degrees of instability. For us, this crystallisation defines the change from a fluid (synonymous) state of certain terms that gain stability as a result of the preferential or reiterated choice of certain words. A reverse crystallisation occurs even in saint Jerome's Hebraicum, where *buccina* takes the place of *tuba* and translates *šofar*.

Some examples are in order. As already mentioned in *Musical Instruments* 2021, p. 94, the crystallised term used by Old English texts as a designation of a wind instrument was *byme*. In the Vitellius Psalter, based on Gallicanum (contrary to most Old English Psalm glosses which are based on Romanum), the distinction of a realia-gloss type is evident. In *tubis ductilibus et uoce tube corneae* was

rendered as *on bymum gelædendlicum 7 stefne byman hyrnenre*. The same happens in the Stowe Psalter (*in tubis ductilibus et uoce tubae corneae > on byman aslagenum 7 stemne byman hyrnenre*); or in the Eadwine Psalter (*in tubis ductilibus & uoce tube cornee > on bymæn geleddon 7 stefne byme horn*). If we were to draw a hasty conclusion, we would say that this stable use of the term *byme* could be determined by the formal or functional type of translation strategy, close to the Latin source.

When we move into the corpus of Middle English texts, we recognise a similar type of crystallised translation choice in the form of the *trump(is/ys)*. Richard Rolle calques the Latin text of his source (*in tubis ductilibus & uoce tubae corneae > in trumpys ductils and in uoice of trumpe corne*). This happens as well in the Early and Late Versions of the Wycliffite Bible (*in trumpis beten out, and in uois of the hornene trump vs. in trumpis betun out with hamer, and in uois of a trumpe of horn*). The interesting thing about the second example is the manner in which the realia-gloss expands from a simple reference such as *beten out* (Early Version) to a more elaborate one such as *betun out with hamer* (Late Version). It is as if the translator acknowledges the exegetic character of the two Latin attributes and feels the need to expand on one of them, in order to enhance comprehension. This is by no means the situation in the Middle English Glossed Psalter, which reads *in trumpis ledande and uoice of trumpe of horne*, but this could be linked to a reading from its French source (probably not the manuscript identified by the editors, which reads here something else: *en esemes meuables et en uoix d'eseme*).

Just like Middle English texts, Italian translations generalise *tromba* (or *trombetta*) but sometimes introduce odd changes to the text of the source. For instance, in the precise case of the Venetian Psalter's translation of Ps 97:6, the reading *in la tromba et in la uoce de tromba de corno* follow the specific distinction of the Latin text only in the case of the second term, the instrument made of horn (*de corno*). Perhaps the first term was already perceived as being made of metal, as a general attribute of the word *tromba*, based on a Germanic etymon. This etymon also appears in later French texts (cf. *DEAFÉL trompe* based on the Old Franconian *trumba*), probably as a result of the wider use of an instrument with this name, across languages. And the same etymon is perhaps at the origin of Church Slavonic *mp̃x̃ba (tr̃ba)* which becomes the crystallised translation choice in Old Czech texts, which always use the word *trúba* and keep the adjectival distinction of the Gallicanum text (their probable source) for the phrase of Ps 97:6: *v trúbách lútých a hlasem trúby rohové* (Wittenberg Psalter); *v trúbách povodných a hlasem trúby rohové* (Clementinum Psalter); *v trúbách v litých a v hlasě trúby rohové* (Chapter Psalter); *v trúbách dutých a hlasem trúby rohové* (Poděbrady Psalter); *a v trúbách dutých a v hlasu trúby rohové* (Boskovice Bible); *v trúbách dutých a v hlasu trúby rohové* (Padeřov Bible); *a na trouby duté a hlasem trúby rohové* (First Printed Psalter).

This choice of *trúba* needs to be understood in light of the use of the verb *trubte* in the Czech translations of Ps 80:4. The crystallisation of this term is probably the crystallisation of the etymon itself. This is equally evident in the case of Old French *buisine* and Old Romanian *buci(n)-*, in turn related to the use of the verb *buisiner* and *a buci(n)ra*, as shall become evident in the next segment of our demonstration. For the time being, it is safe to assume that variations in the use of the verb occur for aesthetic reasons, trying to avoid the repetition of an etymon in the same statement. In the Old Czech Clementinum Psalter,

for instance, Ps 80:4 is translated differently in comparison to other Czech versions. The verb *vzvüchte* takes the place of *trubte*. According to Andrea Svobodová and Hana Kreisingerová, whom we thank for this information, *vzvüchte* could be interpreted as a poetic translation choice, similar to many other ones in the Clementinum Psalter. This provides us with a glimpse into the aesthetic origin of similar variations and with the relevance of aesthetics in the translation process, as a general rule.

Before pursuing the connected issue of the verbs *bucinare*, *canere*, and *clangere* and their corresponding nouns, it is worth dwelling a little bit longer on generic translation choices and the manner in which they crystallise. In the same passage, most Hungarian versions use the word *kürt* for *tuba*, and the verb *kürtölni* (same etymon) for *bucinare*: *visselő kürtökben és szarukürtnek* (Döbrentei Codex); *viselő kürtbe és szaru csinált kürtbe* (Codex of Keszthely); and *viselem kürtbe és szaru csinált kürtbe* (Kulcsár Codex). Apór Codex reads *trombita* twice (*vert trombitákkal és szaru trombitának*), probably an Italianism (cf. *Musical Instruments* 2019, p. 117), if not an odd choice of the translator, influenced by the existence of similar terms in Italian, French, Czech, etc., based on the already mentioned Germanic etymon. This game of synonymy is further substantiated by the use of an attribute following the first mention of *trombita* in Apór Codex, namely *vert* (past participle of *verni* 'to beat') instead of *viselő* (present participle of the verb *viselni* 'to bear, to wear, to carry'), which is used by the previous three versions. We thank Ágnes Korondi for this information. It helps establish that variations such as these are synonymic, not aesthetic, and they do not lead the Hungarian translator of the Apór Codex to mention two specific instruments, opposed to one another, similar to the Latin Hebraicum. He preserves the differentiation of Gallicanum.

The only time when we do encounter the name of two instruments in the form of a pair, as in Hebraicum, is in the three Hungarian translations of the sixteenth century. The use of two different words by István Benczédi Székely (*trombitával és kürtszóval*), Gáspár Károli (*trombitákkal és kürtnek*), and Gáspár Heltai (*síppal és trombitaszóval*) is probably the result of an awareness of the Hebrew text or at least of saint Jerome's Hebraicum. Like the Hebrew text, these three later Hungarian versions use two terms which seem to refer to two different instruments: on the one hand, *kürt* and *trombita*; on the other hand, *síppal* (perhaps linked to the Hebrew word *šōṣar*?) and *trombita*. The use of *kürt* and *trombita* in the earlier Hungarian translations already gave the impression that they are interchangeable synonyms. In these more recent translations, the two words remain synonyms, as is evident from the rendering of verses Ps 46:6, Ps 80:4, and Ps 150:3, where Székely and Heltai deploy them according to the same logic as the Masoretic text or saint Jerome in the Hebraicum. As a matter of fact, Heltai uses *trombita* to render *bucina* / *šōṣar*, whereas *síppal* is used as a translation for *tuba* / *ḥāšōserāh*. Székely uses *kürt* for *bucina* and *trombita* for *tuba*. As for Károli, he does not seem to follow this logic outside of verse Ps 97:6. He is often closer to what we see in certain late French medieval translations. We consider that this differentiation is probably the result of an interest for the original

- ▶ *Angel playing the horn, trumpet, or perhaps the bucin in the scene of the Last Judgement in the Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God, Hălmagiu (Transylvania, Romania), 15th century.*

Credits: Anca Crișan.



Hebrew text, expected from the part of Protestant translators such as István Benczédi Székely, Gáspár Károli, and Gáspár Heltai. After all, they would be faced with more or less the same dilemma as the one faced by saint Jerome in the making of the Hebraicum, where he distinguished between *tuba* and *bucina*. Perhaps this can equally explain the use of the pair *trîmbita* and *bucin* in the Old Romanian Psalter of Coresi dated to 1589, where the two terms translate the reiteration of a Church Slavonic term *тpъжба*. Could this Romanian use of *trîmbita* be based on a similar logic as the Hungarian use of *trombita* in the Protestant texts of the sixteenth century? Coresi is known to have been influenced by Protestant translations, therefore some knowledge of the Masoretic text via a commentary, a gloss, or a translation in another language cannot be excluded.

This does not mean that Romanian texts, in general, were different because they date to a late period and often bear the imprint of Protestant influence. On the contrary, the instruments mentioned in verse Ps 97:6 are always rendered as the Old Romanian word *bucin* accompanied by an attribute, based on Church Slavonic (Voronet Psalter: *îm bucire ferecate și cu glasure bucire de cornu*; Hurmuzaki Psalter: *În bucinre fărâcate cu glasul bucinre de coarne*; Scheian Psalter: *în bucinre ferecații și cu glasure bucinre de cornu*; Ciobanu Psalter: *În bucinrele ferecate cu glasure bucinre de cornu*; Coresi Psalter of 1570: *în bucinrele ferecate cu glasure bucinre de cornu*; Coresi Psalter of 1577: *în bucinrele ferecate cu glasure bucinre de cornu*). The Coresi Psalter of 1589 seems to be an exception to the general rule. This general rule would be that *bucin* is the crystallised term, followed by different attributes. However, once again, just like in the late Hungarian versions, Coresi 1589 witnesses the use of *trîmbita* and *bucin* as interchangeable synonyms (Ps 46:6 [46:5] *възиде бѣ въ въскликновени гѣ въ гласъ тръжбнѣ / sui Dumnezeu întru strigări, Domnul în glasul bucinilor*; Ps 80:4 [80:3] *въстръжите на новъ мѣсець тръжбож, въ нарочитъ днь празника вашего / trîmbitați la lună noao cu trîmbita, în nărocita zi de sârbătoarea voastră*; and Ps 150:3 *хвалите его въ гласъ тръжбнѣ хвалите его въ фалтири и въ гжслехъ / lăudați pre dins în glas de trîmbite, lăudați pre dins în ceateri și ceateari*). He does this in the manner of Gáspár Károli, but with the attributes specific to the development we see in all versions derived from the Greek.

We will end this section of the demonstration with a simple observation concerning the Old Romanian translation choice *buci(n)r-* for the verb and noun corresponding to Latin *bucina* and *bucinare*. Even though this could be a strong argument in favour of a Latin source text, this is hardly imaginable. Ongoing research into the possible sources of the Romanian ‘rhotic’ psalters (cf. RoPSALT project) have identified that source as Church Slavonic. Furthermore, the problematic term (Latin *bucina*) is not used in Romanum, which had been identified as a possible source for the Romanian translations by Chițimia 1981. Instead, the use of a verb and noun derived from the etymon *buci(n)r-* could stem from the frequent use of this etymon in the Old Romanian language. *Buci(n)ra* is a Latin word in Romanian, perhaps just as frequent as it is in the Old French vernacular. In the case of the Romanian language, no previous uses of the terms can be identified, since the rhotic translations of the Psalms are the first texts attested in the language, but in the case of the Old French uses of the word *buisine* it is evident that this was the most relevant term to be used, and as a result the most obvious choice of translation. This observation was already made in the first instalment of this article

(cf. *Musical Instruments* 2019, p. 86: “*buisine* was the most common way of rendering any wind instrument. This is probably the reason why the word *tuba* was frequently translated as *buisine*”). This consideration is supported by the vernacular choice for rendering *tuba* in various French texts, such as the First French Psalm Commentary, which is not related to the Oxford Psalter group (*Ascendit Deus in iubilatione, et Dominus in voce tube > Deus monta en granz leëce, et li Sire en voiz de boisine* in the commentary of Ps 46:6) or in the adaptation of Pierre de Paris (BnF, MS fr. 1761), who uses *buisine* in all occurrences (Ps 46:6 *en la uois de la boussigne de son fill*; Ps 80:4 *boussignes en la boussigne de la nouvelle lune*; Ps 97:6 *et en les bouzignes magnables e en la uois de la bouzigne faite de corne*; Ps 150:3 *en le son della boussine*). Nevertheless, the ultimate piece of evidence comes from the Anglo-Norman glossaries of the thirteenth century. In all these texts, Latin *buccina* and *tuba* are always rendered as *buisine* (cf. Hunt 1991, vol. 3, p. 21, 171, 212, 213-214).

This explains why *buisine* is the preferred choice for Latin *tuba* in the Oxford Psalter (Ps 46:6, Ps 97:6, Ps 150:3). In this French text, verse Ps 97:6 becomes *en buisines turneices e en uoiz de buisine de corn*, thus maintaining the difference between *tuba ductilis* and *tuba cornea*. Yet the analyses from the earlier instalments of the current paper have shown that Ps 80:4 represents an exception from this general rule. The scribe translates there Latin *tuba* as Old French *tube* (*Buccinate in neomenia tuba > Buisinez en la festiuel tube*). As previously implied in *Musical Instruments* 2019, p. 88, “the use of the [Old French] word *tube* was probably restricted to an etymological context,” but in this specific case, we no longer agree with this interpretation. The translator’s choice could actually be justified by the desire to keep a distinction between the terms used in the verse, following the example of the Latin text: *Buccinate / tuba > Buisinez / tube*. The situation seems to be the same in the Winchester Psalter, a copy of the Oxford Psalter manuscript group. The formula of verse Ps 97:6 (*in tubis ductilibus & uoce tubae corneae*) is rendered as *en buisines turneices e en uoiz de busine de corn*. It should be noted that *buisine* also appears in verses Ps 46:6 and Ps 150:3 of this text. However, *tube* is maintained in verse Ps 80:4: *Buisinez en la festiuel tube*.

In contrast, a different copy of the Oxford Psalter, the version of the Additional MS 35283 of the British Library, rewrites one of the passages. The translation of Ps 97:6 does not change (*in tubis ductilibus et in voce tvbe cornee > en buisines turneices et en uoiz de buisine de corn*) and the distinction between the two attributes is maintained by the two adjectives. Ps 46:6 and Ps 150:3 use *buisine* too. However, in Ps 80:4 *tube* is replaced by *buisine* (*buccinate in neomenia tuba; in insigni die solemnitatis uestre > buisinez en la nuele lune de busine, en noble iorn de la uostre festiualtet*) in what seems to be a concern for the faithful rendering of the Latin text. It is safe to assume that the scribe wished to preserve and enforce the same translation choice for all occurrences of Latin *tuba*. This is evident in the rest of the words of the Ps 80:4 vernacular rendering. For instance, the scribe probably wished to stay as close as possible to the etymology of the word *neomenia*. In the process, nevertheless, his reading of the Latin text also led to grave misunderstandings. The Oxford Psalter translator interpreted *neomenia* as an adjective, which he translated as *festiuel*, thus keeping a syntagmatic unity of meaning (*festiuel buisine*), just like the reference to the celebration (or festivity) of the new moon. This is particularly revealing. The Winchester Psalter scribe, as we have seen, remains faithful to the Oxford Psalter text, but

the scribe of the Additional MS 35283 seems to regard the sequence *in neomenia* as a complement and *tuba* as a second complement, in turn, of *in neomenia*. In doing so, the scribe reverses the semantics of the phrase. Indeed, logic would have him translate it as *en la busine de la nuele lune*. Moreover, the change in the adjective *festiu* and its transformation into a noun *festiauletet* moves away from a Latin text that his predecessors had translated in a rather faithful manner.

Let us pursue this parenthesis with the case of Harley MS 273 of the British Library, which is even more interesting. In verses Ps 46:6 and 150:3, the scribe uses *buisine*, since this is a late version of the Oxford Psalter. Nevertheless, in verse Ps 80:4, the phrase *en la nouele lune* comes close to the translation choice noticed in the Additional MS 35283. However, the scribe of Harley MS 273 seems to have mastered the semantic link between *neomenia* and *tuba*. He seems to consider that *in neomenia* was an adverbial phrase relating to time and *tuba* an adverbial phrase related to instrument. Just like his predecessors (Oxford Psalter and Winchester Psalter) the Harley MS 273 scribe preserves the rendering of *tuba* as *tube* (*businez en la nouele lune o tube en noble ior de nostre solempnete*). Yet for the first time one finds a change in verse Ps 97:6, the one that interests us the most: *en busines amenable et en voiz de tube de corn*. It seems that the scribe preserves the Latin distinction via attributes similar to *ductilis* and *cornea*, all while rendering *tuba* as both *buisine* and *tube*. This variation could be due to the fact that the author did not want to repeat *buisine*. Perhaps he would have preferred to stay close to the structure of Ps 80:4, where *tube* echoes the verb *businez* (or perhaps for other reasons, *vide infra*). The joint use of *tube* and *buisine* in this case, as in the Oxford Psalter and the Winchester Psalter, suggests that the two words could have been synonymous in his perception, but also that his choice was based on aesthetic reasons. He did not manage to recreate exactly what saint Jerome had created in Hebraicum, but he felt the need to reinstate an actual pair of instruments.

Speaking of Hebraicum, there is one case where French translations were based on it. In the Eadwine Psalter, the translator or scribe followed this Latin version. He always rendered *buccina* (Ps 46:6, Ps 80:4, Ps 150:3) as *buisine*, which is not surprising. However, for Ps 97:6, where the French syntax remains close to that of Hebraicum, the translator used *buisine* in order to render both *tuba* and *buccina*. This raises a few interesting questions. Did he understand that *tuba* and *buccina* refer to two realia that the three Hieronymian versions distinguish each in its own way, either through the use of precise attributes or through the use of two different Latin words? The modern eye notices that Gallicanum and Romanum use *tuba*, whereas Hebraicum uses *buccina*, thus pointing to the fact already noticed at the beginning of the current study: the medieval translator or scribe interpreted the two Latin words as being synonyms, hence his particular translation choice. It is hardly possible to imagine that he was not familiar with the word *tube* or any other name of a wind instrument in French. His choice to use *buisine* twice means that he regarded the two Latin terms as part of a synonymic pair. His choice would only attest that *buisine* was by far the most widespread automatism. In any case, the differentiation between the two realia is lost, despite the fact that saint Jerome tried to enforce it in Hebraicum, which is the basis of the Eadwine Psalter French gloss. As a result, *buisine* seems to be a catch-all term to render a wind instrument in a generic manner.

This is where we come to the oddest situation of all. In the Arundel Psalter, as in the Winchester and Eadwine Psalters, no occurrence of the French word *tube* can be noted in Ps 46:6, Ps 80:4, Ps 97:6 and Ps 150:3. The case of verse Ps 97:6 is perhaps essential. In this manuscript, the Latin text reads *in tubis ductilibus & uoce tubae corneae*, which is rendered in the vernacular as *en busine demenable e en uoiz de corn*. Certainly, this represents a simplification or a reworking of the translation from the Old French Oxford Psalter (*en busines turneices e en uoiz de busine de corn*). But this is also a term which designates a different musical instrument altogether.

The filiation between these texts is not clear. Several hypotheses have been proposed, therefore one cannot surely state that the Arundel Psalter is a copy of the Oxford Psalter. The relation between the two manuscripts could be even more complicated. However, one thing is certain: the two texts are related in one way or another. As a result, the Arundel scribe could either be the initial translator of the text or could have made a conscious choice to alter a previous translation. In both cases, the rendering of the Latin phrase *tubae corneae* by an abridgement highlights the material properties of the instrument (horn) and turns an attribute 'horn' into a noun, mentioning the actual 'horn'. This is a third translation choice for Latin *tuba* and we see it also in the Italian version of the Malermi Bible: *con trombe, et con suon di corno*. The second possibility is that the person writing the vernacular text of the Arundel Psalter made an error, forgetting to transcribe the words *de busine*. Yet this could also be linked in one way or another to the fact that the values of the preposition *de* (which introduces *buisine*) and *de* (which introduces *corn*) are the same. This would lead to a sort of lexical haplography, eliminating *de busine* and keeping only *de corn*. If we hold the first hypothesis to be correct, the situation will be similar to the one proposed as an easier solution for the translation of Old Romanian texts. Musicology research expected the use of the word *coarne* (*Musical Instruments* 2019, p. 129) in that particular instance, much in the manner of the Arundel Psalter. However, the Old Romanian translations had come up with the solution present in the Oxford Psalter, *bucirne de coarne*, because they kept the realia distinction first attested in the Greek text.

The most reasonable assumption would be that the initial French translation read, just like the Oxford Psalter, *en uoiz de busine de corn*, and that the Arundel Psalter represents a modified version of the initial translation. Nevertheless, previous research did not notice that the Arundel Psalter reading *demenable* (instead of the Oxford Psalter *turneices*) corresponds to the translation choice *amenable* in Harley MS 273. This complicates our understanding of the relationship between all these versions, since the Harley MS 273 version also reads *tube* instead of *buisine* in Ps 97:6. However, we previously argued that this particular translation choice in the Harley MS 273 was presumably influenced by the need to differentiate between two instruments, coupled with a second differentiation between two features (metallic and horn). Harley MS 273 reads here *en busines amenable et en voiz de tube de corn*. One of the explanations would be that the term *tube* could be reintroduced from a Latin text, to avoid repeating the word *buisine*, as previously suggested. Another possible explanation is that both Harley MS 273 and the Arundel Psalter derive from a now lost version (with *demenable* or *amenable*; with or without *tube* or *buisine*). Either way, this would be once again an aesthetic choice. Furthermore, this choice cannot be part of a



dynamic translation strategy, which would explain the alteration of the text. The Arundel Psalter is a perfect example of formal or functional translation strategy. Therefore, the aesthetic choice is not restricted to the type of strategy deployed by the translator. This is why we speak of a certain degree of resilience. It is as if the original text reestablishes its structure in various retranslations.

As a result, in the specific case of *tubae ductiles* and *tubae corneae*, the scribe of the Arundel Psalter (formal/functional translation strategy) acts in the manner of the versifiers of the same period (dynamic strategy). Let us look at the First French Metrical Psalter, where the Latin word *tuba* is always translated as *buisine* (Ps 46:6, Ps 80:4, Ps 150:3), except for verse Ps 97:5-6, where we find *busines* and *corns*: *En corns de tuz semblanz / En busines sunanz* (Harley MS 4070) or *En corns de tuz semblanz / En busines sunanz* (Additional MS 50000). Since the influence of Hebraicum seems to be excluded, this French text being based on the Oxford Psalter, on Gallicanum, or on a commentary to the latter, the poet presumably tried to distinguish between *tubae ductiles* and *tubae corneae*. He then rendered the latter by the noun *corns*, a translation choice that we have already identified in the Arundel Psalter. However, there is more than meets the eye. A divergent translation choice in the two versions of this metrical adaptation is the mention of *buisine* in verse Ps 150:3 of the Oscott Psalter (Additional MS 50000), whereas the fragmentary reading of Harley MS 4070 uses *corn*. In light of previous research, given that the Oscott Psalter text is probably an adaptation of a version which is closer to the text of Harley MS 4070, the Oscott Psalter scribe probably reworked the contents of the verse and deployed the formula *buisine sonant* already used in Ps 46:6 and Ps 97:6. *Corn* would be used because it was part of a synonymic group.

The Second French Metrical Psalter testifies to a gener-

alised use of the word *buisine* (Ps 46:6 *En voix de busine montes*; Ps 80:4 *En neuue busine cornez*; Ps 150:3 *Loes lo en son de businer*), as well as to the presence of an instrument defined as *buisine de cor*, by itself and without reference to Latin *tubae ductiles* of verse Ps 97:6. This latter is, of course, the result of metrical and prosodic constraints, as the versifier needed to fit a longer Latin sequence and abridge it in the space of a couple of verses. It cannot be based on exegetical texts of the time. For these texts, the Glossa ordinaria would be the immediate exegetical source, but the distinction between *ductilis* and *cornea* as separate instruments cannot originate in Glossa. Its text explains only (based on the interpretation of saint Jerome) that *ductilibus* should be interpreted as *Argenteis more Iudeorum*. Magna Glossatura expands saint Jerome and Cassiodorus as: *Et in tubis ductilibus, scilicet in tubis argenteis, vel ereis, que tundendo producuntur, et voce tube cornee. Morem Iudeorum tangit, qui et habebant duo genera tubarum sicut legitur in libro Numeri, alias que argento vel ere ductili producebantur, alias corneas* (cf. GLOSS-E). None of these pieces of information seem to have been of any use to the late twelfth and thirteenth century translators. It is perhaps just a problem of mere synonymy and nothing more.

Moving on, the cases documented in the Bible d'Acre, Anglo-Norman Judges, and the Quatre livre des reis confirm that *buisine* is the most obvious choice to render both *tuba* and *buccina*. As a matter of fact, many biblical translations or adaptations, such as the French text of the *Giffard Apocalypse*, frequently use *buisine* to render Latin *tuba*. The latter also uses the verb *buisiner* (Ap 9:13-14) as an equivalent of Latin *habere tubam*. This must be analysed in the context of synonymy once again. More often than not, the use of *buisine* and *tube* in Anglo-Norman texts such as the *Apocalypse* or *Revelacion* is based on this synonymy. The verse Ap 8:6 in the Anglo-



◆ Angels playing musical instruments in the mural paintings decorating the vaults of the crypt from the Cathedral of Our Lady in Bayeux (Normandy, France), 15th century.

Credits: Vladimir Agrigoroaei.

Norman *Apocalypse* explains the use of the translation choice *tube* not only by a desire to underline its etymological proximity to the Latin term, but also for aesthetic reasons, to render the translation more idiomatic or diverse, which can be similar to the one of the uses of Middle French synonymic binomials (*vide infra*). It was already suggested (cf. *Musical Instruments* 2019, p. 87) that the use of the word *tube* in verses Ap 8:6, Ap 10:7, and Ap 18:22 is dictated by rhythmic and prosodic constraints. Is it the same for verse Ap 8:2? In any case, if the Old French word *tube* was chosen for metrical reasons, this suggests that the etymological question was absent, or at least unimportant:

Vulgate, Ap 8:6: *Et septem angeli, qui habebant septem tubas, praeparaverunt se ut tuba canerent.* // Anglo-Norman Apocalypse: *E les seth angles ke busines hurent / Pur soner lur tubes tut prest furent.* // Anglo-Norman Revelacion: *E les angles que seeth busines urent / A soner lur busines se apparaillerent.*

Vulgate, Ap 18:22: *Et vox citharodorum, et musicorum, et tibia canentium, et tuba non audietur in te amplius: et omnis artifex omnis artis non inveniatur in te amplius: et vox molae non audietur in te amplius.* // Anglo-Norman Apocalypse: *Jammés ultre trové ne serra, / Ne harpe ne musike la ne chantera; / Tibies ne busines erent desornavant; / Voiz de tubes n'erent sonant, / Voiz de mole oy ne serra,...* // Anglo-Norman Revelacion: *Voiz de harpurs ne de musikes que chanterunt / En tibies e busines desorenavant; / E voiz de tube ne ert oy atant, / E la voice de la mole oy ne ert. / De chescun ovrs lur art pert...*



When used alone, tube is preferred over buisine in Ap 8:2 or in Ap 10:7. We would also like to point out the interesting choice (Ap 10:7) of the verb *tuber* as a translation for the Latin expression *tuba canere*:

Vulgate, Ap 8:2: *Et vidi septem angelos stantes in conspectu Dei: et datae sunt illis septem tubae. // Anglo-Norman Apocalypse: E jeo vi seth angles ki esturent / Devant Deu ke seth tubes hurent. // Anglo-Norman Revelacion: E jo vi .vii. angles que esturent / En award l'Angnel, que .vii. tubes urent.*

Vulgate, Ap 10:7: *sed in diebus vocis septimi angeli, cum coeperit tuba canere, consummabitur mysterium Dei sicut evangelizavit per servos suos prophetas. // Anglo-Norman Apocalypse: Més quant li setime angle tubera / La misterie de Deu dunc ert terminé / Si cum les prophetes hunt ewangelizé. // Anglo-Norman Revelacion: Mes quant li setime angel ad soné après / Sa tube, le misteris de Deu tut fet serront / E quanque ses serfs e prophetes ewangelicé out.*

In light of this comparison, the translation from the Kerr manuscript should attract even more attention. It uses the word *buisine* only once (Ap 1:10), then switches to the use of *trumpe* as well as the verb *trumper* in order to render the Latin expression *tuba canere* (Ap 8:10, Ap 8:12, Ap 11:15). Can this shift be justified as a result of a metric or prosodic issue, or simply on account of the translator's preference for the use of this word, which seems to keep track of *buisine* / *trumpe* as a synonymic pair? Could this be linked to the use of synonymy in double translations (*Doppelübersetzungen*) or in the so-called synonymic binomials (*binômes synonymiques*) such as in the Middle French Metz Psalter? *Doppelübersetzung* actually refers to more or less the same translation phenomenon as the French *binôme synonymique* already presented in *Musical Instruments* 2019, p. 67.

Previous instalments of the current study already highlighted that the translation of the Metz Psalter uses, just like the Kerr Apocalypse, the words *buisine* and *trompe* to render Latin *tuba*. Specifically, in Ps 46:6, *tuba* becomes *buisine* + *trompe*; in Ps 97:6, *tuba ductilis* becomes *trompe* + *buisine*, whereas *tuba cornea* is rendered as *trompe* + *corne*; and in Ps 150:3, *tuba* becomes *trompe* + *busyne*. The situation is particularly interesting in Ps 80:4, where the verb *buccinate* is rendered as *trompeiz*, all while maintaining the double translation of *tuba* as *buisine* + *trompe*. One could argue that the Latin term is split into a sort of synonymic binomial, which would not be unusual in the case of this fourteenth century text, where synonymic binomials are already frequent (cf. *Musical Instruments* 2020, p. 276). However, one can also notice the return of the word *corne* in Ps 97:6. This relates, on the one hand, to the etymon of Latin *cornea*, which begs for a translation as French *corne* (just like in the case of the Arundel Psalter and the two French metrical versions) but also to an aesthetic use of synonym pairs which, well attested in French literature. See for instance: [...] *Cor et graille i sonnent menu, / Trompes et buisines i sonnent, [...]* in the *Roman de Mahomet* by Alexandre du Pont, where these pairs of instruments are just formulae (Lepage 1996, p. 195, v. 1761-1762). The fluctuation concerning *tube*, *buisine*, *trompe* and (occasionally) *corne* is not just the result of a fluctuation in the perception of these realia, but also an aesthetic issue. Even though their source is often the Gallicanum, translators and versifiers reconstruct an image that saint Jerome had formulated in the Hebraicum. Not because of an awareness of that third Latin version translated by saint Jerome, which was not liturgical and, therefore, not as well known as the other ones, but because vernacular translators harness the potential of the target language in order to accentuate

the difference.

These constant reworkings of the same structure, independent of the Masoretic text or of the Hebraicum, cannot simply be random. There is a certain logic behind the choices that scribes and translators make, a logic that we define as “translation resilience” of an aesthetic nature. For the two authors of this conclusion, “resilience” defines a process or a phenomenon which can appear in multiple translations or adaptations of a source text, whereby certain aesthetic or structural features of a first text are lost in the process of translation in a second text, but can reappear in a third given text based on the second one.

As a side note, the comparison of an Occitan or Piemontese exemplum with the Latin and Greek lives of Barlaam and Josaphat upon which it was based led to a similar discovery: in the transfer between languages (Georgian > Greek > Latin), a key feature of the narrative structure was lost. A progression of three friends of the protagonist (the first one extremely rich, the second one rich, and

◆ *Players of musical instruments in the mural decorations of the Sala Vecchia or Sala di Apollo in the Castel Sant'Angelo, Rome, c.1547.*

Credits: Vladimir Agrigoroaei.



the last one rather poor) already existed in the Georgian text, but had been lost in the Greek and Latin translations and retranslations. The progression was reinstated only when the text was adapted in a vernacular language (Agrigoroaei 2017, p. 19), because the narrative begged for it. There are certainly countless other examples that need to be identified and this is only the starting point of a theory. When many more examples will be identified, perhaps they will provide a better understanding of the phenomenon. The current article is just the first proposal, and further discussion is needed.

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Corrigendum

L'ancien secrétariat de direction de la revue et la responsable du projet GRAPH-EAST présentent leurs plus plates excuses à Michalis Olympios. L'analyse critique qu'il avait proposée pour l'article intitulé « L'inscription 'palimpseste' du château de Larnaca. Tour de force méthodologique interdisciplinaire » (co-écrit par Clément Dussart, Estelle Ingrand-Varenne, Maria Aimé Villano, Savvas Mavromatidis, Thierry Grégor et Vladimir Agrigoroaei, et paru dans la revue en 2021), était une série de commentaires adressés uniquement aux auteurs de l'article, dont il n'avait pas conscience qu'ils seraient publiés. La compilation des commentaires sous cette forme est le fait du secrétariat de la revue et non de l'auteur.

Vladimir Agrigoroaei et Estelle Ingrand-Varenne

heritage



patrimoine



Πρὸς τὸν ἐκλαμάρωτον Δισεβέστρον καὶ ὑψηλότατον αὐθέντην, καὶ ἡγεμόνα
 πάσης ἔγκροβλαχίας, κύρον ἰωάννην Κωνσταντῖνον μπασαράμπα βοεβόδα.

Ἐξ ἔγκροβλαχίης κωνσταντῖνος μόνος εἶρος
 οἶακας ὅς ταύτης νυῦ διέπερ μακάρως
 Φύτλης ἐκ πατέρος μπασαράμπων ὦν μεγακύδων,
 και τακουζηνῶν μητρόθεν ἡγεμόνων,
 χαλκοτυπεῖ τὸ δ' ὄνηαρ ἐελδομύοισιν ἔρωτα
 πνύματος, ὅτι τελεῖ σύμβολον Δισεβίης.
 Ἐθλοδ θροφίλεθ' ἱερκαλύμιν πατριάρχια,
 ἔνθεον οὐ σπκδῆ Ἰούνομα δουσίθεος.
 Ναι μὲν Ἰπιασίης πόνοσ ἠδὲ μεληδῶν
 ποδ γέρον' ἀτρεκέως, πᾶν ὃ φιλοψυχέως
 Κωνσταντῖνος ἔδωκεν ἴος πόσον ὁ μπσανκεβκός,
 ἀγλάης ἀνθος, καὶ χαρίτων πρόφιμος.
 Τοῖσ ἤν νοός, ἠδὲ χερὸς τοδρον δέετ' ἐδλῆς,
 χερσοδ εἰς ἀγάπης, σκιδναμύης ἄφενον.

χερὺ ανθος ἱερομόναχος καὶ ἄρχιμασ
 δρίτι...

Les livres grecs anciens de la Métropole de Moldavie et de Bucovine conservés dans la bibliothèque « Dumitru Stăniloae » de Iași

Lidia Cotovanu

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SUMMARY: The Library of the Orthodox Metropolitan See of Moldavia and Bucovina in Iași preserves over a thousand copies of old Greek books. There are only ten manuscripts in this collection, one of which was commissioned by Constantin Brâncoveanu, Prince of Wallachia. The collection consists mainly of Greek prints of various origins, some of which can be traced back to the library of the Princely Academy of Iași, succeeded by the Mihăileană Academy. Other volumes originate in the library of the Theological Seminary of Socola, founded by Veniamin Costachi Metropolitan of Moldavia, who donated his personal library to the Iași foundation. Several references come from the private collections of high hierarchs, while some books were collected from various Moldavian monasteries, especially from those who used to be metochia of the Greek Patriarchates and the great monasteries under their jurisdiction. This article evaluates the importance of the prints according to their dating, place of publication, owners, and contents (generally didactic books, but also polemical books of a religious nature). It also seeks to reconstruct the historical context of their circulation in Moldavia and the circumstances in which they came into the possession of the Metropolitan See of Moldavia and Bucovina. The analysis provided takes into account prosopographical investigations, the history of the Moldavian educational institutions, and the examination of the notes (mostly in Greek) on the prints.

KEYWORDS: manuscripts; old prints; libraries; Modern History; Greek language.

REZUMAT: Actuala Bibliotecă a Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, cu sediul la Iași, deține peste o mie de exemplare de cărți grecești vechi, între care doar în jur de zece manuscrise, unul fiind realizat la comanda lui Constantin Brâncoveanu, domnul Țării Românești. Așadar, este vorba de un fond alcătuit în mod special din tipărituri grecești, de proveniență diversă: unele provin din vechea bibliotecă a Academiei Domnești din Iași, preluată de Academia Mihăileană care i-a succedat; altele din biblioteca Seminarului Teologic de la Socola, înființat de mitropolitul Moldovei, Veniamin Costachi, care, de altfel, și-a închinat biblioteca personală ctitoriei sale ieșene; altele din colecțiile private ale unor înalți ierarhi; unele au fost culese din mănăstirile din Moldova, în special din cele închinat ca metohuri către Patriarhiile grecești și marile mănăstiri aflate în jurisdicția lor. Scopul articolului este de a evalua importanța tipăriturilor în funcție de vechime, de locul ediției, de posesori și de conținutul lor (este vorba în general de carte didactică, dar nu lipsesc nici cărțile de polemică religioasă). De asemenea, s-a urmărit reconstituirea contextului istoric în care aceste cărți au circulat în Moldova și împrejurările în care ele au ajuns în posesia Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei. Investigațiile prosopografice, conexiunile cu istoria vechilor instituții de învățământ din Moldova și analiza însemnărilor (grecești în cele mai multe cazuri) de pe tipărituri sunt instrumentele metodologice utilizate de-a lungul lucrării.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: manuscrise; tipărituri vechi; biblioteci; istorie modernă; limba greacă.

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Je tiens à remercier le Prof. Petronel Zahariuc de l'Université « A.I. Cuza » de Iași pour m'avoir offert l'opportunité d'étudier le fonds de livres grecs anciens de la MMB. Notre gratitude va également à mes collègues et amis Chariton Karanasios (Centre de Recherches Médiévales et Néohelléniques de l'Académie d'Athènes) et Ovidiu Olar (Institut d'Histoire « N. Iorga » de l'Académie Roumaine / Institut für die Erforschung der Habsburgermonarchie und des Balkanraumes, Vienne), ainsi qu'à Mme Virginia Popa (Directrice de la Bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae »). Qu'ils soient ici remerciés pour leur aide précieuse. Les photographies des monuments figurant dans le texte m'appartiennent.

Le lecteur pourra trouver une première version de cet article, en langue roumaine, dans « Fondul de carte greacă veche al Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei păstrat în Biblioteca 'Dumitru Stăniloae' din Iași », in *Istoria Catedralei și a ansamblului mitropolitan din Iași*, dir. P. Zahariuc, Pr. M.D. Isai, Iași, Doxologia, 2021, p. 817-866.

◀ *Vers sur l'emblème de Valachie avec la mention du nom de Constantin Brâncoveanu en tant que prince du pays. Verso de la page de titre du livre Chaptires contre les Calvinistes / Contre les Calvinistes, imprimé à Bucarest en 1690 par les soins de Mélétiou Syrigos et Dosithée, patriarche de Jérusalem.* Cliché: collections Museikon.



▲ Fig. 1a-c. *Psautier du Prophète et Roi David*.
Source : MMB, î.P.S. Teoctist, Ms. gr. 12.

La bibliothèque de la Métropole de Moldavie et de Bucovine (MMB) de Iași, qui honore depuis 1995 le nom du réputé théologien roumain Dumitru Stăniloae, abrite un important fonds de livres grecs anciens qui, à ce jour, n'a pas encore fait l'objet d'une étude approfondie.¹ Il s'agit d'un fonds de livres manuscrits et imprimés inventorié, mais non catalogué. Le but de la présente étude est d'estimer l'étendue du fonds en question, d'en offrir une description qualitative, de signaler les exemplaires qui présentent le plus d'intérêt de par leur ancienneté, la thématique qu'ils recouvrent et leur importance historique. L'origine du fonds, les manuscrits, la thématique des livres imprimés, les imprimeries dans lesquelles ils ont été conçus, les auteurs, les commanditaires et les destinataires des dédicaces, les possesseurs de haut rang social ou de rang plus modeste, le transfert des livres d'une bibliothèque à l'autre, les notes autographes et les inscriptions dédicatoires, etc., ce sont là autant d'aspects qui seront traités. Les informations conservées dans les livres étudiés emmènent le lecteur

sur différents terrains : celui des polémiques théologiques de la fin du xvii^e siècle et du début du siècle suivant, celui de l'histoire de l'imprimerie en langue grecque développée dans et au-delà des Pays Roumains, celui des institutions d'enseignement supérieur et des Séminaires Théologiques de Moldavie et, enfin, celui de la commercialisation du livre et de l'évergétisme princier ou privé. J'ai donc l'intention de présenter le fonds de livres grecs anciens de la MMB dans la longue durée et le contexte de sa constitution, traitement dont, autant que je le sache, aucun autre fonds de livre ancien de Roumanie n'a bénéficié jusqu'ici.²

MANUSCRITS

Le nombre de manuscrits grecs n'est pas significatif ; j'ai pu consulter une dizaine d'exemplaires, conservés dans la collection *Manuscrite* (« Manuscrits ») et *Înalt Preasfinția Sa Teoctist / Î.P.S. Teoctist* (« Sa Sainteté Théocliste »).³ Un nombre aussi réduit de manuscrits grecs s'explique par le fait que les exemplaires ayant anciennement appartenu à l'Académie Princièră de Iași, à d'autres institutions d'enseignement de la capitale moldave, à des monastères, ainsi

qu'à la Métropole de Moldavie,⁴ ont été transférés en plusieurs étapes à la Bibliothèque Centrale Universitaire « Mihai Eminescu » de Iași (BCU).⁵ Or, à ce jour, nous ne disposons pas d'un catalogue des manuscrits grecs conservés à la BCU. Par conséquent, il est difficile d'affirmer avec précision combien et lesquels de ces exemplaires avaient appartenu à la Métropole de Moldavie.⁶

Le plus ancien des manuscrits grecs se trouvant actuellement en possession de la MMB (et le plus important de par la qualité de son exécution et son commanditaire) est celui qui contient le *Psautier du Prophète et Roi David* (31,2 x 21,5 / 209 f. non numérotés), copié en 1710 sur ordre du prince de Valachie Constantin Brâncoveanu (1688-1714) :

*Ψαλτήριον τοῦ Προφήτου καὶ βασιλέως Δα(βι)δ | Νεωστὶ
γραφέν, | δι' ἐπιταγῆς καὶ δαπάνης | τοῦ ὑψηλοτάτου καὶ
φιλοχρίστου | Αὐθέντου καὶ Ἡγεμόνος πάσης | Οὐγγρο-
βλαχίας Κυρίου Κ(υρί)ου | Ἰωάννου Κωνσταντίνου |
Βασαράβα Βοεβόνδα | τοῦ Βρανκοβάνου. | .αψι.⁷*

Psautier du Prophète et Roi David, recopié sur l'ordre et les dépenses de son Altesse aimant Christ, le prince et souverain de toute la Hongrovalachie, seigneur, seigneur Ioan Constantin Brâncoveanu, 1710.

Il s'agit d'un manuscrit de l'époque de Brâncoveanu encore méconnu par les milieux académiques.⁸ Les couvertures sont en carton recouvert de cuir marron. Ici, un portrait du Prophète David en médaillon doré est accompagné de l'inscription grecque ΠΡΟ(ΦΗΤΗΣ) ΔΑΒ(Ι)Δ. La

deuxième et la troisième de couverture sont doublées de brocart vert. Les fermetures métalliques ont disparu, mais leurs supports sont encore visibles. La feuille de titre est encadrée de lignes dorées doubles, décorées d'éléments végétaux exécutés en or et à l'encre noire.⁹ Le titre, les initiales et le nom du voïvode, ainsi que l'année d'exécution, sont également réalisés en or. Le texte proprement dit du *Psautier* est rédigé à l'encre noire (Fig. 1). Au verso de la feuille de titre sont représentées les armoiries princières de Constantin Brâncoveanu, encadrées, à droite et à gauche, de majuscules dorées qui désignent les initiales du nom et de la titulature du voïvode. S'ensuivent des vers consacrés au Prophète David, qui continuent sur la feuille suivante. Le recto du folio 2 est décoré par une raffinée miniature en or et encre noire représentant le Prophète (Fig. 2). Or, ce type de représentation, en noir et blanc, dans les portraits en miniature, est influencé par les gravures imprimées, élément caractéristique des manuscrits rédigés sur commande de Constantin Brâncoveanu.¹⁰

Cette commande princière, qui renvoie à la représentation davidique du pouvoir autocratique du souverain,¹¹ devait être destinée à la bibliothèque personnelle du voïevode. Bien que le *Psautier* fût imprimé dix ans auparavant (Snagov, 1700),¹² à en juger d'après la qualité luxueuse du manuscrit, il semblerait que le prince Brâncoveanu souhaite enrichir la bibliothèque de son monastère de Hurez avec un manuscrit 'sélecte' du texte davidique, car 'sélecte' (I. Ionașcu) était la collection entière qu'il déposa auprès de ce lieu de culte.¹³ Toutefois, nous ne disposons pas de preuves quant à la présence de ce manuscrit dans la bibliothèque de Hurez. Nous savons seulement que quelques décennies plus tard, il est arrivé, dans des circonstances inconnues, entre les mains de Georgios Guliano/Iuliano, dont l'*ex libris* figure sur la feuille de titre (Fig. 1c) :

▼ Fig. 2a-b. *Psautier du Prophète et Roi David* : verso de la page de titre et feuillet 2v.

Source : MMB, î.P.S. Teoctist, Ms. gr. 12.



κτῆμα κ(αί) τόδε π[ε]φ[υ]κ[εν] ἐμοῦ τοῦ γεωργίου [ἰουλιανού]
| ἰουλιανού τοῦ δυστυχοῦς τοῦ τύχης πολεμίου.

Propriété acquise par moi, Gheorghe [Iuliano], éprouvé
par les difficultés du destin.

Georgios Guliano devait être un proche parent, sinon un descendant, de Costachi Guliano, le grand chambellan de Moldavie sous Ioan Mavrocordat (juin 1743-avril 1747) ou pendant le règne du frère de celui-ci, Constantin Mavrocordat (février 1748-août 1749).¹⁴ Il a été aussi le possesseur du manuscrit grec BAR 580 (XVII^e siècle), au sujet duquel Constantin Litzica précisait que « la note [dédicatoire, folio 1v] semble être souscrite par Chrysanthé Notaras ». ¹⁵ Après avoir consulté le manuscrit, je peux confirmer qu'il a été donné par Chrysanthé Notaras à l'Académie Princièră de Bucarest :

Καὶ τόδε πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐκ τῶν ἀφιερωθέντων βιβλίων
τῆς ἐν βουκουρεστίῳ ἑλληνικῆς σχολῆς κειμένης ἐν
τῷ σεβασμίῳ μοναστηρίῳ τοῦ ἁγίου σάββα τῷ ἐν τῷ
πάνηγυρῷ τάφῳ ὑποτελοῦντι, ὅστις δ' ἂν ποτὲ τολμήσῃεν
ἀποξενώσας ταύτης τοῦτο ἔστω ἀφωρισμένος παρὰ
θεοῦ κυρίου παντοκράτορος, καὶ ὑπόδικως τῷ αἰωνίῳ
ἀναθέματι [...].

Celui-ci, avec d'autres, est l'un des livres dédiés à
l'école grecque de Bucarest, qui fonctionne auprès du
monastère Saint-Sabbas, subordonné au Saint Sépulcre,
et qui osera jamais l'aliéner, qu'il soit maudit par
le Dieu le Tout-Puissant et frappé par l'anathème à
jamais [...].

En dessous de la note figure, en effet, la signature du patriarche, Ὁ Ἱεροσολύμων Χρῦσανθος. Georgios Guliano a apposé sa propre signature au-dessus de celle du patriarche, alors qu'en dessus de la date de la donation faite. Nous voici donc en présence de deux pièces manuscrites importantes provenant de la collection personnelle de Georgios Guliano, qui eut l'ambition de mettre sa propre signature au-dessus celle de l'un des plus importants patriarches de l'Orient orthodoxe.

De Georgios Guliano – qui était, probablement, lui-même, un proche de la maison princièră des Mavrocordat de Moldavie –, le manuscrit de Brâncoveanu est arrivé entre les mains d'Alexandru Gheorghe Mavrocordat, ainsi que l'indique la note autographe laissée par celui-ci sur le recto du dernier feuillet par Chrysanthé il a ajouté la date à laquelle il avait acquis lui-même le manuscrit : mai 1783.

Nous voici donc en présence de deux pièces manuscrites importantes provenant de la collection personnelle de Georgios Guliano, qui eut l'ambition de mettre sa propre signature sous celle de l'un des plus importants patriarches de l'Orient orthodoxe.

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Ὁ χατμάνος Ἀλέξανδρος Γεωργίου Μαυροκορδάτος
τῷ Πανιερωτάτῳ | καὶ θεοπροβλήτῳ Μητροπολίτῃ
Μολδαβίας Κυρίῳ Κυρίῳ Μελετίῳ | τῷ σεβασμίῳ [ὡς:]
ἐν Χριστῷ Πατρὶ υἱικῆς στοργῆς τεκμήριον. | Ἐν Ἰασιῶ
τῇ ζῆ φεβρουαρίου, αὐτῷ δ'.

Le *hatman* [commandant en chef de l'armée]
Alexandru Gheorghe Mavrocordat pour le Très Saint
et élu par Dieu Métropolitain de Moldavie, le respectable
seigneur seigneur Mélétiος, en signe d'affection de la

part de tel un fils dans Christ le Père. À Iași, le 7 février
1844.

En 1844, donc, le *hatman* Alexandru Gheorghe Mavrocordat fit don de ce livre manuscrit au métropolitain de Moldavie Meletie (1844-1848), à savoir Meletie Lefter Brandaburul, ordonné le 2 février 1844.¹⁷ Le *hatman* Mavrocordat devait avoir offert ce précieux présent au prélat moldave à l'occasion de l'occupation du siège métropolitain de Iași. C'est ainsi que le manuscrit du prince Brâncoveanu est arrivé, par l'intermédiaire du hiérarque Meletie, dans la collection de manuscrits de la MMB.

Le fonds de livres grecs anciens de la MMB nous surprend avec un autre manuscrit, important de par les textes qu'il contient. Il s'agit d'une anthologie de chants profanes, dont les vers relèvent de ce que les spécialistes appellent « littérature phanariote », consommée dans les milieux sociaux grecophones entre 1760-1830.¹⁸ Le manuscrit (20,2 x 16 cm, papier, 187 f. non numérotés), avec reliure d'époque (couvertures en carton revêtu de cuir marron), présente un titre marqué au dos en majuscules dorées : ΣΕΜΑΓΙΑ, ΣΑΡΚΙΑ, [Μ]ΠΕΣΤΕΛ[ΕΣ], à savoir *Anthologie de chants et poèmes* (Ms. gr. 129). Ce recueil a été réalisé par l'archidiacre du Patriarcat d'Antioche Nikiphoros Kantouniaris, originaire de Chios,¹⁹ professeur à l'École de musique psaltique (*Școala de Psaltichie*) de Iași entre 1813-1820 et compositeur réputé de musique psaltique.²⁰ Qu'il s'agisse d'un manuscrit autographe de Nikiphoros, la note apposée en début du texte (folio 4r) – encadrée du décor floral qui lui est caractéristique (Fig. 3) – en témoigne :

Σεμαγία, σαρκία, καὶ μπεστέδες τῇ δε κὰκεῖ | σε
διασκορπισμένοι ὄντες, συνηροὶ | σθησαν ἐν τῇ δε τῇ
βίβλῳ | διὰ χειρὸς νικηφόρου | καντουνιάρη τοῦ χίου, καὶ
ἀρχιδιακόνου τοῦ | τῆς ἀντιοχείας | θρόνου. | Ἰάσιον. | Ἐν
τῇ Ἱερῶ καὶ σεβασμίᾳ μονῇ τῆς Γκόλιας. | αὐτῷ γω 1813 |
Ἀρχιδιάκονος Νικηφόρος.

Anthologie de chants et poèmes qui, étant dispersés
dans le désordre, ont été recueillis dans ce livre
par la main de Nikiphoros Kantouniaris de Chios
et archidiacre du siège d'Antioche. Iași. Au saint et
vénérable monastère de Golia. 1813. Archidiacre
Nikiphoros.

Elle se complète, au folio 5v, d'une ultérieure note apposée par Nikiphoros :

Καὶ τοῦτο κτῆμα νικηφόρου ὑπάρχει, | ἀρχιδιακόνου τε
ἀντιοχείας, | οὗ τινος πατρὶς περιήμους ἡ χίου.

Et celui-ci est la propriété de Nikiphoros, l'archidiacre
d'Antioche, dont la patrie est la fameuse Chios.

Nikiphoros Kantouniaris, qui se présente comme « philologue » (ὁ φιλόλογος μαθητῆς Ἰακώβου Πρωτοψάλτου),²¹ était lui-même auteur de chants psaltiques et profanes, qu'il avait l'habitude de recueillir avec les compositions d'autres auteurs connus ou anonymes de l'époque – Petros Lampadarios de Peloponnèse, Petros Byzantios, Ioannis Koukouzelis, Iacob *protopsaltis*, Scarlatos Byzantios, le grand archidiacre Kyrillos, *beizadé* Iancu Caragea, Nicolae Caragea, Iorgachi *cămăraș*, Ioannis Koparis, le spathaire Nicolachi Kotikos, le chambellan Iorgachi Suțu dit *dragomanachi*, Nicolachi Iliășcu *sluger*, Athanasios Mourouzis, Antonios Photinos, Athanasios Christopoulos – dans les soi-disant *mishmaïá* (μισμαγιά <tc. *meçmuia*), i.e. anthologies / recueils manuscrits de chants et poèmes.²²

Outre l'anthologie conservée à la MMB, qui n'a pas encore fait l'objet d'une étude approfondie,²³ on connaît treize autres recueils de la main de Nikiphoros, dont cinq

sont conservés au monastère athonite de Vatopédi,²⁴ trois se trouvent à Xéropotamou,²⁵ un au Centre d'Études Mircrasiatiques d'Athènes,²⁶ un autre à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Saint-Petersburg,²⁷ deux à la BAR,²⁸ et un à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Roumanie.²⁹ De tous ces manuscrits, seul celui de Vatopédi (Ms. 1428) a été transcrit intégralement dans le cadre d'un mémoire de licence soutenu à l'Université « Aristote » de Thessalonique en 2007.³⁰ À ce jour, aucune des treize anthologies de Kantouniaris n'a encore été publiée. L'on signalera également que les poèmes de Kantouniaris ont été copiés par ses contemporains dans diverses autres anthologies, signe de l'appréciation et de la diffusion dont ils avaient bénéficié du vivant de l'auteur.³¹

Mais encore, le manuscrit conservé à Iași nous offre-t-il quelques nouveaux éléments biographiques concernant l'archidiacre. Selon son propre témoignage, il a rédigé l'anthologie en 1813, au monastère de Golia, à l'époque métoque du monastère athonite de Vatopédi. Ainsi, j'en déduis qu'à cette date le musicographe se trouvait à Iași et qu'il était déjà professeur à l'École de musique psaltique fondée par Veniamin Costachi auprès de la Métropole.³² Par conséquent, à en juger d'après la note apposée au folio 11 (*Ίάσιον αἰωδ* / Iași 1814), c'est à Iași qu'il avait dû rédiger, ou fini de rédiger, l'anthologie intitulée *Σειρὲς ἀνοιξανταρίων καὶ πολυελέων* (Vatopédi, Ms. 1429), qu'il dédia au métropolite Veniamin Costachi.³³ Par ailleurs, Nikiphoros avait écrit à plusieurs reprises sur commission de ce dernier (*κατ' ἀρέσκειαν / κατ' ἐπιταγήν τοῦ πανιερωτάτου μητροπολίτου Μολδοβλαχίας Βενιαμίν*),³⁴ ainsi que sur commission de ses élèves de Iași (*κατὰ παράκλησιν τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ*).³⁵ J'en déduis également que Nikiphoros (du nom laïc de Nikolaos), qui prit l'habit monacal à Damas entre 1800-1806, eut Golia pour lieu de résidence sur toute la durée de son séjour à Iași et non seulement à la fin de sa vie.³⁶

Il semblerait que l'anthologie de Kantouniaris conservée à Iași eut comme premier possesseur l'écrivain et homme politique moldave Costache Negruzzi (1808-1868). Selon la note qu'il appose en grec au folio 3v, il acquiert le manuscrit à Iași, en 1830 :

Καὶ τόδε κτήμα Κωνσταντίνου Νεγρούτζη· ἀγορασθὲν ἐν Ίασσίῳ 1830, διὰ ἑκατὸν γρ(όσια).

Et celui-ci est la propriété de Constantin Negruzzi ; acheté à Iași pour 100 thalers.

La note de Negruzzi étant la seule qui figure sur le manuscrit, après celle de l'auteur, on peut supposer que l'écrivain l'avait acheté à Kantouniaris lui-même, qui vivait encore à Iași en 1830 ; cependant, des preuves supplémentaires seraient nécessaires afin d'étayer cette hypothèse.

En 1831, Negruzzi fit don du manuscrit « en signe de reconnaissance et d'amitié » à son professeur de grec Dimitrios Ithakisios, c'est-à-dire d'Ithaca – détail inconnu jusqu'ici de la vie de l'écrivain :³⁷

Τεκμήριον εὐγνωμοσύνης τε φιλίας, ἐδωρήθη | τῷ σοφολογιώτατῳ μοι Διδασκάλῳ Δημητρίῳ | Ίθακησίῳ. 27 Ἀπριλλίου 1831. | Κ. Νεγρούτζης.

En signe de reconnaissance et d'amitié, [ce livre] a été offert à mon sage professeur Dimitrie Ithakisios. 27 avril 1831. C. Negruzzi.

On ignore comment le Ms. 129 est arrivé de Dimitrios Ithakisios en possession de la MMB. Le volume ne contient aucune autre note, ni le sceau d'une quelconque bibliothèque de Iași. Toutefois, on retrouve dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » un autre livre ayant appartenu au profes-

seur de Iași : Misail Apostolidis, *Σύνοψις κατηχητικῆ τῆς Ἱστορίας ἐκ τῆς Παλαιᾶς καὶ Νέας Διαθήκης / Sommaire catéchétique de l'Histoire selon l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament*, Athènes, 1837 (CGr, nr. 00061). Le volume est arrivé plus tard dans les mains du métropolite Calinic Miclescu (*infra*). Il doit s'agir là de pièces égarées de la bibliothèque personnelle de Dimitrios Ithakisios, dont au moins ces deux exemplaires sont arrivés dans les dépôts de la MMB.

