

Staging for Commemoration The *Cherubikos Hymnos*

Among all the functions of royal imagery in service of promoting the power and rule of sovereigns, royal portraits installed within sacred space sought to guarantee the permanent presence of the embodied persona of the ruler, even when he was not physically present. This staging facilitated continuous commemoration of the sovereign.

However, this raises the question of how such commemoration could be ensured. We assume that these images found references in the texts spoken aloud in sacred space, namely as part of the liturgy. Only this interaction with words enabled the integration of the ruler's image into the daily service – and thus also into permanent commemoration. Indeed, remembering the living and the dead is a central component of the Byzantine liturgy, especially in the context of the *Cherubikos Hymnos*. It must be underlined that the portraits nevertheless always had to follow a double strategy: in addition to engaging with the liturgy, they oriented themselves towards representing the status of the depicted.

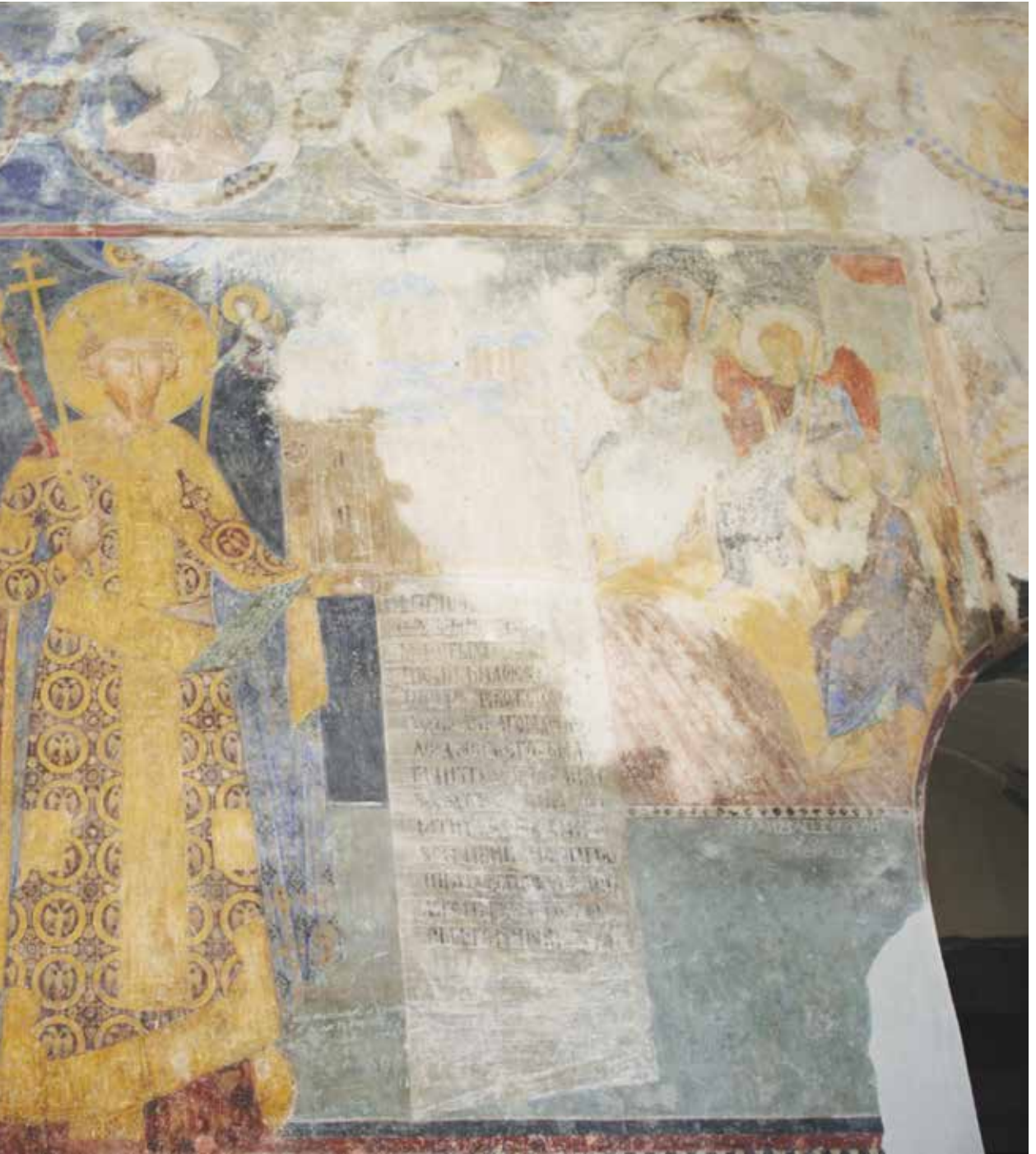
Staging for Performance

In the case of Byzantium, if we wish to examine the interconnections among ritual space, the acoustically perceptible performance of the liturgy, thematically elaborate iconography, and the representation of the ruler, the west wall of the naos in the church of the Trinity of Resava Monastery, Manasija (1408-17), offers itself as an ideal starting point (Fig. 1).¹ The monastery was conceived as the burial church of the despot Stefan Lazarević (r. 1389-1427), whose tomb is located in the southwest area of the structure.² His image next to the western entrance reflects much more than the standard ruler's likeness.³ With recourse to a well-known motif from propaganda of the period, the despot is shown standing frontally while Christ, appearing from the heavens, places a gold crown on his head. Meanwhile, an angel hands the ruler a sword, and

- 1 On the monastery with a discussion of the bibliography: Branislav Todić, *Manastir Resava* (Belgrade: Draganić, 1995); Branislav Todić and Milka Čanak Medić, *The Dečani Monastery* (Belgrade: Muzej u Prištini, 2013); Jadranka Prolović, *Resava (Manasija). Geschichte, Architektur und Malerei einer Stiftung des serbischen Despoten Stefan Lazarević* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2017).
- 2 Stefan Lazarević was awarded the title of despot by emperor John VII Palaeologos in 1402. The last flourishing of Serbian art began under Lazarević. For historical background, see: Todić, *Manastir Resava*, pp. 3-30; Gordana Simić, Dragoljub Todorović, Marin Brmbolić and Radojka Zarić, *Monastery Resava* (Belgrade: Draganić, 2011), pp. 5-16; Prolović, *Resava*, pp. 41-48, 55-56.
- 3 Todić, *Manastir Resava*, pp. 98-103, figs. 6, 82-84; Branislav Cvetković, 'Imago leonis in Despot Stefan's Iconography', in *Ikon*, 2 (2009), 137-46; Prolović, *Resava*, pp. 347-56, fig. 74; Branislav Cvetković, 'The Royal Imagery of Medieval Serbia', in *Meanings and Functions of the Ruler's Image in the Mediterranean World (11th-15th Centuries)*, ed. by Michele Bacci and Manuela Studer-Karlen (Leiden: Brill, 2022), pp. 172-208 (p. 194, fig. 5.10).



◆ Fig. 1
Manasija, church of the Trinity of Resava
Monastery (1408-17), west wall of the Naos.
Stefan Lazarević, Christ Anapeson
(Photo: Manuela Studer-Karlen).



a second angel a spear. Along with a cruciform sceptre in his right hand, Stefan holds in his left a realistic model of his church as well as an unfurled scroll inscribed with a deed of donation and a poetic prayer to the Holy Trinity. He is presenting his foundation to the Trinity residing at the New Sion, depicted adjacent to the despot on the northern part of the west wall. The text on the scroll may be a partial copy from the lost original *chrysobull* for the monastery of Resava and therefore may have a direct connection to the founder.⁴ While his appearance follows the Byzantine iconographic formula of the ruler victorious over his enemies, it also articulates, due to the spatial organization and the content of these words, his religious humility in his capacity as the institution's founder.⁵ On the other side of Stefan's portrait, in the lunette above the main door, are images of Christ Anapeson, God's hand holding the souls of the righteous, and David and Solomon.⁶ The source of the iconography of God's hand is the Book of Wisdom 3:1, where Solomon promises salvation to the righteous; thus the image is often found in the context of the Last Judgement.⁷ On the scroll of Solomon, the text of Proverbs 21:1 is paraphrased: 'Thus God directs the heart of a ruler'. The importance of the prophets in this context is explained in the despot's *vita*, written by Konstantin of Kosteneć, who drew multiple comparisons between Stefan and both David and Solomon.⁸ It is noteworthy that in the *vita* Solomon is referred to twice as often as David, a statistic that accords with the former's closer proximity to the ruler in the painted programme at Resava.⁹ Another striking visual feature in the immediate vicinity of the donor is the rather rare portrayal of Christ Anapeson reclining on his left arm in order to orient himself towards Stefan.¹⁰ The text on the scroll of David (Psalm 44[45]:24) bears relevance to the Anapeson and, at the same time, can be understood as a plea for salvation from the mouth of the founder: 'Awaken, Lord! Why do you sleep?' In this context, the image takes on a strongly eschatological character, one that also extends to the founder himself. The despot's *suppedion* is identical in form and colour to the cushion of Christ Anapeson.¹¹ As Branislav

4 Todić, *Manestir Resava*, pp. 14-15.

5 Cvetković, 'Imago leonis', p. 138; Branislav Cvetković, 'Ideološki modeli i motivi u vladarskoj reprezentaciji despota Stefana', in *Srednji vek u srpskoj nauci*, ed. by Gordana Jovanović, *istoriji, književnosti i umetnosti* 7, (Despotovac: Resavska škola, 2016), pp. 57-78.

