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DEESIS IN THE WALL PAINTINGS OF MACEDONIA IN THE 12TH–13TH CENTURIES: ICONOGRAPHIC ASPECTS AND DEVELOPMENT[2]

Abstract: Monumental decoration of many churches in Macedonia in the 13th and 14th Centuries includes three-morph Deesis in the central nave close to the altar space. This tradition appeared in the Northern Balkans at the end of the 12th century, developed into established form in the course of the 13th Century and became constant iconographic element of the central nave decoration of Macedonian churches, both small provincial and royal. By the second half of the 14th century it developed into complicated iconography of the Royal Deesis. This article deals with the origins, emergence and further development of the three-morph Deesis composition in the naos and its connection with other images in monumental programs in Macedonia in the 12th–13th centuries while its further development in the 14th century is studied in the connected article «Deesis in the Wall Paintings of Macedonia during the Period of Serbian Rule: Iconographic Aspects and Development» by Elena Nemykina[3].

Keywords: Byzantine painting, Macedonia, iconography, wall paintings, Deisis, Paraklesis

Deesis is commonly referred to as a composition of Christ in the center with the Virgin and St John the Forerunner in a three-quarters turn with hands raised in a gesture of prayer[4].The genesis and iconographic aspects of Deesis have been studied extensively in scientific literature, but mostly in connection

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[3]   E. Nemykina, *Deesis in the Wall Paintings of Macedonia during the Period of Serbian Rule: Iconographic Aspects and Development*, in this volume.

[4]   Ch. Walter, *Two Notes on the Deesis*, REB 26 (1968) 312.

Fig.1. Christ. Fragment of the frescoin the St. George's church, Kurbinovo. 1191. Photo by the author.

Сл.1. Христ. Фрагмент живописа цркве Светог Ђорђа, Курбиново. 1191. Фотографија аутора.

with the iconography of icons and templon decoration[5]. Deesis in church monumental painting in Greek territories has been studied by M. Kazamia-Tsernou[6], but she did not extend her research to the Balkan territories outside Greece. It is interesting to note that even though Deesis is known from Early Byzantine

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[5]   The bibliography on Deesis is extensive and among the most significant works are: Ch. Walter, *op.cit.*, 311–324; M. Chatzidakis, *L'évolution de l'icône aux 11e–13e siècles et la transformation du templon*, Actes du XVe Congrès International d'Etudes Byzantines 1, Athènes 1979, 333–366; A. Epstein, *The Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier: Templon or Iconostasis?*, Journal of the British Archaeological Association 134 (1981) 1–28; A. Cutler, *Under the Sign of the Deesis: on the question of representativeness in medieval art and literature*, DOP 41 (1987) 145–154.

[6]   Μ. Καζαμία-Τσέρνου, *Ιστορώντας τη Δέηση στις βυζαντινές εκκλησίες της Ελλάδος*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2005.

Fig.2. Virgin and John the Forerunner. Fragment of the fresco in the St. George's church, Kurbinovo. 1191. Photo by the author.

Сл.2. Богородице и Јован Претеча. Фрагмент фреске у цркви Светог Ђорђа, Курбиново. 1191. Фотографија аутора.

times (mostly in the sanctuary apse)[7], the majority of Deesis compositions are found in the churches dated to the 13th century or later. Most of them are small provincial churches built by local donors. The increase in popularity of this composition can be explained by its eschatological and mediation meaning and the wish of the donors to have visual image of the intercession of the Virgin and John the Forerunner for their souls during the Last Judgment or earthly life. However, since the place of Deesis in the monumental programs as well as particular iconography varies their interpretation is also very wide: from traditional eschatological to imperial and liturgical[8]. As far as Macedonia is concerned, Kazamia-Tsernou does not identify any local tradition, but only notes that in Northern Greece Deesis composition are often placed on the northern side of the naos[9]. Deesis in the Byzantine churches of Macedonia is referred to in monographic works dedicated to particular monuments, but so far this local

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[7]   The most important examples appear in the Early Byzantine period (e.g., Transfiguration church in St. Catherine monastery, Sinai). All the examples of Deesis in the Middle Byzantine period, except for the church of Panagia tou Arakou in Lagoudera, Cyprus, appear in simple, small provincial churches built presumably on the orders of local donors, rather than on imperial or aristocratic order, therefore most likely bearing predominantly funeral themes (Μ. Καζαμία-Τσέρνου, *op. cit.*, 55-159).