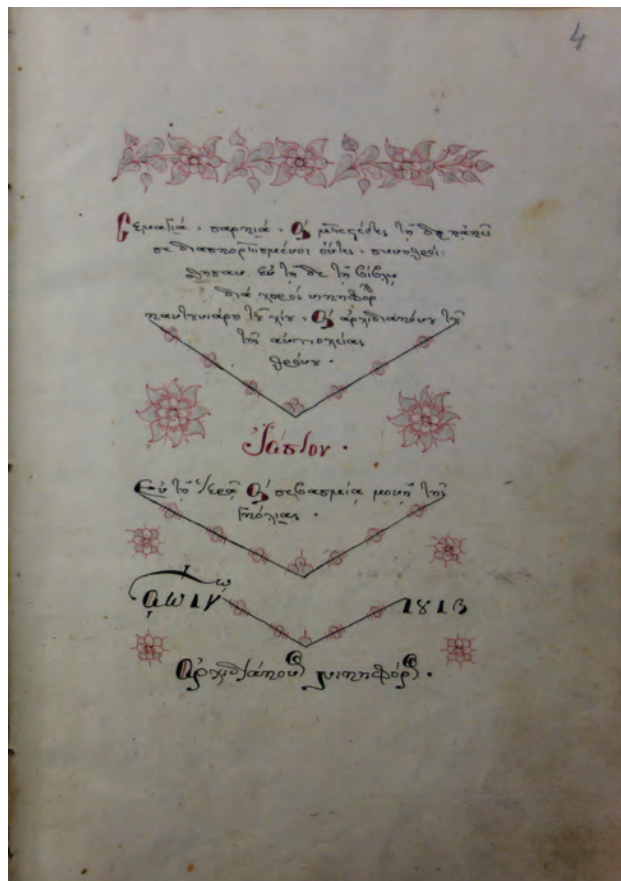
Nous concluerons cet aperçu en mentionnant quelques autres exemplaires manuscrits importants : une copie tardive de la *Ἡ Ἱερὰ Θεολογία ἐκ τῶν Ἁγίων Πατέρων / La Théologie Sacrée selon les Saints Pères* d'Evgenios Boulgaris (1716-1806) (Ms. gr. 180) ; l'*Office du martyr Benjamin* et l'*Office de Saint Jean*, également des copies tardives, avec la feuille de titre manquante. D'après les notes qu'ils contiennent, les deux derniers manuscrits se trouvaient déjà à la MMB en 1817 et 1818 (Mss. Gr. 112, 114). Quelques autres anthologies de musique religieuse sont en train d'être inventoriées.

LIVRES IMPRIMÉS : L'ORIGINE DES COLLECTIONS

Le nombre de livres grecs imprimés conservés dans la Bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » s'élève à 1200 volumes environ, dont 1145 inventoriés. Les volumes sont repartis en trois collections distinctes : *Î.P.S. Teoctist, Cărți grecești / « Livres grecs »* (désormais : CGr) ; *Veniamin Costachi (VC) ; Mănăstiri / « Monastères »* qui, en plus des anciens livres

▼ Fig. 3. Anthologie de chants et poèmes conclue par l'archidiacre du Patriarcat d'Antioche Nikiphoros Kantouniaris au monastère Golia de Iași, en 1813.

Source : MMB, Manuscrite, nr. 129, f. 4r.





▲ Fig. 4. Monastère St-Sabbas de Iași.

roumains, contient également quelques exemplaires en grec. Dans les paragraphes qui suivront seront présentés les livres anciens les plus importants, leur thématique, leurs auteurs et leurs possesseurs. Je me focaliserai également sur la façon dont le fond s'est progressivement constitué. En effet, à ce jour, nous ne disposons d'aucune étude d'ensemble montrant comment ces 1200 livres grecs imprimés sont arrivés en possession de la MMB. Pour essayer de combler cette lacune, référence y sera faite à la bibliographie disparate qui traite ce sujet, aux matériaux d'archives, ainsi qu'aux données fournies par les livres eux-mêmes à travers les *ex libris*, les notes et les sceaux.

D'une manière générale, l'on peut affirmer que les livres grecs imprimés de la MMB, notamment ceux qui constituent la collection « Veniamin Costachi », proviennent de la bibliothèque de l'Académie Princièră de Iași, de l'Académie *Mihăileană*, de la bibliothèque du Séminaire Théologique de Socola, de celle du Séminaire Théologique de Roman, des collections privées de Veniamin Costachi (1803-1842) et de Calinic Miculescu (métropolitain de Moldavie entre 1865-1875 et primat de Roumanie entre 1875-1886) – dont les *ex libris* figurent sur de nombreux exemplaires –, de donations privées, ainsi que de sources encore non identifiées. Faute d'un catalogue complet, il est difficile d'estimer combien de volumes proviennent de chaque source déjà identifiée. Sans doute, le plus grand nombre provient-il du Séminaire de Socola (fermé en 1948), grâce auquel les livres ayant appartenu à Veniamin Costachi sont entrés en possession de la MMB. En effet, le métropolitain les avait donnés en plusieurs étapes au Séminaire (*infra*).





◀ Fig. 5. Hrisant Notaras, patriarche de Jérusalem (1707-1731).

▲ Fig. 6. Monastère Barnovschi de Iași.

(1) Livres provenant de l'Académie Princièrè de Iași.

Fondée en 1707, puis réorganisée en 1714,³⁸ probablement auprès du monastère des Trois Hiérarques – l'institution eut pour siège, à partir de 1728, le monastère Saint-Sabbas de Iași, métroque du Patriarcat de Jérusalem, et après 1766 elle fut accueillie par la Métropole (c'est depuis cette époque qu'elle est connue du nom proprement dit d'« Académie »)³⁹ –, l'Académie Princièrè de Iași a suivi en tout point le modèle de l'institution homologue de Bucarest. Fraîchement nommé professeur à l'Académie de Iași, le hiéromoine Athanasios, ancien élève de Chrysanthe Notaras de Jérusalem, sollicitait à son ancien mentor un *Chrysoloras* et un *Cato*, car, disait-il dans la lettre adressée au patriarche, « surtout, nous n'avons pas de livres destinés à l'étude, ni slavons, ni grecs » (*δεν ἔχομεν βιβλία τῆς σπουδῆς, οὔτε σλοβενικά, οὔτε ἑλληνικά*). Chrysanthe répondit aussitôt à la demande d'Athanasios.⁴⁰ Ainsi, la base de la bibliothèque de cette première institution d'enseignement supérieur de Moldavie fut constituée de livres donnés par Chrysanthe Notaras en avril 1714.⁴¹ D'ailleurs, Chrysanthe fut impliqué dans le projet même de fondation de cette école. Plus tard, en 1723, le prince de Moldavie l'avait nommé à la tête de l'éphorie chargée de surveiller le bon fonctionnement et la qualité de l'enseignement dans l'Académie.⁴² Lors d'une nouvelle visite à Iași, en septembre 1728, le patriarche y fit une nouvelle donation de livres, sur laquelle je reviendrai plus loin.

Le plus ancien catalogue (en réalité, plutôt une liste) répertoriant les livres de la bibliothèque de l'Académie date d'avril 1727 et fut achevé après l'incendie de 1723 qui avait détruit le siège de l'institution. L'école fut alors transférée, avec la bibliothèque, auprès du monastère Barnovschi de Iași – un autre métroque de Jérusalem –, et elle y resta jusqu'en 1728. Dans le catalogue rédigé au monastère Barnovschi figurent les titres de 101 livres, dont 35 en grec.⁴³ Après la fermeture de l'Académie, en 1821/2, la bibliothèque arriva, en partie, au Séminaire de Socola – notamment les livres manuscrits, selon Nikos Gaïdagis⁴⁴ – et, en partie, à l'Académie *Mihăileană*.⁴⁵ Les bibliothèques de ces deux institutions d'enseignement de Iași furent partagées à leur tour entre la Bibliothèque Centrale et Universitaire « Mihai Eminescu » de Iași (BCU)⁴⁶ – créée avec les fonds de la bibliothèque de l'Académie *Mihăileană* – et la bibliothèque de la MMB ayant prélevé notamment les livres de Socola (*post* 1948).

Seulement quelques livres parmi ceux que Chrysanthe Notaras avait autrefois donnés, et qui sont mentionnés dans le catalogue de 1727, peuvent être identifiés avec certitude grâce à la note autographe du donateur.⁴⁷ À la BCU, on a pu retrouver huit exemplaires – latins et grecs – donnés par Chrysanthe à l'Académie Princièrè en avril 1714 et septembre 1728.⁴⁸ À cette liste, j'ajouterai deux autres livres imprimés en grec, ainsi qu'un troisième en latin, qui sont actuellement en possession de la MMB :

a) Ὁρθόδοξος Ὁμολογία τῆς Πίστεως / *La Confession de foi orthodoxe* de Petru Movilă (86 pages) et *Εἰσαγωγικὴ ἐκθεσις περὶ τῶν μεγίστων Ἀρετῶν* / *Exposé introductif sur les trois grandes vertus* de Visarion Makris de Ioannina (Snagov, 1699, 356 pages) (fig. 7), ouvrages imprimés et reliés ensemble (VC, nr. 02462) :⁴⁹

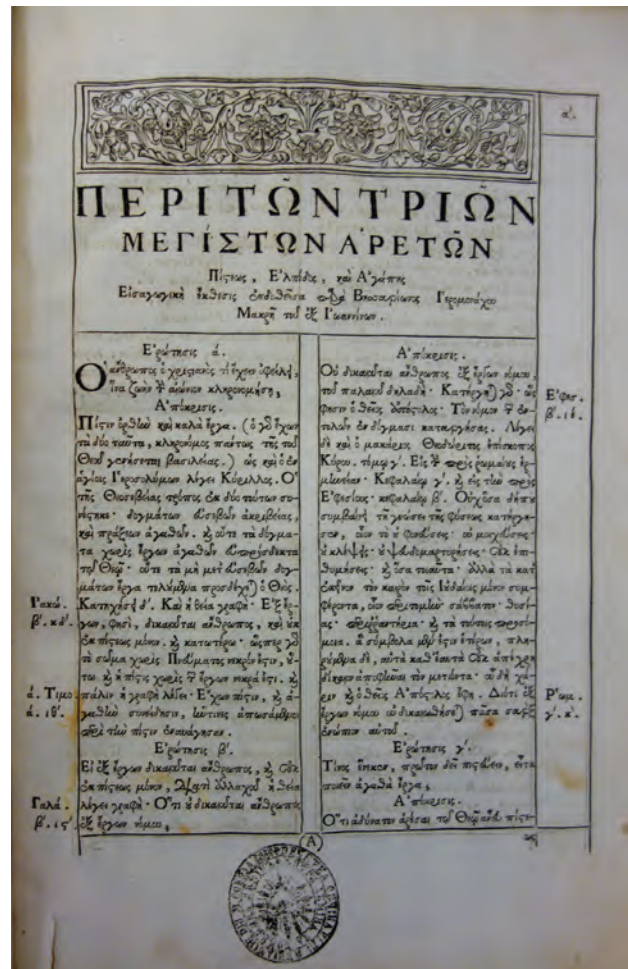
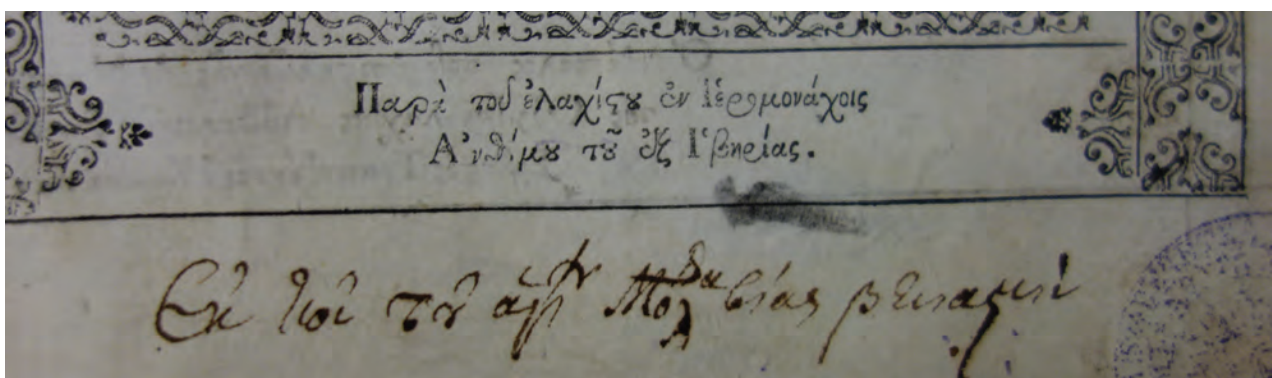
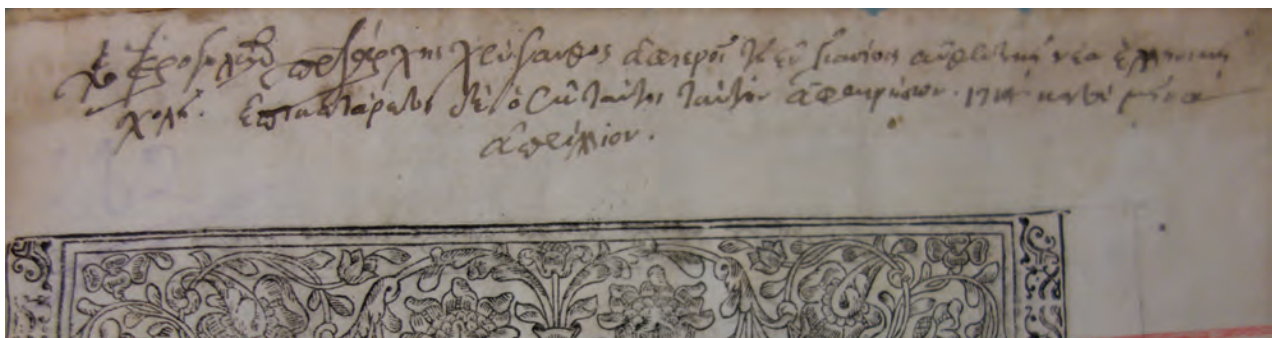


Fig. 7a-d. Ὁρθόδοξος Ὁμολογία τῆς Πίστεως / Confession de foi de Petru Movilă et Εἰσαγωγικὴ ἔκθεσις περὶ τῶν μεγίστων Ἀρετῶν / Exposé introductif sur les trois grandes vertus de Visarionos Makris de Ioannina, Snagov, 1699.
Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02462.

Fig. 8. Le sceau de l'Académie Mi-hăileană (1835).



† Ὁ Ἱεροσολύμων Π(ατ)ριάρχης Χρύσανθος ἀφιεροῖ τῇ ἐν Γιασίοις αὐθεντικῇ νέα ἐλληνικῇ | σχολῇ. Ἐπικατάρματος δὲ ὁ ἐκ ταύτης ταύτην ἀφαιρήσων. 1714. κατὰ μῆνα | ἀπρίλλιον.

† Le patriarche de Jérusalem Chrysanthé fait don à la nouvelle École grecque princière de Iași. Soit maudit celui qui va écarter ce [livre] des autres. 1714. Au mois d'avril.

Nous comprenons ici que cet exemplaire serait celui qui est mentionné dans le catalogue du monastère Barnovschi (1727) et non pas celui qui est conservé à la BCU, ayant également appartenu à l'Académie de Iași.⁵⁰ Comme l'atteste l'*ex libris* du métropolitain (Ἐκ τῶν τοῦ ἀγίου Μολδαβίας Βενιαμίν), ce volume était arrivé en la possession de Veniamin Costachi, qui l'avait, par la suite, déposé à la bibliothèque du Séminaire de Socola,⁵¹ d'où il est ensuite entré dans la collection de la MMB.

b) *Τόμος χαρᾶς / Le tome de la joie*, Râmnic, 1705 (CGr, nr. 00496),⁵² enregistré dans la liste des livres de l'Académie transférés au monastère Barnovschi après 1723 (fig. 9).⁵³

† Ὁ Ἱεροσολύμων Π(ατ)ριάρχης Χρύσανθος ἀφιεροῖ τῇ ἐν Γιασίοις αὐθεντικῇ νέα σχολῇ. Ἐπικατάρματος δὲ ὁ ταύτην ἐκ ταύτης ποτὲ ἀφαιρήσων. 1714. κατὰ μῆνα ἀπρίλλιον.

† Le patriarche de Jérusalem Chrysanthé fait don à la nouvelle École princière de Iași. Soit maudit celui qui aliénera jamais [ce livre]. 1714. Au mois d'avril.

Comme l'indique le sceau appliqué sur la page de titre, cet exemplaire était arrivé à la bibliothèque de l'Académie *Mihăileană* après la fermeture de l'Académie Princière. Le volume y fut exposé en 1885 à l'occasion de l'anniversaire des 50 ans de la fondation de l'Académie *Mihăileană*.⁵⁴

Le Séminaire de Socola eut en sa possession un second exemplaire du *Τόμος χαρᾶς*, actuellement conservé dans la collection « Veniamin Costachi » (nr. 02468). Signalons également un troisième exemplaire ayant appartenu au métropolitain de Moldavie Iosif Naniescu (1875-1902) – ainsi que l'indique l'*ex libris* du haut prélat sur la page de titre –, aujourd'hui conservé à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Roumanie (BRV 149).⁵⁵ Deux autres exemplaires, l'un ayant appartenu au Séminaire de Socola (1881), l'autre à l'Académie *Mihăileană* (1835), se trouvent actuellement à la BCU.⁵⁶

c) *Epistolarum Pauli Manutii Libri XII*, Venise, 1580 (VC, nr. 01758), livre marqué de la note et de la signature de Chrysanthé (à l'encre d'une couleur différente) :

καὶ τὸδε ἐκ τῶν ἀφιερωθέντων βιβλ[ίων] τῇ ἐν γιασίῳ νέα αὐθεντικῇ ἐλληνικῇ σχολῇ. ἐπικατάρματος ὁ τοῦτο ἀφαιρήσων. 1728 μηνὶ Σεπτεμβρίῳ. † Ὁ Ἱεροσόλυμων Χρύσανθος.

Et celui-ci [fait partie] des livres donnés à la nouvelle École princière grecque de Iași. Maudit celui qui l'aliénera. 1728, au mois de septembre. † Chrysanthé de Jérusalem.

Encore, on peut supposer que ce fut toujours Chrysanthé Notaras qui déposa à la bibliothèque de l'Académie de Iași un exemplaire de chaque livre imprimé dans l'imprimerie fondée en 1682 par son oncle Dosithée au monastère de Cetățuia et transférée par lui-même, en 1715, au monastère Saint-Sabbas de Iași.⁵⁷ En voici deux exemples :

(a) Syméon de Thessalonique, *Περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ Ναοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ Ἀρχιερέων...* / *Autour du Temple divin et de ses Archiprêtres...*, Cetățuia, 1683 (VC, nr. 02478).⁵⁸ Le volume est marqué du sceau de 1852 du Séminaire de Socola. Avant d'arriver à Socola, le livre eut plusieurs pos-

sesseurs. En bas de la page de titre (fig. 10), nous pouvons lire la note du premier possesseur, apposée sur une seule ligne, entièrement recouverte d'un dessin géométrique par le possesseur suivant. Vraisemblablement, c'est le diacre Constantin de Domenic – dont l'*ex libris* figure sur le recto et le verso de la page de titre (l'écriture semble être de la même main) – qui souhaite s'assurer la possession du volume, vendu, par la suite, à Christodouos Ioannis Bazoukas. Faute d'une chronologie clairement indiquée, il est difficile de savoir à quel moment l'*editio princeps* de l'œuvre de Siméon de Thessalonique est arrivée entre les mains de ces particuliers. Il reste également à confirmer si le volume a bien appartenu à l'Académie Princière de Iași. Toutefois, étant donné le caractère didactique que Dosithée de Jérusalem voulut attribuer à ce texte, lorsqu'il le prépara pour l'impression,⁵⁹ on peut supposer que la bibliothèque de l'Académie fondée par Chrysanthé Notaras ne pouvait pas se priver de cette œuvre phare de l'Orthodoxie d'expression grecque, indispensable à l'enseignement de la Théologie.

(b) Jean Damascène, *Ἐκδοσις τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως / Manifeste de la foi orthodoxe*, Iași, 1715 (VC, nr. 02400).⁶⁰ Il s'agit d'un livre ayant appartenu au Séminaire Théologique de Roman (fondé en 1858), ainsi que l'indique le sceau apposé sur la page de titre (Fig. 11). Puisque le livre ne figure pas sur la liste des volumes transférés après 1723 au monastère Barnovschi, il est possible qu'il soit arrivé à la bibliothèque de l'Académie Princière après cette date, probablement en 1728, lorsque Chrysanthé Notaras visita à nouveau la capitale moldave et fit de nouvelles donations à l'Académie.⁶¹ D'ici, le livre fut probablement transféré à Socola (*post* 1821/2), puis à Roman (1858), pour revenir ensuite à Socola (en 1901, lorsque le Séminaire de Roman cesse de fonctionner) et de là arriver à la MMB (*post* 1948).

Au cours du XVIII^e siècle, la bibliothèque de l'Académie Princière s'enrichit suite à de nouvelles donations, notamment celles de dame Argyra, épouse du feu le logothète Thomas Dimitriou. Thomas Dimitriou, originaire du diocèse de Kastoria, plus précisément du village de Kripiani (ἐκ Καστορίας ἐκ χώρας Κρηπανίης), vécut un certain temps à Bucarest – il fit peut-être des études à l'Académie Princière⁶² –, d'où il partit pour Iași, le 14 août 1758. En octobre 1760, Thomas Dimitriou fut investi de l'office de logothète de second rang auprès de la chancellerie de la Métropole de Moldavie. Le logothète était aussi connu pour son activité de traducteur de livres grecs en roumain (*infra*).⁶³ Or, cela ne doit pas nous surprendre que Thomas Dimitriou, homme de lettres, ait accumulé une consistante bibliothèque personnelle, remplie de livres grecs imprimés, mais également de ses propres traductions imprimées ou restées manuscrites. Après son décès, son épouse Argyra fit don du contenu de la bibliothèque à l'Académie Princière de Iași. Après la fermeture de l'Académie, la collection de manuscrits et d'éditions ayant appartenu au logothète connut le même sort que le reste de la bibliothèque de la prestigieuse institution :⁶⁴ une partie des livres est entrée en possession de la Métropole de Moldavie⁶⁵ ; une autre partie est parvenue à la bibliothèque du Séminaire de Socola. D'autres livres sont arrivés à Bucarest et certains d'entre eux se trouvent aujourd'hui à la BAR.⁶⁶

Un exemplaire des livres arrivés autrefois à Socola est conservé à la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae ». Il s'agit de *Πόνημα χρυσοῦν Σαμουήλ Ραββὶ τοῦ Ἰουδαίου ἐπέλεγχον τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων πλάνην / Exposé doré de Samuel Rabbi le Juif condamnant l'égarement des Juifs*, traduit depuis l'arabe en latin, ensuite du latin en grec « simple » par Nikiphoros Theotokis⁶⁷ et corrigé pour être imprimé par Thomas Mandakasis, un compatriote de Thomas Dimitriou installé en

Ανανίου Αδαμίδου Κουζάνου τοῦ ἐκ Χαλδίας
Γκιουμισχανέ κ(αὶ) ταῦτα, ὠνηθέντα ἐν Ἰασίῳ
τῆς Μολδαβίας, ἐν ἔτει ᾠωδ'.

[Livres] d'Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos de
Giumischané de Chaldia, achetés à Iași, en
Moldavie, l'an 1814.

L'ex libris apposé sur ce livre nous met sur les traces de cette personnalité marquante des milieux intellectuels de Iași du début du XIX^e siècle. Né dans le diocèse de Chaldia de Trébizonde, à Giumischané (aujourd'hui Gümüşhane, en Turquie – qui, en 1848, s'appelait *Argyroupolis*, traduction grecque de l'ancien nom turc –),⁷² Ananias était le petit-fils de Lazaros Kouzanos de Tsiti (*Τσίτη*, localité située dans le même diocèse). Lazaros fit ses études à l'Académie Princière de Bucarest et regagna sa patrie pour enseigner à l'École (*Φροντιστήριον*) de Trébizonde fondée en 1682 par Sevastos Kiminitis.⁷³ Après avoir intégré les rangs du clergé, il fut nommé *oikonomos* (administrateur des biens matériels), puis *protekdikos* (juge en chef du tribunal ecclésiastique) de la Métropole trébizontaine. On sait également que le frère de Lazaros, Dionysios, fit une carrière encore plus brillante. Il prit l'habit monacal au monastère de Gouméra, d'où il était passé au fameux monastère trébizondein de Souméla.⁷⁴ C'est là qu'il apprit l'arabe, pour ensuite poursuivre ses études à l'Académie Princière de Bucarest dans les années 1750. Après avoir regagné ses terres natales, il fut ordonné métropolite de Chaldia en 1757 et occupa le siège métropolitain jusqu'à sa mort, le 17 juillet

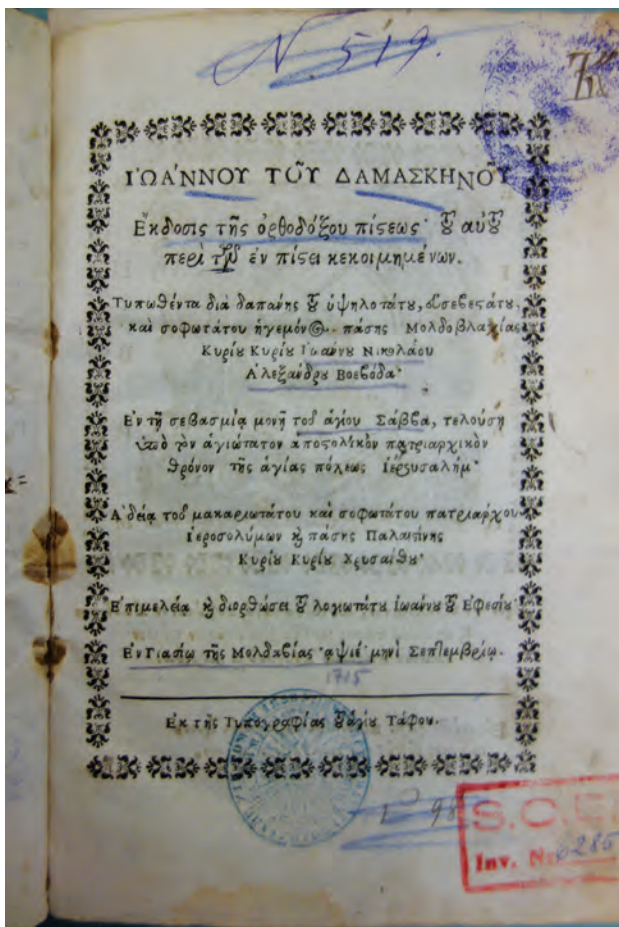
1783. Or, ce fut Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos qui hérita la riche bibliothèque du métropolite Dionysios Kouzanos, ainsi que la bibliothèque de son grand-père Lazaros.⁷⁵

Lazaros Kouzanos est celui qui avait copié, en 1746, le Ms. IFEB 3⁷⁶ (récemment identifié par le prof. Vassa Kontouma)⁷⁷ et deux autres versions du même manuscrit : Ms. St-Georges-Peristeriotis 2 (selon Rhallis et Potlis) et 10 (selon Minoidis Minas), le dernier étant achevé le 30 novembre 1746 (et perdu depuis).⁷⁸ C'est encore lui, « Lazaros de Tsiti », qui avait copié, en 1765, l'*Exégèse aux saints et sages canons de Kosmas et Ioannis* de Théodoros [Prodromos], qui se trouve de nos jours à Naousa, en Grèce.⁷⁹

L'on voit donc qu'Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos était né dans une famille de hauts prélats et fonctionnaires de l'Église de Trébizonde, instruits à l'Académie Princière de Bucarest et spécialistes de la reproduction de manuscrits grecs. Il avait lui-même étudié le Droit à Leipzig, mais les chemins parcourus par ses ancêtres l'avaient rappelé dans les Pays Roumains, cette fois-ci à Iași, où il fut le premier professeur de Droit de l'Académie Princière.⁸⁰ On lui connaît l'habitude de se présenter également comme *nomophylax* (*infra*). Vu les données dont nous disposons, on peut supposer que soit Ananias avait emmené une partie des livres hérités à Leipzig et ensuite à Iași, soit qu'une fois installé en Moldavie, il y avait retrouvé certains exemplaires ayant appartenu aux siens. En 1815, il fit don à la stavropégie patriarcale de Gouméra d'un manuscrit rédigé par son oncle Dionysios de Chaldia durant ses études à Bucarest.⁸¹ Ainsi, le manuscrit autrefois copié par Dionysios Kouzanos fut destiné au monastère où vécut le copiste suite à la donation faite par l'héritier Ananias.

▼ Fig. 11. Jean Damascène, "Ἐκδοσις τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως / Manifeste de la foi orthodoxe, Iași, 1715.

Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02400.



On apprend d'une autre donation envers le monastère de Gouméra qu'Ananias Kouzanos copiait lui aussi des manuscrits, comme l'avaient fait avant lui son grand-père Lazaros et son oncle Dionysios. Le 17 septembre 1815, il fit don, au dit monastère, du manuscrit *Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὰς ἱερὰς τελετὰς καὶ τοὺς ἱεροὺς κανόνας τοῦ Θεοδώρου Πτωχοπροδρόμου / Exégèse aux saints offices et aux saints canons de Théodore Ptochoprodrome*, copié par lui-même (*γραφεῖσα ὑπὸ Ἀνανίου Ἀδάμ Κουζάνου*).⁸²

Bien évidemment, Ananias Kouzanos enrichit sa bibliothèque personnelle grâce à de nombreux achats. En 1804, à Iași, il avait acheté les *Œuvres* de Théodorete, volume qui se trouve actuellement à la MMB. En 1786, lorsqu'il se trouvait à Bucarest, il acheta un manuel de mathématique de Balanos Vasilopoulos (homme de lettres bien connu, originaire de Ioannina), texte qui se trouve aujourd'hui à la BCU :

[...] ἤδη δὲ Ἀνανίου Ἀδαμίδου Κουζάνου τοῦ ἐκ Χαλδίας
(Γκιουμισχανέ) ἐν Βουκουρεστίῳ τῆς Βλαχίας ὠνηθεῖσα,
ἐν ἔτει αψς.⁸³

[...] À présent [le livre] est à Ananias Adamidis
Kouzanos de Chaldia (Ghiumishané), acheté à
Bucarest, en Valachie, l'an 1786.

Le 22 mars 1815, Ananias acheta un recueil de textes polémiques imprimés en deux volumes à Saint-Petersburg (en 1797).⁸⁴ Le second volume contient la note suivante :

Ἀνανίου Ἀδαμίδου Κουζάνου τοῦ ἐκ τῆς ἐπαρχίας
Χαλδίας καὶ Χερσιάνων καὶ ἤδη ὠνηθεῖσα μετὰ τοῦ Α΄
αὐτῆς τόμου διὰ γροσίων ὀγδοήκοντα τεσσάρων ἐν
Ἰασίῳ τῆς Μολδαβίας ἐν ἔτει ᾠωιέ, Μαρτίου κβ'.⁸⁵

[Livre] d'Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos du diocèse de
Chaldia et Cherianon, acheté avec le volume I pour 84
thalers à Iași, en Moldavie, l'an 1814, mars 22.



La plupart des livres ayant appartenu à Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos sont aujourd'hui conservés à la bibliothèque de l'Association des Pontiques de Naousa, appelée « Euxin » (*Εύξεινος Λέσχη Ποντίων Ναούσας*, en Macédoine, dans le diocèse de Verrhoia). Cette association fut fondée par les habitants de la ville d'Argyroupolis qui s'étaient réfugiés en Grèce en 1924 et avaient emmené avec eux les 972 volumes de la bibliothèque de l'École d'Argyroupolis, conservés actuellement à la bibliothèque de l'Association. Parmi ces derniers, 753 ont été numérisés dans le cadre d'un projet piloté par l'Université « Aristote » de Thessalonique (2010). C'est dans ce groupe de livres que figurent les deux volumes mentionnés ci-dessus, achetés par Ananias Kouzanos à Iași, en mars 1815.⁸⁶ La même collection comporte deux livres donnés par Ananias à la Métropole de Chaldia. Le premier est un *Dictionnaire de Du Cange*, édité en 1688 à Lyon,⁸⁷ emmené de Leipzig à Iași le 8 décembre 1816 :

*Ανανίου Ἀδαμίδου Κουζάνου τοῦ Νομοφύλακος καὶ τότε, μετακομισθέν ἀπὸ Λειψίας εἰς Ἰάσσιον τῆς Μολδαβίας, τῷ ἰασιῶν ἔτει Δεκεμβρίου η'.*⁸⁸

[Livre] d'Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos, et l'a transféré depuis Leipzig à Iași, en Moldavie, l'an 1816, décembre 8.

Le deuxième est le *Τρόπαιον τῆς Ὁρθόδοξης Πίστεως / Tro-paion de la Foi Orthodoxe*, imprimé à Vienne, en 1791, aux frais du grand *serdar* de Moldavie Antonie Manuil et du marchand Dimitrios Pavlou de Ioannina, et dédié au grand spathaire de Valachie Ion Văcărescu.⁸⁹ Selon la note apposée sur la page 1, Ananias Kouzanos fit don de ce livre à la Métropole de Chaldia le 17 octobre 1818 :

Αφιέρωται τῇ ἀγιωτάτῃ Μητροπόλει τῆς φίλης μου πατρίδος Χαλδίας καὶ Χερσιάνων, σταλὲν ἐκ Μολδαβίας

▲ Fig. 12a-b. Κώδιξ Πολιτικός τοῦ Πριγκιπάτου τῆς Μολδαβίας / Le Code Civil de la Principauté de Moldavie, vol. 1, Iași, 1816. Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02493.

ὑπ' ἐμοῦ Ἀνανίου Ἀδαμίδου Κουζάνου ἐν ἔτει ἰασιῶν Ὀκτωβρίου ιζη'.

J'en fais don à la très sainte Métropole de ma chère patrie de Chaldia et Cherianon, expédié depuis la Moldavie par moi, Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos, en l'an 1815, octobre 17.

Le nom du juriste, professeur de Droit, copiste et bibliophile Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos est resté dans l'histoire – moldave surtout – grâce au rôle qu'il a joué, aux côtés du juriste transylvain Christian Flechtenmacher, dans la composition du *Code Civil de la Principauté de Moldavie* (*Κώδιξ Πολιτικός τοῦ Πριγκιπάτου τῆς Μολδαβίας*), projet initié par le prince Scarlat Alexandru Callimachi (1806, 1807-1810, 1812-1819, 1821). Le *Code* fut imprimé à Iași en quatre volumes (1816-1817) et appliqué jusqu'en 1859.⁹⁰ Un exemplaire du volume 1 (Fig. 12), authentifié sur ordre princier par Ananias Kouzanos en personne, se trouve actuellement dans le fond de livres grecs anciens de la MMB (vc, nr. 02493).⁹¹

Κατ' ἐπιταγὴν ὑψηλὴν ἐπιθεωρήσας ὑπογράφωμαι. Ἀνανίας Κουζάνος Νομοφύλαξ.

Après avoir examiné, sur haute ordonnance princière, je signe. Ananias Kouzanos nomophylax.

Pour conclure, le cas d'Ananias Kouzanos peut être comparé à celui de son contemporain Athanasios Christopoulos de Kastoria, diplômé de l'Académie Princièrre de Buc-

rest et de l'Université de Padoue, juriste, philosophe, poète, traducteur, philologue et dramaturge, professeur et juge auprès des cours princières de Moldavie et de Valachie. Il fut le précepteur des fils du prince Alexandru Moruzi, puis *căminar* et grand logothète des Affaires Étrangères sous Ioan Caragea. Sur l'ordre de Ioan Caragea, il acheva la partie grecque du *Code Civil* de la Valachie, connu en roumain sous le nom de *Legiuirea Caragea*, appliqué entre 1818-1865.⁹² À ce jour, je n'ai pas trouvé d'autres traces de Christopoulos dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae », si ce n'est celles que son contemporain Nikiphoros Kantouniaris nous a transmises, à savoir quelques poèmes lyriques (*ἐν τῶν λυρικῶν ἄρχοντος καμινάρη Ἀθανασίου Χριστοπούλου*), dans l'anthologie de chants et poèmes que nous avons présentée auparavant.⁹³

(2) Livres provenant du Séminaire Théologique de Socola.

La collection « Veniamin Costachi » provient en grande partie de la bibliothèque du Séminaire Théologique de Socola. Cette institution d'enseignement secondaire, dotée d'« enseignants expérimentés dans la langue moldave »⁹⁴ et destinée à la formation des prêtres, fut fondée par le métropolite de Moldavie Veniamin Costachi dès qu'il occupa le siège métropolitain de Iași, en 1803. Plus tard, le Séminaire allait porter son nom, jusqu'à sa fermeture en 1948.

Comme Chrysanthé Notaras l'avait fait avant lui en 1714 – lorsqu'il créa les bases de la bibliothèque de l'Académie de Iași –, Veniamin Costachi dota la nouvelle bibliothèque de tout ce qui était nécessaire aux professeurs et aux séminaristes. En 1948, lors de la fermeture du Séminaire, la Métropole de Moldavie récupéra, afin de les conserver, la plupart des livres de cette bibliothèque, excepté les manuscrits, transférés à la BCU.⁹⁵ Faute de données, nous ne sommes pas en mesure, actuellement, de présenter une estimation quantitative précise du fond d'origine, de la partie prélevée par la MMB et de celle qui est toujours conservée dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae ». ⁹⁶ Faute également de listes ou de catalogues d'époque,⁹⁷ il est difficile d'établir quels livres étaient arrivés dans la bibliothèque du Séminaire et à quel moment. Toutefois, nous disposons de quelques indices permettant de reconstituer, bien que partiellement, le chemin emprunté par une partie de ces livres pour arriver à Socola et de là au fonds de livres anciens de la MMB. Il s'agit en premier lieu de livres ayant appartenu au fondateur du Séminaire, le métropolite Veniamin Costachi, identifiables grâce à l'*ex libris* du haut prélat. Tous marqués du sceau de 1852 du Séminaire, cela signifie qu'ils avaient dû arriver dans la bibliothèque de l'école avant cette date, pro-

bablement à la suite des donations successives faites par Veniamin Costachi.⁹⁸ Le métropolite les avait acquis à son tour, au moins en partie, grâce à des achats :

(a) Ὁρθόδοξος Ὁμολογία τῆς Πίστεως / *La Confession de foi orthodoxe* de Petru Movilă (86 pag.), reliée avec la *Εἰσαγωγικὴ ἔκθεσις περὶ τῶν μεγίστων Ἀρετῶν / Exposé introductif sur les trois grandes vertus* de Visarionos Makris, Snagov, 1699 (VC, nr. 02462), livre déjà évoqué précédemment.

(b) Un set de *Menées*, d'où il manque l'exemplaire pour le mois de février, acheté par Veniamin Costachi lorsqu'il était évêque de Huși, pendant la deuxième année de son pontificat (1792).⁹⁹ La page de titre de chaque volume porte la note autographe du futur métropolite (fig. 15), avec des différences minimales d'un volume à l'autre :

ἡγεμονεύωντος τοῦ ὑψηλοτάτου αὐθέντου κυρίου κυρίου ἀλεξάνδρου κωνσταντίνου μουρούζη βοεβόδα: καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ κυρίου Ἰακώβου μητροπολίτου Μολδαβίας ἠγοράσθη καὶ τὸ παρὸν συν τοῖς ἄλλοις παρὰ τοῦ θεοφιλεστάτου ἐπισκόπου ἀγίῳ χουσίῳ κυρίου κυρίου βενιαμὶν κατὰ τὸν πρῶτον χρόνον τῆς ἀρχιερατείας του: 1792φ: ἐν μηνὶ δεκεμβρίου.

Pendant le règne de son Altesse le Prince, seigneur, seigneur Alexandru Constantin Moruzi voïévode, au temps du métropolite de Moldavie Iacob, a été acheté ce [livre], avec d'autres, par le Très aimant de Dieu évêque du saint [siège] de Huși, seigneur, seigneur Veniamin, durant la première année de son pontificat : 1792, le mois de décembre.

Les onze volumes furent imprimés à Venise, à des dates différentes, dans l'imprimerie de Nikolaos Glykis de Ioannina : CGr, nr. 00158 (a. 1779),¹⁰⁰ nr. 00181 (a. 1783), nr. 00193 (a. 1780),¹⁰¹ nr. 00203 (a. 1783),¹⁰² nr. 00216 (a. 1781),¹⁰³ nr. 00228 (a. 1781),¹⁰⁴ nr. 00242 (a. 1784), nr. 00254 (a. 1784), nr. 00265 (a. 1775), nr. 00278 (a. 1788),¹⁰⁵ nr. 00289 (a. 1781).¹⁰⁶ Ils furent tous achetés en décembre 1792, date à laquelle Veniamin Costachi acheta également un *Penticostar* (Venise, 1778), conservé, de nos jours, à la BCU.¹⁰⁷

(c) Joseph Vryenios, *Τὰ εὐρεθέντα / Œuvres*, Leipzig, 1768 (fig. 17), édition préparée par Evgenios Boulgaris et imprimée avec le soutien financier du voïévode Grigore Alexandru Ghica (VC, nr. 02317).¹⁰⁸ Veniamin Costachi entra en possession de ce livre lorsqu'il était évêque de Roman, en juin 1796 (*νῦν δε βενιαμὶν ῥωμάνου. τοῦ κῆρ νετζέλου / à présent [il appartient] à Veniamin de Roman,*

► Fig. 13. L'église de l'ancien monastère de Socola.

▼ Fig. 14. Le sceau du Séminaire de Socola (1852).





▲ Fig. 15. Menée pour le mois de janvier, Venise, 1779.
Source : MMB, Cărți Grecești, nr. 00158.

le fils de kyr Negel). On remarquera qu'il signe en tant que fils de Negel,¹⁰⁹ en référence à son appartenance à la lignée Costachi-Negel, descendante de Constantin Costachi, haut dignitaire de Moldavie au carrefour des XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles († 1735, monastère Trois Hiérarques, Iași).¹¹⁰

La même année, le 21 juin 1796, Veniamin Costachi offrait en donation au hiérodiaque Sofronie le livre *Πέτρα σκανδάλου / Pierre du scandale*, vol. I, Vienne, 1783. Après être passé entre les mains de plusieurs possesseurs, le volume est arrivé à une date inconnue dans la bibliothèque du Séminaire de Socola (où Constantin Erbiceanu l'avait vu en 1885)¹¹¹ et de là à la BCU.¹¹²

(d) *Philocalie*, imprimée aux frais du « Très honorable et Très honorant Dieu, le prince Ioan Mavrocordat », « pour le bien commun des Orthodoxes » (εις κοινήν των ὀρθόδοξων ὠφέλειαν), à Venise / 1782, dans l'imprimerie d'Antonio Bortoli. Livre relié en 4 volumes (vc, nr. 02463, 02464, 02465, 02466).¹¹³ L'*ex libris* du métropolite Veniamin figure sur la page de titre du volume I (fig. 19) :

Ἐκ τῶν τοῦ ἁγίου Μολδαβίας Βενιαμίν.
Des [livres] de Veniamin de Moldavie.

(e) Dimitrios N. Darvaris de Kleisoura de Macédoine, *Γραμματικὴ ἀπλοελληνικὴ / Grammaire grecque simple*,

Vienne, 1806, manuel destiné « à l'usage des jeunes de la même nation [grecque] » (εις χρῆσιν τῶν ὁμογενῶν νέων) et financé par les frères Darvaris (vc, nr. 02415). À la date de l'acquisition du volume, Veniamin était déjà métropolite (Ἐκ τῶν τοῦ ἁγίου Μολδαβίας Βενιαμίν) et le Séminaire de Socola était en pleine activité.

Ce sont là quelques modestes traces de la collection personnelle de livres grecs du métropolite Veniamin Costachi,¹¹⁴ une grande partie de sa bibliothèque se trouvant actuellement à la BCU.¹¹⁵ On peut supposer que tous les livres déposés par le métropolite à la bibliothèque de Socola n'étaient pas marqués par l'*ex libris* ou par les notes du donateur. En effet, tous les livres de Socola ne lui ont pas appartenu. Certains provenaient des monastères moldaves, sans que nous puissions savoir comment Veniamin – qui les avait ensuite donnés au Séminaire – était entré en leur possession. C'est le cas d'un set de *Menées* (seul celui pour le mois de mars est manquant) imprimés à Venise, à des dates et dans des imprimeries différentes – CGr, nr. 00155 (1732),¹¹⁶ 000165 (1732),¹¹⁷ 00190 (1732),¹¹⁸ (1749), 00213 (1732),¹¹⁹ 00226 (1751),¹²⁰ 00239 (1749),¹²¹ 00251 (1732),¹²² 00264 (1732),¹²³ 00275 (1732), 00287 (1732)¹²⁴ – et donnés par le prince Constantin Mihai Racoviță (1749-1753, 1756-1757) à sa propre fondation, le monastère Saint-Nicolas de Botoșani, dit aussi *Popăuți*. Ce fut, au début, une église rénovée par la princesse Ana (épouse du prince Mihai Racoviță et mère du voïevode Constantin), et ensuite par Constantin Racoviță (1750), qui l'avait transformée en monastère et dédié en tant que métoque au Patriarcat d'Antioche (1753).¹²⁵ En bas des pages 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, le voïevode a apposé une note en roumain, en caractères cyrilliques :¹²⁶

▼ Fig. 16. Veniamin Costachi, métropolite de Moldavie (1803-1846).
Source : BAR, Lithographie par Constantin Lecca (apud Barbu Theodorescu, Constantin Lecca, Bucarest, Meridiane, 1969).



ΒΕΝΙΑΜΙΝ ΔΕ ΚΟΣΤΑΚΕ
Ἐπί-Ἐπίσκοπος καὶ Μητροπολίτης Μολδαβίας
BENJAMIN DE KOSTAKE
Archevêque et Métropolitain de la Moldavie

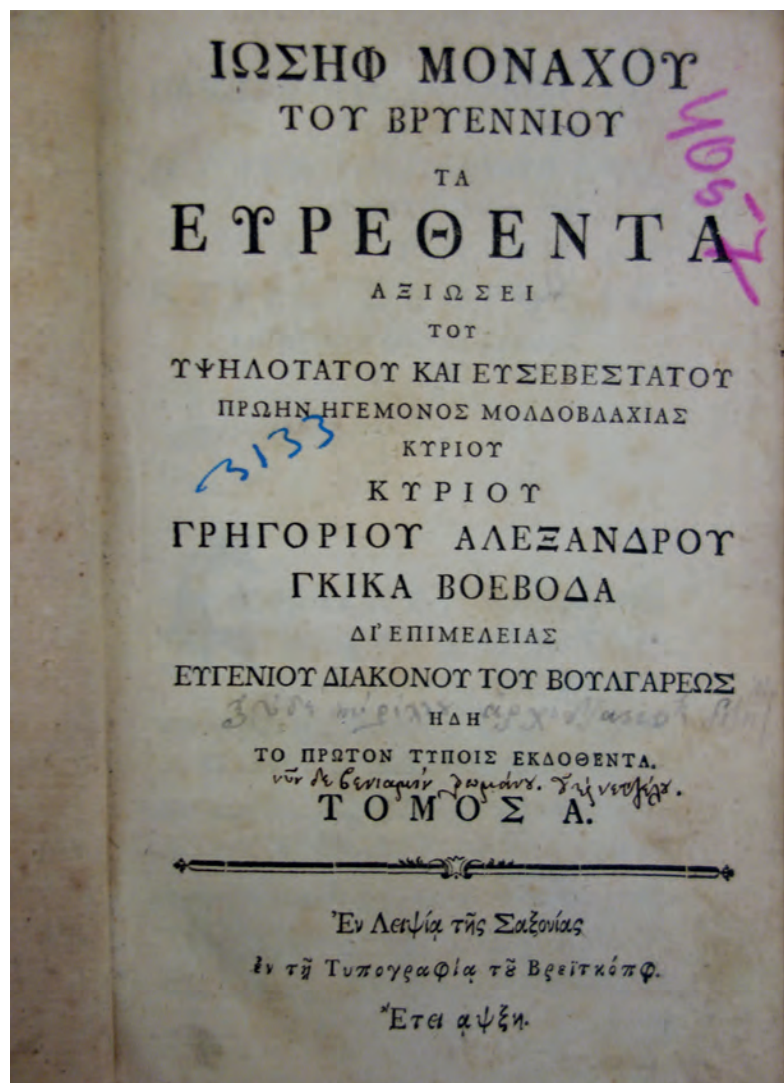


Ce saint Menée je l'ai offert en donation à notre saint monastère Saint-Nicolas de Botoșani pour notre perpétuelle commémoration, Io Constandin Mihai Cehan Racoviță в <oe>вода Б<o>жию м<и>л<o>сти<ю> Γ<os>π<o>δ<ar>ή Ζεμλε Μολδαβσκόε,¹²⁷ l'an ρζβϛϛ [7259 / 1751] μαι ϛ [20].

Encore, certains livres (par exemple CGr, nr. 00142.2,¹²⁸ *ex libris* de 1804) ont appartenu à des membres du clergé au service de la Métropole de Iași durant le pontificat de Veniamin Costachi. D'autres ont appartenu à certains employés du Séminaire ou à d'autres moines du monastère de Socola. C'est le cas notamment de deux livres de musique (*Εἰρηολόγιον / Ermologion*, Constantinople, 1825 et 1835) – dont les auteurs sont, respectivement, Petros de Péloponnèse et Grigorios *protopsaltis*, professeurs à l'École de musique psaltique de Iași, fondée par Veniamin Costachi – qui avaient appartenu à l'archimandrite Isaïa de Socola en 1826 et 1835 (vc, nr. 02338 et CGr, nr. 00320). À ces exemplaires nous ajouterons deux éditions d'Aristote (*Τέχνη ῥητορικῆς / Ars Rhetoricae*, Frankfurt, 1584, et *Ὀργανον / Organon*, Frankfurt, 1585), reliées ensemble (vc, nr. 02347), ayant appartenu à Stefan Pisarev (1705-1775), le secrétaire du Saint Synode de Moscou.¹²⁹ Le premier ouvrage est marqué de l'*ex libris* de Pisarev en russe, sur le recto de la dernière page. Le deuxième porte l'*ex libris* du possesseur en grec, sur la page de titre. On ignore dans quelles circonstances le volume est arrivé à la Métropole de Moldavie : soit il fut en possession de Veniamin Costachi, soit entre les mains d'une autre personnalité ayant vécu à Iași au début du XIX^e siècle et de là il parvint au Séminaire de Socola, puis à la ΜΜΒ.

Mis à part les donations de Veniamin Costachi, de ses subalternes de la Métropole ou du personnel de Socola, les donations d'autres particuliers ont complété la collection des livres les plus rares. C'est le cas du *Lexicon sive Dictionarium Graecolatinum*, imprimé à Bâle en 1557, qui conserve encore ses couvertures d'époque, recouvertes de cuir blanc (vc, nr. 02460). Le dictionnaire a été donné au Séminaire par le Lieutenant-Colonel Constantin Langa en 1914, probablement à sa mort.¹³⁰ Mais avant, le livre eut d'autres possesseurs : en février 1870, il se trouvait entre les mains de Natan Cornman (*ex libris* en roumain sur la deuxième de couverture et sur la page de titre). Une autre note, toujours en roumain, apposée en bas de la page de titre, montre que le volume avait également appartenu à l'archimandrite Hyéronimus, mais on ignore à quelle date. Le dernier possesseur, Constantin Langa, mentionne dans ses notes qu'il avait acquis cette œuvre le 24 juin 1880, à Iași, et que trente-cinq ans plus tard, probablement vers la fin de sa vie (une des notes est rédigée d'une main tremblante), il en faisait don à Socola. De même, il disait avoir donné au Séminaire, avant le 27 novembre 1914, l'intégralité de ses bibliothèques (peut-être se réfère-t-il ici aux bibliothèques qu'il eut dans plusieurs de ses maisons ou en plusieurs langues). En l'absence d'autres témoignages et d'un inventaire des livres donnés par Constantin Langa à l'école, en l'absence également d'*ex libris* apposés sur chaque livre, il est impossible de préciser le nombre exact de volumes, ni ce qui reste aujourd'hui de la donation du colonel.

Un autre livre offert au Séminaire de Socola par un certain Gh. I. Dima, le 15 août 1913, est un *Ὁρολόγιον Μέγα / Grand Horologion*, imprimé à Venise en 1806 (CGr, nr. 00083). Le possesseur l'a marqué de sa note sur la deuxième de couverture. Parmi de nombreuses autres notes qui y sont apposées, je signale celle d'un possesseur de Horodniceni (dépt. de Suceava), un haut dignitaire, qui fait un bel éloge à la langue grecque, dans un beau



▲ Fig. 17. Joseph Vryenios, Τα εὐρεθέντα / Œuvres, éd. Evgenios Voulgaris, Leipzig, 1768.

Source : ΜΜΒ, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02317.

▼ Fig. 18. Tombeau du Col. Constantin Langa. Cimetière Eternitatea (Iași).



moldave vernaculaire (1848, novembre 17) :

Toute belle chose se réalise avec difficulté et effort, tel celui d'apprendre le grec. Cela peut paraître difficile aux débutants, mais par la suite, s'ils l'apprennent, il leur est de grande utilité, notamment à ceux qui souhaitent apprendre l'art de la musique psaltique. Car sans maîtriser le grec, tu ne peux pas avancer dans cet art. Levez-vous, donc, ceux qui aimez la science, pour pouvoir avancer dans ce qui est utile, pour pouvoir louer cette science avec effort et au nom du très bon et miséricordieux Dieu, jusqu'à la fin de cette vie éphémère et passagère comme une couleur. 1848, novembre 17. Teodor Filipovici grand sénéchal de Horodniceni.

Des simples notes et/ou le sceau du Séminaire de Socola figurant sur maints livres rares et précieux montrent que les volumes en question ont appartenu à l'école de Iași, sans apporter des précisions quant à la date et aux circonstances de leur arrivée dans la bibliothèque de l'institution. Certains parmi eux, de par leur ancienneté, méritent d'être signalés :

- *Ἡ Θεία Λειτουργία τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἰακώβου τοῦ Ἀποστόλου* / *La divine Liturgie du Saint Apôtre Jacob*, Venise, 1645,¹³¹ marquée d'une note de 1863 qui indique que le volume appartient au Séminaire de Socola (vc, nr. 02230) ;

- *Πάντες Προφήται* / *Profetae omnes*, Leipzig, 1697, deux exemplaires, dont un marqué du sceau de 1852 du Séminaire (vc, nr. 02363 et 02318) ;

- Georgius Pasoris, *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum*, Leipzig, 1702 ; le livre a appartenu, à une date inconnue, à un certain Ioannis, ensuite à Konstantinos Christodoulou de Ioannina (*ex libris* du 5 mai 1768),¹³² puis au grand spathaire Ilie, à une date difficile à lire (vc, nr. 02368) ;

- *Ἑτυμολογικὸν τὸ Μέγα ἤγουν ἡ Μεγάλῃ Γραμματικῇ* / *Grand Ethymologikon ou Grammaire Grande*, Venise, 1710,¹³³ volume imprimé aux frais du grand marchand Nikolaos Karagiannis de Ioannina (Νικόλαος Καραϊάνης) – je reviendrai sur ce bienfaiteur de la « nation grecque » (vc, nr. 02459) ;

- deux exemplaires de *Σειρὰ ἐνὸς καὶ πενήκοντα ὑπομνηματιστῶν* / *Serie de 51 commentateurs*, vol. I, Leipzig, 1772, livre écrit par le hiéromoine Nikiphoros Theotokis et imprimé aux frais du prince de Moldavie Grigore Alexandru Ghica (vc, nr. 02451 et 02451.1 ; le vol. II contient le portrait du voïévode : fig. 20).¹³⁴ Les deux exemplaires ont été achetés à Iași, en 1774, mais l'acheteur ne précise pas son nom (*30 γρόσια τούρκικα : ἀγόρασα τοὺς δύο παρόντες τόμους ἀπὸ γιάσιον τῆς μολδαβίας – 1774, Ἰανουάριος / 30 thalers turcs ; j'ai acheté les deux volumes présents à Iași, en Moldavie – 1774, janvier*).

- *Σύντομον Δοξαστάριον* / *Bref Doxastarion*, Bucarest, 1820,¹³⁵ œuvre de Petros Lampadarios de Péloponnèse (cf. *supra*), professeur à l'École de musique psaltique de Iași au début du XIX^e siècle, auteur de chants psaltiques et de poèmes profanes, à l'instar de Nikiphoros Kantouniaris¹³⁶ (vc, nr. 02348). Une note sur la page de titre indique que le volume a appartenu, à une date inconnue, à Dimitrie Suceveanu.

Encore, signalons quelques volumes ayant appartenu au Séminaire de Socola et empruntés au fil du temps à divers lecteurs particuliers qui, contrairement au règlement en cours,¹³⁷ avaient jugé bon de témoigner de l'emprunt à l'intérieur des couvertures. C'est le cas, par exemple, d'un certain P. Enoliu, qui apposa sa signature sur un manuel de musique imprimé à Constantinople en



▲ Fig. 19. Φιλοκαλία... / Filocalia..., vol. I, Venise, 1782.

Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02463.

1839 (vc, nr. 02284) :

Cet Ermologion grec m'a été confié à la bibliothèque du Séminaire par le père hiérodiaque Silvestru Balanu. 1861, sept. 15. P. Enoliu.

