

Original Scientific Paper  
УДК: 75.052.044(495)  
75.071.1 МИТРОФАНОВИЋ Г.  
DOI: 10.5937//zrffp53-46720

# GEORGIJE MITROFANOVIĆ'S FRESCO COMPOSITION WITH REPRESENTATIONS OF MEDIEVAL RULERS IN THE SOUTHERN APSE OF THE HILANDAR REFECTORY

Nikolaos L. DIONYSOPOULOS<sup>1</sup>  
University of Western Macedonia  
School of Fine Arts, Florina, Greece  
Department of Fine and Applied Arts

Vesna D. MILANOVIĆ<sup>2</sup>  
University of Priština in Kosovska Mitrovica  
Faculty of Philosophy  
Department of History of Art

---

<sup>1</sup> ndionysopoulos@uowm.gr

<sup>2</sup> vesna.milanovic@pr.ac.rs

Received: August 24, 2023  
Accepted: September 29, 2023

## GEORGIJE MITROFANOVIĆ'S FRESCO COMPOSITION WITH REPRESENTATIONS OF MEDIEVAL RULERS IN THE SOUTHERN APSE OF THE HILANDAR REFECTORY

*Keywords:*  
Georgije  
Mitrofanović;  
refectory of  
the Hilandar  
Monastery;  
fresco-painting of  
the 17<sup>th</sup> century;  
portraits  
(representations)  
of medieval rulers;  
Jesus Christ the  
Angel of Great  
Counsel.

*Abstract.* The composition with representations of medieval rulers is a unique structure within the fresco-ensemble of the Hilandar refectory, which was signed by the painter Georgije Mitrofanović in 1621/1622, replacing the previous, three centuries older works. It depicts Serbian King Milutin and the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos in a paraphrased version of the solution found in medieval portraits within the narthex of the Catholicon of the Monastery. With some modifications, it was incorporated into a new programmatic context, together with figures of Saint Simon the Monk (most likely representing the former King Uroš I) and Saint Stefan Dečanski. The formation of the latter pair is based on iconographic patterns that combine the initial theme of the pious rulers' patronage with motifs of martyrdom and unwavering faith. The new visual ensemble, featuring figures of pious and orthodox rulers from the medieval past, is completed by the insertion of the symbol of the cross between them and by placing all the figures under the protection and blessing of Christ, the Angel of Great Counsel.

Why did the creator of this pictorial program connect the bygone rulers, patrons of the monastery, with a distinctive, non-traditional representation of Christ? How does the passage of time since the medieval period affect the reception of this iconographic group? What does the medallion with the cross and Christogram signify in the given arrangement? These and similar questions, mostly overlooked in previous discussions focused on the restoration aspect of Mitrofanović's work, stem from the endeavour to understand what was achieved through the characteristics and circumstances of the era in which the refectory was repainted, particularly in the context of the challenges faced by the Orthodox community within the then Ottoman state.

The composition under consideration is a segment of the wall painting in the communal dining hall of the Hilandar monks. This hall is situated in the building opposite the western facade of the Catholicon and was adorned during a renovation project at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> Despite its medieval origins, when it was initially shaped during the extensive renovation of the monastery's most important buildings in the time of King Milutin,<sup>4</sup> the building underwent various modifications and alterations over the centuries of Ottoman rule, which have significantly shaped its present-day appearance (Ненадовић, 1963; Theocharidis, 1989, pp. 65–66; Богдановић, Ђурић, Медаковић, 1978, pp. 76–78; Nenadović, 1998, pp. 181–184; Kovačević, 1998, pp. 133–137; Petković, 1999, pp. 46–47; Ковачевић, 2022, pp. 286–307).<sup>5</sup> The changes to the medieval interior, resulting from the painting works, are most notably associated with the renovation that took place in 1621–1622. In this period, when Mount Athos was under Ottoman rule and the monastery no longer received the patronage it had enjoyed from Serbian rulers in the past, the first recorded and clearly visible restoration took place.<sup>6</sup> This

---

<sup>3</sup> It is considered that the indicated place, common for the topography of monastery units, corresponds to the place of the building with the same purpose from the time of the establishment of the Serbian monastery (end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century). There is a scarcity of information concerning the building attributed to the efforts of Saint Simeon Nemanja and Saint Sava of Serbia in the writings of their contemporaries. The sole medieval, albeit somewhat later, testament comes from Teodosije Hilandarac, the author of *The Life of Saint Sava*, who asserts that the father and son constructed it “from the ground up” (Теодосије, 1973, pp. 50–51; Теодосије, 1988, p. 138; cf. Миљковић, 2008, pp. 85, 94).

<sup>4</sup> The undertaking of King Milutin, the great restorer and “second ktetor” of the endowment of Saint Simeon Nemanja and Saint Sava, was most likely completed in the early years of the reign of his son and successor Stefan Dečanski, at least when it comes to painting the refectory (v. infra).

<sup>5</sup> From the consideration of the material remains resulted the identification of a significant portion of the outer wall of the building, including segments associated with the oldest monastery fortifications, i.e., layers attributed to the former Greek monastery and the reconstruction from the era of the first Serbian ktetors.

<sup>6</sup> Letters written by Hilandar monks during the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, addressed to Tsar Ivan the Terrible, along with other members of the Russian ruling family and nobility,

restoration occurred three centuries after the completion of the works associated with the most prosperous period in the history of the Hilandar monastery.<sup>7</sup> The construction interventions that preceded the painting works occurred around 1620, although specific dates lack direct confirmation. Nevertheless, there is a precise chronological documentation for the creation of the fresco paintings in the spacious hall designated for the daily monastic meal ritual, which to this day remains preserved on three of its walls (Kajmaković, 1977, pp. 189–267, figs. 101–134; Ταβλάκης, 1997, pp. 149–164 et passim, figs. 141–152; Rakić, 1998, pp. 263–266). The fresco-paintings on the north wall of the main apse date from 1780.<sup>8</sup> The founder's inscription inside the room, located above the entrance door at the northern end of the east wall and signed by the painter himself, confirms that the frescoes were created and donated by the Hilandar monk painter Georgije Mitrofanović<sup>9</sup> in the years 1621–1622. These works were commissioned at the request of “the fathers and brothers and the entire council of the Hilandar Monastery, with Abbot Kir Ilarion hieromonk overseeing the project” (Суботић et al., 2019, pp. 53–55). One of the leading Serbian painters of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, known for his fresco-ensembles, icons, and iconostases (Kajmaković, 1977; Петковић, 2002; Тодић, 2013, I, pp. 132–140; Матић, 2017a, pp. 279–283, 445–447), painted the refectory of this monastery upon returning from the Patriarchate of Peć. He also completed an extensive project for Patriarch Pajsije in 1619–1620, marking the culmination of his productive involvement in his homeland. At the Serbian

provide compelling evidence of the monastery's deterioration and the dire condition of specific structures, thereby highlighting the urgent need for restoration. In one such appeal for assistance directed to Prince Georgi Vasilievich, brother of Ivan the Terrible, dated to 1558, mention is made of the collapse of the refectory; cf. Фотић, 2000, pp. 108 sq., especially 109, 127 (with bibliographical references, especially see Димитријевић, 1903, p. 31, no. 22). On the relations between Hilandar and Russia in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, see Петковић, 1995.

<sup>7</sup> On the reign of King Uroš II Milutin as the time when Hilandar reached the peak of power, cf. Живојиновић, 2022, pp. 453–485.

<sup>8</sup> The ktetor inscription from 1780 was published by Kajmaković, 1977, p. 255; cf. also Yiannias, 1991, p. 271, n. 18. A new edition of the inscription is expected in an upcoming volume of the book on the inscriptions of the Hilandar Monastery, which is listed in the bibliographic reference provided in the paper (Суботић et al., 2019).

<sup>9</sup> The author's and ktetor's inscriptions by Mitrofanović's hand constitute the sole source of information regarding this talented and industrious artist. Within a relatively brief and “condensed” timeframe, spanning from 1615 to 1622, he left a significant imprint not only in Hilandar but also across Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and the southern part of Serbia. Preceding this period, the sole instance of his fresco-painting, dating back to 1609, adorned the walls of a monastery in the area of Zapadna Morava (Ježevica). Mitrofanović was educated in the painting workshop of Mount Athos, with possible beginnings under the tutelage of a master who had plied his craft within the domain of the Patriarchate of Peć. It is the distinctiveness of his style, imbued with the hallmark traits of the Cretan “school” of painting, that sets him apart from his local predecessors. For further reading on this subject, refer to the supplementary bibliography provided in the subsequent sections of this paper.



church headquarters, he painted various significant works, including the entire refectory (of which only the foundations remain to this day). This project served as preparation for a similar endeavour at the Hilandar Monastery, which stands as his last recorded and most significant work (Kajmaković, 1977, pp. 51–56, 92–96; Ђурић et al., 1990, pp. 291–294; Тодић, 2013, I, p. 137).<sup>10</sup> The construction works carried out on the monastery building before the execution of the fresco-paintings primarily refer to the replacement of the upper structure and the adjustment of the existing openings on the walls (breaking new ones and bricking up parts of the existing ones) (Ненадовић, 1963, pp. 8–12; Ненадовић, 1965, p. 108; Суботић et al., 2019, pp. 57–58; Ковачевић, 2022, pp. 294–296, 303). A discovery from the eighth decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century showed that the new solution with a flat ceiling, instead of the previous one with a visible construction of a gabled roof, obscured the authentic remains of the fresco-ensemble from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Untouched during the painting of the room and hidden from view, they survived only in the former attic, gable part of the north wall above the opening of the main apse and the place reserved for the abbot's table (Djurić, 1978, pp. 41–53; Богдановић et al., 1978, pp. 88–92; Đorđević, 1998, pp. 243–244; Petković, 1999, pp. 47–48).<sup>11</sup> These frescoes exhibit stylistic characteristics that do not align with the work of the artists who completed the painting of the Catholicon in September–October 1321, prior to the death of King Milutin.<sup>12</sup> Instead, they support the previously mentioned perspective regarding the antiquity of the refectory building.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> On Mitrofanović's engagement beyond the confines of Mount Athos, as understood in the context of accumulating funds for the restoration of the refectory, see Суботић et al., 2019, pp. 54–57 (where this endeavour is compared with the other relevant examples of artists bestowing endowments – an occurrence not quite uncommon but still rare).

<sup>11</sup> Kajmaković (1977, p. 190, n. 448) was aware of the newly discovered remains, although he had not personally examined them at the time. The survival of these remnants on the wall, whose section beneath the ceiling was the only area painted in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, has led to a reinterpretation of Mitrofanović's renovation efforts. A recent interpretation challenges the conventional understanding of his work by proposing that Mitrofanović chose to preserve the ancient paintings on the north wall, with the newer ones mirroring the appearance and arrangement of the medieval artwork (see Миљковић, 2008, p. 207, n. 50). This viewpoint contradicts the earlier observations regarding the extent and nature of the damage sustained by the frescoes in the northern and northeastern sections of the hall (cf. Kajmaković, 1977, p. 265, and also Живковић, 1981, p. 39; Petković, 1999, p. 50; Ковачевић, 2022, p. 302).

<sup>12</sup> On the new, accurate reading of the date on the original ktetor inscription in the catholicon, executed in fresco technique on the eastern wall of the narthex, and its significance in resolving the question of the dating of the construction works on the catholicon and refectory, see Марковић, Хостетер, 1998, pp. 201–220 (with reference to previous literature), and especially p. 205, n. 20.

<sup>13</sup> In the written sources of the time, the refectory was not explicitly identified as the primary architectural project of King Milutin. Instead, it was considered that this might have been implied in the broader context of the construction of other monastery structures,



Fig. 1. Hilandar refectory, south apse (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)

At the far end of the elongated hall, in the apsidal recess on the southern wall, smaller and lower than the one previously mentioned,<sup>14</sup> there is a group of representations that we will pay special attention to in this paper (Figs. 1–2). Due to its position and arrangement within the two-band structured fresco-surface of the small, low apse, this group of representations stands out formally from the surrounding content. In the lower part of the composition, there are four standing figures, grouped in pairs on either side of the window. Notably, these figures are distinct from the series of standing figures displayed beneath the painted arcades in the lower zone of the hall's longitudinal walls

cf. Богдановић et al., 1978, pp. 76, 78; Живојиновић, 1998, p. 135. For the point of view about the realization of the plan to paint the refectory only after Milutin's death (accepted in recent literature), see Đorđević, 1998, pp. 243–244 (cf. our n. 4).