6 On the Anapeson: Branislav Todić, 'Anapeson. Iconographie et Signification du Thème', *Byzantion*, 64 (1994), 134-65 (pp. 139, 141, 144-45); Todić, *Manestir Resava*, pp. 103-09, figs. 85-89; Nicolas S. Constatas, 'To Sleep, Perchance to Dream: The Middle State of Souls in Patristic and Byzantine Literature', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 55 (2001), 91-124 (pp. 104-05); Manuela Studer-Karlen, 'Le programme des églises byzantines et la liturgie', *Cahiers Archéologiques*, 59 (2022), 103-24 (p. 118); Manuela Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson. Bildprogramm und Liturgie* (Basel: Schwabe, 2022), pp. 163-71.

7 Book of Wisdom 3:1: 'The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God'. Henry Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium* (Princeton: University Press, 1982; repr. 1994), pp. 57-59; Todić *Manestir Resava*, pp. 106-07, fig. 88; Constatas, 'To Sleep', p. 93, n. 8; Prolović, *Resava*, pp. 344-47, 421-26.

8 Konstantin Kostenećki: *Vita des Despoten* (Житије деспота Стефана Лазаревића). For this text, see:

Ninoslava Radošević, 'Laudes Serbiae. The Life of Despot Stephan Lazarević by Constantine the Philosopher', *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta*, 24-25 (1986), 445-51; Elka Bakalova, 'King David as Model of the Christian Ruler: Some Visual Sources', in *The Biblical Models of Power and Law*, ed. by Ivan Biliarsky and Radu G. Păun (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2008), pp. 93-131 (p. 122); Prolović, *Resava*, pp. 48-54. Between 1432 and 1439, Konstantin Filosofof wrote the *vita* of Stefan Lazarević. The composition corresponds to well-known models, comparable to the panegyric of the patriarch Euthymios of Bulgaria.

9 Cvetković, 'Imago leonis', p. 138.

10 More commonly in the Anapeson image, Christ rests on his right arm. The reversed lying position evident at Resava is extremely rare. It also occurs in the church of St John the Evangelist in Serres (second half of the fourteenth century), on the northern part of the east wall of the narthex. Todić, 'Anapeson', pp. 138, 141, 144, 147, 149, 153-54; Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, pp. 192-202.

11 The cushion is a typical imperial attribute in Byzantine art. Christ, prophets, and even archangels are often accompanied by this status symbol, whereas the Theotokos and the saints only

Cvetković has rightly pointed out, the two animal figures embroidered on the *suppedion* are lions, which refer as well to the Anapeson and, in particular, to Gen. 49:9, the main source for the theme.¹² Serbian royal ideology's special connection to this text is evident.¹³ In the *vita* of St Simeon Nemanja, Jacob's blessing of his sons exemplifies the divine election of royalty and is consequently paralleled with the dynasty. Therefore, at Resava the visual confrontation staged between Stefan and Christ Anapeson characterizes the former as a God-loving monarch who belongs to the righteous tribe of Judah.¹⁴ The appearance of the Anapeson image near the tomb of the despot can further be explained by Psalm 120(121):4, which is another source for the Anapeson image and was quoted in funerary rites, including those of the founders, especially in the monastic context.¹⁵ If one agrees that the visual-spatial programme of the church constitutes a coherent and clear unity, one must nevertheless ask how it interacted with ritual. What function did this multilayer complex fulfil in the eucharistic performance?

The Theotokos turns to Christ Anapeson with her hands raised in prayer, but simultaneously she looks in the direction of the despot. The Theotokos as intercessor is a visual equivalent to the long *ektenie*, which was recited daily and in which she was invoked to intercede on behalf of mankind.¹⁶ This was followed by the commemoration of certain persons as prescribed in the *typikon*.¹⁷

At Resava, Jadranka Prolović identifies a depiction of Pentecost in the western vault, which has a liturgical relevance for the founder as well, for on the Saturday before Pentecost, Vespers was sung with a procession that included prayers for the deceased.¹⁸

sporadically appear with it. Notable at Resava is the fact that the *suppedion* serves as an attribute of a donor who seeks to imitate the image of the emperor. In addition to geometric and floral ornaments, bicephalous eagles also appear as decoration on the *suppedion*. The depiction of the lions at Resava is singular.

- 12 Cvetković, 'Imago leonis', pp. 137-8, fig. 3; Prolović, *Resava*, pp. 347-56; Cvetković, 'The Royal Imagery', p. 194. While Cvetković correctly identified the animals as lions, Prolović mistakenly recognized a snake and a lion, thus arguing that the royal cushion symbolizes evil. Gen. 49:9: 'Judah is a lion's cub; from the prey my son, you have gone up. He stopped down, he crouched as a lion and as a lioness, who dares rouse him? For the sources of the theme: Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, pp. 13-34.
- 13 Cvetković, 'The Royal Imagery', p. 187, with the bibliography and the sources.
- 14 Cvetković, 'Imago leonis', p. 138.
- 15 Elena Velkovska, 'Funeral Rites according to the Byzantine Liturgical Sources', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 55 (2001), 21-51 (pp. 38-39); Maréva U, 'Images et passages dans l'Espace ecclésial à l'époque médiobyzantine', in *Visibilité et présence de l'image dans l'Espace ecclésial*, ed. by Sulamith Brodbeck and Anne-Orange Poilpré (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2019), pp. 301-27 (pp. 317-18). Psalm 120(121):4: 'Indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.'
- 16 Dimitris I. Pallas, *Die Passion und Bestattung Christi in Byzanz. Der Ritus – das Bild* (Munich: Institut für

- Byzantinistik und neugriechische Philologie, 1965), pp. 120-21; Sophia Kalopissi-Verti, 'The Proskynetaria of the Templon and Narthex: Form, Imagery, Spatial Connections, and Reception', in *Thresholds of the Sacred. Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. by Sharon E. J. Gerstel (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2006), pp. 107-32 (pp. 129-30). During the liturgy, the Theotokos is invoked in the *Theotokion* in front of the door: U, 'Images et passages', pp. 316-17, 321-22. The text is cited in: Feuillen Mercenier, *La Prière des Églises de Rite byzantin 2, les Fêtes* (Chevetogne: Éditions de Chevetogne, 1947), p. 84.
- 17 Gordona Babić, *Les chapelles annexes des églises byzantines. Fonction liturgique et Programmes iconographiques* (Paris: Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, 1969), p. 48; Christine Stephan, *Ein byzantinisches Bildensemble. Die Mosaiken und Fresken der Apostelkirche zu Thessaloniki* (Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1986), p. 174; Catia Galatariotou, 'Byzantine Ktetorika Typika. A Comparative Study', *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 45 (1987), 89-107 (pp. 93-94); Gail Nicholl, 'A Contribution to the Archaeological Interpretation of Typika: The Case of the Narthex', in *Work and Worship at the Theotokos Evergetis 1050-1200 (Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations, 6.2)*, ed. by Margaret Mullet and Anthony Kirby (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 1997), pp. 285-308 (p. 306).
- 18 Babić, *Les chapelles annexes*, pp. 53-54; Prolović, *Resava*, pp. 425-26. On the fact that Pentecost is

Within the three-dimensional architecture, the experience of spatiality was closely intertwined with performative and visual references. Thus, aspects of the king's identity and aspirations were communicated through not only standard modes of representation but also their integration into an image of salvation, a double strategy that only makes sense if the portrait is encountered as part of a continuous ritual format within the space. It is well known that the *typika* determined a monastery's daily routine, being based both on the general principles of the order and on the founder's own form of monasticism. Every foundation was an exchange: a gift in return for continuous prayer on behalf of the founder and, in turn, for a greater chance of securing him eternal life.¹⁹ However, the question arises of how the royal body factored into the daily service.