D'autres livres, marqués du sceau de 1852 du Séminaire, sont également marqués d'un sceau plus tardif de l'institution. Ceci indique qu'à un moment donné ils avaient dû être égarés ; et qu'ils étaient revenus au sein de la bibliothèque de l'école dans des circonstances inconnues :

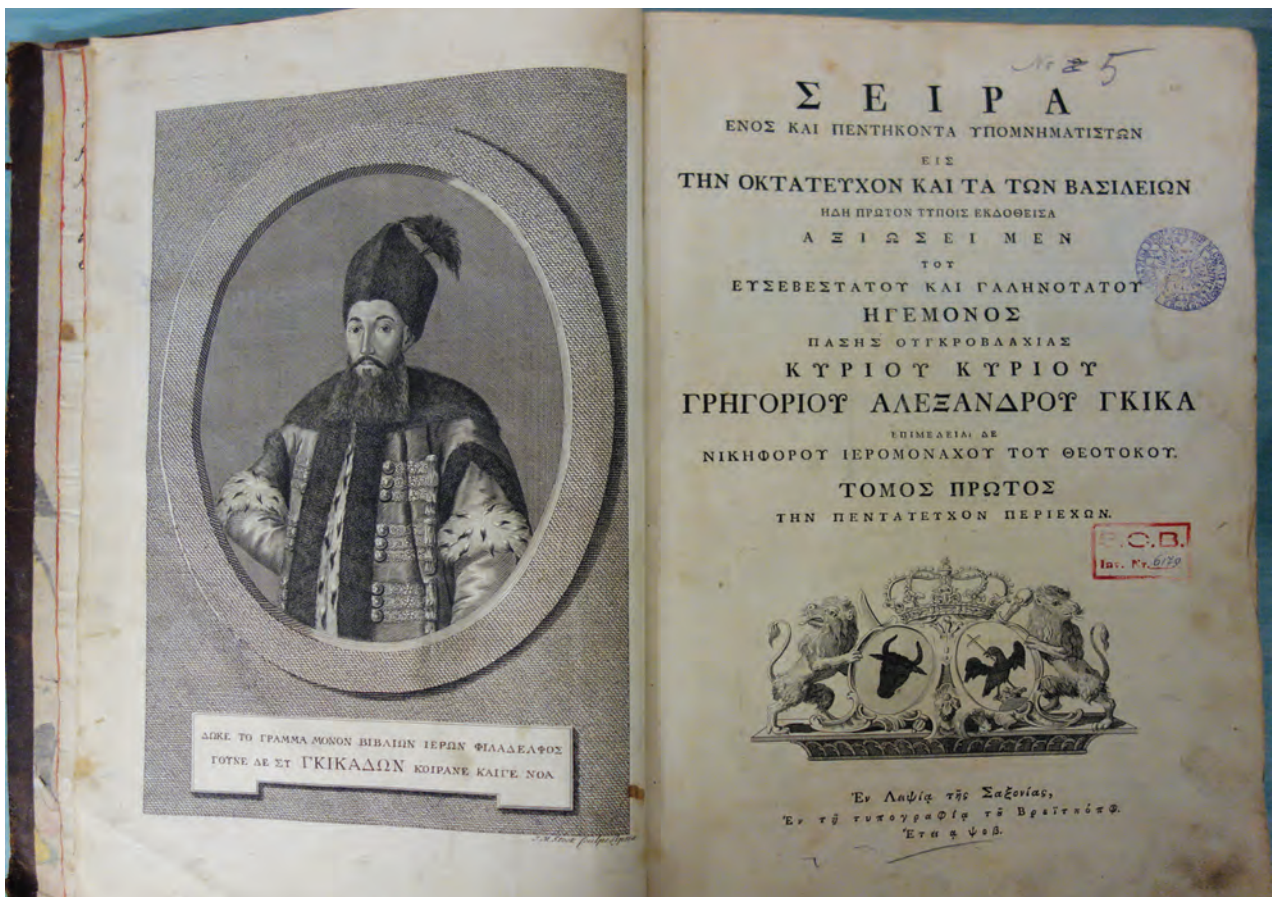
- *ὺρολόγιον* / *Horologion*, sans couvertures ; *ex libris* de 1866 (CGr, nr. 00086) ;

- Patousas, *Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία φιλολογική* / *Encyclopédie philologique*, vol. I, Venise, 1805 ; *ex libris* de 1861/2 (CGr, nr. 00112) ;

- *Ἑλληνική χρηστομάθεια* / *Chrestomathie grecque*, Athènes, 1852, *ex libris* de 1854 (vc, nr. 02341), etc.

(3) Livres provenant du Séminaire Théologique de Roman.

Plusieurs volumes – sans que nous puissions en préciser le nombre exact – conservés dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » proviennent du Séminaire Théologique de Roman. Certains d'entre eux sont marqués du sceau de 1852 du Séminaire de Socola et de celui de 1858 du Séminaire de Roman. Dès sa fondation en septembre 1858, cette nouvelle institution avait été dotée d'une bibliothèque, « qui appartenait à l'Évêché », comprenant « 224 tomes, reliés en 219 livres ».¹³⁸ Or, le Séminaire de Roman constituait



▲ Fig. 20. Σειρά ενός και πενήκοντα υπομνηματίστων / Série de 51 commentateurs, éd. hiéromoine Nikiphoros Theotokis, vol. I, Leipzig, 1772.
Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02451.1.

une filiale de celui de Socola. Il avait donc reçu des livres de l'institution tutélaire de Iași.¹³⁹ Au moment de la fermeture du Séminaire de Roman, en juillet 1901, une grande partie des meubles et la bibliothèque, qui comptait alors 1290 volumes, furent transférés au Séminaire « Veniamin Costachi » de Iași. Les livres reçus de Socola firent retour à leur institution mère.¹⁴⁰

Des volumes transférés depuis Socola à Roman, en 1858, nous signalons ici – en suivant l'ordre chronologique de leur édition – les plus importants par ancienneté et thématique :

- *Œuvres* d'Hippocrate, Bâle, 1538 (vc, nr. 02477). On ignore à quel moment le livre est entré en possession du Séminaire de Socola. Il est fort probable qu'il ait appartenu antérieurement à l'Académie Princière. D'après l'*ex libris* grec apposé sur la page de titre, le volume était la propriété d'un certain Bartholomeos Tornikis en 1634. Il faut toutefois signaler que le nom du possesseur et la date sont rédigés avec des encres différentes (fig. 21).

- *Œuvres* d'Hésiode, Bâle, 1542 (vc, nr. 01769). Le volume a eu différents possesseurs au fil du temps.

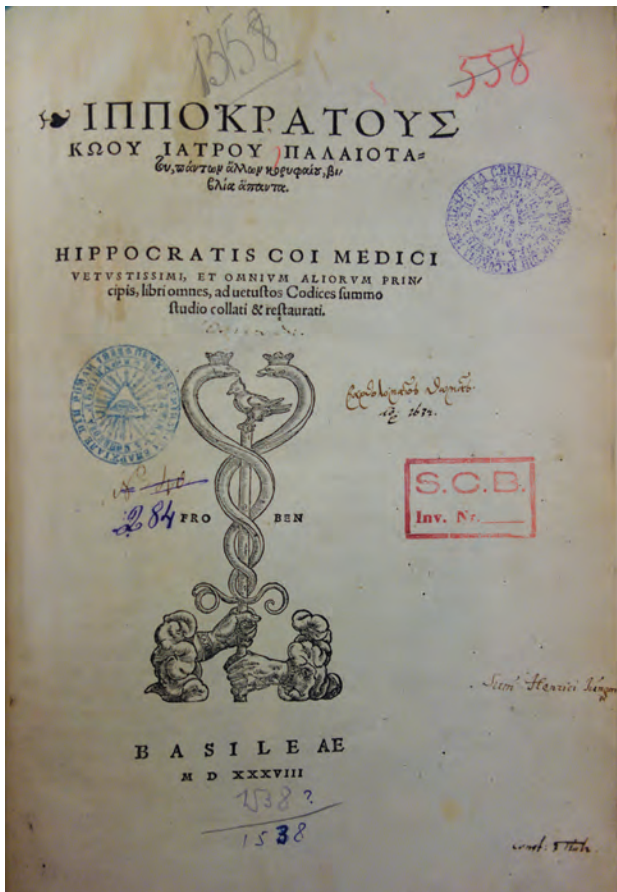
- *Epistolarum Pauli Manutii Libri XII*, Venise, 1580 (vc, nr. 01758). Il s'agit d'un volume offert par Chrysanthè de Jérusalem à l'Académie Princière de Iași en septembre 1728 : *ex libris* (*supra*).

- *Θησαυρός τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς καὶ τῆς Φραγκικῆς γλώσσας / Tesoro della Lingua Greca-Volgare ed Italiana*, Paris,

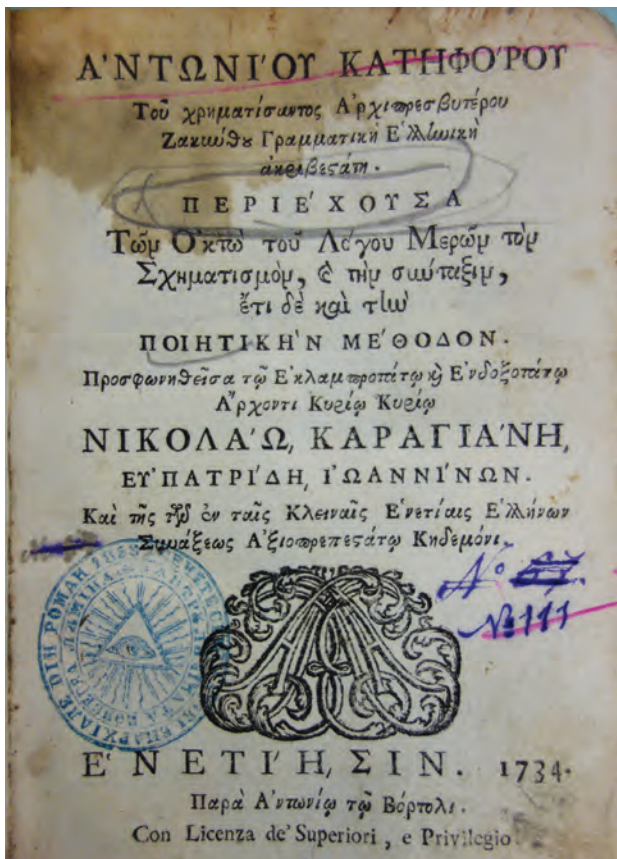
1709¹⁴¹ (vc, nr. 02328). Les dates demeurent inconnues, mais nous savons que le livre a appartenu à Georgios Panagiotti (p. 1 : *ἐκ τῶν τοῦ γεωργίου παναγιώτου*), Nikodimos Vatorédinos (p. 1 : *ἐκ τῶν τοῦ νικοδήμου τοῦ βατοπαιδινοῦ*), ainsi qu'à Georgios Nitzou (p. 1 : *ὁ γράφων ἄνωθεν οὐκ οἶδε τι γραφεὶ ὅτι σήμερον ἐμοῦ γεωργίου νιτζου κ(αί) αὔριον σοῦ, καὶ οὐδέποτε οὐδενός*).

- Zigadenos, *Πανοπλία Δογματικῆ / Panoplie dogmatique*, Târgoviște, 1710¹⁴² (vc, nr. 02475). Je ne saurai pas préciser si cet exemplaire ou celui ayant appartenu à Veniamin Costachi figurent sur la liste des volumes transférés après 1723 depuis l'Académie Princière vers le monastère Barnovschi.¹⁴³

- Antonios Katiforos, *Γραμματικὴ ἑλληνικὴ ἀκριβεστάτη / Grammaire grecque détaillée*, Venise, 1734. Il s'agit d'un livre imprimé aux frais du marchand Nikolaos Karagiannis de Ioannina (Fig. 22a-b), également dédicataire de cette édition (vc, nr. 02374).¹⁴⁴ Ainsi qu'en témoigne une note apposée sur la première page (non numérotée), le volume appartenait, en novembre 1757, à Nikolaos Athanasiou, « le logothète de *postelnicie* » : *ἦ ὁ ποταπός καὶ παραμικρός δοῦλος τῆς, ὁ ὁποῖος εἶναι περὶ παντός ἀλιθηνός. Νικόλαος λογοθ[έτης] τῆς ποστελνιτζίας. ἀψίνζ: νοεμβρίου βῆ / l'esclave indigne et petit [de ce livre], qui est pourtant sincère en tout, Nikolaos le logothète de *postelnicie*. 1757, novembre 12. Sur le recto de la dernière page, une autre note confirme l'appartenance de l'œuvre : *Νικόλαου ἀθανασίου λογοθ[έτη] / De Nikolaos Athanasiou logothète. À**



▲ Fig. 21. Œuvres d'Hippocrate, Bâle, 1538.
Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02477.



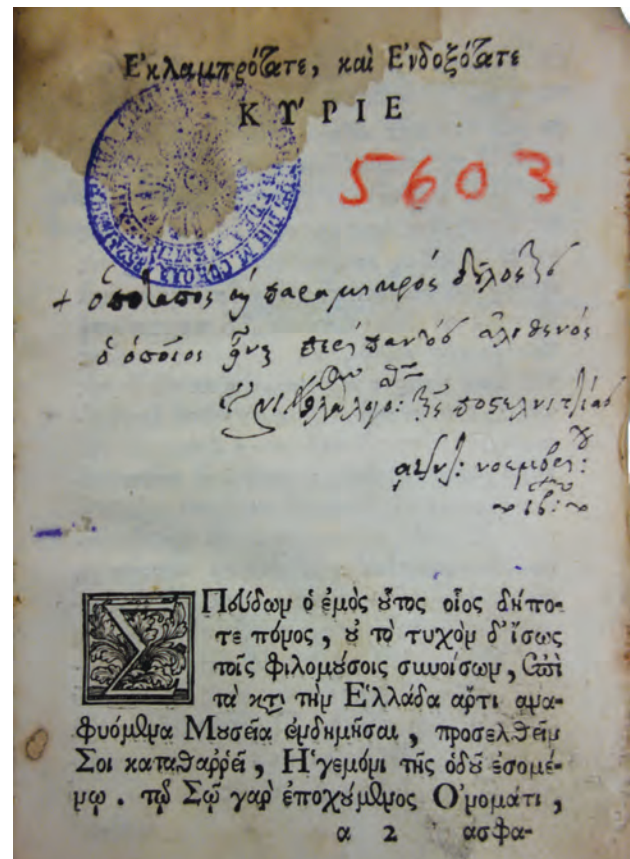
des dates inconnues, le livre avait également appartenu à Kalokyriakis Pavlou de Ioannina (cf. les notes sur la deuxième de couverture : *καὶ τότε σὺν τοῦς ἄλλοις ἐκ τῶν τοῦ καλοκυριάκη παύλου ἐξ ἰωαννίνων κ(αι) ἔστω / et celui-ci, avec d'autres, est à Kalokyriakis Pavlou de Ioannina*) et sur le verso de la dernière page : *καὶ τότε σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις κυριάκη παύλου / et celui-ci, avec d'autres, [est] à Kyriakis Pavlou*), ainsi qu'à Anastasios Dimitriou (cf. le recto de la dernière page : *καὶ τότε σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀναστασίου τοῦ διμητρίου / et celui-ci, avec d'autres, [est] à Anastasios Dimitriou*). La deuxième et la troisième de couverture sont remplies des griffonnages et des dessins d'élèves, mais sans que cela puisse nous fournir davantage de précisions sur les possesseurs et le voyage de cette œuvre.

- Meletios, *Γεωγραφία παλαιὰ καὶ νέα / Géographie ancienne et nouvelle*, Venise, 1728. Réalisé dans l'Imprimerie de Nikolaos Glykis de Ioannina (Fig. 23),¹⁴⁵ ce livre est dédié au marchand Panagiotis sarafis, un proche parent de l'imprimeur Glykis (vc, nr. 02456).

- Jérémie, patriarche de Constantinople, *Δόγματα καὶ μυστήρια / Dogmes et mystères*, Leipzig, 1758, deux exemplaires (vc, nr. 02396 et 02396.1).

- Dorotheé, métropolitaine de Monembasie, *Βιβλίον ἱστορικόν*, connu sous le nom de *Chronographe*, Venise, 1781. Sorti de l'Imprimerie de Nikolaos Glykis (Fig. 24), l'édition fut dédiée à Gheorghe Duca, prince de Moldavie (1665-1666, 1668-1672, 1678-1683) et de Valachie (1674-1678)¹⁴⁶ (vc, nr. 02337). Il s'agit d'une chronique importante pour l'histoire de la Moldavie du temps de Petru le Boiteux/

▼ Fig. 22a-b. Antonios Katiforos, Γραμματικὴ ἑλληνικὴ ἀκριβεστάτη / Grammaire grecque détaillée, Venise, 1734.
Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02374.





▲ Fig. 23. *Meletios, Γεωγραφία παλαιά και νέα* / Géographie ancienne et nouvelle, Venise, 1728.
Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02456.

Șchiopul (1574-1591, avec des interruptions) et elle fut imprimée pour la première fois à Venise en 1631. L'*editio princeps* était dédiée à Alexandru l'Enfant/Coconul, prince de Valachie (1623-1627) et de Moldavie (1629-1630). L'œuvre fut ensuite rééditée en 1684 et dédiée au prince Gheorghe Duca. Comme toutes les éditions précédentes, celle de 1781 conservée à Iași présente le portrait du grand spathaire de Moldavie Zotu Tsigaras de Ioannina († 1594, Venise), qui fut le gendre de Petru le Boiteux (Fig. 24).¹⁴⁷

En conclusion, l'on remarquera que le Séminaire de Roman avait reçu de Socola des livres importants, ce qui me semble témoigner du fait que le transfert des livres s'était fait avec l'approbation des hautes instances publiques, parmi lesquelles figurait, sans doute, le métropolitain Sofronie Miclescu.

(4) Livres provenant de la bibliothèque personnelle de Calinic Miclescu.

Au moins une vingtaine de livres imprimés proviennent de la bibliothèque personnelle de Calinic Miclescu (cf. *supra*), neveu de Sofronie Miclescu, qui était son prédécesseur.¹⁴⁸ La signature autographe du possesseur, apposée sur la page de titre de chaque volume, témoigne de leur appartenance.

Tous les volumes répertoriés se trouvent actuellement dans la collection *Cărți grecești* (« Livres grecs »). Les plus anciens sont : *Tέχνη ρητορικῆς* / *Art de la rhétorique* de Francisc/Philaretos Skoufas, imprimé à Venise en 1681

(CGr, nr. 00126) ;¹⁴⁹ *Βιβλίον καλοῦμενον Αὐλὸς ποιμενικός* / *Livre appelé « Flûte pastorale »*, Leipzig, 1780 (CGr, nr. 00307) ;¹⁵⁰ *Τύποι ἐπιστολῶν ἤτε περὶ ρητορικῆς* / *Types de lettres ou sur la rhétorique* de Théophile Corydalée, Venise, 1786 (CGr, nr. 00120).¹⁵¹ Les autres volumes ont été édités au cours de la première moitié du XIX^e siècle.¹⁵² L'un de ces volumes (CGr, nr. 00061) avait appartenu à Dimitrios Ithakisios, professeur de l'écrivain Costache Negruzzi (cf. *supra*).

Tous les volumes marqués de l'*ex libris* du métropolitain Calinic Miclescu présentent des œuvres au contenu didactique, ce qui pourrait indiquer qu'il les avait acquis durant la période de ses études. Le fait qu'il s'agisse de livres imprimés pendant la première moitié du XIX^e siècle semble conforter cette hypothèse.

(5) Livres provenant de l'ancienne collection de la Métropole de Moldavie.

Une partie des livres grecs qui font l'objet de cette étude semblent être entrés directement en la possession de la Métropole de Moldavie, sans avoir appartenu antérieurement aux institutions d'enseignement de Iași. Plusieurs indices nous confortent dans cette hypothèse. En voici quelques exemples.

Certains livres, après avoir appartenu à des hauts prélats de la Métropole, ont été marqués juste du sceau de cette dernière. C'est le cas de deux exemplaires du *Εἰρημολόγιον* / *Ermologhion*, Venise, 1818 (CGr, nr. 00025 și 00042), qui ont appartenu au protosyncelle et ecclésiarque de la Métropole, Visarion, en 1834 (cf. une note roumaine, en caractères cyrilliques, sur le verso de la page de titre). Les deux volumes sont marqués la même année du sceau de la Métropole – à cette époque, la Métropole avait son siège à l'église Saint-Georges, appelée jusqu'à aujourd'hui « l'ancienne Métropole ».

D'autres livres sont marqués uniquement par des notes montrant que les volumes se sont retrouvés à la Métropole dès le XIX^e siècle. C'est le cas d'un *Menée* pour le mois de mars (Venise, 1815) qui, selon la note roumaine apposée sur les pages 3, 5 et 7, appartenait à la Métropole depuis 1817 (CGr, nr. 00185.1). Le livre avait été donc acquis aussitôt après son impression. Un autre *Menée*, pour le mois de septembre (Venise, 1791), aurait appartenu à la Métropole dès 1851, selon ce que la note roumaine apposée sur la première page en laisse déduire (CGr, nr. 00255). À en juger d'après la note apposée en roumain (CGr, nr. 00257.3), un autre *Menée* pour le mois de septembre (Venise, 1804)¹⁵³ serait arrivé à la Métropole de Iași suite à une donation faite pendant la première moitié du XIX^e siècle.

Ὁρθόδοξος Κατήχησις / *Catéchèse orthodoxe* de N. M. Damalas, Athènes, 1877 (CGr. 00303), est un autre livre provenant d'une donation, offert notamment par le métropolitain Partenie [Clinceni] (1902-1908) au « Palais métropolitain de Iași ».

Certains volumes furent publiés par l'imprimerie métropolitaine, au début du XIX^e siècle. On peut supposer que bon nombre d'entre eux ont été directement acquis par la bibliothèque de la Métropole. C'est le cas, par exemple, de trois exemplaires d'un *Liturgiaire* imprimé à Iași en 1899 (CGr, nr. 00029.1, 00029.2 et 00090.1).

Plusieurs livres proviennent des monastères moldaves, qui les avaient, à leur tour, acquis suite à des donations. Dans ce cas, on supposera que la Métropole est entrée en leur possession suite à la Sécularisation des biens monas-



▲ Fig. 24a-b. *Dorotheé, métropolite de Monembasie*, Βιβλίον ἱστορικόν / Livre historique (*Chronographe*), Venise, 1781. Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02337.

tiques de 1863,¹⁵⁴ ou bien par des acquisitions ultérieures. Cependant, on ignore pourquoi ils ont été déposés dans la collection « Cărți grecești », étant donné que la Métropole possède une collection spécifique de livres provenant des monastères moldaves, notamment la collection *Mănăstiri* (« Monastères »), qui inclut aussi des livres grecs imprimés.¹⁵⁵ Certains des imprimés qui nous intéressent ici proviennent du monastère Frumoasa de Iași (CGr, nr. 00039, 00076, 00145, 00178, 00201, 00237) : trois *Menées* – pour mars, mai et août –, tous imprimés à Venise (1609, 1673 et 1755) ;¹⁵⁶ *Ἀποστόλων πράξεις / Les actes des Apôtres* (Venise, 1752) ; un *Psautier* (Venise, 1830) ; et un *Fragment de la Bible* (sans couvertures) ayant appartenu à un hiéromoine de Ioannina en 1802. Le *Menée* pour le mois de mars (Venise, 1609) et le *Menée* pour le mois de novembre, sans couverture (CGr, nr. 00178, VC, nr. 02497) avaient appartenu au monastère Sainte-Parascève de Iași. En revanche, le *Menée* pour le mois de mai (Venise, 1780)¹⁵⁷ fut d'abord en la possession du monastère Saint-Jean-le-Nouveau, reçu en donation de la part du hiéromoine Nicodème de Trébizonde (signé *Νικόδημος Ἱερομόναχος Τραπεζούντιος*) le 25 mars 1784 (cf. la note grecque au verso de la page de titre). D'après le sceau de 1852, il arriva ensuite au Séminaire de Socola et de là dans la bibliothèque de la Métropole (CGr, nr. 00202.1). Un manuel de musique psaltique, imprimé à Bucarest en 1820 aux frais du grand palatin Grigorie Băleanu, fut donné à l'église Saint-Nicolas de Humulești par Sav. V. Scripcaru le 9 août 1938. Aujourd'hui, ce livre se trouve à la MMB



► Fig. 25. *Le sceau de l'Ancienne Métropole de Iași, vocable St-Georges* (1834).

► Fig. 26. *L'ancien siège de la Métropole.*



(i.p.s. Teoctist, nr. 9). Mentionnons aussi le *Κλειώ / Clio* de Hérodote (Paris, 1895), ayant appartenu à Dosoței Zincu, « le supérieur de la skitè de Cozancea », dans le département de Botoșani (CGr, nr. 00041). Un exemplaire du manuel d'algèbre de Dimitrios Govdelas (Venise, 1806), professeur à l'Académie Princière de Iași,¹⁵⁸ fut donné au monastère athonite d'Esphigmenou, plus précisément au hiérodiaque Cyrille, par Théodorete l'Esphigménite (*ἐκ τῶν θεοδωρίτου ἐσφιγμενίτου ἀφιερωθέντων τῇ ἐαυτοῦ μονῇ ἐσφιγμένον. ἐδωρήθη ἔπειτα τῷ ἱεροδιακόνῳ Κυρίλλῳ*). La donation fut probablement faite depuis Iași mais, pour des raisons que l'on ignore, ce livre n'arriva jamais au Mont-Athos. Il trouva sa place dans la bibliothèque du Séminaire de Socola et de là il est passé dans celle de la Métropole (vc, nr. 02288).

De nombreux livres ayant appartenu à des particuliers ou à des membres du clergé n'offrent aucun indice sur la date et les circonstances de leur acquisition par la Métropole. À en juger d'après leur contenu didactique, on peut imaginer qu'ils avaient appartenu à des étudiants ou à des professeurs de l'Académie Princière de Iași et du Séminaire de Socola. Ce serait le cas, par exemple, de : *Le sens des Évangiles* de Théophylacte de Bulgarie (édition de Rome 1542, page de titre manquante) ayant appartenu à Nikolaos Anagnostis d'Acaranie à une date inconnue (CGr, nr. 00505) ;¹⁵⁹ *l'Histoire* de l'empereur de Byzance Jean Cantacuzène (fig. 29a-b), imprimé en trois volumes à Paris, en 1645 (i.p.s. Teoctist, nr. 16.1, 16.2, 16.3). Ce der-



nier exemplaire ne contient aucun indice quant à la date et aux circonstances de son arrivée à Iași. Selon l'*ex libris* en latin apposé sur la page de titre de chaque volume, le livre avait appartenu à un monastère de l'Occident catholique (« *Ex libris Domus [...] cong[regationis] missionis* »). Le volume 1 est marqué du sceau récent de la Métropole de Iași, avec le numéro d'inventaire 7134, cote 16. On connaît un seul autre exemplaire de l'*Histoire* de l'empereur Cantacuzène arrivé dans l'espace roumain. Il s'agit notamment de celui qui avait appartenu au grand sénéchal Constantin Cantacuzène, qui en fit don au monastère de Hurez, la fondation de son neveu couronné Constantin Brâncoveanu. Ce dernier est aujourd'hui conservé à la BAR, sous la cote IV 25 437.¹⁶¹

Ajoutons aux œuvres précédentes : *Εἰς ἅπασαν τὴν λογικὴν τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους ὑπομνήματα / Commentaires à la Logique d'Aristote* de Théophile Corydalée, imprimé à Venise en 1729, dans l'imprimerie de Nikolaos Glykis.¹⁶² Le livre a appartenu à un certain Georgios Ioannis, ensuite au moine grec Dorothee de Petite-Russie (CGr, nr. 00332) ; le *Ἐγκόλιον λογικόν / Enkolpion logique* de Constantin Dapontes, édité à Venise, en 1770,¹⁶³ livre provenant de la bibliothèque personnelle du professeur Stamatis Ioannis (CGr, nr. 00305) ; *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὸ τέταρτον βιβλίον τῆς τοῦ Θεοδώρου Γαζῆ Γραμματικῆς / Erminie au quatrième livre du Grammaire de Theodoros Gazis* de Gerasimos Byzantios (Venise, 1757),¹⁶⁴ marqué de l'*ex libris* du hiéromoine Antim (CGr., 00334), alors que l'*Erminie* du moine de Patmos Daniilos Kerameus à la même *Grammaire de Gazis* (Venise, 1791) avait appartenu à Constantin de la Nouvelle-Patras (CGr 00136.3) ; *Εὐχολόγιον / Evchologion* (Venise, 1759), signalé en 1760 à Argyrokastro par Dimitrios Kiritzis (CGr, nr. 00347).

Enfin, j'ai insisté sur ces quelques ouvrages imprimés pour montrer la diversité de leur provenance, de leurs possesseurs et de l'espace d'origine de ces derniers : Trébizonde, Acarnania, la Petite-Russie, la Nouvelle-Patras, Patmos, Argyrokastro, etc. Les données recueillies montrent que les livres grecs les plus anciens conservés à la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » datent du xvi^e siècle (six exemplaires). L'on ignore toutefois si les livres en question ont été les premiers à rejoindre les collections de la Métropole de Moldavie. D'après les données de notre possession, fournies par les livres eux-mêmes, la plus ancienne acquisition proviendrait d'une donation de Chrysanthos Notaras, en 1714, à l'Académie Princière. Les livres seraient ensuite passés au Séminaire de Socola et de là, après 1948, dans la bibliothèque de la MMB. Bien évidemment, certains livres, qu'il nous est, à ce jour, difficile d'identifier, doivent avoir appartenu à la Métropole de Moldavie ou à des métropolites dès avant 1714.¹⁶⁵

RÉPERTOIRE THÉMATIQUE

Le contenu des manuscrits et des livres grecs imprimés de la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » correspond bien au profil des institutions qui en ont fait usage ou des personnes qui les ont eus en leur possession avant qu'ils n'arrivent dans la bibliothèque de la MMB.

S'agissant de la bibliothèque de la Métropole, il est tout à fait normal de retrouver des livres au contenu essentiellement religieux. Les volumes de cette catégorie, partiellement recueillis par la Métropole suite à la Sécularisation des biens monastiques de 1863 ou à d'autres occasions, sont concentrés dans la collection *Cărți grecești*

(« Livres grecs »). La circulation de ces livres grecs en Moldavie, mais aussi en Valachie, s'explique de plusieurs manières. Il faut, tout d'abord, tenir compte de la présence d'une importante population grecophone dans les Pays Roumains,¹⁶⁶ population qui avait engendré des nécessités liturgiques et des repères identitaires spécifiques.¹⁶⁷ La pratique de la dédicace des lieux de culte valaques et moldaves aux Patriarcats grecs de l'Orient orthodoxe est directement liée à la mobilité géographique gréco-orthodoxe vers les Pays Roumains.¹⁶⁸ Administrés par des moines « grecs », les métoques des Patriarcats d'Orient ont été d'importants lieux de consommation de littérature religieuse en langue grecque. En effet, une partie des livres imprimés conservés dans la collection *Cărți grecești* provient d'anciens monastères dédiés, tel Popăuți de Botoșani, le métoque du Patriarcat d'Antioche,¹⁶⁹ Frumoasa et Sainte-Parascève de Iași, anciens métoques du Mont-Sinaï,¹⁷⁰ Saint-Jean-le-Nouveau de Iași, dit aussi « Nicorița », métoque du Saint Sépulcre,¹⁷¹ etc. De plus, les membres du clergé ayant eu en leur possession cer-

tains livres grecs d'usage liturgique étaient, en règle générale, originaires du « Pays Grec » (*Țara Grecească*) et avaient été affectés aux métoques moldaves des Patriarcats grecs en qualité d'higoumènes, épitropes ou économes.

Les textes de polémique théologique imprimés avec l'aide des illustres patriarches de Jérusalem Dosithée (1669-1707) et Chrysanthe Notaras (1707-1731) constituent une catégorie à part. La vaste activité d'impression de livres fondateurs de l'Orthodoxie dans les imprimeries valaques (Bucarest, Târgoviște, Snagov, Râmnic), la fondation de la première imprimerie grecque au monastère de Cetățuia, près de Iași (1682), ensuite la fondation des Académies grecques à Bucarest et Iași avec le concours des mêmes patriarches, représentent, sans doute, des actions conjointes et complémentaires destinées à renforcer l'Orthodoxie dans le cadre plus large de la chrétienté,¹⁷² mais également les frontières de la communauté « grecque » (*το γένος των Ρωμαίων, των Γραικών γένος, nazione greca*) dans le cadre plus restreint de la chrétienté orthodoxe.¹⁷³ Le fait que Chrysanthe Notaras ait pris soin de doter l'Académie Princière de Iași avec d'importants livres de polémique religieuse défendant l'Orthodoxie d'expression

▼ Fig. 27. Mănăstirea Frumoasa.





▲ Fig. 28. L'église du monastère Nicorița de Iași.

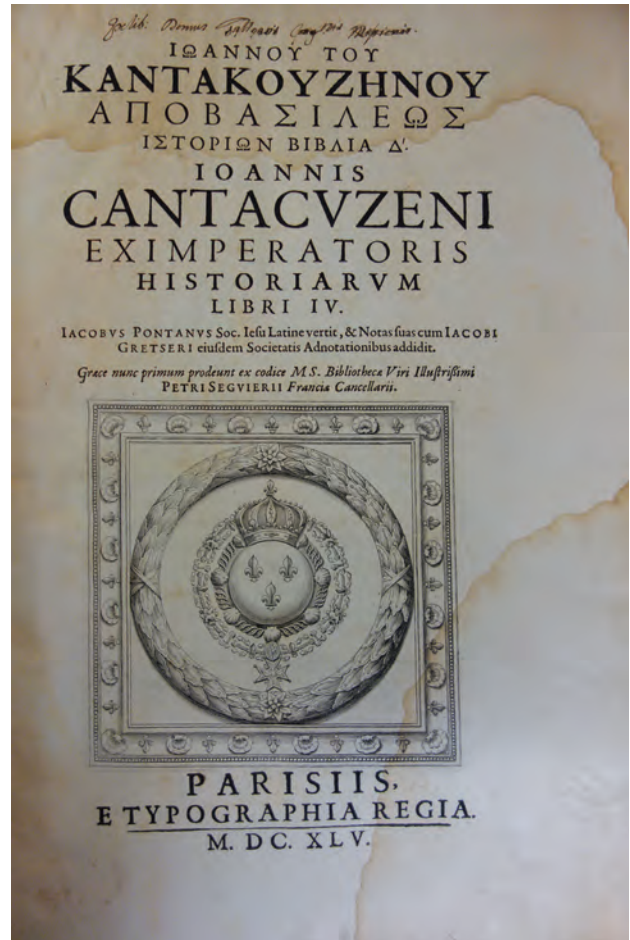
grecque nous semble aller dans le sens de cette interprétation. Les Académies de Bucarest et de Iași, dont aussi bien les enseignants que les étudiants étaient majoritairement originaires du « Pays Grec », fonctionnaient comme des institutions de consécration – par l'étude institutionnalisée – de l'œuvre typographique déployée par les deux patriarches. On a affaire à deux instruments importants qui servaient à consolider l'Orthodoxie en général et de la « nation grecque » dans le cadre de la chrétienté orthodoxe en particulier.

Néanmoins, la grande majorité des livres grecs imprimés ont un caractère didactique. Il s'agit de dictionnaires, encyclopédies, grammaires, manuels de sciences humanistes et positives, livres d'histoire et de géographie, d'auteurs anciens et byzantins, œuvres parénétiqes, livres de musique psaltique, etc. Tous les livres qui présentent ce profil thématique sont recueillis dans la collection « Veniamin Costachi ». Ils répondaient aux nécessités d'éducation et d'apprentissage des professeurs et des étudiants de l'Académie Princièrè de Iași, où les matières étaient enseignées en grec,¹⁷⁴ des élèves du Séminaire Théologique de Socola, où l'on étudiait la langue grecque,¹⁷⁵ et de ceux de l'École de musique psaltique de la Métropole de Iași, où les professeurs étaient tous des Grecs. Certains livres imprimés ont pour auteurs les professeurs des institutions d'enseignement mentionnées, souvent formés à l'Académie Patriarcale de Constantinople ou dans les Universités d'Occident : Sevastos Kiminitis, Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos, Petros Lampadarios, Dimitrios Govdelas, Nikiphoros Kantouniaris et bien d'autres.

Enfin, remarquons le large éventail d'imprimeries où les livres que nous étudions ici ont été confectionnés : les imprimeries grecques de Venise, en particulier celle de Nikolaos Glykis,¹⁷⁶ sont de loin le mieux représentées ; mais nombreux sont aussi les livres imprimés à Vienne, Leipzig ou Bâle, importants centres universitaires de l'Europe humaniste.¹⁷⁷ À ceux-là, il faudrait ajouter, bien évidemment, les livres imprimés en Valachie et en Moldavie, qui témoignent du développement des infrastructures locales de production et de diffusion des livres religieux et didactiques en langue grecque.¹⁷⁸

LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE « DUMITRU STĂNILOAE », MIROIR D'UNE VILLE COSMOPOLITE

En conclusion de cette étude, on peut affirmer que le fonds de livres grecs anciens conservés à la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » de la MMB nous fournit – à l'instar de l'arsenal de documents à caractère patrimonial (slavons, slavo-roumains et roumains) conservés aux Archives Nationales de Roumanie, à la Bibliothèque de l'Académie Roumaine et dans d'autres archives de l'étranger – de précieux témoignages sur l'environnement cosmopolite de la ville de Iași au XVIII^e siècle et au début du XIX^e. On sait que les princes de Valachie et de Moldavie s'étaient entourés, dès la fondation des deux pays, de personnalités venues des pays voisins, dotées de compétences spécifiques, rares au nord du Danube : armes, commerce d'import / export, gestion des finances publiques, des douanes et des salines, architecture, peinture votive, miniature, chancellerie et production de livres manuscrits, etc.¹⁷⁹ Étant situés à la périphérie des empires et en dépendance



▲ Fig. 29a-b. Histoire de l'empereur de Byzance Jean Cantacuzène, Paris, 1645.

Source : MMB, î.P.S. Teoctist, nr. 16.3.

► Fig. 30. Dimitrios Govdelas (vers 1780-1831).

Source : MMB, Veniamin Costachi, nr. 02288.

politique par rapport aux puissances voisines, le Pays Roumains ont toujours été en posture d'adaptation vis-à-vis des modèles dominants produits à l'étranger. La présence grecque au nord du Danube, qui s'accroît à partir de la seconde moitié du xvi^e siècle, fut un élément important, porteur de nouveauté culturelle externe et stimulant de l'innovation culturelle locale. Elle a servi aux élites sociopolitiques et culturelles locales d'altérité dans la définition du soi-même collectif roumain. Plus l'élément gréco-orthodoxe s'enracinait dans les Pays Roumains et créait ses propres institutions pour la conservation de la grécité dans le cadre de la chrétienté orientale (application des normes de droit byzantin écrit, dédicace de métoques aux Patriarcats grecs, fondation d'écoles de calligraphie ou d'institutions d'enseignement grecques, impression de livres grecs, etc.), plus la recherche de repères identitaires collectifs roumains s'affirmait (origine romaine des Roumains et latinité de leur langue, production de textes narratifs, juridiques et liturgiques en roumain, usage de la langue roumaine dans les échanges contractuels privés et dans l'administration des affaires publiques).¹⁸⁰

En somme, la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » et son fonds de livres grecs anciens reflète cette rencontre socioculturelle et institutionnelle gréco-roumaine de longue du-

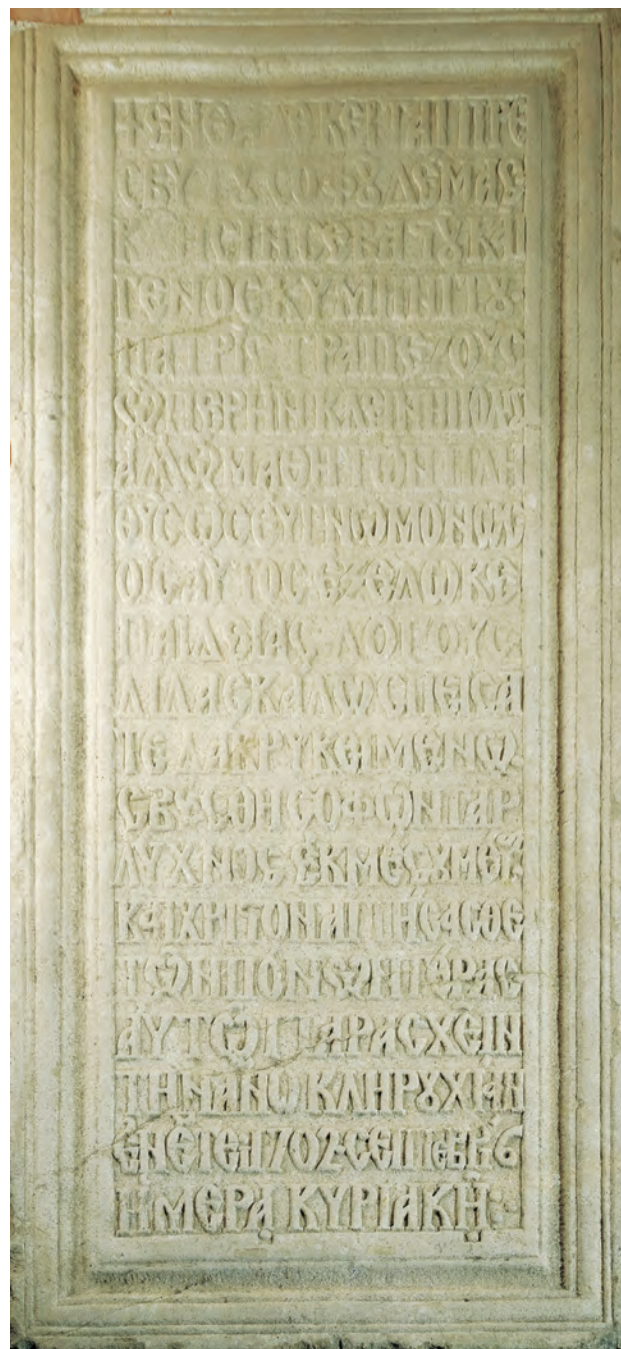


rée, génératrice d'un vécu commun et d'un espace cosmopolite. Avec la fondation des Académies grecques de Bucarest et de Iași, sous l'impulsion de Dosithée de Jérusalem, de son neveu Chrysante Notaras et avec le soutien princier, les rangs de l'intellectualité orthodoxe maîtrisant le grec augmentèrent progressivement. Au sein de ce milieu social, les membres du clergé cohabitaient de plus en plus avec les laïcs, instruits dans un cadre institutionnalisé, selon des programmes didactiques d'inspiration européenne. Les Académies Princières formaient des prêtres et des professeurs pour les écoles grecques de l'Orient chrétien, tels Lazaros Kouzanos de Trébizonde, devenu prêtre et professeur à l'école fondée dans sa petite patrie par le bien connu *iatrophilosophes* Sevastos Kiminitis. C'est de ces Académies que sortaient des hauts prélats, comme, par exemple, Dionysios Kouzanos, ou bien des juristes, tel Athanasios Christopoulos de Kastoria, qui fut au service du prince de Valachie Ioan Caragea. Elles formaient également des poètes, des chroniqueurs, des philosophes, des copistes et des traducteurs, recrutés, pour la plupart d'entre eux, dans l'appareil de gouvernement de l'Église et de l'État ou encore entraînés dans les mécanismes de conservation de la mémoire culturelle collective, de reproduction des élites culturelles et d'innovation intellectuelle.

Les livres grecs de l'Académie Princière de Iași, marqués par les notes de leurs possesseurs – professeurs, métropolitains, higoumènes et autres membres du clergé, dignitaires et marchands ayant le goût de la lecture, logothètes de chancellerie, étudiants venus des quatre coins de la chrétienté orientale – témoignent de cette présence intellectuelle et culturelle dans la capitale de la Moldavie. Un exemple parmi d'autres, le livre manuscrit de musique psaltique de Nikiphoros Kantouniaris – homme cultivé venu de la lointaine Antioche pour devenir professeur à l'École de musique psaltique de la Métropole de Moldavie –, qui témoigne des milieux d'enseignement grecs du centre de la capitale¹⁸¹ et nous renseigne également sur la consommation locale de poèmes et de chants grecs profanes. En effet, à Iași, comme à Bucarest à la même époque, le grec était d'usage courant, ce qui imprima à la langue roumaine une intense patine lexicale grecque. Le métropolitain de Moldavie Veniamin Costachi avait d'ailleurs lui-même l'habitude de signer les livres de sa bibliothèque personnelle en grec, même s'il était un fervent patriote et promoteur de l'enseignement en langue roumaine. De même, l'écrivain Costache Negruzzi savait rédiger des notes en grec pour son professeur Dimitrios Ithakisios.

Des réseaux de communication mentionnés ci-dessus faisaient bien évidemment partie les marchands, qui importaient les livres grecs imprimés par Nikolaos Glykiss à Venise et par d'autres imprimeurs grecques de l'Occident.¹⁸² Parmi les personnalités les plus importantes, il faudrait sans doute compter Nikolaos Karagiannis et Panagiotis *sarafis* de Ioannina,¹⁸³ qui patronnaient financièrement l'impression de livres savants et de manuels grecs à Venise – certains leur étant même dédiés –, ou encore les marchands Darvaris de la Kleisoura macédonienne, famille dont était issu le bien connu auteur de manuels scolaires Dimitrios Darvaris (cf. *supra*).¹⁸⁴

Encore, les longues listes des pré-commanditaires (*συνδρομητές, sindromiți*) – parmi lesquels on compte de nombreux dignitaires, membres du clergé, marchands et autres particuliers de Moldavie – attachées aux livres grecs savants édités entre 1749-1832 témoignent de la même



▲ Fig. 31 La pierre tombale de Sevastos Kiminitis.
© Musée National d'Art de Roumanie.

ambiance cosmopolite de Iași.¹⁸⁵

Dans la capitale moldave on parlait roumain, grec, arménien et hébreu, mais également russe et français, notamment pendant la période de la tutelle russe sur les Pays Roumains (1828-1834), ce qui constitua le prélude de l'européanisation et de la nationalisation de la société roumaine qui aspirait à l'Union politique (accomplie en 1859).¹⁸⁶ La bibliothèque de la MMB conserve la mémoire d'une ville cosmopolite, d'une ambiance culturelle polyvalente que le processus d'homogénéisation linguistique et culturelle nationale a, depuis, progressivement nivelée. Elle constitue, tout comme la vcu, l'un des « Lieux de Mémoire » (au sens donné par Pierre Nora) de la Nation et de l'Église Orthodoxe Roumaine.

Notes:

- 1 Pour une brève histoire de la Bibliothèque « Dumitru Stăniloae », voir Muraru 2004, p. 1-4 ; Popa 2005, p. 205-214.
- 2 Pour un bilan autour des recherches menées dans ce domaine et des suggestions méthodologiques, voir Păun 2012, p. 140-168.
- 3 Il s'agit de Teoctist Arăpașu, titulaire de la Métropole de Moldavie et Suceava entre 1977-1986, puis patriarche de l'Église Orthodoxe Roumaine entre 1986-2007.
- 4 Une partie de ces livres a été consultée par Constantin Erbiceanu à la fin du XIX^e siècle : Erbiceanu 1885a, p. 27-31, 41-46, 49-52, 56-58, 68-72, 75-80, 82-84 ; Erbiceanu 1885b, p. 169-172, 177-181, 185-187, 194-198, 203-206, 220-224.
- 5 Vus, en partie, par Erbiceanu 1885c, p. 220-224, 229-232, 237-240, 244-245.
- 6 Nous attendons avec impatience le catalogue que notre collègue Chariton Karanasios est en train de finaliser.
- 7 MMB, î.p.s. Teoctist, Ms. gr. 12.
- 8 Le manuscrit ne figure pas parmi les 36 autres rédigés sur la commande de Brâncoveanu, répertoriés par Barbu 2000, p. 48-103.
- 9 Selon Barbu 2000, p. 18-25, le décor végétal des manuscrits serait une innovation due à Constantin Brâncoveanu. Voir aussi Tugearu 2014, p. 221-234.
- 10 Barbu 2000, p. 8 ; Bădără 2014, p. 235-270.
- 11 Păun 2001, p. 265-310 ; Bakalova 2008, p. 75-92 ; Kuyumdzhieva, p. 133-154. Signalons qu'aux yeux de ses contemporains, Constantin Brâncoveanu ressemblait au Prophète David en vertu de ses « bonnes œuvres, la sagesse absolue, la bravoure de l'âme, la justice implacable, la pureté absolue même dans ses mots, la douceur semblable à celle du Prophète David » : Barbu 2000, p. 14 et n. 65, p. 108.
- 12 Legrand 1895, nr. 692, p. 77-78 ; BRV, I, nr. 122, p. 409-411.
- 13 Pour la bibliothèque fondée par Constantin Brâncoveanu à Hurez (département de Vâlcea), voir Ionașcu 1935, p. 49-54 ; Dima-Drăgan, Caratașu 1967, p. 235-245.
- 14 Karanasios 2016, p. 260, 265, 294, 301-303 et n. 117, où il est précisé que le chambellan Costachi Guliano ne doit pas être confondu avec Constantin Guliano, le grand logothète du Patriarcat de Constantinople dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle), p. 369, 371. Kaisarios Dapontes, qui détint l'office de *căminar* en Moldavie, tient le chambellan Costachi Guliano pour son « frère spirituel », en précisant que celui-ci avait pour gendres Nikolaos Skordilis, originaire de l'île de Paros, et l'écuyer Ianachi : Karanasios 2016. Un grand spathaire de Valachie appelé Tudorache Guliano (dit aussi Teodor Iuliu) a été le gendre du grand spathaire Mihai Cantacuzène : Bibliothèque de l'Académie Roumaine (BAR), Documente istorice, DIII/10 (1693, avril 3), doc. cité par Stoicescu 1971, p. 141 ; voir aussi Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale [désormais : ANIC], Achiziții Noi, MMCXXXIII/8 (1716, mars 1^{er}, orig. gr.) et Rădulescu 1972, p. II, 320, 315, au sujet du grand écuyer et grand sénéchal Tudorache (Theodorache) Guliano, le fils de Constantin Paléologue. À la même époque, un Tudorache Guliano Paléologue est mentionné comme étant le gendre du grand spathaire Iordache Cantacuzène, le frère du spathaire Mihai : Năsturel 1906, p. 65-66 ; Stoicescu 1971, p. 142. Les membres de diverses branches de la famille Guliano sont attestés comme résidents dans les Pays Roumains dès le milieu du XVII^e siècle : Luca 2008, p. 675, Annexe 4, qui contient des erreurs reprises de Iftimi 2009, p. 110-111.
- 15 Litzica 1909, nr. 3 (580), p. 4-5.
- 16 MMB, î.p.s. Teoctist, Ms. 12. On détient des informations disparates au sujet du *hatman* Alexandru Gheorghe Mavrocordat († Constantinople, le 7 avril 1858), qui était le fils du grand *ban* de Moldavie Gheorghe Alexandru Mavrocordat († Constantinople, le 17 avril 1821) et l'arrière-petit-fils du prince Nicolae Mavrocordat (1709-1710, 1711-1715, en Moldavie, 1715-1716, en Valachie) ; voir Sturdza, 1999, p. 319-330.
- 17 Păcurariu 1961, p. 29-30 ; Păcurariu 1975, p. 334.
- 18 On connaît à ce jour à peu près 430 chants de ce type, recueillis dans des anthologies dont une partie sont conservées à la BAR : Kalaïtzidis 2012 et 2013, p. 451-453 ; Alexandrescu 2016-2017, p. 51-66. Dans la riche bibliographie consacrée à ce type de littérature, voir notamment Camariano 1935 et 1959 ; Dragomis 1979 ; Oikonomidis 2004-2006 ; Frantzi 1993 ; Plemmenos 2003 et 2010 ; Gheorghîță 2010 ; Chatzipanaiotou-Sangmeister, Karanasios, Kappler, Chotzakoglou 2013. Voir également la bibliographie citée *infra*.
- 19 Pour Nikiphoros Kantouniaris, voir Papadopoulos 1890, p. 327 ; Vranoussis 1995, p. 294-296, 617-618 ; Plemmenos 2010, p. 195-234 ; Plemmenos 1999 et 2006 ; Stathis 2001 ; Gheorghîță 2010, p. 87 ; Gheorghîță 2020, p. 65-66, 69-70.
- 20 L'École de musique psaltique, qui fut la première de ce type en Moldavie, fut fondée par le métropolitain Veniamin Costachi en octobre 1805 auprès de la Métropole de Iași. L'institution eut comme professeurs, entre autres, les biens connus Petros Lampadarios de Péloponnèse, le protopsalte de la Grande Église de Constantinople Georgios Paraskiadis, Grigorios Byzantios de Chios, Petros Byzantios de Constantinople : voir Erbiceanu 1885d, p. 84-88 ; Erbiceanu 1888, p. 345, 346 ; Vizanti 1881, p. 54-55, 109-110 ; Apetrei 1967 ; Enescu 1967, p. 36 ; Barnea 2001. À y ajouter le nom de Nikiphoros Kantouniaris, correctement identifié sous ce nom de famille (au lieu de Navtouniaris) par Politis, Politis 1994, p. 575.
- 21 Stathis 1975, I, nr. 60 (Xéropotamou 318), p. 149.
- 22 Voir la bibliographie citée *supra*, note 18.
- 23 Manuscrit connu de Vranoussis 1995, p. 618 ; Gheorghîță 2010, p. 88 ; Kalaïtzidis 2013, p. 453, 459 ; Karanasios 2013, p. 183, n. 22.
- 24 Ms. 1396 (*Kalophonikon Heirmologion* / 1812), 1427 (*Hiera Apichimata* / 1810), 1429 (*Therpsichores paignion* / 1812) et 1430 (*Doxastarion – Heirmologion* / 1812), 1428 (*Melpomeni* / 1818) : Evstratiadis 1924, p. 226-228.
- 25 Ms. 295 (*Doxastarion* / début du XIX^e siècle), 299 (*Antologie* / vers 1810), 318 (début du XIX^e siècle) : Stathis 1975, I, nr. 37 (295), p. 69-70, nr. 41 (299), p. 73-81, nr. 60 (318), p. 143-151 ; Politis, Politis 1994, p. 575.
- 26 Ms. R1 (*Antologie* / 1814-1816) : Plemmenos 1999, p. 97-110.
- 27 Cod. Petropolitanius Gr. 734, étudié par Karanasios 2013, p. 173-188, qui annonce préparer l'édition intégrale du manuscrit.
- 28 BAR, Ms. 784 (*Anthologie de chansons profanes* / vers 1810-1812) et 925 (fin du XVIII^e ou début du XIX^e siècle) : Gheorghîță 2010, p. 88 (pour le Ms. 784) ; Plemmenos 2010, p. 202 ; Kalaïtzidis 2013, p. 451, 452, 459.
- 29 Bibliothèque Nationale de Roumanie, Ms. gr. 17 476 (*Anthologie de chants religieux* / 1820). Le manuscrit a été identifié par Gheorghîță, *loc. cit.* Description chez Țârlescu 2011, nr. 29, p. 145-149.
- 30 Tsakiridou 2007.
- 31 Stathis 1975, II, nr. 309 (Xéropotamou 144), p. 91 ; Ionescu 2003, p. 96-98.
- 32 Si Nikiphoros se trouvait à Iași dès 1813, j'en déduis qu'il avait rédigé l'anthologie conservée de nos jours au Centre des Études Micrasiatiques d'Athènes (CEMA) dans d'autres circonstances que celles supposées par Plemmenos 1999, p. 100. De même, Kantouniaris ne pouvait pas emmener à Iași en 1818 (Plemmenos 1999, p. 101, 105) le BAR, Ms. gr. 927 – dont il reprend certains chants dans le manuscrit de CEMA –, étant donné

- qu'il se trouvait à Iași dès 1813.
- 33 Gheorghiu 2010, p. 87. Voir aussi Plemmenos 1999, p. 100, n. 10.
- 34 Voir, par exemple, Stathis 1975, I, nr. 41 (Xéropotamou 299), p. 75, nr. 60 (Xéropotamou 318), p. 144.
- 35 Stathis 1975, nr. 41 (Xéropotamou 299), p. 75.
- 36 Stathis 1975, p. 99 ; Karanasios 2013, p. 180, 183.
- 37 Le nom du professeur Dimitrios Ithakisios (ὁ ἑλληγομῶτατος διδάσκαλος Δημήτριος Ἰθακῆσιος) figure dans la liste des pré-commanditaires (en roumain « sindromiți », du gr. συνδρομητής) de plusieurs éditions grecques du XIX^e siècle, tel Dionysios Photeinos serdar, *Ἱστορία τῆς Παλαιᾶς Δακίας, τὰ νῦν Τρανσυλβανίας, Βλαχίας, καὶ Μολδανίας*, Vienne, 1819 (liste à la fin du texte, où le professeur Ithakisios figure parmi les commanditaires de Galați) ; Dimitrios Stamatiadis, *Φιλοσοφία τῆς φυσικῆς ἱστορίας. Ἐρανισθεῖσα ἐκ τοῦ Ἀγγλικοῦ καὶ ἤδη τὸ πρῶτον τύποις ἐκδοθεῖσα*, Constantinople, 1846, p. 476, etc. En 1842, lorsqu'il se trouvait à Iași, Dimitrios Ithakisios fut impliqué dans la fondation d'un « Séminaire » auprès du monastère Mega-Spiléon de Péloponnèse avec le soutien de l'évêque Grégoire d'Eirinoupoleos, qui séjournait, lui aussi, à Iași en qualité d'administrateur des métèques du monastère de Vatopédi : Μοναστήρια 2003 (<http://www.ecclesia.gr/greek/monshrines/mega-spilaion5.html>, consulté le 16.02.2018).
- 38 Selon la chronologie reconstituée par Camariano-Cioran 1971, p. 68 sq.
- 39 Voir la discussion dans Gaïdagis 1976, p. 93-112.
- 40 Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XIV/2, nr. DCCCXLII, p. 864. Pour Athanasios, qui fut le premier professeur à l'Académie Princièră de Iași, voir Pippidi 1985, p. 170.
- 41 Karathanassis 1982, p. 124 et n. 6 ; Stathi 1999, p. 211. Après son départ de Moldavie, Chrysanthe a continué d'alimenter en livres la bibliothèque de l'Académie, ainsi qu'il le précise dans sa lettre adressée à Nicolae Mavrocordat le 11 avril 1715 : Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XIV/1, nr. DCXLVI, p. 676-678 (*Ἐὐχαριστοῦμεν καὶ διὰ τὰ πεμφθέντα βιβλία εἰς τὴν σχολήν, τὰ ὁποῖα ἐγράφησαν εἰς τὴν βιβλιοθήκην* / Remerciements pour les livres envoyés à l'école, qui ont été enregistrés à la bibliothèque). Le 20 novembre 1715, c'est Georgios Ramadani qui rassure le patriarche sur la bonne réception des livres : Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XIV/1, nr. CDLXII, p. 696. Gaïdagis 1974a, p. 219, 224, nr. 17 (photo p. 233) et p. 225, nr. 18, apporte la preuve de l'existence de la bibliothèque, qui s'était constituée autour de la donation de Chrysanthe dès avril 1714. Voir aussi Gaïdagis 1976, p. 104-106.
- 42 Camariano-Cioran 1971, p. 70-73 ; Stathi 1999, p. 210-213. Après 1766, lorsque l'Académie fut logée auprès de la Métropole de Iași, le prince du pays ordonna la constitution d'un dépôt légal destiné à approvisionner la bibliothèque en nouvelles parutions éditoriales. Les marchands qui commercialisaient des livres parus à l'étranger avaient l'obligation de donner un exemplaire à la bibliothèque : Codrescu 1892, p. 13-23 (p. 23, règlement concernant les livres) ; commentaire chez Xenopol, Erbiceanu 1885, p. 190-198 ; Camariano-Cioran 1971, p. 82.
- 43 Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XIV/2, nr. DCCCLXXXVII, p. 909-910 ; Gaïdagis 1976, p. 107-109.
- 44 Gaïdagis 1976, p. 98.
- 45 Institution d'enseignement supérieur fondée en 1835, avec l'enseignement en langue roumaine. Le Séminaire Théologique de Socola devint Faculté au sein de cette première Académie roumaine de Moldavie, alors que le directeur du Séminaire roumain devint le recteur. L'institution nouvellement fondée eut comme épitrope (gérant) le métropolitain Veniamin Costachi. Les bases de la bibliothèque de la nouvelle Académie furent constituées dès 1835 suite à la donation de 600 volumes faite par le prince Mihail Sturdza et suite à l'héritage de l'ancienne bibliothèque de l'Académie Princièră de Iași : Gaïdagis 1976, p. 95 sq. L'Académie *Mihăileană* ferme ses portes en 1847 : Enescu 1967, p. 36, 42-43 ; Bădărău 1987 ; Toderășcu 2012.
- 46 Voir Gaïdagis 1976, p. 98-99 ; Gaïdagis 1974a, 1975, 1978.
- 47 Pour les livres portant la signature autographe de Chrysanthe, voir la bibliographie indiquée par Gaïdagis 1974a, p. 218, n. 7.
- 48 Bodinger 1974, nr. 242, p. 131, nr. 279, p. 150-151 ; Bodinger 1975, nr. 34, p. 15, nr. 59, p. 26, nr. 69, p. 32-33, nr. 284, p. 128-129, nr. 325, p. 145, nr. 501, p. 225 ; Gaïdagis 1974a, p. 224, nr. 17, p. 225, nr. 18, 19, 20 ; Gaïdagis 1975, nr. 34, p. 28-31 ; Gaïdagis 1976, p. 105 ; Pippidi 1985, p. 171.
- 49 BRV, I, nr. 117, p. 378-389 ; Năsturel 1952, p. 519 ; Chițulescu 2009, p. 76. L'exemplaire conservé dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » a été connu de Iorga 1916, p. 801, qui affirme qu'initialement le volume était arrivé « dans la bibliothèque de Cetățuia, où se trouvait l'imprimerie grecque, car Chrysanthe en avait fait don à son école au 1714 » ; Erbiceanu 1885e, p. 402 ; Erbiceanu 1885f, nr. 52, p. 410. Pour ce livre et le contexte de son impression, voir Ică 2015, p. 116-125.
- 50 Pour l'exemplaire de la BCU, voir Gaïdagis 1974b, nr. 288, p. 221 sq. ; Pippidi 1985, p. 171.
- 51 Le volume a été exposé à Iași en 1885 à l'occasion de la célébration des 50 ans de l'Académie *Mihăileană* et de l'inauguration de l'enseignement supérieur en langue roumaine en Moldavie : Xenopol, Erbiceanu, 1885, p. 388 ; voir aussi Erbiceanu 1885e, nr. 12, p. 402. Pour l'Académie *Mihăileană*, voir *supra*, note 45.
- 52 Legrand 1918, nr. 37, p. 43 ; BRV, I, nr. 149, p. 463 sq. ; Năsturel 1952, p. 519 ; Poenaru 1973, nr. 149, p. 173 ; Chițulescu 2009, p. 77.
- 53 Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XIV/2, nr. DCCCXXXVII, p. 909.
- 54 Xenopol, Erbiceanu 1885, p. 387 ; Erbiceanu 1885e, nr. 4, p. 401.
- 55 *Brâncoveanu și epoca sa*, p. 22-23. Pour d'autres livres donnés par le métropolitain Iosif Naniescu à la BAR, voir Ciubotaru 2012.
- 56 Gaïdagis 1975, nr. 13, p. 11-12. Voir aussi Chițulescu 2009.
- 57 Bădăra 1998, p. 88-91.
- 58 Legrand 1894, p. 414-416, nr. 578 ; BRV, I, nr. 81, p. 273 sq. ; Erbiceanu 1902, nr. LXXVII, p. 788-792. Édition étudiée par Garnier 2016.
- 59 Garnier 2016, p. 220, 228 et *passim*.
- 60 BRV, I, nr. 174, p. 501 sq. ; Năsturel 1952, p. 518.
- 61 Gaïdagis 1976, p. 110-111.
- 62 En 1755, Thomas apposait sa signature sur un manuscrit grec en tant que *ἐν ἑλαχίστοις τῶν φοιτητῶν* / « le plus humble parmi les étudiants ». Le manuscrit se trouve actuellement à la BAR, Ms. gr. 1418.
- 63 Gaïdagis 1974b, nr. 65, p. 51-52 ; Gaïdagis 1976, p. 113-117, qui suppose que Thomas Dimitriou fut employé comme bibliothécaire auprès de l'Académie Princièră de Iași (p. 117) ; Algeria Simotas dans *Dicționarul literaturii române*, p. 280-281, *sub voce* ; Ursu 1999, p. 7-24.
- 64 Erbiceanu 1885c, nr. CXXVII, p. 229-230 ; Gaïdagis 1974b, nr. 26, p. 24-25, nr. 38, p. 32-33, nr. 39, p. 33-34, nr. 65, p. 51-52 (avec les notes autographes du logothète), nr. 126, p. 92, nr. 228, p. 168 ; Gaïdagis 1974a, p. 226-227, nr. 27 (édition Bâle 1550 des *Œuvres* d'Aristote) ; Gaïdagis 1975, nr. 39, p. 36, nr. 81, p. 62 ; Ursu 1999, p. 7-8.
- 65 Erbiceanu 1885a, nr. XXIII, p. 51, nr. XXXV, p. 68, nr. LIII, p. 81. Je n'ai pas retrouvé ces manuscrits dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae ».
- 66 BAR, Ms. gr. 1370 (acheté à l'antiquariat le 22 mars 1955), 1389, 1418.
- 67 Homme de lettres renommé du XVIII^e siècle : Mourouti-Genakou 1979 ; Patiniotis 2001.
- 68 Sur Thomas Mandakasis, voir Moennig 1996, p. 121-128 ; Karamperopoulos, Marketos 1999, p. 45 ; Togia 2010, p. 65-67.
- 69 BRV, II, p. 200. Il s'agit justement d'un livre que Thomas Dimitriou avait traduit en roumain, sur la commande du trésorier Jean Cantacuzène – la traduction fut imprimée à Iași,

en 1717. C'est encore Thomas Dimitriou qui avait composé les « vers politiques » (*stihurle politicești*) qui précèdent le texte : BRV, II, nr. 378, p. 197-200 ; Gaidagis 1976, p. 114 et n. 163. Un exemplaire se trouve actuellement à la BAR, I 194428. Le texte a été réédité à Buzău en 1836 : voir Brihuneț 2012, p. 161-162.