<sup>14</sup> The central portions of the narrow walls of the rectangular refectory end with apses.





Fig. 2. Hilandar refectory, view of the south wall with the apse (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)

(both west and east), which also includes two figures at the eastern end of the southern wall.<sup>15</sup> These figures do not share the same dimensions as those on the adjacent walls, and this difference is due to their adaptation to the available surface in the recess. The height of the conch-shaped niche housing the composition matches the height of the lower zone of frescoes on the surrounding walls (cf. *Кажмаковић*, 1977, figs. 104–107, especially 105, and 116). However, the two-zone design of this mini-unit required the inclusion of another equally significant representation in the upper part of the available surface. This decision was influenced by the shape of the wall, i.e., its conchal finish. Additionally, the positioning of the window in the center of the lower, semicircular part of the wall necessitated the use of pairs in the composition.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The row with depictions of holy monks beneath the arcades on the western side of the hall is only found in the southern half of the west wall. In the northern half of that wall, several large compositions occupy the space, leaving no room for individual figures. This sequence of holy monks does not extend into the western end of the southern wall due to the presence of an exit leading to the shooting range of the rampart. For the northern wall, with frescoes from 1780, uncertainty exist about the presence of painted arcades, which may not have been there or could not have been replicated (cf. *Кажмаковић*, 1977, figs. 104–107).

<sup>16</sup> The window opening does not correspond to the one from the time of *Mitrofanović's* composition. It was expanded later (*Суботић et al.*, 2019, p. 59, n. 19).



Fig. 3. Hilandar refectory, east half of the south apse (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)

The pair in the eastern half of the wall is a joint portrait in the full sense of the word (Fig. 3). It is interesting to note that we are talking about the ruling representations of King Milutin and his father-in-law, the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos, as they exist at the entrance from the narthex to the nave of the main monastery church (Djurić, 1989, especially pp. 105–106, figs. 1–5, 10–12; Vojvodić, 1998, pp. 250–257; Vojvodić, 2022, pp. 419–420, 422–423, 427). The outstretched left hand of King Milutin and the right hand of Emperor Andronikos II are extended towards each other, engaged in the joint act of transferring charters. Unfortunately, significant damage to the fresco between the two rulers makes it challenging to determine precisely what was originally painted in the area where their hands meet. It is noticeable that their hands are not positioned at the same height. However, the motif bears a striking resemblance to the portraits of the same individuals in the ktetor composition in the narthex of the Catholicon (Fig. 4). This similarity suggests that, just like in the narthex of the church, the rulers

here also held a bundle of charters (*chrysovuli*) with hanging stamps between them.<sup>17</sup> Both are in ceremonial imperial garb (*sakkos*, *loros* and crown in the form of *stemma*), with cruciform scepters in their hands, and illuminated by a nimbus. They are accompanied by inscriptions with the same designation (“pious ones”, along with the name, and “the ktetor of this holy temple”, Fig. 5) (Kažmačković, 1977, p. 255, fig. 133; Dionysopoulos, 2002, figs. 59–62, with inscriptions in the catalogue N. 15/1–15/2; cf. Đorđević, 1998, p. 244; Vojvodić, 1998, pp. 257–258). Two figures to the west of the window (Fig. 6), also with a nimbus, are marked differently in the inscriptions—their clothing and insignia

<sup>17</sup> On the iconographic type of the ruler-ktetor with a folded charter in his hand, that is, on representations depicting the act of donating a church through a charter, the oldest example of which in Byzantine monumental art dates from the 7<sup>th</sup> century, cf. Ђурић, 1989, pp. 33–38 (especially pp. 37–38, fig. 22, with a solution from the Hilandar narthex).





Fig. 4. Narthex of the Hilandar Catholicon. Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos and King Milutin (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)



Fig. 5. Hilandar refectory, south apse. King Milutin and Andronikos II Palaiologos (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)

differ from each other, but they are accompanied by the same type of signature (“saint” next to the name) (Kaĵmaĵoviĥ, 1977, p. 255, fig. 134; Dionisopoulos, 2002, figs. 59–62, part of the description in the catalogue N. 15; cf. Vojvodić, 1998, pp. 257–258).

The figure next to the window, described as “Saint Simon II” (most likely the late King Uroš, father of King Milutin), is dressed in the robes of a schema monk, with a *koukoulion* on his head, and thus differs from the other three, because the fourth, the Holy King Stefan Dečanski, is depicted in representative



Fig. 6. Hilandar refectory, south apse. Saint Simon II the Monk and Saint Stefan Dečanski (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)

(imperial) robe, similar to the one worn by the “ruling-ktetor” pair on the eastern section of the wall. In contrast to the cross-shaped scepter of King Stefan Dečanski, which corresponds to the insignia of the previously mentioned couple, the holy monk, whose name and identity are “clarified” by the added letter with the numerical value “second”,<sup>18</sup> holds a thin white cross in his right hand. His left hand is raised in front of his chest, with the palm facing the viewer as a sign of testimony. There is no doubt that it is a martyr’s cross—an iconographic detail that is not uncommon in the hands of saints from the order of monks, though it is not an absolute rule or convention. In the fresco in the narthex of King Milutin’s endowment in Gračanica, where both of the founder’s monastic parents are rightly recognized, the former King Uroš is represented as a schema monk. He likewise holds the same sign of the cross in his right hand as he makes a characteristic gesture with his left (Тодић, 1993, pp. 8–14, figs. 1–3; Војводић, 2009, p. 251 sq., figs. 1–2). The damaged inscription did not contain his monastic name. This inconsistency in naming was not uncommon in the medieval portraits of the monastic ancestors, which appear multiple times in the endowments of the sons of Uroš I at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> and the beginning

<sup>18</sup> The identification of the painted figure as the former king Uroš I is a viewpoint held by most researchers. With all caution, we share that view. This identification is supported by various details discussed in the paper, particularly the addition of the number “two” to the monk’s name. For an alternative opinion and identification of the painted figure with Stefan the First-Crowned, see Суборић et al., 2019, p. 59 (the interpretation according to which the number next to the monk’s name would refer to the ruler’s title should not be accepted).



of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He was referred to as both Simeon and Simon, a naming practice that also applied to the corresponding portraits of his father, Stefan the First-Crowned.<sup>19</sup> The same practice is also confirmed in written sources.<sup>20</sup> It is worthy of mention that the form of the monk's name inscribed on Mitrofanović's fresco (Simon), with "Izhitsa", is identical to the one in the copies of the text of Milutin's charter to the Hilandar parg Hrusija (Мошин et al., 2011, p. 439АБ), especially due to the circumstances that in one of the two mentioned specimens (specimen A), the same monastic name was written in addition to the secular name and the title of the First-Crowned—but with an octal "i". A figure with a name that is associated with both Stefan the First-Crowned and Uroš I in written sources, as well as in painted representations of former Serbian kings, is clearly associated with a martyr in Mitrofanović's fresco. As a kind of deviation from iconographic pattern, the depiction of holy monks with the cross of martyrdom in their hands (Mouriki, 1988, pp. 341–342; Марковић, 1995, p. 255, n. 136; Ђурић, 1997, p. 135, n. 58) clearly refers to the Christian understanding, developed by the early church fathers, and especially nurtured in the Mount Athos, according to which monks as "martyrs of conscience" are equal in feat to "blood martyrs" (Malone, 1950; Malone, 1951; Јевтић, 1980).<sup>21</sup> As the figure of the schema monk is paired with the image of the holy king whose exceptional respect and celebration in the era of Turkocracy is based on the developed cult of the ruler-martyr, the reception of the depicted couple is significantly determined by allusions to martyrdom and perseverance in faith tested by great trials. If the specific circumstances of the monastic life of King Uroš did not particularly distinguish the image of the sanctity of this Nemanjić

<sup>19</sup> In the paraklis at Đurđevi Stupovi near Ras and in the Church of St. Achileos in Arilje, Stefan the First-Crowned is represented as "St. Simon" and Uroš I as "St. Simeon" (Радојчић, 1997, pp. 27–28; Милошевић и Нешковић, 1987, p. 49, fig. 31; Ђорђевић, 1998, p. 50, with an illustration on pp. 54–55; Војводић, 2005, pp. 91, 165–167, 296, pl. 26). In the Church of the Holy Apostles of Peć, whose wall paintings date ca. 1300, an identical naming convention is used, with the name "Simeon" appearing alongside depictions of both figures (Ђурић et al., 1990, p. 121, fig. 75). In the exonarthex of Sopoćani, painted during the reign of King Dušan, a portrait of the former King Uroš is accompanied by the inscription "St. Simon the monk, the ktetor of this holy temple" (Ђурић, 1991, p. 160; Живковић, 1984, pp. 38–39).

<sup>20</sup> In the earliest sources, i.e. in documents related to the era of King Milutin, there are two variants of King Uroš's monastic name (Simon and Simeon). For further information, cf. Коматина, 2021, pp. 275–276 (with accompanying notes and sources).

<sup>21</sup> One form of expressing such an idea is observed in the practice of juxtaposing the images of holy great martyrs and holy monks on the walls of churches. The examples of this concept in Hilandar, Protaton and Peć are elaborated in Radovanović, 1989; Djurić, 1991, pp. 45–50; Ђурић, 1997, p. 135, n. 58. This idea has also been considered as part of a more intricate variation of the same parallelism, which encompasses baptism, monasticism, and martyrdom. This connection is explored in relation to the selection of themes in the exonarthex of the church of Treskavac Monastery, cf. Милановић, 2012, especially p. 463 sq.

ruler-monk,<sup>22</sup> which remains uncelebrated by the service, it is an entirely different case with the cult construction of King-Martyr Dečanski. Completely defined by the merit of the Visoki Dečani abbot and writer Grigorije Camblak (1989), in the first decade of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, his cult gained exceptional momentum in the period of the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć and during the time of Georgije Mitrofanović, closely rivaling the already strong cults of Saints Simeon and Sava (Петковић, 1965, p. 83 et passim; Djurić, 1983; Ђурић, 1985; Петковић, 1990; Поповић, 2006, pp. 162–178; Марјановић-Душанић, 2007, pp. 361–405, especially 369 sq; Магић, 2017b; Васиљевић, 2021, pp. 202–222).<sup>23</sup>

Defining the “common denominator” of the group in question is a challenging task, given the selection of personalities, their iconographic identities, and accompanying inscriptions. While historical records confirm their charitable donations and patronage of the Hilandar Monastery, not all of them were ktetors of the refectory.<sup>24</sup> Only King Milutin and Emperor Andronikos II are explicitly marked as ktetors. Research into the cults of the monarchs depicted does not yield a singular or homogeneous image, even though factors that could be associated with specific cult categories seem to have influenced individual depictions. As a result, not all of them were categorized as saints, and the construction of their cults may have remained incomplete. Despite King Milutin's reference to him as the “Holy Emperor”, the Byzantine autocrat was never officially “canonized”. Beyond the broader context, which underscores the sacred lineage of the Nemanjić rulers, connecting them through text and imagery to the celebration of their dynastic heritage and its “holy root” (Војводић, 2007; 2016a), perhaps the most enigmatic aspect lies in the depiction of the former King Uroš as a saint. Ever since the medieval era, the veneration of the “blessed” king remains without the “tangible” elements of a distinct cult. Even during the

<sup>22</sup> These circumstances are connected with the violent dethronement: the rebellion of the elder son, Dragutin, against his father took place with the participation of a foreign factor, namely the Hungarians. After his defeat in the military conflict with his son, he retreated to the monastery in Hum (cf. Коматина, 2021, pp. 275–276; Војводић, 2022, p. 388).

