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DECORATIONS OF “ARABESQUE” STYLE IN LATE BYZANTINE ART

Abstract: Our study presents decorations of “arabesque” style in late Byzantine art. These elements have an abstract, geometrical layout and are encountered in miniatures of manuscripts, details and secondary zones of frescoes, champlevé marble sculptures, textiles, wooden sculptures, metalwork, minor arts, minor sculptures and silver icon revetments. Some of these ornaments seem to be modifications-adaptations of the older Komnenian models to the aesthetic preferences of the Palaiologan era. These were previously interpreted as the result of Islamic influences in byzantine art. Other Palaiologan arabesque ornaments reflect direct influences from the Islamic art of the period, as is the case of marble champlevé sculptures from Macedonia.

Keywords: Palaiologan “arabesque”, “oriental” decorations of Late Byzantine Art, Palaiologan sculpture, Seljuk influences in Late Byzantine Art

The byzantine art of the Palaiologan period (late 13th-early 15th c.) boasts several works of art with an “arabesque” character.¹ In those pieces, the ornament of “eastern” origin displays a rich and dense design, like woven textile or carpet (figs. 1, 2, 3, 4). These special designs and ornaments, known as “arabesques”,² are mainly autonomous compositions with special geometric

¹ For the topic see P. Androudis, *Τέχνη και αρχιτεκτονική στο Σελτζουκικό σουλτανάτο του Ρουμ (12ος-αρχές 14ου αιώνα)*, Thessaloniki 2018, 755-841; Idem, *Αραβουργηματικές διακοσμήσεις και επιδράσεις της ισλαμικής τέχνης στην Παλαιολόγεια Τέχνη της Μακεδονίας/ Arabesque decorations and influences of Islamic art in the Palaiologan art of Macedonia*, Γ' Επιστημονικό Συμπόσιο «Βυζαντινή Μακεδονία». Θεολογία- Ιστορία- Φιλολογία- Δίκαιο- Αρχαιολογία- Τέχνη, 14-15 Μαΐου 2016, Thessaloniki 2019, 771-793; Idem, *Το ζήτημα των διακοσμήσεων «αραβουργηματικού χαρακτήρα» στην Παλαιολόγεια γλυπτική της Μακεδονίας (β' μισό 13ου-14ου αιώνας)*, to be published in the Volume dedicated to the Memory of Professor Maria Kazamia-Tsernou, Thessaloniki 2023. On the role of trade to the introduction of Islamic elements in byzantine art see: N. Vryzidis, *Late Byzantium as a Eurasian Borderland: Trade, Material and Visual Culture at the Western End of the Silk Road*, 36 (2020-2021, 237-264.

² For the ornament of the type of “arabesque” see in particular: A. Riegl, *Stilfragen, Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte des Ornamentik*, Berlin 1893 (reprint Hildesheim



Fig. 1 Monastery of Dionysiou, Mt Athos, miniature with "oriental" decorations (cod. 4, f. 9 a), 13th c.

Сл. 1 Манастир Дионисије, Света Гора, минијатура са „оријенталним“ украсима (код. 4, ф. 9 а), 13. век.



Fig. 2 Monastery of Iviron, Mt Athos. Frontispiece, gospel, 13th c. (cod. 55, f. 178a)

Сл. 2 Манастир Ивирон, Света Гора, 13. век

organization, but also floral and vegetal themes. Some of them match perfectly with the "classical" Byzantine decorations and scripts, offering a rich variety. In fact, when the combination of the above elements is successful, the style of decoration acquires a special uniformity. These decorations are usually found in miniatures of manuscripts (figs. 1, 2, 3, 4),³ in details and secondary zones of frescoes (figs. 5-7), in champlévé marble sculptures (figs. 8-18).⁴ Also in tex-

1975); E. Herzfeld, *Arabesque*, Encyclopaedia of Islam, I, Leiden 1913, 363-367; E. Kühnel, *Arabesque*, EI, I, Leiden 1960, 558; O. Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art*, New Haven 1973, 188-205. See also M. Khazâie, *The Arabesque Motif (Islîmî) In Early Islamic Persian Art*, London 1999. For the Arabic influences on the Byzantine art in Greece see G. Sotiriou *Αραβικά διακοσμήσεις εις τα βυζαντινά μνημεία της Ελλάδος*, Πρακτικά της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας 1933-1934, Athens 1935, 57-95.

³ See for example R. S. Nelson, *Palaeologan Illuminated Ornament and the Arabesque*, Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte, XLI (1988), 9-10 and fig. 17.

⁴ A. Grabar, *Sculptures byzantines du moyen-âge II (XIe-XIVe siècle)*, Paris 1976, 149-150, 151 and pl. LXXXVII, CXXXIII, CXXXVI-CXXXIX; M. Šuput, *Vizantijski reliefi sa pastom iz XIII i XIV veka*, Zograf 7 (1977), 161-248; T. Pazaras, *Reliefs of a sculpture workshop operating in Thessaly and Macedonia at the end of the 13th and beginning of the 14th century*, in: *L'Art de Thessalonique et des pays balkaniques et les courants spirituels au XIVe siècle* (Rapports du IVE Colloque Serbo-Grec, Belgrade 1985), Belgrade 1987, 159-

Fig. 3 Monastery of Philotheou, Mt Athos. Frontispiece of Gospel, 13th c. (cod. 1, f. 36 a)

Сл. 3 Манастир Филотеј, Света Гора. Заглавље Јеванђеља, 13. в. (код. 1, ф. 36 а)



Fig. 4 The frontispiece of the Gospel no. 16 which was donated by John VI Kantakouzenos (1340/1341) to the monastery of Vatopedi in Mt Athos (1347-1354), f. 56r

Сл. 4 Заглавље јеванђеља бр. 16 коју је Јован VI Кантакузин (1340/1341) поклонио манастиру Ватопед на Светој Гори (1347-1354), ф. 56р



182; Idem, *Ανάγλυφες σαρκοφάγοι και επιτάφιας πλάκες της μέσης και ύστερης βυζαντινης περιόδου στην Ελλάδα*, Athens 1988, 25, 26, 34-35, 54, 87, 140 and pl. 8, 10β, 24, 25α-δ, 63; Idem, *Τα ανάγλυφα θυρώματα του καθολικού της Μονής Χελανδαρίου και η σχέση τους με την παλαιολόγεια γλυπτική του βορειοελλαδικού χώρου*, in: Πολιτιστική Κληρονομιά και Αρχιτεκτονική Παράδοση στη Χαλκιδική και το Άγιον Όρος, Thessaloniki 1993, 147-164; Idem, *Πρόταση αναπαράστασης του Αμβωνα της Παλαιάς Μητρόπολης στη Βέροια*, Θυμίαμα στη μνήμη της Λασκαρίνας Μπούρα, τ. 1, Αθήνα 1994, τ. 1, 251-254 and τ. II, pl. 136-147; A. Liveri, *Die byzantinischen Steinreliefs des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts im griechischen Raum*, Athens 1996; A. Parazotos, *Η λεκάνη αγιασμού του καθολικού του Τιμίου Προδρόμου και συναφή παραδείγματα από τη Μακεδονία*, in: Οι Σέρρες και η περιοχή τους από την αρχαία στη μεταβυζαντινή κοινωνία (Σέρρες 29 Σεπτεμβρίου 3 Οκτωβρίου 1993), Πρακτικά, τ. II, Serres 1998, 509-524; T. Pazaras, *Η γλυπτική στη Μακεδονία κατά την παλαιολόγεια περίο-*

tiles, wooden sculptures (fig. 19),⁵ metalwork,⁶ minor arts, minor sculptures,⁷ silver icon revetments (fig. 20),⁸ e.t.c. In addition to these compositions, we recorded several individual images with geometric patterns, ornaments and animal figures, which bear “oriental” features (fig. 2, 4, 19).