70 Voir Simotas dans *Dictionarul literaturii române*, p. 281 ; Ursu 1999, p. 8.

71 Lampros 1903, nr. 27, p. 33 ; Gaidagis 1976, p. 114 ; Ursu 1999, p. 9 sq.

72 Pour cette localité, fondée au xv^e siècle, dont les habitants étaient spécialisés dans l'extraction, le traitement et la commercialisation de l'argent des mines locales, voir Stoidis 2010.

73 Sevastos Kiminitis fut le premier recteur de l'Académie Princièră de Bucarest : Karanasios 2001. La pierre tombale du savant se trouve de nos jours au Musée National d'Art de Bucarest (voir photo *supra*). Son inscription grecque est publiée dans *Inscriptiile medievale*, nr. 660, p. 535-536.

74 Le monastère de Souméla reçut de nombreuses donations de la part des princes des Pays Roumains au xviii^e siècle : Amăriuței, Cotovanu, Olar 2017.

75 Pour toutes ces données biographiques, voir Kandilaptis 1966, p. 132-133 ; Kandilaptis 2000. L'on a pu supposer que Lazaros Kouzanos, lorsqu'il fut nommé professeur à l'École de Trébizonde en 1745, avait transféré la bibliothèque personnelle de Georgios Hypomenas depuis Bucarest vers l'École trébizontaine, où elle fut donnée la même année : Kyriakidis 2010.

76 Institut français d'études byzantines (IFEB), Ms. 3, f. 170v (*Διὰ χειρὸς δὲ τοῦ ἐλαχίστου ἐν ἱερεῦσι λαζάρου* / « De la main de l'humble parmi les prêtres Lazaros »). Pour la description du manuscrit, voir Binggeli, Cassin, Kontouma 2014, p. 23-25.

77 Kontouma 2013, p. 160.

78 Rhallis, Potlis 1859, p. γ', n. 3 ; Colias 1971, p. 96-97, d'après l'inventaire des manuscrits de l'École de Trébizonde conclu par Constant Minoidis Minas en 1844. La version vue par Minoidis Minas était marquée de la note suivante, que je cite d'après Colias, *op. cit.*, p. 96 : *ἐγγράφη τὸ παρὸν βιβλίον πόνω καὶ σπουδῇ τοῦ ἐν ἱερεῦσιν ἐλαχίστου Λαζάρου τοῦ ἐκ πόλης Ἰζήτης τῆς Χαλδίας παροικούντος μοι ἐν τῇ περιφημῶ καὶ θεοσώτῳ πόλει Τραπεζοῦντος ἀψιμζ' νοεμβρίου λ'* / « Le présent livre a été écrit avec l'effort et l'enseignement de l'humble parmi les prêtres Lazaros de la ville de Iziti de Chaldia, qui se trouve dans la fameuse et protégée par Dieu Trébizonde. 1757, novembre 30 ». Or, Minoidis Minas dut avoir mal lu le nom de la localité d'origine de Lazaros (Ἰζήτης au lieu de Τζίτης, qui devient « Tzinè » chez Kontouma 2013, p. 160) : voir la bibliographie citée *supra*, note 72.

79 Colias 1971, nr. 11, p. 206.

80 Camariano-Cioran 1971, p. 192. Selon Stoidis 2010, p. 29, Ananias Kouzanos aurait enseigné un certain temps aussi à l'École de sa petite patrie d'Argyroupolis (fondée en 1722/3), où il aurait fondé une bibliothèque, disparue dans un incendie en 1845 ; l'auteur n'indique pas la source de ces informations. Certes, une partie des livres a échappé à cet incendie : voir *infra*.

81 Il s'agit de *Υπόμνημα εἰς τὴν περὶ οὐρανοῦ πραγματείαν / Commentaire à l'ouvrage sur le ciel* de Théophile Corydalée. En 1902-1903, le manuscrit se trouvait encore dans la bibliothèque du monastère bénéficiaire. Il était marqué de plusieurs notes, de la main de Dionysios et de l'héritier Ananias : a) *Καὶ τότε Διονυσίου ἱερομονάχου Κουζάνου, τοῦ ἐκ Χαλδίας* / « Celui-ci appartient également à l'hiéromoine Kouzanos de Chaldia » ; b) *Ἀνανίας Ἀδαμίδης Κουζάνου, ἕγγονος Λαζάρου Κουζάνου, ἱερέως ἀταδέλφου τοῦ γραφέως τῆς παροῦσης βίβλου, μητροπολίτου ἔπειτα ἐπὶ καὶ εἴκοσιν ἔτη χρηματίσαντος Χαλδίας καὶ Χερροϊάνων καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἀφγ [1783] ἐν μακαρίᾳ τῇ λήξει γενομένου Ἰουλίου ιζ' [18]. ἀφιερῶ ταύτην τῇ ἱερᾷ μονῇ τῆς Παναγίας Γουμερᾶς πέμψας ἐκ Μολδαβίας αἰοι [1815], Ὀκτωβρίου ις' [16]* / « Ananias Adamidis Kouzanos, le petit-fils

de Lazaros Kouzanos, c'est-à-dire du prêtre qui est le frère de l'auteur du présent livre, de celui qui a servi pendant 27 ans comme métropolitain de Chaldia et Cherianon et est décédé en 1783, juillet 18 ; je dédie [ce livre] au saint monastère de Gouméra, en l'expédiant depuis la Moldavie en 1815, octobre 16 » ; c) *ὁ γράψας παρεδόθη παρὰ τοῦ σοφωτάτου Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ ἐκ Τυρνάβου. Ἐν Βουκουρεστίῳ κατὰ τὸ ἀψνβ [1752]* / « l'écrit a été donné au très sage Alexandre de Târnovo, à Bucarest, en 1752 » (Kandilaptis 1966, nr. 7, p. 132-133 ; Colias 1971, nr. 7, p. 181). Dionysios avait confié à Alexandre de Târnovo, professeur à l'Académie de Bucarest, un autre manuscrit (*γέγραπται μοι Διονυσίου ἱερομονάχου Κουζάνου Χαλδαίῳ ἀπὸ θεογονίας 1775, παραδοθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ σοφολογιωτάτου διδασκάλου κυροῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ ἐκ Τυρνάβου ἐν τῇ αὐθενταίᾳ σχολῇ τοῦ ἁγίου Σάββα* / « écrit par moi-même, le hiéromoine Dionysios Kouzanos de Chaldia, l'an depuis Christ 1775, confié au très sage professeur, seigneur Alexandre de Târnovo, à l'École Princièră de St-Sabbas ») : Colias 1971, nr. 23, p. 119. La date mentionnée semble erronée, vu qu'en 1775 Dionysios Kouzanos était déjà métropolitain de Chaldia. Il doit s'agir plutôt de 1755, année durant laquelle Dionysios était encore hiéromoine et se trouvait à Bucarest. Nous lui connaissons encore toute une série de manuscrits lui ayant appartenu ou qu'il avait copiés lui-même du temps où il se trouvait à Bucarest, entre 1749-1755 – « Denis moine de Chaldia » (8 août 1751), « Denis moine de Gouméra et Chaldia Kouzanos » (7 août 1749, Bucarest), « Denis de Chaldia Tsitenos », « Denis moine de Chaldia Tsitenos » (1750), « Denis moine Kouzanos de Chaldia » (30 décembre 1755) : Colias 1971, nr. 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, p. 132-133, 145.

82 Kandilaptis 1966, nr. 10, p. 134 ; Colias 1971, nr. 10, p. 182.

83 Gaidagis 1974a, nr. 4, p. 222-223.

84 *Ἀδάμ Ζοιρνικαβίου Αἰ λουπαὶ δώδεκα τῶν Ἰθ' πραγματειῶν τῶν περὶ τῆς ἐκπαρέσεως τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἐκ μόνον τοῦ Πατρὸς. Καὶ Μάρκου Ἐφέσου τοῦ Εὐγενικοῦ Κεφάλαια Συλλογιστικὰ Πεντήκοντα καὶ ἐπτὰ πρὸς Λατίνους. Καὶ Θεοφίλου τοῦ Κορυνθαλέως Πρὸς Σωφρόνιον Ποκζάσκι Ρέκτορα τῆς ἐν Κιαβίῳ Σχολῆς, καὶ ἐν Γιασίῳ τῆς Μολδαβίας Ἠγουμενεύσαντα, Ἀπάντησις*, vol. I, Petroupoli, 1797 : <http://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/127412/?ln=fr> ; vol. II pe <http://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/127414/?ln=fr> (consulté le 21.02.2018). Édition importante que Constantin Erbiceanu a connue d'après une copie manuscrite du xviii^e siècle, de laquelle il a extrait et publié, en traduction roumaine, la lettre adressée par Théophile Corydalée à l'archimandrite Sophrone Potchjaski, le recteur du Collège fondé par le prince Vasile Lupu à Iași : Erbiceanu 2009. Pour le Collège de Vasile Lupu, voir Zahariou 2009.

85 *Ἀδάμ Ζοιρνικαβίου*, vol. II, p. 3 : <http://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/127414/?ln=fr> (consulté le 21.02.2018).

86 Stoidis 2010, p. 29-32.

87 Carlo du Fresne, domino Du Cange, *Glossarium ac Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Graecitatis in quo Graeca Vocabula Novatae Significationis, aut usus rarioris, barbarae, exticae, ecclesiasticae, liturgicae, tacticae, nomicae, iatrica, botanica, chymica explicantur, eorum notiones et originationes reteguntur...*, vol. I-II, Lyon, 1688 : Lyon, Apud Anissonios, 1688 ; J. Posuel & C. Rigaud : <http://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/126590/?ln=fr> (consulté le 21.02.2018) ; Stoidis 2010, p. 32.

88 Du Cange, *Glossarium*, p. XIX.

89 *Τρόπαιον τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Πίστεως. Πόνημα τοῦ Ἄντωνίου Μανουὴλ τοῦ ἐν Μολδοβλαχίᾳ, μεγάλου Σερδάρη Χρηματίσαντος, τὰ μὴν ἐν τῷ κειμένῳ μεταφρασθέντα ἐξ ἰταλικοῦ, τὰ δὲ ἐν τοῖς σημειώμασι συλλεχθέντα ἐκ διαφόρων Ἑλλησιαστικῶν καὶ ἔξωτερικῶν Συγγραφέων, καὶ προσφυῶς συλλεχθέντα πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν τῆς εὐσέβειας, καὶ ἀναίρεσιν τῶν φληνῶν δυσσεβῶν, νῦν πρῶτον τύποις ἐκδοθὲν, δαπάνη τοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀφηρωθὲν τῷ Πανευγενεστάτῳ ἀρχόντῳ μεγάλῳ Σπαθάρῃ κυρίῳ κυρίῳ Ἰωάννῃ Βακαρέσκουλω, συνδρομῇ δὲ καὶ φιλοπόνῳ σπουδῇ, τοῦ τιμωτάτου ἐν Πραγματευσταῖς κυρίου Δημητρίου Παύλου, Εὐπατρίδου, τῆς ἐν Ἠλείῳ πρωτεύουσας πόλεως Ἰωαννίνων, Vienne,*

- 1791 : <http://digital.lib.auth.gr/record/126150/?ln=el> (consulté le 21.02.2018).
- 90 Description faite d'après l'exemplaire conservé à la BAR : voir BRV, III, nr. 927, p. 164 sq. ; BRV, IV, nr. 927, p. 302. Pour l'édition critique, voir *Codul Callimachi*, Académie Roumaine, Bucarest, 1958.
- 91 Selon les sceaux, le volume a appartenu au Séminaire de Socola ; vu par Erbiceanu 1903, nr. cxxviii, p. 1357.
- 92 *Legiuirea Caragea*, éd. A. Rădulescu et al., Bucarest, 1955. Pour Athanasios Christopoulos et la place qu'il occupe dans l'histoire de la littérature néo-hellénique, voir Pechlivanos 1998 ; *Αθανάσιος Χριστόπουλος* 2001 ; Athini 2013, p. 325-356 ; Mitsou 2013, p. 357-372 ; Camariano 2014.
- 93 ММВ, î.p.s. Teoctist, Ms. 129, p. 16, 14 ; *supra*.
- 94 Adamescu 1904, Annexe 3, p. 7. Le qualificatif de « langue moldave » se réfère, bien sûr, au vernaculaire moldave de la langue roumaine.
- 95 Comme il a été dit plus haut, les manuscrits consultés par C. Erbiceanu en 1885 à la bibliothèque du Séminaire, qui avaient appartenu à l'Académie Princière, ne se trouvent plus aujourd'hui dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » : C. Erbiceanu 1885b, p. 169 sq. Voir aussi, Gaïdagis 1974b, 1975, 1978, *passim* ; Bodinger 1974, 1975, *passim*.
- 96 Pour l'histoire du Séminaire « Veniamin Costachi » de Socola, voir Erbiceanu 1885h ; Adamescu 1904 ; Enescu 1967 ; Ursu 1993 ; Bahrim, Timofti 2003.
- 97 Pour la bibliothèque du Séminaire de Socola, voir Erbiceanu 1885e.
- 98 Veniamin Costachi a donné une partie de sa bibliothèque personnelle à la Métropole, ainsi qu'en atteste son testament, rédigé le 8 janvier 1844 : Gheorghită 1946, p. 95 ; Popa 2005, p. 208. Le premier catalogue connu des livres se trouvant dans la bibliothèque de la Métropole, aujourd'hui perdu, datait du temps de son pontificat : Popa, *loc. cit.*
- 99 Pour cette période de la vie de Veniamin Costachi, voir Vlad 1967, p. 18-23.
- 100 Legrand 1928, nr. 966, p. 310.
- 101 Legrand 1928, nr. 1015, p. 338.
- 102 Legrand 1928, nr. 1109, p. 409.
- 103 Legrand 1928, nr. 1050, p. 366.
- 104 Legrand 1928, nr. 1051, p. 366.
- 105 Legrand 1928, nr. 1224, p. 492 ; Musée National Cotroceni, 6696/34 cvb.
- 106 Legrand 1928, nr. 1053, p. 367.
- 107 Gaïdagis 1974a, p. 223, nr. 5 ; Gaïdagis 1975, nr. 564, p. 261-262. Il s'agit probablement de Legrand 1928, nr. 931, p. 286.
- 108 Legrand 1928, nr. 683, p. 80-83.
- 109 Il signe de la même manière sur le *Dictionnaire* de Varinus, Venise, 1779, conservé à la BCU : Gaïdagis 1974a, p. 223, nr. 7. Un exemplaire de cette édition, qui a appartenu au Séminaire de Socola, se trouve actuellement dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » : vc, nr. 02487. On ignore lequel des deux exemplaires figure sur la liste des livres de l'Académie Princière de Iași transférés au monastère Barnovschi (*post* 1723) : Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, xiv/2, nr. DCCCLXXXVII, p. 909-910. Pour l'autre livre, qui a circulé aussi en Valachie, voir Legrand 1928, nr. 963, p. 307-308 ; Chițulescu 2016a, p. 313, 330.
- 110 Pour les boyards moldaves Costachi et leur descendant Veniamin Costachi, voir surtout le numéro spécial de la revue *Mitropolia Moldovei și Sucevei*, XLIII/1-2, 1967, p. 7-174 ; Stoicescu 1971, p. 380-385 ; Monu 2011 ; Iacob 2015.
- 111 Erbiceanu 1885e, nr. 6, p. 402.
- 112 Signalé par Gaïdagis 1974a, nr. 6, p. 226.
- 113 Legrand 1928, nr. 1086, p. 391-394. La bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » conserve un exemplaire de plus du vol. I de la même *editio princeps*, exemplaire qui avait appartenu au Séminaire de Socola : ММВ, vc, nr. 02457.
- 114 Par exemple, on ne retrouve pas dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » : Zigadenos, *Panoplie dogmatique*, Târgoviște, 1710, livre qui était marqué de l'*ex libris* grec de Veniamin Costachi. Le volume a été vu dans la bibliothèque de la Métropole de Moldavie, en 1885, par Erbiceanu 1885i, nr. 38, p. 92. L'exemplaire conservé de nos jours à la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae » (vc, nr. 02475) ne contient aucune note autographe : *infra*. Il est vrai que la Métropole a eu dans sa bibliothèque plusieurs exemplaires de ce livre imprimé, vus en 1885 par Erbiceanu 1885i, nr. 42, p. 100.
- 115 Erbiceanu 1885i, nr. 50, p. 101, nr. 53, p. 102 ; Erbiceanu 1885b, nr. LXVII, p. 170, nr. LXXX, p. 187 ; Gaïdagis 1974a, p. 226, nr. 26 ; Gaïdagis 1975, *passim*.
- 116 Legrand 1918, nr. 210, p. 238.
- 117 Legrand 1918, nr. 211, p. 238.
- 118 Legrand 1918, nr. 212, p. 239.
- 119 Legrand 1918, nr. 213, p. 239.
- 120 Legrand 1918, nr. 398, p. 399.
- 121 Legrand 1918, nr. 372, p. 364.
- 122 Legrand 1918, nr. 214, p. 239-240.
- 123 Legrand 1918, nr. 215, p. 240.
- 124 Legrand 1918, nr. 216, p. 240.
- 125 Diaconu 2018.
- 126 Notice (avec photos) publiée par Diaconu 2018, II, p. 43 et fig. 8, p. 45, qui tient la référence de nous-même.
- 127 « Voïévode, par la grâce de Dieu prince du Pays de Moldavie ».
- 128 Βιβλίον καλούμενον Ἐλεγχος κατὰ ἀθέων καὶ δυσσεβῶν [...] φιλοπονηθὲν παρὰ Προκοπίου Πελοποννησίου τοῦ Ἱεροδιδασκάλου, καὶ ἀφιερωθὲν τῷ Μακαριωτάτῳ καὶ Σοφωτάτῳ Πατριάρχῃ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων, Κυρίῳ Ἀνθίμῳ, I, Venise, 1792, dans l'Imprimerie de Dimitrios Theodosios de Ioannina : voir <http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr> (exemplaire digitalisé de l'Université de Crète ; consulté le 02.07.2018).
- 129 Stefan Pisarev est connu aussi pour son activité de traducteur : Coquart 1946, p. 129.
- 130 Constantin Langa a été le primaire de Iași († 1914). Cette information nous a été fournie par le Prof. Petronel Zahariuc, que nous remercions, ici, une fois de plus.
- 131 Legrand 1894, nr. 365, p. 1.
- 132 Il a été également le possesseur d'un manuscrit qui se trouvait en 1885 dans la bibliothèque de la Métropole de Moldavie : Erbiceanu 1885a, nr. LXI, p. 85. Plusieurs autres livres imprimés vus par Erbiceanu dans la bibliothèque de la Métropole lui avaient appartenu : Erbiceanu 1885a, nr. 11, p. 90, nr. 25, p. 91. À l'heure actuelle, je n'ai pu identifier que ces quelques volumes dans la bibliothèque « D. Stăniloae ». Konstantinos Christodoulou est probablement le même que Konstantinos Christodoulou dit « Bartzoka », qui semble être le fils de Christodoulos Ioannis Bazoukas, celui qui eut en sa possession les *Œuvres* de Syméon de Thessalonique (Cetățuia, 1683), édition actuellement conservée dans la bibliothèque de la ММВ (vc, nr. 02478) : voir *supra*.
- 133 Legrand 1918, nr. 65, p. 88-89.
- 134 On retrouve les deux volumes (le premier contenant le portrait du prince Grigore Ghica) à la Bibliothèque Publique Centrale de Verrhoia : <http://medusa.libver.gr/jspui/handle/123456789/2506> (consulté le 03.07.2018).
- 135 D'autres exemplaires se trouvent à l'Université de Crète : <http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr/metadata/f/a/4/metadata-39-0000474.tkl> et à Athènes (<https://pergamos.lib.uoa.gr/uoa/dl/frontend/browse/168050>) (consulté le 03.07.2018).
- 136 Sur Petros Lampadarios, voir Plemmenos 2006. Voir aussi la

bibliographie citée *supra*, note 18.

137 Voir Codrescu 1892, p. 22-23.

138 Dragomir, Dragomir 1978, p. 113, qui citent *Dosarul Episcopiei de Roman*, nr. 304/1858, p. 117 (doc. 1858, septembre 25) ; la citation étant incomplète, je n'ai pas pu identifier la source citée. Le Séminaire de Roman a été fondé en septembre 1858 avec le soutien du Ministre des Cultes et de l'Instruction Publique Dimitrie A. Cantacuzino et du métropolitite de Moldavie Sofronie Miclescu (1851-1561). Pour l'histoire de l'institution, voir aussi Leonte 2003.

139 Dragomir, Dragomir 1978, p. 115.

140 Dragomir, Dragomir 1978. Le Séminaire a rouvert ses portes en 1919.

141 Legrand 1918, nr. 57, p. 74-77.

142 BRV, I, nr. 160, p. 482 sq. ; BRV, IV, nr. 160, p. 223 ; Năsturel 1952, p. 520 ; Chițulescu 2009, p. 76. Édition étudiée par Miladinova 2014.

143 Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, XIV/2, nr. DCCCXXXVII, p. 909 ; *supra*, note 114.

144 Legrand 1918, nr. 226, p. 247. Pour la *Grammaire* de Katiforos et celui qui en subventionna l'édition, Nikolaos Karagiannis, voir Camariano-Cioran 1971, p. 118 ; Zampakolas 2015, p. 114-115.

145 Pour ce manuel, voir Legrand 1918, nr. 179, p. 211-217 ; Camariano-Cioran 1971, p. 184 ; Gaïdagis 1975, nr. 64, p. 53.

146 Legrand 1928, nr. 1032, p. 355. Un exemplaire de cette édition se trouve à la Bibliothèque Publique Centrale de Verrhoia : <http://medusa.libver.gr/jspui/handle/123456789/4795> (consulté le 03.07.2018).

147 Un exemplaire de l'édition de 1743 et un de celle de 1752 se trouvent à la BCU : Gaïdagis 1974a, nr. 25, p. 226 ; Gaïdagis 1975, nr. 146, p. 99-100, nr. 182, p. 134. Pour la bibliographie concernant cette importante source narrative et les figures dont il y est question, voir Falangas 2009, p. 57-58, 189-209 ; Păun 2017, p. 174-184 ; Păun 2018.

148 Pour les deux métropolitites, voir Păcurariu 1961, Index, *sub voce*.

149 Legrand 1894, nr. 566, p. 400.

150 Legrand 1894, nr. 988, p. 321, nr. 989, p. 322 ; Gaïdagis 1975, nr. 390, p. 275-276, nr. 391, p. 277-278.

151 Legrand 1894, nr. 1182, p. 463-464.

152 Patousas, *Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια Φιλολογική*, II, Venise, 1810 (nr. 00026) ; Stephanos Komitas, *Παιδαγωγικά μαθήματα*, Peste, 1828 (nr. 00324) ; Polyzois Kontos, *Ποικίλη Διδασκαλία*, Vienne, 1818 (nr. 00044) ; Nikolaos Darvaris, *Ἐγχειρίδιον χριστιανικόν*, Athènes, 1837 (nr. 00046) ; *Στοιχεῖα τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσης*, Vienne, 1815 (nr. 00056) ; *Βιβλίον Ὀνομαζομένον Ἱερὸν Ἐγκόλλιον*, Iași, 1843 (nr. 00058) ; Misail Apostolidis, *Σύνοψις κατηχητικῆς...*, Athènes, 1837 (nr. 00061) ; *Παγκόσμιος ἐξουσία τῆς νέας Σιών*, sans couvertures (nr. 00062) ; *Στοιχεῖα τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσης*, Vienne, 1812 (nr. 00073) ; *Προσευχητάριον εἰς χρῆσιν τῶν ὀρθοδόξων Χριστιανῶν*, Iași, 1844 (nr. 00098) ; *Ψαλτήριον τοῦ Δαβὶδ*, Venise, 1811 (nr. 00119) ; *Ἀκολουθία τῆς Ἁγίας... Εὐφημίας*, Constantinople, 1837 (nr. 00298), Misail Apostolidis, *Τῆς κατὰ Χριστὸν ἠθικῆς πραγματείας*, Athènes, 1847 (nr. 00308) ; Mavlis, *Διάλογοι Φωκίωτος*, Iași, 1819 (nr. 00317).

153 Chițulescu 2016b, p. 72.

154 Signalons tout de même que la plupart des livres acquis par les monastères ont été déposés, après la Sécularisation, à la BCU : cf. Catanescu 1868. Pour les anciennes bibliothèques des monastères, voir Chițulescu 2016a, p. 246-291.

155 ММВ, *Inventar – Bibliotecă*, vol. II, p. 264 sq. (pagination manuelle).

156 Legrand 1918, nr. 465, p. 446-447. Un exemplaire du *Menée* pour le mois de mai (Venise, 1755) se trouve dans la Bibliothèque du Saint Synode de Bucarest : Chițulescu 2016b, p. 66.

157 Legrand 1928, nr. 1016, p. 338.

158 Pour Dimitrios Govdelas (1780-1831), originaire de Thessalie, dernier recteur de l'Académie Princière de Iași, retiré à Chișinău entre 1822-1825 avec son entière bibliothèque personnelle (2723 volumes), voir Camariano-Cioran 1971, Index, *sub voce* ; Valais 1994 ; Danilov 2011, p. 25-31 ; Danilov 2016, p. 79-141.

159 Livre traduit en grec démotique par Ioannis Komninos (professeur à l'Académie Princière de Bucarest) et dédié au prince Constantin Brâncoveanu, en 1702. Un exemplaire de la traduction manuscrite originale est conservé, de nos jours, à Vienne : Căndea 2010, nr. 410, p. 85 ; Pantos 2014, p. 248-253. Un exemplaire de l'édition de Rome 1542 se trouve à la bibliothèque du Patriarcat d'Alexandrie : Karas 1987, nr. 245, p. 81.

160 Illisible.

161 Ionașcu 1935, p. 49, 52 et Annexe 5, p. 75 et note 38 ; Dima-Drăgan 1967, p. 117 ; Dima-Drăgan, Caratașu 1967, p. 439, 443.

162 Legrand 1918, nr. 189, p. 224-225.

163 Legrand 1928, nr. 718, p. 113-114. On connaît d'autres exemplaires de ce livre : http://onassislbrary.gr/el/syllogi/antikei/mena/35201_el/ (Bibliothèque de la Fondation « Al. Onassis » d'Athènes) ; <http://drama.locloudhosting.net/items/show/204> (Bibliothèque Publique Centale de Drama).

164 Legrand 1918, nr. 505 p. 474.

165 Pour l'histoire de la bibliothèque de la Métropole d'avant 1714, voir Popa 2021.

166 Păun 2003 ; Falangas 2009 ; Cotovanu 2022.

167 Cotovanu 2014a. Voir aussi les observations d'Olar 2020.

168 Pour le lien entre l'émigration « grecque » et la pratique de la dédicace, voir Cotovanu 2012, 2014b, 2015 et 2016.

169 Stoicescu 1974, p. 113-114 ; Diaconu 2018.

170 Pour les monastères Frumoasa et Sainte-Parascève de Iași, voir Stoicescu 1974, p. 446-447, 477 ; Székely 2001, p. 31-38 ; Marinescu 2009, p. 328.

171 Stoicescu 1974, p. 465.

172 Pour cet aspect de la politique déployée par le haut clergé gréco-orthodoxe tout au long du XVII^e siècle, voir Olar 2011, 2012 et 2014 ; Biliarsky, Păun 2017 ; Păun, Biliarsky 2022.

173 Ailleurs, j'ai déjà attiré l'attention sur la dimension communautaire grecque des discours pour la défense de l'Orthodoxie, véhiculés par des hauts prélats comme Matthieu de Myres (†1624), mais aussi sur la pratique de la dédicace de métoques « roumains » aux Patriarcats grecs, censée les soutenir matériellement : Cotovanu 2018 et 2023. Dans cette même ligne interprétative s'inscrivent les négociations gréco-roumano-russes du XVII^e siècle pour l'alignement des rituels et des pratiques religieuses à la « bonne tradition », entretenue depuis des siècles par l'Église « grecque » : voir Olar 2007-2008, avec la bibliographie plus ancienne ; Olar 2020.

174 Les programmes analytiques et les manuels utilisés par les Académies de Bucarest et de Iași ont été étudiés par Cronț 1966 ; Camariano-Cioran 1971, p. 110-193. Pour la comparaison, voir Skarveli-Nikolopoulou 1993.

175 Pour les matières enseignées au Séminaire « Veniamin Costachi », voir Păcurariu 2003, p. 91.

176 Kontosopoulos 1954 ; Ploumidis 1969 ; Vranoussis 1977 ; Veloudis 1987.

177 Laios 1961 ; Epenekidis 1965 ; Vranoussis 1983 ; Staïkos 1996.

178 Pour les imprimeries roumaines, voir Bădără 1998, avec bibliographie.

179 Aspects traités amplement dans Cotovanu 2022.

180 Cotovanu 2014a, II^e partie.

181 Sur la musique orthodoxe grecque comme marqueur identitaire collectif pour les Grecs de l'Empire ottoman, voir Erol 2015.

182 Sur la commercialisation du livre grec au XVIII^e siècle, voir Asdrachas 1971 ; Stoide 2005.

183 Pour ces deux agents financiers des princes roumains, voir Cotovanu 2012 ; Cotovanu, Lazăr 2014 ; Zampakolas 2015, p. 110 sq.

184 Siokis 2009, p. 160-200 ; Seirinidou 2013. Les marchands Darvaris ont fondé la belle skitè Saints-Archanges de Bucarest, connue aussi sous le nom de *Darvari* ou *Dârvari* : Bulgaru 2015.

185 La pratique de l'inscription préalable des consommateurs de livres grecs sur des listes de pré-commanditaires a été étudiée par Stoyanov 1966 ; Iliou 1969, qui constate que seulement 7 % des pré-commanditaires d'avant 1821 habitaient dans des régions qui allaient être intégrées dans le jeune État grec ; Kapralova 2021. Pour les pré-commanditaires de l'espace roumain, voir Papacostea-Danielopoulou 1970 ; Velculescu, Velculescu 1974, 1975 ; Păun 2012, p. 150 ; Stoide 2005, p. 197-402.

186 Sur l'administration russe et la première « modernisation » des Pays Roumains, voir, entre autres, Filitti 1934 ; Vintilă-Ghițulescu 2015.

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Royal Doors of Maramureș beyond their appearances

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RÉSUMÉ : Dans les églises de rite byzantin, les ‘portes royales’ de l’iconostase se distinguent par leur richesse, leur étrangeté et leurs mystérieux ornements. Malgré le rôle décoratif essentiel qu’ils jouent, la finalité de ces traits caractéristiques demeure souvent obscure. Le manque d’explication cohérente devient ainsi l’un des défis scientifiques les plus stimulants à relever, afin d’en clarifier la signification. Étant donné que les recherches en ce sens sont encore absentes du panorama critique de l’histoire de l’art post-byzantin, mettre l’accent, dans une analyse du symbolisme des ‘portes royales’, sur une province lointaine telle que le Maramureș pourrait surprendre. La présente étude se propose toutefois d’interpréter la décoration des ‘portes royales’ au sein du cadre strict de l’espace rituel et culturel byzantin dans le territoire des Carpates du Nord à l’époque prémoderne, en s’appuyant, pour ce faire, sur des écrits religieux contemporains des objets étudiés. Puisque ces écrits, à travers les traductions en langue vernaculaire, ont influencé la culture populaire de la région, la décoration des ‘portes royales’ doit être interprétée en clé mariale. Aussi, tous les traits caractéristiques, les détails et les significations de ces portes illustrent la porte du ciel, attribut caractéristique de la Mère de Dieu dès l’incarnation du Christ. Il semblerait donc que le thème central en soit l’Annonciation. Ainsi, l’étude se propose de montrer la manière dont ce thème a été amplifié et diversifié sous forme de cycle iconographique composé de quatre parties, que l’on peut observer à la fois en peinture et en sculpture. Les sculptures témoignent d’un emploi particulier du langage métaphorique, exprimé d’une manière allégorique et emblématique, à travers laquelle les ‘portes royales’ sont transformées en pièces centrales et complexes de l’iconostase. Plusieurs prophéties concernant la Venue du Sauveur grâce à une vierge ont été choisies et représentées dans la sculpture des ‘portes royales’ de la région des Carpates du Nord, qui devient le centre d’un développement iconographique particulier. Sans doute, les disputes religieuses ont-elles façonné la culture spirituelle des croyants orthodoxes des Carpates, à l’époque turbulente de la pré-modernité. À cet égard, la rhétorique du langage artistique visuel se pose en miroir des témoignages apportés par les documents, les inscriptions et les collections folkloriques des communautés de rite byzantin. Situé à un carrefour de civilisations, l’art sacré de Maramureș contribue à une meilleure compréhension de la signification et de l’évolution de ces ‘portes royales’ à l’époque post-byzantine ; mais il nourrit également l’étude de l’histoire de l’art européen dans son ensemble.

MOTS-CLÉS : Mère de Dieu ; art post-byzantin ; iconostase ; sculpture ; Carpates du Nord.

REZUMAT: În bisericile de rit bizantin, ușile împărătești se disting prin bogăția, ciudățenia și misterul ornamentelor, pentru care, cu toată importanța acordată, nu avem o explicație coerentă a rostului lor. Din acest motiv, una dintre cele mai mari provocări științifice este de a le lămuri semnificația. Deoarece unui astfel de scop istoricii artei bizantine nu i-au dedicat încă cercetări aplicate, concentrarea atenției asupra Maramureșului poate intrigă. Se mai păstrează aici o cheie de descifrare a acestor simboluri? Acest studiu operează în cadrul strict al ritului și spațiului de cult bizantin, în teritoriul nord-carpatic, în epoca premodernă, făcând apel la vechile scrieri religioase. Aceste scrieri au influențat cultura populară din zonă, datorită traducerilor în limbile vernaculare. Pentru a descifra iconografia ușilor împărătești este propusă o cheie de interpretare mariană. În toate trăsăturile, detaliile și semnificațiile lor, ușile împărătești ilustrează poarta raiului, care este un atribut definitoriu al Maicii Domnului din momentul întrupării lui Hristos. Tema centrală a ușilor împărătești este Buna Vestire. Studiul arată pentru prima dată că ea a fost amplificată și diversificată la dimensiunea unui ciclu iconografic, compus din patru părți, redate atât în pictură, cât și în sculptură. În sculptură, studiul demonstrează folosirea unui limbaj metaforic, exprimat alegoric și emblematic, prin care ușile împărătești au fost transformate în cele mai complexe și mai semnificative piese ale iconostasului. Un alt rezultat semnificativ îndreaptă atenția către câteva profeții despre venirea Mântuitorului prin o fecioară. Aceste profeții au fost alese, lărgite și subliniate în sculptura ușilor împărătești, ducând la dezvoltarea unor trăsături distinctive în arealul Carpaților de Nord. Disputele religioase sunt cauza și mijlocul prin care a fost modelată cultura spirituală a credincioșilor de rit bizantin din Carpați în agitata epocă premodernă. În acest sens s-a apelat la o retorică a limbajului artistic vizual, ale cărei reverberații în comunitățile de rit bizantin poate fi recunoscută în documente, inscripții și culegeri de folclor. Aflată la o răscruce a civilizațiilor, arta sacră din Maramureș contribuie la o mai bună înțelegere a semnificației și evoluției ușilor împărătești în epoca postbizantină, cu relevanță pentru întreaga artă europeană.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: Maica Domnului; artă post-bizantină; iconostas; sculptură; Carpații nordici.

INTRODUCTION

From the wooden churches of Maramureș, a significant number of royal doors have been preserved, which can be dated to the 17th, 18th, and the first half of the 19th centuries. Together, they form a unique, valuable, homogeneously thematic, and stylistically varied mobile heritage. At first glance, the royal doors are distinguished by the interweaving of two distinct means of artistic expression: painting and sculpture. Following the relationship between the two in the aspect of the royal doors, one can observe a development over time that cannot be explained in purely aesthetic, stylistic, and thematic terms. Beyond the visual property of painting and the tactile dimension of sculpture, there are ideas and messages about their purpose in the space of worship, which surface and give voice and life to the royal doors. What do they communicate? How can their significance be recovered? How does their symbolic language contribute to the understanding of these objects of worship? What do they say about the world in which they were created and the past generations of believers who venerated them? The purpose of this research is to highlight the royal doors of Maramureș through what transpires beyond their appearance. In this regard, I will focus on the symbolic language invested in them, which can open a new perspective of understanding their purpose in the space of worship.

To penetrate the symbolism of the royal doors, the present study confronts the original material documented in the field with the liturgical books of the Byzantine Church and theological writings, which circulated in pre-modern era. They provide a necessary platform of analysis and an interpretive guide, which are essential for understanding the royal doors.¹ Throughout the centuries, the liturgical texts were sung, recited, and listened in local churches, as well as in the whole Eastern Christian Church, cyclical and uninterrupted. Moreover, with their translation for everyone to understand, which took place between the 16th and 18th centuries, they shaped, settled, and consolidated the faith of the communities through

common religious ideas and images. Naturally, for theologians and artists Scripture, liturgical books, and theological writings were essential sources of inspiration, which gave unity to the Orthodox Church after the fall of the Byzantine Empire. Although the royal doors were during the same time formally influenced by artistic currents from the West, especially from the Latin Church, their message did not go much beyond the hermetic framework of the theology of the Eastern Church, codified in liturgical texts. Finally, I appeal to available specialized literature, dedicated to the history of Byzantine art. The literature dedicated to iconography and artistic evolution in the area has increased significantly since the fall of communist regimes and the growing cross border collaboration. Scientific research has long established the major influence that liturgical texts have had on iconography. On the other hand, very little has been written about the significance and complex appearance of royal doors. Knowledge of their sculpture is still quite limited.²

In this study, discussions about the royal doors oscillate between two interconnected spatial planes. In the background is the reference space of the Northern Carpathians, especially the Ruthenian environment, where major cultural interferences generated innovations in post-Byzantine art. In the foreground is Maramureș, also located in the Northern Carpathians, but in an area of cultural diffusion. Here, attention is directed to the communities of Romanian nobles, open and receptive to cultural impulses coming from the north of the Carpathians.

Researching the symbols contained in the royal doors requires a gradual approach, starting from the overall picture to the detail. At an overall level, one must identify an entrance key to the subtle dimension of the royal doors. Three introductory aspects serve this purpose: the historical, architectural, and especially ritual context of the 17th-19th centuries. With the help of that key and the liturgical texts, we can delve into several layers of meanings gathered from the iconography of the royal doors, to offer orientation to the numerous details that compose their whole. Finally, the meanings of the symbols

▼ Fig 1. Mănăstirea Giulești. Archangel Gabriel in the scene of Annunciation on royal doors, painted within a medallion carved with surrounding red petals. Photo 1995.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



▼ Fig 2. Mănăstirea Giulești. Virgin Mary in the scene of Annunciation on the right wing of the royal doors, painted around 1692. Photo 1995.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



inscribed in the royal doors will be formulated, necessary conclusions will be drawn, and some consequences will be discussed. Due to the complex nature of this subject and to the inherent limitations, the approach is neither perfect nor exhaustive. For this reason, the study is left open for future multidisciplinary efforts guided by intercultural dialogue.

The Historical Context.

In Central Europe after the Protestant Reformation, the relationship of relative tolerance between the two great Christian traditions, Latin and Byzantine, significantly changed and fluctuated. The competition, as well as the religious, political, economic, and social disputes between Catholics and Protestants also extended to the Orthodox communities located in the areas of coexistence. In places where they were politically dominant, both Latin confessions endeavoured to attract the Orthodox faithful. The disputes led to the division of the Orthodox into two communities: those united with Rome, Greek-Catholics,³ and, with some Protestant support, those who remained in their old course, Greek-Orthodox.⁴

North of the Carpathians, in the Polish-Lithuanian territory, the Ruthenian communities of Byzantine rite took the first steps of joining the union with Rome toward the end of the 16th century. In the following two centuries, dialogues, and polemical exchanges between non-uniates, uniates, and Latins focused on the process of union and its effects on the Byzantine theological foundations, creed, rite, and tradition.⁵ Subjected to strong acts of subordination and affected by conversions to Latin denominations among the elites, the Churches of Byzantine rite in Central Europe, both Uniated and Orthodox, were forced to revise their foundations. For the Byzantine rite believers, the 17th and 18th centuries were periods of probing, adaptation, and modernization, but also of definitions and defences of sacred values.⁶ The varied and competing answers of the Byzantine rite Churches were transmitted for educational purposes to the communities, being largely formulated in the space of rhetorical and visual communication in front of the altars. Located in the centre of attention of this space, the iconostasis was remodelled and developed, with visible effects in the architecture of Byzantine churches.⁷ From the very beginning, the royal doors were essential parts of the iconostasis, and thus were well articulated both in their messages and in their artistic expressions.⁸ Their models were perfected in several significant spiritual and cultural centres. From there, they were adapted and disseminated in more or less coherent and representative forms in all corners of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, from monasteries, towns, and fairs, to villages, and from one craftsman to another.

In this way, new models of royal doors and even of iconostases entered Maramureş, which is located in the immediate vicinity of Poland and where the religious climate was somewhat similar. In the second half of the 16th century and throughout the 17th century, the Byzantine rite communities of Maramureş experienced a period of Reformation dominance under the rule of the Calvinist princes of Transylvania, which lasted until the third decade of the 18th century. In the 17th century – even during the re-establishment of the local bishopric (1690-1733) and despite the efforts to re-establish the role and estates of the old monastery of Peri – the Orthodox communities no longer had their own cultural and spiritual centre of importance.⁹ After the separation



▲ Fig. 3. *Vişeu de Mijloc*. The royal doors are dated from 1767 and attributed to painter Alexander Ponehalsky. Human figures, angels, a lot of plant and even zoomorphic details, have, at first sight, no obvious connection between them. In Maramureş Museum, i383 A-B. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboş.

of the region from Transylvania and its annexation to Hungary in 1733, the Byzantine Rite Church from Maramureş united with Rome, and a Greek-Catholic Diocese was established in Mukachevo. Until the late 18th century, the people of Maramureş had to attract more skilled painters and sculptors trained beyond the Carpathians, who would support the desire to manifest their religious attachment and devotion to the Byzantine rite. After the subordination of Maramureş to the Uniated Diocese of Mukachevo, many craftsmen and artists were directed and coordinated from this new centre. No matter



where the artists came from, their works, including the design of royal doors, speak largely about their local reception, as well as about the artistic taste and economic power of the communities. At the same time, they reveal the connection of priests, founders, and artists to a much wider space and cultural phenomenon in which denominational disputes were closely observed, as well as the response of the Byzantine rite Churches in the artistic sphere was adapted and received as a common good.

THE ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The Byzantine sacred space is designed to house and support the liturgy. The division of the Maramureș churches into several distinct rooms, in accordance with the principle of Byzantine architecture, accentuates the sacredness of the space and gradually increases the spiritual experience of the liturgical act, from west to east.¹⁰ In the Maramureș idiom, the parts of the church, in their succession, are known as: *tindă* (narthex), *biserică* (nave), and *altar* (sanctuary). Due to the different degrees of sacredness, significance, and utility in the ritual, each room was separated from the others by a solid wall. In this strict structure, both mental and physical, the doors gained a double role: to functionally link distinct spaces and to aesthetically affirm and regulate the significance of the transition to the next space.

In the 17th-18th centuries Maramureș, the first of the entrances marks the access to the consecrated space, announcing and anticipating the ascent to heaven.¹¹ The next entrance controls the access to the nave and marks the transition between the space reserved for women and the one dedicated to men. The third entrance marks the passage to the altar, which represents a final passage between the earthly sphere and the world beyond, between the seen and the unseen.¹² The decorations of the royal doors, which extends over the entire east wall of the men's nave – known as the iconostasis – underline the importance of the entrance to the sanctuary.

The role and meaning of the iconostasis in Byzantine sacred spaces are indicated by the special position and function of this threshold marker. By delimiting the visible world from the invisible one and by its monumental and complex elaboration, the iconostasis enables the faithful to see an unparalleled icon of the entrance to



► Fig 4: Botiza. The wooden church is one of the most representative and valuable churches in Maramureș. It was built in 1699 in Vișeu de Jos, by its founders, the nobleman Ștefan Pop and his wife, Maria and it was moved to its current location in 1899. Inside, stands the original carved iconostasis, dated in 1700. Photo 2017.

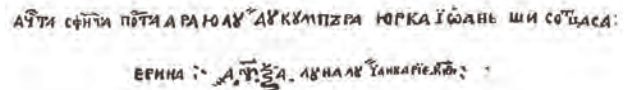
Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

▲ Fig 5: Rona de Jos. The wooden church with eyes, dated around 1637, was provided with a suite of entrances, along the axis of the church, looking from west to east. Photo 2017.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

▼ Fig. 6: Călinești-Susani. The royal doors are metaphorically called: Door to Heaven, in the inscription of the donator from 1761, written on their frame.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



the kingdom of heaven.¹³ The iconostasis is, indeed, the most remarkable piece of furniture inside the church. The entrance in the axis of the iconostasis comprises its essence. Two royal doors control the main entrance to the sanctuary. They are objects of worship with a central place in the sacred space, and with significant meaning in the liturgical act. Thus, the royal doors bear essential symbols for the Byzantine rite.

THE RITUAL CONTEXT

In Christianity, Christ, the Son of God, and Mary, the Mother of God, are at the centre of devotion. The entire Christian art revolves around them. The two dominate the church iconography and consequently of the iconostasis. In addition, they are often represented in relation to one another, compositionally and iconographically. Therefore, many representations and meanings can be interpreted in either a Christological or Mariological key, each leading to different and multiple interpretations and addresses.¹⁴ In order to understand the royal doors, the right key must be identified. That can only be found in the Byzantine

liturgical context.¹⁵ To this effect, three fundamental aspects related to the royal doors are further highlighted and analysed: their name, use in worship, and structure.

(a) The Name.

Although the two wings that mark the main entrance to the iconostasis are known by different names, in the Byzantine and Romanian cultural contexts they are generally called the royal doors. The name comes from an essential attribute of the Mother of God, named as the door of the Great King (Christ). This attribute is synonymous with that of Theotokos.¹⁶ The Ukrainian monk Teodosij Sofonovych, once head of the Kyivan Mohyla Academy, left us a direct testimony of how the royal doors were to be understood in the Carpathian and Russian Byzantine worlds in the 17th century. He explained that their name is determined by their meaning: “because through them only the King of glory, Christ, and the priest enter, [the latter being a] symbol of His presence.”¹⁷ Therefore, the royal doors are symbols of Christ’s entry into the world, through the Theotokos.¹⁸ Several liturgical hymns of the feast of the Entry into the Temple of the Virgin Mary reflect this attribute of the royal doors. The *Mother of God* is invoked on this occasion as “the door looking to the east... toward God’s holy place,”¹⁹ “called an embellished empress... the one who stands in the church before the King and God.”²⁰ “the holy door... openings the doors of the church to God.”²¹ In Maramureş, the doors are recorded in inscriptions either as царски врата, a phrase consecrated in Church Slavonic and translated into Romanian as *uși împărătești* (royal doors), or as *dveri* and *zveri*.²²

(b) The Interdiction.

The main entrance to the sanctuary is marked by two light doors, without locks.²³ However, the royal doors are always closed, being opened only at certain moments during the liturgical celebrations. The opening of the royal doors during the liturgy signifies an exchange of gifts between the heavenly sphere and the earthly faithful. They are a material ritual gate between the sanctuary and the church, the first representing the divine, and the latter the profane. From time immemorial, the passage through these gates has been restricted to the clergy and categorically forbidden to the uninitiated.²⁴ A clear warning in this regard was written above the royal doors of the former wooden church in Berbești: “This door will be locked, and it will not open, and no one will pass through it [Ezek. 44, 2].”²⁵ The location of the closed door in the axis of the church and the interdiction around it are contradictory aspects of Byzantine liturgical spaces and rituals, which cannot be explained without a symbolic attribute.

The subtle meaning given to the closed entrance in the centre of the iconostasis comes from a vision of the prophet Ezekiel concerning the door of Solomon’s temple, which was closed and reserved exclusively for God.²⁶ Church Fathers saw in the remarkable unopened door of the temple the perfect purity of the Theotokos. The doors are thus interpreted as a foreshadowing of the immaculate conception of Christ.²⁷ This attribute was associated with the second name given to the Mother of God: (Ever-) Virgin.²⁸ St. Simeon of Thessaloniki clarified the intimate connection between the royal doors and the Virgin through the example of the bishop who enters “through the royal doors as Christ entered us through the closed door, (i.e.) through the Mother of God, and (thus) they opened for us the doors to heaven.”²⁹ The identification of the Virgin with the closed doors of the place of worship is stated in several liturgical hymns, such as: “Rejoice, O gate of the King of glory, for through thee the Most

High alone has passed. He left thee sealed again, for the salvation of our souls”³⁰ On the feast of the Annunciation it is sung: “Rejoice, O Mother unwed, who knew not wedlock! ... Thou will remain incorrupt and wilt give birth to the Lord, O all-holy one!”³¹

(c) The Separation.

The third fundamental aspect is the composition of the royal doors of two symmetrical pieces. Theodosius Sofonovych clarifies in his work from 1668 the subtle meaning of the division of the royal doors into two wings, indicating “the separation and difference between invisible things and visible things.”³² St. Simeon records that “for this reason ... the royal doors of the sanctuary are opened, meaning that those from above open and unite with those on earth.”³³ In other words, the royal doors are the miraculous meeting place between the heavenly and the earthly spheres. The distinction between the two worlds, but also the meeting between them becomes clearer in the opening and closing of the royal doors. The symbolic meeting between the two worlds is also assigned to the Mother of God. Thus, in a hymn of the eve of the feast of the Entry into the Temple of the Virgin Mary one can read: “Rejoice in heaven and on earth, seeing the virgin without any blame ... the door of the Lord, the doors of the Temple opened to you, and rejoicing you entered.”³⁴ During the feast of the Annunciation a hymn proclaims: “Today is the joy of the annunciation, the triumph of virginity! Those below are united to those above.”³⁵ The troparion of the Mother of God announces: “We cry to Thee with a joyful voice, O Theotokos, with the angels in heaven and men on earth: Rejoice, Gate wider than heaven! Rejoice only salvation of the human race! Rejoice, O pure one full of grace, for you gave birth to the incarnate God.”³⁶

The three aspects of the ritual reveal the Marian identity of the royal doors. Because of the Marian identity and the distinctive location, the royal doors received the symbolical meaning of the gate or door to heaven.³⁷ This is undeniably demonstrated by two inscriptions on the royal doors from Călinești-Susani (Fig. 6). According to St. Simeon of Thessaloniki, “the opening of the divine royal doors means the entrance to heaven.”³⁸ Considered essential parts of the church building – a symbol of heaven –, the royal doors could be preserved where they were initially consecrated for a long time, until their deterioration.³⁹ This explains why many churches in Maramureş retained the old royal doors, even though all the other icons of the iconostasis had been replaced.⁴⁰ The attribute of the door of heaven given to the Mother of God had been cherished and defended by the Holy Fathers of the Church, inspiring hymnographic poetic literature.⁴¹ One of the most famous works is the Akathist of the Annunciation. In the Akathist, the shepherds bless the Virgin: “Rejoice, opening of the gates of Paradise!” Those above and below, together, address her: “Rejoice, Door of solemn mystery!” and “Rejoice, Door through which heaven opened!”. Then Jesus urges people to say, “Rejoice, Gate of salvation!”⁴²

(d) The Iconographic evidence.

Several scenes painted inside the churches of Maramureş provide direct evidence that the royal doors were identified with the Virgin Mary, through the metaphor of the door of heaven. In this regard, the prophet Ezekiel is almost indispensable represented on the old royal icons of the Mother of God, in which she is glorified by the prophets. Prophet Ezekiel is always associated with his prophecy the closed door of the temple, a typos of the

royal doors. An example from the 17th century is found on the royal icon of the Mother of God with the Christ Child from Șieu, where a pair of royal doors was sketched next to Ezekiel (Fig. 8).⁴³ From icons, the scene of the Mother of God surrounded by prophets was transferred to the iconostases from Maramureș and developed into a distinct register dedicated to the prophets. It was meant to emphasize allegorically the continuity between the Old and New Testaments. In the scene *Long Ago the Prophets Announced You or Rejoice*, also found in the iconography of the Akathist of the Mother of God, prophet Ezekiel is portrayed together with the other prophets of the Old Testament, turned toward the praying Virgin in an attitude of greeting and admiration.⁴⁴ On the iconostasis from Desești, Ezekiel holds in his right hand a phylactery with the addressing formula “Rejoice, Door of heaven!”, and in his left hand he displays a pair of royal doors, divided into six parts and closed at the top with a cross (Fig. 10). Two letters – O and N – appear on the doors, which are an abbreviation of O Ω N, meaning “He Who is”, an indispensable mention on the halo of Jesus.⁴⁵ The two letters on the royal doors refer to the coming of Jesus through the unopened door, that is, through the Virgin Mary.⁴⁶

Therefore, in the Byzantine liturgical tradition the royal doors bear the symbol of Christ’s entry into the world and his immaculate conception. Moreover, they are in connection with two fundamental attributes of the Mary, as Theotokos and Virgin. These attributes were metaphorically expressed through the door of heaven, the meeting place between the unseen and the seen world. In other words, in the case of the royal doors, we are dealing with a liturgical object associated directly to the Mariological cult and indirectly to the Christological one, just as in the icon of the Mother of God with the Christ Child. This attribution offers the key to decode the symbols from the decoration of the royal doors in Maramureș, in order to understand their iconographic, allegorical, and compositional aspects.