<sup>23</sup> The depictions of dramatic trials and sufferings, overcome through unwavering faith, are highly emphasized in the late medieval hagiography and service authored by the learned sojourner in Serbia under the Lazarević Dynasty. These depictions are in accordance with the ideals and spiritual needs of the time. The portrayal of the king's sanctity and the related events from his life would be reaffirmed as a favourite theme in Serbian painting from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

<sup>24</sup> All three rulers could still be credited, in one way or another, with merits and contributions to the most significant building in monastic communities after church buildings. King Uroš I, however, would certainly remain outside this particular circle. Of course, the perspective changes when considering all the charities and donations made to the monastery [for general information, cf. Живојиновић, 1996; Томић, 1997, pp. 176–178; Живојиновић, 1998, pp. 115, 118 (Uroš I), 123, 134 sq. (Milutin), 147 sq. (Andronikos II, i.e. Andronikos II and Milutin); Ђекић, 2006; Живојиновић, 2022, pp. 453–485; Тодић, 2022].



era in which Georgije Mitrofanović lived and worked, there are no indications of a special or widespread celebration of that king-monk.<sup>25</sup> The origins of the cult of King Milutin took shape following his death and centered around his burial endowment, including relics, at the Banjska Monastery. Initially, this cult included the image of the warrior-king. However, due to the absence of a formal service, the perception of King Milutin's sanctity evolved independently of older hagiography topics—it shifted toward celebrating him primarily as a great builder and ktetor (Поповић, 2022, especially pp. 549–551; Тодић, 2022, pp. 372–373). During the period of Ottoman rule, the veneration of King Stefan Dečanski as a saint reached its zenith (as mentioned above).

In order to achieve a more objective perspective on the selection of figures, it becomes imperative to explore not only the possibility that Mitrofanović had access to an authentic and perhaps partially damaged older painting serving as a model but also the likelihood that he himself made these choices based on his own conceptualization of the programme or the requirements of his contemporary environment and era. In this context, it is crucial to consider additional aspects within the image analysis. Scholars have noted the resemblance between the ruling couple in the eastern half of the apse and the portraits of ktetors found in the narthex of the Hilandar Catholicon. This often implies prioritization of the restoration aspect of the work carried out by the Hilandar monk-zographer, as if this were the only perspective worth exploring.<sup>26</sup> The medieval fresco from the narthex of King Milutin's church endowment was well-known to Georgije, particularly due to his association as a Hilandar monk. It is, therefore, reasonably suggested as a possible model for the depiction we are currently examining. However, most researchers have refrained from explicitly stating this as a fact,

<sup>25</sup> We emphasize that prior to Mitrofanović's painting of the refectory, the cult of St. Stefan the First-Crowned had not been raised to the level of full saintly celebration. This transformation would occur slightly later, thanks to the efforts of the Serbian Patriarch Pajsije. In 1629, the relics of the First-Crowned were unearthed, and it was during this period that Patriarch Pajsije composed a service and, toward the end of his life, a hagiography as well. For further details, cf. Матић, 2017b, pp. 394–395 (including information on fresco representations within note 32).

<sup>26</sup> In relation to this aspect, the identification of the monk's figure in the refectory with the First-Crowned can be observed, see Суботић et al., 2019, p. 59 (cf. supra, n. 18). The authors of the mentioned publication conclude that the choice of the ruler's figures, especially Stefan the First-Crowned, was influenced by the older painting of the refectory, because no model could be found in the Catholicon. We will not delve into the hypothesis about the portraits that were painted over in the narthex, as it is not relevant to the topic (loc. cit.), but in connection with the question of the model, we believe that we should not ignore the fact that Mitrofanović could have seen a monastic representation in Peć that corresponds to the one he chose. Furthermore, it was precisely in Peć where he worked immediately before the repainting of the refectory (Ђурић et al., 1990, p. 121, fig. 75).

with the exception of Kajmaković (Кажмаковић, 1977, p. 256).<sup>27</sup> There seems to have been some reservation, as they considered the possibility that a corresponding or similar representation might have existed on the now irretrievably lost older layer of frescoes in the dining room. It is generally accepted that Mitrofanović, recognized for his skillful restoration work on frescoes in the Church of St. Dimitrije in Peć (Кажмаковић, 1977, pp. 92–95 et passim; Ђурић et al., 1990, pp. 291–292), “renewed what could be recognised” from the previously removed older fresco painting, as suggested by Đorđević (1998, p. 244). While Vojvodić generally adopts a positive stance regarding the likelihood of portraits of the founders existing in the older programme of the refectory,<sup>28</sup> one of his concluding statements regarding these representations reveals a significant degree of doubt about the possibility that the depictions of King Milutin and the Byzantine emperor “could have been ‘transferred’ from the Catholicon into the apse of the refectory in the 1320s” (Vojvodić, 1998, p. 258).<sup>29</sup> Grouping of representations in the small apse of the refectory does not seem to reflect a choice related to the time of King Milutin or the early years of Stefan Dečanski’s reign. The figure of Dečanski does not appear in buildings whose founder was King Milutin dating back to the rebellion against his father, and the representation created as part of the so-called horizontal Tree of the Nemanjić dynasty, which emerged at the end of the first or beginning of the second decade of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in the Church of the Holy Virgin of Ljeviša, anticipate the later type of vertical Nemanjić tree (Војводић, 2007, pp. 301–302; 2022, pp. 405–406, 411–415, 419). Furthermore, we have knowledge that his portrait, along with the portrait of his son, the young King Dušan, in the Hilandar Catholicon, was painted later—only after the death of his father-ktetor and his own accession to the throne, without disrupting the authentic thematic programme that underpinned the complex portrait

<sup>27</sup> In relation to the hypotheses regarding the repetition of the previous fresco programme, Kajmaković’s perspective is influenced by the dating of the original refectory painting, which places it at the end of King Milutin’s reign, and the classification of the frescoes as part of Milutin’s ktetorial contributions. He viewed the portrait of King Stefan Dečanski as anachronistic in the context of the earlier medieval frescoes, leading him to question the notion that Mitrofanović’s work was “merely a replication of a medieval solution” (Кажмаковић, 1977, p. 256).

<sup>28</sup> Rarely preserved material data about the iconographic programmes of monastic refectories in the Byzantine world up until the period of Turkish rule do not shed light on the inclusion or potential approaches to representing ktetors, especially royal ktetors, within the refectory’s fresco-paintings. However, the situation changes when examining written testimonies. It is noteworthy that in *The Life of Saint Sava*, authored by the Hilandar monk Teodosije, a depiction of Saint Simeon Nemanja (the founder and ktetor of the Serbian monastery on Mount Athos) is mentioned as being painted on the wall of the refectory in his endowment at Studenica (Теодосије, 1988, p. 166; cf. Миљковић, 2008, p. 129).

<sup>29</sup> The unwillingness to present such a possibility as a result of comparing the fundamental similarity of visual representations and completing a conclusion consistent with Đorđević’s statement is summarized in the initial part of the formulation “It is quite doubtful” (if that is the case) (Vojvodić, 1998, p. 258).

ensemble (Djurić, 1989, pp. 119–121; Vojvodić, 1998, p. 257; Διονυσόπουλος, 2012, pp. 82–85; Тодић, 2017, pp. 161–162).<sup>30</sup> As a general practice, King Dečanski was typically not portrayed without his son and heir to the throne, whose representation, interestingly, is absent in the composition within the small apse of the refectory.<sup>31</sup> In addition, it is crucial not to overlook a significant aspect of Mitrofanović's overall composition—the central part and the very “crown” of the depiction. Situated between the two pairs of representations described earlier, a cross bearing Christ's cryptogram, inscribed within a circle, was meticulously painted above the window opening. The circle's field was adorned in a vivid shade of red (cf. Fig. 1). Within the same space, the decoration is concluded by a distinctive and unconventional representation of the Angel of Great Counsel, portrayed in bust form. This figure, owing to its size, the expansive wingspan, and the brightness of its white tunic, dominates the apex of the apse—it does not derive from some lost three-century-old fresco. Before delving into the specifics of the central and upper segments of the composition, it is essential to acknowledge the presence of certain details that prevent us from regarding Mitrofanović's work solely as a restoration of older artistic solutions. It is worthy of note that both King Milutin and his father-in-law, the Byzantine Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos, are identified in inscriptions as pious ktetors of “this temple,”<sup>32</sup> whereas inscriptions accompanying the other two figures emphasize their status as saints. This circumstance underscores a fundamental difference in the programme's conceptual framework from what is evident in the existing medieval solution in the church's narthex.<sup>33</sup> In the narthex portraits, only King Milutin is identified as the ktetor. To be more precise, in the inscription where he proudly acknowledges his status as the son-in-law of the “holy” Emperor Andronikos II, he is explicitly labeled as “the ktetor of this holy monastery” (Djurić, 1989, p. 106, figs. 4–5). The Byzantine Emperor, while himself a donor of the monastery and the sovereign of the territory where the monastery is

<sup>30</sup> The authors of the aforementioned contributions provide different explanations for the addition of the portrait and the circumstances surrounding it. It is challenging to accept the hypothesis presented by Subotić et al. (2019, p. 59) that the later-added portraits of Stefan Dečanski and his son were painted over the original portraits of King Milutin's grandfather and father (Stefan the First-Crowned and Uroš I), whom the Hilandar monks undoubtedly revered as donors and patrons of the monastery.

<sup>31</sup> Even in the later-added portraits in the narthex of the Gračanica Monastery, and similarly in the narthex of the Hilandar Catholicon, he is depicted alongside his son, the young King Dušan (Vojvodić, 2009).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Dionisopoulos, 2002, catalogue numbers 15/1 and 15/2. As it is a monastery refectory and not a church, the word “xramε / temple” is probably used with the broader meaning of “home” or “holy place”, and actually refers to a monastery.

<sup>33</sup> This is one of several observed and described differences, clearly indicative when compared to the related representation in the Catholicon (Vojvodić, 1998, p. 257).

situated,<sup>34</sup> serves primarily in the capacity of a guarantor of Milutin's founding act—the one who confirms that act.<sup>35</sup> There are two other deviations in the portrayal of the initial couple from the model in the Catholicon, and these deviations are noteworthy because they appear to carry ideological and meaningful connotations that historically differentiate the content of the Catholicon from that of the refectory. These deviations are not likely the result of error or oversight in the possible transmission of form. One of these deviations pertains to the rearrangement of the positions of the two rulers, who, in Mitrofanović's work, are attributed with the characteristics of ktetors. Another deviation involves the placement of the scepter in King Milutin's right hand. The author of the portrait in the narthex of the Catholicon left out that detail in the representative depiction of King Milutin for a reason. It is also explained why: the absence of the insignia on the portrait in the church, as well as the usual intitulation in the inscription (along with Milutin's name, the title of *samodržac* / autokrator is not highlighted), is an expression of the appropriate hierarchical subordination of the Serbian king to the Byzantine *basileus* (Djurić, 1989, pp. 106–109; Vojvodić, 1998, pp. 251–253, Војводић, 2022, pp. 422–423).<sup>36</sup> Mitrofanović's solution, on the other hand, abolishes and at the same time changes that hierarchy. It is completely trivial at a time when both the Byzantine and Serbian empires, that is, the previous Serbian state, are a distant, albeit glorious, past. This is most clearly shown by placing King Milutin at the head of a special portrait group.<sup>37</sup> It is worth

<sup>34</sup> It is known that Andronikos II Palaiologos issued chrysovuli and other charters multiple times, confirming various contributions to Hilandar or specific legal acts, often at the request of the Serbian king and the monks of Hilandar. Some of these charters relate to King Milutin's donations to the monastery. For the most recent insights into the role of the Byzantine basileus in bestowing Hilandar, cf. Живојиновић, 2022, pp. 453–485, in the paper discussing King Milutin and Hilandar.

<sup>35</sup> It is noteworthy that the portrait of Stefan Dečanski, subsequently added to the fresco-ensemble in the narthex, was accompanied by an inscription in which the new Serbian king, bearing his full title, is referred to as “the founder of this holy place” (Djurić, 1989, p. 120; Vojvodić, 1998, p. 257). Conversely, in the fresco located in the refectory, only the reference to his sanctity and the toponymic addition, which gradually evolved into an integral part of the name and identity of this revered king, are prominent.

<sup>36</sup> Andronikos II's young ruler, Andronikos III, whose representation is not included in the composition in the refectory, is presented with all the signs of imperial authority, in a portrait ensemble in the narthex of the Catholicon. The relationship between the Serbian king and the Byzantine basileus in the fresco that served as inspiration to the painter of the refectory is indicated by the elevated position of Andronikos II's hand in the depiction of the handing over of the charter, signifying the circumstance that the Byzantine emperor extends the scroll from above while the Serbian king-ktetor receives it with a downward hand gesture, signifying acceptance of the lower end. This detail remains unchanged in the later fresco.