[8]   Μ. Καζαμία-Τσέρνου, *op. cit.*, 256-258.

[9]   Μ. Καζαμία-Τσέρνου, *op. cit.*, 246-284, 359-364.

Fig.3. St. George. Fragment of the fresco in the St. George's church, Kurbinovo. 1191. Photo by the author.

Сл.3. Свети Ђорђе. Фрагмент фреске у цркви Светог Ђорђа, Курбиново. 1191. Фотографија аутора.

tradition has not been studied as such. In this article we attempt to identify and study this local trend on the wider territory of Ohrid Archbishopric in connection with other works of Byzantine art of the 12th–13th century.

In the Middle Byzantine period in Ohrid Archbishopric we can see several examples of Deesis and its elements in different parts of churches[10]. Since Deesis as an abstract symbolic composition has very wide meaning, touching on very popular themes of intercession and mediation, it was broadly used in different forms and iconographies[11]. We shall focus on the origins and develop-

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[10] For example, in St Sophia church in Ohrid (ca. 1052-1056) a Deesis flanked by two angels is placed on the arch above the conch (V. J. *Đurić, Vizantijske freske u Jugoslaviji, Beograd 1974, 9-11*); in Assumption church in Labovo, Alabania, three-morph Deesis is located on the gallery of the western bay, dated to the middle of the 11thcentury (A. Zakharova, *Some Observations on the Church of the Dormition in Labovo (Albania) and its Murals*, Deltion of Christian Archaeological Society 41 (2020) 157-172). In the church of Agios Nikolaos tou Kasnitzi in Kastoria (ca. 1160-1180) two Deesis compositions are placed in the gables above the apse and in the narthex (S. Pelekanidis, M. Chatzidakis, *Kastoria,* Athens 1985, 50-65).

[11] Ch. Walter, *op. cit*., 312; Н. Квливидзе, *Деисус*, Православная энциклопедия, https://www.pravenc.ru/text/ 171595.html (Accessed 02.11.2022).

ment of a specific iconographic tradition: full length three-morph Deesis placed in the bottom tier of the central nave near the sanctuary, next or opposite to the image of the titular saint of the church. Therefore, in this work we shall consider only those examples that are connected with this tradition.

The origin of this tradition can be traced to the so-called proskynetaria images on the templon beam or altar pillars (east piers or pilasters of the nave that delimited the space of the sanctuary), where the images of Christ Pantokrator and the Virgin with Child had been placed starting from the 10th century[12]. Some researchers consider these images as a kind of two-figure Deesis[13]. This tradition will continue in the 13th–14th century[14]. On the other hand, starting from the second half of the 12th century, the image of Christ or the Virgin is sometimes replaced with that of the patron saint of the church[15]. Examples can be seen in St Panteleimon church in Nerezi (1164)[16], where the image of Christ is replaced with the image of St Panteleimon or in the church of Agios Nikolaos tou Kasnitzi in Kastoria (1160-1180)[17], where the image of Christ on the northern wall is placed opposite that of St Nicholas on the southern wall. In the last case, the church is a single nave building, therefore the proskynetaria images are placed on the eastern parts of the side walls instead of the altar piers. In order to emphasize their importance, the image of Christ is framed by a painted three-lobed

Fig.4. Panagia Paraklesis. Church of Agioi Anargyroi. Kastoria. Late 12th century. Photo by the author.

Сл.4. Панагиа Параклесис. Црква Агио Анаргирои. Касториа. Крајем 12. века. Фотографија аутора.