THE ANNUNCIATION CYCLE IN PAINTING

The royal doors are ornamented only on the side facing the nave, thus addressing the community of the faithful (Fig. 20-21). Their study requires a differentiated, yet complementary, approach between the painted and sculpted parts.

The painted scenes were rendered in a narrative and metaphorical language proper to Byzantine tradition. The iconography of the scenes painted on the royal doors from Maramureș, common for the whole Byzantine cultural space, depicts a chain of subjects that support and amplify the identification of the doors with the Virgin at the Annunciation. Four iconographic subjects dominate the artistic representations painted on the royal doors from Maramureș. They refer to four announcements: the blessed, the teaching, the confessional, and the prophetic. Together, they form a cycle of the Annunciation (Fig. 9, 24). At the centre of this cycle is the main scene: the Annunciation proper or the blessing proclamation, where the mysterious and unfathomable event of the incarnation of the Divinity occurred.⁴⁷ The other three announcements represent a development of the Annunciation scene and play the role of expanding and strengthening people’s faith in the fulfilment of the first, as shown in a troparion of the Mother of God: “The prophets have foretold, the apostles taught, the martyrs professed and we have believed that thou art indeed the Mother of God.”⁴⁸

(a) The blessed Announcement.

The Annunciation is the turning point in the history of

Christianity. It is the key moment in saving mankind from original sin and the fulfilment of the covenant between God and man. In the Annunciation, the archangel Gabriel announced and the Mother of God received the wonderful coming of the Son of God in the history of mankind. This was the moment when the Mother of God assumed the change of destiny for all human race. The significance of the event is expressed in the troparion of the Feast of the Annunciation: “Today is the crown of our salvation and the revelation of the mystery which is from before the ages! The Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel announceth the glad tidings of grace. Wherefore, with him let us cry out to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O thou who art full of grace! The Lord is with thee!”⁴⁹ According to the Byzantine liturgical tradition, the most suitable place in the space of worship to illustrate the Annunciation is the royal doors. The scene of the Annunciation is invariably divided into two parts, which correspond to the two wings: Archangel Gabriel, who came from heaven as a representative of the Divinity, is depicted on the left door; the Mother of God is portrayed on the right door, representing all humanity. In their meeting, the heavenly and earthly spheres intersect and communicate with one other, reunited in a single scene. The Annunciation⁵⁰ is the most important, the best adapted and, of course, the central and original theme of the royal doors, in which the composition of the scene and the division of the doors unite and support each other.

(b) The Teaching Announcement.

The teaching announcement gathers the Four Evangelists, namely the four Evangelists. The term Gospel, in Greek and Church Slavonic, means good news, a name inspired by the act of the Annunciation. The Gospels are, therefore, the written witnesses of the good news, of the coming of Jesus through the Virgin to save humankind.⁵¹ The Evangelists are a popular theme in the iconography of the royal doors throughout Byzantine art, from the early Middle Ages.⁵² Usually, the Four Evangelists appear under the scene of the Annunciation, suggesting a hierarchical and chronological order between the themes (Fig. 11-13). Teodosij Sofonovych explains the presence of the Annunciation scene and of the Evangelists on the royal doors as themes already established in contemporary iconography. He claims that “that is why the Annunciation appears on the royal doors above the Evangelists, because the Archangel proclaimed our salvation from the heavens, and the Annunciation was preached by the Holy Evangelists throughout the world.” He adds that “through the teachings of the four Evangelists, the foundation of the Church was established, and the whole world was united in one law, in one Church.”⁵³

(c) The Preaching Announcement.

The third announcement draws attention to the martyrs, the hierarchs, the saints and the righteous of the Church. They carried the faith further, not as direct witnesses, but by confessing their faith in the works and teachings of Christ, as transmitted through the Apostles. Through their writings, the Holy Fathers passed on the good news. Their presence directly on the royal doors of Maramureș is very rare. The deacons Prochorus and Stephen make a noteworthy example on the royal doors in Valea Stejarului. Instead, some altar servants from the first centuries, hierarchs, and deacons, appear on the side frames of the royal entrance and of the side doors to the sanctuary. In those churches where a frame of the central gate to the sanctuary was introduced and preserved, St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom, two of the three

greatest theologians and hierarchs of the Eastern Church and authors of the liturgies, are painted on either side of the royal doors (Fig. 15-16).⁵⁴ It is no coincidence that on the feast dedicated to them, the hierarchs and saints are called together with the Mother of God in the prayers of the faithful: "Thou art the true vine, O Theotokos, bearing the Fruit of life. Thee do we implore: Wherefore, O Lady, intercede tough together with the Holy Hierarchs and with all the saints for the salvation of our souls."⁵⁵

(d) The Prophetic Announcement.

The Holy Fathers of the Church attributed the foreshadowing of the Mother of God to the prophets. The Church Fathers commented on Old Testament texts through figurative interpretations, in order to identify veiled references to the Mother of God and, through her, to establish a bridge with Christ's entry into the world and with the teachings transmitted by the Apostles. Marian prophecies, identified and interpreted typologically, were imposed and celebrated throughout Christendom as evidence of the continuity and concordance between the Old and the New Testaments. The prophets thus entered the choir of the heralds of the Mother of God, as we can read in one of hierarch Mitrophanes's verses: "From afar the sacred choir of the prophets revealed thee as the one who would become the true Mother of God, O pure one who art more exalted than the cherubim and all creation."⁵⁶ It is possible that the prophets were painted on several much-older royal doors in Maramureş, but which have not survived. On the extant doors, we find them only later, toward the end of the 18th century. We have several examples of prophets painted in the medallions of the royal doors at the churches from Poienile Izei, Torun, Pylpety, and the same was probably at the churches from Bocicoiu Mare and Roztoka. The reason why the prophets disappeared from the iconography of the royal doors for about two centuries could be explained by the increasingly important role sculpture received in the program.

THE PROPHETIC ANNOUNCEMENT IN SCULPTURE

The addition of sculpture on the royal doors of the Byzantine churches from the north of the Carpathians, and later from Maramureş, significantly transformed their appearance. The sculpture was elaborated, displaying a bold composition and an innovative artistic expression.⁵⁷ At first sight, even an informed viewer may question the appearance of the carved doors. Why do they look like this? Why was sculpture needed? What do the sculpted motifs mean? As it appears, the purpose of the sculpture was to take over and give a new expression to the prophetic announcement in the iconographic cycle of the Annunciation. Since the Old Testament prophecies were communicated through symbols and allegory, nothing in the content of the texts was what it seemed at a first reading. If the sculptural language followed that of the prophetic text, then it is not surprising that the appearance of the royal doors does not offer a direct meaning. Thus, to recover the message of the sculpture double reading is needed: one formal, to a certain point, and another allegorical from there on. To reveal symbols and interpret allegories was a game of intuition and intelligence. It involved a refined system of decoding and understanding forms and compositions. This was much favoured by the elites of the pre-modern era. The layered content was so veiled that it required, in addition to a correct reading, a cultivated and elevated commentary in rhetorical language. To complicate matters further, the hidden message was constructed polysemantically in several coherent and intertwined layers of interpretation.

The more overlapping meanings there were, the more sophisticated and refined the allegorical interpretation became. Over time, for unclear reasons, the allegorical interpretation of the sculpture of the royal doors lost its relevance and was erased from the collective memory. Consequently, it is not surprising that, for some time, the sculpture of the royal doors has been regarded more as a formal and aesthetic aspect with decorative value. In order to recover the meaning and semantic richness of the royal doors, we must make an effort to approach their sculpture as it was conceived, in symbolic and allegoric terms. Next, using the Marian key, we will explore the figurative meaning of the sculpture, going through two levels of interpretation.

(a) The Closed Garden of Paradise.

At the first level of iconographic interpretation, the prophetic announcement was manifested and enhanced through the representation of Mary as Virgin and Mother of God, using two overlapping allegoric images: the Closed Garden and the Garden of Paradise where only the divine enters.

The Closed Garden was inspired by one of King Solomon's canticles: "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits, fragrant henna with spikenard, spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh, and aloes, with all the chief spices."⁵⁸ Elsewhere, Solomon urges: "Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine has budded, whether the grape blossoms are open, and the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love. The mandrakes give off a fragrance, and at our gates are pleasant fruits, all manner, new and old, which I have laid up for you, my beloved."⁵⁹ From the poetic images of the closed garden, various flowers, leaves and fruits were taken as source of inspiration (Fig. 13-14). They were combined with the dominant motif of the vineyard with grapes.⁶⁰ The meaning of the closed garden can be easily identified in the two wings of the royal doors, due to the richly carved decoration in vegetal patterns.

The Garden of Paradise as an image of Mary is plainly expressed in a resurrection canon: "The power of the Most High overshadowed thee, O Maiden, and made of thee a paradise of life, having the Lord and Mediator as a tree in thy midst."⁶¹ As the garden was already inspired and shaped by the symbol of the Closed Garden, the royal doors need only an additional tree in the middle to reach a new meaning. The tree can be recognized in a slender pillar placed at the meeting between the wings, in the axis of the royal doors. The pillar is always crowned with a cross, which is a well-known symbol of the Tree of Life.⁶² Thus, the iconography of the Garden of Paradise with the Tree of Life in the middle was allegorically formed through the relationship between the three parts of the royal doors, namely the two wings viewed as a symmetrical garden, and the central pillar as a tree.

(b) The Tree of Life.

The formal evolution of the pillar in the axis reveals its growing importance in the iconography of the royal doors. During the 17th century, the pillar evolved from a simple pole to increasingly elaborate vertical forms, as a part of the layered significance of the royal doors. The oldest column-like pillars carved with plant motifs in openwork appeared in the axis of the royal doors of Maramureş at the beginning of the 18th century (Fig. 17). They became popular in the second half of the century, and were then replaced by plaster-like pillars carved in



▲ Fig. 7. Poienile Izei. The church was built in the first half of the 17th century. The simple iconostasis of this church was painted directly on the wall between the church and the altar. The work was signed by the painter Gheorghe Plohod from Dragomirești and dated 1793. The tier of festive icon was painted by the same artist. Some of the large imperial icons can be attributed to his son, Ioan Plohod, in the first decades of the next century. Currently, it is one of the few completely preserved, unaltered, Maramureș iconostases of this simple type. Note the openwork sculpture in the royal doors, also extended to the frames of the icons. Photo 2017. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

high relief, especially in the first part of the 19th century. This remarkable evolution was due to the increasing identification of the axis section with Christ. Alexa, a well-known artist in Maramureș from the second half of the 18th century, left us a unique and revealing piece of evidence, which leaves no room for doubt regarding the identity of the pillar: in the axis of the royal doors from Strâmtura the face of Christ is graven on the column (Fig. 23). He most probably wanted to illustrate here a

canon dedicated to the Theotokos: “The Word from The Holy Spirit ... became visible in thee in human form.”⁶³ The basic symbol for Christ in the central pillar was the Tree of Life that grows in the middle of the Garden of Paradise. The purpose of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Paradise is to nourish and heal the faithful, as it is shown in the Book of Revelation: “In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits ... The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”⁶⁴ The Tree of Life is often represented as a vine, laden with leaves and grapes, growing in a spiral on the spindle of the column. In the upper church of Apșa de Mijloc, the central column was carved with twelve grapes, thus providing a precise interpretation as the Tree of Life.⁶⁵

When shaped in the form of a column laden with leaves and grapes, the pillar also resembles a staff. The staff shares with the Tree of Life the same appearance and symbolism, but it has other prophetic allusions as sources. Aaron’s staff is a well-known symbol of the coming of the Saviour through a Virgin. It is often employed in the

iconography of the row of prophets in the iconostasis. Especially distinctive in this sense is the episcopal mitre with a cross above, placed at the top of the pillar, which refers to Christ through the staff by which Aaron was elected priest.⁶⁶

In Christian terms, the wood of the cross blossomed like the staff of Aaron, revealing Christ as the High Priest and the Head of the Church.

An eloquent detail was introduced in the second half of the 18th century, namely the partition of the column into two more or less distinct and equal segments. Painter Alexa marks this partition with a red element, which he placed right in the centre of the royal doors in Strâmtura (Fig. 23) and Călineşti (Fig. 19). This decorative motif could be interpreted as the girdle of the Mother of God, venerated throughout the Byzantine world for its miracles and to which numerous verses have been dedicated. The girdle represents both the virginity of the Theotokos and the reception of the Divinity in her womb. One of the most significant canons in this regard states that “Having given birth to the all-comely Word in the beauty of thy virginity, thou didst wind thy cincture about Him as a babe.”⁶⁷ Through text and image, the division of the column with a red girdle affirms the double nature of Christ, divine and human, after the incarnation.

During the end of the pre-modern era, under the influence of Rococo and eclectic styles, the column was replaced by a pilaster. On the Rococo pilasters, the two halves received well-differentiated shapes with flowers and fruits carved in relief, life-size, hanging in a downward motion, as subjects to the law of gravity (Fig. 26). The eclectic pilasters (Fig. 25), in turn, show rows of money on either side of a central flower, suggesting a reference to two lesser-known staffs of Christ, inspired by Zechariah’s prophecy: “I called one ‘Mercy’, and the other ‘Covenant’.”⁶⁸

In Maramureş, the central piece of the royal doors takes on a variety of details and symbols. For example, the column of the doors in Glod received, at the base, a vessel with live fire,⁶⁹ another symbol of the virgin birth of Christ. The spindle of this column is decorated with vines, loaded with grapes and leaves. The upper part ends with a globe and a cross inscribed in a sun surrounded by rays. These symbols refer to a hymn of the Octoechos: “The twelve apostles, twelve time radiant, have appeared to the earth like the sun ... for their sake Thou dost illuminate the souls of Thy servants”⁷⁰ (Fig. 17). The pilasters often begin with a bud at the bottom and end with a mitre or a crown placed on a pillow and a cross at the top. These are signs of royalty and of a high bishop. The cross, no matter how small, is a constant at the top of the pillar in the axis, and its function can be found in a hymn of the Octoechos: “Your cross, Lord, Heaven has opened to the human race.”⁷¹ The cross and, by extension, the whole pillar bear the symbol of the Tree of Life. The royal doors, in their entirety, are an icon of the Garden of Heaven, as stated in one of the hymns of the Octoechos: “Heaven, you appeared to us, Immaculate, with the Tree of Life in the middle.”⁷²

The sculpted image of the Closed Garden of Paradise with the Tree of Life in the middle emphasises a widely popular and easily recognisable prophetic allusion to the coming of the Saviour through the Virgin Theotokos. It can be found on royal doors throughout the Carpathians, some of considerable antiquity, which demonstrates a long development in time of the theme, and within a wide geographic area.⁷³ In other words, the sculpture of the royal doors regarding this theme is not limited to the Northern Carpathians, but is well represented and further elaborated here,⁷⁴ and thus introduced even in Maramureş.



▲ Fig. 8. Şieu. Icon from the 17th century, with the subject of the Mother of God surrounded by prophets. One of the twelve figurative prophets is Ezekiel, who holds a phylactery with Slavonic text in his hands. In front of him, appears the attribute: two royal doors, taken from his prophecy regarding the Mother of God. The royal doors are sketched, clearly divided into six fields, and provided with a rich crowning. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboş.

(c) The double identity of Mary.

Mary was sublimated and revered as Virgin and Mother of God in the ornamental vegetal motifs of the wings of the royal doors. However, beyond this first reading, there is a second level to be revealed: her double identity, in body and spirit. Within this double identity, a theological lecture was embedded, addressing to Byzantine rite communities. Could this be the reason why in 1635 the brotherhood from Lviv corresponded with Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem? The patriarch’s letter addressed some innovations concerning the royal doors coming



▲ Fig. 9. Budești-Susani. Inside the church, there is a unique painting on canvas, datable around 1755. The subject on this canvas is the Annunciation cycle, with direct references to the composition, iconography and meaning of the painting on the royal doors, of that time. The canvas need be read starting from the scene of the Annunciation, which was placed in-between the four evangelists. The three hierarchs were attached eccentrically at the right end. Its original place inside the church remains unknown. The author was the painter Alexander Ponehalsky, alias Alexa, from Berbești. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

▲ Fig. 10. Desești. Painting on the wall of the iconostasis, dated 1780 and signed by the painter Radu Munteanu from Ungureni. In the medallion, the prophet Ezekiel and King David are portrayed together. Ezekiel holds in his right hand a phylactery addressing to the Virgin: 'Hail, Door of Heaven!' and in the left hand a pair of royal doors, divided into six parts, and ended by a cross. Two letters appear on the doors, O and N, which means 'He who is', meaning that Jesus always wears in his halo depicted on icons. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

from Lviv, unknown until then in their iconographic program. The patriarch's response was positive, but the details are not known to us.⁷⁵

To reach the second level of iconographic interpretation of the prophetic announcement, we turn to a text from the Sunday of the Expulsion from Heaven, which marks the beginning of Great Lent. Here, Adam, and through him the whole of humanity, prays to the Virgin Mary to be able to re-enter the Garden of Paradise and to commune of the Tree of life, that is Christ: "Virgin and Bearer of God, by descent thou art a daughter of Adam, but by grace Mother of Christ our God. I am an exile from Eden: call me back again."⁷⁶ The canon captures a double identity of Mary: the one of the flesh, as descendant of Adam, and the one of the grace, as Mother of God. This double identity, due to its importance, was integrated into the scene of Annunciation. Heaven, through the voice of the Archangel, addressed Mary: "Rejoice, O full of grace!"⁷⁷ The moment is considered the beginning of the salvation of humankind, and for Mary it meant her spiritual birth, making possible the understanding of the event and the conscious reception of the coming of the Divinity in human form. Since receiving the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Mother of God has been honoured in her double identity, in body and in spirit. For this very reason, her dual identity was represented and celebrated in the remarkable iconography of the Assumption. Christ speaks of this duality when he reveals to Nicodemus that every man born on earth is summoned to be born a second time, in spirit, for eternal life.⁷⁸





The two aspects of Mary were allegorically expressed in the royal doors of the Northern Carpathians by two trees, one with an instructive meaning: *the tree of ancestors* – representing the bodily birth – and the second with a moral meaning: *the good tree* – meaning the spiritual birth. The two trees are rendered on the two wings that together make up the royal doors, i.e., the Garden of Heaven. The trees are not formally differentiated, because of the required symmetry. Thus, they must be read from the same iconographic source.

The trees on the royal doors do not closely resemble trees. They are rather represented by a series of common plant elements: root, sprout, leaf, flower, and fruit. These defining elements were inspired by two prophecies foreshadowing the coming of Christ through a Virgin: the branch of Jesse and the staff of Aaron. The branch of Jesse was revealed by the Prophet Isaiah: “And the rod shall come forth from the root of Jesse, and the flower from the root of it shall lift you up.”⁷⁹ Aaron’s staff grew and budded, blossomed and yielded ripe fruits in the tabernacle of Moses.⁸⁰ One of the canons of the Theotokos captures the correspondence between the branch, the staff and Mary: “Rejoice, undefiled, the one who sprouted from the root of Jesse; rejoice, the one which, by the sprouting of Aaron’s staff, was conceived before in mystery and depth; and like those almonds, so you have made Christ blossom.”⁸¹

To better understand how the double feature of the Mother of God was imagined in the sculpture of the royal doors in the Northern Carpathians, let us examine further the iconography of the two trees and the symbols that characterize them. Upon a more detailed analysis of the sculpture, we discover that each plant element and complementary feature could have a particular meaning, specific to each of the two trees.

(d) The tree of the ancestors, of the birth in body.

The tree of the ancestors is known in literature as the *Tree of Jesse*, when it refers to the genealogical origin of the Theotokos, and through her of Christ.⁸² On the first royal doors of Baroque inspiration from north of the

Carpathians, dating from first half of the 17th century, the fruitful tree of the ancestors appears veiled, limited to only a few defining features: the root, the sprout, the flower, and the fruit.⁸³ In Maramureș, trees of the ancestors can be identified on the royal doors after the middle of the 17th century. Complementary zoomorphic and anthropomorphic motifs were placed on the royal doors of Maramureș starting with the first half of the 18th century, to make the message more detectable and more comprehensible.⁸⁴

The root represents the genealogical origin of the Mother of God, Jesse being indicated as her direct ancestor. In the oldest royal doors carved with shoots, flowers, and fruits from Maramureș, dating to the second half of the 17th century, the root is not individualized, only implied. At the beginning of the 18th century, in Maramureș, the root began to receive a distinct representation, probably to facilitate the understanding of the motif. In the figurative language of the vegetal motif, the root was rendered by a strong thickening of the rod at the bottom, as it can be seen at Săliște de Sus-Buleni (1724) (Fig. 18), or it received a distinct form, as in the church from Coștiui (1780). After the middle of the 18th century, on a series of royal doors made by the painter Alexa⁸⁵ the root was anthropomorphized by the figure of Jesse, who was accompanied, most often, by his son, King David. On several of these royal doors,⁸⁶ the painter Alexa placed the incipit of the kathisma of the feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos: “From the Root of Jesse, and from the Thighs of David, [Mary] the daughter of God is born”⁸⁷ (Fig. 19). Here, we are dealing with one of the rare situations in Maramureș in which the theme carved on the royal doors is accompanied by a subtext, according to the model of an emblem. The emblems form a coded communication system, composed of image and text (motto). This artistic style was appreciated in that era.⁸⁸ Taken separately, the motto and the image allow a multitude of interpretations. However, read together, they complement each other and translate exactly the meaning of the emblem. In this case, the Marian identity of these doors is decoded through the text. If the painter wanted to refer to the Christological



▲ Fig. 11. Oncești. The original royal doors, date from 1621, most probably from the consecration of the church. Painted in a post-Byzantine tradition, their front side were divided into six fields, by frames lightly decorated with half-palmettes and zigzags in the ground of the painting. The Annunciation is narrated in the upper register, while the four evangelists are depicted in the large cassettes below. Photo 2019. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



▲ Fig. 12. Budești-Josani. The royal doors go back to the consecration of the church in 1643. They are painted in the post-Byzantine tradition, with decorated frames inspired by Renaissance. Their face is divided into six fields by ropes lightly carved in bas-relief. A slightly more pronounced rope marks the vertical axis. The Annunciation is told in the upper register, and the four evangelists arranged in the four large fields below. This model was characteristic for Maramureș, around the middle of the 17th century. Photo 2018. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



▲ Fig. 13. Sârbi-Susani. The royal doors can be relatively dated to the second half of the 17th century and attributed to painter Grygoriy of Colomeea. The medallions were painted in the post-Byzantine style, while the main part of the front was carved in the Baroque style with loosely unfolded plant motifs in bas-relief, in a composition radically different from earlier models. The most probable prototype of these doors can be identified at the church of the Assumption of Mary in Lviv (circa 1629, later moved to Velyki Hrybovytsi). Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



▲ Fig. 14. Mănăstirea Giulești. The original royal doors can be relatively dated to around 1692. The medallions are painted in the post-Byzantine style. The doors were carved in openwork with exotic and lush plant motifs, reminding of the Song of Songs. The doors were stolen from the church in 1999. Photo 1995.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



◄ Fig. 15-16: *Apșa de Mijloc, upper church. The painting extends on the soffit of the frame, while it retracts significantly on the royal doors.* Basil the Great and John Chrysostom, the authors of the Byzantine liturgies, are painted on the frame close to the royal doors, here in the role of preachers of the Announcement. They were repainted and signed by the painter Cornelius Romanowsky in 1840. Photo 2019. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

◄ Fig. 17: *Poenile Izei. Openwork carved pillar in the axis of the royal doors, topped by a cross, surrounded by sunrays, over a bishop mitre.* Photo 2019. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

identity, then he would have appealed to another text from the New Testament: “Behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, has overcome ...”⁸⁹ Therefore, the iconographic theme of the flowering branch coming out of Jesse’s root should be read in a Marian key. For this reason, even on the royal doors where the root is replaced by a lion, the image cannot be associated with the text of Revelation, but is still a visual complement to the text of Isaiah. In this reasoning, the lion’s mouths on the royal gates of Desești (Fig. 22) must be understood as a simplification of the heraldic lion, a symbol of the people of Judah, from which the Mother of God is also derived, just as the hymn states: “The holy David and Jesse render praise, and Judah offereth homage; for the pure Virgin, of whom the pre-eternal God was born, grew forth as fruit from their root.”⁹⁰ There is an alternative representation on the royal doors of Borșa de Jos, where the root is replaced by a whale. The whale represents the giant fish in the story of the prophet Jonah, an image that symbolically and visually overlaps the mouth of the Leviathan, from which Christ took out his ancestors, shattering the chains of hell.⁹¹ Consequently, the root was still in the mouth of the great fish when the Mother of God conceived and then gave birth to Christ. This image indirectly emphasizes the contribution of the Theotokos to the salvation of the ancestors from original sin.

The staff and the shoot. The rod is the stalk that grows from the root and sprouts, i.e., it offers a shoot. The staff and the shoot, added together, designate the Virgin,⁹² as shown in a canon of the Theotokos: “O Virgin Mother undefiled, Thou art the Rod from the root of Jesse from which has sprung up Christ the Flower, that brings life to all on earth.”⁹³ From a broader perspective, the shoot laden with fruit can be interpreted as a metaphor or allegory of the passing from one descendant to another, i.e., “from fruit to fruit”, according to an old Romanian expression taken from Church Slavonic. The shoots loaded with grapes on the royal doors twist and shift, suggesting visually and ideologically the exchange of generations, the heritage, or the bloodline.

The fruit of the shoot was formally represented by a pome, a grape and even abstracted by painted medallions. The fruit (representing a descendant or a generation) in the form of ripe cluster of grapes, is popular in the sculpture of the royal doors. Quite often grapes are symbolically associated with Christ, the Fruit of Mary. In a canon of the Theotokos it is written: “O Virgin, thou hast borne the ripe Cluster of grapes. From Him we receive the wine of salvation.”⁹⁴

The flower. The painter Alexa was an expert of the symbols and allegories woven on the royal doors. These might have been well understood by the top of the local elite, but most of the faithful were illiterate, even among nobility. Therefore, following models from Northern Carpathians, he introduced human and zoomorphic characters

within the fabric of the royal doors to make their allegorical meaning more explicit to a larger part of believers. At the bottom, he placed the ancestor Jesse as a hermit, most often together with King David, to show the root of the Theotokos (Fig. 19, 23). At the top, he visualized the flower coming out of the shoot, signifying the role of the Virgin in bringing Christ into the world. In the prophecy of Isaiah, the purpose of the shoot is *to bloom*, the flower being here a symbol of the blessing of the Holy Spirit and of Mary’s spiritual birth, leading to the birth of Christ in flesh. We find the interpretation in a theotokion: “Thou art a staff from the root of Jesse, Blessed Virgin, who from the Flower brought the Fruit of salvation for all those who cry with faith to Thy Son: God of our fathers, blessed art Thou.”⁹⁵ The strophe was built on a series of symbols which appear frequently on royal doors: root (Jesse) – staff (Virgin) – flower (birth / Holy Spirit) – fruit (Christ).

In order to clarify the role of the Mother of God on the royal doors, Alexa introduced some complementary symbols in their sculpture. In the crown of the ancestors’ tree, next to the flower or in its place, he carved pairs of figurative motifs, such as birds and seraphim, both signifying the coming of Christ. On the royal doors of Sârbi-Josani and Vișeu de Mijloc (Fig. 3), the presence of seraphs and birds expresses a verse from a hymn of the feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple: “He Who is borne upon the cherubim and is hymned by the seraphim, borne into the temple of God today in accordance with the law, sitteth in the arms of the elder as on a throne, and as God receiveth gifts from Joseph: a pair of turtle-doves – the undefiled Church and the people newly-chosen from among the gentiles; and two young pigeons – the beginning of the Old and the New.”⁹⁶ Associating the text with the images, one can deduce that, above the tree of the ancestors, the two birds illustrate two pigeons or two doves, i.e., the sacrifice brought to God on Christ’s behalf, who was born in the old law and initiated the new law.⁹⁷ In their turn, the two cherubim flank the cross in a heraldic manner, reminding of Christ, the infant “born upon the cherubim”. By adding up the embracing presence of the Theotokos through the carved Closed Garden of Paradise, her warming girdle on the central piece, and the pigeons above the two wings of the royal doors, an even sharper image of the new-born Christ, the incarnated Word, comes through. All around Him stands the Mother of God, as foretold by prophets, a Virgin from the root of Jesse and from the family tree of David.

(e) The good tree, of the birth in spirit.

The good tree should offer a moral compass for all those who want to be born in the spirit, i.e., a guide to the Christian spiritual life. It brings visible contributions to the whole composition and proposes an alternative reading to the carved ornaments of the royal doors. In the collection of parables offered by Christ, we find an allegory of a good tree and a corrupt tree. In this parable, people are advised to choose carefully, on the basis of the quality of the fruits: “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruits is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits you will know them.”⁹⁸ In the iconography of the good tree, the presence of the good fruit, with the meaning of virtues, is essential.

The *fruit*, in the form of ripe cluster of grapes, is one of the most characteristic figurative ornamental elements of the royal doors and of the sculpture of the iconostasis in general. It is used to emphasize the presence of the good



▲ Fig. 18. Sălișteea de Sus Buleni. The royal doors are original, dated in November 1724, together with the church, and were carved in bas-relief, most likely by a local painter from Maramureș. These are the last surviving doors from the campaign to rebuild wooden churches in the upper district after the Tatar raid of 1717. Photo 2018.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



▲ Fig. 19. Călinești-Susani. The royal doors with the tree of ancestors illustrated by the presence of Jesse and David at its foot. On one strip, a motto was written quoting from a liturgical book. In the upper part, appear flowers, birds with dragons in their beak and the cross, an allegorical ensemble that can be interpreted as the coming of Christ. The girdle that divides the central colonnade into two segments and the bishop's miter below the cross give important support for the interpretation. The doors are the original ones, dated 1761 and attributed to the painter Alexa. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

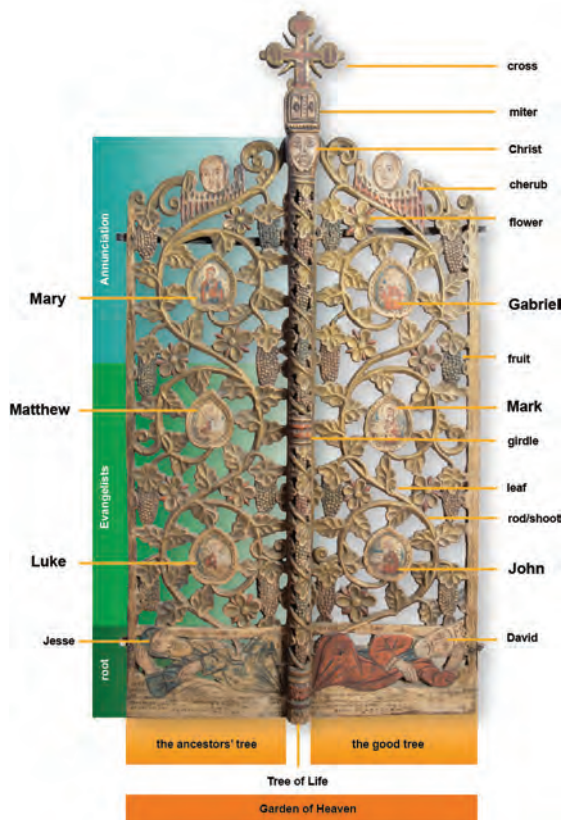


▲ Fig. 20-21. *Călinești-Susani*. The backside of the royal doors is left undecorated. No less than ten distinct wooden pieces can be identified, fastened together with wooden nails and glue: the two wings, the two pieces on the sides, the central pillar, the cross, and four transversals. To these are added four hinges made by a local blacksmith, fastened in nails. Nail marks on the top crossbars indicate the existence of a small lock, now vanished. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

▲ Fig. 22. *Desești*. These are probably the oldest doors with a pillar carved with openwork, known in Maramureș, dating in the first half of the 18th century. They are reused within the present wooden church. It combines the rich vegetal elements (shoots, leaves, flowers, fruit) with lions' heads at the root and a dove at the top above Mary. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



▲ Fig. 23. *Strâmtura*. The original royal doors are dated 1776 and attributed to the painter Alexa. The medallions were painted in the post-Byzantine style and the openwork sculpture was made in the Mannerist-Baroque style, most likely by the same artist. The centrepiece features a unique and extremely valuable detail of the portrait of Christ, personalizing and identifying the colonnade. In the lower part, Jesse and David are lying down, from whose ribs grow vine shoots, an image built on Isaiah's prophecy about the coming of Christ from a virgin. Photo 2018.

Credits: Alexandru Baboş.

tree. On the royal doors of Sălişteia de Sus-Buleni (Fig. 18) and Fereşti, the grapes are accompanied by figs, paraphrasing the parable of Christ, and affirming the presence of a model worth following. An adaptation of the image of the good tree, allegorically built on the parable, for the pedagogical purpose of illustrating the Christian life, is found in Avva Agathon: "A human being is like a tree: as such, manual labour is the leaves, while the interior spiritual life, that which keeps watch, is the fruit. Since, according to what is written, 'Every tree that does not produce good fruit gets cut down and thrown into the fire,' it's clear that all our diligence and zeal is for the fruit, that is, safeguarding the mind. But we also need the protective shade and beauty of the leaves, that is, manual labor."⁹⁹ From these allegories emerges the presence of a model worth following, built through the image of a tree with good fruits and adorned with leaves. The royal doors were provided with all the defining features in this regard.

In the thematic framework of the good tree, the focus lies on the identity of the Theotokos by her second birth, in spirit, full of virtues, in which she serves the role of an exemplary and ideal moral model in life. In this regard, numerous hymns are dedicated to the Mother of God: "A tree of beautiful fruit and a good shade, we, the faithful,

call you, Thou who gave birth to the beautiful Fruit and Saviour ..."¹⁰⁰ In another hymn, the faithful address her: "Rejoice the true and fruitful offspring, Thou who have raised the Grape of immortality."¹⁰¹ Since no one attains virtue or is born in the spirit without his own efforts, a hymn addressed to the Mother of God captures the metaphor of a well-cared vineyard: "Ripening like a vineyard at the cry of the angel, O Virgin, prepare thou to put forth the ripe and incorrupt Cluster."¹⁰²

The *flower* might represent the presence or the reception of the Holy Spirit, and therefore it most suitably can stand for the second birth, in spirit or in grace. Through this symbol, the often-employed motif of medallions emerging from flowers in which the Evangelists or some other human characters are bestowed with grace becomes clearer. Instead, the motif of flowers emerging from another flower can be understood as gifts or virtues springing from the Holy Spirit. On the flowery doors, flowers become an attribute of identification and aesthetic beatification of the good tree – vineyard –, garden of heaven, i.e., of the Mother of God, and by extension, signs of the beauty and purity of her virtues: "Rejoice, queen, the book of Christ, the one with many flowers adorned and the union of the separated, rejoice the river of life, rejoice the tree of delight and clean place ..."¹⁰³

The *bird*, which lives at the top of the good tree, offers multiple possibilities of metaphorical and overlapping interpretation. A first interpretation can be taken from the second part of Isaiah's prophecy, related to the rod of Jesse: "And the Spirit of God, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of good faith, and the Spirit of fear of God will fill him."¹⁰⁴ In the iconography of the good tree, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit can be interpreted as seven fruits or virtues: wisdom, understanding, counsel, courage, knowledge, piety and fear of God, sometimes imagined in religious art in the form of seven doves with divine aura, suggesting their common source, as a diffraction from a single ray of light from the Holy Spirit. The first and the second verse of Isaiah 11 can also be interpreted as a typological prophecy of the Annunciation, where the Holy Spirit is invariably imagined concentrated in one dove, traveling on a ray of light. In a second Marian sense, the bird can refer to the virtues and distinction of Mary, as we find in a hymn: "Rejoice the chosen dove, polished with the wings of virginity, and the beautiful dove ... the fruitful vineyard, which gives the wine of martyrdom. Ask Him to show great mercy to your servants."¹⁰⁵ In the context of the good tree, the birds on the royal doors still allow a third alternative interpretation that is complementary to the other two. It is about the presence of a fabulous phoenix bird, the royal eagle, the immortal and traveling bird from one realm to another. For this reason it is used within Christian iconography as a symbol of Christ. In Călineşti-Susani (Fig. 19), the bird appears near the cross in the axis, together with a dragon and a flower, alluding to the eternity, rebirth, and transformation phases of the phoenix. The image is partially inspired by the Flower of Virtue and the Physiologist.¹⁰⁶ In the end, all three interpretations seem to support the presence of significant moral virtues, which are expressed through the images of birds, with direct or indirect references to the scene of the Annunciation, where the Theotokos receives Christ from the Holy Spirit.

THE RECEPTION OF THE ROYAL DOORS IN MARAMUREȘ

Through their ornaments, the royal doors received the meaning of the gates of heaven. Where else, if not here, could the duality of human nature be highlighted? However, in order to communicate such meaning, the ornaments require a subtle and allegorical reading, and presume the existence of an elite capable of mastering and passing it on. For this reason, it is necessarily to find out in what extent were the subtle messages of the sculpture of the royal doors comprehended by the majority of believers, beyond the gates of some few centres of spirituality and culture? Were the messages understood and used by the common people of Maramureș?

(a) Blagorodia.

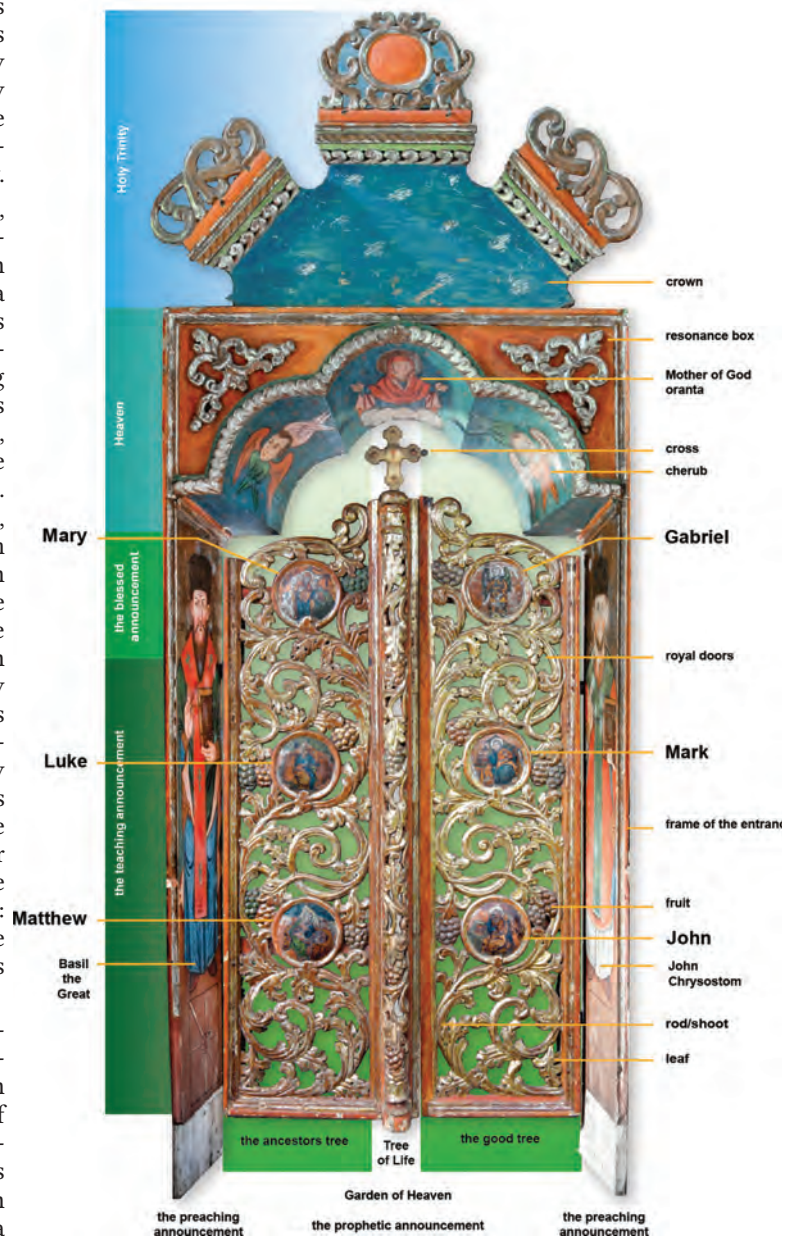
To understand the interest of the people of Maramureș for the duality of human nature, in spirit and in body, the concept of *blagorodia*, which circulated in the region in the pre-modern era, must be clarified.¹⁰⁷ *Blagorodia* addresses to the privileged class, to the intellectual and clerical elite from the Byzantine rite environment in the Carpathians, in a shaping and moralizing sense. It carries the meaning of nobility and appeals equally to a person's descent as to his moral qualities. In the contemporary European literature on nobility, the emphasis usually shifted from the inheritance of noble privileges to the aspiration for noble ideals and moral virtues, essential attributes of a Christian life at the top of the social hierarchy.

The discourse about nobility, in its social expression, took easily root in the hierarchical environment of Maramureș. The preservation of privileges from generation to generation, starting from a diploma inherited from a common ancestor in the Middle Ages, was a continuous concern and a necessity for the Maramureș nobility. According to numerous written sources, especially during the processes of investigating the noble status of families in Maramureș in the 18th century, genealogical trees, along with the remarkable deeds of their ancestors, were learned, memorized, and defended in all their branches. Thus, long bloodlines of family members, family alliances, or relatives who emigrated far away and detached from the common trunk many generations ago could have been evoked.¹⁰⁸ The family tree and the deeds of the past were a true history book of the family, the community and the country, with a strong educational role. For example, in the preliminary part of an act of attestation of nobility from 1633, written for several Maramureș noble families from Iapa village, the notary of the convent from Cluj-Mănăștur noted the way the nobles in the principality of Transylvania and Maramureș felt about nobility in his time: "... the brilliant deeds and the acts of bravery make anyone who seeks to reach virtue be remembered forever and usually bring a very great and useful reward to the descendants ..."¹⁰⁹ From the quote transpires a trinomial: deed – virtue – reward, that may correspond on the visual-allegorical level of the royal doors with the series of leaf – flower – fruit symbols.

About the moral side of nobility speaks the large number of inscriptions preserved inside the churches of Maramureș, which record deeds, founders, and donations, in the memory of ancestors, for the spiritual benefit of donors and their descendants, from generation to generation. A good example is provided by three inscriptions in Church Slavonic on the royal doors in Oncești. Written on the front side, they capture two donor families, Vancea

▼ Fig. 24. The structure and arrangement of symbols in the royal doors in Maramureș. In Cuhea, the original entrance in the axis of the altar dates from around 1754. The author is anonymous, but his works in Verchoyna and north of the Carpathians indicate a Ukrainian, Galician artist. The entrance includes: a frame, royal doors, and a crown. The frame consists of side panels and a sound box over the doors. The frame brings more distinction and allows a diversification of shapes in the opening of the entrance. On the side panels, two of the most important bishops, are painted, preaching the wonderful news, as part of the Annunciation cycle. Over the doors, the Mother of God appears in the height of the sky, and above the frame, in the crown, the presence of Trinity has been suggested, floating above the depths of Heaven. The royal doors are carved in openwork with the theme of the Garden of Heaven, to strengthen the prophetic vision. In the medallions, the teaching evangelists and the Annunciation are depicted. The entrance to the altar in Cuhea reaches a level of elegance, sophistication, articulation, and eloquence unusual in Maramureș until then, practically a pinnacle of Baroque artistic expression and quality in the area. Photo 2017.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.





▲ Fig. 25. Rozavlea, royal doors carved and painted by the artist Philipp Schaitzner from Sighet, in 1823, in an eclectic style. The central pilaster is decorated with chain of coins and divided into two parts by a sunflower in the middle (Christ), a reference to the staffs of Christ in Zechariah's prophecy: called covenant and mercy. Characteristic details on the pilaster: a bud (beginning) at the bottom, bishop miter with crown set on a quatrefoil, (end), at the top. Also, characteristic is a garland placed over the door that suggests the protective covering of the Mother of God. Photo 2018.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

and Gogea, the main noble branches of the community. On the left wing, it is written: "The merciful servant of God, Ștefan Gogea, together with Nastasia Gogea, Chifor, Parasca, Dumitru, Grigorie, Alexa, for the health and forgiveness of sins." On the right wing: "The merciful servant of God, Vancea Nicoară, together with his father Sava and his mother Fodora and his children Ionaș, Petru, Maria, for their remembrance." Below, there is a third inscription: "Nicoară and Ștefan bought together these gifts for the patron saint, Holy Archangel Michael, in the year of the Lord, August 17, 1621."¹¹⁰ The purchase of a liturgical book for the benefit of the community also provided a notable opportunity to note the contribution, the donor, and the benefits expected in return. Similarly, on a Slavonic *Antologhion* of 1638 (the manuscript was found at the beginning of the 20th century in the upper church of Borșa) there is a note which informs that the manuscript was bought in 1675 by "Timiș Roman with his wife, ... as [alms for] his soul and all his fruit until [the] seventh fruit." The note continues with the curse of the donor, in order to prevent the removal of the donation from the church. In the end, he asks: "he who is priest [is] obliged to commemorate the souls that are written here; may God remember them in the Kingdom of Heaven."¹¹¹ It is worth remarking the extension of the spiritual benefit for endowing the church with this expensive book, up to the seventh "fruit", i.e., seven generations of descendants.¹¹² The book had been used for a long time, until its replacement with others written in Romanian, toward the end of the 18th century and until the abandonment of the Cyrillic alphabet, after the middle of the 19th century. In the meantime, it probably fulfilled its purpose of commemorating the good deeds of the donors, for the benefit of the seven generations of descendants.

An exceptional example of the cultivation of virtues in a community of nobles is provided by a tradition recorded in connection to a chandelier with birds hanging from the nave vault inside the wooden church in Cuhea (Fig. 27).¹¹³ The wooden chandelier with its numerous arms spread over three levels, each inhabited by a row of birds, visualizes in an elaborate three-dimensional construction the image of the Tree of Life. As mentioned earlier, in Christian symbolism birds represent the virtues gained by the righteous during their earthly life, thanks to which they were received in the Garden of Heaven and permitted to eat the fruits of the Tree of Life. According to the oral tradition from Cuhea, the birds in this chandelier tree urge the seeking of three virtues: "to be gentle like a dove, to sing like a nightingale, and to be free like a swallow."¹¹⁴

The continuous cultivation of virtues, the tradition of patronage in the construction and endowment of churches, and the concern to keep alive the family tree demonstrates that *blagorodia* was a well-known and common concept among noble families in Maramureș in pre-modern times. In this regard, one must read the titles of *blagorodnicul* (noble) Vasile Săpânțan and his *blagorodnica* (noble) wife, Ioana Săpânțan, written on their votive paintings inside the church from Cuhea. Therefore, the painted and carved ornaments of the royal doors were naturally introduced and integrated into their social, cultural, and spiritual environment. Obviously, most of the communities of nobles from Maramureș were familiar with their moral and pedagogical message, as it was integrated in the concept of nobility.

(b) In Folklore.

The Christmas carols contain various religious subjects that, despite their theological complexity, were communicated in the simple and native local language, versified and expressive. One of the carols that may refer, directly or indirectly, to the royal doors is *The carol of the apples obtained from the king's girl*, which has wide circulation in various forms in northern Transylvania, including Maramureş. It might have been composed inspired by or to explain and popularize the iconography, the figurative message, and the innovations brought in the aspect of the royal doors, during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Up there in the sunrise,
There is a tree in full bloom,
With silver leaves
And with golden apples.
The sun, when it shone,
The apples became ripe,
And [when] the wind blew,
The apples fell,
Young men picked them.
– Where did you get them?
– From a king's girl,
Standing in a gate of heaven.¹¹⁵

The introductory verses of the carol can easily be understood as a synthetic description of the Garden of Heaven, and as a first allusion to the sculpture of the royal doors. We identify here the orientation to the east, a flowering tree with leaves and fruits, as well as the characteristic polychromy in silver and gold. The flowering tree within the carol bears fruits, ripe from the shining sun, that is, from Christ, and blown down by the wind, a suggestion of the presence of the Holy Spirit. In carols, apples are not the forbidden fruit of the Edenic tree of knowledge, but the ripe fruit of salvation from the flowering Tree of Life. They are offered to the faithful by a king's girl at the gate of heaven. We can recognize here the Mother of God, a virgin descended from the tribe of King David. In this way, the Mother of God greets the faithful in front of the gate of heaven, mediating between them and Christ. The gate of heaven appears in this carol just like in liturgical texts, as a symbol of the Theotokos and, implicitly, makes a possible second allusion to the royal doors. In a similar carol, the apples are received by some boys:

With great prayer
On elbows and knees
On that mountain top
With successful prayer,
From the shining moon.¹¹⁶

The mediating shining moon replaces here the king's girl, making a synonymous reference to the Mother of God.

In another carol from Maramureş, collected at the end of the 19th century, the royal doors are suggested by the presence of three trees, indicating a correct understanding of their structure and meaning:

What are these courts,
High, wonderful courts?
Before these yards
There are three rows of trees.
In the shade of the trees
The lady of the courts sits...¹¹⁷



▲ Fig. 26. *Moisei-Țosani*. The wooden church was consecrated in 1779 and the royal doors are the original ones. The painting in the medallions could be attributed to the official painter of the bishopric of Muncaci, Tadei Spalinsky. The doors were made in Rococo style, with a central pilaster carved in high relief. On the pilaster the Christ attributes are distinguished: the division into two segments, the flower and the fruit, the miter with the cross. The royal doors are today preserved in Ruscova Oblaz. Photo 2018.

Credits: Alexandru Baboş.



▲ Fig. 27. Cuhea. Inside the wooden church, the original architectural iconostasis from 1754 is preserved, completed with a unique background painting. From the vault of the church hangs a chandelier with birds, one of the most valuable in the Carpathians. In the oral memory, the symbol of virtues attributed to birds in the Tree of Life was preserved. Inside the nave, the gilt and the paintings of the noble founders, Vasile and Ioana Săpânțan, are preserved. Photo 2017.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

The high courts, i.e., close to the sky, are synonymous with the Garden of Heaven, and the lady of the courts can be recognized as the Mother of God. A related carol, *The angry Santa Claus*, captures the image of the tree of the ancestors with Jesse at the bottom, who is replaced in this case by Santa Claus. Santa became upset in this carol on people who are driven by passions and vices, forgetting the fruits of the good tree taught by the church.

The sun rises red above,
White apple flowers,
It is a proud-flowering tree.
Who's lying under the tree?
Santa Claus lays upset. ...¹¹⁸

Over time, the image of the ancestral tree has passed from religious rhetoric to profane folklore, being thus encountered in a Wedding oration, noted in 1895:

You who are honest parents
Who are ordained by God

Like the fruitful trees
Who bear fruit to their branches
From the freshness of their roots ...¹¹⁹

A ballad *For the repentance of the sinful man* from the same folklore collection discusses the second birth and the tree with good fruits planted in heaven:

Every man who lives
In a defiled life
Is like a tree planted
And swayed by the storm;
The sun makes him pale,
He still does not grow old;
Although the wind blows it,
Its leaf still does not fall
Yet, it will bear good fruit
In its sweet life.
The man of great faith
Has no great sigh
When his body is broken
His soul is renewed.
He who would endure to the end
He will be saved.¹²⁰

The transfer of moral and pedagogical teachings from church to folklore, in similar forms to artistic visual expression, especially manifested through the royal doors, demonstrates how far and deep this phenomenon entered the culture of Maramureș and further on, in the northern parts of Transylvania.⁴



▲ Fig. 28. Mănăstirea Moisei. The triptych preserves the deeds and names of the founders to be remembered in the commemorative prayers at the proskomedia. In its form, meaning, and iconography, the triptych can be compared to a pair of miniature royal doors. Archangel Gabriel and Virgin Mary in the Annunciation scene are painted on the doors, while the names of the founders are written inside. By placing the triptych in the altar, it was revealed the obvious desire of the founders to secure a place in heaven.

Symbolically, the inscription inside the triptych imitates the writing in the book of eternal life. The triptych from Mănăstirea Moisei can be the original one, made after the consecration of the monastery in 1672. It begins with the names of Archbishop Sava Brancovici and the founder Mihai Coman and continues with numerous other names of donors and benefactors. The face of the triptych seems to have been repainted in the 18th century. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.



▲ Fig. 29. Călinești-Susani. The altar icon with tabernacle was dated 1789 and signed by the painter Gheorghe Plohod from Dragomirești. Altar icons were introduced in the environment of Maramureș in the second half of the 18th century, under Latin influence. They were inspired by the iconography and symbolism of the royal doors. Their frontside usually depicts the Virgin and the Child wearing crowns, against a rich vegetal background, suggesting the allegory of the Garden of Heaven. In the surrounding openwork sculpture – among shoots, leaves, fruit, flower and cross – appear the four teaching evangelists, painted in medallions. On the back of some altar icons, the scene of the Annunciation appears, functioning together with the frontside as a coin with two complementary sides. In Călinești Susani, the back of the icon was dedicated to John the Baptist, with the text: “Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees”. (Matthew 3:2 and 3:10) The meaning of this quote-motto is commented in a verse at the birth of John the Baptist: “The cutting of the axe by the root is near, and

it is witnessed, that every tree, which does not bear good fruit, is cut down with the cutter and thrown into the fire of Gehenna. Therefore, my soul, tremble, and bear fruits of repentance.” (Menaion, June 24, matins, ode 4) The verse makes a compelling call to choose the path of the good tree. Thus, the altar icon from Călinești Susani emphasizes the parable of the good tree. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

► Fig. 30. Susenii Bârgăului, Bistrița County. Royal doors with a double-headed eagle in a royal Byzantine blazon construction, with sceptre and sword, devouring snakes. This symbol is common in Northern Transylvania in the 18th century and can be interpreted as the manifestation of Christ in His double nature and quest to overcome evil. The church together with its iconostasis were moved to Livezile in 1909 and moved once again in Dumbrava in 1957, where they are now preserved. Photo 2019.

Credits: Alexandru Baboș.





▲ Fig. 31. *Tarna Mare, Ugoșca County, an example of royal doors carved in openwork technique.* The sculpture is dominated by the Tree of Life in the middle of the Garden of Heaven. The vine is blooming and bearing 12 clusters of grapes. The tier of royal icons from Tarna Mare is signed by *Ștefan maliar Maramoroshiansky*, in the second half of the 18th century. It was donated in 1937 to a small community in Văgaș, and it is at present preserved in Satu Mare Museum. Photo 2021. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

► Fig. 32. *Buzești, Maramureș County. Rococo royal doors from the 18th century with the blooming and fruit bearing Tree of Life in the heart of the sprouting Garden of Heaven.* There is a visible emphasis on the painted medallions by surrounding them with carved plant motifs, resembling rocailles. Reconstruction after the slightly enlarged royal doors preserved inside the wooden church. Photo 2022. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS.

The liturgical act and text contribute significantly to the understanding of the appearance of the royal doors in the Northern Carpathians. During religious celebrations, when recited or sung verses vibrate in the space of the church and ritual movements draw attention from one place to another, the motifs and symbols intertwined in the sculpture of the royal doors come to life and gain meaning. In this context, the interpretations, messages, and structure that marked the changes in the appearance of the royal doors can be recovered, step by step. The subtle innovations of the royal doors developed in a social and cultural environment ready to receive them. The Maramureș society of the pre-modern era was guided by the same teachings and ideals as those inscribed in the designs of the royal doors. These aspects are extant in contemporary documents and inscriptions, as well as in the oral folkloric tradition transmitted to this day.

The central theme of the royal doors in the Eastern Church was the Annunciation. The scene of the Annunciation highlights a moment of greatest importance for the salvific history of humanity, namely the incarnation of the Divine in the human body. Because the Virgin Mary assumed the role of receiving the Divinity in the name and for the benefit of all human race, the key to interpreting the royal doors is a dominant Marian one. If we interpret the birth in spirit of the Mother of God as the moment of birth of the Christian Church, we may understand even better the importance of the event and the reason of placing the scene of the Annunciation in the centre of the communal religious space.¹²¹

The painting on the royal doors forms a coherent grouping of the themes in the Annunciation cycle, which allowed a limited variation in the selection and arrangement of scenes. The painted panels of the wings followed the old narrative and metaphorical art of the icons. Even after the introduction of sculpture, the arrangement, character, and content of the paintings did not change significantly. While the paintings took up less and less of the decorated surface of the doors, they expanded instead on the frame around the royal doors (Fig. 24).

The sculpture of the royal doors was introduced to reformulate the prophetic part of the Annunciation cycle. The sculpture highlights the existence of several overlapping levels of figurative interpretation, which require a good control of the allegorical language and a deep knowledge of the meaning of liturgical texts. This supports the origin of the sculpted models, of Baroque inspiration, from an environment of high theological formation, creativity, and cultural exchanges, such as Lviv. This is also suggested by historical evidence. The real novelty seems to be the consistency with which the theme of the three trees was introduced and developed in the Northern Carpathians. This was inspired by several Old Testament sources and liturgical texts, as well as contemporary representations of the Tree of Jesse. The relationship of the three trees with the duality of the human nature – the flesh and the spirit – adds a layer of depth to the reading of the royal doors. The three trees urged the faithful to search for higher grounds in their life: in consensus with the theological, moral, and pedagogical concerns of the time. Examining in detail, despite their diversity, no sculpted symbolic element is detached from the liturgical function of the royal doors in their entirety. References to the symbols should be sought especially in the liturgical and patristic texts that circulated in the area, which help recognize and decode the allegorical meanings.





▲ Fig. 33. *Strâmtura*. The wooden panel, together with the applied decoration, the tympanum, and the side colonnettes, all carved in openwork, can be dated, most probably, from the last quarter of the 17th century and come from an earlier icon. The openwork carved decoration of the initial icon constitutes one of the oldest examples of this kind in Maramureș, introduced at the same time as in the royal doors. The current icon of Saint Nicholas was painted by Alexa around 1775, reusing the wood and carved decoration of the old icon, a custom widespread in the area. In the medallion, Saint Nicholas was painted saving a man from drowning, the saint being the protector of those traveling on the waters, a theme probably loved by Maramureș raftsmen. Photo 2019. Credits: Alexandru Baboș.