<sup>37</sup> Due to the exchange of positions between the two figures, the same insignia in Mitrofanović's painting shifted from the right hand to the left hand of the Byzantine emperor. The painter's emphasis on symmetry in the arrangement of insignia is evident, prioritizing it over strict adherence to the patterns of medieval insignology. This is not only evident in the

examining what we see when we set aside the existence of the older fresco in the Catholicon and the assumptions regarding Mitrofanović's role as a restorer of older solutions in the refectory. Initially, it might seem that the figures in the group from the Hilandar refectory align with the series depicting selected holy rulers, a theme well-documented in Serbian painting during Mitrofanović's era. The sequence bears a resemblance to the solutions observed in the fresco-ensembles of several Serbian churches dating from the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>38</sup> as well as those featuring a similar motif in the icon-painting of the time.<sup>39</sup> However, what sets this composition apart is the presence of the Byzantine emperor and the emphasis on the ktetorial character, not only of King Milutin but also of Andronikos II. These elements give the composition a distinct and nuanced meaning.<sup>40</sup> While seeking connections with the medieval past and medieval iconographic and ideological patterns can offer insights, it is essential not to overlook the influence of the historical time in which the painter worked. The narrowness of relying solely on medieval frameworks for interpreting the thematic set becomes evident when we examine the nature of the changes in patterns that Mitrofanović used as models or starting points. These changes, both in terms of appropriating details and assembling the whole ensemble, suggest that symbolism held greater importance for him than historical reconstruction. The motifs comprising the upper part of the thematic repertoire serve as confirmation of this approach. However, it is essential to note that prioritizing symbolism does not mean entirely neglecting historical connections between the four depicted figures. In the monograph on the painter Mitrofanović, there is an emphasis on "kinship" connection between the figure of the king-ktetor positioned at the head of the line and all those who accompany that figure. In

positioning of the cross-shaped sign in the ruler's hands but also in the way the ruler's loros is depicted. For the sake of symmetry, Milutin's loros drapes over the right arm, in contrast to the traditional belting of this imperial insignia on the left arm during the Middle Ages.

<sup>38</sup> During the Turkish rule, and especially after the restoration of the institution of the Serbian patriarchate (1557), the devotion of the Serbian church to the values associated with the era, symbolized by the sovereigns from the Nemanjić dynasty, was expressed through special, thematically clearly defined paintings in which the sanctity of the depicted rulers stands out. They are inspired by a concept extremely developed already in the Middle Ages. For representative examples of monumental paintings from the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Orahovica, Holy Trinity Monastery of Pljevlja, Gradište Monastery, Patriarchate of Peć), cf. Петковић, 1965, p. 84, et passim; idem, 1971, pp. 87, 94–95; especially Ђурић et al., 1990, p. 295, fig. 189. For a more recent discussion of examples, cf. Радујко, 2020, pp. 45 sq., especially 58; Војводић, 2020, pp. 206–207, 208–209, figs. 10–14.

<sup>39</sup> On the corresponding topic, with examples, see Матић, 2017a, pp. 163–164, 177–178, 380, figs. 187, 200; 2017b, pp. 393, 396, fig. 12.

<sup>40</sup> Earmarked from the series as a separate representation, the depiction of the ruling couple in question is incorporated into the material that forms the basis for the contribution on the iconography and typology of ktetor portraits in Serbian painting of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Матић, 2018, pp. 234–235).



the mentioned finding, and especially in recognizing the particular importance of King Milutin within the group, the author of the study sought a key criterion for selecting these personalities. Despite this focus, it is worthy of note that throughout the study, all mentioned personalities were collectively designated as “other ktetors” (Кајмаковић, 1977, pp. 255–257). Even if we accept the existence of a special relationship among these figures (King Milutin, followed by his father-in-law, the sovereign of the state where the monastery is located, the collaborator and the guarantor of the donor act; father and predecessor; son and heir), it is essential to note that such a group has not been confirmed in visual material.<sup>41</sup> The fresco composition does not indicate this “kinship” connection through any specific details. This narrow and one-sided interpretation of the representation does not align with the complexity of the painting or its essence. It also does not correspond to the recorded perspective of Mitrofanović, a painter of the Turkish era, regarding the rulers associated with the medieval history of his monastery. Still, what unites all four figures in the mini-unit at the lower part of the apse is their representation as medieval rulers-ktetors and patrons of the monastery during the period of its greatest growth and prosperity (Кајмаковић, 1977, pp. 255–257; Đorđević, 1998, p. 244; Vojvodić, 1998, pp. 257–258; Rakić, 1998, p. 265; Dionisopoulos, 2002, p. 208),<sup>42</sup> that undoubtedly held significant meaning and symbolism during the restoration of the monastery refectory. The selected figures are drawn from the ranks of honorable emperors, kings, holy ruler-monks, and ruler-martyrs—and they represent specific symbols of the most significant period in the monastery’s history, from its foundation onwards.<sup>43</sup> The act of donating and protecting the monastery was a significant and ongoing topic—an issue that deeply occupied the monastic communities as they contended with various legal and illegal, regular and extraordinary impositions and burdens. These challenges, including “debts, punishments, and injustices”, were

<sup>41</sup> We have already discussed why it appears to be absent from the fresco that dates back three centuries earlier.

<sup>42</sup> In the monograph on Mitrofanović (Кајмаковић, 1977, p. 255), this group is presented under the section titled “Other ktetors in the southern apse”. Vojvodić’s contribution (1998, pp. 257–258) in the publication on Hilandar is titled “Ktetor’s portraits and representations”, whereas Đorđević (1998, p. 244) describes the group as “portraits of historical personalities” within the same publication. Rakić (1998, p. 265) refers to them as “images of Serbian rulers and the Byzantine emperor” and “the most deserving donors of the monastery”. Overall, when considered collectively, the most frequently used are the terms *rulers*, as seen in Суботић et al., 2019, p. 59 (in Vojvodić, loc. cit., also “rulers”) or *ktetors* (Кајмаковић, loc. cit., “other ktetors”).

<sup>43</sup> Towards the end of the third decade of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, during the final years of Andronikos II’s reign, there is a notable increase in the number of documents confirming the monastery’s property rights and other privileges. This period is significant as it attests to a time of generosity that, due to the subsequent sequence and development of historical events, would not be repeated (Живојиновић, 1997, p. 33).

an integral part of life under the Ottoman rule (Фотић, 2000, p. 65 et passim).<sup>44</sup> Mitrofanović, who was well-acquainted with the hardships endured by enslaved Christians during the challenging period of the Turkish era and who understood the efforts and sufferings of the monks of Mount Athos to ensure the survival and preservation of their monasteries,<sup>45</sup> managed to convey a message of hope. He explores the founding and sponsorship mission of the featured personalities with unique and optimistic messages. While Mitrofanović may have had access to damaged remains of a gallery of ktetorial ruler portraits from the older medieval fresco-painting in the refectory and sought to repeat what could be repeated, it is evident that his intention extended beyond merely depicting Stefan Dečanski as a ktetor. The same likely applies to his choice of portraying Saint Simon the Monk. Through the saintly depiction of the monarch, who was celebrated as a great victor in the trials of faith during the new painting of the monastery refectory, Mitrofanović imparts messages about perseverance in suffering and steadfastness in faith. He further underscores these themes by including a martyr's cross in the hands of the portrayed ruler-monk. In shaping the reception of the composition, Mitrofanović stresses motifs as a means of conveying the specific attitude of a monk from Mount Athos towards the angelic schema and everyday life of his fellow monks, achieved in conditions often far from the ideal of monastic life. The choice to depict a monastic figure, rather than a ruler, among the four personalities certainly confirms the fact that the monks of Mount Athos held special respect for the rulers who renounced worldly fame and power by embracing monastic robes. This sentiment is notably evident in the reverence shown by the Hilandar monks towards their founders and first ktetors, Saint Simeon and Saint Sava (Суботић, 1979; Ђурић, 1997).

<sup>44</sup> Mitrofanović's frescoes were created during a challenging period marked by looming debts and hardships. These challenges emerged as a result of the economic and political difficulties faced by the Christian population due to the circumstances surrounding the Long Turkish War (Langer Türkenkrieg) between the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy (1593–1606). Monks struggled to alleviate their financial burden in the face of escalating annual financial obligations and interest (Фотић, 2000, pp. 65, 67, 71). In this context, the recorded testimony of the "great distress caused by Hagarenes" in the form of a document dating back to 1614/1615, which pertained to the tin roof of the Hilandar church, is particularly intriguing (Стојановић, 1926, p. 108, N. 10113).

<sup>45</sup> While working in his homeland for Patriarch Pajsije, the successor of Jovan Katul, who was murdered in Constantinople in 1614 due to anti-Turkish actions, Mitrofanović could gain a unique perspective on the complex and tragic political circumstances of the era. He closely witnessed the reasons behind the peaceful policy and the direction taken by the new leader of the Serbian people, which sought a form of "creative respite" after the tumultuous events at the turn of the century (cf. Кајмаковић, 1977, pp. 20–23, 181 sq.). Due to various circumstances, during the decade spanning the transition from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the connections between Hilandar and the royal court, as well as donors from Imperial Russia, temporarily ceased, lasting until the second quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Петковић, 1995, pp. 152–153).



Fig. 7. Hilandar refectory, north apse (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)

However, these characters are not part of the repertoire of individual representations on the three existing walls with frescoes painted by this Hilandar monk. Therefore, it is entirely justified for researchers to explore the potential special relationship between the representations in the southern apse and the figures of the founders of the Hilandar monastery, which were repainted in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in the lower zone of the main refectory apse (Кажмаковић, 1977, pp. 255, 256, figs. 101, 107; Ταβλάκης, 1997, pp. 159–161; Rakić, 1998, pp. 264–265; Dionisopoulos, 2002, p. 208; Миљковић, 2008, p. 207) (Figs. 7–9). In the existing frescoes of the younger layer, located in the lower zone of the space within the large apse of the north wall, the figures of the two founders and first ktetors of the monastery are depicted as part of the procession of the holy fathers of the church, wearing monastic robes that are not worn during religious service. These representations align with the custom of the post-Byzantine era, where similar spaces within Mount Athos received comparable programmatic representations (Yiannias, 1991, pp. 279–280; Ταβλάκης, 1997, pp. 101, 117, figs. 30, 38, 42; Καδάς, 1997, p. 59, figs. 56–57). We see them positioned opposite each other at the extreme lateral positions, right at the beginning of the apsidal opening. Here, in the company of the greatest holy fathers of the church and with the





Fig. 8. Hilandar refectory, north apse. Saint Sava (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)



Fig. 9. Hilandar refectory, north apse. Saint Simeon (photo by Nikolaos L. Dionysopoulos)

intercessory support of the Mother of God and Saint John the Forerunner, they engage in prayer before the throne of God. Considering Mitrofanović's artistic achievement in the recess of the smaller southern apse, which occupies a less prominent position both in scale and hierarchy within the space, it becomes challenging to imagine that a similar solution featuring saintly figures of the most significant patrons of the monastery did not exist in the main apse at the time when Mitrofanović executed the fresco programme for the refectory. Therefore, it also seems reasonable to consider the possibility that in the repainted older or previous program and arrangement of saintly figures in the main apse, the figure of the monk Saint Simon "The First" (formerly Stefan the First-Crowned) was included. The presence of such a solution, as an integral part of Mitrofanović's fresco ensemble, could also provide an explanation for the numerical designation next to the name of the monk Simon (formerly King Uroš I) in the southern apse.

In his monograph on Mitrofanović, Kajmaković (Kajmaković, 1977, p. 257) identified the figure of Christ the Angel of Great Counsel, prominently

positioned above the royal group at the top of the conch in the opposite southern apse, as a counterpart to the Christ on the throne (of the main apse). However, discussions on that part of programmatic complementarity between the fresco-paintings in the two apses, and particularly on the Angel of Great Counsel theme of the southern one, have been limited to one extensive sentence. He only highlights the representation of Christ the Angel of Great Counsel as “an element of theophany and an accent with which the painter aimed to emphasize the importance of this separate space”.<sup>46</sup> The depiction of a youthful winged Christ, with a characteristic inscription “Jesus Christ the Angel of Great Counsel”, inspired by the Christological interpretation of a passage from the Book of the prophet Isaiah (LXX Is. 9, 6), is an unusual theme within the fresco programme of the refectory.<sup>47</sup> It relates to the type of representation atypical for the Serbian medieval art and not represented in endowments whose ktetors were the rulers painted in the Hilandar refectory. In the tradition before the Ottoman rule, whose thematic repertoire was not devoid of angelomorphic representations with Christological semantic connotations (Grabar, 1956; Meyendorff, 1959, p. 266 sq.; Der Nersessian, 1962; Πάλλας, 1989–1990; Луковникова, 2002; Miljković, 2004; Кюмджиева, 2020, pp. 29–33),<sup>48</sup> an exception to the typical themes can be found in the bust within the medallion located in the western bay of the small church of St. Nikola in Prizren, built in

<sup>46</sup> Loc. cit. Kajmaković did not extensively address the winged figure of Christ in the Hilandar refectory, in contrast to his detailed examination of the same iconographic motif within the broader context of Mitrofanović's frescoes on the western facade of the church in Morača Monastery (Kajmaković, 1977, pp. 179–186). The national-patriotic context and the political message against the Turks associated with the Morača programme were rejected by Petković (Петковић, 1986, p. 66, n. 287), who did not identify a reason for depicting Christ the Angel at the pinnacle of the facade, outside the context of that representation's connection with the accompanying scenes of Old Testament visions (for a similar perspective, cf. Пејић, 1998, p. 120, n. 21).