Cherubikos Hymnos (Χερουβικὸς ὕμνος)

The manner in which the ruler was present in the daily service can be seen in the *Cherubikos Hymnos*, which was audibly sung at the theatrical climax of the liturgical entrance procession known as the Great Entrance.²⁰ During this portion of the liturgy, the gifts were carried from the prothesis, where the loaf of bread and the chalice had been prepared at the beginning of the rite, to the narthex and then returned to the bema via the naos.²¹ The *epitaphios*, the textile adorned with the image of the dead Christ, served to cover the gifts during the procession.²² *Epitaphioi* sometimes bore an inscription of a *troparion*, a short hymn, from the prayer 'Noble Joseph',

- rarely absent from imperial foundations and its significance for the founder: Catherine Jolivet-Lévy, 'Présence et figures du souverain à Sainte-Sophie de Constantinople et à l'église de la Sainte-Croix d'Aghtamar', in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. by Henry Maguire (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1997), pp. 231-46 (pp. 234-36).
- 19 Galatariotou, 'Byzantine Ktetorika Typika', pp. 92-93; Rico Franses, *Donor Portraits in Byzantine Art. The Vicissitudes of Contact between Human and Divine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 152-93. In this chapter, Franses examines the presence of both lay and holy figures.
- 20 The *Cherubikos Hymnos* is probably introduced in the sixth century under Justin II and intoned during the Great Entrance since the twelfth century: Robert F. Taft, *The Great Entrance. A History of the Transfer of Gifts and other Preanaphoral Rites of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1978), pp. 69, 119-48; Robert F. Taft, 'The Liturgy of the Great Church: An Initial Synthesis of Structure and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasm', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 34/35 (1980/81), 45-75 (p. 54).
- 21 Thomas Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971), pp. 155-62; Taft, *The Great Entrance*, pp. 178-215; Vasileios Marinis, 'Defining Liturgical Space', in *The Byzantine Word*, ed. by Paul Stephenson (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 284-302 (pp. 285-86, 294); Vasileios Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople. Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 22-23; Vasileios Marinis, 'On earth as it is in heaven? Reinterpreting the Heavenly Liturgy in Byzantine Art', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 114 (2021), 255-68 (pp. 259-60).
- 22 Taft, *The Great Entrance*, pp. 69, 119-48; Warren T. Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon. Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 124-25; Richard Barrett, 'Let Us Put Away All Earthly Care: Mysticism and the Cherubikon of the Byzantine Rite', *Studia Patristica*, 64 (2013), 111-24; Robert F. Taft and Stefano Parenti, *Il Grande Ingresso. Edizione italiana rivista, ampliata e aggiornata* (Grottaferrata: Monastero Esarchico, 2014), pp. 155-205; Marka Tomić Đjurić, 'To picture and to perform: the image of the Eucharistic Liturgy at Markov Manastir (I)', *Zograf*, 38 (2014), 123-42 (pp. 130-37). Most likely, the use of the *epitaphios* was introduced on Mount Athos at the end of the thirteenth century.

which was recited while the bread and wine were deposited on the altar, commemorating the deposition of Christ.²³ Such inscriptions make clear that the *epitaphios* was meant to be part of the symbolism surrounding the Great Entrance.²⁴ A similar interaction with the entrance rite can be observed in other liturgical objects, such as the *panagiaria*.²⁵ On the Disk of Pulcheria from Mount Athos (fourteenth century) in specific, the Great Entrance is depicted in the first register, while the central medallion is encircled by an inscription containing the *Cherubikos Hymnos*.²⁶ Relevant to the donors' integration into the rite is the fact that the *Cherubikos Hymnos* was rhythmically interrupted – as documented in the manuscripts – by liturgical commemorations for the living and the deceased.²⁷ References to this custom are evident in the numerous inscriptions on *epitaphioi* pleading for the salvation of the donor, which are to be understood as intercessory formulas.²⁸ These interjections into the liturgy multiplied over time. Ultimately, to pray for the ruler, bishop, and benefactors became a stable element of the rite, even when they were not present.²⁹

Through its inclusion of portraits of rulers within a liturgical narrative, the Sakkos of Photios (1414-17) makes explicit the implication of political figures in the liturgy, especially since the garment was worn and 'performed' by the priest on high feasts.³⁰ At the bottom front, political figures are portrayed beneath Constantine I and Helena: at right, the Russian grand duke Vasily Dmitrievich I and his wife Sophia Vitovtovna, with Russian inscriptions, and, at left, the future Byzantine emperor John VIII Palaeologos (r. 1425-48) and his wife Anna Vassilyevna (Anna of Moscow, daughter of the Russian grand duke Vassily Dmitrievich I), with Greek inscriptions. The fact that the Byzantine rulers are endowed with halos, in contrast to

- 23 Taft, *The Great Entrance*, p. 245; Rémi Gounelle, *Les recensions byzantines de l'Évangile de Nicodème* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 52-53; Taft and Parenti, *Il Grande Ingresso*, pp. 244-49.
- 24 Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon*, p. 126.
- 25 Marka Tomić Đurić, 'To Picture and to Perform: The Image of the Eucharistic Liturgy at Markov Manastir (II)', *Zograf*, 39 (2015), 129-50 (pp. 139-45). On the *panagiaria*: Ivan Drpić, 'Notes on Byzantine Panagiaria', *Zograf*, 35 (2011), 51-62.
- 26 Iouli Klavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), pp. 204-05.
- 27 Taft, *The Great Entrance*, pp. 78-79, 227-34, 430; Hans Belting, *Das Bild und sein Publikum im Mittelalter. Form und Funktion früherer Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin: Mann, 1981), pp. 195-96; Stefanos Alexopoulos, *The Presanctified Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite. A comparative Analysis of its Origins, Evolution, and structural Components* (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), pp. 232-35; Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon*, p. 126; Taft and Parenti, *Il Grande Ingresso*, p. 396.
- 28 Juliana Boycheva, 'L'aer dans la liturgie orthodoxe et son iconographie du XIII^e siècle jusque dans l'art post-byzantin', *Cahiers Archéologiques*, 51 (2003), 169-94 (pp. 169-72).
- 29 Taft, *The Great Entrance*, p. 232; Taft and Parenti, *Il Grande Ingresso*, pp. 227-34.
- 30 Warren T. Woodfin, *Late Byzantine Liturgical Vestments and the Iconography of Sacerdotal Power* (Illinois: ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2002),

p. 37; Warren T. Woodfin, 'Celestial Hierarchies and earthly Hierarchies in the Art of the Byzantine Church', in *The Byzantine World*, ed. by Paul Stephenson (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 303-19 (pp. 313-14); Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon*, pp. 123, 126-28, fig. 3.4; Aleksej G. Barkov and Inna Vishnevskaya, 'Cat. 104. Sakkos', in *Byzantine Antiquities. Works of Art from the Fourth to Fifteenth Centuries in the Collection of the Moscow Kremlin Museums*, ed. by Irina A. Sterligova (Moscow: Moscow Kremlin Museums, 2013), pp. 488-513; Warren T. Woodfin, 'Orthodox Liturgical Textiles and Clerical Self-Referentiality', in *Dressing the Part: Textiles as Propaganda in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Kate Dimitrova and Margaret Goehring (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), pp. 31-51. In the fifteenth century, Simeon of Thessalonica noted that all priests have the right to dress in the *sakkos*. However, he specified that the *sakkos* is 'the mantle of the Passion', which the priest consequently wore during the rite of *Epitaphios Threnos*. Simeon Thessalonicensis Archiepiscopus, *De Sacra Liturgia, Patrologia Graeca* 155, cols 829-52. For this text: Christopher Walter, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church* (London: Variorum Publications, 1982), p. 18; *St Simeon of Thessalonika. The Liturgical Commentaries*, ed. and trans. by Steven Hawkes-Teeple, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 168 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2011), p. 179.

the Muscovites, suggests the work to be of Greek production.³¹ It was a diplomatic gift, and its iconography simultaneously invokes secular, divine, and imperial authority.³² Its iconography, moreover, looks to Orthodox liturgical realism: on the front, the scenes of the Passion and Annunciation, along with the depictions of the Anapeson and the *Epitaphios Threnos*, mirror the mystagogical symbolism of the Great Entrance, while the portraits of the rulers refer to the integration of the donors into this rite via their commemoration during the *Cherubikos Hymnos*.³³

These implications can also be applied to Resava. The liturgical-spiritual influence of the Athonite tradition was widely evident in the Serbian Empire but was particularly strong at Resava; indeed, as Konstantine (the biographer of Stefan Lazarevic) notes, monks from Mount Athos came to Resava.³⁴ This connection is also apparent in the pictorial programme, with St Peter Athonites prominently placed on the west wall next to the founder's portrait. The programme refers, in addition, to the Great Entrance: among the figures of saints, the vision of Peter of Alexandria on the south side of the northeast pillar stands out.³⁵ Encountered by the priest during the Great Entrance as he brought the prepared gifts from the prothesis to the altar for consecration, it is a didactic image reminding him that these are not mere bread and wine but the incorruptible body of Christ. Peter in his dual role as celebrant and martyr becomes a metaphor for Christ, understood, based on the last phrase in the *Cherubikos Hymnos*, as the one who at once sacrifices and is sacrificed.³⁶

It is essential to emphasize that the participation of the ruler in the Great Entrance is attested in both *De ceremoniis* (tenth century)³⁷ and a passage from Pseudo-Kodinos's *De officiis* (fourteenth century).³⁸

Mimesis

These questions regarding the significance of the *Cherubikos Hymnos* for the founder as well as for invoking the latter's presence or absence have already been addressed in the case of Markov Monastery. The monastery, founded near Skopje by the Serbian king Vukašin (r. 1365-71) is dedicated to St Demetrios.³⁹ A procession painted on the south and north walls and consisting

31 Barkov and Vishnevskaya, 'Cat. 104', p. 502.

32 Next to John is a representation of Archbishop Photios with a Greek inscription. Photios, who was from Monemvasia, was unexpectedly appointed Metropolitan of Kiev in September 1408. He held this powerful position until 1431. Cecily Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art and Diplomacy in Age of Decline* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 288-330.