An innovative aspect in the sculpture of the royal doors was the introduction of the openwork technique in the rendering of plant motifs. Through this technique, the doors and their iconographic subjects, as well as their symbolic elements, were more strongly highlighted, beco-

ming more realistic and palpable. At the same time, the royal doors became more and more transparent, allowing an improved visual contact with the altar, unprecedented until then. This innovation was not only a formal one, but also a conceptual one, which responded to the criticism brought by Catholics to the Eastern Church that it prevents believers from participating in the obligatory sacramental moments.¹²² By introducing and bringing to the fore the Garden of Heaven in the decoration of the royal doors, as well as through the transparency offered by the sculpture, the faithful became more involved and more aware of the chances of salvation in the Byzantine rite Church. At the same time, and probably for the same purpose, small openings were cut in the wall that separated women from men.¹²³ This suggests the growing importance of visual and voice communication inside the wooden churches of Maramureș. In the subtext, through all these innovations, one can understand the efforts of the Byzantine rite Church to take the initia-

tive, to open itself and communicate with the faithful, as well as to lead its flock to salvation, navigating between the necessary reforms and the defence of its identity

The sculpture of the royal doors and iconostasis developed in specific historical conditions for the Eastern Church in the Northern Carpathians. For as long as education in the essence of Byzantine rite and tradition was needed, in competition with other denominations, the message conveyed through the royal doors remained relevant. With time passing and changes occurring in the historical context, the sculpture of the royal doors and iconostasis was formalized and transformed under the influence of new fashionable styles. The teaching messages were forgotten, along with the reason for introducing sculpture in the first place. Indeed, the carved royal doors preserved in Maramureș are true and eloquent witnesses of the times of effervescence and challenges that the Byzantine rite communities in the Northern Carpathians experienced a few centuries ago.

Since the royal doors could communicate with the faithful, the aesthetics were not a priority. The patrons of Maramureș were most often satisfied with second- or third-hand painters. If we compare the royal doors from Maramureș with their Baroque counterparts from the north of the Carpathians, we can see that they were of a lower artistic quality, with few exceptions. The situation was the same in most rural communities in the Northern Carpathians. This differentiation was determined by the economic power of the church patrons and the possibility to use the services of skilled artists. Only toward the end of the 18th century and in the first half of the 19th century, after several reforms introduced by the bishops of Mukachevo, the artistic level became a priority, significantly improving in Maramureș as well.

Maramureș played the role of a transitional space between Poland and the Principality of Transylvania in the field of art and exchange of ideas. The changes that took place here influenced the evolution in the Byzantine rite churches from the north and sometimes in the heart of Transylvania. Here they met and mixed with the influences of the Brâncoveanu school, coming from the other side of the Southern Carpathians. Many of the wooden churches in northern Transylvania are distinguished not only by larger sizes, height, and the richly carved entrances,

but also by more elaborate iconostases. Behind these features were, most likely, the cultural exchanges with Maramureș, supported by strong family relations between the nobles of Maramureș, both those who remained in their villages of origin and those who emigrated to the counties in northern Transylvania. This explains, at least in part, the presence in northern Transylvania of carved royal doors like those of Maramureș (Fig. 30-32).

In the churches south of the Northern Carpathians, the artist's fine sculpture at the royal doors becomes more relevant, if we look at it in dialogue with the carpenter's sculpture at the entrance to the church. At both entrances, in the Carpathian space, the sculpture flourished synchronously, reaching remarkable heights in the 17th and 18th centuries. Symbolically, the sculpture on the portals at the entrance to the church makes a direct reference to the first creation, while the entrance to the altar brings to the fore the second creation, through the wonderful coming of the Divine in human form. The entrance to the church anticipates the later, while the royal doors fulfil the first, opening the personal experience to higher levels of spirituality.

The popularity of the sculptures of the royal doors can be traced on other religious objects inside the churches of Maramureș. The most obvious influence appears in the appearance of iconostases and individual icons (Fig. 33), which took over and expanded the theme of the entrance into heaven. A similar influence can be recognized in the triptychs (Fig. 28) that imitate the shape of royal doors and in the altar icons (Fig. 29), which take over the openwork sculpture. Both types of objects carry the theme of the Annunciation and the partial meaning of the gate of heaven.

Finally, the royal doors of Maramureș can be understood only together with those preserved beyond the tops of the Northern Carpathians, which served as a model. Conversely, the royal doors from Maramureș – copied, adapted, and preserved in unexpectedly large numbers in a compact region – contribute to a better understanding of the artistic and cultural phenomena of the Northern Carpathians, and beyond. Therefore, the royal doors on both sides of the Northern Carpathians must be examined and further studied as a common heritage. In such a way, we can better understand this unique place of cultural exchanges between east and west, north and south.

Notes:

1 Texts may not always have a direct influence on the image, but they do show a common ground for thought and expression. The site *Cele șapte laude* (<https://sites.google.com/site/ortodox007/>) was very useful in the study of liturgical texts. I resorted, whenever possible, to old texts, both for a closer understanding of their meaning and to highlight the effort of the Romanian elite in the pre-modern era to raise and impose the language of the people as a language of worship. Modern liturgical books in English are available through Ponomar project (<https://www.ponomar.net/english.html>).

2 The pioneer of research regarding the royal doors in the Northern Carpathians was the Ukrainian researcher Mykhaylo Dragan, whose reference work was published only after his death, in 1970 (Драган 1970). It is worth mentioning the album: *Царські врата* 2012. Most noteworthy and inspirational for the purpose of the present study is Svitlana Olianina's contribution, materialized in her doctoral dissertation on symbols in ancient Ukrainian iconostasis, including the royal doors (Оляніна 2019).

3 In 1596 at Brest, extended in 1692 to Pryzemyśl and in 1700 to Lviv, in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in 1646 in Ungvar, in northern Hungary, and in 1698 in Alba Iulia, in Transylvania.

4 Partial return to Orthodoxy in the early 17th century in Poland, the temporary re-establishment of the diocese of Maramureș between 1690-1733, the re-establishment of the diocese of Transylvania after the riots of the 1760s.

5 Deluga 2019, p. 11-38.

6 Sołtysiak 2006.

7 Sołtysiak 2006; Оляніна 2019; Deluga 2019, p. 39-70.

8 Драган 1970, p. 44-52.

9 Baboș 2004, p. 230-231.

10 Constat 2006, p. 174-175.

11 Baboș 2020, p. 176-222.

12 Florenski 1994, p. 154-156.

13 Шалина 2000, p. 52-84.

14 Оляніна 2019, p. 160-161.

15 About the structure and symbolism of the liturgical act in Byzantine commentaries, see: Ică 2011.

16 Title formulated in the first centuries of Christianity and consecrated as absolute truth at the Third Ecumenical Council (Ephesus, 431). Ladouceur 2006, p. 5-57.

- 17 Софонович 2002, p. 58-59. "Why are they called royal doors? Because through them enters only the King of Glory, Christ, and the priest, who is a symbol of His presence. What does it mean that the royal doors open in two? It means the separation and difference between the visible and the invisible, both in heaven and in the altar, there is invisible fire, just as there are visible things in heaven and in the church. Why are four evangelists depicted on the royal doors? Because by the teaching of the four evangelists the foundation of the Church was laid, and the whole world was united by one law into one Church. That is why the Annunciation appears above the evangelists on the royal doors, because the archangel in heaven proclaimed our salvation, and the Annunciation was preached by the holy evangelists throughout the world." Thanks to researcher Svitlana Olianina for providing the text.
- 18 The royal doors are sometimes wrongly associated with a parable of the good shepherd, the symbol of *Christ the Door* (John 10: 9), through which believers are called to enter the kingdom of heaven. The representation of *Christ the Door* is found in Maramureș only on some doors to the nave or to the narthex, as for example in the church of Strâmtura.
- 19 *Menaion*, November 21, at litia, tone 1.
- 20 *Menaion*, November 21, another canon, third song.
- 21 *Menaion*, November 21, Canons, first song, tone 4.
- 22 *Dveri* textually mean curtains, but colloquially referred to royal doors.
- 23 The doors to the narthex and the nave are, in exchange, closed by massive doors and locks.
- 24 Braniște 1993, p. 401.
- 25 Bârlea 1909, p. 21, note 32. *Mineiu pe luna Noiembrie*, Râmnic, 1778, p. 133; *Menaion*, November 21, the doxastikon of the Great Vespers, contains exactly the same text.
- 26 Ezekiel 44:1-13. Solomon's temple was considered of divine inspiration and for this reason it became an important model in the sacred art and architecture of Christianity.
- 27 Salvador-González 2020, p. 615-633.
- 28 The Christian interpretation to the doors of Solomon's temple influenced the royal doors since their introduction into Byzantine architecture in the second half of the first Christian millennium. Before the fall of Constantinople in the middle of the 15th century, the temple and the royal gates were already crystallized and integrated into the place of worship.
- 29 Sfântul Simeon al Tesalonicului (1765): *Voroavă de întrebări și răspunsuri*, cap. 309. See also: *Tratat asupra tuturor dogmelor credinței noastre ortodoxe* (2002), Suceava, part v, chap. 155.
- 30 *The troparion of the Theotokos*, tone 8, Sunday, at the end of Matins.
- 31 *Menaion*, March 25, at Great Vespers of the Annunciation (litia), tone 2.
- 32 Софонович 2002, p. 58-59.
- 33 Sfântul Simeon al Tesalonicului, *Tratat* (2002), part v, chap. 155.
- 34 *Menaion*, November 21, at Great Vespers (litia), at the apostichia, stichera in tone 5.
- 35 *Menaion*, March 25, at Great Vespers of the Annunciation (litia), tone 4.
- 36 *Troparion of the Theotokos*, tone 5, Sunday evening.
- 37 Among studies dedicated to Marian symbols: Herea 2013, p. 363-381; and Ladouceur 2006, p. 5-57.
- 38 Sfântul Simeon al Tesalonicului, *Tratat* (2002), part v, chap. 118, p. 165.
- 39 At consecration, there are allowed to remain inside the church only "those parts who should stay forever"; among these, the royal doors were essential. Sfântul Simeon al Tesalonicului, *Tratat* (2002), part v, chap. 108.
- 40 As for example the royal doors in Budești-Josani, Călinești-Căeni, Breb, Ieud-Deal, Săliște de Sus-Buleni, Săliște de Sus-Nistorești, Oncești, Hoteni, Mănăstirea Giulești, Hârnicești, and so on. In other cases, the royal doors were reused from former replaced churches, as in Budești-Susani, Călinești-Susani, Desești and Strâmtura. In some other churches, they mark some important renovations, as in Rona de Jos, Sârbi-Susani, Vișeu de Mijloc and Poienile Izei.
- 41 Constatas 2006, p. 174-175.
- 42 *Acahistiariu cu multe alese rugăciuni pentru evlaviia fieștecărui creștin*, Blaj, 1763, p. 292-361.
- 43 The pair of old royal icons from Șieu comes most probably from a workshop north of the Carpathians. Ezekiel is pictured on the side columns among twelve prophets.
- 44 Dionisie din Furna 2000, p. 145.
- 45 Cavaros 2005, p. 18-21.
- 46 Similar representations are easily recognizable on the iconostasis from Călinești-Căeni, Ieud-Deal, Sârbi-Susani, Poienile Izei and Bârsana-Jbâr.
- 47 Uspensky 1994, p. 178.
- 48 *Menaion*, November, the *troparion of the Theotokos* at the end of the book, tone 3, Wednesday evening.
- 49 *Menaion*, March 25, at Great Vespers of the Annunciation (litia), troparion in tone 4.
- 50 For the iconography, composition, and symbols of the Annunciation scene in European art and their Christian doctrinal sources, see José María Salvador-Gonzales' recent studies.
- 51 Uspensky 1994, p. 178-179.
- 52 Grabar 1961.
- 53 Софонович 2002, p. 58-59.
- 54 Some representative examples can be seen in Cuhea, Ferești, Apșa de Mijloc-Susani, Sândreni/Olexandrivka, Dănileni/Danylovo, Bârsana-Jbâr, Rozavlea and in Moisei Monastery.
- 55 *Menaion*, January 30, at the Little Vesper, tone 6.
- 56 *Menaion*, June 4, at Matins, Ode 1, tone 6. The hymn was singled out by Ladouceur 2006, p. 5-57; and by Kruk 2017, p 53-68.
- 57 Оляніна 2019; Царські врата 2012.
- 58 *Bible*, New King James Version, Song of Solomon 4:12-14.
- 59 *Bible*, New King James Version, Song of Solomon 7:12-13.
- 60 Delightful flowers, fragrant leaves, and pleasant fruits were introduced in the first Baroque-inspired royal doors of the 17th century, for example in Sârbi-Susani, Hârnicești, Desești, Mănăstirea Giulești, and Rona de Jos. Even the medallions, in which the figures from the Annunciation cycle appear, often take the form of luxurious bulbs or fruits that come out of flowers and grow naturally from the shoots of the trees. Exotic flowers, leaves, and fruits became increasingly rare in the sculpture of the next century, as the composition was simplified. In exchange, the grape-laden vineyard was retained and amplified. By using vegetal motifs, the carved royal doors follow the example of the doors of Solomon's temple, described by Ezekiel (41, 23-25): "The temple and the sanctuary had two doors. The doors had two panels apiece, two folding panels ... Cherubim and palm trees were carved on the doors of the temple ..."
- 61 *Octoechos*, tone 5, on Saturday morning at Matins, Ode 4, Canon of the departed, theotokion.
- 62 "Killed through eating from the tree, we have been restored to life through the Tree of Thy Cross." *Triodion*, Wednesday in Cheese Week, Matins, The Three-Canticle Canons, canticle 3, first canon, tone 2.
- 63 *Menaion*, September 8, Matins, ode 6.
- 64 *Bible*, New King James Version, Revelation 22:2. The Old Testament correspondence of the description of Heaven with the Tree of Life in the middle is found in Ezekiel 47:12: "Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine."
- 65 In some other cases, the twelve grapes are visible in the wings of the royal doors, but their meaning may shift accordingly. Relevant examples can be admired in Remeți (c.1785), Dănileni/Данилово (c.1779), Sârbi-Josani (1764), Budești-Josani (1762) and Berbești (1759).
- 66 *Canons of the Theotokos*, tone 8, Thursday evening, ode 3. See also: *Bible*, Numbers 17:1-13.
- 67 *Menaion*, August 31, Matins. Further on (ode 4), one can read about the transcendental function of the girdle (cincture): "O Theotokos, thy divine cincture draweth up from earth to heaven us who are transported by love for thee and it."

68 Zechariah 11:7. "Covenant" refers to the first creation, in body, and "Mercy" refers to the second creation, in spirit. The payment of the Shepherd (Christ) in Zechariah's prophecy was 30 pieces of silver, which the Shepherd did not receive, but donated to the Great Temple. There are 30 and 31 coins placed on the pilasters from Rozavlea and Așa de Jos-Părău, respectively.

69 *Menaion*, September 8, Matins, canon, tone 6: "You were a golden censer, because the Fire in your womb Dwelt, the Word from the Holy Spirit; and in the form of a man the Mother of God, Pure, appeared in you."

70 *Octoechos*, Songs of the resurrection, tone 6, Thursday Matins.

71 *Octoechos*, Songs of the resurrection, tone 6, Wednesday vespers.

72 *Octoechos*, Songs of the resurrection, tone 6, Monday Matins, canon, ode 3.

73 See the richly carved doors from the Cotmeana Monastery (possibly from the end of the 14th century) preserved in the National Art Museum of Romania, some royal doors from Moldova, from the Humor Monastery (circa 1535) and the Voroneț Monastery (1581), from the Crasna Hermitage, in Oltenia (mid-17th century), and those from the Partoș Monastery, in Banat (early 18th century).

74 For another interpretation of the royal doors through the symbol of the tree of life and the entire iconostasis through the image of the garden of heaven see: Оляніна 2019, p. 166-181 and p. 280-289.

75 Драган 1970, p. 44-52.

76 *Triodion*, Sunday in Cheese Week, canon of Resurrection, ode 1, tone 6.

77 Luke 1:28.

78 John 3:3-8, Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.

79 *Biblia*, Blaj, 1795. Isaiah 53:2 and Isaiah 11:1.

80 Numbers 17:8.

81 *Canons to the Most Holy Theotokos (Little Octoechos)*, tone 8, Saturday vespers, ode 1.

82 The iconography of the tree of ancestors was inspired by that of Jesse's tree. About the iconography of Jesse's tree in the painting from the north of the Carpathians in the 17th-18th centuries, see: Косів 2019, p. 1379-1392.

83 One of the first such doors come from the Wallachian church of the Assumption in Lviv (dated about 1629, moved later to Velyki Hrybovytsi), from the church of St. Friday in Lviv (1644) and those in Rohatyn (1649). Царські врата 2012, ill. 47, 48 și 49. See also: Драган 1970, p. 48-49. Similar royal doors are documented in Lublin (ca. 1633) and Zamość (1643); see: Deluga 2019.

84 Jesse appears illustrated in the carving of Ukrainian royal doors towards the end of the 17th century, for example at Nova Skvaryava, dated 1697-99. The oldest royal doors from Maramureș that contain the figure of Jesse at their base are documented in Berbești, in 1759.

85 About the painter Alexander Ponehalsky, known among Romanians as the painter Alexa, see Baboș 2018-2019.

86 In Budești-Josani, Sârbi-Josani, Călinești-Căeni, Călinești-Susani and Strâmtura.

87 *Minologhion*, Blaj, 1751, p. 25, ode 4, troparion at the feast before the celebration of the Nativity of the Mother of God.

88 Денисенко 2010, p. 195-213. Note that while the allegory adds alternative readings to some scenes, the emblem precisely narrows them down to one correct reading. In both forms of communication, the message is hidden and must be sought beyond appearances.

89 Revelation 5:5.

90 *Menaion*, November 21, Matins, canon 2, ode 8.

91 The Icon of the Resurrection, where the ancestors are released from the mouths of hell.

92 In the Latin form there was a play on words and meanings between the shoot: *virga* (*vargă*, in Romanian) and virgin: *virgo* (*vergură*, in Romanian), which inspired the iconography of the

subject. Reddish 2003, p. 1-15.

93 *Canons of the Resurrection (Great Octoechos)*, tone 3, Saturday Matins, *Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos*, ode 3.

94 *The Lenten Triodion*, Monday in the fourth week, Matins, tone 3, *Theotokion*; very similar with *Canons of the Resurrection (Great Octoechos)*, tone 3, Friday Matins, ode 3.

95 See similar version in note 94.

96 *Menaion*, February 2, litia, tone 8; the feast of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple.

97 The bird symbol offers many interpretations. Further extensive mapping of each symbol, on different criteria and in different contexts, would be necessary to establish more precisely their meaning and correspondence in art and texts.

98 Matthew 7:18-20. Peter Mohyla, metropolitan of Kyiv, clarified this quote as follow: „Good works, that is Christian virtue, are a fruit that grows from faith, as from a tree”, by a binomial: tree (faith) – fruit (deed). Movilă (1642) 1981, part 3, question 2, p. 142.

99 Vivian 2020, 272.

100 *Canons to the Most Holy Theotokos (Little Octoechos)*, tone 4, Wednesday vespers, ode 4.

101 *Menaion*, March 24, Matins, ode 8.

102 *Menaion*, March 24, Matins, ode 5.

103 *Canons to the Most Holy Theotokos (Little Octoechos)*, tone 1, Saturday vespers, ode 4.

104 Isaiah 11:2. The importance of this passage was emphasized in the eighth article of faith of the Orthodox Creed, concerning the Holy Spirit, defining Byzantine theology and rite in relation to the Latin; see Movilă (1642) 1981, p. 73-81, questions LXIX-LXXXI. So, the bird carved on the royal doors may be more than a symbol of the Holy Spirit, it may support a Byzantine identity.

105 *Menaion*, January 22, Matins, canon, ode 9.

106 Moraru, Georgescu 1996, p. 13-193. As the symbol of loyalty, the phoenix bird may have appeared on the royal doors to emphasize the need to preserve the Byzantine faith. For other versions and meanings, see the texts on the phoenix bird and the eagle, whose attributes and meanings intertwine, at Velculescu, Guruianu 2001, p. 36-37, 51-52, 56, 69-71 și 80.

107 Barbu 2018, p. 43-57.

108 Ardelean 2015, p. 471-480.

109 Pop 2012, p. 338.

110 Baboș 2018-2019, p. 18.

111 Bârlea 1909, p. 36, nr. 144.

112 Baboș 2004, p. 221-297.

113 Dateable around 1754.

114 Baboș 2000, p. 130-135. The attributes of the three birds, accompanied by Christian parables, are found in the *Physiologist*, see: Velculescu, Guruianu 2001.

115 Bîlțiu, Pop 1996, p. 94, Carol 50: "Colindul merelor căpătate de la fata de crai". See also the carols 37-49 from the same source.

116 Bîlțiu, Pop 1996, p. 88, carol 38.

117 Iuga 2008, p. 76. Another two versions at p. 319 and 324.

118 Bîlțiu, Pop 1996, p. 260, carol 350. We find the reason for his upset in a larger version of this carol, with the theme: *Lamenting the sins of mankind*, p. 237-238, carols 304-305-306.

119 Iuga 2008, p. 136.

120 Iuga 2008, p. 133.

121 The ecclesiological significance of the Marian cult in the royal doors remains a challenge for further research and future discussion.

122 Read the exchange of lines between Kasjan Sakowicz and the Metropolitan of Kyiv, Peter Mohyla, in the 1640s. Deluga 2019, p. 28-31.

123 Baboș 2004, p. 206 and 281.

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RÉSUMÉ : Un siècle après la publication des premières recherches sur l’église Sainte-Parascève de Tălmăcel, de nouvelles études permettent de reconstituer l’histoire de la fondation du village transylvain à la fin du XVIII^e siècle. Elles mettent en évidence la valeur architecturale et le caractère représentatif des composantes artistiques dont l’église du village a été dotée à différents moments historiques ; caractéristiques qui ont déterminé le classement de cette église en tant que monument historique. La présente étude se propose de réexaminer les recherches publiées jusqu’à présent et poursuit l’investigation grâce, entre autres, aux apports fournis par la restauration de l’ensemble mural. Les informations inédites identifiées dans les documents, les notes transcrites dans les anciens livres liturgiques des archives paroissiales, permettent d’identifier la signature de l’artiste Ioan de Poplaca, à qui l’on devrait certaines parties de la peinture murale de l’église. Sa contribution, jusqu’ici inconnue, peut être désormais différenciée de celle de l’autre peintre, Panteleimon. La différenciation de leur activité à Tălmăcel permet de mettre en évidence quelques particularités stylistiques propres à chacun de nos deux artistes ; caractéristiques qui, par analogie, nous pouvons également identifier dans d’autres de leurs œuvres. À titre subsidiaire, l’article permet de reconstituer leurs biographies.

MOTS-CLÉS : icônes ; peintures murales ; XVIII^e siècle ; Transylvanie ; église rurale.

REZUMAT: S-a scurs aproape un secol de la publicarea rezultatelor primelor cercetări întreprinse asupra bisericii „Sfânta Paraschiva” din Tălmăcel. Între timp, o serie de alte contribuții științifice au aprofundat cunoașterea acestei întemeieri a unei obști sătești transilvănene, de la sfârșitul veacului al XVIII-lea, evidențiindu-i valoarea arhitecturală și caracterul reprezentativ al componentelor artistice cu care a fost înzestrată în diverse etape istorice. Însă aportul cel mai prețios l-au avut la conservarea caracteristicilor amintite, prin faptul de a fi determinat cu argumente convingătoare clasarea acestora în categoria monumentelor istorice. Reanalizând opiniile exprimate până în prezent de cercetători, studiul de față extinde investigația din perspectiva devenită accesibilă după restaurarea ansamblului mural și în lumina câtorva informații inedite culese din acte și însemnări așternute pe filele unor vechi cărți de ritual, din arhiva parohiei. Identificarea semnăturii lui Ioan din Poplaca, marcând părți din ansamblul de pictură murală al bisericii de la Tălmăcel, îngăduie diferențierea contribuției sale, până acum necunoscută, în raport cu a celui alt zugrav, Panteleimon. Această separare înlesnește reliefaarea anumitor particularități stilistice proprii fiecăruia dintre cei doi artiști, oferind temeuri pentru a le atribui alte opere, prin analogie cu ce au realizat la Tălmăcel și, în subsidiar, stabilirea de noi repere în biografiile lor.

CUVINTE-CHEIE: icoane; picturi murale; secolul al XVIII-lea; Transilvania; Tălmăcel; biserică rurală.

In 1912, on the occasion of the publication of the eulogy given by Alexandru Ciura, professor from Blaj, at the funeral of Octavian Smigelschi, the painting of the “Saint Paraskevi” church in Tălmăcel was first mentioned. Evoking the artist’s period of training, it was mentioned that “he was a high school student, merely a child, when his beautiful dream of becoming a painter was first conceived. He looked with great love at the painting of the church in Tălmăcel and his eyes lit up with a holy spark, a great dream.”¹ Of course, the boy used to accompany his father, Mihail Smigelschi, a communal notary, on the latter’s frequent visits to the village at the foot of Cindrel Mountains.

The first report of some historical relevance, however, dates to 1929. This is a note from the work dedicated by Ștefan Meteș “to the painters of the Romanian churches from all times and lands.” The researcher stated, invoking the contents of an original inscription communicated to him by Archpriest Emilian Cioran, that the church in Tălmăcel was built in 1776 and that the painters were Oprea from Poplaca and Pantelimon. The latter was identified as the later restorer of the frescoes of the Royal Church from Curtea de Argeș.²

Ioan D. Ștefănescu demonstrated interest in the church in Tălmăcel as part of the research he was undertaking, around the same period, on the painted decoration of Transylvanian monuments. He researched the iconographic ensemble, listing the subjects according to the principle of their spatial distribution. As for the age of the church, he estimated that it dated to the beginning of the 18th century. He also put forward the view that the church replaced another sacred building, whose iconographic program had probably inspired the painters of the new monument. The murals were dated to 1780, a year identified in the votive inscription on the left side of the iconostasis, “which also includes the name of the painter, Pantelimon.”³

A shift toward a more accurate understanding of this monument shifted, during the next almost nine decades, into a stumbling block for researchers who assumed, without a critical evaluation, the premises established by Ștefan Meteș and I. D. Ștefănescu. It was known that the first one did not actually do research in the church in Tălmăcel, and the reading of the inscription to which he referred was mediated by a non-specialist. I. D. Ștefănescu

relied on the dating of the church building only on iconographic arguments, and, in the matter of assigning the mural decoration, he lacked stylistic determinations, which were impossible to achieve in the conditions of that time, when consistent deposits of dust and soot darkened the frescoes.

Such considerations urge researchers to resume the investigation, and preserve only the verifiable aspects that can be deduced from the opinions presented above. As regards the identity of the founders and painters, these details can be established based on the inscriptions recovered during the restoration of the painting in 1984 and the documents from the parish archive, which contain information about the circumstances in which the church was constructed.

DOCUMENTARY REFERENCES TO A CHURCH BUILDING THAT EXISTED BEFORE THE CURRENT CHURCH

The first references to the religious life of the inhabitants of Tălmăcel and to the existence of a church in this settlement date to the beginning of the 18th century. In 1721, in that Romanian village, which was part of the Saxon Chair of Sibiu, a church attached to the Greek-Catholic archdiocese of Râșinari served as the place where the community was spiritually assisted by three clerics,⁴ who were also mentioned in two conscriptions from 1733. Statistical documents provide details about the confession of the inhabitants and of their priests. Among the clergymen, Marcu Jr., who had been ordained in 1724⁵ by Bishop John Pataki, declared that he was Greek-Catholic. The others, Marcu Sen. and Iacob, both ordained in 1711 by Bishop Athanasius, testified that neither of them,⁶ nor most of the families in the village where they pastored were Greek-Catholic.⁷

A note on the edges of several pages of the New Testament printed in Alba Iulia in 1648 sheds light on the kinship relationship that can be established between the two priests mentioned above. Through these lines, written and edited by Bishop Inochentie Micu on April 18, 1734, it is attested that the volume had been bequeathed by the priest Drăghici from Tălmăcel to his sons, namely the priests Iacob and Marcu cel Tânăr, as well as to their sisters, Maria and Opriana, and that out of their goodwill the village church received alms. But when Iacob died, Marcu cel Tânăr bound himself before the bishop to redeem the book, in the event that claims would be made against it by his brother's heirs.⁸ It is understood that the precious print had entered the property of the church, which was now Greek-Catholic, and Marcu cel Tânăr, a servant at its altar, could expect the successors of the late Orthodox priest Iacob to wish to revoke his donation.

The particular circumstance evoked by this seemingly insignificant note, regarding a disagreement manifested between members of the same family, but who had opted for different religious confessions, reflects the relations, increasingly difficult to harmonize, in which the community of the village and the Greek-Catholic clergy found themselves at that time. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, the peasants of Tălmăcel dared to disregard the authority of the bishop, even at the risk of being punished for disobedience to the orders of the secular rulers. In the spring of 1744, when investigators were sent to find out how the Government's obligation to examine how church services, performed by the Greek-Catholic priests, were being respected, the villagers replied that they hoped the queen would have the grace to allow them to live freely in the religion of their ancestors, without any change. Also, if the priests contributed to the union, of

which the villagers knew absolutely nothing, they would like only the priests to continue to take care of it, and to be allowed to have priests of the same confession as theirs.⁹ Such an attitude of resistance was also shown in the following years, so that at the beginning of the 1770s, the village was considered officially Orthodox, as was the local church.¹⁰ Both the conscription of the faithful who belonged to the non-uniatic diocese (1766)¹¹ and the conscription commanded by the uniatic bishop Atanasie Rednic¹² (1767) confirmed that Tălmăcel, with a community of over a thousand faithful, was among the most populous settlements of the Mărginimea Sibiului region and that in the matter of church organization it was in a consolidated situation. The Orthodox priests Constantin Simion (born in Veștem) and Achim Potreca (born in Porcești)¹³ ministered in the parish of the Sibiu archdiocese at that time. Besides them, in a deed of donation of an estate, made on behalf of the church from Tălmăcel, on March 27, 1769, priest Ioan Moga and deacon Simion Săcăără are also mentioned as having ministered at the altar while the village mayor was Stroie Hăuș, and jurors Ion Totoroga and Oprea Borha.¹⁴

As for the building of the old church, there is a historical testimony, namely the representation of Tălmăcel on the Josephine Map of the branch Seat of Tălmăci. The cartographic document dates to the period 1769-1773 and attests that the church building occupied in the perimeter of the locality the same position in which the current one is located. We can assume that the monument had been built of stone and brick, as it is known that the churches from Sadu, Boița, Porcești or Racovița were in the region. The assumption is somehow reinforced by the rather large size of the bell cast in 1722¹⁵ – the only vestige left of the older church.

CIRCUMSTANCES FOR ESTABLISHING A NEW CHURCH

At some point, there were reasons to request the replacement of the old church in Tălmăcel. One of these was the demographic progress reported by the conscriptions of the 18th century. Between 1712, for example, and 1767, the number of families increased from 165 to 290.¹⁶ In a classification of the most populated localities in Mărginimea Sibiului, with such an increase Tălmăcel was in the third place, after Râșinari and Săliște. From an economic point of view, it was also in an advantageous position. It had large areas of hayfields, and, in terms of sheep, it competed with Râșinari, being surpassed only by the main pastoral centres of the region, which were Poiana, Jina and Tilișca.¹⁷ In the 18th century, the phenomenon of transhumance reached a great extent among the shepherds of Mărginimea Sibiului, as it was facilitated by the establishment of the so-called "sheep road," a corridor that allowed the herds to cross without restraint the territories south of the Carpathians, far into the Dobrogea steppe. The tithing of the pasture was applied according to the changing circumstances in the Romanian Lands and abuses were sometimes committed by the bailiffs of the plain,¹⁸ despite the harsh orders of the rulers. Any violation of the privileges established by the old custom of the country was met with resistance, and the Transylvanian shepherds, considered "imperial-royal subjects" (in Romanian *sudiți*), could appeal to the support of the Austrian Agency in Bucharest.¹⁹ In the parish archive from Tălmăcel, there are copies of some royal books of liberty issued by the ruler Ioan Mihail Alexandru Șuțu as a result of such diplomatic interventions. These were handed over to the shepherds in 1792 and



strengthened older ones from 1783 and 1785.²⁰

Above all, it is clear that the Josephine Edict of Religious Tolerance of 1781 was the most important stimulus for the initiation of church building in Tălmăcel, with dimensions and aspect designed to meet the needs of a large and prosperous community concerned with expressing its spiritual advancement.

The new cult building was erected in 1784. This fact is attested by a note made in the parish diary, that on October 14, 1884, the feast of the Holy Pious Paraskevi, "when the jubilee of one hundred years since the building of the church was held, together with a memorial service for the administrators and benefactors, 6 fl have been distributed as alms to the poor in the commune." The year 1785, inscribed with figures large enough to be easily visible on the east wall of the exonarthex, to the right of the access door to the narthex, could be an indication that certain works might have continued, as in the previous autumn, when Bishop Ghedeon Nichitici had consecrated the church to the patron saint *Prepodobna Paraskevi*.

The diptych painted at the Prothesis mentions, among the founders, Ion and Mărie, probably the spouses Ion and Mărie Herța, mentioned as founders in the painted inscription a few years later, placed above the door that opens in the western wall of the narthex. Ion Herța was of noble birth. The Register of Accounts in Sibiu records a certain knyaz Herțe (*Hercze Knesium*) from Tălmăcel, commissioned in 1506 and 1509 to collect the tax owed by the village to the Magistrate from Sibiu and who, on July 31, 1509, accompanied a Transylvanian messenger to the voivode of Wallachia.²¹

The list at the Prothesis continues with the names of some priests, about whom, however, there is no information whether they were parishioners in Tălmăcel, namely Ierei Bucur and Ierei Neagoe, then with the villagers Bucur, W[idower] Isoie, Stoica and Mărie.



◄ Fig. 1. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church (photo from 1939). Source: Ștefan Popescu.

▲ Fig. 2. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church. Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.

The architecture of the church.

The builders were inspired by the architectural program of the parish churches in Wallachia, transplanted to Transylvania during the second half of the 17th century and in the first years of the next, through the voivodship of Făgăraș and those closest to Tălmăcel, from Porcești and Ocna Sibiului. It is a slender, rectangular construction. The nave ends in a closed porch, over which a bell tower rises. To the east, there is a detached apse, contoured as semicircle inside and polygonal (with seven sides) on the outside. There was originally a dividing wall between the nave and the narthex, crossed by arches. The temple wall was provided on the upper level with a wide opening in the form of a semicircle and with central and lateral doors with archivolts in braces. Spherical caps on pendants, unloaded on arches supported by corner piles, cover the nave and the narthex. Above the sanctuary, a semi-hull with penetrations is connected to the axial half-cylinder corresponding to the western span.

In the exonarthex, the vaulting system starts from a transversal semi-cylinder, divided into three spans by doubles that support, in the centre, a spherical cap with a quadrilateral birth plan. It should be mentioned that a similar formula was used to cover the porch of the church "St. Teodor Tiron" from Sâmbăta de Sus (Brașov County), built in the same year as the one in Tălmăcel.²²

The decoration of the exterior facing consists of the simple shape of the plinth, a median torus that divides the façades into approximately equal registers, and a second one, meant to emphasize the cornice. Other mouldings outline the series of rectangular panels that follow the long route at the base, which correspond exactly to the arch in the upper register. This way of treating the façades, which Ioana Cristache-Panait considered to be influenced by the richly decorated façade of the voivode foundations from Porcești and Ocna Sibiului,²³ actually distinguishes the church from Tălmăcel among the Transylvanian church buildings, deriving from a formula typical of the Brâncoveanu decorative style, found at the hermitage "St. Stephen" of the Hurezi Monastery (1703), at the church of the Monastery of Anthim in Bucharest (1713-1715), at the chapel of the hierarchical residence from the Râmnic Episcopate (1751), at the church "St. Ștefan and Sf. Gheorghe" of the Jieni Boyar Court (Preajba, Dolj County, 17th century, rest. 1778-1779), and in other places.



▲ Fig. 3. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, view of the iconostasis.

Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.

Even in the first century of its existence, the original shape of the church building had undergone some changes. All these interventions can be documented due to their recording in the parish accounts. There is no mention of damage to the building after the powerful earthquake on October 14, 1802, recorded as a frightening event in a note made by the village teacher, Ioan Ignatovici, on the last page of the Pentecostarion from Râmnic (1743). Instead, in an inventory drawn up in 1861, it was stated that “the church, the roof, and the wall and the roof of the church cemetery are in good condition.”

The changes mentioned above were made in 1882, on the initiative of the parish committee, under the leadership of the priest Dimitrie Săcărea (b. 1823) and with the support of the donor George Buluț. Thus, in September, eight pillars and four long beams were bought and transported from Sibiu, over which the floor of the choir balcony were to be placed, and in the following month the carpentry and glass for new windows were ordered. In December, the payment was made to the Saxon craftsman Johann Scherer “for the breakage of the wall and the vault (*tympanum*) of the church between men and women and its clogging,” demolition imposed by the project to build the choir balcony, then “for the widening of 11 windows.”

THE WALL DECORATION, INSCRIPTIONS, PORTABLE ICONS, LITURGICAL FURNISHING

After the building of the church in Tălmăcel was completed, the interior endowment with parietal paintings, icons, and pieces of liturgical furniture was carried out in several stages. This process began with the painting of the chamber in the apse of the sanctuary, the iconostasis wall, and the soffit of the east arch of the nave. As mentioned earlier, the iconographic program from Tălmăcel was published by I. D. Ștefănescu in 1932, together with an analysis of the sources that inspired the iconographers in selecting the themes. Based on a meticulous observation of the church – although the paintings were darkened by smoke – the historian managed to display accurately the program of images in the apse: on the wall of the chamber, in descending registers, apostles, bishops and the usual group of Holy Fathers of the Church, completed by the images of the Holy Archdeacons Stephen, Roman and

Lawrence; on the north wall, “The Vision of St. Peter of Alexandria,” and next to it, in the Prothesis niche, a rare theme, Jesus Christ – The Source of Life; in the key of the triumphal arch, Jesus Emmanuel; below, prophets; at the level of the base of the arch, to the north, the Holy Righteous Fathers Joachim and Anna, and to the south, the Holy Righteous Fathers of the prophet John the Baptist.

However, I. D. Ștefănescu did not present as part of the iconographic program the images that make up the mural decoration of the temple. This aspect deserves attention, as the selection of themes and the way they were composed reveal a characteristic interpretation of the artist who completed this first stage in the painting of the church. The theological discourse that the images communicate has an eschatological character, focusing on the theme of the transfiguration of the universe under the sign of the cross through which Christ overcame death. The mystery of the regeneration of creation is celebrated in this artistic vision through a tumultuous manifestation of the heavenly hosts. The presence of these heralds of the establishment of the kingdom of divine glory dominates the whole composition. The Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel flank the royal register, above which there are six other angelic figures. Rising one step further in the succession of these registers, stand the Great Deisis – the image of the Parousia and the universal Judgment; still above, a group of angels glorifying the Church of the Saints – the Mystical Body of Christ, symbolically foreshadowed by the Virgin *Orans*. Finally, next to the crucifix icon, the Seraphim protect the mystery of the atoning sacrifice, the Old Testament prefiguration of which appears on the reverse of the temple, illustrating the *Sacrifice of Abraham*.

The artistic originality and the deep theological meaning of this decoration are completed by the documentary contribution of the inscriptions noted by the painter in two places, on the sides of the temple wall. On the left, on three lines, a series of donors of the painting made at that time are mentioned, namely *Florea: Floarea Ioan : Bunea : Simeon : Maria : V[idow] : Floarea : Petca* (originally, with Slavonic characters: Флоарѣ Іоан : Бунѣ : Сімеѡн : Маріа : В : Флоарѣ : Петка).

On the right side of the temple, a certain *Oprea Totoroga* (Опрѣ Тоторѡга)²⁴ is mentioned first. Next, at a certain distance, there is the trace left after deleting a word, from which it is still difficult to distinguish and, therefore, remaining in question, the first and last of the letters: ω (*o - Omega*) and respectively ι (*ia - Iaco*). Next to it one can see the signature of the painter and the dating of the ensemble: *Paint[er] : Panteleimon 1789* (Зр : Пантелеімон АΨΠΘ).

Of the pieces that made up the royal register, in the original decoration of the temple, only the Deësis icon is preserved, currently mounted on the outer face of the pulpit. It is stylistically similar to the image in the extended composition of the subject, from the fresco on the iconostasis. It is perfectly permissible, therefore, to attribute the icon to Panteleimon. In addition, the painter left a note on the reverse of the wooden panel: *year 1789* (ЛА АНУЛ АΨΠΘ), a date that corresponds to the time when he executed the parietal painting in the apse and on the temple. The inscription continues with a few more words, difficult to read today unfortunately, being, presumably, a votive formula, from which the following fragment can be distinguished: *Dumitru Dumitru E. ot Tă[Imă] ce[!]* (Думитру Думитру Е. ѿ Тѣ[лмѣ]ч[!]). Later, and

probably by another hand, the names *Dumitru, Maria* (Думитру, МариѦ) was written with the words scratched across the panel.

A reminder left by Simion Săcărea, the parish priest in Tălmăcel, on the last page of the *Octoechos* – a hymnary printed by Metropolitan Anthim Iberian in Târgoviște in 1712, records that: “in 1789, August 2, the holy bishop Gherasim came to Sibiu.” Thus, we are indirectly revealed the name of the priest with whose care and of the bishop with whose blessing the interior works of the church in Tălmăcel were continued. In a second stage, which was to be started shortly after the end of the first, the vault of the east apse, the nave, the narthex, the exonarthex, and some exterior murals were painted in fresco, but the community entrusted this task to a master other than Panteleimon.

I. D. Ștefănescu presented the content of the program of images and the distribution of scenes in each compartment in a way that he considered to have been inspired by monuments from Wallachia: on the vault of the apse, the icon of the Theotokos with the Child – *Vlachernitissa*, accompanied by images of angels (completing the images previously painted on the chamber, by Panteleimon); in the nave, *the Pantocrator, Hetimasia, the Heavenly Hierarchy and the Divine Liturgy*; on the pendants, the evangelists, “each accompanied by the characteristic symbol and the allegorical figure of divine inspiration;”²⁵ on the load-bearing walls of the nave, south and north, scenes from the Savior’s Passion and Resurrection cycle, Military Saints, and just two of the Saviour’s miracles. The lack of a more developed series of miracles was attributed by I. D. Ștefănescu to the limited space that the painter had at his disposal.²⁶ However, it is possible that representations with this subject existed on the western wall, abolished in 1882, and the scene of the *Assumption* might have been represented there, as it is always present in the iconographic program of the nave. Let us also mention, among the images omitted by Professor I. D. Ștefănescu, the representations of Stylites, painted on the corner piles. The iconography of the narthex presents on the crown: the New Testament *Holy Trinity*, medallions with prophets and martyrs; on pendants, the melodists; on the vertical walls, scenes from the *Akathist of the Annunciation, The Virgin of Mercy, The Three Young Men in the Furnace of Fire, The Parable of the Ten Virgins, St. Mary of Egypt and the Pious Zosima*. The description of the program ignored the frieze of the anchorites and pious, as well as two images painted on each of the side walls, below the level of the arches that crossed the dividing wall between the nave and the narthex: *Saints Emperors Constantine and Helen* (south), *St. Mark the Ascetic* (north).

The iconography of the exonarthex includes on the vault, *the Holy Trinity in a body*, angels and seraphim, *the Apocalypse of St. John*, and on the vertical walls, to the east, *the Last Judgment*; to the west, the *Deesis, the Synaxarion, the Synaxis of the Holy Archangels* (November 8), *the Wheel of Life*, parables (“of the barren fig tree”, “of the death of the ruthless rich man and the poor Lazarus”, “of the narrow gate”).

The painter who completed this last phase of the process of mural decoration of the church in Tălmăcel has twice added his signature to his work. One of the signatures appears, as I mentioned earlier, in the inscription painted

above the door that opens on the western wall of the narthex. Unfortunately, in 1882, when the choir balcony was introduced, one of the transverse beams of which it was made was supported by craftsmen directly on the wall and at the level where the inscription was located, destroying the plaster and seven or eight of the lines of the text. The preserved fragments correspond to the beginning and the closing formula, respectively: *With the will of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, began ... Ion Herța, with his wife Mărie, founders; painte[r] Io[n] Isaiie ot Popla[ca], 1790 Oc[tober] 22* (Ку врерѣ Татѣлуи ши ку а Фіюлуи ши а Духулуи Сфнт сау Іцелут ... Іоѡн Херца : ку соцѣ са Мѣріе титори : І Зугра Іо[н] Ісаіе ѿ Попла : 1790 ѿк кв).

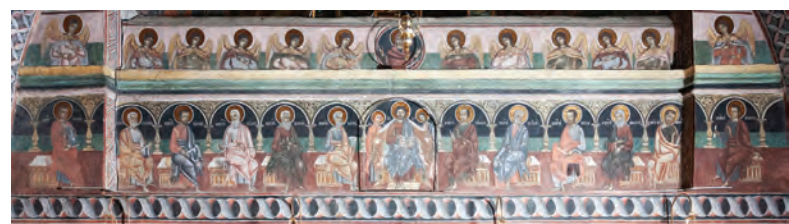
Due to the need for certain additions, it was probably requested that the painter from Poplaca should return to the church in Tălmăcel in the spring of the following year, when he signed the area of the image that represents *St. Mark the Ascetic*. The signature, with a more sophisticated handwriting, implies the following formula: *Ioan P[a]int[er], 20 M[ar]ch 1791* (Іоѡн Згр К Міе 1791).

The success that Ioan of Poplaca had, possibly due to the realistic, and thus more popular character of his painting, recommended him to return several times to the church in Tălmăcel, where he was possibly entrusted with painting the royal doors and, certainly, the portable icons meant to replace those painted by Panteleimon in 1789. In the first instance, he executed two royal icons: “Jesus Christ the Great High Priest” and “the Mother of God with the Infant”, signing only the last one, in the form: *by Ioan Zugr. (Paniter) Popla. 1807* (де Іоѡн Зугр. Попла. 1807). At the same time, the set of icons for the feasts of the liturgical year were completed. Much later, he was invited to paint two icons of the patron saint of the church, the Pious Paraskevi. The first one was placed on the temple, as a patron saint’s icon, and had the following dedication: *This holy icon was paid by Thomas Zbera and his wife Mary. Ion zugrav 1828* (Ачасть С. Ікоѡн о плѣтитъ Тома Збера ши фѣмел луи Мѣріе: Іоѡн Зуграб 1828). A year later, a second icon was dedicated to the same pious saint, to be mounted on a liturgical furniture item, an artistically made *proskynetarion*, which had been additionally decorated with the image of King David, the Prophet. An inscription mentions the names of the donors: *This tetrapod was prepared by Radu Zbera’s Milan and his wife Maria, October 18, 1829* (Ачасть тетраподъ сау прегѣтит де Милан а луи Раду Збера ши небаста луи МариѦ : 1829 ѿктомвре 4).

After the middle of the 19th century, the temple included two new pieces, namely the crucifix icon, with prayers (*molenii*), painted in 1858 by Ioan Zugrav, possibly Ioan Boicean, the younger brother of the painter Isaiah the Monk, and the icon of Saint Nicholas, the work

▼ Fig. 4. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, view of the iconostasis, detail.

Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.





▲ Fig. 5. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, the key of the triumphal arch, Jesus Emmanuel, painter Panteleimon, 1789. Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.

▲ Fig. 6. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, iconostasis, votive inscription including the signature of the painter Panteleimon, 1789. Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.

of another artist from Boița who signed it in 1865 with the name *Ioan Mani[u]*. The church also received the icon of the Holy Three Hierarchs, dated August 28, 1829, which might have also been painted by Ioan Boicean and – at a time that we cannot yet establish – two very refined icons in terms of artistic execution, produced in Russian workshops, probably toward the end of the 18th century. The subjects represented are: *The Burial of the Lord* (ПОЛЮЖЕНИЕ ВО ГРОБЪ Г[ОСПО]ДА) and respectively *Saint Nicholas the Miracle Worker* (ОБРЯЗ СТАГО НИКОЛЯ ЧД [Чудотворця]).

The Painters.

I. D. Ștefănescu attributed the creation of the paintings exclusively to the painter Panteleimon.²⁷ Later, in 1960, when

he published an inaccurate presentation of the church in Tălmăcel in the form of a note,²⁸ Victor Brătulescu only took over almost *ad litteram* the information from Ștefan Meteș's book, admitting that the merits for the decoration should be shared between Oprea from Poplaca and Panteleimon.

In 1976, Marius Porumb also circulated the name of the enigmatic painter Oprea from Poplaca, considering him the co-author of the mural ensemble in the church in Tălmăcel. However, he was the first researcher who correctly identified the year 1789, marked on the iconostasis,²⁹ although the fresco had not yet been restored. It seems all the more surprising that years later, after the paintings had meanwhile been “illuminated”, he changed his mind about the validity of his own observation, preferring to return to what I. D. Ștefănescu had previously proposed and to date the entire mural in 1780.³⁰ It should be pointed out that Marius Porumb definitively consecrated Oprea din Poplaca in the scientific literature, when he drafted a biographical sketch in the Dictionary published in 1998. And even if he admitted, with regard to the painter's origin, that it had been established by Ștefan Meteș without reference to sources (although in fact the author had revealed from whom he took the information), offered credit to the historian from Cluj, admitting the presence of the name Oprea, “almost illegible today”, in the inscription he published in an approximate and yet purely hypothetical reconstruction.³¹

In a study published in 1984, Ioana Cristache-Panait adopted the already accepted opinion that, in 1786 (*sic!*), there was a collaboration in the realization of the painting in Tălmăcel between Panteleimon and Oprea, even if she had seen with her own eyes that only the former “had placed his signature, on the iconostasis wall.”³²

The interpretation put forward by Maria Zintz is surprising and wrong at the same time, as she swore *in verba magistri* when she appropriated as an indisputable ground what is, however, only an unlikely testimony of the passage through this world of Oprea from Poplaca. However, she dared to sketch for this ghostly entity a human and an artistic profile, going so far as to make it incarnate in the person of the enigmatic painter Oprea from Porcești. Created out of pure imagination, and yet with obstinacy, this portrait has acquired distinct features, becoming surprisingly true. But the qualities that the researcher attributed to him, somehow succeeding in distinguishing them as being reflected in the paintings from Tălmăcel, were taken, on the one hand, from Panteleimon, who was thus stripped of virtues, and, on the other hand, from Ioan of Poplaca, who was thus unjustly and completely ignored as regards his substantial contribution to the accomplishment of a remarkable work.³³

The mural decoration of the church in Tălmăcel was made, successively, by Panteleimon and Ioan of Poplaca, between 1789 and 1791. This is highlighted by the signatures, marking corresponding sections of the image program, through which the two disclosed their identities and mater painter qualities.

Regarding the signature present in the inscription on the iconostasis, the word preceding it – erased, in circumstances and for reasons unknown – even if there is the possibility to be a proper noun, a name, it is sufficiently clearly delimited, including by a graphic symbol which marks a pause, from the term that follows, namely that of “painter”, strictly associated with the person of Panteleimon. In fact, the present reality makes it impossible to suggest a plausible interpretation of what the erasure has almost completely nullified from that fragment of writing.

For these reasons, it would be unfounded to admit the association of a second craftsman in the execution of the sector of the mural decoration marked by the signature of Panteleimon. The one who launched the presumption of such a collaboration, which later became a certainty to others, was the archpriest Emilian Cioran, when he put into circulation, through Ștefan Meteș, the name of Oprea from Poplaca. However, he did it without bringing any arguments and we can think of a possible misreading of the inscription, which was covered at that time with deposits of dust and soot. The line of the commune leaders who supported through donations the realization of the painting, which concluded in the text of the inscription with the name of Oprea Totoroga and, after a short interval, with the signature of the painter Panteleimon, could have been a reason for the mistake.

(a) The painter Panteleimon.

We know nothing for sure about the origin of this church painter and iconographer, from whom we are left with a relatively rich and distinct work owing to his monumental vision and well-individualized style. When he marked his contribution, "he simply signed, without any addition."³⁴ Marius Porumb assumed that he was "originally from Wallachia" and that he had been "educated in a monastic artistic environment," a fact indicated by the style he practiced, characterized by "the persistence of elements of Brâncoveanu tradition," as well as a "deep knowledge of iconography."³⁵ Instead, Ioana Cristache-Panait put forward the firm view that "Panteleimon was from Făgăraș,"³⁶ "like a whole pleiad of painters trained in the artistic climate of some locals, such as Ionașcu and Pană from Făgăraș, educated, in turn, by artists of to the south of the mountains, like those from Râșinari."³⁷ As such, she rejected the possibility that Panteleimon was from Argeș, as Vasile Drăguț³⁸ had opined, mistaking the artist who worked in Tălmăcel with "Pantelimon (Pandeleimon) from Curtea de Argeș, who had the same name as the one from Transylvania."³⁹

The first definite attestation of the name of the painter Panteleimon in Transylvanian painting is from 1782, when he appeared as the main signatory of the mural decoration, seconded by Nicolae and Alexandru (Grecu), in the inscription painted at the Prothesis, in the chapel of the church "St. Nicolae" from Zărnești (Brașov County).⁴⁰

Panteleimon's presence in Sibiu, at an early stage of his activity for almost four decades, may have been related to Hagi Constantin Pop's preoccupation for recruiting worthy painters to decorate places of worship at whose building he had contributed as a founder or supporter. It was, for example, the case of the church "St. Nichola" in



▼ Fig. 7. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, Deisis, icon assigned to Panteleimon, 1789.

Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.

▼ Fig. 8. Voivodenii Mari, the church dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, iconostasis, the Great Deisis, painter Panteleimon, 1813.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

► Fig. 9. Voivodenii Mari, the church dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the signature of the painter Panteleimon, 1828.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.



▲ Fig. 10. Voivodenii Mari, the church dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, iconostasis, the Great Deisis (apostles), painter Panteleimon, 1813.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

▼ Fig. 11. Mohu, St. Nicholas Church, view of the iconostasis.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

▶ Fig. 12. Mohu, St. Nicholas Church, frieze with hierarch saints in the sanctuary apse, paintings assigned to Panteleimon.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

Mohu (Șelimbăr, Sibiu County), built in 1782 with the help of the worthy and pious merchant from Sibiu. According to the inscription placed above the door that opens on the

western wall of the narthex, the mural decoration was made in an initial stage only in the altar, being completed later, until 1804, in the rest of the church compartments, by brothers Nicolae and Alexandru Greco from Sășăuș. The testimony of the latter, recorded in the inscription, attests that “the great church, the porch, the pulpit were painted, and the altar was renewed a little, being worked by another before.”⁴¹ Without being too affected by this intervention, it is easy to notice the painting of the apse to the east, which retained the remarkable imprint of Panteleimon’s style. What also belongs to him, but suffering the more radical intervention, of homogenization, performed by the two Greco brothers, is the decoration applied to the temple in the wall, on both sides of it, as well as to the triumphal arch. Looking at them as a whole, the paintings of the apse, the temple, and the eastern arch are very similar from an iconographic point of view (except for a few differences in the choice of themes and the introduction of an additional register, that of the feasts, in the iconostasis program), especially as a characteristic way of expression, to the corresponding section of mural decoration from Tălmăcel. If we admit that Panteleimon was the author of the first intervention in the painting of the church in Mohu, it means that, most likely, this happened before the construction of the Tălmăcel site, namely in the ninth decade of the 18th century, possibly around the inauguration of the altar in the church from Mohu, on December 6, 1785, “through the blessing and consecration of His Holiness Mr. Ghedeon Nichitici, Bishop of the non-uniate from Transylvania.”

At Drăguș (Viștea commune, Brașov county), in the nave of the wooden church, Valeriu Literat read, before the disappearance of this monument, the year 1800, in connection with the execution of the mural decoration that he attributed to Panteleimon.⁴²





СТИ



ІСДАНЬ СТИ

МІЗЯН



ЕАСІ

ІС ЧЕ



In a chronological order, the churches of Braşov County, where Panteleimon’s signature documents his intervention in the execution of the paintings, are those from Sâmbăta de Jos, (dedicated to the “Assumption”, paintings in the altar, the nave, and the narthex, from 1806),⁴³ Voivodenii Mari (dedicated to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, paintings in the apse of the sanctuary from 1812, possibly also the paintings found on the outside walls, from 1820),⁴⁴ Viştea de Jos (dedicated to the “Holy Archangels,” paintings in the altar and nave, from 1819 and on the outside walls, since 1820).⁴⁵

Fig. 13. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, narthex, votive inscription mentioning the ktetors and the painter Ioan of Poplaca, 1790.

Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.

Fig. 14. St. Nicholas Church, the St. Archdeakon Nicanor, painting in the sanctuary apse assigned to Panteleimon.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

Fig. 15. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, nave, St. Apostle and Evangelist Mark, painter Ioan of Poplaca.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.



(b) Ioan of Poplaca.

Only a few things can be said with certainty about the life of this Transylvanian church painter. It is known that he was a resident of Poplaca and that he was a native of this commune, which he probably never left for good. His name appears recorded, other than in relation to the creation of works of art, in a lapidary inscription placed in 1818 on the walls of the church in Poplaca,⁴⁶ immediately after its completion by Bishop Vasile Moga. The place of worship had been built in 1793, but until the final preparation and endowment, including the enclosing with a fence, it was necessary to postpone the time of the inauguration. At that time, the artist was a juror or, in other words, a communal councilor. It is interesting to note that, with one exception, all the persons involved in the founding act, either the bishop, the priests, the judges, the other jurors, the administrators of the goods of the church, or the mason, were mentioned and identified by their first and last names. However, the painter seems to have been known among countrymen as Ioan the Painter.

The novelty of the signature that I noticed in the painted inscription from Tălmăcel, in which the painter recommended himself as Ioan Isaiie from Poplaca, urges us to relate it to a documentary attestation, which remains for the time unique, about the presence, in the latter commune, of a priest named Isaiia. This is a note left in 1826 by the parish priest of the church dedicated to "Saint Pro-



▼ Fig. 17. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, exonarthex, the Holy Trinity in a body, painter Ioan of Poplaca.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

▼ Fig. 16. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, nave, Jesus Christ Pantocrator, painter Ioan of Poplaca.
Credits: Daniel Mihail Constantinescu.