<sup>47</sup> As uncommon for the refectory program, this representation was singled out by: Ταβλάκης, 1997, pp. 260, 423–424; Dionisopoulos, 2002, pp. 209–211. The ‘Painter's Manual’ of Dionysius of Fournā recommends a representation with the same inscription, albeit with a slightly more complex iconography, for the program of the side spaces next to the altar (Медић, 2005, pp. 528/529–530/531).

<sup>48</sup> Among Byzantine and late medieval examples, we find dominant themes illustrating the Old Testament story of Abraham's Hospitality (the Old Testament Holy Trinity). Other examples refer to motifs from the Stories of Solomon, representing the theme of Wisdom, as well as depictions that draw inspiration from visions of the prophets Habakkuk and Ezekiel, which actually convey the content of St. Gregory the Theologian's Second Easter Sermon (Der Nersessian, 1962; Miljković, 2004). Notably, the circle of medieval representations does not include the figure of Christ the Angel of Great Counsel from the diaconicon of the Church of the Virgin in Studenica (cf. infra). Some studies on this subject have inaccurately dated it to the 13<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century (Meyendorff, 1959, p. 266; Луковникова, 2002, p. 77, n. 65; 2009, p. 291; Вълева, 1988, p. 92).

1331/1332 as the endowment of the monk and former landlord Nikola Tutić. Based on the foundational inscription and the evaluation of the stylistic and program features of the only fragmentarily known painting, this particular representation is dated to the time close to the construction of the church, i.e. to the fourth decade of the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Радовановић, 1988a; Ђорђевић, 1994, pp. 51–52, 100, 134, fig. 7).<sup>49</sup> Given that the origin of painting in the Davidovica monastery church has been shifted from the medieval era to the Turkocracy era with convincing arguments (Тодић, 2011, pp. 414–415, 416, fig. 2; Војводић, 2015),<sup>50</sup> the previously mentioned example remains without real analogies in the works of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This absence of analogies raises questions about the origins of the iconographic practice that would come to define monuments in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and its connection to medieval heritage. Mitrofanović's representation, in its condensed and highly reduced form, depicts an Old Testament prophetic vision. It belongs to a unique type of Christ figure, often depicted alongside other Christ figures, standard or not unusual in the tradition of Byzantine art, like Emmanuel, Pantocrator and Christ the Ancient of Days (Лидов, 1999; 2014). Such an arrangement is confirmed as part of the thematic repertoire in many temples painted during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Петковић, 1965, pp. 67, 107–108; Кајмаковић, 1977, pp. 99–100; Ђурић et al., 1990, p. 296).<sup>51</sup> The largest number of recorded examples is part of the programme of the highest zone, where, in the vaults of the church building medallions with the various

<sup>49</sup> This representation corresponds to the type of a youthful Christ with wings in a medallion (not exclusively confirmed due to the absence of a preserved inscription). For a color photo, cf. [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Prizren/StNicholas/Pictures/Interior/Naos/PRIZREN\\_3\\_IMG\\_4008-2.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Prizren/StNicholas/Pictures/Interior/Naos/PRIZREN_3_IMG_4008-2.html). We are not aware that the mentioned dating of the paintings of the Tutić church (cf. also Ђурић, 1974, p. 61, n. 69) has recently been called into question. It was retained in the work of D. Vojvodić (2016b), although the findings of that author precisely refute the stylistic and programmatic assumptions on which the dating rests (for details and a more complete bibliography, see *ibid.*).

<sup>50</sup> Todić initially shifts the dating from the late 13<sup>th</sup> to the middle of 14<sup>th</sup> century, and Vojvodić subsequently establishes a more convincing timeframe: the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This dating corresponds to the arrangement in which the figure of Christ the Angel of Great Counsel, along with corresponding representations of Christ Emmanuel and two non-handmade figures of Christ (Mandillion and Keramion), is situated within the fields between the four evangelists in the pendentives of the dome.

<sup>51</sup> Wider post-Byzantine materials have been documented by Куюмдзхиева (Куюмдзхиева, 2020, especially pp. 70–83). For similar examples within Greek monuments from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, and related materials from Bulgarian heritage, cf. Σέμουλου, 2010; Вълева, 1988, pp. 94–96. For an intriguing example from Wallachia see our n. 57. Unlike the iconographic tradition of the Balkans, the Russian monuments of the era attest to a unique tradition of its own. For a deeper insight into works representing this tradition, cf. publications such as Чернова (Ed.), 2000, from which we have drawn contributions by Ostashenko (Осташенко, 2000, pp. 36–39) and Ётингоф (Этингоф, 2000, pp. 59–63; also see Царевская, 2019).



figures of Christ are arranged, surrounded by prophets.<sup>52</sup> The solutions with counterpart pairs of Angels of Great Counsel and Emmanuel in the tops of the apse of the proscomedion and the diaconicon stand out in particular (cf. Медић, 2005, pp. 528/529–530/531).<sup>53</sup> A similar arrangement is also recorded in Greek triconchal churches in a variant with two close and programmatically connected characters at the tops of the side conches.<sup>54</sup> Judging by the material offered by Serbian monuments, one of the characteristic solutions is the prominent place of the winged bust of Christ on the gable wall fields in the western areas of the edifice or on the facades of the nave.<sup>55</sup> An insight into Mitrofanović's oeuvre and the frequency of the appearance of a unique, non-traditional character of the Saviour in his other preserved and well-known works shows that this could have been his favourite representation. He incorporated it alongside the figures of Christ the Ancient of Days, Pantocrator and Emmanuel in the churches of Dobrićevo and Zavala. A similar arrangement can be observed in

<sup>52</sup> As in the Serbian environment (see the cited literature), the solution is also typical for the Bulgarian soil, where it is mostly about small single-nave village churches (Вълева, 1988, pp. 94–96). In churches with a dome, different figures of Christ are placed in the subdome arches or the corresponding series of representations in the dome and on the vaults are completed by those on the subdome arches. This was the case, for example, in the Church of the Virgin Mary in Matka, which contains one of the oldest images of Christ with wings, judging by the founding inscription from 1496/1497 (Димитрова, Лилич, Антевска, Василевски, 2011, pp. 192, 194; Суботић, 1980, p. 144, figs. 111–112; Σέμογλου, 2010, p. 382).

<sup>53</sup> Such a solution was achieved during the restoration of the painting in the Church of the Virgin in Studenica in 1568. An unusual variant of the standing figure of the Angel of Great Counsel was placed in the niche of the diaconicon. This representation from Studenica is an authentic work from the era of the Turkocracy. It is worth noting that this is not the only example of a corresponding image of Christ in that church (cf. *infra*, n. 55), and it cannot be cited as an example of a medieval solution. Unfortunately, this misattribution still exists in the literature dealing with the iconography of the winged Christ. To a valid understanding of the representation and more detailed information about its relationship with other examples of the era, the closest analogy is found in the church of the Petkovica Monastery, cf. Живковић, 2019, pp. 440–443. For photographic material, see [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD\\_3\\_\\_MG\\_9895.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD_3__MG_9895.html); [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD\\_2\\_IMG\\_7382.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD_2_IMG_7382.html).

<sup>54</sup> For examples of both mentioned layout variants, cf. Σέμογλου, 2010, p. 382.

<sup>55</sup> For examples recorded on the western facades, cf. Пејић, 1998, p. 120, which includes churches in Crna Reka, Morača and Mrtvica. The way in which the image of Christ is presented on the front of the church corresponds to the example from the Church of the Virgin in Studenica. In this arrangement, it occupies a place in the gable top of the western wall of the nave, cf. Живковић, 2019, pp. 495–496; For photographic material, see [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western\\_bay/West\\_wall/West\\_wall\\_-\\_third\\_row/STUD\\_2\\_IMG\\_6761.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western_bay/West_wall/West_wall_-_third_row/STUD_2_IMG_6761.html); [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western\\_bay/West\\_wall/West\\_wall\\_-\\_third\\_row/STUD\\_2\\_IMG\\_6760.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western_bay/West_wall/West_wall_-_third_row/STUD_2_IMG_6760.html).

the Lower Hermitage of St. Sava in Studenica, although there is no representation of Christ the Ancient of Days (Кајмаковић, 1977, pp. 66, 79, 87, 99, figs. 19, 28, 34, 185; Тодић, 2013, pp. 134, 137). On the main facade of the church in Morača, the image of Christ the Angel of Great Counsel was given an important, separate place at the top of a selected group of representations (Кајмаковић, 1977, p. 179, figs. 92–93; Петковић, 1986, p. 66, fig. 18; Тодић, 2013, p. 134), and as a special motif, in bright and shiny robes, it stands out at the top of the despotic icon of the Virgin Mary surrounded by prophets (theme “The prophets foretold you”) (Кајмаковић, 1977, pp. 281–288, figs. 152, 155; Петковић, 1986, p. 63, fig. 49; Матић, 2017а, pp. 94, 446–447, fig. 86).<sup>56</sup> The example of placing representations of pious and holy ktetor-rulers under the auspices and blessing of the youthful winged figure of Christ, as found in the refectory apse in Hilandar, has survived to this day as a unique solution. There are no exact and complete analogies to be found in the available examples.<sup>57</sup> Its symbolism is particularly notable due to the radiant attire typically worn by Christ in scenes of divine revelation, such as the Transfiguration, Resurrection and Ascension. Does it contain the confirmation of ideas that should sublimate the selected type of representation per se? An important guideline for distinguishing them is certainly the inscription that usually accompanies the representation and underlines the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament text whose verses are a recognizable primary source. The messianic reception of the title “Angel of Great Counsel”, as mentioned in the book of the prophet Isaiah, is clearly evidenced by the apostolic heritage contained in the New Testament writings and the writings of the early church fathers, classical patristic literature, as well as hymnographic and liturgical tradition.<sup>58</sup> Calling Christ an “angel” reflects an

<sup>56</sup> Frontal head-to-waist representations of either Christ as the Ancient of Days, Emmanuel, or the Angel of Great Counsel might be a special component of a larger programmatic idea found in complex icons of the Virgin and Christ, where they dominate the center of the upper zone of the icon frame. This feature is particularly characteristic of Serbian post-Byzantine icons, especially despotic ones. For more details, see Матић, 2017а, p. 69 et passim.

<sup>57</sup> The closest example that we know of is particularly interesting due to the spatial connection between the portrait of the distinguished ktetor-ruler from the medieval past and the figure of Christ the Angel. This example dates back to the year 1542/1543 and can be found in the narthex of the Bolniza church of the Wallachian Monastery of Cozia. It was painted thanks to Duke Radul Pajsije. In this instance, the ktetor composition featuring portraits of the Cozia founder, Mircea the Elder and his son Michael, adorns the western wall of the premise. Notably, a small medallion depicting the mentioned figure of Christ is placed into a nearby opening in the same wall (cf. Dumitrescu, 1978, pl. 11, with a drawing of the arrangement of paintings on page 31; for a new interpretation of the portrait of Duke (Voivoda) Radul Pajsije, depicted on the nave of the chapel, see Negrau, 2019).

