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EN TOYTΩ NIKA: BRICKWORK AND NARRATIVE IN CONSTANTINOPOLITAN ARCHITECTURE DURING THE PERIOD OF PALAIOLOGOI

In Byzantium a technical sphere can be found and recognized as highly connected with iconism of signs (fig. 1), sophistication of the space sacredness, architecture as visual narrative and iconic vision.¹ Byzantine written sources up to the end of 14th century allow us to distinguish craftsmen engaged in brick and tile production, *plinthourgia*², *cuparii* or *scamni* at the end of 14th century. They produced brick in so called oxido – reduction atmosphere. The heating and cooling cycle of the bricks was 150 – 200 hours.³ Utilisation and thermal analysis and dilatometry of brick showed that bricks from several Constantinopolitan monasteries were fired at temperatures from 800 – 900 degrees.⁴ These are experimental results of technical brick analysis which possibly can help us to clarify how the medieval brick resisted the most severe climatic conditions and have secured high static resistance of church. Brick appeared in Constantinopolitan architecture during the construction of the monuments such as one of the most remarkable structures of Land Walls (fig. 2) between 408th and 413th year. The inner, great wall - μέγα τεῖχος is faced with carefully cut limestone blocks, while its core is filled with mortar made of lime and crushed bricks.⁵ Be-

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¹ R. Ousterhout, *The Memory of Jerusalem: Text, Architecture and the Craft of Thought*, Jerusalem as Narrative Space: Erzählraum Jerusalem, ed. by Annette Hoffmann, Gerhard Wolf, Leiden – Boston, Brill 2012, 130 – 154.

² S. Novaković, *Matije Vlastara Sintagmat, azbučni Zbornik vizantijskih crkvenih i državnih zakona i pravila*, Beograd 1907, 490.

³ D. Roller, *Dubrovački zanati u XV i XVI stoljeću*, Zagreb 1951, 123 – 126.

⁴ For results obtained by differential thermal analysis of a bricks sample from medieval churches in Serbia compare: *Bricks from Serbian medieval monasteries*, ed. M. Ristić, S. M. Ćirković, V. R. Korać, Beograd 1989, 80, 81.

⁵ A. Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople: The Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites*, London: John Murray ed., 1899, 51, 53.



Fig. 1 Brick ornaments, left: ornament on the north wall of St. Panteleimon church in Gorno Nerezi; right: ornament on the north register of the apse of Virgin Peribleptos church in Ohrid, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 1. Орнаменти изведени опеком, лево: орнамент на јужном зиду цркве Св. Пантелејмона, Горно Нерези; десно: орнамент на северном регистру апсиде цркве Богородице Перивлепта у Охриду: фото: Ј. С. Ћирић



tween seven and eleven bands of brick, traverse the structure, not only as a form of decoration, but also strengthening the cohesion of the structure by bonding the stone façade with the mortar core, and increasing endurance to earthquakes.⁶ This was an important architectural achievement, testimony of architectural polychromy made by earthly materials. The importance of earth and ground inside and outside the walls was used for fruit and vegetable gardens, probably

used in allusive creation of Paradeisos Garden.⁷ This earth-use can still be seen outside the Theodosian walls, which is now managed as city greenway-buffers.⁸

⁶ M. Phillippides - W. K. Hanak, *The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. Historiography, topography and Military Studies*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd 2011, 302 – 304 (with bibliography).

⁷ H. Maguire, *Paradise Withdrawn*, Byzantine Garden Culture, ed. A. Littlewood, H. Maguire, J. Wolsche – Bulmahn, Washington D. C., Dumbarton Oaks 2002, 23 – 35; *Ibid.*, *Nectar and Illusion Nature in Byzantine Art and Literature*, Oxford university Press, Oxford 2012, 66, 118.

⁸ J. Ljungkvist - S. Barthel - G. Finnveden - S. Sorlin, *The urban Anthropocene: Lessons for Sustainability from the Environmental History of Constantinople*, *The Urban Mind: Cultural and Environmental Dynamics*, ed. P. J.J. Sinclair, G. Nordquist, F. Herschend, C. Isendahl, African and Comparative Archaeology Department of Archaeology and Ancient History Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden 2010, 367 – 390.