▲ Fig. 18-19. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, nave, the Military Saints, painter Ioan of Poplaca.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

◄ Fig. 20. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, nave, St. Mark the Ascetic with the signature of the painter Ioan of Poplaca, 1791.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

► Fig. 21. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, Virgin Mary with Child, painter Ioan of Poplaca, 1807.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

►► Fig. 22. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, Jesus Christ the Great Teacher, painter Ioan of Poplaca.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

►► Fig. 23. Tălmăcel, Saint Paraskevi church, St. Paraskevi, painter Ioan of Poplaca, 1828.
Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

brajenii”, from Ocna Sibiului, whereby he recorded the payment of 9 zlotys that were due to a certain Isaiea, priest from Poplaca, because he had tied up a copy of the *Kyriacodromion* (Cazania printed in 1699) again.⁴⁷ Nicolae Iorga, who collected and published the note, admitted – on its basis – that sometimes there were also priests among the rare artisans who still practiced in the 19th century the old monastic craft of binding books.⁴⁸ It goes without saying, however, that they had to have had an aptitude for an occupation involving manual dexterity, and we might think that such a condition was met, for example, in the case of a priest who was also a painter. Therefore, we can assume that, after almost a quarter of a century in the service of the Church as a highly regarded muralist and iconic painter, Ioan Isaiea was ordained by Bishop Vasile Moga. In fact, in the monograph, lost today, which the parish priest Coman Baca Jr. (1866-1921) dedicated to the church in Poplaca at the beginning of the last century, it was stated that the mural “was made by Ioan Zugrav, local priest.”⁴⁹



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► Fig. 24. Porcești (Turnu Roșu), St. Nicholas church, western façade, patronal icon of St. Nicholas assigned to Ioan of Poplaca.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

◄ Fig. 25. Porcești (Turnu Roșu), St. Nicholas church, exonarthex, The Last Judgment, assigned to Ioan of Poplaca.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

▲ Fig. 26. Porcești (Turnu Roșu), St. Nicholas church, nave, St. Philip the Apostle, the Holy Archdeacons Stephen and Cyril, painter Ioan of Poplaca.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

▼ Fig. 27. Porcești (Turnu Roșu), St. Nicholas church, nave, St. Thomas the Apostle, the Holy Great Martyrs Theodore and Demetrios, painter Ioan of Poplaca.

Credits: Ioan Ovidiu Abrudan.

The identification of Ioan of Poplaca's signature, marking the execution of the paintings on the vault of the sanctuary, in the nave, narthex, and exonarthex of the "Pious Paraskevi" church in Tălmăcel, reveals the vigorous affirmation in the field of mural painting of the one who was considered, in particular, a prolific and skilled icon-painter.⁵⁰ The ability to express himself in the manner specific to monumental art has so far been assessed in the case of the painter mentioned above only by reference to a few known works. He was credited with the paintings on the vault of the porch under the bell tower of the church from Sebeșu de Jos (Turnu Roșu commune, Sibiu County), probably dating to the eighth decade of the 18th century;⁵¹ then, with those inside and on the façades of the "Birth of St. John the Baptist" church in his hometown (Tpq 1793),⁵² the original aspect of which has been altered by recent restorations. A similar intervention affected the painting executed by Ioan, in 1806, on the enclosure gate of



the church "The Assumption of the Mother of God" from Boița.⁵³ Other evidence that he practiced mural painting can be found in Sibiel (the decoration signed in 1814 of the crucifix called "from Gura Utii")⁵⁴ and in Rășinari (the decoration signed in 1826 of the crucifix called "from the Mountain").⁵⁵

The frescoes made in Tălmăcel demonstrate certain peculiarities of the style of the painter Ioan from Poplaca – especially the elongated and thin allure of the figures, but keeping the naturalness of proportions and anatomy, or the artist's inclination to attenuate contrasts by subtle, graded transitions from dark to light values, or from cold to warm tones – which allows us to attribute the images painted in the nave (on the supporting piles of the eastern double arch),⁵⁶ in the closed porch and on the west façade (patron saint's icon) of the church "St. Nicolae" from Porcești (today Turnu Roșu, Sibiu County).⁵⁷ In fact, Marius Porumb also noted the similarity "in style and iconographic composition" of the large representation of the *Last Judgment* in the exonarthex of Porcești, with the fresco illustrating the same subject in the exonarthex of the church in Tălmăcel.⁵⁸

To the church founded in 1653 by Matei Basarab in the village of Porcești, the exonarthex is an addition for which Eugenia Greceanu proposed the year 1750 as the *ante quem* term for its dating, as it had been inscribed on one of the scenes painted on the northern façade of the nave near the signature of Oprea Mihail Crăciun, but to whom, according to the researcher, iconographic representations applied to the western façade of the porch should also be attributed.⁵⁹ It would be more prudent, however, to consider the dating of this added compartment in relation to the year 1779, inscribed on one of the painted representations of the four evangelists, which occupy as many niches in a register located just below the cornice, on the western façade.

Regarding the contribution of Ioan of Poplaca to the decoration with murals of the church from Porcești, in

the mentioned places, this was possibly occasioned by the circumstance of the extension of the building, this time to the east, between June 1827 and June 1828, as attested by a lapidary inscription from 1829. The extension involved the demolition of the altar apse and its replacement with a trefoil nave, a situation that required finding solutions for the overall integration of the added segment. A satisfactory architectural solution to this problem was to build a roof that would rise “both over the new building and over the retaining walls, unifying both sides.” At the same time, on the façades of the trefoil nave, the exterior decoration of the church of Matei Basarab was reproduced, “with the same pious care for the preservation of the old architecture” that the builders of the porch showed in the 18th century.⁶⁰

If the unity of the built ensemble was obtained on the outside by architectural processes, on the inside this task was achieved with the help of the frescoes, the painting of the compartments added to the west and east being done in accordance with the mural decoration preserved in the old part of the church. However, the harmonious expression of the whole, as it had probably been fulfilled in the 19th century, can no longer be contemplated because of the recent paintings inserted into various areas and on different surfaces. Even a century ago, when I. D. Ștefănescu researched the church in Porcești, only the porch might have preserved traces of the original painting, all the other compartments of the building being covered by limestone walls, as the original mural decoration of the wall iconostasis had been repainted in 1927 by Nicolae Cabadaieff.⁶¹

A careful examination of the scenes attributed to Ioan of Poplaca in the area of the eastern double arch of the old nave, where the connection to the walls of the building from 1827–1828 was made, suggests that the artist had been employed to paint not only the porch, but rather to complete the mural decoration of the church. One argument in favour of this hypothesis is the fact that, after the removal of the lime from the walls of the trefoil nave, in the context of the preparations for the re-painting of the church, during the last decade of the last century, traces of an older painting emerged. Without intending to recover it, however, the performers of the new decoration took as a vague suggestion the original pattern of the composition in the crown, with the image of the Pantocrator, very similar in this respect to the one painted by Ioan on the vault of the nave, in the church from Tâlmăcel.

I. D. Ștefănescu considered that the paintings in the porch resulted from the restoration of an older decoration, in 1828, a year indicated in an inscription located in the upper part of the western wall of the exonarthex.⁶² The historian most likely referring to the contents of the inscription from 1829. However, that text did not mention the painting of the church, as there was no reference to that in the register of incomes and expenditures of Porcești parish in 1828. The latter document meticulously recorded the costs of each action taken during the expansion of the church, from the elaboration of the architectural project, the conclusion of the execution contract with the Saxon masons, the registration of the dona-

tions made for the production and assembly of the carpentry or the purchase of the royal icons, including the expenses incurred for the organization of the festivities of November 11, 1828, when the church was consecrated.⁶³ Reports from later years, however, show that the action of endowing the church was not over. We learn, for example, about a donation made in 1829, for the payment of the celebrations painted on brass and also in that year and then in 1831, about the circumstance – which seemed suspicious to Andrei Gălea, who published these annual reports – that they sold icons from the church for 2 zlotys each.⁶⁴ We know, however, that this practice was attested in Transylvania as early as the 18th century, in the sense that the support of the painting of churches was done by public contribution, each family committing itself to the payment of a scene or icon. It is, therefore, admissible to consider that the mural decoration was made by Ioan de la Poplaca during two or three years, starting in 1829, with the activity of painting the church ending in 1831 with the mounting of the royal and deacons' doors on the iconostasis, which were painted in Sibiu, by the artist Dimitrie Dimitriu. It is not without interest to advance the hypothesis of the actual meeting of the two artists, the former being characterized as a “last and late continuator of the post-Brâncoveanu style,”⁶⁵ and the latter being considered the earliest promoter of neoclassicism in church painting in Transylvania.

Based on the investigative approach presented above, we might draw the following conclusions regarding “St. Pious Paraskevi” church from Tâlmăcel – the main subject of this contribution. The first refers to the persistence of the interest for post-Brâncoveanu art, reflected by the features of a monumental work that was completed in a period, in an area of culture, and in a creative field in which the tendency toward forms of expression specific to late Baroque and Neoclassicism were present. If we refer strictly to the area of Mărginimea Sibiului, the church from Tâlmăcel is a last example of construction inspired exclusively by the repertoire of ecclesiastical architecture characteristic of the area south of the Carpathians.

The fidelity to the tradition was also manifested in the option of the founders to entrust the creation of the iconographic decoration to some muralist painters who cultivated and interpreted in their works the spirit of South Carpathian art. The initial choice of Panteleimon, coming from an artistic environment marked by the influence of the Brâncoveanu foundations from Făgăraș and Sâmbăta de Sus, was not accidental.

What was added to complete his contribution to the painting of the church in Tâlmăcel was also the earliest work – among the ones known so far – attributed to Ioan from Poplaca. The complexity of the iconographic program, as well as the perfect agreement between the painting and the architecture of the church, is proof of the intervention of an experienced artist.

Annexes: Notations on the pages of some cult books and scattered notes.

1. The New Testament, Bălgrad (1648):

1734 meșița aprilie optsprezece.

Despre aceasta facem în știrea cui să cuvine pentru rândul acestui Testament, cum să rămâie de [la] Pop Drăghici din Tâlmăcel feciorilor săi anume Popi[i] Iacob și Popi[i] Marcul cel Tânăr și surorilor lor Maria și Opriana, care Testament din bună voința lor l-au dat besericii din numitul sat Tâlmăcel ca să [se] pomenească ei și tot neamul lor în veci. Și oricine s-ar întâmpla sau ar vrea să o strămute de la acea Sfântă beserică să fie anatema, Amin.

An : zile : mai sus scris,

însă și feciorii răposatului numit Popi[i] Iacob, cu toată voința lor cea sufletească îl voiesc să fie al Sfintei beserici, acum Simion și Marcul zic că și ceialalți frați vor fi îngăduitori spre acest lucru

sufletesc, iară neîngăduindu-să ceialalți nescriși feciori ai Popi[i] Iacob, Pop Marcul cel Tânăr să leagă înaintea noastră că va înturna din cinci flor. parte lor ce să va căde.

Vl[ă]d[i]ca Inokentie

Această Sfântă Carte iaste a Sfintei biserică Neunite din Tâlmăcel, hramul Sf. Cuvioasei Paraschiva, tipărită în anul Domnului 1648.

Tâlmăcel 27 Ianu[a]r [1]858

Popa Dimitrie Secăria paroh.

2. Pentecostarion, Râmnic (1743):

Precum să știe ca aceas[tă] sf[ânt]ă carte iaste a sfintei biserică a Tâlmăcelului și s-au cumpărat din banii besericii din

gocia lui Marcul Herța și dintr-a lui Radul Moga și cine o are muta într-altă parte ar greși.

În anu 1750 noem[brie]...

3. Octoechos, Târgoviște (1712):

În anul 1769, în luna lui Martie 27 zile s-au făcut a precum eu Irimia Borha din Tâlmăcel fac știre tuturor celora să cuvine a ști, precum partea mea din moșie și din ocină a cinsti besericii Tâlmăcelului, până voui trăi eu să fie a mea. Iară după moartea mea va fi a besericii Tâlmăcelului și să se dea la beserică pe ea flor. trei și bani 50. Și cine va lucra acea moșie, întâiu să dea banii apoi să o lucreze. Și la acea moșie care o [voi] cinsti eu Irimia la beserică, pe tot anul să o lucreze preoții besericii jumătate de moșie și jumătate sătenii sau alții care va fi mai aproape și vor da acei bani rânduiți. Și iară eu Irimia Borha având un nepot de fecior și ajungând nepotul meu la căsătorie și se va căsători, va fi acea moșie a lui și va da pe ea ceară un punt pe an de-aci înainte. Iară de va muri nepotul meu, va fi precum s-au scris din sus și cine s-ar mesteca într-acest lucru al meu și ar strica, să fie blestemat și așurisit de sfânta Beserică. Și pentru întărirea și credința m-am iscălit punându-mi deștul meu, eu, Irimie.

Și aceasta s-au făcut în judecata [lui] Stroie Hăuș, fiind [de] față și din jurați Ion Totoroga, Oprea Borha părgariu și preoții besericii: popa Costandin ot Veștem, popa Ion ot Porcești, diaconul Simion Săcără. Si am scris eu, popa Ioan Moga din Tâlmăcel, cu zisa lui Ierimia Borha. Anul, luna, ziua scrise din sus.

4. Triodion, Râmnic, (1782):

Această sfântă carte să cheamă...

Această sfântă carte... la leat 1784: zil[e]... meța ...

5. Octoechos, Târgoviște (1712)

... anul 1789 Avgost 2 au venit prea o sfințitul vlădică Gherasim la Sibiu.

Cinstite părinte Simion, în anul 1789, 2 august.

*

La anul [1]822 scris-am în 8 zile Noemvrie

Ioan Mănduc dascăl.

6. Manuscript:

7917. 1792

Copie

M[i]l[o]stiv vias i sin (in attendance, n. n.) Ioan Mihail Constantin Suțul Voevod i G[o]sp[o]din Zemli Vlașcoi,

vDumneavoastră tacsatorilor i volo slujbași oeri de sub Argeș vă facem înștiințare pentru vâcărutul streinilor, care-l plătesc sudiții chesarocrăești la vremea oeritului pă vitele ce le au aicea în țară la pășune, adecă de vita mare câte bani 33 și de vită mică pă jumătate. Că cu acest cuvânt ce să zice de vită mică pe jumătate, s-au întâmplat în anul cel trecut a face slujbașii oerilor la unii din sudiți supărare, împotriva vechiului obicei, făcând tunșii cai mari și sugătorii⁶⁶ vite mici. Pe slujbași i-am pus Domnia mea de au întors înapoi banii ce au luat mai mulți, plătind noi chieltuială sudiților. Deci pentru ca să nu mai să întâmple și pe viitoarea vreme a face vreun slujbaș tâlmăcirea acestui cuvânt într-alt chip, măcar că am poruncit Domnia mea ca și punturile slujbii să să deslușească, dară iată și la mânilor sudiților am dat această Domnească carte mai-nainte, prin care poruncim de obște slujbașilor oiari ca la vremea cea obicinuită a oeritului să nu-i supărați împotriva, ci tunșii și mânzați aveți a-i socoti drept vită mică, de la care aveți a lua vâcărutul pe jumătate, adecă doi drept unul, iară cu sugătorii nu aveți a face.

I (sama) recohă⁶⁷ Gospode Vami⁶⁸

în București,

29 Avgost Anul Domnului 1792

L. P. ⁶⁹

Ioan Mihail Constandin Suțul Voevod Gospodin Zemli Vlașcoi.

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Sluga Domnii mele Vătaș di Plaiul Argeșului Sud (B),

Îți facem Domnia mea în știre că pentru lăcuitorii ai nemțeștia ce au vitele lor la pășune aicea în țara Domniei mele, vi s-au poruncit de obște prin deosebire cărțile Domniei mele de la șapte

ale lui avgust, întru care să cuprindă că lăna și mițale de la vitele ce le tund sus în Munți, lângă hotar, sunt slobozi dupe poruncile împărătești a o treace înlăuntru fără de a li să ceare nimic. Nici cu nume de hava[t]e, nici cu nume de vamă. Dar fiindcă să jăluiură sudiții cum că fără de cartea Domnii mele de slobozenie nu li să dă voie, iată Vă poruncim strajnic, că pentru acea lăna și miță tunse de la vitele lor sus în Munți lângă hotar, fără de a li să ceare cartea Domnii mele de slobozenie sau măcar adeverintă de la spătărie sau de la ispravnic, a o trece înlăuntru, urmând după cuprinderea cărții Domnii mele de la șapte ale lunii Avgost. Așjiderea arătarea și pentru ciobanii care vin de la vale și să sue în Munți la stână cu Mălai de hrana mâncării și nu ceale trebuincioase la stănele ce au în pământul țării Domnii mele, să opresc de către vâtaf i plaiasi, cerându-le răvaș de slobozenie și cu această pricină să zăbovesc și să trapă de câte doao trei zile până să nu meargă la ispravnici să aducă răvaș, care aceasta fiind fără de trebuință când acei ciobani nu au a trece cu mălaiu și alte trebuincioasă peste hotar, la stănele lor ce sunt sus pă Munți, a pământului țării Domnii mele, îți poruncim ție, Vâtaf de plai, ca și această ceare de răvaș să lipsească și să fie slobozi a merge la stână fără de răvaș ispravnicesc cu mălaiul cel trebuincios al hraniilor, grijind numai tu, Vâtaf, ca să nu treacă peste hotar cu cât de puțină zăhărea, fiindcă aceasta iaste porunca.

Așjiderea să jăluiură Domnii mele că nice acum la această vreme nu sunt slobozi a-și treace înlăuntru brânza de la vitele lor, după ce au încetat a da cași la cășăria, pentru care îți poruncim strajnic a împotriva punturilor să nu te cutezi a le face cât de puțin supărare și necazuri nici tu, nici plăiașii tăi, ce să fie slobozi în pace a sta vremea orânduită care iaste după punturi a-și treace brânza de la vitele lor înlăuntru, nesupărați de vamă sau de altă ceare cu orice fealu de numiri, că împotriva poruncilor Domnii mele care v-am dat după punturile împărătești cu cât de puțin de-i veți supăra și-i veți necăji să știți că negreșit te vom pedeși strajnic, urmând și întru toate celelalte după cartea Domnii mele de la Avgost în șapte, ce s-au dat la mâinile lor.

Așjiderea au arătat Domnii mele cinstita Agenție, cum că slujbașii ce să orânduiesc cu vâcărutul străinilor apucă pă sudiți a plăti vâcărutul străinilor și pentru cai și boi ce vin din lăuntru împovărați pă cai și îi cară cu boi și iarăși să întorc, care vite nu rămân în țara Domniei mele la pășune, ce numai merg și vin. Pentru care căutându-se condica Divanului de cealaltă Domnia noastră, s-au găsit la anul 1783 și la anul 1785 poruncile Domnii mele date după vechiul obicei cătră vameși și cătră vâcari ai slujbii vâcărutului, ca unele vite ca acestea să nu să supere de vâcărut, deci pentru ca Domnia mea de obște tuturor slujbașilor ce veți orându cu slujba oeritului și vâcărutului streinilor în vremea cea obicinuită, ca pentru acest făliu de vite împovărate ce merg și vin din lăuntru, care n-au pășunea lor aicea în pământul țării Domnii mele, supărare să nu li se facă. Pentru care s-au dat la mâinile lor aceste Domnești ale noastre cărți lângă cealelalte din trecuta lună a lui Avgost, după care aveți a fi următori,

I sama rechehă Gosp. Vami.

s-au dat în București în 7 Avgost 1792,

L. P.

Ioann Mihail Constandin Suțul Voevod Zimli Vlașcoi.

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a Cărții Domnești cei poruncitoare la vâtașii plaiurilor și la judeațele mai jos însemnate trimisă.

Sluga Domnii mele vâtaș din plaiu cu cutare îți facem Domnia mea înștiințare cum pentru Bârsani, Tuțueni ce vin cu oile lor la hrană în pășunea. În pământul țării Domnii mele date mai de nainte strajnice spre a păzi dreptatea întru toate după poruncile Domnii mele, dară pentru ca nu care cumva vreunu din voi vâtașilor ori la scoborârea oilor în țară cu vitele, ori la întoccare să vă cutezați în vreun fealiu de chip a le face împotriva vreo supărare. Iată, dar, iznoavă întărind poruncile ce sunt date pentru dânșii, Vă poruncim strajnic ca foarte să vă feriți de cea mai mică și cât de puțin ceare și supărare împotriva punturilor și poruncilor Domnii mele și păziți drept aceea întru toate să fie feriți și bine ocrotiți, pentru că ori mult ori cât de puțin de vor fi supărați de cineva și împotriva punturilor, bine să știți că acel vâtaș ori plăiași sau orice slujbaș chiar acolo în plaiu va cerca cea mai grea pedeapsă a Domnii mele, pentru pilda tuturor.

I sama recoh Gosp.

S-au dat în București în luna lui Septemvrie în 29 de zile 1792

L. P.

Ioann Mihail Constandin Suțul Voevod i G[os]p[o]d[i]n Zemli Vlașcoi.

7. Registry of the dead:

Roaba lui Dumnezeu Anna Preoteasa popi[i] Simion, lăcuitoare din Veastem, de leagea pravoslavnică grecească neunită, au murit în ziua 6 luna mai anul 1793, având de la nașterea sa ani 82 luni 11 zi 14 și după ... s-a îngropat în ziua 7 luna mai anul mai sus numit, în îngropătoarea cea de obște, în țintirimul cel vechiu neunit.

Cu chiar mâna sa preotul Simion Săcărea, paroh la satul Tălmăcel.

8. The Bible from Blaj (1795):

Această Sfântă Carte ce să chiamă Biblie și o au dat-o... din Tălmăcel și o au cumpărat...

Besearică a Tălmăcelului: hramul Prepodo[bn] Paraschiva, ca să-i fie pomeană în veaci lui și părinților lui și moșilor și strămoșilor lui și la tot neamul lui.

Și cine ar îndrăzni a o fura sau a o înstreina de la această Sfântă beserică a Tălmăcelului la alt loc, să fie supt blestemul și afurisenia Sfintei Scripturi câtă să pomeanește întru această Sfântă carte.

... a lui Ioan Totoroga ktitorului.

Am scris eu Radul Hăușu Notareș [din] sat și gociman la această Besearică a Tălmăcelului în anul 1799, luna lui Iunie 29 de zile, fiind pe vremea împăratului Francisc al doilea, în războiul cu Franțuzul.

Popa Simion Săcără p[aroh] și cu porun[cile] Dumniile Sale și Gubernator Țării Ardealului Exelea[n]ția sa Grofu Bamfi Gheorghie și preoți la această Sfântă Besearică: Popa Constandin Popoviciu.

9. Pentecostarion, Râmnic (1743):

Anul 1802, 14 Octombrie, în ziua de Vinerea Mare (Holy Friday, St. Pious Paraskevi, from the Greek name Παρασκευή, meaning Friday, n. n.) au fost un cutremur mare foarte de mișcarea pământului carea au fost înfricoșătoare foarte tare.

Anul 1802, 14 Octombrie în ziua de Vinerea Mare precum zic au fost un cutremur foarte mare de mișcarea pământului care s-au mișcat pământu.

Ioan Ignatovici

Dascăl satul Tălmăcel.

10. Horologion:

Acest Ceaslov iaste al lui Popi[i] Iacob și l-au dat de pomeană sa fie de pomenire în sfânta bisearecă a Tălmăcelului și cine se va afla să-l mute de la această biserică sau să-l fure sau să zică că e al lui să fie afurisit supt blestemul acelor 318 Sfinți Părinți de la Nichia și supt...

s-au iscălit în anul 1806, 20 mar[tie],

Ion crisn. cu Nicolae Popa crâșnicul bisearecii.

11. Epistle Book, Blaj (1814):

Această sfântă carte ce să numește Apostol, cumpărată de dumnealui Toma lui Ion Zbera cu soția lui Mariia. Cumpărată Sfint[e]I bisearici și cine s-ar îndrăzni a o înștrăina să fie afurisit de 300 sute Sfinți Părinți.

Anul 1815, luna februarie 14.

Prin Popa Simion Săcărea, în satul Tălmăcel.

12. The Small Octoechos (manuscript):

Scris în Avrig în 26 iunie [1]817.

Prin Ioan Mihail a[l] lui Simion Cătălin din Tălmăcel ieste această epistolie.

Simion Cătă[lin] din satul Tălmăcel.

Scris de mine Ioan Mihail din Avrig.

13. Octoechos, Târgoviște (1712):

La anul [1]822

Scris-am în 8 zile Noembrie la anul [1]822

Ioan Mânduc Dascăl.

14. Horologion, Bucharest (1674):

Ioan Candrea Dascăl, 1839.

15. The Duties of the Monarchy (n.d.):

Această cârticică iaste a școlariului Nicolae Ion Totoroga din Tălmăcel

20 febr. [1]856.

Prin D. Secărea

Paroh și învățător.

16. The Small Catechism, Sibiu (1858):

Această carte s-au cumpărat din oarecare [...] și să dă la pruncii cei săraci spre învățătură.

Tălmăcel 10/1 [1]859,

prin D. Secărea,

s-au dat chiar noao lui Simeon Dancu.

17. Inventory:

Despre averea bisericii grec. răsă. din Tălmăcel făcut după moartea parohului Simeon Săcăria carele au răpusat la 21 Ianuarie 1861 și adecă:

1iu Biserica, precum coperișul așa și zidul și coperișul țintirimului bisericii să află în stare bună.

2° biserica are următoarele odoară: 2 potire, 1 discos, 2 linguriță de argint, 4 sfejnice de aramă, 5 tipsii, 2 Evanghelii, 1 antimis, 2 Liturghii, 2 cădealnițe, 2 sfinte noaă, 2 sfinte mai vechi, 1 epitrahir nou, 3 epitrahir mai vechi, 3 stihare, 2 părechi de rucavițe (mă-necuțe).

3iu în cărți are biserica următoarele: 1 Biblie vechie, 1 Biblie noaă ilustrată cu icoane, 1 Apostol, 1 Predică, 1 Kiriacodromion, 1 Cazanie, 1 Didahie, 2 Propovedanii, 1 Mărgăritarul lui Ioan Zlatoust, 1 Tălcuț Evangheliilor, 12 Mineae pe cele 12 luni, 2 Octoice mari, 2 Octoice mici, 1 Katavasieriu rumânescu și grecescu, 1 Ceaslov bogat, 1 Pentecostariu, 2 Treoade, 2 Psaltiri, 1 Ômilii.

4a în alte odoară: 8 icoane, 1 prapur, 8 candile de aramă, 3 clopote, 4 sfejnice de lemn, 1 castăi min, 2 măsute.

5a În moșie parohială

1 un pământ de arătură de 6 ferdeli în capu satului, vecin Alăman Tatu.

2 un pământ de arătură sub zăpozii de 3 ferdeli, vecin Marcu Bărză

3 un pământ în rogoază de arătură de 3 ferdeli, vecin Marcu Bărză

4 un pământ de arătură în groapa beberii de 4 ferdeli, vecin Mărtin Mărtin

5 un pământ de arătură în luncă de 4 ferdeli, vecin Ioan Călăraș

6 un pământ de arătură speripă de 5 ferdeli, vecin Pavel Gărbacea

7 un fînaț Dosu Mutului de 600 stâneni pătrați, vecin Ilie Che(?)ă

8 un pământ de arătură în părau Mutului de 4 ferdeli, vecin Ioan Ivan.

18. Notation

La anul 1894 Ianuarie, în 18 adecă Martie la 2 oare după amezei ... s-au mutat din viață preotul Neculae Săcărea, adecă Taica Părinte și la 20 s-au făcut înmormântarea.

Tălmăcel, în 25 ianuarie, Duminică. Roman ca ginere și Marie Roman, născută Săcărea, ca fică.

19. Horologion, Sibiu (1874):

Tălmăcel, 15 Martie anul 1891 au plecat copilul nostru Dimitrie în Dobrogea cu Toma Petru, Costandin Sbera, Toma Ciorogariu, Ioan Pologea, Mihaî Iordan Bărdă, Niculae Vlad Sbera, Marcu Oancea, Niculae Erimie Barb.

În 21 Maiu 1893 am trimis pre Ioan la Râmnic cu Ioan Eliseiu Brazilesc.

În anul 1926 Ianuarie au răposatu la 11 orele cias, în 2 Februarie l-am îngropatu la 11, D-tru Roman.

13 anuarie, dimineața, la 8 ore a fost cutremur mare, la 7 ore al doilea.

20. Euchologion, Sibiu (1874):

Proprietatea bisericii gr. Or. Din Tălmăcel, hramul Cuvioasa Paraschiva. S-a legat a doua oară la anul 1906, Ianuarie, fiind preoți Dumitru Săcărea de 83 de ani și Ioan Roman de 25 ani.

S. Roman, paroh.

Notes:

- 1 Ciura 1912, p. 2.
- 2 Meteş 1929, p. 120, n. 10.
- 3 Ştefănescu 1932, p. 289-292.
- 4 Gâlea 1959, p. 58.
- 5 Despite the fact that he was mentioned as priest in Tălmăcel ever since 1721 (see note 4).
- 6 Hitchins, Beju (II) 1989, p. IV.
- 7 Hitchins, Beju (I) 1989, p. 109; Togan 1898, p. 13.
- 8 Annexe 1.
- 9 Lupaş 1938, p. 289, 290.
- 10 Ciobanu 1926, p. 79.
- 11 Hitchins, Beju 1977, p. 545.
- 12 Dumitran, Dumitran, Laslo 2009, p. 136, 137.
- 13 Hitchins, Beju 1984, p. 563.
- 14 Annexe 3
- 15 *Den keltuiale szatului Talmasel s-au fokut klopotu. Anno 1772.*
- 16 Bucur 1985, p. 81.
- 17 Bucur 1985, p. 102, 103.
- 18 Bailiff guardian of the mountain borders = bailiff of the guardians who guarded a region or a pass, who had the task of collecting customs, to control the goods entering or leaving the country (<https://dexonline.ro/sursa:DEXI> (2007)).
- 19 Meteş 1925, p. 60, 61; 63.
- 20 Annexe 6.
- 21 Rechnungen 1880, p. 424, 503, 521; Beşliu Munteanu 2010, p. 139, n. 4.
- 22 Greceanu 1970, p. 49; fig. 9.
- 23 Cristache-Panait 1973, p. 40.
- 24 In a conscription of April 25, 1788, Oprea Totoroga is registered as having lived in Tălmăcel, in the household at number 201.
- 25 Ştefănescu 1932, p. 332, 333.
- 26 Ştefănescu 1932, p. 291.
- 27 Ştefănescu 1932, p. 289.
- 28 Brătulescu 1960, p. 438.
- 29 Porumb 1976, p. 120.
- 30 Porumb 1998, p. 408.
- 31 Porumb 1998, p. 280.
- 32 Cristache-Panait 1984, p. 75; n. 71.
- 33 Zintz 2002, p. 203-214; Zintz 2011, p. 88, 89, 94, 99-105.
- 34 Cristache-Panait 2005, p. 420.
- 35 Porumb 1998, p. 280, 458.
- 36 Cristache-Panait 1984, p. 75.
- 37 Cristache-Panait 2005, p. 420.
- 38 Drăguţ 1978, p. 30.
- 39 Cristache-Panait 2005, p. 420.
- 40 Porumb 1998, p. 280.
- 41 Porumb 1998, p. 245.
- 42 Literat 1996, p. 77.
- 43 Iorga 1906, p. 183; Cristache-Panait 1970, p. 31.
- 44 Literat 1922, p. 158-159.
- 45 Porumb 1998, p. 455.
- 46 Porumb 1998, p. 303.
- 47 Iorga 1906, p. 138-139; In the Protocol of revenues and expenditures of Porceşti (Turnu Roşu) parish from 1822-1851, it is mentioned that in 1837 "the church books were linked to the bookbinder from Boiţa and Poplaca" (Gâlea 1995, p. 62).
- 48 Iorga 1927, p. 114.
- 49 Baca (n.d., lost manuscript).
- 50 The production of the icons signed by or attributed to Ioan din Poplaca, known until now, can be placed chronologically between the years 1797-1829. We present them below, in the following order: Veştem (Şelimbăr, Sibiu county) – holy epitaph, signed (Ioan) painter of Poplaca, dated 1797 (Iorga 1906, p. 201); Gura Răului (Sibiu County) – "Holy Martyr Marina", signed and dated 1802, comes from the church of the Synaxis of the Archangels (demolished in 1886) (Abrudan 2017, p. 595-596) and painted analogue ("The Prophet and King David"), unsigned, undated, possibly coming from the same church (unpublished); Tălmăcel (Tălmăciu, Sibiu county) – "Jesus the Great High Priest", unsigned, undated; "Mother of God with Child" signed, dated 1807 (Porumb, 1998, p. 184); set of holiday icons, unsigned, undated; "Saint Pious Paraskevi", signed; Ioan Zg. ot ..., dated 181[?], "Jesus Christ the Great High Priest", "the Mother of God with the Infant" and "Saint Hierarch Nicholas" unsigned, undated, which belonged initially to the church of The Pious Paraskevi (Good Friday), disappeared, from Tântari - Dumbrăviţa, Braşov County (village that between 1764 and 1851 was the headquarters of the 12th company of the 1st Border Regiment from Orlat, which would explain the presence of icons painted by the painter from Mărginimea Sibiului), now preserved in the Collection of the Archdiocese of Sibiu (Abrudan 2017, p. 596) Turnişor (Sibiu municipality, Sibiu county) – "Jesus the Great High Priest", dated 1812, "Mother of God with Child", signed, "Saint Hierarch Nicholas" and "Saint Archangel Michael" (currently in the Collection of the Archdiocese of Sibiu; Abrudan 2017, p. 596); Sadu (Sibiu County) – "Jesus the Great High Priest", dated 1813, "Mother of God with Child", signed, "Holy Hierarch Nicholas" and "Holy Trinity" (Abrudan 2017, p. 596); Răşinari (Sibiu County, Holy Trinity Church) – "Mother of God with Child", signed, dated 1817; Deisis, dated 1818; "Holy Hierarch Nicholas", "The Coronation of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity", signed (Pop 2013, p. 166); "Ecce Homo"; "Mother of God", signed, dated 1818; "Saint John the Bogoslov"; "Saint Mary Magdalene", signed (Meteş 1929, p. 130; Abrudan 2017, p. 597-598); Boiţa (Tălmăciu commune, Sibiu county) – "The Assumption of the Mother of God", signed icon of the patron saint, dated 1822 (Porumb 1984, p. 184); Răşinari (Sibiu County, Holy Trinity Church) – crucifix icon, dated 1824 (Meteş 1929, p. 130); "Holy Mahram" (Cioran 1940, p. 334; Pop 2013, p. 166, 180); Tălmăcel (Tălmăciu commune, Sibiu county) – "Saint Pious Paraskevi", patron saint icon, signed, dated 1828 (Porumb 1984, p. 184); Tălmăcel (Tălmăciu, commune, Sibiu county) – proschinitarian painted with the image of King and Prophet David, unsigned, dated 1829; "St. Pious Paraskevi", unsigned, dated by association with the proschinitarian in 1829 (unpublished).
- 51 Porumb 1998, p. 364.
- 52 Porumb 1998, p. 303.
- 53 Porumb 1998, p. 48.
- 54 Porumb 1998, p. 184.
- 55 Pop 2013, p. 161-185.
- 56 To the north: St. Philip the Apostle (in circular medallion), the Holy Archdeacons Stephen and Cyril; to the south: St. Thomas the Apostle (in a circular medallion), the Holy Great Martyrs Theodore and Demetrios.
- 57 According to Ioana Cristache-Panait, the paintings in the porch were the work of the local painter Oprea Mihail Crăciun (Cristache-Panait 1981, p. 174).
- 58 Porumb 1998, p. 434.
- 59 Greceanu 1972, p. 218. The four compositions on the western façade of the porch, which had been in a precarious state of preservation since the time of the publication of Eugenia Greceanu's study, were later and completely covered with new paintings. From the analysis of the photographs, we have had so far, which capture the image of the western façade with the original appearance of the mural decoration, no details can be distinguished that could constitute conclusive evidence in favour of this attribution.
- 60 Greceanu 1972, p. 219.
- 61 Gâlea 1995, p. 10.
- 62 Ştefănescu 1932, p. 177.
- 63 Gâlea 1995, p. 9, 10.
- 64 Gâlea 1995, p. 62.
- 65 Porumb 2003, p. 51.
- 66 Calves, foals or buffalo calves less than one year old, lambs.
- 67 "I said it myself".
- 68 "God bless us".
- 69 "The place of the seal".

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ukraine 2022



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MUSEIKON

A JOURNAL OF RELIGIOUS ART AND CULTURE | REVUE D'ART ET DE CULTURE RELIGIEUSE

Call for Contributions *MUSEIKON* 6 (2022)

Brief Scholarly Reflections on Ukraine

In light of current events (the ongoing war of aggression led by Russia in Ukraine), the sixth issue of *Museikon* will feature a section dedicated to the political concept of the “Third Rome”, particularly its exegetical and ideological implications, which recently led to absurd considerations about the “artificial” nature of Ukraine. The editorial board welcomes contributions from historians, art historians, philologists or literary historians, theologians, and other specialists in fields connected to late medieval and modern history.

Contributions can also bring into the discussion subjects such as the history of Kyivan Rus’; debates concerning the evolution of languages and dialects, as well as the ethnonyms ‘Russian’, ‘Ruthenian’, and ‘Ukrainian’; icon art; translations and literary texts; prints and engravings; or any other subject that broadens the topic and leads to a better understanding of the political regimes to which Ukrainians have been subordinated throughout their history.

Each contribution must represent a personal point of view based on argumentations accompanied by essential bibliographical references (if necessary). The main interest of the special section of *Museikon* concerns the manner in which such concepts of a political and theological nature impact our everyday lives. It is an exercise in sincerity in an age of hiding feelings and thoughts under thick layers of alleged scientific objectivity. Despite its often mentioned short-comings and potential problems, subjectivity is omnipresent in our research. Personal choices should and must be explained.

Submission should be between 1000-1500 words (2-3 single-spaced pages). The final publication of the text will be in English, French, or Italian. The use of illustrations is recommended.

Publications & Projects

The journal also features short notices about recent books, exhibitions, and research projects. Please send us details, including a title, a text (max. 500 words / 1 page), and images. In the case of a book, include the high-resolution image of the cover and publication details.

All submissions must be received by **August 31, 2022** at museikon.journal@gmail.com.

*The Hetmanate Carpets:
Celebrating the Historical Complexities of Ukraine*

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When I first read Museikon's call for contributions on the concept of the Third Rome and the current Russian statements about the artificial nature of Ukraine, my first thought was how timely and needed such discussions are in these troubling times. Indeed, Vladimir Putin's 2021 essay "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians," and the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine have deep historical roots, and it is the art historian's task to balance the scales by revealing the imperial nature of Russian political discourse and by asserting the historicity of Ukraine, giving proper attention to Ukrainian culture.

This reminds me of the 1990s, when Ukraine gained independence from the Soviet Union and shortly thereafter there was a surge in interest in Ukrainian cultural heritage. Then, motivated by this zeitgeist of national awakening, I located my initial scholarly interest in the studies of the early modern carpets that originate from left-bank of Ukraine. Now reading Museikon's call, I thought that these carpets may provide an exemplary case for the current discussion.

The oldest of these carpets come from the 18th century and the region of the Cossack Hetmanate, one of the historic states on Ukraine's territory that maintained its cultural and even political autonomy within the Russian Empire. Produced by folk craftswomen, these carpets show floral designs marked by a charming "provinciality" that distances them from Russian imperial culture. Moreover, the tradition of creating such carpets continued in the subsequent centuries. Even today, such carpets are produced in the village of Reshetylivka in the Poltava Region, which is included in the National List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ukraine. However, thinking about the Hetmanate carpets merely as a tool for justifying Ukraine's historicity seems dubious to me.

I recall here Donald Preziosi's tasks for art historians to practice "mindfulness regarding the fabricatedness of artistic (and all disciplinary) fabrications."¹ With the Hetmanate carpets, this mindfulness means for me approaching them not just as a "creative acquisition of the people,"² or as an expression of Ukrainian folk culture, as many Ukrainian scholars have done in the past, but as a much more complex and ambiguous cultural fact. In my studies, I constantly argue that these carpets belonged to Cossack elite culture, that they manifested this elite's taste, and that with these carpets this elite distanced itself from the commoners. Moreover, my studies show that the patterns evident in the Hetmanate carpet designs were of foreign origin, Oriental or Western European, and disconnected from local folk art. One may even say that these findings significantly problematize the "Ukrainianness" of these carpets.

And here another problem arises. What is the significance of my studies in the current situation, when the very existence of Ukraine is under threat? Is the focus on "elitist" and "foreign" aspects of the carpets justified, when they are seen by many as an aspect of indigenous identity? For Ivan Franko, the major figure of the early twenties-century Ukrainian literature, the answer was simple. He urged that all "bricks", all efforts, should go to "reinforce the life and development of the nation" and

warned against "international ideas" and "universal phrases," which can turn us into "fantasists marked by morbid sentimentalism" spiritually alienated from the nation.³ But I am not satisfied with such an answer, and I can not subscribe to it.

I think that constructing a folk image for the old Hetmanate carpets will not contribute much to a justification of Ukraine's historicity; rather, it will distort it. The folk image of the carpets was nourished in the Soviet era. It originated in Marxist-Leninist beliefs in the special value of art produced by the working masses. But at the same time, the Soviet colonial discourse used the vision of the Ukrainian carpets as a folk art to construct an "uncivilized" image of Ukrainians and Ukrainian culture.

If we go beyond the narrow confines of the Soviet colonial discourse, which fenced Ukrainian culture behind the "Iron Curtain," if we explore the carpets as a part of the world carpet industry, then they will become visible to other cultures and will find their place in the global





Notes:

- 1 Preziosi 2009, p. 509.
- 2 Zhuk 1966, p. 34.
- 3 Franko 1986, p. 283-285.
- 4 Nochlin 1988, p. 150-151.
- 5 Snyder 2022.

history of art, from which they are still excluded. One can not find any information on Hetmanate carpets in popular comprehensive books on global textile art as “The great carpets of the world” or “5,000 Years of Textiles” not only because there were no publications about Ukrainian carpets in English, but primarily because they were considered only a local cultural fact disconnected from the rest of the world. When we expand the focus, we will be able to see these carpets as art objects created on the so-called Great Cultural Border between West and East, as valuable examples of transcultural communication and exchange. If the Hetmanate carpets will become visible as a part of the global culture, their ornaments will gain a chance to extend their “life” in our fast-changing contemporaneity.

Instead of taking a reactionary position against the Russian imperial discourse defending the “Ukraineness” of Ukrainian culture, I choose to act proactively, exploring this culture’s ambiguity and complexity. Here, I recall the words of a feminist art historian, Linda Nochlin, who stated that the “Women Problem,” and similar “problems” such as the “Black Problem,” the “Poverty Problem,” or the Nazis’ “Jewish Problem” has been formulated from a specific point of view in order “to rationalize the bad conscience of those with power.”⁴ In the case of the “Women Problem,” Nochlin suggested not to look for “solutions” but instead boldly face the reality and work to increase the presence of women in art institutions.

Similarly, being aware of the colonialist origins of the “Ukrainian problem,” we should reject the rules Russian colonialism wants us to play. Instead, we need to do our work as art historians honestly, with integrity, according to the highest academic standards, and with mindfulness regarding colonialists’ fabrications. If Ukraine’s most powerful response to the Russian imperialist claims is the fact of its very existence, as Timothy Snyder recently argued,⁵ the best art historical response would be to celebrate Ukraine’s historic existence in all its complexity and contradictions.

Bibliographical Abbreviations:

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The Role of Ukrainian Book Printing in the Development of Orthodox Culture in the Early Modern Period

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This short contribution is an attempt to appeal to a scholarly journal with a mixture of research and reflection, which are usually excluded from scholarly discourse. As Russia started its criminal war against Ukraine on 24 February, the feelings of powerlessness and anger, fear and disgust, sadness and helplessness became omnipresent in my life, as well as in the lives of my numerous relatives, colleagues, and friends. As a Russian citizen (even after 10 years of emigration), I felt this terrible

weight of responsibility and guilt, which the Russian president and government put on my shoulders, definitely without asking for any consent, as the Russian army began bombing Kyiv and trying to occupy Ukrainian territories.

As a historian and as a human, I had to deal with a feeling of complete failure, as none of my personal achievements or activities could prevent or stop this catastrophe, the death of innocent people, lies and hatred about Ukrainian

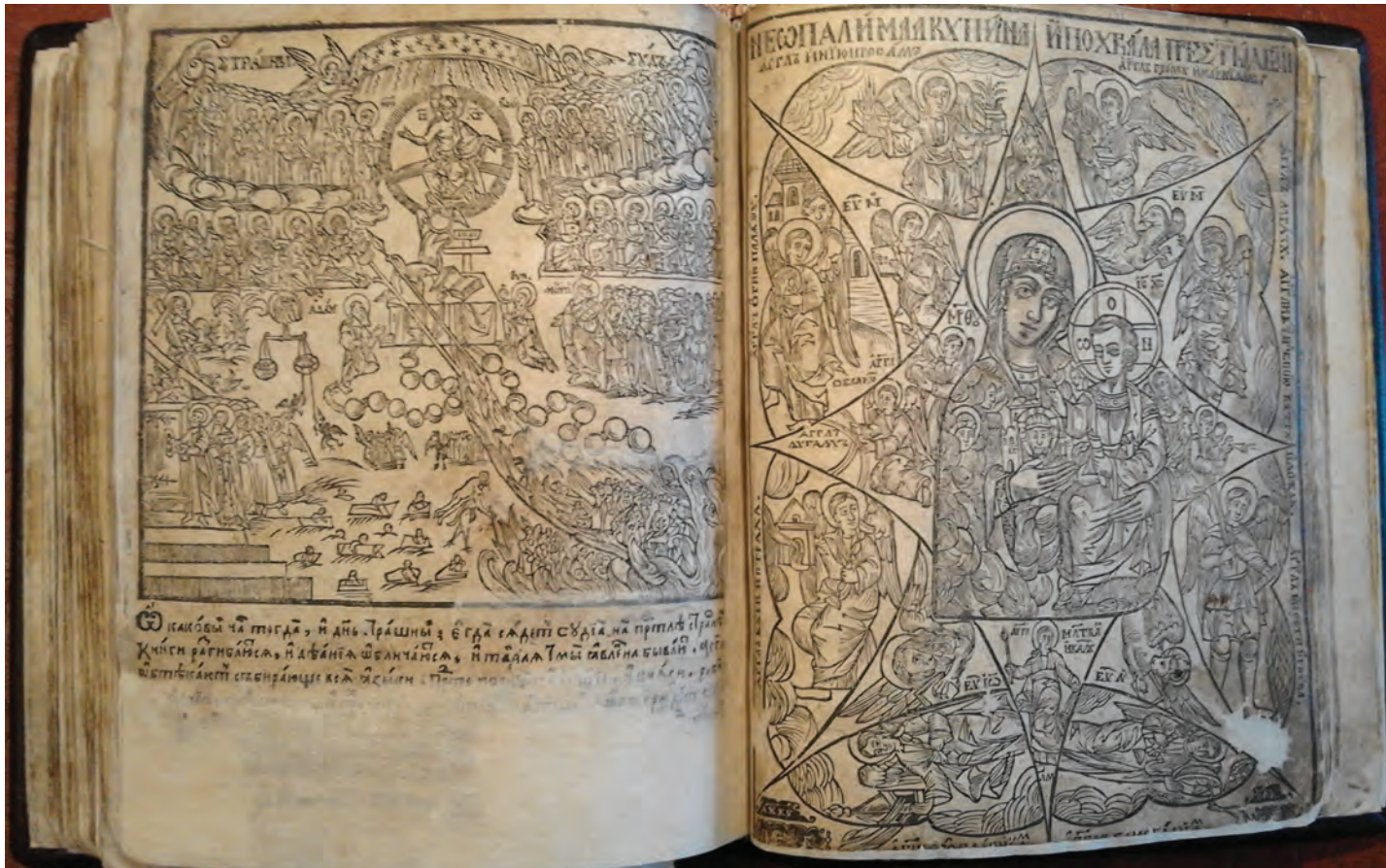
history and Ukrainian people that were widespread in Russian media, but also persecutions against people in Russia who went to demonstrations to protest the war. How can the normal everyday life go on, when the war is so close, when the ideology and propaganda of hatred have won again? I have no answers, but many doubts about how to proceed with research during this time when the Russian state and army continue to kill thousands of civilians, women, and children in Ukraine with the goal of eliminating this culture of freedom, which seems so dangerous to the dictators. These short reflections on the issue of early modern printing are my attempt to share thoughts about Ukrainian heritage and its great impact on Orthodox culture, something that is not omnipresent in the general image of Ukrainian history.

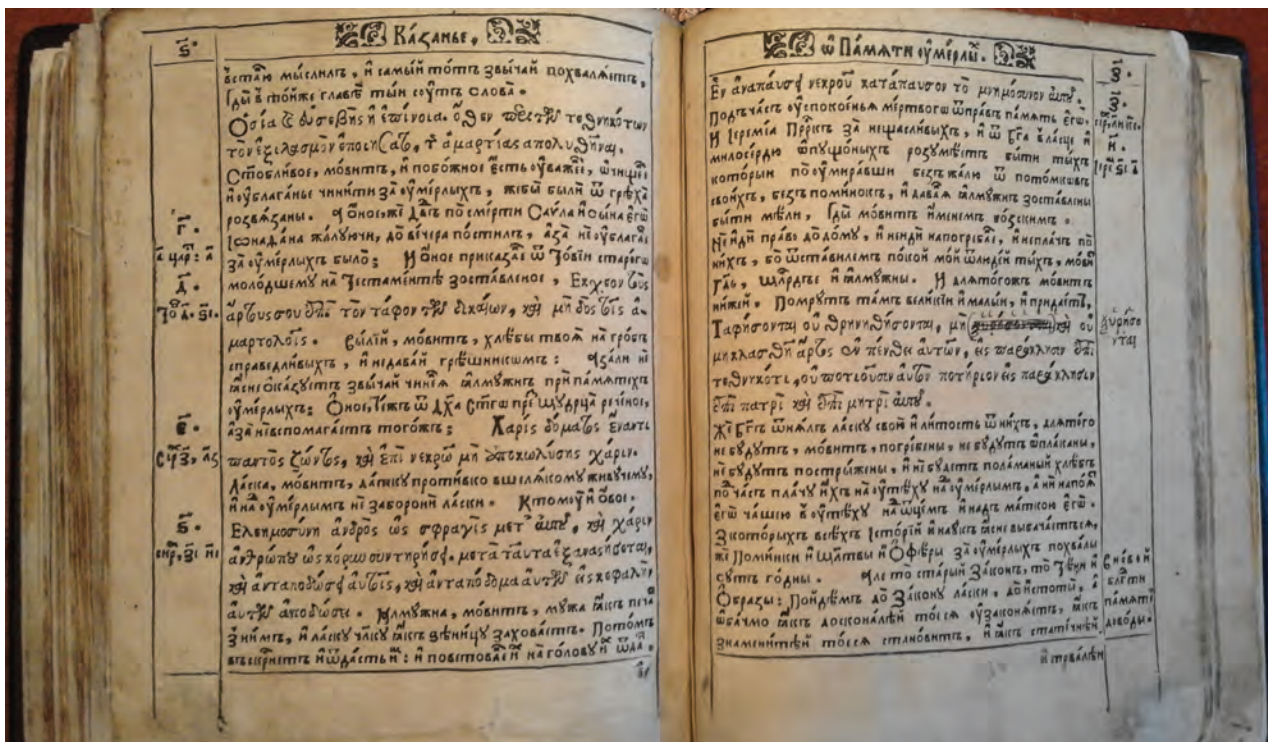
The goal of this essay is to point out an extraordinary and still little-acknowledged impact of Ukrainian book printing in Orthodox religious culture and thought in the early modern period. During the 16th and 17th centuries, as most of the lands of contemporary Ukrainian were part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, numerous printing presses were established there with the goal to provide first and foremost printed books for the needs of the Orthodox Ruthenians living in the Commonwealth. Among the languages were Church Slavonic, Ruthenian (vernacular), Greek, and also Polish. The importance of this subject has especially increased since the beginning of this terrible war, which threatens to devastate Ukrainian culture, history, collections, and archives.

Having and using Greek print types was one of the peculiarities of Ukrainian printing shops in the second half of the 16th century. As Greek hierarchs did not have any printing possibilities in the Ottoman Empire, they were looking for prospects to print their works also outside of

Catholic Italy. The support of Ukrainian printers made it possible that contemporary writings by Greek hierarchs could be translated into Ruthenian and printed in translation or edited in bilingual Greek-Ruthenian editions. For Ukrainian Orthodoxy, access to Greek writings, education, and theology meant a chance of success in the context of confessionalization; there were active contacts between the Patriarchate of Constantinople (to which the Ruthenian Orthodox Church was subordinated), other Greek bishops, scholars, and merchants that operated between the Ottoman Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Not only Greek texts were printed by Orthodox Ukrainians, but they supported also other Orthodox peoples looking for access to printing in Greek letters. For example, the Moldavian ruler Vasile Lupu (1643–1653) asked for Greek types in Lviv in order to organize the first Greek printing press in the Danubian principalities. Thanks to the support of the Orthodox brotherhood of Lviv, the first printing press with Greek types was established in Iași around 1642.

Ukrainian printing had a tremendous impact on the history of printing in the Danubian principalities. In the historiography, Petre Panaitescu (1926) demonstrated that during the lifetime of the famous Kyivan metropolitan of Moldavian origin Petro Mohyla (1596–1647), there were strong connections between Ruthenian and Romanian/Moldavian book culture. Due to the high demand of Romanian and Moldavian rulers during the 17th century, numerous Ukrainian printers with their tools and skills were sent there in order to support Orthodox book printing in Cyrillic letters in the Danubian principalities. Ukrainian printers under the leadership of Timofej Verbitskij helped to reestablish printing presses in Wallachia in 1630s. Ukrainian scholars supported





the foundation of both Orthodox academies, in Iași and Bucharest, which functioned according to the model of Petro Mohyla’s Collegium in Kyiv. The works of Ukrainian theologians and scholars were translated and reprinted in the Danubian principalities, and thus influenced the development of Orthodox religious and intellectual culture there in the early modern period. It was Petro Mohyla’s Orthodoxa Confessio that was translated into Greek and accepted as an official textual foundation of the Orthodox faith worldwide during the council of Iași (1642). Thus, it was neither Constantinople, and definitely not Moscow, but Kyiv that became a forerunner of the Orthodox tradition in the 17th century.

Ukrainian book printing in the early modern period was well developed thanks to the urban surrounding of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Unlike in Muscovy, where printing was absolutely controlled and censored by the Russian Tsar, Ukrainian book printing was more flexible with languages, topics, and contents, and was not limited only to liturgical books, as the Russian book printing in its early stage. Traditional active contacts with Greek hierarchs, as well as Moldavian and Wallachian princes, contributed to the extension and development of the program of book printing in Ruthenia and in the Danubian principalities, thus enriching the Orthodox religious culture in the early modern period.

With hope for peace in Ukraine, defeat of Russian military forces, and new beginnings in Eastern Europe after the fall of dictatorships.

The photos from two printed editions – Lviv 1593 (*Apolology of Christianity, an answer towards the Jew* – image 1) and Kyiv 1627 (*Slavic Ruthenian Lexicon* – image 2 and 3) originate from the Vernadsky National Library of Kyiv. I am very thankful to the employees of the Library, especially to Natalia Bondar for her kindness and support during my research stay in Kyiv in 2018.



*Golgotha
from the Armenian Cathedral in Lviv*

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The outbreak of the war in Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and the offensive of the Russian army in the eastern territory of the country caused a rapid mobilisation of art historians in an effort to save the most valuable monuments, objects, and archives.

In the first days of the war, museum exhibitions were quickly dismantled, and attempts were made to evacuate the works to safe places. The artefacts were evacuated by the employees of the institutions as much as they could afford, giving rise to massive logistical constraints. Huge difficulties in obtaining protective materials did not allow for efficient organisation of the evacuation operations. The municipal offices, which took care of the protection of the most important monuments and architectural buildings, were more ready. Lviv and Kyiv were the best prepared. The Lviv monuments were secured with the support of local authorities and to a certain extent by Polish institutions. The proximity of the border and the relatively “safe” nature of the missile attacks in the area were conducive to efficient operation. Some sculptures were dismantled, such as those of Golgotha at the Armenian Cathedral. Many stone decorations and sculptures were also secured.

It was Golgotha, located in the courtyard of the Armenian cathedral, that became an “icon” of monuments in Ukraine that were saved by the citizens of this country. The photo of the crucified Christ caused a stir in public opinion.

The wooden composition consisting of many elements, situated in the southern courtyard, was created in the 18th century. The crucified Christ is visible in the centre, and the Mother of God and Mary Magdalene to either side of the cross. In recent years, this work has been subjected to conservation under the leadership of Andrzej Kazberuk, on the initiative of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in Warsaw. In a recess made of wood, the above-mentioned sculptures were placed, protecting them with a roof and decoration of a carved background. Women’s sculptures show typical features of the Lviv Baroque sculpture of the first half of the 18th century.

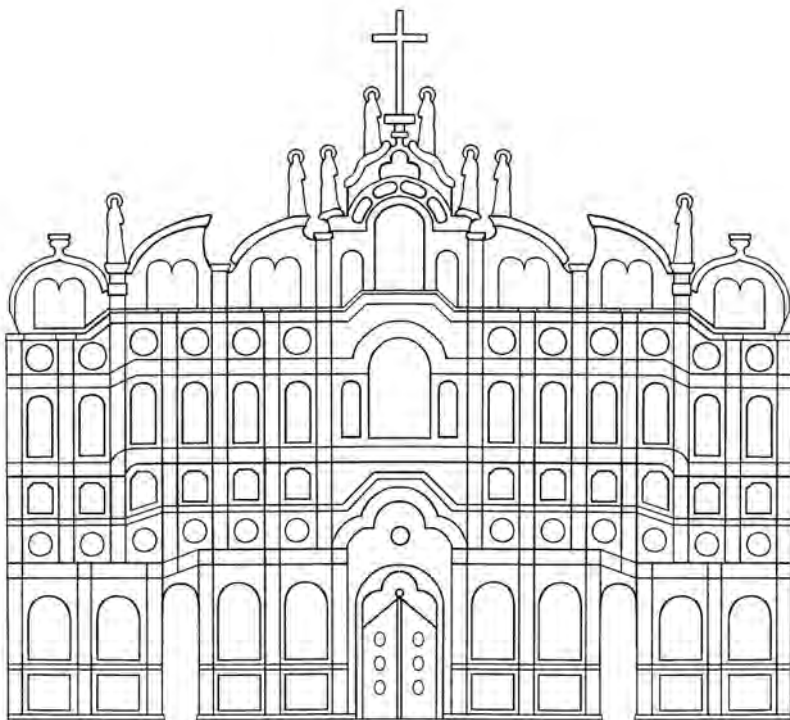
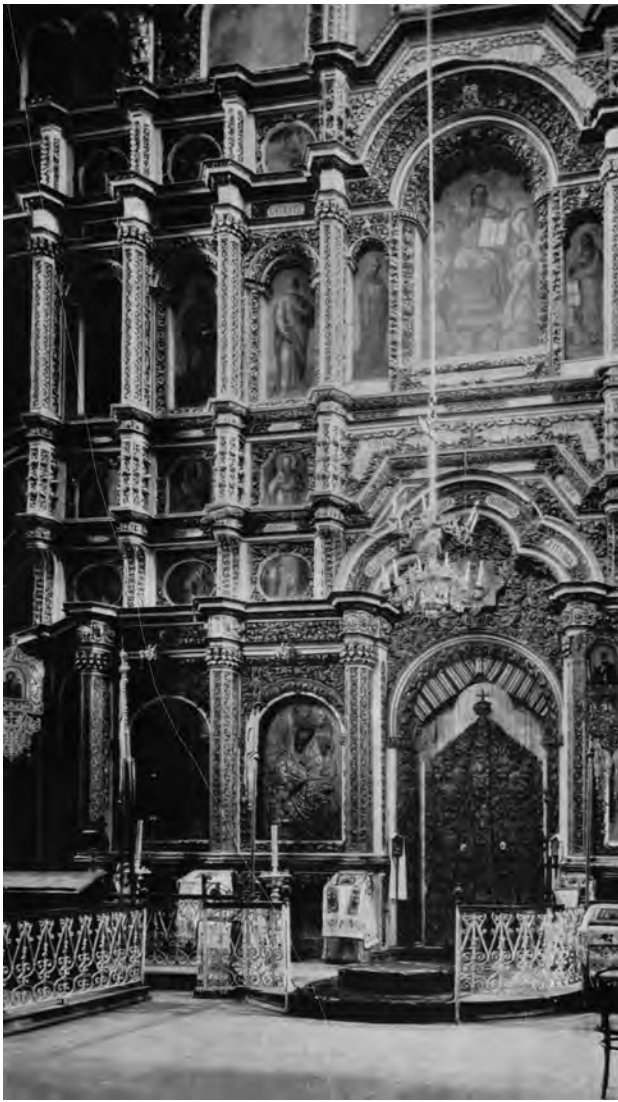
The sculptural ensemble did not generate particular interest in Ukraine or Poland. For scholars of Armenian art, the work was too Latin; for researchers of Latin art, it was not very noticeable. When the sculpture of Christ was taken out of the recess in the first week of March 2022, and the entire composition was secured a few days earlier, dramatic photography circulated the world. The photos showed not only the drama of the war, but for the art historian, the drama of his body. At that time, we noticed that it is a late gothic sculpture. The work was probably created in the 16th century and comes from a different composition, perhaps a different Golgotha at the Catholic church. It was probably created in the local community or in Lesser Poland, but it should be remembered that very few Gothic works have survived in these areas, and many of them were created later retaining earlier forms.