In the following pages we will present some works with “arabesque” or “Islamic” decoration from Palaiologan Art. We can encounter a wide variety of “arabesque” ornaments in late byzantine illuminated manuscripts.⁹ In the mon-

δο, in: Β' Συμπόσιο για τη Μακεδονία: Η Μακεδονία κατά την εποχή των Παλαιολόγων, Θεσσαλονίκη 14-20 Δεκεμβρίου 1992, Thessaloniki 2002, 471-504; P. Androudis, *Sur les fragments d'une chaire épiscopale byzantine à Episkopi (Anó Volos)*, Βυζαντιακά 22 (2002), 143-168; Idem, *Ο ναός της Επισκοπής Άνω Βόλου και ο εντοιχισμένος γλυπτός του διάκοσμος*, ΔΧΑΕ 28 (2007), 85-98; Idem, *Παρατηρήσεις στον υστεροβυζαντινό γλυπτό διάκοσμο των εκκλησιών του δυτικού Πηλίου*, Βυζαντινά 30 (2010), 299-319; N. Melvani, *Late Byzantine Sculpture*, Turnhout 2013, 99-100, 108-109; C. Vanderheyde, *La Sculpture Byzantine du IXe au XVe siècle. Contexte- mise en oeuvre- décors*, Paris 2020, 154-156.

⁵ See G. Sotiriou, *La sculpture sur bois dans l'art byzantin*, Mélanges Charles Diehl II, Art, Paris 1930, 171-180; M. Ćorović-Ljubinković, *Srednjevekovni duborez u istočnim oblastima Jugoslavije*, Beograd 1965; Grabar, *Sculptures byzantines*, 118-121 (no. 116), pl. LXXXVII; N. Nikonanos, *Ξυλόγλυπτα*, in: Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους (Exhibition Catalogue), Thessaloniki 1997, 259; S. Kadas, *Η Ιερά Μονή Αγίου Διονυσίου*, Mt Athos 1997, 52-54; V. Pace (ed.), *Treasures of Christian Art in Bulgaria* (Catalogue of Exposition), Roma 2000, 193-194 (no 70); N. Nikonanos, *Βυζαντινά ξυλόγλυπτα στο Άγιον Όρος*, in: Άγιον Όρος, Φύση- Λατρεία- Τέχνη. Πρακτικά Συνεδρίων εις το πλαίσιον των παραλλήλων εκδηλώσεων της Εκθέσεως «Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους», τ. II, Thessaloniki 2001, 149-153, 241-243 (fig. 1-7); K. Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Ξυλόγλυπτα της ύστερης περιόδου των Παλαιολόγων από ναούς της δυτικής Μακεδονίας*, Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας, per. Δ', τ. ΛΕ' (2014), 375-402; Androudis, *Αραβουργηματικές διακοσμήσεις*.

⁶ K. Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Thessalonique, centre de production d'objets d'arts au XI^e siècle*, DOP 57 (2003), 241- 254, fig. 1-24.

⁷ Idem, *Les œuvres d'arts mineurs comme expression des relations du Mont Athos avec l'aristocratie ecclésiastique et politique de Byzance*, in: G. Galavaris (ed.), Athos, la Sainte Montagne. Tradition et renouveau dans l'art, Athens 2007, 63-96, 166-179, pl. 3-28a-b.

⁸ A. Grabar, *Les revêtements en or et en argent des icônes byzantines du Moyen Age*, Venise 1975; A. Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Βυζαντινή Μικροτεχνία*, in: Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Παράδοση-Ιστορία-Τέχνη, τ. II, Mt Athos 1996, 482-497; *Trésors médiévaux de la République de Macédoine* (Exhibition Catalogue, Paris, Musée national du Moyen Âge, Thermes de Cluny, 9 février- 3 mai 1999), Paris 1999, 48- 51, 62-63, 74-81, 86-91; Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Thessalonique, centre de production*, 241-254; Idem, *Αργυρές επενδύσεις εικόνων από τη Θεσσαλονίκη του 14ου αιώνα*, in: ΔΧΑΕ, per. Δ', τ. ΚΣΤ' (2005), 263-271; E. Tsigaridas, K. Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Βυζαντινές εικόνες και επενδύσεις*, Mt Athos 2006; K. Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Βυζαντινές επενδύσεις εικόνων στο Άγιον Όρος*, in: Άγιον Όρος. Πνευματικότητα και Ορθοδοξία, Τέχνη, Πρακτικά Β' Διεθνούς Συμποσίου, Θεσσαλονίκη 11-13 Νοεμβρίου 2005, Thessaloniki 2006, 131-147; Idem, *Les oeuvres d'arts mineurs comme expression des relations du Mont Athos avec l'aristocratie ecclésiastique et politique de Byzance*, in: G. Galavaris (ed.), Athos, la Sainte Montagne. Tradition et renouveau dans l'art, Athens 2007, 63-96.

⁹ Nelson, *Palaeologan Illuminated Ornament*.

asteries of Mt Athos are kept manuscripts of the late 13th and 14th centuries with wonderful frontispieces, marked by ornaments of geometric and arabesque character.¹⁰

In contrast to the corresponding designs of the art of the Komnenian period (1081-1185), in these later designs the absence of the pseudo-Kufic ornament is obvious. As R. Nelson pointed out, the Palaiologan ornaments are more linear, abstract, carefully organized and structured compared to the Komnenian ornaments.¹¹

We have already noticed that many ornaments designs in Palaiologan manuscripts generally imitate earlier Komnenian models, but we also encountered exceptions, where the design departs from the old model and takes on a new form. Although the painter of miniatures often had difficulty in reconciling different themes, however, the new composition with the lateral human and animal figures accompanying frontispieces and paintings goes far beyond the static and “two-dimensional” style of the Komnenian decorations.¹²

The colors used in the Palaiologan art of the miniatures in manuscripts are broadly similar to their older counterparts. We also notice the absence of saints. Their place is often taken by forms of real or fabulous animals, sometimes faithful copies of corresponding Seljuk or Persian standards. In our case these figures are purely decorative and lack the corresponding symbolism that they can have in Islamic art. Of course, there are also initials of letters with animal designs according to Eastern standards. The peacock appears in some representations to be identical to similar depictions in Islamic art. Also the griffin, a mythical creature, with apotropaic and protective qualities, has a remarkable



Fig. 5 Thessaloniki, Hagioi Apostoloi. Oriental decorations in the intrados of an arch (P. Androudis)

¹⁰ See S. Pelekanidis, C. Christou, C. Mavropoulou-Tsoumi, S. Kadas, *Οι Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους. Εικονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα. Παραστάσεις-επίτιλα-αρχικά γράμματα*, t. I (Πρωτόπτον, Μ. Διονυσίου, Μ. Κουτλουμουσίου, Μ. Ξηροποτάμου, Μ. Γρηγορίου), Athens 1973, 50 (for the fig. 1 in our text), 51 (for the figures 2 and 3 of our text) and 394 (Monastery of Dionysiou). See also S. Pelekanidis, C. Christou, C. Mavropoulou-Tsoumi, S. Kadas, *Οι Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους. Εικονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα. Παραστάσεις-επίτιλα-αρχικά γράμματα*, t. II (Μ. Ιβήρων, Μ. Αγίου Παντελεήμονος, Μ. Εσφιγμένου, Μ. Χιλανδαρίου), Athens 1975, 58, fig. 48 (for the figures 4 and 5 of our text) and 305 (Tetraevangelon, Monastery of Iviron, 13th c.) and S. Pelekanidis, C. Christou, C. Mavropoulou-Tsoumi, S. Kadas, K. Kalamartzi-Katsarou, *Οι Θησαυροί του Αγίου Όρους. Εικονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα. Παραστάσεις-επίτιλα-αρχικά γράμματα*, t. III (Μ. Μεγίστης Λαύρας, Μ. Παντοκράτορος, Μ. Δοχειαρίου, Μ. Καρακάλου, Μ. Φιλοθέου, Μ. Αγίου Παύλου), Athens 1979, 194, fig. 300 for the fig. 6 of our text) and 305 (Monastery of Philotheou).