On the other side, the ekphraseis of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople eloquently pictured how the poets could turn materials – brick and marble – into flesh, skin and stilness of the motion. An exercise of imagination should help us re-create the impression made upon Byzantine beholder of true living flesh, skin and body of the church columns, exaedras and walls.⁹

A cliché found in almost every modern work on the Byzantine Empire is that the Palaiologan period was time of decline in all domains except arts and culture, which, paradoxically, flourished and revived during the same period. Among contemporary Byzantines perhaps no one exemplifies this paradox better than Theodore Metochites (1270 – 1332) (fig.3).¹⁰ *Byzantios*, his oration in praise of Constantinople deserves to be treated as an important piece of evidence for the context in which late Byzantine architecture was conceived. The message of *Byzantios* is the providential greatness of Constantinople as noble, highly beneficent city. As for the buildings, words cannot describe or number them.¹¹ Temples are like stars in the heaven, reservoirs of faith or safe heavens



Fig. 2 Land Walls, Constantinople, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 2. Зидине, Цариград, фото: Ј.С. Ћирић

⁹ R. Macrides – P. Magdalino, *The architecture of ekphrasis: construction and context of Paul the Silentiary's poem on Hagia Sophia*, BMGS 12 (1988), 47–82;

¹⁰ P. Magdalino, *Theodore Metochites, The Chora, Constantinople*, Kariye Camii Yeniden/ The Kariye Camii Reconsidered, ed. H. A. Klein, R. G. Ousterhout, B. Pitarakis, Istanbul Arastirmalari Enstitüsü, Istanbul 2011, 169 – 214; A. Voudouri, *Ο Βυζάντιος λόγος του Θεόδωρου Μετοχίτη και η προγενέστερη παράδοση των εκτενών αυτοτελών εγκωμίων πόλεων / The Byzantios logos of Theodore Metochites and the tradition of the lengthy independent city-praises*, Ημερίδα επιστημονικού διαλόγου για τη Βυζαντινή Λογοτεχνία του ηλεκτρονικού περιοδικού Παρεκβολαί, 14-12-2012, Φιλοσοφική Σχολή Αθηνών, 2012, Parekbolai: An electronic Journal for Byzantine Literature 4 (2014), forthcoming.

¹¹ *Byzantios*, ed. I. Pougounia, London 2006; A. Rhoby, *Theodoros Metochites' Byzantios and Other City Encomia of the 13th and 14th Centuries*, Villes de toute beauté: L'Ekphrasies des cites dans les literatures Byzantine et Byzantino – Slaves, ACTES du colloque international, Prague, 25-26 novembre 2011 organisé par l'Institut d'études Slaves de l'Académie des Sciences de la République Tchèque et le Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales édités



Fig. 3 Portrait of Theodore Metochites with model of the church; carved crosses in marble jambs, west entrance of the nave, Chora church photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 3: Портрет Теодора Метохита са моделом храма; урезани крстови на мермерним доворотницима, портал између наоса и припрате, фото: Ј.С. Ћирић



in the sea of life. Not only visual effects created were thus transmitted to the eyes as visual ekphraseis, but also materials: “arranged, ordered in accordance with all harmony, fitted together in both alternating and interlacing fashion”.¹² Visual narrative resists the evidentiary sequential models of written narrative. The complex visual structures trouble the linear logic of written text, and have often left modern interpreters frustrated in their lack of allegiance to those texts. Narrative is not only written, it can be spoken as well and the impact of this duality is keenly felt in Byzantine narrative imagery. It is the practice or art of narration or story-telling.¹³ In examining images in performative spaces enlivened

par Paolo Odorico et Charis Messis, Paris 2012, 81 – 99.

¹² M. Featherstone, *Metochites Poems and the Chora*, Kariye Camii Yeniden/ The Kariye Camii Reconsidered, ed. H. A. Klein, R. G. Ousterhout, B. Pitarakis, Istanbul Arastirmalari Enstitüsü, Istanbul 2011, 225.

¹³ I. Jevtić, *Narration or Visual Story-telling in Late Byzantine painting (1261 – 1453)*, lecture held at BFA Visual & Critical Studies Department NYC, 29th October 2013; Eadem, „Being inside a book?“ *Some thoughts about Narrative Expression in Palaeologan Monumental Painting*, Symposium on Visual Culture of Byzantium, Getty Foundation-Pera Museum, Istanbul 2012 [forthcoming publication].