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12 S. Kalopissi-Verti, *The Proskynetaria of the Templon and Narthex: Form, Imagery, Spatial Connection, and Reception*, Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical, and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West, Washington D.C. 2006, 107–132.

13 J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *L'évolution du programme décoratif des églises de 1071 a 1261*, Actes du XVᵉ Congrès international d'Etudes Byzantines, Athènes 1976, 309; M. Chatzidakis, *op. cit.*, 336–367; К. Образцова, *Деисус в системе убранства византийского темплона XII — начала XIII века*, Актуальные проблемы теории и истории искусства 7, Санкт-Петербург 2017, 232–240.

14 М. Καζαμία-Τσέρνου, *op. cit.*, 102-115.

15 J. Lafontaine-Dosogne, *op. cit.*, 309; К. Образцова, *op. cit.*, 234.

16 I. Sinkević, *The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi: Architecture, Programme, Patronage*, Wiesbaden 2000, fig. XXXIV.

17 S. Pelekanidis, M. Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, 50-65.

Fig.5. Christ crown-
ing Saints Cosmas and
Damian. Church of Agioi
Anargyroi. Kastoria. Late
12th century. Photo by the
author.

Сл. 5. Христос крунише
Свете Козму и Дамјана.
Црква Агиои Анаргирои.
Касториа. Крајем 12.
века. Фотографија
аутора.

arch and that of St Nicholas is placed in a niche framed with a simple red strip.
We can find other examples in the late 12th century churches of Kurbinovo and
Kastoria. In St George church in Kurbinovo (1191)[18] the large image of Christ
framed by elaborate arch with floral décor is adjoined by smaller figures of the
Virgin and St John the Forerunner (Fig.1, 2). The Virgin turns towards Christ
in a devotional appeal holding a long scroll in her left hand with the text of the
prayer for the humankind. This is the so-called type "Panagia Paraklesis" often
encountered in Deesis compositions further on[19]. Therefore in Kurbinovo we
see the three-morph Deesis even though not yet joined in one composition.
On the northern wall opposite the Deesis the image of St George is marked by
the same large size and framed by the same three-lobed arch on columns with
elaborate capitals under a horizontal cornice on the top (Fig. 3). This motive
replicates marble or stucco proskynetaria decoration that can be seen in many

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18 *L. Hadermann-Misguich, Kurbinovo. Les fresques de Saint-Georges et la peinture byzantine du XIIe siècle*, Brussels 1975; E. Dimitrova, *The Church of Saint George at Kurbinovo*, Skopje 2016.

19 I. Djordjević, M. Marković, *On the Dialogue Relationship Between the Virgin and Christ in East Christian Art*, Zograf 28 (2000) 14–17.

Middle Byzantine churches. A well preserved example can be found in the near-by St Panteleimon church in Nerezi[20]. Its carved proskynetaria frames could be the source for Kurbinovo Deesis decoration.

In the late 12th century church of Agioi Anargyroi in Kastoria, the painters placed two classical three-morph Deesis compositions on the sanctuary eastern walls of the central nave and the northern aisle: busts of Pantocrator in medallion with the Virgin and St John the Forerunner in three-quarters with hands raised in a gesture of prayer in the central nave tympanum and three full length figures of Christ Emmanuel flanked by the Virgin and St John on the eastern wall of the northern aisle. These compositions follow the trend of placing the three-morph Deesis in the sanctuary known from earlier periods. However, the most interesting is the third composition found at the southern entrance to the central nave on the eastern and western slopes of the passage. Saints Cosmas and Damian crowned by Christ framed by the arch are painted on the eastern side and Panagia Paraklesis with prayer roll turned towards the naos or the altar is placed on the western side of the entrance (Fig. 4,5). This composition can be interpreted as the so called "spatial Deesis"[21], when the figures of praying Virgin and John the Forerunner or the patron saint of the church, as in this particular example, are separated from the figure of Christ but are placed near-by or symmetrically on the opposite wall. Images are framed with a similar three-lobed archwith elaborate capitals as in Kurbinovo imitating stucco or marble decoration of the proskynetaria images. This type of "spatial Deesis" is used at the same time in the church of Panagia tou Arakou in Cyprus (1192) as the image of Christ is placed on the southern altar pillar and the image of St. John the Forerunner is on the northern wall of the naos next to St Symeon the God-receiver[22]. Why did the painters place three Deesis compositions in Agioi Anargyroi, two classical and one spatial? We can assume that the ktetor, Kastorian nobleman Theodore Lemniotes[23], who ordered the new decoration program and used the church as a family funeral chapel, may have wanted to emphasize eschatological and funeral aspects and to leave a visual image of saints' intercession for the souls of his family before Christ.