¹¹ Nelson, *Palaeologan Illuminated Ornament*, 9-10.

¹² Op.cit., 11.



Fig. 6 Thessaloniki, Church of Profitis Ilias. Remains of fresco with oriental decorations in the western wall of the former vestibule (P. Androudis)

Сл. 6 Солун, црква Св. Илије. Остаци фресака са оријенталним украсима на западном зиду некадашње припрате (П. Андрудис)



Fig. 7 Katholikon of the monastery of Lesnovo. The despot Ioannis Liverios with the model of the church

Сл. 7 Католикон манастира Леснова. Деспот Јован са моделом цркве

presence in Palaiologan art (fig. 9, 10).¹³ Here it should be noted that imitations of the decorations of “Arabic” or “Seljuk” origin in Byzantine manuscripts are rarely followed closely.

It is obvious that Greek manuscript illuminators simplified and adapted many of the “abstract” ornament designs in order to make them more “compatible” with traditional Byzantine designs. In addition, we have recorded, in the same manuscript, frontispieces with “arabesque” ornaments, which provide an impression of unity, although their origins vary.

So it seems that some of these ornaments are modifications-adaptations of the older Komnenian models to the aesthetic preferences of the Palaiologan era. These were previously interpreted as the result of Islamic influences. Other frontispieces in the same manuscript are inventions of Palaiologan workshops, while they are not missing, although to a limited extent in-

¹³ See L. Bouras, *The Griffin through the Ages*, Athens 1983; S. Ćurčić, *Some Uses (and Reuses) of Griffins in Late Byzantine Art*, in: *Byzantine East- Latin West. Art- Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzman*, Princeton 1995, 597- 604.

lation to the rest of the ornaments, those that are pure copies of corresponding ornaments of Islamic art. We also include animals with iconographic features that are specific to creations of the East (fig. 1-4, 8-10 and 19). The last ornaments and animals are, in our opinion, obvious “additions” to the decorative repertoire of Byzantine art.

It is obvious that it is quite difficult to distinguish between the “arabesque” ornament of the Palaiologan era, which responds in other forms and compositions to earlier Komnenian art of the 12th c. and to the obvious, “direct” Islamic influences.

Several scholars have argued that “arabesque” Palaiologan ornaments are not the product of direct Islamic influences, but rather belong to this particular “oriental” repertoire of Byzantine art, described as “Byzantine arabesque” by G. Sotiriou.¹⁴ This view was shared by professors A. Grabar,¹⁵ R. Nelson,¹⁶ M. Šuput¹⁷ and T. Pazaras.¹⁸ It seems that most of the “oriental” ornaments of the Palaiologan period were incorporated into Byzantine art at the end of the 11th century and were part of its so-called “oriental” repertoire. This fact is particularly evident in the decorations of the manuscripts of the late 13th and 14th centuries, which represent an adaptation and evolution to new aesthetic standards (primarily Seljuk and Syrian and secondly Mamluk) older corresponding Komnenian decorations of the 12th c.

It is also worth noting that most of the works in which we find decorations of this type are associated with donations of the imperial family and their court, and with donations of other secular and ecclesiastical officials. In this environment there was the possibility of studying and copying many works and styles of art. As for the poor people, they had access mainly



Fig. 8 Church of the Dormition of the Virgin at Episkopi, Ano Volos. Slab with double-headed eagles and dragons from the sarcophagus of Anna Maliassene (P. Androudis)

Сл. 8 Црква Успења Пресвете Богородице, Волос. Плоча са двоглавим орловима и змајевима са саркофага Ане Малиасене (П. Андроудис)



Fig. 9 Church of the Dormition of the Virgin at Episkopi, Ano Volos. Detail of a medallion of the longitudinal slab of the sarcophagus of Anna Maliassene, with griffin (P. Androudis)

Сл. 9 Црква Успења Пресвете Богородице, Волос. Детал медалјона уздужне плоче саркофага Ане Малиасене са грифоном (П. Андроудис)

¹⁴ Sotiriou *Αραβικαί διακοσμήσεις*, 79.

¹⁵ Grabar, *Sculptures byzantines*, 152.

¹⁶ Nelson, *Palaeologan Illuminated Ornament*, 7-22 and 151-162, fig. 1-30.

¹⁷ Šuput, *Vizantijski reliefi*, 43.

¹⁸ Παζαράς 2002, 478.



Fig. 10 Byzantine marble slab with griffin, now in the Metropolitan Museum of New York (MET)

Сл. 10 Византијска мермерна плоча са грифоном, сада у Метрополитен музеју у Њујорку (MET)

to works of glazed pottery, the decorative themes of which often copied in a modest way the corresponding Islamic designs.

But how were these motifs introduced into the late Byzantine art of Macedonia and to what extent did they affect its decoration? These questions have not been satisfactorily answered, as the “Islamic” decorations of the Palaiologan period have simply been perceived as a decorative trend of the art of the time. Perhaps the answers should be sought in the political, social and artistic context of Palaiologan Macedonia and in the potential commissioners of the works.

We know, for example, that Thessaloniki, with the settlement of Yolande-Eirene de Montferrat, second wife of the emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos and her children in it, in the beginning of 14th century,¹⁹ became a prominent art center.²⁰ Although Eirene stayed in Thessaloniki for 14 years, research does not attribute any contributions to the architecture or art of the

city,²¹ while after her death her fortune was used by Andronikos for repairs to Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. We do not know if Irene’s installation in Thessaloniki, along with members of her court, was connected with the arrival of artists from Constantinople, who could introduce new trends in her art. Irene also seems to have donated works of art to the monasteries of Mt Athos, such as manuscript A111 of Megisti Lavra, from which he chose - while it was still in Thessaloniki - the motifs of his manuscripts the Thessalonian scribe and illuminator Theodoros Hagiopepitrīs (active from 1277/1278 to 1307/1308).²²

¹⁹ D. M. Nicol, *The Byzantine Lady: Ten Portraits, 1250-1500*, Cambridge 1994.

²⁰ On issues of donors of early Palaiologan Art in Constantinople and Thessaloniki and related bibliography see Nelson, *Palaeologan Illuminated Ornament*, 127-145.

²¹ This view was supported mainly by M. Rautman: *Aspects of Monastic Patronage in Palaeologan Macedonia*, in: S. Ćurčić-D. Mouriki (ed.), *The Twilight of Byzantium*, Princeton 1991, 64, which was shared by Nelson (Nelson, *Palaeologan Illuminated Ornament*, 139).