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Fig. 4 Brick ornamentation, Constantinopolitan examples, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 4. Орнаменти изведени опеком, неколико цариградских примера, фото: Ј.С. Ћирић



Fig. 5 Swastika ornament executed in brick, South church of Constantine Lips monastery, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 5. Мотив свастике изведен опеком, апсида јужне цркве манастира Константина Липса у Цариграду, фото: Ј.С. Ћирић

of physicality and space encircling will be reinserted into the understanding of Byzantine visual narrative of „Ev τούτω νικά“¹⁴. Similar sublime thought appears in *Nikaeus*, where Metochites developed encomiastic ekphraseis of the walls structured in principles of regularity of arrangement.¹⁴ Ekphrastic elements proved to be *par excellence* evidences for understanding of blurred meanings of the exterior of the wall. The transmission of these words to material should be understood as a picture of both rhetoric and visual.¹⁵

In Constantinopolitan architecture during the period of Palaiologoi brick was used extensively as main material for creating of optic illusion (fig.4). Brick as product of dry exaltation of earth in Platon's *Timaeus* was recognized as the element with energy of Creation. The *Timaeus* makes conjectures on the composition of the four elements. The element of earth would be a cube, and of fire a tetrahedron a polyhedron composed of four triangular faces, three of which meet at each vertex¹⁶ the same as executed at several late Byzantine

idea of interpretation of the walls in Byzantine sacred space during the “Istanbul Through the Ages“ full scholarship summer programme, 1st – 28th July 2012.

¹⁴ M. Featherstone, *Metochites Poems*, 179 – 181.

¹⁵ L. James, ‘And Shall These Mute Stones Speak?’ Text as Art, Art and Text in Byzantine Culture, ed. L. James, Cambridge 2007, 188-206; A. Harris, *Narrative*, Studies in Iconography: Medieval Art Today: Critical Terms, Vol 33 (2012), 47 – 60.

¹⁶ “Of each of these kinds which I must endeavor to explain to you in an exposition of an unusual type; yet, inasmuch as you have some acquaintance with the technical method which I must necessarily employ in my exposition, you will follow me. In the first place, then, it is plain I presume to everyone that fire and earth and water and air are solid bodies; and the form of a body, in every case, possesses depth also. Further, it is absolutely necessary that depth should be bounded by a plane surface; and the rectilinear plane is composed of triangles.” *Plato in Twelve Volumes, Vol. 9* transl. by W.R.M. Lamb. London 1925, *Timaeus*, 53c.



Fig. 6 Tekfur Sarayı front facade, detail of the Railing of Paradise motif, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 6. Текфур Сарај, прочеље, мотив Рајске ограде, фото: Ј. С. Ћирић

ings are described as fiery: “*For our God is a consuming fire*” (Hebr. 12: 29).²⁰

Earth seems to pervade brick and animates it; brick seems to be traversed (outspreed) by an invisible stream which *transfigures* and ensouls the epidermis of wall. Fire is a mode of being uplifted to God because “*the power of fire causes a lifting up to the godlike*”.²¹

Regarding brickwork compositions preserved at main examples of last phase of Constantinopolitan architecture (south church of Constantine Lips; Pantokrator Monastery; Christ in Chora Monastery; Pammakaristos parekklesion; the Palace of the Porphyrogenitus / Tekfur Sarayı), art historians followed the convention and used term “aniconic” to designate the nature of the wall exterior articulation: system of semiotic signifiers disguised as non-representational, non-figural representations of crosses or vegetal patterns but imbued

¹⁷ M.L. Rautman, *The Church of the Holy Apostles in Thessaloniki: a Study in Early Palaeologian Architecture*, UMI 8417210, Ann Arbor MI, 1984, 281sq ; J. S. Ćirić, *Décryptage du mur : l'Arbre de Vie dans l'architecture byzantine tardive*, Collection of Works „Spaces of Memory: Art, Architecture and Heritage“, ed. A. Kadijević, Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade 2012, 19 - 31.

¹⁸ R. Nelson, *Emphatic Vision: Looking at and with a performative Byzantine Miniature*, AH 30 / 4 (2007), 489 – 502.