Another interesting aspect of Deesis compositions in the 12th century frescoes in Macedonia is the new iconography of the Virgin, the Paraklesis (Mediatrix), which accentuates the intercession theme of the Deesis. The Virgin is depicted in three quarters turn with one hand raised in a gesture of prayer holding in the other hand the scroll with the text of her dialogue with her Son, representing her intercession for the humankind before Christ[24]. This iconog-

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[20] I. *Sinkević, op. cit.*, fig. XLIX, L.

[21] S. Kalopissi-Verti, *op. cit.*, 41-64; I. Djordjević, M. Marković, *op. cit.*, 13-47.

[22] A. Stylianou, J. Stylianou, *The painted churches of Cyprus*, Nicosia 1997, 157-185.

[23] S. Pelekanidis, M. Chatzidakis, *Kastoria*, 108.

[24] I. Djordjević, M. Marković, *op. cit.*, 13–47; М. Бутырский, *Богоматерь Параклесис у алтарной преграды: происхождение и литургическое содержание образа*, Иконостас: происхождение — развитие — символика, Москва 2000, 71-83.

Fig.6. Archangel Michael and Saint Nicholas. St. Nickolas church. Manastir. 1271. Photo by the author.

Сл.6. Арханђел Михаило и Свети Никола. Црква Светог Николе. Манастир. 1271. Фотографија аутора.

Fig.7. Deesis. St. Nickolas church. Manastir. 1271. Photo by the author.

Сл.7. Деизис. Св. Никола, Манастир. 1271. Фотографија аутора.

raphy has its prototypes in icons[25]. In monumental decoration similar iconography can be found in the donor composition at Martorana (1146-1151)[26]. In the late 12th century, there are three examples with preserved Greek text in the churches mentioned above: Kurbinovo, Agioi Anargyroi and Lagoudera[27]. The simultaneous appearance of similar compositions with almost exact text in such remote parts of the Byzantine Empire as Cyprus and Macedonia can indicate the single source of such iconography, possibly the metropolitan tradition. The metropolitan origin of this tradition can also be indicated by the Constantinopolitan background of Lagoudera painter, Theodoros Apseudes.

The 13th century monuments in North Macedonia demonstrate development of the Deesis iconography. If in Cyprus and other regions the 'spatial' Deesis tradition continues[28], in Macedonia the three-morph Deesis composition predominates. In Prilep we find three examples of the three-morph Deesis placed in the central nave on the southern or northern wall. In the second half of the 13th century this small border town experienced cultural and economic revival: two Middle Byzantine monasteries and two churches were reconstructed and painted on the orders of the local aristocracy. It could be connected with the large reconstruction program, initiated by Michael VIII Palaeologus and supported by his aristocracy as a visible symbol of the restoration of the Empire[29].

In St Nicholas church in Manastir (1271) on the northern wall of the central nave near the altar we can see the image of the patron saint, St Nicholas, and the image of the archangel Michael, both framed by the three-lobed arches (Fig. 6). On the opposite southern wall, a three-morph Deesis composition is placed under the same three-lobed arch referring to the classical stucco or marble proskynetaria arches (Fig.7). In provincial monastic church the frame gets much simplified and decorative character. The Virgin Paraklesis with the prayer scroll and St John the Forerunner transmit to Christ the supplications for the faithful, and in particular for the donors, as well as for the Byzantine emperors, whose names are mentioned in the long inscription running around the whole central nave from the Deesis to Archangel Michael and St Nicholas on the opposite wall[30]. The text on the Virgin's scroll is identical to that in Kurbinovo.