²² See Nelson, *Palaeologan Illuminated Ornament*, 47-51, 126. Also E. Lamberz, *Βιβλιογράφοι και βιβλιογραφικά εργαστήρια στο Άγιον Όρος κατά την εποχή των Παλαιολόγων*, Β΄ Διεθνές Συμπόσιο για τη Μακεδονία. Η Μακεδονία κατά την εποχή των Παλαιολόγων, Thessaloniki 14-20 December 1992, Thessaloniki 2002, 143-172, in particular 146; Idem, *Νέα στοιχεία σχετικά με τον Θεσσαλονικέα γραφέα και διακοσμητή χειρογράφων Θεόδωρο Αγιοπετρίτη*, Β΄ Διεθνές Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινή Μακεδονία. Δίκαιο, Θεολογία, Φιλολογία, 26-28 Νοεμβρίου 1999, Thessaloniki 2003, 91-92.

Fig. 11 Katholikon of the Monastery of Chilandar in Mt Athos. Lintel of the entrance to the naos with champlévé technique, detail (P. Androudis)

Сл. 11 Католикон манастира Хиландара на Светој Гори. Надвратник улаза у наос, детаљ (П. Андрудис)



The workshops of Thessaloniki had a significant production of works of art of high artistic value, widely disseminated in the Balkans.²³ In addition, merchants were active and traveled to the city,²⁴ where apart from Slavic languages and Latin, Turkish, Mongol and Arabic were also spoken. These facts promoted the introduction of new elements and works in the city, such as Mongolian ceramics of the Golden Horde²⁵ and Andalusian ceramics of the Pula type.²⁶

The end of the 13th century and especially the 14th century are marked by a special preference of the Byzantine world for artistic productions and the way of clothing of the East.²⁷ In the palace of Constantinople and the circles of the court (despots, caesars, *sebastocrators*) a series of oriental garments, bore names such as *lapatza*, *granatza*, *skaranikon*.²⁸ In the middle of 14th c. Pseudo-Kodinos gave a historical explanation of the origins of certain oriental garments (*granatza*, *lapatzas*) in the byzantine Court: « ...Ἐτι καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν

²³ Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Thessalonique, centre de production*, 241-254, fig. 1-24. See also: A. Antonaras, *Arts, Crafts and Trade in Ancient and Byzantine Thessaloniki. Archaeological, Literary and Epigraphic Evidence*, Mainz 2016.

²⁴ See D. Jacoby, *Foreigners and the Urban Economy in Thessalonike, ca. 1150–ca. 1450*, *DOP* 57 (2003), 85-132.

²⁵ See H. Philon, *Thessaloniki, Andalusia and the Golden Horde*, *Balkan Studies* 26.2 (1985), 299-319; P. Androudis, *An unknown 14th century Golden Horde bowl (piyala) from the monastery of Vatopedi, Mount Athos Greece*, *Niš and Byzantium XVI* (2017), 209-216.

²⁶ Philon, *Thessaloniki, Andalusia*, 299-319; K. Tsouris, *A bowl embedded in the wall of the chapel of the Hagioi Anargyroi in Vatopedi monastery*, *Balkan Studies* 39.1 (1998), 5-16; P. Androudis, A. Yangaki, *A Fragment of the “Pula type” of lustreware immured at the exonarthex of the Katholikon of the Monastery of Hilandari (Mount Athos peninsula)*, *Zbornik Matice Srpske za Likovne Umetnosti* 42 (Novi Sad 2014), 51-60.

²⁷ See R. Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks. 1204-1461*, Leiden 2016. Also E. Zachariadou, *Η καλόπτρα του Μετοχίτη και οι αραβικοί αριθμοί στη Μονή της Χώρας*, 18ο Συμπόσιο Βυζαντινής και Μεταβυζαντινής Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης, Athens, May 1998, Abstracts, 25-27.

²⁸ See A. Grabar, *Pseudo-Codinos et les cérémonies de la Cour byzantine au XIV^e siècle*, in: *Art et Société à Byzance sous les Paléologues*, Venise 1971, 193-221; E. Piltz, *Le costume officiel des dignitaires byzantins à l'époque Paléologue*, Uppsala 1994; M. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th -15th Centuries)*, Leiden-Boston 2003. For these vestments and their names: B. Čvetković, *ПРИЛОГ ПРОУЧАВАЊУ ВИЗАНТИЈСКОГ ДВОРСКОГ КОСТИМА-ГРАНАТЗА, ΛΑΠΑΤΖΑΣ*, *ZRV* 34 (1995), 143-156.



Fig. 12 Veroia, late byzantine marble font, formerly in the Church of St. George (P. Androudis)

Сл. 12 Βεργία, κασνoβизантијски мермерни фонт, некада у цркви Светог Ђорђа (Π. Ανδρουδίδης)

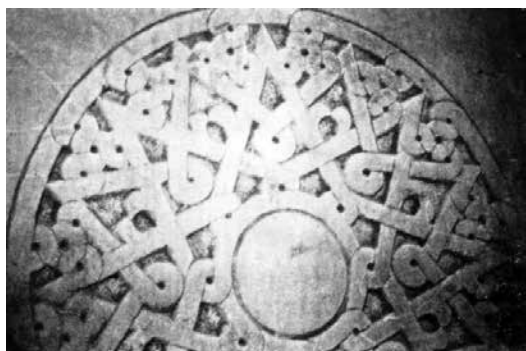


Fig. 13 Veroia, Collection of sculptures. Late byzantine slab with roundel (P. Androudis, 1999)

Сл. 13 Βεργία, Збирка скулптура. Касновизантијска плоча са округлом (Π. Ανδρουδίδης, 1999)

Ἀσυρίων βασιλείας κατῆλθέ τι φόρεμα μέχρι καὶ τῶν νῦν βασιλέων, γρανάτζα λεγόμενον, ὅπερ καὶ φορεῖ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἄνευ ζώνης, οὗ κρεμάμενα τὰ μανίκια διήκουσι μέχρι καὶ ἀστραγάλων. ὃ δὴ φόρεμα καὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἕκαστοι ἔχουσιν ἐπ' ἀδείας φορεῖν, πλὴν ἐζωσμένον, τῶν μανικίων ἐμπεπηγμένων ὄντων πρὸς τὴν ζώνην ὀπισθεν, καὶ ὃ μὲν ὁ βασιλεὺς φορεῖ, καλεῖται γρανάτζα, ὡς εἴρηται, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων λαπάτζα. Ὅπως δέ, ἀδηλόν ἐστι, καὶ οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι ἄρχοντες οὕτω. τοῦ μεγάλου δὲ δομεστίκου καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦτο φοροῦντος ἐζωσμένον κατὰ τοὺς ἄλλους, τὸ μὲν ἐν τῶν τοιοῦτου λαπάτζα μανικίων ἐνι ἐμπεπηγμένων, τὸ δὲ ἕτερον κρέμαται τιμῆς ἕνεκα, ἐπεὶ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ἀμφοτέρω, ὡς εἴρηται, κρέμανται ...”²⁹

N. Grigoras (14th c.) refers, bitterly, to the introduction of many foreign elements in the Byzantine costume of his time: “... οὐτε γὰρ Περσική τις ἄκρατος ἢ στολή γέγονεν ἤδη Ῥωμαίοις, οὐτε Λατινική τελέως, οὐτε μὴν τις Γοθική καθάπαξ, οὐτε εἴ τις Τριβαλλῶν καὶ ἄμα Μυσῶν καὶ Παιόνων· ἀλλ' ἐκ πασῶν τὸ διὰ πασῶν εἰπεῖν τῆς μουσικῆς ἐκείνης ἁρμονίας καὶ ἀρετῆς ἐπὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀντέστραπται χρόνων ἐς ἅπαν τούναντιόν μῆμα καὶ συμφύρημα ...”³⁰

²⁹ Pseudo-Kodinos, *Traité des Offices*, ed. J. Verpeaux, Paris 1966, 218.29-30 and 219.1-21. See also *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies*, ed. R. Macrides, J.A. Munitiz, D. Angelov, London and N. York 2016, 164-166 and 356.