¹⁹ C. Mango – J. Parker, *A Twelfth-century Description of St. Sophia*, DOP 14 (1960), 237.

²⁰ *The Celestial Hierarchy* 15.2, 329C; 15.7, 336C.

²¹ *The Celestial Hierarchy* 13.4, 305A.

apses: Constantine Lips Monastery in Constantinople, Hagia Theodora in Arta, Holy Apostles and Prophet Elijah in Thessaloniki.¹⁷ Theories of vision like those formulated by *Ti-maeus*, refer that brick is the product of fire. In the same time brickwork exists as “fire” of the eye, that is meets the shining of the fire coming from the object seen, which results in a visual stream.¹⁸

It must be stressed that such a kind of vision blurs the distinction between subject and object; it unifies seen and seer.¹⁹ Fire is immanence; it is why the heavenly be-

Fig. 7 Interior cornice with cross-swastika motif in south church of Constantine Lips monastery; right: St. Sophia, floor cornice detail, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 7. Унутрашњи кордон венац са исклесаним мотивом свастике, првобитно у јужној цркви манастира Константина Липса, данас у Археолошком музеју; десно: венац уз патос цркве Свете Софије, Цариград, фото: Ј.С. Ћирић



with symbolic meanings (fig. 5).²² Narrative voice of these patterns (zigzags, dog – tooth friezes, meanders, chess fields, various whirling discs, Tree of Life motives and heraldic signs such as patterns based on swastika and “Byzantine heart”) plays substantial role in late Byzantine architecture: the entire surface of the façade as sacred skin and substance of the church turns into a kind of tapestry.²³ The ornamentation of the façade is characterized by stacking bricks with which the entire surface of the façade turns into a kind of tapestry. Brick structures the meaning of visual communication and directs the viewer to understand what is seen in a particular way.²⁴ It is my assumption that, although it exceeds by far the temporal span of Byzantine Art History, the apse of Palaeologan churches profoundly reflects the Byzantine spiritual thoughts.²⁵ Apsē is a part of a vaster ornamentation that completely covers the exterior walls. One example of narrative marker of the apse is a motif symbolizing the Railing of Paradise, formed by criss-cross ornament. Symptomatically, that ornament was carried out at the apse of the south church of Constantine Lips also at the

²² J. S. Ćirić, *West facade of Holy Archangels church in Štip: Economy of the wall*, PATRIMONIUM. MK Year 5, N°10 (2012), 139 – 148.

²³ Eadem, *Les emblèmes sur l’abside de l’église de Lesnovo*, Zograf 35 (2012), 189 – 197.

²⁴ Eadem, *Optic desires: toward better understanding of wall arrangement at the late 13th century Byzantine Architecture*, Before and After the Fall of Constantinople The Center and Peripheries of Byzantine World in the Turbulent Times Before and After the Conquests of Constantinople in 1204 and 1453, ed. V. Stanković (forthcoming).

²⁵ The problem of exterior decoration of the apse in byzantine architecture is almost completely excluded from broader analyses and interpretations of space and ritual. By so far study of Sheron Gerstel is the only one dedicated to the problem of painting in this compartment of the church. S. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary*, Seattle – London, Washington University Press 1999 [with bibliography].