33 Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, pp. 31-32, 345-48.

34 Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, p. 162.

35 Babić *Les chapelles annexes*, p. 136; Archimandrite Silas Koukiaris, 'The Depiction of the Vision of Saint Peter of Alexandria in the Sanctuary of Byzantine Churches', *Zograf*, 35 (2011), 63-71; Prolović, *Resava*, pp. 237-40.

36 This phrase was introduced in the twelfth century: Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, pp. 40-41.

37 Taft, *The Great Entrance*, pp. 195-97. Book I, chapter I qualifies that the patricians stood on either side of

the solea during the procession, and the emperor passes between them. The deacon with the gifts met the emperor and his entourage at a point in the centre of the church, just behind the ambo. For the reconstruction of the procession: Mathews, *The Early Churches*, pp. 161-62.

38 Mathews, *The Early Churches*, pp. 142-47; Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual*, p. 31; Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: *Offices and Ceremonies*, ed. and trans. by Ruth Macrides, Dimiter Angelov and Joseph Munitiz, Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs, 15 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 226-31 (p. 230): 'The emperor leads the entire Entrance. All the axe-bearing Varangians and young armed noblemen, about a hundred in number, follow along with him on both sides. Immediately after the emperor come the deacons and priests carrying other holy vessels. Going around the nave, according to the custom, they come to the solea. All the others stand outside; only the emperor traverses the solea

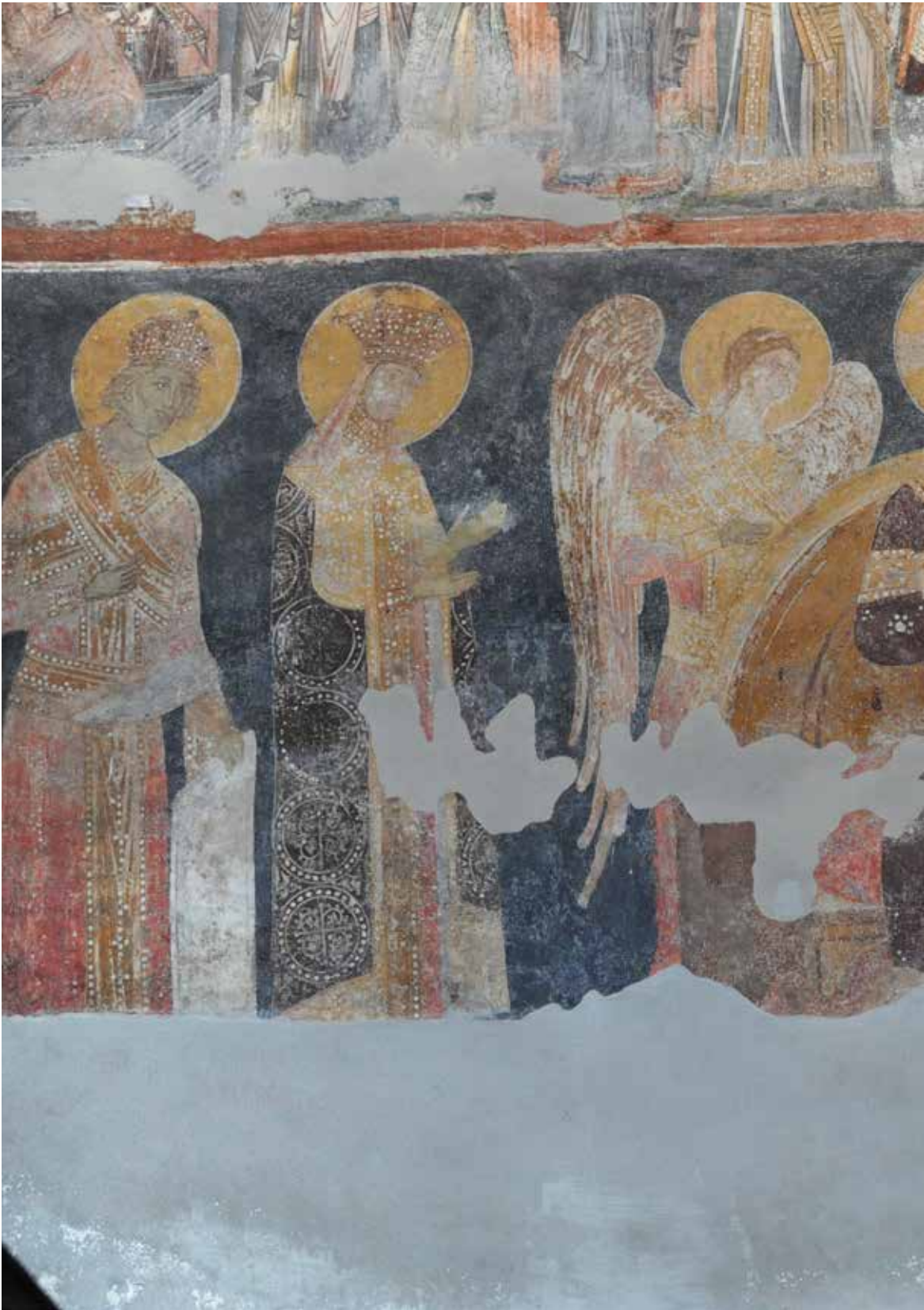
of laypeople, holy martyrs, warriors, the prophet David, and members of the royal family – King Vukašin, his wife, and King Marko⁴⁰ – terminates in a composition on the lowest register of the north wall, directly adjacent to the iconostasis; there, Christ is seated on a throne, wearing the *kamelaukion* and the *loros* (Fig. 2). The flanking angels and the wheels of fire at Christ's feet represent the heavenly powers. The winged St John Prodromos turns towards Christ. On the other side of Christ, the Theotokos appears as a queen, crowned, yet clad in the priestly robe. The identification of the textual source for the Royal Deesis has been a subject of scholarly debate.⁴¹ The two images – Christ as priest and Christ as emperor – operate in tandem, the former as a mimetic counterpart to ecclesiastical ritual and the latter as an anagogical evocation of heavenly realities.⁴² Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis on the imagery's interaction with the rite of the Great Entrance in this part of the church. The depiction correlates to the Great Entrance celebrated by Christ the Archpriest, a subject illustrated within the central apse.⁴³ The Royal Deesis specifically evokes the presence of the eschatological Christ and the liturgical theme of the *Cherubikos Hymnos*, which is sung during the Great Entrance and praises the eternal kingdom of Christ.⁴⁴ Ida Sinkević has pointed out that in Markov Monastery the missing link in the procession on the south wall – namely in front of the royal door – could have

and meets the patriarch who is standing at the Holy Door'. The axe-bearing Varangians guarded the doors of the emperor's room in the palace and accompanied the emperor to monasteries and churches on certain feasts. On the parallel between the emperor surrounded by the Varangians in the Great Entrance and the sentence 'We are about to receive the king of all invisibly escorted by the angelic host', see: Macrides, Angelov and Munitz, *Pseudo-Kodinos*, p. 231, n. 666.

- 39 Cvetan Grozdanov, 'Sur l'Iconographie des fresques du Monastère de Marko', *Zograf*, 11 (1980), 82-93; Saska Bogevska, 'Les peintures murales du monastère de Marko: un programme iconographique au service de la propagande royale', in *La culture des commanditaires*, ed. by Quitterie Cazes, Florence Journot and Christiane Prigent (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2011), pp. 1-21; Ida Sinkević, 'Prolegomena for a Study of Royal Entrances in Byzantine Churches: The Case of Marko's Monastery', in *Approaches to Byzantine Architecture and its Decoration. Studies in Honor of Slobodan Ćurčić*, ed. by Mark J. Johnson, Robert Ousterhout and Amy Papalexandrou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 121-42 (pp. 130-38). The paintings were completed under Vukašin's son, King Marko (r. 1371-95), in 1376/77. Tomić Đurić, 'To Picture and to Perform (I)', 123-42; Tomić Đurić, 'To Picture and to Perform (II)', pp. 129-50; Marka Tomić Đurić, *Фреске Марковог манастира*. Београд: Балканолошки институт САНУ, Архиепископија охридска и Митрополија скопска (Belgrade: Institute for Byzantine Studies, 2019).
- 40 On the representations of the donors on the south door as well as on the north wall of the naos: Zaga A. Gavrilović, 'The Portrait of King Marko at Markov Manastir (1376-1381)', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*,

16 (1990), 415-28; Branislav Cvetković, 'Sovereign Portraits at Mark's Monastery Revisited', *Ikon*, 5 (2012), 185-98.