³⁰ *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, ed. L. Schopen, I. Bekker, t. I, Bonn 1829, 555.14-17. See comments on this text: E. Zachariadou, *The Presents of the Emirs*, in: L. Droulia (ed.), *Cultural and Commercial Exchanges between the Orient and the Greek World*, Athens 1991, 80; M. Parani, *Cultural Identity and Dress: Byzantine Ceremonial Costume*, *JÖB* 57 (2007), 95-134.

In Byzantine art we also find an eastern type of hat, the Turkish-Mongol *sarāghūch*.³¹ Characteristic is the male figure (third from right) wearing a hat of the type at the “noblemen’s” banquet, part of the scene of the Ladder of the Divine Ascent (Heavenly Ladder of Saint John Klimax) in the outer narthex of the katholikon of Vatopedi, Mt Athos.³² It is also worth noting the representation of two noblemen with Mongolian characteristics, together with Greek noblemen and other foreigners in the same symposium.³³ A Mongol caftan with the “cloud collar motif” is encountered in the portrait of sebastocrator Ioannis Liverios in the narthex of the katholikon of the monastery of Lesnovo (fig. 7).³⁴

In addition to the garments and designs we also observe the presence of eastern symbols in the Byzantine court.

The two-headed eagle, symbol in the pre-Islamic Turkish Religion, was a symbol of the Seljuk sultan Alaeddin I Kaykobod (1219-1237), while it is also encountered in the repertoire of 13th c. Seljuk art.³⁵ As Pseudo-Kodinos informs us, the double-headed eagle was widely used in the Byzantine court. Its use was not a direct Seljuk influence on Byzantine art. Many scholars mistakenly considered the double-headed eagle as a loan from the time of the Komnenoi. This view cannot be true, as it would be inconceivable for two neighboring and competing states to use the same symbol at the same time. What happened is the adoption of the symbol of the double-headed eagle by Byzantium long after the defeat of the Seljuks in 1243 by the Mongols and their consequent vassalage. Byzantium used the Roman one-headed eagle as a symbol of power of

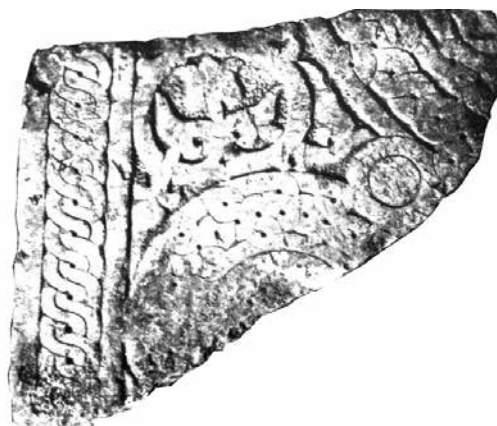


Fig. 14 Veroia, Collection of sculptures. Late byzantine slab with geometric and vegetal decoration (P. Androudis, 1999)

Сл. 14 Вероиа, Збирка скулптура.
Касновизантијска плоча са геометријском и
биљном декорацијом (П. Андрудис, 1999)

³¹ See Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks*, 320, 323 (fig. 24).

³² E. Tsigaridas, *Τα ψηφιδωτά και οι βυζαντινές τοιχογραφίες*, in: *Ιερά Μεγίστη Μονή Βατοπαιδίου. Παράδοση-Ιστορία-Τέχνη*, t. II, Mt Athos 1996, 263, 269, 275 (fig. 231), 339 (notes 71-74).

³³ Op. cit, 275 (fig. 231) and 339 (note 71). See also Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 91-93; Androudis, *Αραβουρρηματικές διακοσμήσεις*, 771- 793, esp. 778.

³⁴ For this costume see V. Aleksić, M. Gasparini, *The “Mongol” Cloud Collar of the Serbian Despot John Oliver: An Historical and Iconographic Investigation*, *The Journal of Transcultural Studies*, vol. 12, no 1 (2021), 1-30, with previous bibliography.

³⁵ See A.U. Peker, *The double-headed eagle of the Seljuks. A historical study*, MA Thesis, Bogaziçi University, Istanbul 1989; Idem, *The origins of the Seljukid double-headed eagle as a cosmological symbol*, in: *Art Turc/Turkish Art: Proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Turkish Art* (Geneva 17-23, 1995), Geneva 1999, 559-566; P. Androudis, *Origines et symbolique de l’aigle bicéphale des Turcs Seldjoukides et Artuquides de l’Asie Mineure (Anatolie)*, *Βυζαντικά* 19 (1999), 309-345, with bibliography.



Fig. 15 Ohrid, Church of Hagia Sophia. The upper part of the construction of the “ambo” in the naos (K. Petrov)

Сл. 15 Охрид, црква Св. Софија. Горњи део конструкције „амвона“ у наосу (К. Петров)

the emperor and moreover entered – rudimentarily – the world of Western heraldry, although it never adopted heraldry in the “Western” concept of the term.³⁶ Byzantine two-headed eagles are not depicted according to Eastern or Seljuk models. However, in areas adjacent to the Seljuk territory, such as Armenia, the Crimea of the Golden Horde Khanate (Altın Ordu), even on the slab from the fortification of *Pourtziou* (1324) in the walls of Trebizond, immured into the church of the Transfiguration in Kalamaria, Thessaloniki,³⁷ the double-headed eagle copied with high fidelity the Seljuk model.³⁸

A strong argument in favor of the elaboration of older and modern arabesque designs by the artists of the Palaiologan era is the coexistence, in the same work, of different styles, a “traditional byzantine” and a more “oriental” one, which reflects an “eclecticism” of the Byzantine art, also mentioned by the sources.

In our study of the late Byzantine sculpture in Mt Pelion, Thessaly, we recorded works with arabesque ornaments with coexistence of different techniques of carving (*champlevé*, low relief, etc.).³⁹

The *champlevé* works with wax mastic inlay and “oriental” decoration features in Macedonia and Thessaly have been systematically recorded by many researchers, including the author of the present study. Theocharis Pazaras even attributed these works dating back to about 1275 (reliefs of the Dormition of the Virgin in Episkopi Ano Volos,⁴⁰ of the

³⁶ D. Cernovodeanu, *Contributions à l'étude de l'héraldique byzantine et post-byzantine*, XVIe C.I.E.B., Wien 1981, Akten II /2, in: J.Ö.B. 32/2, 409-422; Idem, *Contributions à l'étude des origines lointaines de l'héraldique (Moyen Orient) et son développement du XIIIe au XVe siècles à Byzance et dans le Sud-Est Européen* (Recueil du XIVe Congrès International des Sciences Généalogique et Héraldique, Copenhague 1980), *Genealogica et Heraldica*, Copenhagen 1982, 339-358; Idem, *L'apparition des armoiries dans le sud-est européen*, in: *Les origines des armoiries* (Actes du Ite Colloque International d'Héraldique, Bressanone/Brixen 5-9. X. 1981), Paris 1983, 49-54.

³⁷ See P. Androudis, *Dalle avec aigle bicéphale en provenance de l'enceinte byzantine de Trébizonde*, ΔΧΑΕ, per. Δ', t. ΛΔ' (2013), 67-78.

³⁸ Androudis, *Dalle avec aigle bicéphale*.

³⁹ Idem, *Παρατηρήσεις στον υστεροβυζαντινό γλυπτό διάκοσμο*, 299-319.