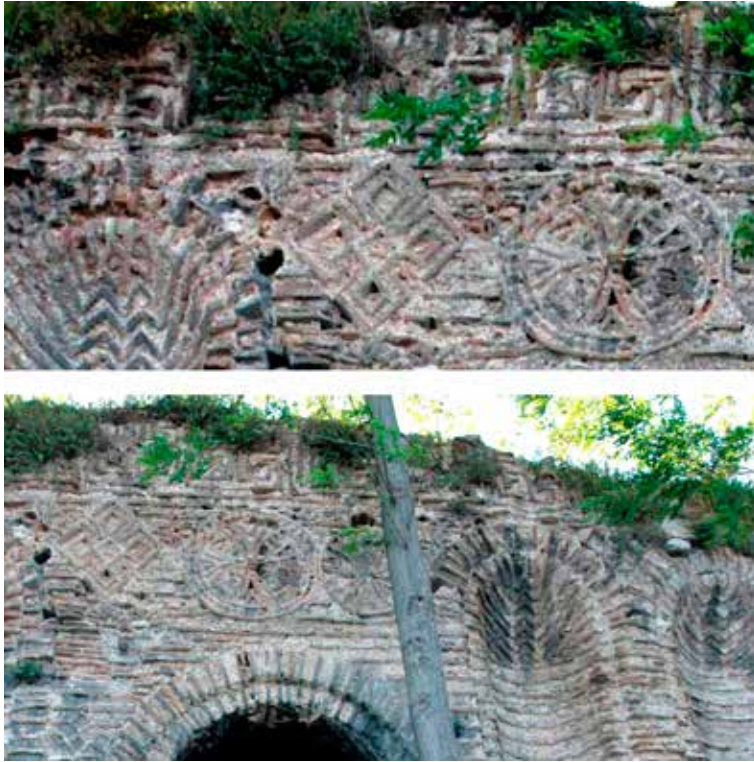


Fig. 7a Marmara Sea Wall, Constantinople, photo: Tolga Ersoy

Сл. 7a. Јужни зид према Мраморном мору, фото: Толга Ерсој

apse of Pantepoptes Church and the front facade of Tekfur Sarayi in Constantinople (fig. 6). These ornaments represented various attributes of the Divine, whose presence they announced to the faithful before they even ventured into the church. ‘Aniconic’ imagery of facade was developed over the centuries culminating in the richly decorated churches during the Palaiologan period.²⁶ Part of this imagery is also the meander, a motif of equally antique origin but incomparably more commonly present in Byzantine art.²⁷ Although investigation along meanders should certainly be further pursued,²⁸ it seems that of swastika at upper register motif at central apse of Constantine Lips (fig.5) appear to offers powerful stimulus for rather different optics. Like a vast membrane, the eastern facade of the church reveals on its exterior surface the hidden mystery performed behind the altar.²⁹ It creates illusion that the wall is transparent; it

²⁶ J. S. Ćirić, *Décryptage de mur*, 19.

²⁷ Extensive bibliography on the motif and its symbolism from Antiquity to the Renaissance is given by E. Thomas, *Monumentality and the Roman Empire*, 320 (n.12). For this motif in Late Byzantine architecture cf. J. S. Ćirić, “*Writing in Light*”: *Same as Different at the West Façade of St. Sophia Church in Ohrid*, *Srpski jezik, književnost, umetnost* 3, prir. V. Kanački, S. Pajić, Kragujevac 2013, 295-304.

²⁸ C. Wright, *The Maze and the Warrior: Symbols in Architecture, Theology, and Music*, Harvard University Press, London 2004.

²⁹ N. Isar, *Le mur aboli: Le sacrement de la Parole dans les absides des églises moldaves*, *Byzantinoslavica* 60.2 (1999), 611 – 632.



Fig. 8. Swastika, above Deesis mosaic and south vault of narthex of Chora church, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 8. Мотив свастике изнад Деизиса и у јужном своду припрате цркве Христа Хоре, Цариград, фото: Ј.С. Ћирић



Fig. 9. Prophet Elias church in Thessaloniki, painted cross-swastika and details in brick, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 9. Црква Св. Пророка Илије у Солуну, сликани мотив свастике и исти детаљ изведен опеком, фото: Ј. С. Ћирић



Fig. 10. Brick ornaments, the apse of Paregoretissa church in Arta, photo: Rémi Terryn
Орнаменти изведени опеком, апсида цркве Богородице Паригоритисе у Арти, фото: Реми Теран



Fig. 11 Labyrinth motif, Chora pareklesion, Anastasis and detail of labyrinth in the dome of pareklesion, photo: J. S. Ćirić



Сл. 11. Силазак у Ад и детаљ мотива лавиринта у параклису цркве Христа Хоре, Цариград, фото: Ј. С. Ћирић

is a paradoxical vision which gives rise to the effect of the walls having been de-materialised. The membrane-like wall falls down around the church like a curtain, draping the body of the edifice, like a new skin. As Gregory of Nyssa stated, sense perception is a means of reaching the spiritual or as written in Ps 18: 29: “In your strength I can crush an army with my God I can scale any wall”.³⁰ That motif relies on the same imagery as on the carved cornice above the floor of Hagia Sophia and interior cornice of south church of Constantine Lips (fig.7), the image of the Ocean – mosaic at Āin Témouchent Setif in the northeastern province of Algeria,³¹ brickwork at Eskihisar, near Gebze on the Sea of Marmara Walls (fig. 7a), which might have belonged to the Christ Philantropos Monastery at the Mangana and north side of Vefa Killise Mosque in Constantinople.³² It appears as a motif running above the Deesis mosaic in the inner narthex and south vault of Constantinopolitan Chora church (fig. 8). Cross-swastikas also appear on the apse dome and on the left side of the west door of the late 14th-century church of the Prophet Elias in Thessaloniki (fig.