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[25] М. Бутырский, *op. cit.*, 77-78.

[26] E. Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of St. Mary's of the Admiral in Palermo*,Washington D.C. 1990, 199-206.

[27] I. Djordjević, M. Marković, *op. cit.*, 18-22.

[28] For example, in the 14th century wall paintings in Panagia Phorbiotissa in Asinou with Christ on the southern altar pier, the Virgin Paraklesis with the same text on the northern pier, and St. John the Forerunner next to her, see: A. Stylianou, J. Stylianou, *The painted churches of Cyprus*, 126-140.

[29] S. Kalopissi-Verti, *Aspects of Byzantine art after the recapture of Constantinople (1261 - c. 1300): reflections of imperial policy, reactions, confrontation with the Latins*, Orient et occident méditerranéens au XIIIe siècle, Paris 2013, P. 41-64. Е. Дятлова, *Фрески церкви архангела Михаила в Прилепе. Особенности иконографической программы и стиля*, Византийский временник 104 (2020) 289–305.

[30] Ф. Баришић, *Два грчка натписа из Манастира и Струге*, ЗРВИ VIII/2 (1964) 13-27; P. Kostovska, *Piety and Patronage: Layman Ioannikios or Abbot Akakios and the Foundation of the Monastery of St. Nicholas at Manastir,* Church, Society and Monasticism, The Second International Monastic Symposium at Sant'Anselmo. Acts of the International

Fig.8. Proskynetaria images of Virgin with Christ and St. Demetrius on the altar pillars. St. Demetrius church. Prilep. After 1282. Photo by the author.

Сл.8. Богородице са Христом и светим Димитријем на олтарским стубовима. Црква Светог Димитрија. Прилеп. После 1282. Фотографија аутора.

This gives a special accent on the funeral character of the iconographic program, together with the unique wall paintings of the northern aisle fully dedicated to the Last Judgment.

The similar decoration of the images with the three-lobed arches resembling proskynetaria decoration, as well as the location of the images next to the passages to pastophoria gives the impression that Deesis and the patron saint composition are part of the templon images. Such location accentuates the two major Deesis themes: eucharistic and eschatological[31]. The first reminds of the Eucharist prayer when the Church resorts to the intercession of the Virgin, St John the Forerunner, archangels and bishops in a thanksgiving

Symposium, Studia Anselmiana, Analecta Monastica, Rome 2009, 485-501; П. Костовска, *Свети Никола Манастир. Средновековно сликарство.* Скопје, 2020; Е. Дятлова, *Монументальная живопись Прилепа (Северная Македония): взгляд на провинциальное византийское искусство второй половины XIII века,* Актуальные проблемы теории и истории искусства 11, Санкт-Петербург 2021, 453–467.

31 Ch. Walter, *op. cit.*, 312. Н. Квливидзе, *op. cit.*

Fig.9. Deesis. St. Demetrius
church. Prilep. After 1282. Photo
by the author.

Сл.9. Деизис. Црква Св.
Димитрија. Прилеп. После
1282. Фотографија аутора.

or in litany prayer. The second eschatological meaning of the Deisis is that of
the intercession for the souls of the donors and all Christians on the day of the
Last Judgement. In such context, the images of St Nicholas and of Archangel
Michael on the opposite wall of the central nave receive liturgical connotation
coherent with the Deesis. Eschatological context is further developed in the
northern aisle of the basilica, fully dedicated to the Last Judgment and including
a separate donor composition.