⁴⁰ Idem, *Ο ναός της Επισκοπής Άνω Βόλου*, 85-98, with previous bibliography; Idem, *Sur les fragments d'une chaire épiscopale*, 143-168.



Fig. 16 Ohrid, Hagia Sophia, detail of the “ambo”, capital with champlévé technique (A. Grabar)

Сл. 16 Охрид, Св. Софија, детал „амбона“, капител (А. Гравирање)



Fig. 17: Ohrid, Hagia Sophia, Exonarthex, upper gallery. Capital with champlévé technique (P. Androudis)

сл. 17 Охрид, Аја Софија, Егзонартекс, горња галерија. Капитал П. Андрудис

Monastery of Oxeia Episkepsis in Makrinitisa, Pelion,⁴¹ prismatic lid of the sarcophagus of Georgios Kapandritis from Thessaloniki,⁴² slab in the floor of the Church of Panagia Paliophoritissa in Veroia) until 1310-1317 (doorframes and sculptures of the katholikon of the Monastery of Chilandar, Mt Athos [fig. 11],⁴³ “ambo” of the Old Metropolis of Veroia,⁴⁴ “ambo” of Hagia Sophia in Ohrid [1317, fig. 15, 16],⁴⁵ capitals in the two-lobed openings in the first floor of the

⁴¹ M. Kontogiannopoulou, *Τα βυζαντινά γλυπτά της Κοίμησης της Θεοτόκου και του Αγίου Αθανασίου στη Μακρινίτσα Πηλίου*, MA Thesis, Department of History and Archaeology, Aristotle University, Thessaloniki 2000; Androudis, *Παρατηρήσεις στον υστεροβυζαντινό γλυπτό διάκοσμο*.

⁴² For this lid, now in the monastery of Vlatadon see A. Xyngopoulos, *Το κάλυμμα της σαρκοφάγου του Γεωργίου Καπανδρίτου*, *ΕΕΒΣ* 11 (1935), 346-360; Idem, *Το ελλείπον τεμάχιον εκ του καλύμματος της σαρκοφάγου του Γεωργίου Καπανδρίτου*, *ΕΕΒΣ* 16 (1940), 156-159; Pazaras, *Ανάγλυφες σαρκοφάγοι*, 35, pl. 25.

⁴³ Pazaras, *Τα ανάγλυφα θυρώματα*, 147-164.

⁴⁴ Idem, *Πρόταση αναπαράστασης*, t. 1, 251-254 and t. II, pl. 136-147.

⁴⁵ For the ambo, donation of the Greek archbishop Gregorios and its reconstruction see K. Petrov, *Dekorativna plastika na spomenitse od XIV vek vo Makedonia*, *Godišen Zbornik na Filozofskiot Fakultet* 15 (1963), 199-286.



Fig. 18 Stomion, Thessaly, Monastery of Hagios Dimitrios, slab with champlévé decoration (P. Androudis)

Сл. 18 Стомион, Тесалија, манастир Св. Димитрие, плоча са декорацијом (П. Андроудис)

outer narthex of the same church, fig. 17),⁴⁶ to a marble sculpture workshop from Thessaloniki that operated in Macedonia and Thrace.⁴⁷ The view, although with no solid base, was generally accepted.⁴⁸ A marble slab with a griffin, now in the Metropolitan Museum of New York (fig. 10), although identical in its main theme with the griffins of the longitudinal slab from the sarcophagus of Anna Maliassene (fig. 9), was attributed “... to Central Greece or the Balkans ...”!⁴⁹ In the sculptural stock with the same artistic repertoire we could also include the lintel with monograms of Patriarch Niphon of the western doorframe in Holy Apostles of Thessaloniki,⁵⁰ the lintel of a doorframe in the Byzantine Museum of Thessaloniki,⁵¹ known and unpublished reliefs from Veroia that may have belonged to the sculptural decoration of the renovated in 14th c. Metropolis of Veroia (figs. 13, 14).⁵² In the narthex of same church we attrib-

⁴⁶ Personal remark. These sculptures remain unpublished.

⁴⁷ Pazaras, *Reliefs of a sculpture workshop*, 159-182. See also Pazaras, *Η γλυπτική στη Μακεδονία*, 478-479.

⁴⁸ Melvani, *Late Byzantine Sculpture*.

⁴⁹ S. Brooks, *Relief depicting a Griffin*, Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261-1557) (Exposition Catalogue, Metropolitan Museum, New York, 23 March-5 July 2004), N. York 2004, 112-113 (no 58). The griffin from the slab of MET doesn't have wings which finish in dragon heads and the execution of the relief is totally different from the slabs from Episkopi. In the slab of MET the background presents foliate designs. As for the basket-weave pattern of the frame, it was suggested that is “... likely inspired by textile designs ...”. It seems that the griffins in the slabs from Pelion and N. York copied similar prototypes, most probably textiles, which could have differed in details. Moreover, the execution of the griffins from Pelion is more elaborated, elegant and probably closest to the prototype. There is no doubt that the marble slabs from Pelion attest a Greek sculptor of great craftsmanship. See P. Androudis, *Evidence on the role of textiles as a medium of ornament transmission between Seljuk Anatolian and Late Byzantine Art. The Case study of two marble slabs from Episkopi, Ano Volos, with double-headed eagles fighting dragons*, Niš and Byzantium 15 (2018), 245.

⁵⁰ For this doorframe we are preparing a short article.

⁵¹ Unpublished. This work, although sculpted in champlévé, did not receive colored mastic.

⁵² Unpublished. For the Old Metropolis of Veroia see: G. Skiadaresis, *Η Παλαιά Μητρόπολη της Βέροιας στο πλαίσιο της βυζαντινής αρχιτεκτονικής*, Unpublished Doctoral

uted a square marble basin of holy water with arabesque decoration (fig. 12),⁵³ but adapted to Byzantine aesthetic standards. It is worth noting that the shape of the basin seems to have its patterns in corresponding works of Romanesque churches of the 12th c.⁵⁴ All the above testify to the fertile and assimilative breath of Byzantine art and to one or more marble sculpture workshops of high artistic quality. Regarding the time range of works with “arabesque” elements in Macedonia and Thessaly, we believe that it could have been extended earlier, at least until 1246-1258, if the dating for the preserved part of the funerary plaque of Ioannis Komnenos Kammytzis from Veroia is correct.⁵⁵ From its champlévé decoration only its frame, the upright front paw of a lion and a small vegetal ornament survive.

The *terminus ante quem* for champlévé marble sculptures in Macedonia could be set in the middle of the 14th c., if we take into account the works (chancel barriers, see fig. 18, window imposts, capitals) from the katholikon of the Monastery of Hagios Demetrios in Stomion (former Tsagezi, in Thessaly), at the southernmost border of the jurisdiction of the Metropolis of Thessaloniki:⁵⁶ We therefore see a particularly long production time range for champlévé works. Consequently the attribution of all these works to a single marble workshop could not be valid any more.

Questions also arise from the different reading of some inscriptions and monograms, as those in the sarcophagus slab on the floor of the church of Panagia Paliophoritissa in Veroia.⁵⁷ T. Pazaras read them as “Διακόνου Κλήμεντος” (= Deacon Clement),⁵⁸ while A. Papazotos read “Δούκ(α)ν Ληζ(ι)κ(όν)” (= Duke

Thesis, Department of History and Archaeology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, t. I-II, Thessaloniki 2016.