³⁰ Gregory of Nyssa, *De Sancto Theodoro*, trans. Leemans et al., Let us Die That We May Live, 86.

³¹ K. M. D. Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roamn North Africa*, Oxford 1978, 151– 152, table 143; H. Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion: Nature in Byzantine Art and Literature*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012, 20, 26.

³² I want to express my most sincerest gratitude to Mr Tolga Ersoy, doctoral candidate at Mimar Sinan University - Istanbul for providing me photos of brick ornaments executed at Marmara see walls in Istanbul.

Fig. 12 “T mouldings”, comparison, screen of south gallery in Hagia Sophia and north nave entrance in Chora church, Constantinople, photo: J. S. Ćirić

Сл. 12. Упоредни приказ тзв. „Т“ моделовање пролаза на јужној галерији цркве Свете Софије и северног портала између наоса и припрате цркве Христа Хоре, Цариград, фото: Ј. С. Ћирић



9), which was probably an imperial foundation, in a position where one would expect to find the founder's monograms. In Thessaloniki the same imagery is found at the west façade of Agia Ekatherini church. Apart from the apse façades of Constantinopolitan and Thessaloniki churches, in the architecture of the period in question, this type of meander also appears in the center of the north and south wall of Theotokos Zahumska Church in Ohrid (Macedonia) while on the churches of Theotokos Peribleptos and Hagia Sophia in Ohrid appears on the apse.³³ The same brickwork is found on the lateral walls of the Church of Hagios Nicholas, Hagios Demetrios at Varoš (Prilep) ca 1298th. On a similar position it is found at the apse, north and south side of the church of Agios Nikolaos of Rhodia, northern part of the apse of Paregoretissa (fig. 10), apse of Kato Panaghia, Merbaka church and south side of Aghia Theodori church in Arta.³⁴ What is of significance here is the mechanism of understanding: the constitutive system of these ornamental phenomena which like a labyrinth encircled both interior and exterior of church in its organic, Divine attributes. The most perfect form of the Late Byzantine church labyrinth possesses a double – retrograding rhythm, turning and returning. Similarly, Christ's journey from Heaven to Hades and back involved a recursive progress, a miraculous reversal, as medieval theologians often emphasized (fig.11). Since, Gregory of Nyssa imagined an

³³ I. Zarov, *Arhitekturata na manastirskata crkva Sv. Bogorodica Perivlepta vo kontekst na tendenciite na vizantiskata arhitektura od XIII – XIV vek*, PATRIMONIVM. MK III (2010), 160 - 169.

³⁴ J. S. Ćirić, *Brick substance at Zaum in Ohrid*, PATRIMONIUM.MK Year 6, №11(2013) – 99 - 109. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Mr Rémi Terryn, research fellow at Onassis Foundation and doctoral candidate at EPHE Paris, who provided me photo of Paregoritissa church in Arta and lots of constructive comments on research conducting of several late Byzantine apses in Arta, Kastoria and Veria.

army following in step beyond its general, the Redeemer, as it marches out of the labyrinth,³⁵ this sign of swastika is metaphorical armor to be worn by the observer or pilgrim. Christ wrote on the earthly material, wrote with his finger on the ground like in the Bible verse John 1:14: “And the word became flesh and dwelt among us.” It is a skin, Christ’s bodily substance. Dressed in Christ’s armor, Christian continues his pilgrimage: the perception of that act intensified with the approaching than with the entering through the doors into the interior of the church. The flesh of Christ therefore if composed of brick and marble, consists of earthly substances which clothe both Church and believers.³⁶