The Manastir Deesis also has interesting imperial connotations connect-
ing these wall paintings with Michael Palaeologus' program of renovation of
the Empire and anticipating the further development of the three-morph com-
position to Royal Deesis in the 14[th]century. Christ and Archangel Michael in
military attire holding a sword both stand on similar purple suppedanea deco-
rated with pearls, as emperors were often depicted[32]. Taking into consideration
the location of the monastery near the site of the famous Pelagonia battle which
was crucial for the Byzantine re-conquest of Macedonia, one can see the paral-
lels between the celestial powers of Christ, of Archangel Michael as the head of
the heavenly army and of the earthly monarch and military commander Michael

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[32] А. Грабар, *Император в византийском искусстве*, Москва 2000, 36-43.

Fig.10. Deesis. St. Nicholas church in Varoš. Prilep. 1298. Photo by the author.

Сл.10. Деизис. Св. Никола у Вароши. Прилеп. 1298. Фотографија аутора.

Palaeologus recently returned to Constantinople. This symbolism is accentuated in the long inscription where the emperor Michael Palaeologus is mentioned as the second Constantine.

St Demetrius church in Prilep demonstrates interesting combination of different Deesis iconographies[33]. The figures of the Virgin with the Child and the patron saint Demetrius painted after 1282 on the altar pillars go back to the 12th century tradition of the proskynetaria images (Fig. 8), while on the southern wall of the western part of the nave the remains of the three-morph Deesis can be seen (Fig.9). Unfortunately, due to its bad condition, the latter is difficult to date. However, based on the logic of Deesis iconography development, we can assume that the three-morph was painted after the 13th century proskynetaria images on the altar pillars. This complies with the sporadic and fragmental development of the church decoration by different donors in different time over the 13th and 14th centuries. On the other hand, it is coherent with the overall archaic iconography, with bishops officiating before an altar instead of Melismos in the apse, more common in the 13th century wall paintings of Macedonia. Otherwise this program may be viewed as a controversial transitional variant using both the proskynetaria images and the three-morph Deesis.

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[33] В. Ристић, *Црква Светог Димитрија у Прилепу*, Синтеза 3-4 (1979) 179-199; А. Захарова, Е. Дятлова, *О строителях и художниках, работавших в македонском Прилепе в конце XIII века*, Studia Slavica et Balcanica Petropolitana 2/28 (2020) 46–72; Е. Дятлова, *Монументальная живопись Прилепа,* 453–467.

In St Nicholas church in Varoš (1298) the three-morph Deesis is located on the northern wall next to the templon (Fig.10) and on the opposite wall, as in Manastir, there is the image of the patron saint Nicholas[34]. The images are not emphasized by size or any special frames. They are framed by regular dark red borders as all other images or scenes covering all the walls of this small single-nave church. The Virgin and St John the Forerunner are depicted with hands stretched in prayer turning to Christ, without any scroll or text. Taking into consideration that one of the painters could have come from Epirus[35], this detail could originate from there. In the church of Taxiarches in Kostaniani (late 13th c.), the Virgin in the Deesis composition on the northern wall is also pictured without the scroll[36]. On the altar pillars, Christ and the patron saint, Archangel Michael, are placed. So here too, as in St Demetrius in Varoš, the two iconographic schemes are used simultaneously. A Deesis was painted on the western wall of the southern bay in Transfiguration church in Plakoti, also in Epirus[37], where only small fragments of the composition are preserved, so iconographic details are unknown. In southern Epirus such three-morph Deesis compositions are not found.

So we see that the well-established iconographic formula widely used later in the 14th century in Macedonia got it form by the end of the 13th century. The monuments preserved in the town of Prilep demonstrate an important stage of this development. It is noteworthy that in the beginning of the 14th century the workshop of Michael and Eutychius returns to the old scheme of depicting Christ and the Virgin on the eastern altar pillars[38]. This may go back to the metropolitan tradition, as the only preserved example in Constantinople in the Chora monastery suggests. The same tradition took roots in the 13th wall painting in Serbia, where proskynetaria images were usually painted on the altar pillars[39]. So in painting the churches in Macedonia, the workshop of Michael and Eutychius followed the metropolitan tradition rather than the local. Only in their latest ensemble of St Nicetas church in Čučer the proskynetaria images were supplemented by the figures of St John the Forerunner and St Nicetas on the southern and northern walls opposite each other, therefore returning to the motive of the "spatial Deesis".