<sup>58</sup> Basic insights, with selected data from various sources in all indicated categories, are available in works that specifically focus on the iconographic theme of Christ the Angel

ancient tradition where the term denotes a “messenger”, the bearer of a message (in writings of a sacred character, it is certainly a divine message).<sup>59</sup> This notion has remained relevant throughout Christian history, because the church has consistently highlighted the concept of Christ the Angel, understanding it in the sense of Him being a messenger rather than a distinct being (Juncker, 1994; Bucur, 2018). In Isaiah’s prophetic vision of the birth of the Messiah, the “Child” and the “Son” (also referred to as Emmanuel in another passage in the book), His power and mission are conveyed by the words: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, King of Ages, The Prince of Peace” [Is. 9, 5(6)]. The apostolic and patristic interpretations of this vision view it as the revelation of “the fellowship of the mystery which hath been hid in God”, pertaining to the creation of the world (Ephes. 3, 9; Col. 1, 26; cf. Genesis 1, 26; Book of Proverbs 8, 22–31). This concept is closely related to the pre-eternal plan or idea of the Father regarding the destiny of humanity and all creation. It encompasses the incarnation of the Son, who is described as “born before the world existed” (John 17, 5), and the Logos “in whom all things were created” (Col. 1, 15–20). This divine plan is seen as the ultimate purpose behind the act of creating the world (Bucur, 2008; Γεβτις, 2012). As the mission of the Son, in cooperation with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and as the renewal of God’s plan (“The Great Counsel of the Trinity”) on the adoption of man by grace, the Incarnation, due to the fall of Adam and the obedience of the world to the laws of death, also entailed the Son’s humiliation, culminating in His death on the cross (Phil. 2, 7–8). His victory over death marked the reconciliation of heaven and earth, opening the doors to the Kingdom whose ruler is often identified with Isaiah’s “Prince of Peace” and “Father of the age to come”.<sup>60</sup> The image of a beardless Christ with wings alludes to the pre-eternal nature of the second person of the Holy Trinity, serving as a reminder of the eschatological character and significance of His mission as the “Father of the

---

and those encompassing related themes such as Christ the Wisdom. For a list of bibliographic references, refer to the previous paragraph of this paper and the subsequent section of the text followed by n. 48, as well as the titles mentioned in n. 51. For the evidence of exegetical references to Old Testament theophanies as christophanies in the tradition that mediate between pre-Nicene and later christian literature, and for the general findings on the diversity and convergence of the sources, see Bucur, 2018.

<sup>59</sup> For insights on the Gospel of John, which prominently presents Christ as the Father’s messenger and even more as “the very embodiment of the message”, see Juncker, 1994, p. 223. In the Gospel’s opening, John introduces Christ as “The Word that became body”.

<sup>60</sup> We have conducted an analysis based on a wide range of literature, encompassing both theological and philosophical sources. Along with these references, we have explored relevant passages from various sources to identify key elements essential for understanding Mitrofanović’s work. A substantial selection of these significant passages can be found in the studies authored by Juncker (1994), Bucur (2008) and Jevtić (Γεβτις, 2012).

Time to Come”<sup>61</sup>. Given its context, the portrayal in Hilandar’s refectory carried a message of victory and optimism, which could be attributed to the meaningful connotations resulting from the association of the ruler’s names of Isaiah’s Angel of Great Counsel with Christ. The radiant, winged figure of the Christ Child, blessing the pious and holy rulers of the glorious past, served as a bearer of the message about the only imperishable kingdom—the future kingdom of Christ. This message may have been intended as a source of consolation for Orthodox Christians living under the rule of infidel leaders. To support this interpretation, a distinct motif placed at the very centre of the composition, in a small free space between Christ the Angel and the window opening of the apse, at the level of the faces of the four rulers, was featured—the sign of the cross within a circular medallion bearing Christ’s victorious cryptogram “Jesus Christ Conquers!” (ИС ХС НИ КА).

Within its category, the size of the painted motif is not negligible. It neither distracts attention from the previously described figural ensemble, nor is it easily overlooked. Its bright red colour within the medallion gives it prominence and makes it a focal point in the composition. There appears to be a conceptual link between this motif and the central axis of Mitrofanović’s composition (cf. Fig. 1). This connection is based on Irenaeus of Lyons’ interpretation of one of the names associated with the Angel of Great Counsel in the ninth chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah (similarly found in the work of Tertullian). This early Christian apologist saw in the cross of Christ the “mighty power” of “The One upon whose shoulder is the government” (Juncker, 1994, pp. 226, 243). The place where the symbol of the Crucifixion of Christ and the victorious sign of Christians was inserted into the composition corresponds to the places where such a motif, due to its apotropaic function, usually appears (Walter, 1997, pp. 210–215; Марковић, 2011, p. 139), but in the southern apse of the refectory, that motif was certainly more than the standard marking of the window with a protection mark.

To understand why the painter decided to connect the old rulers and patrons of the monastery with a special representation of Christ and to complement this connection with the cross motif, we return to the beginning of our discussion.

<sup>61</sup> The basis of the character mentioned draws from Isaiah’s names of God and the dual symbolism inherent in the representation. This concept finds a compelling confirmation in a fresco painted by Pop Strahinja, a contemporary of Mitrofanović, located in the altar of the church in the Ozren Monastery (1605/1606). In this fresco, we observe a representation closely resembling Mitrofanović’s iconographic solution in Hilandar, featuring the bust of a young winged Christ in a gesture of double blessing. However, it is positioned at the top of the niche of the upper place and serves a different programmatic context. What makes this fresco particularly intriguing is the accompanying inscription, more eloquent than usual, which reads: “Father of the Time to Come, Angel of Great Counsel”. For further details and analogies, especially in the context of Georgia, see Радужко, 2020, pp. 34–38, 41, figs. 32–35.

We need to revisit the narthex of the monastery's catholicon. We will examine the fresco program from which the model of the ruling-ktetor pair, King Milutin—Emperor Andronikos II, was 'borrowed' and modified for the purpose of the new composition. Mitrofanović would have surely been drawn to two monumental representations in this space, which were combined with portraits into a unique thematic and visual whole. Directly above the mentioned ruling pair, a medieval master painted a composition featuring motifs from the Old Testament allegory of Wisdom (Proverbs 9). Above the representation of the patroness of the temple, the Virgin and Child with angels, joined by saintly figures of the founders of the monastery, there was the theme of Christ's Crucifixion (Djurić, 1989, pp. 105–132, figs. 1–2).<sup>62</sup> These two scenic representations (the allegory of Wisdom and the Crucifixion) were contextually connected to the central representation of the church and monastery's patron saint, celebrated as the "Temple of Wisdom", both thematically and spatially. They deepened the theme of the mystery of the incarnation of the second person of the Holy Trinity, identified with the Logos and Wisdom. However, both representations were marked by multi-layered symbolism, going beyond simple illustrations of sections of the Gospel or biblical text. They served as conceptual and theological frameworks within which a representative image of the ktetorial act would be highlighted. The inclusion of the imperial figure of Solomon in the scene illustrating his story of Wisdom introduced a series of allusions that subtly glorify all the patrons of the Virgin's temple due to the "presence" of the Old Testament king and the very symbol of wisdom, the ideal ruler-patron of the house of God (Djurić, 1989, pp. 112–116; Marković, 1998, pp. 230–232; Vojvodić, 1998, pp. 250–254; Διονυσόπουλος, 2012, pp. 70–76). Georgije Mitrofanović evidently did not remain indifferent to what he observed in front of the doors of the Catholicon of his monastery. It appears that he possessed both creativity and the ability to synthesize. Within the available limited spatial framework of the refectory apse, he adapted the inspirational result from older fresco paintings through authentic symbolic representations, demonstrating that he was not only a skillful restorer but also a "child of his time".<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Georgije observed the scenes in their original form, without the "fresco layer" that was added in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>63</sup> "Every work of art is a child of its time, while often it is the parent of our emotions" (Kandinsky, 1946).



## Primary sources

- Kandinsky, W. (Wassily Kandinsky). (1946). *On the Spiritual in Art* (Published by Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, for the Museum of Non-Objective Painting, New York City). New York: Hilla Rebay. Retrieved from: <https://csus.edu/indiv/o/obriene/art206/onspiritualinart00kand.pdf>
- Григорије Цамблак. (1989). *Књижевни рад у Србији* (прир. Д. Петровић). Београд: Просвета – СКЗ.
- Димитријевић, Ст. М. (1903). Документи који се тичу односа између Српске цркве и Русије у XVI веку. *Сјоменик*, XXXIX, 16–42.
- Ђекић, Ђ. (2006). Хиландарске повеље Стефана Дечанског. *Теме*, XXX (2), 243–247.
- Медић, М. (2005). *Сѣтари сликарски љручници*. III. *Ерминија о сликарским вештини-нама Дионисија из Фурне (Διονυσίου του εκ Φουρνά Ерμιναιа της ζωγραφικής τέχνης)*. Београд: РЗЗСК.
- Мошин, В., Ђирковић, С., Синдик, Д. (прир.) (2011). *Зборник средњовековних ћириличких љовеља и љисама Срдије, Босне и Дубровника*, I (бр. 64, 225–231). Београд: Историјски институт.
- Стојановић, Љ. (1926). *Сѣтари срѣски зайиси и најљиси*, књ. VI. Сремски Карловци: СКА.
- Суботић, Г., Миљковић Б., Дудић, Н. (2019). *Најљиси манастира Хиландара*, v. *infra*, *References*.
- Теодосије Хиландарац. (1973). *Живој Свѣтоја Саве* (изд. Ђ. Даничић, приредио Ђ. Трифуновић). Београд: Ђорђе Трифуновић.
- Теодосије. (1988). *Жиљија* (приредио Д. Богдановић). Београд: Просвета – СКЗ.

## Visual (photographic) material

- [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Prizren/StNicholas/Pictures/Interior/Naos/PRIZREN\\_3\\_IMG\\_4008-2.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Prizren/StNicholas/Pictures/Interior/Naos/PRIZREN_3_IMG_4008-2.html)
- [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD\\_3\\_MG\\_9895.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD_3_MG_9895.html)
- [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD\\_2\\_IMG\\_7382.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Sanctuary/Diaconicon/STUD_2_IMG_7382.html)
- [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western\\_bay/West\\_wall/West\\_wall\\_-\\_third\\_row/STUD\\_2\\_IMG\\_6761.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western_bay/West_wall/West_wall_-_third_row/STUD_2_IMG_6761.html)
- [https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western\\_bay/West\\_wall/West\\_wall\\_-\\_third\\_row/STUD\\_2\\_IMG\\_6760.html](https://www.blagofund.org/Archives/Studenica/sr/Main/Pictures/Interior/Naos/Western_bay/West_wall/West_wall_-_third_row/STUD_2_IMG_6760.html)

## References

- Bucur, B. G. (2008). Foreordained from All Eternity: The Mystery of the Incarnation According to Some Early Christian and Byzantine Writers. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 62, 199–215.
- Bucur, B. G. (2018). A Blind Spot in the Study of Fourth-Century Christian Theology: The Christological Exegesis of Theophanies. *The Journal of Theological Studies*, 69(2), 588–610.
- Der Nersessian, S. (1962). Note sur quelques images se rattachant au thème du Christ-Ange. *CA*, 13, 209–228.