- 41 For descriptions and diverse interpretations of the scene, with comparisons and earlier bibliography: Bogevska, 'Les peintures murales', pp. 1-21; Sinkević, 'Prolegomena', pp. 121-42; Konstantinos Vapheides, 'Sacerdotium and Regnum in Late Byzantium: Some Notes on the Imperial Deesis', *American Journal of Arts and Design*, 2/4 (2017), 79-83; Anes Kriza, 'The Royal Deesis – An Anti-Latin Image of Late Byzantine Art', in *Cross-Cultural Interaction between Byzantium and the West 1204-1669: Whose Mediterranean is it anyway?*, ed. by Angeliki Lymberopoulou (London: Routledge, 2018), pp. 272-90; Konstantinos Vapheides, 'Sacerdotium and Imperium in Late Byzantine Art', *Niš & Byzantium*, 18 (2020), 55-87. It is important to note that the significance of the scene depends on the iconographical context and the specific rendition, among many variables.
- 42 Woodfin, 'Orthodox Liturgical Textiles', pp. 40-41.
- 43 Tomić Đurić, 'To Picture and to Perform (II)', pp. 129-38, fig. 4.
- 44 Simeon Thessalonicensis Archiepiscopus, *De Sacra Liturgia*, *Patrologia Graeca* 155, col. 340; Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual*, pp. 22-23. Interpretation as Great Entrance: Grozdanov, 'Sur l'Iconographie', pp. 82-93; Cvetan Grozdanov, 'Hristos car, Bogorodica carica, nebesnite sili i svetite vojni vo živopisot od XIV i XV vek vo Treskovec', *Kulturno nasledstvo*, 12-13 (1985-1986), pp. 5-20; Cvetan Grozdanov, 'Isus Hristos car and carevima u živopisu Ohridske arhiepiskopije od XV do XVII veka', *Zograf*, 27 (1998-1999), 151-60; Vojislav J. Đurić, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslawien* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 1976), pp. 80-83; Woodfin, 'Orthodox Liturgical Textiles',



◆ Fig. 2

The royal Deesis, mural painting, 1376-1377.

Markov Manastir, Katholikon, north wall of the naos.

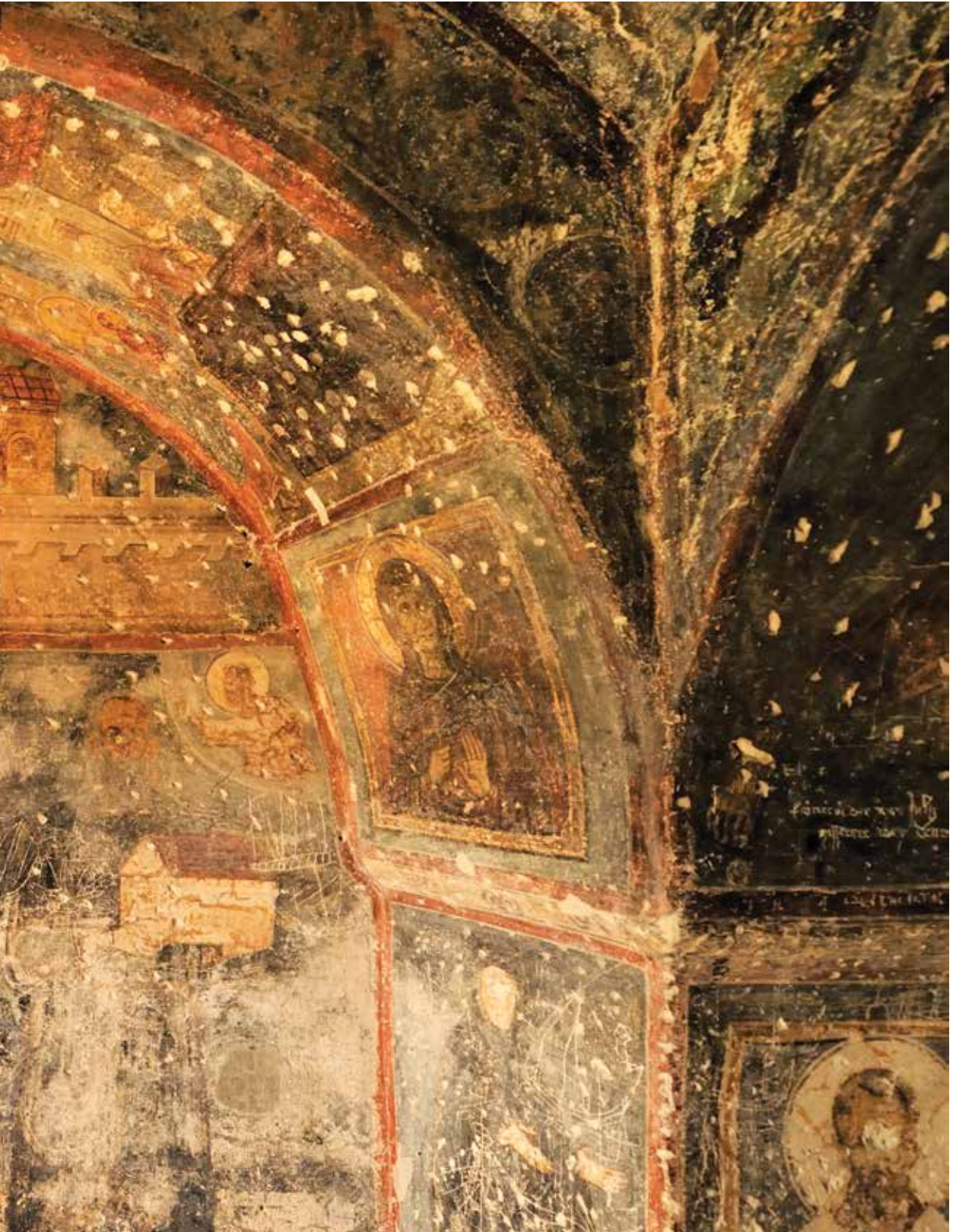
STAGING FOR COMMEMORATION





◆ Fig. 3

Nikolaus Panteugenos with his wife Irene Mentoni and her son; nuns, saints, and Mariological episodes, before 1317. Kalamoti, Panagia Agrelopoussiana, north wall of the naos (Photo: Manuela Studer-Karlen).



been filled by King Marko himself upon his entrance into the church, with the ruler thus acting as a living icon and completing the programme of the lowest register of the naos.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the portrait of the king on the north wall, processing towards the altar with the choir of saints as attested by Pseudo-Kodinos, projected the image of a perfect ruler, whose salvation should be pleaded for in the *Cherubikos Hymnos*. Through mimesis, the image at once facilitates permanent commemoration of the donor and reflects the reality of his participation in the ritual. The frescoes of Markov Monastery thus reveal a subtle and fluid relationship among ritual, its spatial framework, and the spoken word.

Appearing on the southern gate of the church are painted portraits of King Vukašin and St Mark standing to either side of the monastery's patron, St Demetrius. They are positioned beneath an arch that is covered with various saints in a dense symbolic structure.⁴⁶ Through iconographic analysis, Cvetković concluded that the image of King Mark holding a trumpet must be taken as an allusion to Joshua and his conquering of Jericho, and Vukašin's raised hand as a symbol of his identity as the New Moses.⁴⁷ Although the original architectural structure of the south gate is no longer known, it is crucial that the original font for the blessing of the waters, dating to 1393, was discovered here.⁴⁸ This indicates that the building may have hosted special services, chief among them the commemoration of the deceased founders.⁴⁹

Diaklysmos for Commemoration

A similar strategy is also found in the narthex of the Panagia Agrelopoussiana in Kalamoti on the island of Chios. The inscription in the church delimits the paintings to between 1295 and 1317 and mentions two members of the local aristocracy: Nikolaos Panteugenos, who was *anagnostes* and *nomikos*, and his wife Irene Mentoni.⁵⁰ In the northern niche within the narthex, three donors are depicted standing, all facing the viewer (Fig. 3). The rightmost figure is an elderly man, probably Nikolaos Panteugenos himself, who stands holding the model of a single-nave church with a gabled roof and no narthex. This *ktetor* has long grey hair and a grey

p. 40; Vapheides, 'Sacerdotium and Regnum', p. 81; Vapheides, 'Sacerdotium and Imperium', pp. 70-71. For the interpretation as Little Entrance: Rafca Youssef Nasr, 'Priestly Ornaments and the Priesthood of the Mother of God', *Chronos*, 40 (2019), 119-34 (pp. 123-24). Since the *Cherubikos Hymnos* is only sung in the Great Entrance, this interpretation is more likely, especially with regard to the donors. On the south wall of the diakonikon, St Spyridon holds a *rotulus* on which the text of the *Cherubikos Hymnos* is written.