In context of mentioning entrances and facades, it is worth to mention our recent discovering from Chora. Metochites in his hands holds a model of church with carved crosses on the sides of doors executed with gold tesserae, as an allusion to Golden Gate (fig. 2).³⁷ Depicted portal, as powerful optic device in the center of founder’s model, represents portal with real carved crosses in marble jambs, between narthex and naos of the church, the same as carved in the west entrance of Saint Catherine catholicon at Sinai.³⁸ Most likely, crosses were used to mark places where a procession would stop for prayer.³⁹ Hypothetically this portal is modeled as possible appropriation of the south gallery entrance doors of the Great Church Doors, since details of T mouldings of the carving of the screens are almost the same (fig. 12).⁴⁰ Incorporation of selective replicating idea through the idea of passage additionally could prove dialogical context between Chora, Great church, its founders and their ‘writing’ into the centre of contemporary imperial/religious symbolism or ideology. Again that is a reference to heuristic of adaptation⁴¹ and entering in the secret spaces and

³⁵ Gregoire de Nysse, *La cathese du foi*, Paris 1978, 90.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ On architectural depiction in Byzantine painting cf. Ć. Marinković, *Founder’s model: Representation of maquette or the church*, Zbornik radova Vizantoloskog instituta 44 (2007), 145 – 153; Eadem, *Image of a completed church: The representation of architecture in founder’s portraits in Serbian and Byzantine art*, Belgrade 2007.

³⁸ G. Filotheou, *The God Trodden Mount Sinai Holy Monastery (Saint Catherine)*, Egeria: Mediterranean Medieval Places of Pilgrimage Network for the Documentation, Preservation and Enhancement of Monuments in the Euromediterranean Area, ed. M. Kazakou, V. Skoulas [et al.], [Athens] : Directorate of Byzantine and Post Byzantine Antiquities, [2008], 77 – 78.

³⁹ S. Bojanin, *Krst u seoskom ataru - sakralna topografija i njena društvena funkcija u parohiji srednjovekovne Srbije*, Istorijski časopis 56 (2008), 311-352.

⁴⁰ Ø. Hjort, *The Sculpture of Kariye Camii*, DOP 33 (1979), 202 – 204; R. J. Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia: Architecture, Liturgy, Structure*, Thames & Hudson, London 1988, 223, fig. 246; *Kalenderhane in Istanbul. The buildings*, eds. C. L. Striker, Y. D. Kuban, 103; cf. Ø. Hjort, *The Sculpture of Kariye Camii*, 200-289, pl 22 (St. Sophia), 202 – 223, figs 1.2. Kariye Camii. For the same molding found at early Christian stelas in Archaeologica Museum in Istanbul cf. *Antiquités paléochrétiennes et Byzantines: Collections du Musée d’art et d’histoire*, eds. M. Martiniani – Reber, M. A. Haldimann, J. Chamay, M. Campagnolo-Pothitou et al., Musées d’art et d’histoire, Genève – Milan, 2011, 133; *Die Welt von Byzanz: Europas östliches Erbe*, ed. L. Wamser, Stuttgart, Theiss 2004, 350, № 773.

⁴¹ R. S. Nelson, *The Chora and the Great Church: Intervisuality in Fourteenth – Century Constantinople*, BMGS 23 (1999), 67 – 101, especially 71.

church Mystery: μετεμορφώθη and transubstantiation μετουσίωσις in eucharistic manner.⁴² Through these intervisual devices one entered the womb, the church as Incarnation of the Word - Logos and its spreading through the teachings of the Church. With the passing into the interior of the building and coinia one was transferred into a different sphere, oriented towards accentuating *movement*, a dynamic interplay realized by directions of distribution of labyrinth and similar motifs, expressed with polichromatic masonry both in brick and veined marble.⁴³ The whole space of the church is lasting vision of a skin of incarnated body with curving paths and dancing lines which enchant the brick and all earthly materials.⁴⁴ Bound together by the regenerative power of the fire and the earth, that is, Christ “*with eyes like flame of fire*”, beholder is penetrating into the Wisdom, in the space of community as Land of the Living - Χώρα των ζώντων and Logos contained within the Virgin.⁴⁵ That is elaborated in King David’s words: “*I will please the Lord in the land of the living*” [Ps 116, 9]. Also, Athanasius of Alexandria in his Homily on Psalm 114 mentioned: “*you have come to Mount Zion, to the Land of the Living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem*” [Hebr. 12, 22 – 24]. The flesh of Christ therefore if composed of brick and marble, consists of earthly substances which clothe both church founder and believers.⁴⁶ This valorization spans from the concept of the creation - where the body is considered also as representing the image of God - to a representation of future life in which the body will participate, taking in the concept of the human being as indissolubly composed of a soul and a body. The exceptional value conferred on the body is undoubtedly linked to what constitutes the very keystone of Christianity: that is to say, the Incarnation.