It should be emphasised that many works of Western art found their way to be worshipped in the Armenian

Church on the territory of the historic Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. A painting from the beginning of the 16th century from the Church of St. Nicholas in Kamianets Podilskyi is currently at the Hanenka Museum in Kyiv. Many liturgical objects, chalices and chasubles were bought for churches in Lviv, Stanisławów/Ivanofrankivsk, Kamianets Podilskyi, and Kutu. After 1632, when the union with the Catholic Church was signed, Armenian parishes changed the decor of their churches and slowly underwent Romanization, especially in the 18th century. But it should be emphasised that the impact of local tradition has been visible in Armenian art in Ukraine since the 15th century. The wall paintings in the Armenian cathedral in Lviv offers compelling evidence. They combine Armenian, Latin, and Byzantine iconographic and stylistic traditions.

Let us hope that the researchers can return to their scientific work in times of peace and that one day we will learn more about the sculpture of the Armenian cathedral in Lviv.





◀ Fig. 1a-b. Iconostasis c.1663 St. Nicholas Cathedral, Kyiv. Height 15,5 m. Destroyed 1930's.

▶ Fig. 2. Iconostasis c.1734 Trinity Cathedral, Trinity Monastery Chernihiv. Height 20 m. Destroyed end of 1920's.

▶ Fig. 3. Iconostasis c.1730's. Church of the Ascension, Berezna village, Chernihiv region. Height 17 m. Destroyed in 1929-1930.

▶ Fig. 4. Detail of Royal Doors. Iconostasis c.1730's. Church of the Ascension, Berezna village, Chernihiv region.

Ukraine's Baroque Iconostasis – Lost Masterpieces

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Elaborate iconostases in the Eastern Christian churches of Ukraine became widespread in the Baroque period. As new churches were erected, this phenomenon gave rise to a remarkable art of iconostasis design. This brief reflection focuses on the development and evolution of iconostasis building in Ukraine during the 17th and 18th centuries – a period referred to as the “Cossack Baroque”. Beginning with the first half of the 17th century, European Baroque penetrated into all cultural spheres of Ukraine and combined with local artistic traditions. By the mid-17th century, the art of making the iconostases had reached an unprecedented flourishing in the Kyiv Metropolitanate. At that time, the Ukrainian iconostasis turned into a monumental structure, based on a complex architectural frame, richly decorated with carvings. The iconostasis facade acquired an expressive plasticity: the icons were inserted into deep niches, the passages to the altar were deepened. At the same time, the rows of columns in the Local or Stationary and the Apostolic tiers were significantly pushed forward from the iconostasis wall, which gave its structure an impressive plastic multilayer.

From the 1660s, the tiers of icons in the central part of the iconostases in Kyiv and the northern Left-bank

increased in levels starting with a slight stepwise rise of the cornices above the Royal door portal (Fig. 1a-b). The beginning of the 18th century witnessed a plethora of, iconostases with especially ornate concentrically curved cornices above the Royal door. These carved iconostases began appearing in the second half of the 17th century and brought about a dramatic change in the overall shape of the iconostasis, the central part rising upward like a mountain slope and creating an impression of monumental power (Fig. 2). The increase in height was significant. The iconostasis height in the first three decades of the 17th century usually reached only 4-6 meters, but it increased to 14-15 meters in the second half of the 17th century.¹ In the 18th century, the largest iconostases reached 20-22 meters.² As the tiers increased, the number of icons placed in the individual tiers also increased as did their height, achieving an impressive scale. If the iconostasis of the first half of the 17th century had four or five tiers, by the end of the century, it could have six or seven.

The same period was also marked by a distinct flourishing of iconostasis decoration. All surfaces were densely covered with gilded carvings consisting of flowers, fruit





▲ Fig. 5. Iconostasis c.1730's
Trinity Gate Church, Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra.

garlands and rosettes, lush acanthus leaves and vines. These carved floral motifs were not only three-dimensional, but often mounted in two layers on the lower tiers of the iconostasis (Fig. 3-4). Angels and other symbolic images were added to the plant motifs.³ The overall effect was that of an openwork gilded curtain.

The artistic qualities of the Ukrainian Baroque iconostasis, its monumentality, icon painting and carving mastery impressed foreign travelers.⁴ In the middle of the 17th century, the Syrian archdeacon Paul of Aleppo described his impression of the Baroque iconostasis in Ukraine in exacting detail. He pointed out the “originality” of the iconography and the “perfection” of the carved decor typical of the “land of the Cossacks”.⁵ The Kyiv Metropolitanate was recognized in its time as the center of iconostasis decoration mastery. In the 1650s, Patriarch Nikon would regularly invite the carvers from Ukrainian and Belarusian lands,⁶ to introduce new techniques of carving and decoration to Moscow.⁷

The development of the Ukrainian iconostasis in the Baroque period made it one of the high points of national art culture of the 17th and the first half of the 18th centuries. The most spectacular and the greatest monuments were created in the regions of Kyiv, Chernihiv, Poltava, reflecting a flourishing culture in Ukraine at the time.

Despite the fact that so many masterpieces were created during the Baroque period in Ukraine, the art of the icon-

ostasis remains largely little-known outside of modern Ukraine. Mostly this is due to the vast destruction suffered by Ukrainian cultural artifacts over the centuries. Not a single iconostasis of the 17th century had been preserved in the Kyiv region, nor from the Left-bank region. Only two iconostases have been preserved since the first half of the 18th century. One of them is a large iconostasis in the Church of the Transfiguration in Velyki Sorochyntsi village in the Poltava region. It was built at the expense of Hetman Daniel the Apostol in 1732. Another small Baroque iconostasis (Fig. 5), dated to the early 1730s, was preserved at the gate Trinity Church (early 12th century) of Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra. Fragments of the iconostasis of the St. Sophia Cathedral of Kyiv, dating to the middle of the 18th century, have also been preserved.

The state of lost, fragmented, or decimated iconostases in Ukraine reflect long periods of tragic pillaging and destruction of artifacts of Ukrainian heritage culture, especially in modern times. As early as the middle and third quarters of the 18th century, national features in the Ukrainian iconostasis were gradually reduced as a result of imperial pressures. The end of the Baroque era in Ukraine coincided with the suppression of Ukrainian ethnic identity, of which church art was a key characteristic. Moreover, because classicism was embraced as the preferred aesthetic of the imperial court in the 18th century, its features filtered into all aspects of visual culture throughout the empire. Classicism was actively introduced into the church art of Ukraine as a way of erasing all signs of national specificity. As a result, the Ukrainian Baroque iconostasis and other Baroque artistic

forms were no longer seen as having artistic or historical value. By the beginning of the 19th century, despite the ubiquity of Baroque churches in Ukraine, the imperial élite perceived their iconostases mostly as a hopelessly outdated form of decoration element, and even though out of fashion, the cost of rebuilding in a classical style would have been prohibitive.⁸

In the second half of the 19th century, when the study of antiquity was being formalized in both the Austrian and Russian empires against the general background of a pan-European interest in archaeology, the Ukrainian iconostasis came into the field of view of researchers. Regarded mostly within the framework of art inspired by antiquity, however, its inherently Ukrainian features, as well as the historical and cultural significance of the iconostasis to the region did not come under scientific scrutiny. Not until.

The last third of the 19th century, did statistical analyses give way to archaeological interest. The serious study of the iconostasis coincided with the era of a rise in national self-determination and sustained exploration of ethnic origins across the nations of Europe. As Ukrainians were in a struggle for their own artistic heritage, the concept of “Ukrainian art” began to surface, mostly in literature at first, as early as the 1910s.⁹ Among the many categories of antique art that came under study, church monuments garnered the greatest interest and the largest number of researchers. After classifying innumerable ecclesiastical landmarks, including wooden and stone churches, their attention then turned to the iconostases contained therein, mostly from the vantage point of art objects that combined painting, sculpture and the decorative arts, not as national treasures.

With adverse historical circumstances, the study and restoration of the iconostasis begun in the 1910s and 1920s was soon curtailed. The atheistic Soviet state would not stand for the study of ecclesiastical art, except as a tool for anti-religious propaganda. By the 1930s, many iconostases were leveled and used for firewood, or removed and dismantled so as not to serve as a focus for devotional prayer. The churches themselves were turned into warehouses, if not themselves torn down.

The wave of destruction of iconostases reached even the most remote monasteries and temples.¹⁰ By the end of the 1930s, the iconostases of all historical periods were almost completely destroyed as part of the harsh measures of the anti-religious campaign enforced on Soviet Ukraine.¹¹ The number of lost Baroque iconostases mostly demolished in the 20th century has never been

counted, a tragic loss since no systematic cataloguing or official condition reports had been made on these objects. Statistics do not exist in this field of inquiry. Based on retrieved photographs and some negligible descriptions, the lowest estimate would fall in the range of about 230 Baroque monuments unaccounted for.

Researchers and museum workers have played a significant role in rescuing, preserving, inventorying and conserving the icons that had been dismantled from decimated iconostases. What they managed to save now comprises a single semantic complex belonging to a national heritage. Formerly disguised as merely religiously neutral paintings, these works were hardly classifiable in a meaningful way.

In Western Ukraine in the 1920s and 1930s, by contrast, a general understanding of the artistic heritage of the region, which was part of three states in that period — Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania — saved the iconostasis from total destruction by the Bolsheviks. However, the encroaching Soviet government in the post-war period also began to actively instill atheistic ideology in the newly annexed western Ukrainian lands to the USSR. Although the wave of church destruction and other monuments had markedly declined during that period, the study of the iconostasis became marginalized under such circumstances and could only be accomplished surreptitiously, while sustained research could only be done under clandestine conditions.

After Ukraine gained state independence in 1991, a concentrated study of the iconostasis historical as part of art historical and cultural studies in Ukraine was reinstated. The resumption of this research continues to be stymied by the incomplete and uneven preservation of monuments in the Ukraine western and central regions, and the almost complete loss of Kyiv and the Left-bank iconostases built before the mid-18th century. What remains as a viable resource, therefore, are photographs and descriptions.

Historic photographs of lost or destroyed Ukrainian Baroque iconostases are found in various Ukrainian and Polish archives, libraries, museums and research institutions. A number of them also exist in the United States, where they were brought for safekeeping during the 20th century, and are little known and unpublished. Due to the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine, it is uncertain whether the ones that were in Ukrainian collections still even exist, due to the deliberate policy of destroying archives by the Russian army.

Notes:

1 Zinaida Shamurina, *Kyiv* (Reprint reproduction of the 1912 edition. Kyiv: PVP “Zadruga”, 2006), p. 52.

2 Heorhii Lohvyn, *Across Ukraine: Ancient Art Monuments* (Kyiv: Art, 1968), p. 102. Olha Sitkariova, *Dormition Cathedral of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra: To the history of architectural and archaeological research and reconstruction project* (Kyiv: Holy Dormition Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra, 2000), p. 213.

3 Svitlana Olianina, *Ukrainian iconostasis. Symbolic structure and iconology* (Kyiv: ArtEk, 2019), p. 109-261.

4 *Journey of Patriarch Macarius of Antioch to Russia in the middle of the 17th century, described by his son, Archdeacon Paul of Aleppo*; translated from Arabic by G. A. Murkos (Readings in the Imperial Society of Russian History and Antiquities at

Moscow University. Issue 2: From the Dniester to the land of the Cossacks. Book IV. Moscow, 1897). Daniel Krman, Jozef Minárik, Gustáv Viktory, *Itinerarium. Cestovný denník z rokov 1708-1709* (Bratislava, SAV, t. Svernost, 1969).

5 *Journey of Patriarch Macarius...*, p. 41-51.

6 Lavrentii Abetsedarsky, *Belarusians in Moscow in the 17th century. From the history of Russian-Belarusian relations* (Minsk: Belarus University Publishing House, 1957). Mykhailo Dragan, *Ukrainian decorative carving of the 16th and 18th centuries* (Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 1970). Nikolai Sobolev, *Russian folk carving* (Moscow - Leningrad: Academia, 1934).

7 Lavrentii Abetsedarsky, *Belarusians in Moscow...*, p. 8.

echoes



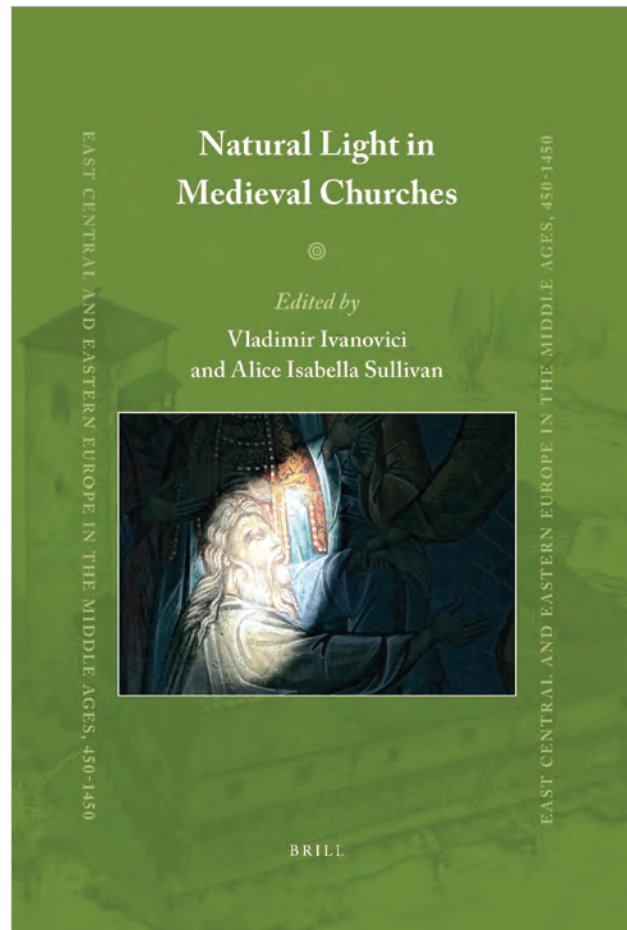
échos



Faces, icons and books for the soul: Moldavians in Ukraine, Ukrainians in Moldavia. Testimonies of sacred art; 16th-19th centuries, exhibition organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Iași between April 14 and August 14, 2022, to support Ukrainian refugees.



Vladimir Ivanovici and Alice Isabella Sullivan (eds),
Natural Light in Medieval Churches, Series: East Central
 and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450-1450,
 Volume 88
 Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2023



Inside Christian churches, natural light has long been harnessed to underscore theological, symbolic, and ideological statements. In this volume, twenty-four international scholars with various specialties explore how the study of sunlight can reveal essential aspects of the design, decoration, and function of medieval sacred spaces.

The studies explore refined and calculated ways of using sunlight, thus illuminating the conceptual nature of liturgical spaces designed and constructed across Europe during the Middle Ages. Although typically inspired by Byzantine and Western uses of light, several of the studied instances from Eastern and Central Europe showcase a surprising capacity for innovation within a local context. As such, the study of light furthers our understanding of the dynamics of cultural contact and adaptation, as well as of the creative power of these communities that developed at the crossroads of competing traditions in a period that was to prove essential for their identities.

Due to its focus on sunlight—whose presence inside churches was shaped by the orientation of the building and by the location, size, and shape of its windows and doors—this volume leans toward those elements of the experience that were fixed and stable, namely the built space, the decorative surfaces, and the iconographic cycles. A future volume dealing primarily with the uses of artificial light (i.e., lamps and candles) in churches seeks to complete the picture by integrating the ephemeral, mobile elements of the experience, such as the location and movement of ritual participants with the incensing, singing, and reading that further enhanced the space's sanctity.

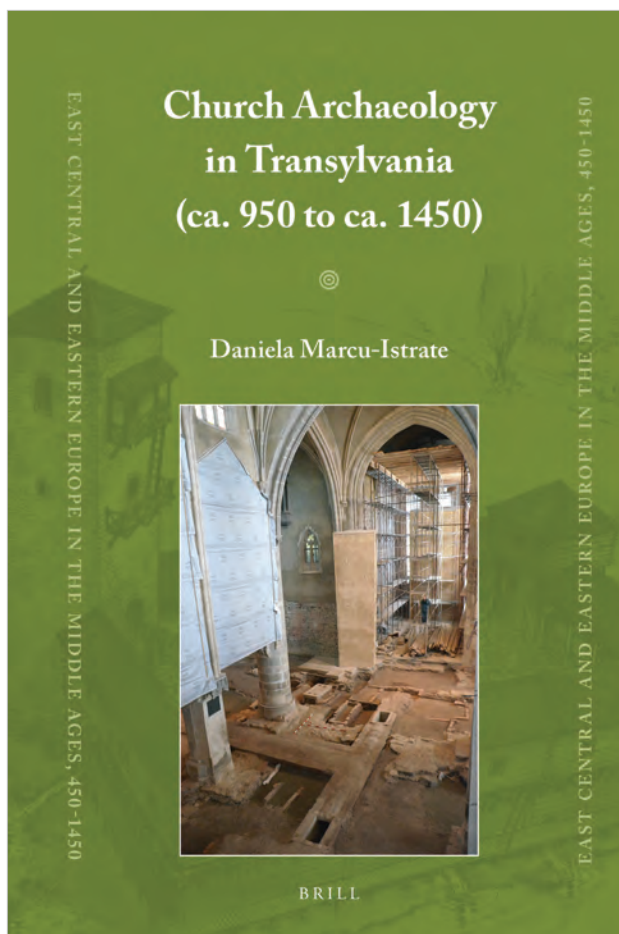
Discussing contexts ranging from the sixth to the seventeenth century, and spaces from Serbia to Spain

and from Estonia to the United States, the papers in this volume adopt various approaches. Since the study of sunlight requires the consideration of several fields (scientific, anthropological, art historical, etc.), the studies often adopt interdisciplinary approaches. We organized them so as to offer readers a coherent introduction and treatment of the topic with available, current methodologies. Therefore, although the individual contributions can be read independently, the volume can be read as a monographic study, where the chapters not only complement each other, but flow coherently and build on one another within and across the two sections: "Light, Theology, and Aesthetics," and "Lighting Sacred Space."

Themes covered include the interaction between patrons, advisors, architects, and artists, as well as local negotiations among competing traditions that yielded new visual and spatial constructs for which natural light served as a defining and unifying factor. The study of natural light in medieval churches reveals cultural relations, knowledge transfer patterns, processes of translation and adaptation, as well as experiential aspects of sacred spaces in the Middle Ages.

Contributors include: Anna Adashinskaya, Jelena Bogdanović, Debanjana Chatterjee, Ljiljana Čavić, Aleksandar Čučaković, Dušan Danilović, Magdalena Dragović, Natalia Figueiras Pimentel, Leslie Forehand, Jacob Gasper, Vera Henkelmann, Gabriel-Dinu Herea, Vladimir Ivanovici, Charles Kerton, Jorge López Quiroga, Anastasija Martinenko, Andrea Mattiello, Rubén G. Mendoza, Dimitris Minasidis, Maria Paschali, Marko Pejić, Iakovos Potamianos, Maria Shevelkina, Alice Isabella Sullivan, Travis Yeager, and Olga Yunak.

CONTACT: <https://brill.com/display/title/63611>



Daniela Marcu Istrate, *Church Archaeology in Transylvania. (ca. 950 to ca. 1450)*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2022, 522 p.

The central-western part of Romania, commonly known as Transylvania, preserves one of the most valuable legacies of medieval religious architecture in Europe. The region is home to the easternmost Romanesque churches, Cistercian monasteries, and Gothic buildings built in connection with the most important continental construction sites. But here also stand some of the oldest Byzantine-like churches, built in the 10th century, and late-medieval Orthodox churches erected in a hybrid, Romanesque-Gothic style. Still, the main characteristic of the landscape seems to be the fortified churches.

Medieval Transylvania was primarily Catholic, this being the official religion of its rulers and privileged social strata. However, Orthodoxy formed a consistent substratum, which sprung from two roots: one the native, Romance, and Slavic populations, and the second the Hungarian leaders baptized in Constantinople and oriented for a period toward this variant of Christianity. This situation, which evolved in specific conditions throughout the Middle Ages, resulted in a consistent body of churches, which counts a series of masterpieces of medieval architecture, and whose uniqueness is indisputable.

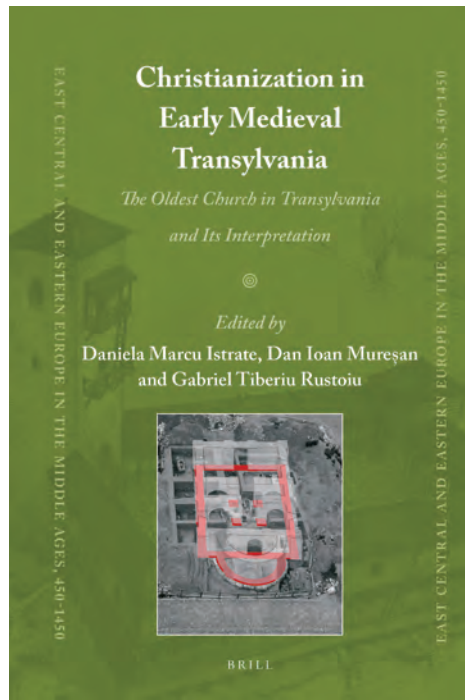
Diversity is the main attribute of this heritage, a diversity that reflects its multi-ethnic character, religious pluralism, the wisdom of certain leaders, and the resistance of those who were not among the favoured social groups. This feature highlights Transylvania on a continental level because no other region offers, to a comparable extent, a similar architectural fabric.

As in any other part of Europe, the medieval ecclesiastical landscape, consisting mostly of Catholic churches, has survived unevenly. In the western regions, almost nothing is left, and retrieving the medieval buildings is basically the task of archaeology. The situation differs in the intra-Carpathian area corresponding to the old Voivodship of Transylvania, which had been better

protected – both naturally and through fortification works – and had a divergent history during the Modern Age. In these territories, many medieval churches are still standing, although, over time, they have been almost all the subject of various alterations, to enlarge, modernize, redecorate, or fortify them. Still, the medieval component is quite noticeable, no matter if we look at the southern lands settled by the Saxons, at the eastern Lands of Szeklers, or at the former northern and western counties

Whenever archaeological excavations have been undertaken, complemented or not by architectural research, it has been noticed that the present-day churches resulted from successive, complex development stages, consisting not only of buildings activities, but organizing cemeteries and providing various facilities as well. In general, church archaeology is almost completely dependent on restorations or other similar works, and usually, only minor spots are available for excavations. Most of the time, the archaeologist deals with details, and it often takes years or decades before a complete diagnosis, if it ever arrives. There is no surprise that the archaeological data are rarely familiar to researchers from other fields, and even less frequently included in general papers.

This book has tried to compensate for this lack while introducing the medieval churches of Transylvania to the English-speaking reader. The previous 11 chapters have surveyed the shaping of the architectural religious landscape from its beginning until, largely, the mid-15th century, outlining the context and achievements of each period, the current state of research, issues, and potential solutions, through examples that, in one manner or another, stand as representative. Each chapter has its conclusions, but some matters need to be stressed at the end, especially for readers less acquainted with this part of Europe.



Daniela Marcu Istrate, Dan Ioan Mureșan and Gabriel Tiberiu Rustoiu (eds), *Christianization in Early Medieval Transylvania. The Oldest Church in Transylvania and Its Interpretation*, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2022, 499 p.

This collection of studies is the result of an initiative of the Great Union Museum in Alba Iulia (Romania), a response to the changes in historiography that accompanied the 2011 discovery of an early medieval pillared church in that same city. The dating and architecture of this monument caused fundamental changes in the scholarly discourse regarding the early Christianization and Hungarian rule in Transylvania.

Perhaps the most important conclusion is that the pillared church can contribute to the understanding of when and how the Bulgarian rule in southern Transylvania came to an end, and how that same territory came under the control of the Magyars. The picture concerning the Bulgarian presence in Transylvania that an earlier generation of scholars has drawn largely on the basis of more or less informed guesses is now both clearer and more detailed. The biographies of the main actors are also better known now, which allows for a better understanding of their political attitudes and the choices they had to make between military expansion and religious proselytism. Greater promises will result from the investigation of how the pillared church influenced the church architecture of Transylvania. There is only a limited number of possible reconstructions for the pillared church, which makes so much easier the search for analogies among the old churches of Transylvania. In the light of what one has learned from the pillared church in Alba Iulia, a particular detail seems to be of significance in terms of distinguishing those churches from any other in the Byzantine area or in those areas of Europe under Byzantine influence: the separation of the naos and the bema by means of a structure with two symmetrical entrances. One can only hope that scholars will be able to identify more examples of influences upon the Orthodox architecture of Transylvania.

Contributors: Daniela Marcu Istrate, Florin Curta, Horia Ciugudean, Aurel Dragotă, Monica-Elena Popescu, Călin Cosma, Tudor Sălăgean, Jan Nicolae, Dan Ioan Mureșan, Alexandru Madgearu, Gábor Thoroczkay, Éva Révész, Boris Stojkovski, Șerban Turcuș, Adinel C. Dincă, Mihai Kovács Nicolae Călin Chifăr, Marius Mihail Păsculescu and Ana Dumitran.

CONTACT: <https://brill.com/display/title/62325>



Mihail K. Qaramah, *O istorie a Molitfelnicului Românesc. Evoluția formularelor Sfintelor Taine (sec. XVI-XVII)* [A History of the Romanian Euchologion: The Evolution of the formularies of the Sacraments (16th -17th c.)], Alba Iulia, Editura Reîntregirea, 2022, 310 p.

The book represents a foray into the history of the Byzantine liturgy among Romanians in a time of religious trends and church political circumstances such as the Protestant Reformation and the liturgical reforms of Peter Mohyla and Patriarch Nikon. Between the 16th and the early 18th centuries the South-Slavic influence on the liturgy of Romanians was replaced by the Ruthenian or East-Slavic one and, finally, by the Greek (based on the the printed Venetian Greek liturgical books). A decisive step in the process of synchronizing the Romanian liturgical practices to the Greek usages was the printing in 1706 of the revised Romanian Euchologion, having the Euchologion of Nikolaos Glykis as primary source. The new redaction represented the basis of the “modern” Romanian Euchologion. This complex process of shifting centres of liturgical diffusion, which signified the gradually abandonment of the older Byzantine-Slavic tradition in favour of modern Greek liturgical formularies, took place at the same time with the translation of the biblical and liturgical texts mainly from Church Slavonic (but also Greek) into the vernacular. The book seeks to reveal the liturgical developments and changes determined by these successive reforms within the Ordos of the Sacraments, namely the Rite of Baptism (and its related rites), Nuptial Rites (Betrothal, Coronation of the spouses, and Digamia), Confession and the Rite of Anointing the sick (and a similar “Service of the Funeral Uncction”). Thus, it presents, for the first time, a corpus of very little (or not at all) studied Slavo-Romanian manuscripts and printed versions of the Euchologion, which are compared to their Greek prototypes. In addition to the historical research of liturgical development, the book contains a section with proposals for revising the received rites, such as the recovery of certain practices and prayers that are mentioned by the older Slavo-Romanian Euchologia, but have undeservedly fallen into disuse.

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IN THIS ISSUE: THE SPLENDORS OF MAXIMILIAN I'S COURT AND HIS CONQUEST OF EUROPE (1459-1519)

ISSUE 1

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WARFARE AND PERFORMANCE IN BOHEMIA

THE HUSSITES

The July feast in Prague can be stirring, and close to the heart, as the city's new tower is raised. On 20 July 1418, the ceremony of the Feast of the Holy Spirit in Old Town Square was a major event before the Hussite Wars began. Many participants in Prague had been focal points for Hussite literary and religious activities. The city's Hussite leaders were able to provide from wealthy families, knights, and other nobles and bishops, both powers were manipulating kings and emperors to subvert them and to attack the Church was receiving considerable money and independence to earn money hoping to get their loved ones out of purgatory.

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IMPERIAL VISIONS & LOCAL REALITIES

THE LATE MEDIEVAL HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

For a long time, historians have typically judged the late medieval Holy Roman Empire as a failed experiment in the standard model of a European kingdom. However, new research has shown how sophisticated and dynamic the Empire was in its final period. This was a complex and political arena, shaped by the emperor's role as a guardian of the legacy of Charlemagne, the emperor's role as a ruler, and the emperor's role as a defender of the faith. Although local political structures tended toward fragmentation and localism, imperial authorities forged new and distinctive relationships that the Empire together with the Holy Roman Empire and beyond.

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IN THIS ISSUE: KYIVAN RUS CULTURE AND CONFLICT - A MEDIEVAL HISTORY OF MODERN UKRAINE (900 - 1400)

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Conflicts and negotiations between the Mongols and Russian rulers in the thirteenth century.

HOLY FOOLS
The demonic encounters and foolish pursuits of a monk named Brother Isaac.

WOMEN IN CHARGE
The diplomatic, social, and military roles of women in medieval Indian society.

GUARDIANS OF FAITH
The spread of martyrs and military saints from Byzantium to the lands of Rus.

IN THIS ISSUE: WOMEN'S IMPACT ON LIFE, CULTURE & POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE AGES, FROM BYZANTIUM TO JAPAN

ISSUE 3

Medieval World

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MEDIEVAL WOMEN IN CHARGE

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TACTFUL PRINCESSES
How elite women served as skilled negotiators in royal courts across Europe.

GREEN MEN
The 'voors' of isolated heads that decorated buildings across medieval England.

WOMEN IN THE ORDEERS
The roles of women among the Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic Knights.

BRISTOL REBELLION
A dispute between civic government and royal authority in fourteenth-century England.

Medieval World: Culture & Conflict is a new magazine about the history and material culture of the Middle Ages intended for a wide readership. The magazine is published by Karwansaray Publishers both in print and online every two months, distributed worldwide, and offers 60 pages of excellent content in full color. The magazine launched in May 2022 and expands on the popular Medieval Warfare magazine, which ended with issue XI.6.

Leading scholars and early career researchers in various fields of study author the short articles (ranging from 800 to 3,200 words) featured in the magazine. The texts are illustrated with images of sites and objects from collections around the world, as well as original maps, drawings, and paintings. Accessibly written and splendidly illustrated, this publication highlights the value of textual and visual records in reconstructing the multifaceted historical and cultural dimensions of the Middle Ages.

Each issue centers on a theme that provides detailed coverage of a particular topic from historical, art historical, archaeological, and literary standpoints, among other perspectives. It also contains special articles on issues of daily life, medieval legends, key figures, events, and monuments from the Middle Ages, as well as reviews of books and exhibitions.

The magazine opens with a brief editorial and a “News” section, highlighting recent discoveries and projects related to the Middle Ages. A “Further Reading” section at the end with key publications that touch on the theme of each issue.

The inaugural issue of Medieval World: Culture & Conflict looked at the Holy Roman Empire at the end of the Middle Ages. It included a critical historical overview, and contributions on Emperor Maximilian I and his glamorous court, the Hussites, and the Swiss pikemen, among other topics. The special features covered the endangered Armenian monuments of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, also known as Artsakh, magical rings

in medieval legends, Welsh castles, and much more.

In response to current events and the ongoing war in Ukraine, the second issue of the magazine looked at the history, art, and culture of Kyivan Rus. In addition to the historical overview of the region, other theme articles covered important figures and monuments, like Yaroslav the Wise and his famed cathedral of St. Sophia, the Kyivan Caves Monastery, the coins and writing of early Rus, military saints, and the interactions with the Mongols. The issue emphasized how expansive and well-connected the region of Kyivan Rus was during the Middle Ages, and how important the contacts with Byzantium, the Mongols, and the wider Europe were in the initial formation and subsequent transformations of the territory and its cultural heritage.

The third issue of the magazine examines the roles of medieval women in cultural, political, economic, and military affairs. From tactful diplomats to creative artists, women impacted much of the life, culture, and politics of the Middle Ages, yet their stories are often overlooked in favor of other histories. In addition to the theme-related content, this issue looks at medieval heraldry, key military encounters, and a recent exhibition on gold at the British Library.

If you would like to contribute an article, a review, or a news piece, or suggest themes for future issues, please be in touch. Each contribution accepted for publication is thoroughly edited, copyedited, and professionally presented. I encourage you to read this new publication, share details about it with friends and colleagues, as well as institutional and public libraries. This project offers a distinct venue for public-facing scholarship that has the potential to bring excellent research about the Middle Ages to all.

Alice Isabella Sullivan, PhD
 editor@medievalworldmagazine.com



EXPANSIVE & WELL-CONNECTED By Christian Rattensperger

THE MEDIEVAL KINGDOM OF KYIVAN RUS

The foundation of the kingdom of Rus is wrapped up in what historians like to call mythohistory. We have a great deal of information accumulated from archaeological investigations that points to a long-established connection with Scandinavia. We know that Scandinavian traders plied the eastern European river systems looking for amber, furs, slaves, and eventually silver to take back to Baltic and North Sea markets. The silver came from the Abbasid Caliphate and passed up the Volga to the Bulgars and elsewhere, thus drawing the Scandinavians – called Varangians in the sources – down those river pathways.

Despite these early associations, the story of the founding of Rus is our western country after the fact as a way to aggrandize the then ruling family. That story is scented on the claim that the local tribes, living along the eastern European waterways, kicked out the Scandinavians who were taking tribute from them. But they were unable to rule themselves – “take over against tribe” – thus they issued an invitation: “Our land is great and rich, but there is no ruler in it. Come to rule and bring us silver.” These new rulers were Scandinavians, a group called the Rus.

The name Rus most likely comes via a Finnish word for “rowers” (ruotsi), which was transmitted into Slavic as “Ruti” and eventually to Rus (Русь). Here, in this mythohistorical narrative, Ruti became the first ruler of Rus and the ancestor of the ruling family – a ruling family who were not conquerors but were invited in to rule over a population who could not rule themselves.

Oleg, a successor to Ruti, is credited with the actual creation of the kingdom of Rus as he expanded south from the Novgorod region to take the city of Kyiv, setting what would become the western capital of Rus. The Islamic silver was dying out at this time, and Oleg became more interested in the Charipen silver mine to the Black Sea and to the Byzantine Empire. In the early tenth century, he

Kyiv not Kiev
 Most readers will have learned the capital of Ukraine as Kiev (pronounced KEEV). However, the Ukrainian spelling of Kyiv (pronounced KEEV) is becoming much more common. The spelling Kyiv is a holdover from the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, and the Ukrainian government has used Kyiv since 1993. In 2012, the United Nations agreed to adopt Kyiv as the standard form for the name of the city. Since the 2014 Russian invasion of Crimea, it has gained increasing worldwide acceptance, especially in the last few months since the February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Kyiv is not the only name to reflect the differences between Russia and Ukraine. The Christianizer of Rus is known as Vladimir the Prince in Russia and Volodymyr (Volodymyr) in Ukraine. These linguistic changes are not modern alterations but reflect the split between the Russian and Ukrainian languages that happened many centuries ago.

Medieval World 2 15

*Translation Automatism in Early Vernacular Texts:
Units, Clusters, Networks*

International Conference
University of Verona, 9-11 June 2022

Università degli Studi di Verona
Dipartimento di Culture e Civiltà
Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature straniere
CNRS / CÉSCM, Poitiers
Universitatea "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" din Iași
Ústav pro jazyk český AV ČR

**Translation Automatism in
Early Vernacular Texts:
Units, Clusters, Networks**



International Conference

University of Verona
9-11 June 2022

Room 1.1
Polo Zanotto

Elizabeth Solopova (University of Oxford): *Tradition and Innovation in the First English Vernacular Bible.*

Ondřej Fúsik (University of Prague): *Translating Female References in the Old English Heptateuch.*

Ileana Sasu (University of Tours): *Middle English glosses between the lines of an Old English homily copied in the Tiberius Psalter.*

Claudia Tărnăuceanu (University of Iași): *'False friends' and calque translations in a Medieval Latin complaint of the Romanian knezes from Banat, c.1360-1380.*

Chiara Concina (University of Verona): *Translating the Life of St Margaret: the Anglo-Norman versions.*

Vladimir Agrigoroaei (CNRS / CÉSCM, Poitiers): *Philippe de Thaon's biblical quotations in his Bestiary as proof of Old French language automatism at the beginning of the 12th c.*

Anna Cappelotto (University of Verona): *Pyramus and Thisbe in medieval and early modern German translation.*

Agnes Korondi (University of Iași / Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest): *Powerful Verses: Psalm Quotations in Old Hungarian Prayers.*

Andrea Svobodová (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague): *Textual variants of the fourth petition in the Lord's Prayer in Czech.*

Ana Maria Gînsac (University of Iași): *Culture-specific items (realia) and their translation in the Old Romanian psalters of the 16th century.*

Chiara Cracco (University of Verona): *Le lexique féodal dans les traductions de fables médiévales : le cas de l'Isopet II de Paris.*

Kateřina Voleková (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague): *The Old Czech hapax legomenon 'domoskyna' as a Modern Czech poetic expression.*

Katarzyna Jasińska (Polish Academy of Sciences, Krakow): *Dissecting the manuscript fragment of the Old Czech Tobit and its relations to Old Polish translations.*

Mădălina Andronic Ungureanu (University of Iași): *Formal Slavonisms in the Romanian Ciobanu Psalter.*

Vladimir Agrigoroaei (CNRS / CÉSCM, Poitiers) / **Ileana Sasu** (University of Tours) in dialogue with the contributors to the volume *Translation Automatism in the Vernacular Texts of the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period*, 2022

PSALTERATIO

Analysis and rationale of the first French and English metrical psalters
 ANR Project: CE54 - Arts, langues, littératures, philosophies
 42 months, 2022-2026

The development of both French and English is multilingually and interculturally connected. The first outputs of this reticulate dialogue of cultures are the French and English translations of the Psalms written after the Battle of Hastings (1066). These were the first French translations ever made, setting the pattern for the development of vocabulary and syntax. Linguists took an interest in them because of their importance in the shaping of vernacular literary languages, but there is more to these texts than meets the eye. Leaving aside the very first translations, such as the *Oxford Psalter* (first half of the twelfth century), another group of texts should stir the interest of linguists and literary historians. The early vernacular psalter tradition included a series of offshoots branching out into lyrical genres (metrical psalters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries) or exegetical ones (commentaries written in the same timeframe). These texts affected the development of literature in general, from both historical and cultural perspectives. Furthermore, the metrical and exegetical alterations of the Psalms are intertwined, since they were made according to a particular *ratio* (or *raison*, as Philippe de Thaon renders the concept in his *Comput*, as early as 1113/1119)—a sense of purpose which escapes contemporary ecdotic approaches. Medieval French translations and adaptations of sacred texts were oriented either towards heterodoxy or towards art, depending on this particular sense of purpose. The tradition of metrical psalters belongs to the artistic category, halfway between literature and cultural history. These texts are by no means minor or ancillary, as they have often been considered on account of their peculiar status (in-between translation and metrical adaptation). They are the fertile ground on which research in translation studies and philology can thrive. The ANR project PsalterATIO considers these texts within a wider case study of translation automatism in historical languages and of the elusive links between vernacular and high-prestige medieval literatures.

The core research deals with three texts developed from one another: *First French Metrical Psalter*—*1FMP* (two manuscripts and several fragments attesting to various stages in the evolution of the text); *Second French Metrical Psalter*—*2FMP* (four manuscripts and various fragments); and *Middle English Surtees Psalter*—*MESP* (six manuscripts). ‘Best-text’ editions or neo-Lachmannian stemmatology cannot solve the puzzle of their intertwined origins. The emphasis of New Philology on digital humanities can shed light on variants, but it cannot properly deal with the intricate matter of their evolution. The problematic addition of a fragment of *1FMP* to manuscripts of *2FMP* provides the source of inspiration for (or point of contact with) the latter. *MESP*, which is an insular text, also follows the stylistic and prosodic pattern of *2FMP*, despite the fact that the latter was written on the Continent, all while being copied in manuscripts of the Oxford Psalter, which could be the basis of *1FMP* and *2FMP*. These odd links (that have already been explored if only briefly, and many more hitherto unpublished) associate the three vernacular texts in a peculiar fashion, impossible to unravel via current ecdotic methods. The situation requires the help of genetic editing. As a result, the interdisciplinary approach of our project must bring

together linguistics, philology, palaeography, codicology, and cultural history, adapting the methods of genetic editing as an alternative to stemmatology and aiming towards the creation of a transdisciplinary method. The three texts must be studied and edited together, as a group of offshoots from the same tradition, in what the project members call a joint genetic digital edition. This is further supported by the fact that the *1FMP* addition to the *2FMP* found its way into copies of the *Bible historiale complétée*.

Were all these texts (both French and English) truly interconnected or are we dealing with linguistically triggered mechanisms related to the translation process and multilingualism? A series of arguments suggests that both options are valid at the same time and operate within certain limits. However, this raises another intriguing question: how significant are the links between all the already mentioned vernacular manuscripts? And how can they be used in the evaluation of translanguistic links? As a result, the ANR PsalterATIO project is built around the convergence of philology and translatology, where neither discipline supersedes the other. It also takes into account exegesis, of equal importance, since some of the coincidences could be explained through the presence of Medieval Latin glossed sources from which the filler verses of metrical psalters could be derived. Occasionally, the filler verses of *1FMP*, *2FMP*, and *MESP* seem to be based on Latin commentaries and glosses, the same ones used in vernacular prose exegetical texts (cf. the *Middle English Glossed Prose Psalter* and its French source; the *First French Commentary to the Psalms*, based on *Media Glossatura*; the *Second French Commentary*; or the *Third French Commentary* fragment, based on *Magna Glossatura*). However, research will be further extended to prologues and related commentaries in collaboration with the two foreign teams of the project. This collaboration covers a wide variety of topics, starting with the avatars of *Glossa Ordinaria* and ending with *Historia scholastica* or later works (such as the influence of Nicholas of Lyra), focusing on the manner in which vernacular texts often incorporate paratextual glosses (marginal as well as interlinear) into their main structure. It is, therefore, evident that the joint genetic digital edition of the three texts must be accompanied by an extensive study. Moreover, the project will also publish research of a theoretical nature, pertaining, on the one hand, to the dynamics between high-prestige exegesis and vernacular texts (as witnessed by the frequent use of the Latin Psalm fragments as support for the vernacular poems); on the other hand, to translation automatism in historical languages.

Although the most obvious point of origin of the three metrical psalters seems to be French or English (see for instance the Old English Metrical Psalter, often compared to the Surtees Psalter), their tradition is pan-European and derives from Medieval Latin experiments. These texts are written according to the paraphrasing practices already established in monasteries and cathedral schools. To give but an example, the eleventh-century manuscript in Tours, Municipal Library, 90 preserves a half-verse, half-prose rewriting of the Psalms and Song of Songs written at the local abbey of Marmoutier, foreshadowing the literary trends of the Old French texts of the twelfth

century. The Marmoutier text can be best described as an oscillation between prose commentary and verse adaptation. It was written at a time when Gallo-Romance vernacular literatures were embryonic—see e.g. the vernacular texts from the tenth-century manuscript in Clermont-Ferrand, Municipal Library, 240 (189), copied among other scribbles at the end of various quires in a Latin glossary manuscript.

It is hardly surprising that the vernacular tradition was late in assimilating trends coming from the high-prestige Medieval Latin milieu. Fear of heresy and dogmatic errors accounts for this delay in the assimilation of new ideas; a period of adjustment (and endorsement) was always needed. What is surprising, however, is the manner in which such trends permeated lower cultural strata. Given that Medieval Latin was a pan-European vehicular language, metrical psalters were not restricted to a monolingual context; they appeared all over Europe, sometimes only indirectly connected through the links that all of them share with Medieval Latin literature. They set a precedent for sixteenth-century trends, such as the Huguenot Psalter and its European avatars. Much in the same manner, the association of vernacular biblical adaptations and Medieval Latin exegetical writings (preceding them) was also predictable.

A parallel line of research deals with the issue of translation automatism, a concept explored for the first time in the forthcoming volume *Translation Automatism in the Vernacular Texts of the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period*, eds. Vladimir Agrigoroaei and Ileana Sasu, 2023, soon to be published by Brepols. Such automatism are based on translation units presenting the same translation choices, especially when two authors use similar translation strategies, all while sharing diatopic, diachronic, diastratic, and diaphasic language variants. They

can be defined as trans/intra-cultural or trans/intra-linguistic phenomena, affecting languages of all shapes and sizes, from chronolects to sociolects, reaching as far as idiolects (even medieval ones; cf. the macaronic renderings of several twelfth-century texts, including the *Old French commentaries to the Psalms*). In the specific case of *1FMP*, *2FMP*, and *MESP*, the confusing output of the phenomena is that not all coincidences between the three metrical adaptations of the Psalms stem from possible intertextual relations, from borrowed formulae, quotations, or adaptations. They can be the simple result of metalinguistic awareness or insular bilingualism, a consequence of translation clusters based on readings of the Latin *Gallicanum* version of the Psalter.

One of the common problems in philological research dealing with medieval or early modern translations is that coincidences between two translated texts are interpreted as proof that one text is based on the other. This assumption is grounded in the definition of a translation: from a literary or philosophical point of view, no two translations can be identical, as they would be based on approximations. Ecdotic methods (mostly neo-Lachmannian) fuel similar notions through their stemmatic reconstruction of texts. However, from a linguistic point of view, the reality of the translation process shows that two independent translations can be similar to the point of being identical, provided they are based on similar approaches and strategies. Following this line of research, PsalterRATIO acknowledges that there is no clear determinacy or indeterminacy in linguistics and that our

▼ Detail of folio 101r of *1FMP* in the *Oscott Psalter* (London, British Library, Additional MS 50000), c.1265-1270.

Source: Print screen of the digital facsimile available on the site of the British Library (<https://www.bl.uk/>).



approach must consider idiolects, sociolects, dialects, etc.; in other words, the project will take into account linguistic variation, going against a Cartesian approach to linguistics, limiting the scope of concepts, and reducing the latter to elementary assumptions. As a continuation of the aforementioned Brepols volume, PsalteRATIO will examine three main situations where coincidences between translations occur: “what is common to two or more translations as a result of the transfer of textual units from one text to another (quotations, diorthoses, formulae); what is common because of the existence of a common source text (translation clusters, based on translation units); what is fixed, innate, and unchangeable in the target language (language automatism, often coinciding with translation units).” This explains why the four French teams of the project will work closely with the two Czech and Romanian teams. Their theoretical approaches developed in joint cooperation can explain the unusual links between *MESP* and *2FMP*. Last but not least, the study of translation automatism opens up a new line of research to an analysis of the links between translation deviations and the translators’ aesthetic desire to explore and play with the vernacular language, to experiment with its expressive potential. It is, therefore, possible to question the reworking of the source contents in order to explore the approach or strategy of the translators and their work on the semantics of the words retained for the target text, both in faithful word-for-word translations and in metrical adaptations.

Needless to say, a large part of these theoretical explorations will consider translation errors. Ongoing research for the *Translation Automatism* volume has already shown that errors form a vital communication bridge between the philological point of view (basis of stemmatology) and the translational one (linked to translation automatism). Translation errors occur in what came to be called an interlanguage, that is, an idiolect developed by a learner or translator. Research in erratology already argued that novice translators do not make random errors, but systematic ones, in connection with each novice’s learning strategies of the target language. Translation errors form a linguistic system based on elements from both the source language and target language. This interlanguage idiolect preserves many features of the first language, leading to overgeneralizations of the native language in the spelling, writing, and speaking rules of the acquired language. Hence the need to confront the philological and translational point of view on errors in a joint genetic digital edition which gives equal footing to philology and translation studies.

To the best of the team members’ knowledge, such notions are entirely novel, but PsalteRATIO does not explore new concepts only for the sake of their novelty. The exploration is born out of a need to adjust current research methods. On the one hand, research dealing with translation automatism is much needed in the field of philology in particular and history of culture in general, since translation units often overlap with culturemes. On the other hand, digital humanities and machine translation can prove to be detrimental to philological and translational research if they are not properly assimilated, with suitable adjustments. The transdisciplinary approach favoured by PsalteRATIO is a laboratory where the members of the project will put these theories to the test.

The threefold edition of the *1FMP*, *2FMP*, and *MEGP*, also represents a completely novel approach. Its innovative and ambitious character is the consequence of focusing less on concepts such as *variance*, *diffrazione*, or *usus scribendi*, born out of a monolingual obsession

for ‘authorship’ (neo-Lachmannian) or ‘variants’ (‘best-text’, New Philology). Instead, this ANR project focuses on an intricate interplay of composite fragments, translation automatism, and intertextual references linked with wider phenomena from the high-prestige milieu of the Middle Ages. It does not focus on a single text or manuscript. It unravels the multilingual evolution of a larger group of texts and manuscripts. Naturally, the editions of *1FMP*, *2FMP*, and *MESP* cannot be published on paper. The digital environment is the only one suited for the project. Since most translation clusters are based on source (not target) languages, and since they occur across vernacular languages, they must be discussed from a comparatist, multilingual perspective, hence the choice to associate the Czech and Romanian teams as full partners in the current project. This is especially necessary as they will become full partners in a future European project proposal at the end of PsalteRATIO. This ANR project is, therefore, an experiment that will sit at the core of a greater debate in philology, translatology, and ‘vernacular theologies’. Since an experiment needs a safe space for debates, the website (interface for the electronic corpus) will provide the common framework where comments will be linked to verses, in order to find common ground for theoretical debates. The conclusions are presented to a wider audience in conferences delivered in open seminars, as well as papers in an online open-review journal where other scholars are invited to discuss both the method(s) used and the project’s discoveries. Other publications will be experimental papers collectively written by five of the six teams.

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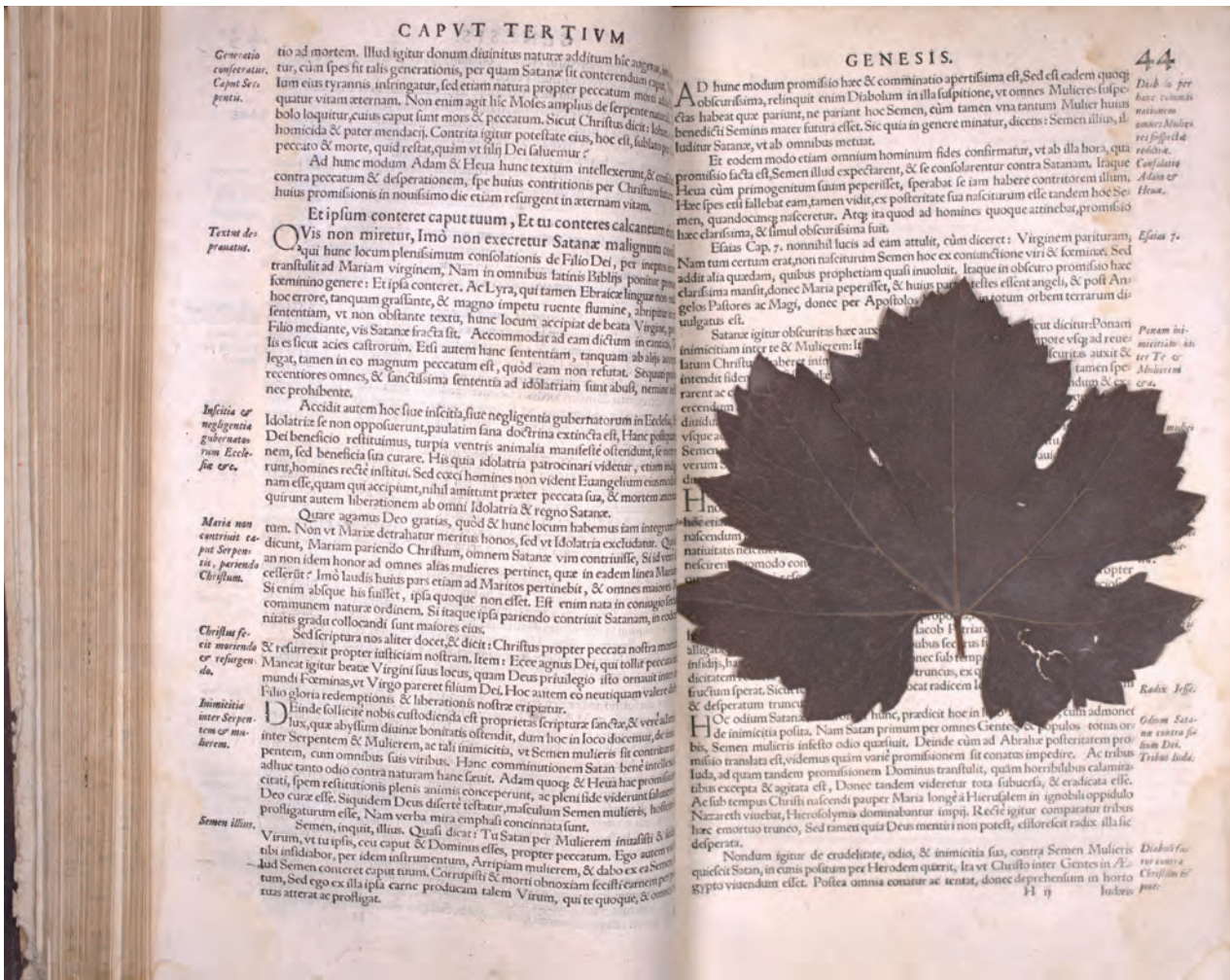
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*Reading and Writing in Mediaș (14th to 16th c.):
Conservation, Virtual Reconstruction, and Scholarly Investigation
of a Transylvanian School and Parish Library*

A project funded by the Ministry for Culture and Media
of the Federal Republic of Germany (BKM), 2022-2024
42 months, 2022-2026

The goal of this project is to reconstruct and interpret the (now scattered) works that were read, collected, and even produced in the small Transylvanian town of Mediaș between the mid-14th century and c.1600: codices, incunabula, 16th century printed texts, charters, administrative records, and other written sources. Its main goal is to recreate virtually (and digitally) the community's literacy environment on a scholarly level, and to display through an illustrative example the textual patrimony of the Transylvanian Saxons for a wider audience. The project considers provenance investigation for the fragmentary pieces of paper and parchment, but the main emphasis of the operation is placed primarily on preserving those cultural artefacts that would illuminate the practice of reading and writing both before and immediately after the Lutheran Reformation.

In June and August 2022, the project's exploratory phase resulted in the physical identification or rediscovery of manuscripts and printed volumes, along with archival records dating to before 1600, all belonging to the intellectual heritage of the Evangelical Community A. B. in Mediaș (St. Margaret parish church). The project team, scientifically coordinated by Adinel C. Dincă, PhD (Associate Professor, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of History and Philosophy), also includes Vasile Mizgan (History Teacher at the Forestry High School in Năsăud, acting as photographer and IT-expert), and two MA students of the Faculty of History and Philosophy, UBB: Livia Potop and Alexandru Frătean. The administrative aspects of the project are overseen by Professor Emeritus Konrad G. Gündisch and Hansotto Drotloff (both holding a wide knowledge of the mediaeval history of Transylvanian Saxons, and the historical development of Mediaș), while further research activities are actively supported by the clergy of the Lutheran Church, Wolfgang Árvay and Gerhard Servatius-Depner, as well as by the staff of the parish. Local historians, either from the History Museum or the school system, are constantly offering additional support and expertise.

Over the first stage of documentation, the 15th-16th c. manuscripts and books that had been preserved in one of the fortified church towers were identified and documented. These volumes were part of a historic library that merged remnants of the former Catholic parish holdings with the Lutheran parish archive, and the collections of Mediaș gymnasium. The research is focused on about 150 volumes, mostly books printed between 1470-1600, two manuscripts from the first decades of the 16th century, about 60 original charters from the late 14th century onward, and some 10 administrative registers of the Lutheran community dating to the 16th-18th c.,

which were bound in fragments of medieval manuscripts on parchment (including a fragmentary text written in Carolingian minuscule, a very rare occurrence in the Transylvanian context).

It has been rewarding to see the great interest shown by the mass media and the academic community at large in the recent research of the historical library preserved in St. Margaret Evangelical Parish Church in Mediaș. This shows that scholars and the public welcome historical manuscript and book studies. The initial results of the ongoing project have already been announced in local journals. Comprehensive information concerning the first phase of research conducted in the library of the Mediaș Lutheran Parish can be retrieved from various press outlets and social media. All public reports have stressed that isolated and fragmented information on the historical library and archive inventory was already available in scholarly literature (for instance, a brief, descriptive list of the books was published in 1867) and was known to the local representatives of cultural-historical associations; these scattered details served as the foundation for developing the research strategy for the current scholarly project.

The rediscovery and study of the historical library and archive of Mediaș is relevant because of its systematic and modern approaches, which have greatly expanded the previously known image of a collection made up of a few manuscripts and printed books to over 150 (so far) individually identified items. This project aims to combine liturgical, palaeographic-codicological, and art-historical methodologies in a meaningful interdisciplinary approach.

The late mediaeval and early modern manuscripts and printed books, which had been stored safely and carefully, but not under the best conditions, have been transferred to a more suitable room and will continue to be scientifically examined. Additionally, parish staff and scholars are working together to establish the best options for conserving, restoring, and cataloguing these historical discoveries, as well as for presenting the findings in exhibition formats appropriate for the 21st century. Until then, the access to this precious cultural heritage remains exclusively reserved to the team of specialists carrying out the ongoing research project.

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