- Dionisopoulos, N. (2002). *Ktitorski portreti XVI i XVII veka na freskama svetogorskih manastira / Donor Portraits of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries in the Frescoes of Mount Athos Monasteries* (odbranjena magistrarska teza). Filozofski fakultet, Beograd.
- Djurić, V. J. (1978). La peinture de Chilandar à l'époque du roi Milutin. *X3*, 4, 31–62.
- Djurić, V. J. (1983). Icône du saint roi Stefan Uros III avec des scènes de sa vie. *Balkan Studies*, 24(2), 373–401.
- Djurić, V. J. (1989). Les portraits de souverains dans le narthex de Chilandar. *X3*, 7, 105–132.
- Djurić, V. J. (1991). Les conceptions hagiologiques dans la peinture du Prôtaton. *X3*, 8, 37–89.
- Dumitrescu, C. L. (1978). *Pictura murală din Țara Românească în veacul al XVI-lea*. Bucharest: Meridiane.
- Dorđević, I. M. (1998). Mural Paintings 1322–1430/1. In: G. Subotić (Ed.), *Hilandar Monastery* (243–248). Belgrade: SASA.
- Grabar, A. (1956). Iconographie de la Sagesse Divine et de la Vierge. *CA*, 8, 254–261.
- Juncker, G. (1994). Christ as Angel: The Reclamation of a Primitive Title. *Trinity Journal*, 15(2), 221–250.
- Kovačević, M. (1998). Fortification Walls and Towers. In: G. Subotić (Ed.), *Hilandar Monastery* (133–144). Belgrade: SASA.
- Malone, E. E. (1950). *The Monk and the Martyr: The Monk as the Successor of the Martyr*. Washington: Catholic University of America Press.
- Malone, E. E. (1951). Martyrdom and Monastic Profession as a Second Baptism. In: A. Mayer, J. Quasten, B. Neunheuser (Eds.), *Vom Christlichen Mysterium: Gesammelte Arbeiten zum Gedächtnis von Odo Casel* (115–134). Düesseldorf: Patmos.
- Marković, M. (1998). The Original Paintings of the Katholikon. In: G. Subotić (Ed.), *Hilandar Monastery* (221–242). Belgrade: SASA.
- Meyendorff, J. (1959). L'iconographie de la Sagesse Divine dans la tradition byzantine. *CA*, 10, 259–277.
- Miljković, B. (2004). L'illustration de la Deuxieme homelie pascale de Gregoire le Theologien. *ЗРВИ*, 41, 105–112.
- Mouriki, D. (1988). Four Thirteenth-Century Sinai Icons by the Painter Peter. In: B. Kopah (Ed.), *Сѣуденица и византијска уметност око 1200. године* (329–347). Београд: САНУ.
- Negru, E. (2019). Policy and Prophecy. The Legend of the Last Emperor and the Iconography of the Ruler Crowned by Angels in Wallachia. *Зограф*, 43, 171–184.
- Nenadović, S. (1998). Refectory, Kitchen and Storage Rooms. In: G. Subotić (Ed.), *Hilandar Monastery* (181–186). Belgrade: SASA.
- Petković, S. (1999). *Chilandar* (2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed.). Belgrade: Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Serbia.
- Radovanović, J. (1989). Das Mönchtum und Märtyrertum in der Malerei des klostere Hilandar und des Patriarchat von Peć. *Balkanica*, XX, 57–71 [= Радвановић, Ј. (1988b). Монаштво и мучеништво у сликарству манастира Хиландара и Пећке патријаршије. У: Ј. Радвановић (ур.), *Иконографска истраживања српској сликарства XIII и XIV века* (79–82, 175–176). Београд: Балканолошки институт САНУ].
- Rakić, Z. (1998). The Seventeenth Century Mural Painting. In: G. Subotić (Ed.), *Hilandar Monastery* (263–278). Belgrade: SASA.
- Theocharidis, P. (1989). The Byzantine Fortified Enclosure of the Monastery of Chelandariou. *X3*, 7, 59–70.
- Vojvodić, D. (1998). Donor Portraits. In: G. Subotić (Ed.), *Hilandar Monastery* (251–262). Belgrade: SASA.

- Walter, Ch. (1997). IC XC NI KA, The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross. *REB*, 55, 193–220.
- Yiannias, J. J. (1991). The Refectory Paintings of Mount Athos: An Interpretation. In: J. J. Yiannias (Ed.), *The Byzantine Tradition after the Fall of Constantinople (269–340)*. Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia.
- Богдановић, Д., Ђурић, В. Ј., Медаковић, Д. (1978). *Хиландар*. Београд: РЗЗСК – Југословенска ревија.
- Васиљевић, М. (2021). *Култови светих на централном Балкану у време османских освајања*. Београд: Балканолошки институт САНУ.
- Војводић, Д. (2005). *Зидно сликарство цркве Свете Ахилије у Ариљу*. Београд: Стубови културе.
- Војводић, Д. (2007). Од хоризонталне ка вертикалној генеалогској слици Немањина. *ЗРВИ*, 44 (1), 295–312.
- Војводић, Д. (2009). Досликани владарски портрети у Грачаници. *Ниш и Византија*, VII, 251–265.
- Војводић, Д. (2015). Зидно сликарство Давидовице. Допуне у ишчитавању тематског програма и датовање. *Зограф*, 39, 177–192.
- Војводић, Д. (2016а). Родословне представе и идеја прародитељства у манастиру Студеници. У: Љ. Максимовић и В. Вукашиновић (ур.), *Манасијир Сјугуница – 700 година Краљеве Цркве (253–266)*. Београд: САНУ.
- Војводић, Д. (2016б). Богородичина икона из цркве Светог Николе Рајковог и питање сликарских радионица средњовековног Призрена. *Зограф*, 40, 95–116.
- Војводић, Д. (2020). Представе српских светих у живопису паштровских цркава и манастира. У: К. Митровић и Д. Медин (ур.), *Градиште – манастир у Пашировићима: Зборник радова (201–226)*. Буљарица: Манастир Градиште.
- Војводић, Д. (2022). Краљеви портрети. У: С. Пириватрић, С. Марјановић-Душанић, Д. Поповић (ур.), *Свети краљ Милутићин. Владар на раскршћима светих (377–428)*. Београд: Задужбина Светог манастира Хиландара.
- Вълева, Ю. (1988). Иконографијата на Христос Ангел на Великият съвет и българската монументална живопис от XV до XVII век. В: Ч. Добрев, А. Джурова, М. Класанов (ред.), *Втори международен конгрес по българистика. Доклади. Изобразително изкуство и архитектура (91–100)*. София: БАН.
- Димитрова, А., Лилић, В., Антевска, К., Василевски, А. (2011). *Мајка: културно наследство*. Скопје: Данте.
- Ђорђевић, И. М. (1994). *Зидно сликарство српске власнеле у доба Немањина*. Београд: Филозофски факултет.
- Ђорђевић, И. М. (1998). Капела краља Драгутина у Ђурђевим ступовима. *Рачански зборник*, 3, 48–53.
- Ђурић, В. Ј. (1974). *Византијске фреске у Јуославији*. Београд: Југославија.
- Ђурић, В. Ј. (1985). *Икона свете краља Стефана Дечанског*. Београд: РЗЗСК – ДКС.
- Ђурић, В. Ј. (1989). Портрети византијских и српских владара с повељама. У: П. Ивић, В. Ј. Ђурић, С. Ђирковић (ур.), *Есфијенска повеља десјоша Ђурђа (20–54)*. Београд–Смедерево: Југословенска ревија – Завод за заштиту споменика културе Смедерево.
- Ђурић, В. Ј., Ђирковић, С., Кораћ, В. (1990). *Пећка љапирјаришија*. Београд–Приштина: Југословенска ревија – Јединство.
- Ђурић, В. Ј. (1991). *Сојоћани*. Београд–Приштина: Просвета – РЗЗСК – Јединство.

- Ђурић, В. Ј. (1997). Једна антиисламска икона Светог Саве Српског и Светог Симеона Немање. *ХЗ*, 9, 119–141.
- Живковић, Б. (1981). Конзерваторски и рестаураторски радови на живопису у манастиру Хиландару. *Гласник ДКС*, 5, 39–40.
- Живковић, Б. (1984). *Сојоћани. Црћежи фресака*. Београд: РЗЗСК.
- Живковић, М. П. (2019). *Најстарије зидно сликарство Богородичине цркве у Сџуденици и његова однова у XVI веку* (одбрањена докторска дисертација). Филозофски факултет, Београд.
- Живојиновић, М. (1996). Даровања краља Уроша I манастиру Хиландару. *ЗРВИ*, 35, 213–219.
- Живојиновић, М. (1997). Запис о грчким повељама Хиландарског архива. *ХЗ*, 9, 27–34.
- Живојиновић, М. (1998). *Историја Хиландара, I. Од оснивања манастира 1198. до 1335. године*. Београд: Просвета.
- Живојиновић, М. (2022). Краљ и Хиландар. У: С. Пириватрић, С. Марјановић-Душанић, Д. Поповић (ур.), *Свети краљ Милушин. Владар на раскршћима светих* (453–485). Београд: Задужбина Светог манастира Хиландара.
- Јевтић, А. (1980). Монаштво и мучеништво. *Гласник СПЦ*, LXI, 253–260.
- Кајмаковић, З. (1977). *Георгије Миџрофановић*. Београд: „Веселин Маслеша“.
- Ковачевић, М. (2022). *Свети царска српска лавра Хиландар на Светиој Гори Аџонској. Архитектура и друга добра*. Хиландар–Београд: Задужбина Светог манастира Хиландара – Атеље Жрнов – Света Гора Агонска – Света царска српска лавра Хиландар.
- Коматина, И. (2021). *Краљ Стефан Урош I Велики и његов век*. Београд: Историјски институт.
- Куюмджијева, М. (2020). *Ликът на Бога. Изображенията на Света Троица в православното изкуство*. Софија: Институт за изследване на изкуствата, БАН.
- Лидов, А. (1999). Образы Христа в храмовой декорации и византийская христология после Схизмы 1054 года. В: Э. С. Смирнова et al. (ред.), *Древнерусское искусство. Византия и Древняя Русь. К 100-летию Андрея Николаевича Грабара (1896–1990)* (155–177). С.-Петербург: Издательство «Дмитрий Буланин».
- Лидов, А. М. (2014). Полиморфизм Христа в византийской иконографии после Схизмы 1054 года. В: А. М. Лидов (ред.), *Икона. Мир святых образов в Византии и Древней Руси* (193–236). Москва: Феория.
- Луковникова, Е. А. (2002). Образ Христа – Ангела Великого Совета из церкви Богородицы Перивлепти в Охриде. Развитие иконографии и особенности образа. *ИХМ*, 6, 66–80.
- Луковникова, Е. А. (2009). Ангел Великого Совета Иисус Христос. В: Патриарх Московский и всея Руси Кирилл (ред.), *Православная энциклопедия (электронная версия)* (290–291). Церковно-научный центр «Православная энциклопедия». Retrieved from: <https://www.pravenc.ru/text/115048.html>
- Марјановић-Душанић, С. (2007). *Свети краљ. Култи Стефана Дечанског*. Београд: Балканолошки институт САНУ – Слио.
- Марковић, М. (1995). Појединачне фигуре светитеља у наосу и параклисима. У: В. Ј. Ђурић (ур.), *Зидно сликарство манастира Дечана. Грађа и сџудије* (243–264). Београд: САНУ.
- Марковић, М. (2011). Иконографски програм најстаријег живописа цркве Богородице Перивлепте. *Зограф*, 35, 119–143.

- Марковић, М. и Хостетер, В. Т. (1998). Прилог хронологији градње и осликавања хиландарског католикона. *ХЗ*, 10, 201–220.
- Матић, М. (2017а). *Српски иконойис у доба обновљене Пећке њаџријаршије 1557–1690*. Београд: Музеј Српске православне цркве.
- Матић, М. (2017б). Представе српских владара династије Немањић у иконопису обновљене Пећке патријаршије 1557–1690: Стефан Првовенчани. *Ниш и Византија*, XVI, 378–404.
- Матић, М. (2018). Киторски портрети у српском сликарству 16. и 17. века: иконографија и типологија. У: М. Лончар-Вујновић (ур.), *Наука без ђраница 2 (227–252)*. Косовска Митровица: Филозофски факултет.
- Милановић, В. (2012). Светачки лик у контексту: један нерасветљени пример из ексонартекса цркве у манастиру Трескавац. У: Б. Крсмановић, Љ. Максимовић, Р. Радић (ур.), *Византијски свети на Балкану (Пета национална конференција византолога, Београд 4–6. новембар 2010)*, II (459–479). Београд: Византолошки институт САНУ.
- Милошевић, Д. и Нешковић Ј. (1987). *Ђурђеви светијови у Старом Расу*. Београд: РЗСК.
- Миљковић, Б. (2008). *Житија Светијој Саве као извори за историју средњовековне уметности*. Београд: Византолошки институт САНУ.
- Ненадовић, С. (1963). Једна хипотеза о архитектури хиландарске трпезарије. *Зборник ЗСК*, XIV, 1–12.
- Ненадовић, С. (1965). Хиландар на графичким приказима XVIII и XIX столећа. *Зборник ЗСК*, XVI, 97–113.
- Осташенко, Е. Ј. (2000). Пресвятая Троица – Предвечный Совет и Божественная Премудрость. В: О. А. Чернова (ред.), *София Премудрость Божия. Выставка русской иконописи XIII–XIX веков из собраний музеев России* (Каталог) (36–39). Москва: Радуница.
- Пејић, С. (1998). Црна Река – уз проблем живописа на фасадама. У: Д. Бојовић (ур.), *Манастир Црна Ријека и Светији Пејтар Коршики (117–132)*. Приштина–Београд: Друштво пријатеља манастира Црна ријека – Народна и универзитетска библиотека у Приштини – Друштво за обнову србистике – Центар Приштина – РЗСК.
- Петковић, С. (1965). *Зидно сликарство на њодручју Пећке њаџријаршије 1557–1614*. Нови Сад: Матица српска.
- Петковић, С. (1971). Култ кнеза Лазара и српско сликарство XVII века. *ЗЛУ*, 7, 85–102.
- Петковић, С. (1986). *Морача*. Београд: Српска књижевна задруга – Просвета.
- Петковић, С. (1990). Ликови Срба светитеља у српским штампаним књигама XVI века. *ЗЛУ*, 26, 139–158.
- Петковић, С. (1995). Хиландар и Русија у XVI и XVII веку. У: М. Јанковић (ур.), *Казивања о Светијој Гори (143–170, 269–271)*. Београд: Просвета.
- Петковић, С. (2002). Фреске олтарског простора у цркви Жежевици из 1609. године – дело Георгија Митрофановића. *Саопштења*, XXXIV, 249–261.
- Поповић, Д. (2006). Свети краљ Стефан Дечански. У: Д. Поповић (ур.), *Под окриљем светости*. *Култ светих владара и реликвија у средњовековној Србији (143–183, 344–346)*. Београд: Балканолошки институт САНУ.
- Поповић, Д. (2022). О светачком прослављању краља Милутина. У: С. Пириватрић, С. Марјановић-Душанић, Д. Поповић (ур.), *Свети краљ Милутин. Владар на раскршћима светова (529–555)*. Београд: Задужбина Светог манастира Хиландара.