Architecture during the Palaiologan dynasty thus facilitated not only choral notion and observer’s perception of art than the universality of the messages displayed on the façade: symbolic imagery to communicate hope and a warning to Christians who have grown apathetic and an encouragement to those who are faithfully enduring the struggles in this world. The spatial and narrative shifts of the ornaments play, invited a transformation of the identity of the spectator from viewer to participant, more specifically from viewer of narrative, violence, and body in the nave to participant in liturgy, reconciliation, and spirit in the apse. Thus, brick ornaments viscerally confirmed the universal Christian message, marching in and out of the labyrinth transformed with visible earthly substance in sacred skin. The entire repertoire of such architectural expression was the product of further practical elaboration of the fundamental idea of the Christ’s skin incarnated in the temple; both the late Byzantine builder and be-

⁴² V. Marinis, *Structure, Agency, Ritual, and the Byzantine Church*, The Architecture of the Sacred, eds. B. Wescoat and R. Ousterhout, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 338-364.

⁴³ J. Chrysostomos, *Homilia II Oratio in crucem et in confessionem latronis, recitata in Sancta et Magna Parasceve, et quod oporteat pro inimicis*, PG XLIX, 408 – 409.

⁴⁴ P. Ide, *Le Corps à cœur, essai sur le corps humain*, Editions Saint-Paul, Versailles 2006, 198-224.

⁴⁵ L. M. Peltomaa, *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos Hymn*, Leiden-Boston 2001 (with references).

⁴⁶ J. Claude Larshet, *Théologie du corps*, Cerf, Paris 2009.

holder thus became “lamplighters“ of a sort, quite like Gregory of Naziansus wrote: “The earth and its surroundings are poised in the middle, and that the motion of all the revolving bodies is round this fixed and solid center, then, I say, there is an absolute necessity that, whatever may happen to each one of the atoms on the upper side of the earth, the same will happen on the opposite side“.⁴⁷ That is “Εἰς τοῦτω νίκα“ late Byzantine visual theological context which resonates with divine perfection of façade both exterior and interior as truly immensed skin. Episodic structure of the wall frames provides performative interaction within Late Byzantine spatial organization. Still, future explorations of these exterior ornaments as performative surfaces, “thingness”⁴⁸ that flicker and appear to move in brick, reveal a pronounced relationship based on the visual impact and its placement, moved from the lateral to the “draped” as main frame of late Byzantine architectural narrative.

Јасмина С. Ћирић

„У ОВОМ ЗНАКУ ЋЕШ ПОБЕДИТИ“: ОПЕКА И НАРАТИВ У АРХИТЕКТУРИ ЗА
ВРЕМЕ ПАЛЕОЛОГА

У архитектури за време династије Палеолога опека је употребљавана као један од носилаца садејства визуелног наратива сакралне грађевине. Имајући у виду сачуване грађевине из позне епохе византијске архитектуре (јужна црква манастира Константина Липса, црква Христа Хоре, црква Богородице Памакаристос, црква Св. Теодора, Текфур Сарај) у тексту је указано на могуће начине тумачења орнамената изведених опеком. Ослањајући се на писане изворе настале пре и за време епохе Палеолога, закључено је да је екстеријер храма описан као икономија, домострој, отелотворење коже и тела Христовог. Истовремено су разматрана и оптичка начела, као и трансформација орнамената мултипликованих на фасади који додатно указују на универзалну хришћанску поруку „У овом знаку ћеш победити“.

⁴⁷ *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2, Vol. 5, ed. P. Schaff, Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 826.

⁴⁸ On “thingness” and transformative effect in art: M. Heidegger, *The Origin of the Work of Art*, Poetry, Language, Thought, trans. Albert Hofstadter, New York: Harper & Row, 1971, 86.