45 Sinkević, 'Prolegomena', pp. 157-58.

46 Cvetković, 'Sovereign Portraits', pp. 186-90, figs. 5-6. At the summit, there is the Virgin of the Passion with the Archangel Gabriel holding the instruments of the Passion. Above the portrait of King Mark, the busts of the Prophet David, St Stephen the Protomartyr, and St Catherine are

chosen as protectors of the ruler. On the other side, busts of the Prophet Solomon and St Anastasia Pharmakolytria are depicted.

47 Cvetković, 'Sovereign Portraits', p. 190.

48 Olivea Kandić, 'Fonts for the Blessing of the Waters in Serbian Medieval Churches', *Zograf*, 27 (1998/99), 61-78 (p. 73, fig. 24).

49 Cvetković, 'Sovereign Portraits', pp. 192-93.

50 For an interpretation of the inscription: Olga Vassi, 'Η κτητορική επιγραφή της Παναγίας 'Αγρελωπούσσινας' στη Χίο', *ΔΧΑΕ*, 27 (2006), 463-70 (pp. 468-70); Olga Vassi, 'Ο παλαιολόγειος ναός της Παναγίας Αγρελωπούσσινας στη Χίο: η μνημειακή Ζωγραφική', *ΔΧΑΕ*, 39 (2018), 311-28 (pp. 325-27). From 1304 on, Chios was – with a short Byzantine intermezzo from 1329 and 1346 – under the rule of the rich Zaccaria family from Genoa.

beard and is dressed in a black tunic. Above his left shoulder, the blessing Christ, shown in half-length, appears from a bright segment of sky to receive the endowment.⁵¹ The central figure is another man, but younger, who outstretches his arms towards Christ. He has light-brown, parted hair and a short beard. He wears a long-sleeved, white tunic under a belted red tunic that falls over his black shoes. On the left, a woman, likewise raising her hands in prayer towards Christ, completes the group of three. Her name can still be deciphered over her right shoulder: Irene Mentoni.⁵² In keeping with the customs of dress for aristocratic ladies, she wears a wide, white tunic and a red cloak, the latter fixed at her chest with a golden, round brooch. Irene's brown hair falls to her shoulders and is partially covered with a yellow and white, turban-like headdress.⁵³ The presence of three donor figures, while only two names are given in the donation inscription, is enigmatic. The young man between the two donors could be a close relative of the couple, possibly even their son.⁵⁴ The visual treatment of the donors in the decorative programme suggests that they were buried here.⁵⁵

In the opposite niche, as a counterpart to the ruling family, St Constantine and St Helena are portrayed in imperial regalia flanking the Cross.⁵⁶ They are accompanied by a hymnographer⁵⁷ and St Onouphrios. The iconography of the narthex pays homage to the Theotokos: in addition to a detailed Mariological cycle, particularly noteworthy are the prefigurations of the Theotokos in the east niche, the details of which suggest an association with a liturgical rite (Fig. 4).⁵⁸ The Old Testament theophany, adapted to the liturgy, emphasizes the presence of the figures who prophesized the Messianic arrival. Moreover, many scenes would have had a special meaning within the context of the funeral service: the prefigurations of the Virgin were echoed in the hymns that were sung throughout the funeral service.⁵⁹ The western door is framed by St Zosimas and St Mary of Egypt. On the one hand, the latter's picture refers to the intercessory role of the Theotokos as evoked in the narrative of the life of Mary of Egypt, who could only enter the church of the Holy Sepulchre after an icon of Our Lady had been adored.⁶⁰ On the other hand, her inclusion here, together with the depiction of the Philoxenia of Abraham in the lunette above the west door, conveys significant monastic meaning: these two subjects are often featured in the narthex, where they had a eucharistic function, in particular related to the

51 Charalambos Bouras, 'Μία βυζαντινή βασιλική εν Χίω', *Νέον Αθήναιον*, 3 (1958/60), 129-50 (p. 136).

52 Bouras, 'Μία βυζαντινή βασιλική', pp. 135-36, fig. 7.

53 Maria G. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images. Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th-15th centuries)* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 74, 77-78, figs. 85-86.

54 Vassi 'Η κτητορική', pp. 466-67. The depiction of children between the donor couple occurs frequently in Byzantine art.

55 Vassi, 'Ο παλαιολόγειος', p. 319.

56 Constantine wears a crossed *loros* and the semicircular crown of the Palaeologian (*Kamelaukion*). Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality*, pp. 29-30, figs. 31-32. The parallel between the holy emperors and the rulers is a known topos; see, for example, the naos of Markov Monastery, where the royal family is represented on the north wall, while the west wall displays the figures of St Constantine and St Helena. Sinkević, 'Prolegomena', p. 135.

On these constellations in the Georgian churches: Antony Eastmond, *Royal Imagery in the Medieval Kingdom of Georgia 786-1213* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), p. 212.

57 Though there is no inscription and the figure is badly conserved, the iconographic context with the Mariological typologies speaks in favour of identifying this figure as a hymnographer.

58 Vassi, 'Ο παλαιολόγειος', pp. 323-24; Manuela Studer-Karlen, 'Les typologies mariales dans l'art paléologue', *Byzantina*, 36 (2019), 103-66 (pp. 151-53, fig. 12).

59 *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church*, ed. by Isabel Florence Hapgood (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1975), pp. 379, 382-83, 385; Robert Ousterhout, 'Temporal Structuring in the Chora Parekklesion', *Gesta*, 34/1, 1995, 63-74 (pp. 70-72).

60 There are several versions of her *vita*, the longest and most detailed of which came from Sophronios of Jerusalem from the years 634-38. Sophronii



◆ Fig. 4
Paraklesis, Ezechiel, and Christ Anapeson,
mural painting, before 1317. Kalamoti,
Panagia Agrelopoussiana, east wall
(Photo: Manuela Studer-Karlen).

diaklysmos.⁶¹ Various *typika* specify that the monks took part in a *diaklysmos* in the narthex after the Divine Liturgy, gathering together to await the summons to the *trapeza*;⁶² although no consistent information can be found across the *typika*, we know that the *diaklysmos* was a common feature of monastic ceremony.⁶³ Concerning the spatial and liturgical organization at Kalamoti, the placement of the two eucharistic scenes just mentioned – Philoxenia and St Mary of Egypt – next to the exit door relates to the fact that during the meal in this space, for which St Mary's communion served as an exemplum, the monks waited for the bell to ring before departing the refectory through this door, after the liturgy had ended.⁶⁴ An interesting occurrence of the *diaklysmos* is to be found in the Pantokrator *typikon* and can be applied to Kalamoti, where unfortunately no *typikon* has been preserved. The Pantokrator *typikon* states that the ritual of the *diaklysmos* is an occasion for commemorating the ruling family and the donors.⁶⁵ We can therefore assume that at Kalamoti, during the *diaklysmos* held in the narthex, prayers were said for the reigning family, the members of which are portrayed, stately and pious, in the northern niche (Fig. 3). At the bottom of the four corner pillars, nuns and monks are depicted, their gestures leading the ruling family to salvation – that is, towards the eastern niche. Here, the clerics are certainly the initiators of the foundation. The triple image of the Theotokos on the east wall, beside the door, emphasizes her role as intercessor, which the ruling family also called upon (Fig. 4).⁶⁶ The door is flanked by the Theotokos Paraklesis, shown almost in profile, standing on a suppedaneum with an open scroll in her right hand, and by Christ, who stands on a red cushion with an open book (John 8:2) in his left hand and his right hand raised in blessing.⁶⁷ Images with an explicit protective function next to passages tended to convey blessing and intercession.⁶⁸

Patriarchae Hierosolymitani, Βίος Μαρίας Αἰγυπτίας, τῆς ἀπὸ ἐταυρίδων ἀσκησάσης κατὰ τὴν ἔρημον τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, *Patrologia Graeca* 87/3, cols 3697-713.

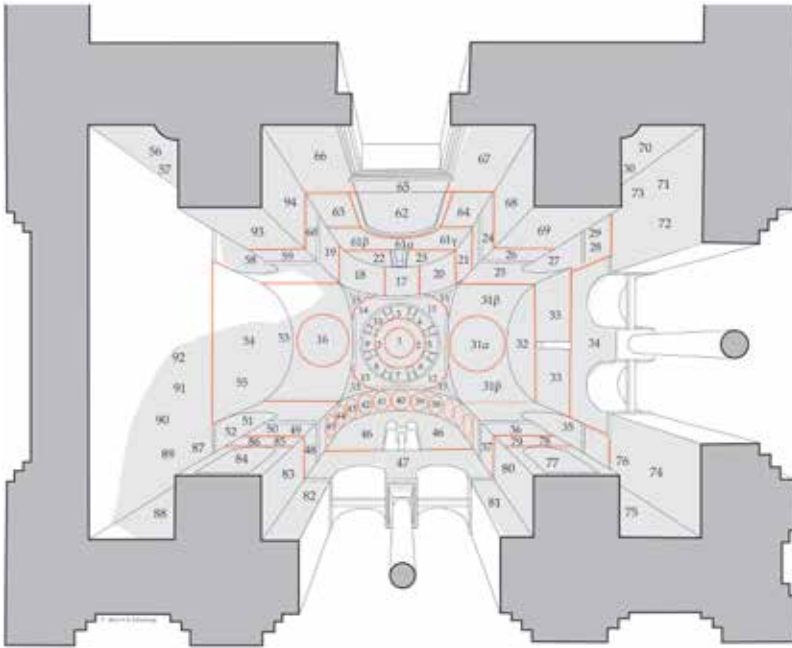
Benedicta Ward, *Harlots of the desert: a study of repentance in early monastic sources* (London:

A.R. Mowbray, 1987), pp. 35-56.