Thus, at the end of the 12th and during the 13th century Deesis composition becomes popular in all Byzantine lands, reflecting the turn from the mis-

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[34] П. Костовска, *Програмата на живописот на црквата Св. Никола во Варош кај Прилеп и нејзината функција како гробна капела*, ЗСУММ 3 (2001) 70-71. А. Захарова, Е. Дятлова, *О строителях*, 46–72.

[35] А. Захарова, Е. Дятлова, *О строителях*, 62-64.

[36] L. Fundić, *Η μνημειακή τέχνη του Δεσποτάτου της Ηπείρου την περίοδο της Δυναστείας των Κομνηνών Αγγέλων (1204–1318)*, PhD Diss., Θεσσαλονίκη 2013, 373-377; Ead, *Art, Power and Patronage in the Principality of Epirus, 1204-1318*, London - New York 2022, 223-230.

[37] L. Fundić, *Η μνημειακή τέχνη*, 383-384; Ead, *Art, Power and Patronage*, 230-231.

[38] See the iconographic programs in the churches of the Virgin Perivleptos, Ohrid; Protaton, Karyes; St George in Staro Nagoričino and St Nicetas in Čučer (П. Миљковиќ-Пепек, *Делото на Зографите Михаило и Евтихиј*, Скопје 1967, 48-62, 205-206).

[39] Such images are preserved in Mileševa, Arilje etc.

sionary and universal programs of the Early and Middle Byzantine periods to simpler private commissions of the Late Byzantine period accentuating eschatological motives. Macedonia develops its own local specific Deesis iconography with full length three-morph framed by architectural or regular frame next to or opposite the image of the church's patron saint. The Virgin is often depicted in Paraklesis iconography holding a long scroll with the text of the dialogue with her Son. In the 1330ies, when Macedonia passed to Serbian rule, this local variant of Deesis returned, conserving its eschatological meaning of supplication for the humankind and especially the donors. It will have two different ways of development. In sophisticated monuments ordered by Serbian kings and nobility the new iconography of the Royal Deesis was formed. In this context the imperial connotations of Deesis and its connected images in St Nicholas church in Manastir provide an early example of such trend. In other much simpler churches built and decorated by the local donors the ordinary three-morph Deesis compositions, similar to that in St Nicholas in Varoš single-nave church, preserved their funeral commemorative nature.

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ДЕИЗИС У ЗИДНОМ ЖИВОПИСУ МАКЕДОНИЈЕ XII-XIII ВЕКА:
ИКОНОГРАФСКИ АСПЕКТИ И РАЗВОЈ

Чланак се бави настанком и формирањем традиције постављања трофигуралног Деизиса у источни део наоса македонских цркава. Деизис постаје популарна композиција у монументалној декорацији у време Палеплога широм Византијског царства, одржавајући заокрет од рано и средњовизантијских универзалних мисионарских програма ка једноставнијим ктиторским зидним сликама са нагласком на есхатолошке и комеморативне теме. У Македонији је развијена локална иконографија трофигуралног Деизиса у пуној величини, често истакнутог архитектонским луком, постављеног у источном делу наоса поред или наспрам светца заштитника храма. Прве такве композиције јављају се крајем XII века у једнобродним или базиликалним црквама, а до краја XIII века добијају устаљени облик. У овом облику се ова композиција појављује у многим црквама Северне Македоније из XIV века, изражавајући есхатолошки контекст молитве за народ и локалне ктиторе. Паралелно, развија се и ново издање „Краљевског деизиса“, чији се рани мотиви такође могу уочити у царским конотацијама македонског деизиса XIII века.