- Радовановић, Ј. (1988a). Тутићева црква Св. Николе у Призрену. У: Ј. Радовановић (ур.), *Иконографска исцртавања српској сликарској XIII и XIV века* (109–116, 180). Београд: Балканолошки институт САНУ.
- Радовановић, Ј. (1988b) [= Radovanović, J. (1989)].
- Радојчић, С. (1997). *Порџрејџи српских владара у средњем веку* (2. издање). Београд: РЗСК.
- Радујко, М. (2020). *Ејџискојски џресџо у српским земљама од IX до XVIII века*, II. Београд: Филозофски факултет Универзитета у Београду, Институт за историју уметности – Православни богословски факултет Универзитета у Београду, Институт за теолошка истраживања – Музеј СПЦ – Покрајински завод за заштиту споменика културе, Петроварадин.
- Суботић, Г. (1979). Иконографија светога Саве у време турске власти. У: В. Ј. Ђурић (ур.), *Сава Немањџић – Светџи Сава. Исџорија и џредање* (343–355). Београд: САНУ.
- Суботић, Г. (1980). *Охридска сликарска школа XV века*. Београд: Филозофски факултет, Институт за историју уметности.
- Суботић, Г., Миљковић, Б., Дудић, Н. (2019). *Најџџиси манасџира Хиландара. Том џрви. XIV–XVII век*. Београд: САНУ, Хиландарски одбор – Византолошки институт САНУ – Манастир Хиландар.
- Тодић, Б. (1993). Краљ Милутин са сином Константином и родитељима монасима на фресци у Грачаници. *Саџџишења*, XXV, 7–23.
- Тодић, Б. (2011). *Ново даџшоване фресака у Давидовици*. У: Б. Тодић и М. Радујко (ур.), *Ђурђеви сџуџови и Будимљанска еџархија* (413–427). Беране–Београд.
- Тодић, Б. (2013). *Српски сликари од XIV до XVIII века*, I. Нови Сад–Петроварадин: Покрајински завод за заштиту споменика културе – Платонеум.
- Тодић, Б. (2017). Време изградње католикона и ексонартекса манастира Хиландара. ХЗ, 14, 147–171.
- Тодић, Б. (2022). Кџиторско дело краља Милутина. У: С. Пириватрић, С. Марјановић-Душанић, Д. Поповић (ур.), *Светџи краљ Милуџин. Владар на раскрџима светџова* (337–375). Београд: Задужбина Светог манастира Хиландара.
- Томић, О. (1997). Хиландарски скит Свете Тројице на Спасовој Води. ХЗ, 9, 173–278.
- Фотић, А. (2000). *Светџа Гора и Хиландар у Османском царсџџу XV–XVII век*. Београд: Балканолошки институт САНУ – Свети архијерејски синод СПЦ – Манастир Хиландар.
- Царевская, Т. Ю. (2019). Ранний вариант новгородской иконографии Софии Премудрости Божией и обстоятельства его появления. *Зограф*, 43, 151–170.
- Этингоф, О. Е. (2000). Иконография Иисуса Христа как образа воплощенной Софии Премудрости Божией. В: О. А. Чернова (ред.), *София Премудрость Божия. Выставка русской иконописи XIII–XIX веков из собраний музеев России* (Каталог) (59–63). Москва: Радуница.
- Πέβџтџс, А. (2012). Η Μεγάλη Βουλή του Θεου στον άγιο Μάξџμο τον Ομολογητή. *Θεολοџџа*, 83(1), 27–60 [= А. Јевџић, Велики Савет Божији код Светог Максима Исповедника, *Вџдослов*, 52 (2011), 49–72; idem (2012). Велики Савет Божији код Светог Максима Исповедника. У: А. Јевџић (ур. и прев.), *Светџи Максим Исџоведник: живџџи и издор дела* (320–349). Врњџци–Требиње–Лос Анђелес: Братство Светог Симеона Мироточивог – Манастир Тврдош – Епархија Западноамерџчка].
- Δџουσσџпуλος, Ν. Α. (2012). *Πορџрџεџа κοσμџκџων δωρηџτων στην ενџοџџџџα ζωγραφџκџη του Αγџου Όρουs (14<sup>ος</sup> – αρχџс 16<sup>ου</sup> αι.)*: Η ιστορџκџη και ιδεολοџџџџη δџασταση της

- εικονογραφίας του ορθόδοξου ηγεμόνα στο αθωνικό περιβάλλον (διδακτορική διατριβή). Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλίας, Βόλος.*
- Καδάς, Σ. Ν. (1997). *Η Ιερά Μονή Αγίου Διονυσίου: Ιστορία, τέχνη, κειμήλια, προσκυνηματικός οδηγός*. Άγιον Όρος: Ιερά Μονή Διονυσίου.
- Πάλλας, Δ. (1989–1990). Ο Χριστός ως η Θεία Σοφία. Η εικονογραφική περιπέτεια μιας θεολογικής έννοιας. *ΔΧΑΕ*, 15, 119–144.
- Σέμογλου, Α. (2010). Χριστός Εμμανουήλ και Χριστός ο της Μεγάλης Βουλής Άγγελος. Εικονογραφικοί και επιγραφικοί συμφυρμοί στη μεταβυζαντινή ζωγραφική. *Βυζαντινά*, 30, 379–391.
- Ταβλάκης, Ι. Εμμ. (1997). *Το εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα στις τράπεζες των μονών του Αγίου Όρους* (αδημοσίευτη διδακτορική διατριβή), Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων, Ιωάννινα.

Николаос Л. ДИОНИСОПУЛОС

Универзитет Западне Македоније  
Школа лепих уметности, Флорина, Грчка  
Κατєδρα лепих и примењених уметности

Весна Д. МИЛАНОВИЋ

Универзитет у Приштини са привременим  
седиштем у Косовској Митровици  
Филозофски факултет  
Κατєδρα за историју уметности

Фреско-композиција Георгија Митрофановића  
са представама средњовековних владара  
у јужној апсиди хиландарске трпезарије

Резиме

Фреске истакнутог српског сликара из првих деценија XVII века, Хиландарца Георгија Митрофановића, замениле су, у пространој средњовековној сали за заједнички обед хиландарских монаха, претходна, оштећена, три столећа старија дела. У прилогу се разматра композиција са представама средњовековних владара у двопојасно уређеном простору мале, ниске апсиде у јужном зиду сале. Својеврсна је структура за себе у фреско-целини с потписом сликара из 1621/1622. године. Заједничко четворочланој групи, распоређеној у паровима у доњем појасу апсидалне конхе, јесте то што је реч о представама одабраних средњовековних владара ктитора и покровитеља Хиландара из најзначајнијег и најпросперитетнијег периода историје манастира од доба његовог оснивања. Међу њима нису портрети првих ктитора. Могуће је, међутим, да је група била у нарочитом односу са садржином наспрамне, крајем XVIII века пресликане

целине са представама првих Немањића оснивача манастира у доњој зони главне трпезаријске апсиде.

Приказ српског краља Милутина и византијског цара Андроника II Палеолога заједнички је портрет у пуном смислу речи и парафраза решења оствареног на средњовековним портретима у припрати главне манастирске цркве. Уз неке измене сликар је „позајмљено“ из припрате поставио у нови програмски контекст, чији су део и ликови Светог Симона монаха (највероватније бившег краља Уроша I) и светог краља Стефана Дечанског. Уобличавање другог од два пара засновао је на иконографским обрасцима који су му омогућили надградњу полазне теме о ктиторству (покровитељској мисији) побожних владара мотивима мучеништва и истрајности у вери. Нови визуелни ансамбл са ликовима побожних и правоверних владара средњовековне прошлости заокружио је уметањем медаљона са крстом и Христовим криптограмом, на део слободног средишњег поља над прозором, и стављањем свих ликова под окриље и благослов Христа Анђела Великог Савета.

За разумевање композиције подједнако је важно расветљавање симболике необично упечатљивог монументалног попрсја младоликог крилатог Христа, као и избор и разматрање иконографских обележја представљених владара. Реч је о истакнутом и, чини се, једном од омиљених мотива у Митрофановићевом опусу. Зашто се стари владари покровитељи манастира повезују са особеним, нетрадиционалним типом Христовог лика? Како временска дистанца од средњовековне прошлости утиче на рецепцију иконографске групе? Шта у датом склопу означава медаљон са крстом и христовом? Или зашто је тај мотив више од стандардног обележавања прозора знаком заштите? Та и слична питања, неразмотрена у досадашњем фокусирању на рестаураторски аспект Митрофановићевог дела, проистичу из настојања да се остварено сагледа и кроз призму епохе у којој је трпезарија изнова живописана, односно из угла одређености приликама које су обележиле живот православних у тадашњој Османској држави. Да су за одгонетање концепта и необичног склопа мини-целине тесни оквири којима се поглед на Митрофановићев подухват задржава у равни расправе о показатељима могуће рестаурације или реконструкције древних решења, могло се видети из природе измена образаца узетих за узор и својеврсно полазиште. Природа измена, и у сегменту везаном за апропријацију детаља, као и оном који би се односио на склапање целине, указује на то да је Митрофановићу симболика била важнија од историјске реконструкције. Цела композиција дише порукама осмишљеним као својеврсна утеха правоверним хришћанима у држави иноверних господара. Митрофановић добро зна да је свакодневица његове сабраће у подвигу далеко од идеала о анђеоском животу – оптерећена разним наметима, казнама и неправдама, и обележена напорима и мукама да се, у ери нужних одлазака у прикупљање помоћи далеко од граница Свете Горе, обезбеди опстанак и очување манастира.

Анализа споја ликова владара покровитеља Хиландара, симбола златног доба манастирске историје, са мотивима који у себи сажимају најдубље основе хришћанске вере и нарочиту оптимистичку и тријумфалну поруку, чији извори сежу до апологетске мисли раних хришћанских отаца мученика, показује да Георгије Митрофановић није остао равнодушан према ономе што је гледао када је стајао пред дверима католикона свога манастира. Ту је, у припрати, поглед привлачила сложена галерија ктиторско-владарских портрета и посебан тематски оквир у који су уклопљени својим местом непосредно под сликом Распећа и



симболично-алегоријском композицијом с мотивима Соломонових прича о Божјој премудрости. Чини се да Митрофановићу није мањкало ни креативности ни дара за синтезу. У расположив скроман просторни оквир мале трпезаријске апсиде пренео је, заправо, резултат надахнућа старијим сликарством, кроз аутентичне сажете симболичне приказе који траже да у њему видимо сликара који није био само вешт рестауратор него и дете свога времена.

*Кључне речи:* Георгије Митрофановић; трпезарија манастира Хиландара; фреско-сликарство XVII века; портрети (представе) средњовековних владара; Христос Анђео Великог Савета.



Овај чланак је објављен и дистрибуира се под лиценцом *Creative Commons ауторство-некомерцијално 4.0 међународна* (CC BY-NC 4.0 | <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).

This paper is published and distributed under the terms and conditions of the *Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International* license (CC BY-NC 4.0 | <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).