- 61 On the different possible functions of the narthex: Mathews, *The Early Churches*, pp. 138-52; Florence Bache, 'La fonction funéraire du narthex dans les églises byzantines du XII^e au XIV^e siècle', *Histoire de l'Art*, 7 (1989), 25-33; Georgi Gerov, 'The Narthex as Desert: The Symbolism of the Entrance Space in Orthodox Church Buildings', in *Ritual and Art. Byzantine Essays for Christopher Walter*, ed. by Pamela Armstrong (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 144-59; Vasileios Marinis, 'Defining Liturgical Space', pp. 294-95.
- 62 Stephan, *Ein byzantinisches Bildensemble*, pp. 173-75; Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual*, pp. 22-23. This ritual is found in a number of eleventh- and twelfth-century *typika*, see: Paul Gautier, 'Le typikon du Christ Saveur Pantocrator', *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 32 (1974), 1-145 (p. 88, n. 5); Nicholl, 'A Contribution', pp. 287-89.
- 63 For a discussion of the diversity in terms of occasion and context: Nicholl, 'A Contribution', pp. 289-94.
- 64 Tomeković has already attributed a eucharistic meaning to the *diaklysmos*, associating it with the iconography in some narthexes and assuming a relationship between the spatial organization and the community gathering in the narthex for a meal.

Svetlana Tomeković, 'Contribution à l'étude du programme du narthex des églises monastiques (XI^e-première moitié du XIII^e s.)', *Byzantion*, 58 (1988), 140-54 (pp. 147-49).

- 65 Gautier, 'Le typikon', p. 89. The commemorations in this specific *typikon* include the monks and laity, who stand in for the staff and patients of the hospital. On the commemoration connected to the *diaklysmos*: Constantin Andronikof, *Le cycle pascal. Le sens des fêtes* (Paris: Édition du Cerf, 1985), pp. 154-56; Stephan, *Ein byzantinisches Bildensemble*, p. 175; Nicholl, 'A contribution', pp. 285-308.
- 66 The Theotokos Paraklesis, the Theotokos as a bust portrait and the Theotokos in the composition with Ezechiel.
- 67 Ivan M. Djordjević and Miodrag Marković, 'On the Dialogue Relationship between the Virgin and Christ in East Christian Art. Apropos of the Discovery of the Figures of the Virgin Mediatrix and Christ in the Naos of Lesnovo', *Zograf*, 28 (2000/01), 13-48. The example in Kalamoti is not mentioned. See for this: Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, pp. 178-92.
- 68 Lydie Hadermann-Misguich, 'Images et Passages. Leurs relations dans quelques églises byzantines d'après 843', in *Le Temps des Anges. Recueil d'études sur la peinture byzantine du 12^e siècle, ses antécédents, son rayonnement*, ed. by Brigitte D'Hainaut-Zveny and Catherine Vanderheyde (Brussels: Société pour le progrès des études philologiques et historiques, 2005), pp. 219-34; Kalopissi-Verti, 'The



◆ Fig. 5
 Lesnovo, church of the Archangels (1349), narthex. Plan with the indications of the scenes. 18-21, 37, 60: Prefigurations of the Old Testament; 22: St Anna; 23: St Joachim; 25, 26, 28, 29, 31-36, 73: Depictions of the psalms; 53: Christ; 54: Stefan Uroš IV. Dušan; 55: Jelena; 56-59: Scenes related to the baptism; 61: Christ Anapeson, Gabriel and the Theotokos; 62: Archangel Michel. (Drawing: Georgios Foustieris).





◆ Fig. 6
Christ Anapeson, mural painting, 1349. Lesnovo, church of the Archangels, narthex (Photo: Manuela Studer-Karlen).

◆ Fig. 7
The royal family and the donor's family, mural painting, 1349. Lesnovo, church of the Archangels, narthex, north wall (Photo: Manuela Studer-Karlen).



The Paraklesis is combined with the Anapeson image, depicted above the door leading from the narthex to the naos, and the prefigurations of the Theotokos. These images imply specific supplications that would have been uttered before passing through the door.⁶⁹ Above the standing Theotokos and adjacent to Christ Anapeson, the Mother of God as intercessor is represented as a bust portrait with outstretched arms. The subjects presented here also reflect the nuances of the daily Vespers service: as sources attest, immediately following the readings from the Old Testament, which are visualized by the prefigurations, a solemn procession (*lite*) took place through the naos into the narthex while *troparia* were sung.⁷⁰ As already mentioned, a long *ektenie* was recited in this part of the church, in which the Theotokos was beseeched to intercede for all mankind and which was related to a commemoration of certain persons as prescribed in the *typikon*. Intercession and commemoration were invoked especially for the ruling family, the members of which directly follow the Paraklesis in the gesture of prayer within the Kalamoti programme. Also relevant is the function of the narthex in the burial of members of the monastic community, including the donors, as well as in the commemoration of the burial of Christ.

A similar composition is known from the narthex of the church of the Archangels in Lesnovo, dating to 1349 (Fig. 5).⁷¹ Significant to that programme is the accentuation of the role of the Theotokos in the Incarnation as well as an emphasis on the baptismal rites. The individual images were actualized here through both prayers spoken and hymns sung. The Theotokos, who was venerated with the Old Testament prefigurations at the entrance, was called to intercede, and certain persons mentioned in the *typikon* were commemorated.⁷² The Theotokos Paraklesis and Christ Pantokrator flank the entrance, while in the lunette above is represented the archangel Michael and the Anapeson (Fig. 6).⁷³ The texts spoken in this space underscored particularly the eucharistic function of the Theotokos. This is probably one reason why the Theotokos is shown in a specific, actively eucharistic role, beside Christ Anapeson. She holds in her hand a eucharistic instrument, the *rhipidon*.⁷⁴ The thematic complexity of the wall paintings relates to the colossal compositions on the north wall showing Tsar Uroš IV Dušan and his wife Jelena and – below, reflecting their inferior status – the *ktetor* Jovan Oliver and his family (Fig. 7).⁷⁵ The iconography visualizes the Divine Liturgy, and thus it is ritual that connects these impressive donor portraits to the salvific and eschatological character of the larger programme.

Proskynetaria', pp. 123–31, figs. 21–33; Matthew Savage, 'The Interrelationship of Text, Imagery and Architectural Space in Byzantium. The Example of the Entrance Vestibule of Zica Monastery (Serbia)', in *Die Kulturhistorische Bedeutung byzantinischer Epigramme*, ed. by Wolfram Hörandner and Andreas Rhoby (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaft, 2008), pp. 101–12.

69 Studer-Karlen, 'Le programme', pp. 116–18.

70 Pallas, *Die Passion*, pp. 120–21; Babić, *Les chappelles annexes*, p. 42; Bache, 'La fonction funéraire', p. 29; Kalopissi-Verti, 'The Proskynetaria', pp. 29–30.

71 Smiljka Gabelić, *Manastir Lesnovo. Istorija i slikarstvo* (Belgrade: Stubovi kulture, 1998), pp. 15–22.

72 Gabelić, *Manastir Lesnovo*, pp. 172–81; Studer-Karlen, 'Les Typologies', pp. 147–49.

73 Todić, 'Anapeson', pp. 138, 140–41, 145, 147, 154; Gabelić, *Manastir Lesnovo*, pp. 178–79, 280, fig. 98; Djordjević and Marković, 'On the Dialogue Relationship', pp. 13–17, 30–35, figs. 1–6; Studer-Karlen, 'Le programme', p. 116; Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, pp. 145–54.

74 There are only two parallel examples of this. One is in the Transfiguration Church in Zrze (1368/69), and the other on the epigonation in Patmos (end of the fourteenth century). Todić, 'Anapeson', p. 147; Studer-Karlen, *Christus Anapeson*, pp. 74–81 (also for the relevant texts).

75 On the portraits in Lesnovo, see: Gabelić, *Manastir Lesnovo*, pp. 167–69, figs. 78, XL–XLII; Branislav Cvetković, 'Christianity and Royalty: The Touch of the Holy', *Byzantion*, 72/2 (2002), 347–64; Cvetković, 'The Royal Imagery', pp. 184–85, fig. 53.