⁵³ P. Androudis, A. Semoglou, *Μαρμάρινη λεκάνη αγιασμού από τη Βέροια* (unpublished presentation in the Conference of ΑΕΜΘ). For the basin see Papazotos *Η λεκάνη αγιασμού*, 517-518, fig. 5; G. Pallis, *Λίθινες φιάλες και κολυμβήθρες με ανάγλυφο διάκοσμο της μέσης και ύστερης βυζαντινής περιόδου από την Ελλάδα*, Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας, περ. Δ', τ. ΛΓ' (2012), 121 (fig. 2); Androudis, *Αραβουργηματικές διακοσμώσεις*, 782-783, 791; Idem, *Τέχνη και Αρχιτεκτονική*, 783-784 and 823-824 (figs. 2025-2031).

⁵⁴ Of the numerous works of this kind that are found in Belgium, France and England, we could mention the basins in the churches of Sainte-Gertrude à Gentimes (Brabant, Belgium), Sainte-Séverine-en-Condroz (Liège, Belgium), Saint-Pierre Montdidier (France). For the basins of the Romanesque period in Northern Europe see C. Drake, *The Romanesque Fonts of Northern Europe and Scandinavia*, Rochester, N.Y. 2002.

⁵⁵ C. Tsioumi, *Μαρμάρινη βυζαντινή επιγραφή από τη Βέροια*, Κληρονομία 3 (1973), 331-341; Pazaras *Ανάγλυφες σαρκοφάγοι*, 25, no. 10; A. Papazotos, *Η Βέροια και οι ναοί της (11ος-18ος αιώνας)*, Athens 1994, 94-95.

⁵⁶ V. Sythiakaki-Kritsimali, *Τα γλυπτά του καθολικού της Μονής Αγίου Δημητρίου στο Στόμιο (Τσάγεζι)*, in: S. Gouloulis, S. Sdrolia (ed.), *Άγιος Δημήτριος Στομίου. Ιστορία-Τέχνη- Ιστορική Γεωγραφία του μοναστηριού και της περιοχής των εκβολών του Πηνειού*, Larisa 2010, 123-154, where the author proposed their attribution to the Middle Byzantine period. For our different dating of these sculptures see P. Androudis, *Γλυπτά από το υστεροβυζαντινό καθολικό της Μονής του Αγίου Δημητρίου στο Στόμιο (Τσάγεζι)*, Αχιλλίου Πόλις 2 (November 2019), Larisa 2019, 177-196.

⁵⁷ Length: 1, 81 m, width: 87 cm, thickness: 3 cm. See Pazaras *Ανάγλυφες σαρκοφάγοι*, 26, pl. 10β; Papazotos *Η Βέροια*, 103.

⁵⁸ Pazaras *Ανάγλυφες σαρκοφάγοι*, 26.



Fig. 19 Monastery of Dionysiou, Mt Athos. Late byzantine wooden doors from the old katholikon (P. Androudis)

Сл. 19 Манастир Дионисије, Света Гора. Позновизантијска дрвена врата са старог католикона (П. Андрудис)

Lyzikos).⁵⁹ We agree with the latter reading, since a simple deacon could not have an elaborate tomb. Papazotos based his reading on 14th c. prosopography of Veroia. We know Michael Lyzikos, owner of estates in Veroia⁶⁰ and Georgios Lyzikos, who in 1328 handed the acropolis of Thessaloniki to Andronikos III Palaiologos and died imprisoned by Serbs in Vodena.⁶¹ The Lyzikoi were probably high officials who accompanied the Seljuk sultan İzzeddin II Keykavus when he fled with his followers to Constantinople and later to Veroia.⁶² We do not know anything about the works of art and on their aesthetic preferences certainly related to their Anatolian origin. The existence of a champlévé slab with a pointed arch attributed by T. Pazaras to the pulpit of the Old Cathedral (façade of its pedestal) and the shallow spaces in its upper part,⁶³ could lead to Islamic models. The cauldron-shaped capitals of the pulpit, also of Islamic

⁵⁹ Papazotos *H Béroia*, 103.

⁶⁰ E. Zachariadou, *Οι χριστιανοί απόγονοι του Ιζζεδίν Καϊκαούς Β' στη Βέροια*, *Μακεδονικά* 6 (1964-1965), 73; G. Theoharidis, *Μια διαθήκη και μια δίκη βυζαντινή*, Thessaloniki 1962, 34; G. Chionidis, *Ιστορία της Βεροίας*, t. II, Thessaloniki 1970; Papazotos, *H Béroia*, 103.

⁶¹ See Papazotos, *H Béroia*, 1994, 103. For Georgios Lyzikos see also *PLP* no. 15956; Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks*, 170.

⁶² On the topic see P. Wittek, Yazijioghlu 'Ali on the Christian Turks of the *Dobruja*, *BSOAS* XIV/3 (1952), 639-668; V. Laurent, *Une famille turque au service de Byzance. Les Mélikès*, *BZ* 49 (1956), 349-368; E. Zachariadou, *Οι χριστιανοί απόγονοι*, 62-74; R. Shukurov, *Семейство □Изз ал-Дина Каї-Кавуса II в Византии*, *VV* 67 [92] (2008), 89-116; Idem, *The Oriental Margins of the Byzantine World: A Prosopographical Perspective*, in: J. Herrin, G. Saint-Guillain (ed.), *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, Aldershot 2011, 180-190; Idem, *The Byzantine Turks*, 100-131.

⁶³ Pazaras, *Πρόταση αναπαράστασης*, t. I, 253, t. II, pl. 139. 10 and pl. 143. 16.

Fig. 20 Monastery of Vatopedi, Mt Athos. Detail of the byzantine revetment of a postbyzantine icon of Christ Pantokrator (P. Androudis)

Сл. 20 Манастир Ватопед, Света Гора. Детаљ византијске оплаге поствизантијске иконе Христа Панτοкратора (П. Андрудис)



origin,⁶⁴ are also encountered in the “ambo” of Ohrid (figs. 15, 16)⁶⁵ and in the Monastery of Chilandar in Mt Athos.⁶⁶ In the Islamic world, the same form of capitals is observed in the Great Mosque in Malatya (Turkey),⁶⁷ and in capitals from Ayyubid Syria and Mamluk Egypt (13th-14th c.).

The presence of “eastern” elements in the late Byzantine sculpture of Veroia combined with the names of Christianized (?) Seljuk Turks⁶⁸ in the wider area, could argue in favor of a charming, but unproven hypothesis, on the existence of “Seljuk” art forms or similar aesthetic preferences in 14th c. Byzantine Macedonia.⁶⁹

In illuminated manuscripts, the individual “oriental” elements and figures in the frontispieces and next to them are numerous. We find, for example, a lion, a dragon and two double-headed eagles in the frontispiece of the Gospel no. 16 that John VI Kantakouzenos donated (in 1340/1341) to Vatopedi (fig. 4).⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Op.cit., t. A', 251, t. B', pl. 137.6a-δ.

⁶⁵ Grabar, *Sculptures byzantines*, 149-150, no 156a-c, pl. CXXXVIII,

⁶⁶ In the katholikon (templon, capitals), in the well of St. Sava, as well as in the portico of the cemetery church.

⁶⁷ See R. Arik, O. Arik (ed.), *Tiles. Treasures of Anatolian Soil. Tiles of the Seljuk and Beylik Periods*, Istanbul 2008, 65-66, fig. 33, 34.

⁶⁸ As Rustam Shukurov refers to them. Personally I believe that they were not “Christianised Turks” (since there is a not a single mention in the sources concerning their supposed baptism), but rather Turkish-speaking Christians from Cappadocia, like the *Karamanlis* of the modern era.

⁶⁹ Androudis, *Αραβουργηματικές διακοσμήσεις*, 784.