In the south arm of the narthex, the illustration of the final three psalms in at least thirteen compositions speaks to the funerary function of the space.⁷⁶ The corollary to this is the north arm, which features imagery of Christ's baptism, a short cycle concerning John the Baptist, and, in the vault, the vision of Ezekiel, all reflecting the baptismal rites that took place there.⁷⁷ Christ's baptism, highlighting John Prodromos as the herald of Christ and the first witness to the Incarnation, references salvation. The *typika* specify that baptismal rites were performed in the narthex and that baptism, as symbolic of new life, held great significance for the founder.⁷⁸ Indeed, a baptismal font is located near the portraits on the north wall.⁷⁹ This symbolic correlation among image, baptismal rite, and donor could already be established in the eventual building in front of the southern gate of Markov Monastery.

It can also be assumed that in the narthex of the church of the Archangels in Lesnovo the memory of the ruling family – namely that of Uroš IV Dušan (Fig. 7) – was ever present in the *Cherubikos Hymnos* sung during the daily liturgy. At Kalamoti, the same applies to Nikolaos Panteugenos's family (Fig. 3). The donor, by means of placing his image near that depicting the ruling family, guarantees his own inclusion in the commemorations as part of the hymn. The donor in Lesnovo, Jovan Oliver, and likewise the clergy in Kalamoti, not only wanted to clarify the vassal relationship, but they also wished that the expansion in the prayers and commemorations is legitimized by the image.

Royal and Secular Images

The relationship staged between royal and secular portraits is furthermore relevant to Georgian churches starting in the late eleventh century.⁸⁰ What is remarkable is that – as at Kalamoti and

76 Gunter Paulus Schiemenz, 'Die Hermeneia und die letzten Psalmen. Gibt es eine spezifische Athos-Kunst?', in *Byzantinische Malerei. Bildprogramme – Ikonographie – Stil*, ed. by Guntram Koch (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2000), pp. 275–92; Ivana Jevtić, 'Le nouvel ordre du monde ou l'image du cosmos à Lesnovo', in *The Material and the Ideal. Essays in Medieval Art and Archaeology in Honor of Jean-Michel Spieser*, ed. by Anthony Cutler and Arietta Papaconstantinou (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 129–49; Gunter Paulus Schiemenz, 'A New Look at the Narthex Paintings at Lesnovo', *Byzantion*, 82 (2012), 347–96. The following Psalm verses are visualized: Psalm 148(149):1–2, 5, 9–10, 11–12; 149(150):1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8; 150(151):1–2, 3–4, 5.

77 Tomeković, 'Contribution', pp. 147–48; Svetlana Tomeković, 'Place des Saints Ermites et Moines dans le décor de l'église byzantine', in *Liturgie, Conversion et Vie Monastique*, ed. by Alessandro Pistoia and Achille Maria Triacca (Rome: Edizioni Liturgiche, 1988), pp. 307–31 (pp. 322–23); Marinis, 'Defining Liturgical Space', pp. 294–95, 299; Studer-Karlen, 'Les Typologies', p. 138.

78 Zaga A. Gavrilović, 'Kingship and Baptism in the Iconography of Dečani and Lesnovo', in *Studies in Byzantine and Serbian Medieval Art*, ed. by Zaga A. Gavrilović (London: Pindar Press, 2001),

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79 Slobodan Ćurčić, 'The Original Baptismal Font of Gračanica and Its Iconographic Setting', *Recueil du Musée National Belgrade*, 9/10 (1979), 313–32 (pp. 313–24); Kandić, 'Fonts for the Blessing of the Waters', pp. 61–78; Gavrilović, 'Kingship and Baptism', pp. 125–45; Jelena Bogdanović, *The Framing of Sacred Spaces: The Canopy and the Byzantine Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 380–85; Studer-Karlen, 'Les typologies', pp. 137–38.

80 'Secular' is used here as a synonym for 'non-royal'. Eastmond, *Royal Imagery*; Zaza Skhirladze, 'History in Images: Donor Figures in Medieval Georgian Art', in *Cultural Interactions in Medieval Georgia*, ed. by Michele Bacci, Thomas Kaffenberger and Manuela



◆ Fig. 8

The Staging of the patrons, mural painting, second half of the fourteenth or sixteenth century. Zarzma, church of the Transfiguration, north wall (Photo: Manuela Studer-Karlen).

STAGING FOR COMMEMORATION



Lesnovo – in almost every church in which a royal portrait can be found, the donor images provide evidence that the imagery was in fact commissioned or paid for by a non-royal donor.⁸¹ The question of what role these royal images played in the process of worship in the church is informed by the fact that each new ruler was taken into the sanctuary for his coronation and, in addition, that his supposed descent from the royal house of David gave him a holy status.⁸² An even more obvious explanation is that the image of the royal family echoed the daily commemorations in the *Cherubikos Hymnos*, which was an important part of the Georgian Orthodox liturgy as well.⁸³ St Euthymios the Athonite (955/60-1028) and St George the Athonite (1009-65), the long-time *higoumenoi* of Iviron Monastery, translated numerous liturgical texts from Greek into Georgian.⁸⁴ Iviron became an important centre of Byzantine-Georgian cultural interaction and of the dissemination of texts in Georgian. The far-reaching influence of the work of St Euthymios and the other learned Georgian monks who were based at Mount Athos during the tenth and eleventh centuries led Georgia to adopt the liturgical calendar of Constantinople rather than that of Jerusalem.⁸⁵

Meanwhile, the seculars register their own integration into the rite with their presence both in the visual programme and in the prayers. They thereby sought to ensure their continuous commemoration and thus their salvation. Indeed, a persistent feature of the painting programmes of Georgian churches is that the royal and secular figures are shown engaged in a procession on different walls, with the most important individuals often appearing on the northern wall – opposite the entrance door.⁸⁶ Thus, the donors on the north wall in the church of the Transfiguration in Zarzma (second half of the fourteenth century) not only fulfil political and propagandistic functions, centring in particular on the depiction of the victorious Joshua above the entrance of the prothesis,⁸⁷ but also visualize the rite of the *Cherubikos Hymnos*. For Zarzma, it is all the more significant that the new founders of the sixteenth century – the members of the Khurtsidze family – updated this area of the church in order to guarantee that they would be the ones to benefit from the commemorations uttered therein (Fig. 8).⁸⁸

Studer-Karlen (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2018), pp. 58-67. Representatives of every social stratum were portrayed: Skhirladze, 'History in Images', p. 64.

81 Eastmond, *Royal Imagery*, pp. 4, 187-88.

82 Eastmond, *Royal Imagery*, pp. 198, 239-44.

83 The *Cherubikos Hymnos* is mentioned in the manuscript Sinai, cod. Georg. 89 from the eleventh century. André Jacob, 'Une version géorgienne inédite de la Liturgie de Saint Jean Chrysostome', *Le Muséon*, 77 (1964), 65-119. The indication is on p. 100.

84 Michael Tarkhishvili, *Geschichte der kirchlichen georgischen Literatur* (Rome: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1955), pp. 149-52, 166-69.

85 For an explanation of the different aspects of the phenomenon, with bibliography: Stephen H. Rapp, 'Caucasia and Byzantine Culture', in *Byzantine Culture. Papers from the Conference 'Byzantine Days of Istanbul'*, ed. by Dean Sakel (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2014), pp. 217-34 (pp. 231-34); Irene Giviashvili, 'Liturgy and Architecture. Constantinopolitan Rite and Changes in the

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86 Eastmond, *Royal Imagery*, pp. 200-02; Skhirladze, 'History in Images', pp. 59, 65.

87 Manuela Studer-Karlen, 'The Monastery of the Transfiguration in Zarzma. At the Intersection of Biblical Narration and Liturgical Relevance', in *Georgia as a Bridge between Cultures. Dynamics of Artistic Exchange*, ed. by Manuela Studer-Karlen, Natalia Chitishvili and Thomas Kaffenberger, *Convivium supplementum* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), pp. 138-67 (pp. 148-54, fig. 2).

88 The new patrons had the murals repainted, with respect for the original themes except for the addition of two new Mariological episodes and the renewal of the composition on the north wall; it was therefore a conscious decision.

Conclusion

The portraits discussed in this paper depict acts of donation and thus record the piety, philanthropy, and generosity of the royal family and the donors. The juxtaposition of certain images and the inclusion of particular saints and scenes were means of enhancing the portrayal of rulers, for example by characterizing and explaining, often in novel ways that extend beyond the political aspects of the portrait, the nature of the ruler's power. In sacred space, the choice and positioning of iconographies are of the utmost importance with regard to activating the real function of the images in that space – namely their ritual function. Here, of course, the commemorations played a crucial role, as is also evident in the *typika*. These entries, as well as the standardization of the commemorations as part of the *Cherubikos Hymnos*, correlate to the rulers depicted. In the fourteenth century, Pseudo-Kodinos's description attests that the ruler played an active role in the Great Entrance. The physical staging of the sovereign in sacred space thus becomes, above all, a visual prayer and a mimetic touchstone for his continuous commemoration in the rite. This offered a guarantee of salvation, extending the original intention of the foundation itself.

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