⁷⁰ E. Lamberz, *Νεότερες έρευνες στις βιβλιοθήκες του Αγίου Όρους. Αποτελέσματα και συμπεράσματα*, in: Διεθνές Συμπόσιο το Άγιον Όρος. Χθες- σήμερα- αύριο, Θεσσαλονίκη 29 Οκτωβρίου- 1 Νοεμβρίου 1993, Thessaloniki 1996, 157-165; Idem, *Βιβλιογράφοι και*

Arabesque motifs (particularly in bosses) bear also the late byzantine metal icon revetments from Mt Athos (see fig. 20) and from icon collection of the Ohrid Gallery (mainly from the Church of Panagia Perivleptos).⁷¹ Knob-shaped bosses are also found in other works of Palaiologan metalwork,⁷² as well as in wooden sculptures, like the 14th c. doors of the ancient katholikon of the monastery of Dionysiou, Mt Athos (fig. 19).

In the painted decorations (frescoes, manuscripts) we also find the ornament of Seljuk origin with cross shape and eight-pointed tiles (see figs. 3, 5).⁷³ The same type of decoration is found in the inferior decorative zones of the frescoes of Hagios Nikolaos at Phountoukli, Rhodes.⁷⁴ Although the tetraconch church and its frescoes are still attributed to 1497/1498, we strongly believe that they should be dated to the early 14th c., before the end of the byzantine rule, since the dignity of *Logothetes* of its founder Nikolaos Vardoanes does not exist in the Dodecanese within the realm of the Order of the Knights Hospitaller.

The “loan” of motifs and elements of Seljuk and Islamic art is also observed in Byzantine architecture. A typical example is the angular *disepsilon* brick ornament in the ceramic panels of some 13th c. Seljuk buildings, e.g. in the tiled decoration of the niche of the mihrab in Şırçalı mescid in Konya),⁷⁵ which, could have been transformed into the well-known angular and curved ceramic *disepsilon* of the buildings of the Palaiologan period.⁷⁶ Also the ceramic *phialostomia*, long before their appearance in Byzantium, are to be found, in similar forms, in Seljuk ceramic seals of the 11th-12th centuries from eastern Iran.⁷⁷

Arabesque decorations are also attested in 14th and early 15th c. Serbian art and architecture.⁷⁸ Especially in the katholikon of the monastery of Dečani

βιβλιογραφικά εργαστήρια, 85-105.

⁷¹ On the icon revetments from Ohrid see Grabar, *Les revêtements*, 35-41, fig. 26-37; *Trésors médiévaux*, 48- 51, 62-63, 74-81, 86-91.

⁷² Loverdou-Tsigarida, *Βυζαντινή Μικροτεχνία*, 465, fig. 401, 402.

⁷³ Arık, Arık, *Tiles*, with many examples of tiles of this type. We also found the same ornament in an unpublished fresco of the late 13th c. on the ground floor of the tower of St. George in the Monastery of Chilandar, Mt Athos (personal remark).

⁷⁴ A. Orlandos, *Βυζαντινά και Μεταβυζαντινά Μνημεία της Ρόδου*, Αρχαίον των Βυζαντινών Μνημείων της Ελλάδος VI (1948), 99-106; S. Gerstel, *Crossing Borders: The Ornamental Decoration of St. Nicholas at Phountoukli at Rhodes*, in: S. Brodbeck, A. Nikolaïdès, P. Pagès, B. Pitarakis, I. Rapti, É. Yota (eds.), *Mélanges Catherine Jolivet-Lévy* [TM 20/2 (2016)], 155-169; N. Mastrochristos, *Ο ναός του Αγίου Νικολάου στο Φουντουκλί Ρόδου*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, University of Athens, Athens 2019, 194-199.

⁷⁵ See Ş. Yetkin, *Anadolu'da Türk Çini Sanatının Gelişmesi*, İstanbul 1972, 101-102; Ö. Bakırer, *Onüç ve Ondördüncü Yüzyıllarda Anadolu Mihrabları*, Ankara 1976, pl. 46, fig. 107, 108; A. Çakmakçoğlu- Kuru, *Ortaçağ Anadolu Türk Mimarisinde Hz. Ali Yazıları*, Millî Folklor 19, s. 74 (2007), 61, fig. 5, plan 5.

⁷⁶ For these *disepsilon* see K. Tsouris, *Ο κεραμοπλαστικός διάκοσμος των υστεροβυζαντινών μνημείων της ΒΑ Ελλάδος*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Department of History and Archaeology, Aristotle University, Kavala 1988, 117- 120 and plan 4α, β.

⁷⁷ See O. Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, London 2004, 149-151.

⁷⁸ V. Božinović, *Tracing inspiration: A comparative study between motifs in Moravian sculptural decoration and Anatolian Art from the Late 14th and early 15th century*, Niš

we can find an elegant wooden throne with vegetal decorations and lions.⁷⁹ The same patterns can also be found in the decoration of the wooden coffin (reliquary) of King Stefan Uroš III Dečanski (ca. 1343), also preserved in the same monastery.⁸⁰

Conclusions

The elements of “arabesque” (sometimes even “Seljukid” style) form an important part of the decorative repertoire in almost all categories of works of art of the Palaiologan period. In Late Byzantine art, the arabesque ornament holds a prominent place and is sometimes linked to the garden of Paradise, as the poet Manuel Philes informs us while referring to the ornaments of an icon: « ... Χρυσήν θεωρῶ τήν Ἐδέμ τῆς Εἰκόνοσ ... ».⁸¹

It is difficult to understand how the above elements reached Byzantine art and were incorporated into its repertoire. It has previously been argued that this “import” was made through the precious silk textiles that arrived in Byzantium through the Silk Road. We believe that these Palaiologan arabesques are either evolutions of older motifs from the Komnenian period, or imports and adaptations from Islamic (mainly Seljuk) and Mongol art of the East. It is worth mentioning, of course, that similar decorative trends and aesthetic preferences characterize works of the Palaiologan art of Constantinople (mainly illuminated manuscripts), at least since the 1280's.

The topic has a broad range, with multiple extensions in many works of Palaiologan art (such as woodcarvings) and certainly is not limited to the present work. However, for the better study of arabesque ornaments and designs of “oriental inspiration” or “oriental origin” in Palaiologan art, it is necessary to prepare a relevant detailed list. Each work with the above characteristics, apart from the influences that might have received, has its own special history, waiting to be revealed through the study of its well-hidden elements and secrets within the arabesque ornament.

and Byzantium XVIII (Niš 2020), 371-380.

⁷⁹ Op.cit., 372, fig. 1.

⁸⁰ D. Popović, *Shrine of King Stefan Uroš III Dečanski*, in: H.C. Evans (ed.), *Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, Exhibition Catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press 2004, 112-113.

⁸¹ See *Manuelis Phile Carmina*, ed. E. Miller, reprint, Amsterdam 1967, no. CLVI, p. 65-66.

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ДЕКОРАЦИЈЕ СТИЛА „АРАБЕСКА” У КАСНОВИЗАНТИЈСКОЈ УМЕТНОСТИ

„Арабески“ украси у касновизантијској уметности (крај 13. - прва половина 15. века) имају апстрактан, геометријски распоред и сусрећу се у рукописним минијатурама, на фресама, скулптурама, текстилу, сребрних икона и друго. Нема сумње да су неки од ових украса модификације старијих комнинских модела и прилагођавања естетским преференцијама доба палеолога. Други орнаменти арабеске Палеолога одражавају директне утицаје исламске уметности тог периода, као што је случај мермерних скулптура из Македоније.