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Τα καθολικά των μονών Ηορονο και Ραπραά και η
θήεση τους στη μεταβυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική

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THE KATHOLIKON CHURCHES OF THE MONASTERIES OF HOPOVO AND PAPRAĆA AND THEIR PLACE IN POST-BYZANTINE ARCHITECTURE

Η αρχιτεκτονική των καθολικών των μονών Ηοποβο και Παπραća, οι οποίες χρονολογούνται στο δεύτερο μισό του 16ου αιώνα, παρουσιάζεται αρχικά στο σύνολό της και κατόπιν εξετάζονται τα ιδιαίτερα χαρακτηριστικά γνωρίσματά της. Βάσει αυτών, και του ιστορικού πλαισίου της εποχής, εξετάζονται τα ζητήματα που αφορούν στην προέλευση του αρχιτεκτονικού τύπου τους και της μορφολογίας των όψεών τους, η οποία αναζητείται στη ναοδομία της μεταβυζαντινής εποχής.

This paper deals with two monastic churches from the second half of the sixteenth century. It briefly presents their architecture as a whole and then focuses on its characteristic features. Based on these traits and on certain historical circumstances, questions related to the origins of their plans and exteriors are discussed. Models are sought in ecclesiastical building practices of the post-Byzantine period, i.e. during the period when the katholikon churches of the monasteries of Hopovo and Papraća were constructed.

Λέξεις κλειδιά

16ος αιώνας, σερβική εκκλησιαστική αρχιτεκτονική, αθωνικός τρίκογχος, βαλκανική χερσόνησος.

Keywords

16th century; Serbian ecclesiastical architecture; Athonite triconch type; Balkans.

Architecture and art from the period of Turkish rule constitute a significant part of the overall cultural history of the Serbs¹. At the same time, they are also an important part of the international culture of Christian lands in the Balkans as part of the Ottoman Empire. From the time of the loss of state sovereignty to the restoration of the Serbian church organization (the

Patriarchate of Peć), church architecture followed the general trends and possibilities dictated by the limited material resources and the social circumstances of the time. This period was marked by the building of churches with very simple plans and modest architecture. Their construction kept alive the principles of old building practices. The prolonged politics of independence in regions north of the Sava and the Danube, in Southern Hungary, where the Serbs had fled from the Turkish conquests, provided the framework for the building practice of the last decades of the 15th and the first decades of the 16th century. Unfortunately, only a small number of churches erected in that period remain, some in greatly altered form resulting from subsequent restorations². Therefore, it is not possible to observe the

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** I would like to offer my deepest gratitude to my esteemed colleagues, prof. Jelena Erdeljan and Nikos Tsitsimelis, for the translation of this text.

¹ That long period was marked by several major historical events: the fall of the Serbian Despotate (1459), the fall of Belgrade (1521), the Turkish conquest of Hungary (1526), the renewal of the Serbian church organization (1557), the Turkish-Austrian war at the close of the 17th century which resulted in the Great Migration of the Serbs (1690). This event marks the end of the period during which Serbian art and architecture relied exclusively on medieval tradition. See *Istorija srpskog naroda*, III, 1, 2, Belgrade 1993.

² V. Korać, "Stara crkva u Slankamenu i njeno mesto u razvitku srpske arhitekture" (The old church in Slankamen and its place in the development of Serbian architecture)", *ZLU* 6 (1970), 291-312. M. Šuput, *Srpska arhitektura u doba turske vlasti - 1459-*

currents and characteristics of this building practice, interrupted by Turkish-Hungarian conflicts, as a whole. According to the present state of our knowledge on the subject, and in relation to the Morava school, that architecture can be called "post-Morava school" –transformed in a number of elements, ways, except for the general spatial schemes. We know for certain that the first structures played an important role in the development of monastic life in the region north of the Sava and the Danube, in particular on Fruška Gora where, in time, a large group of monasteries were founded and functioned as the center of spiritual life under Turkish occupation³. At the close of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century building activity in the central and broader regions of the original sovereign Serbian state was reduced mainly to the construction of smaller churches and of an almost insignificant number of somewhat larger church buildings⁴.

The restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557 laid the foundations of awareness that building and artistic activities were possible. The second half of the 16th century witnessed an all encompassing cultural renewal and a flourishing of art and architecture. This resulted not only in the restoration of the damaged monasteries and churches from the period of the state's independence, endangered to various extent, but also in the erection of a number of smaller churches as well as larger buildings of complex spatial programs. Observed as a whole, with the necessary note that the mentioned renewal lacked both a common chronological inception and stylistic unity, it can be seen as a movement of diverse conceptions, as a series of specific entities

1690 (*Serbian architecture in the era of Turkish rule – 1459-1690*), Belgrade 1984, 43-51. V. Matić, *Arhitektura fruškogorskih manastira. Kasnosrednjovekovne crkvene građevine (Architecture of the Fruška Gora monasteries. Late medieval church buildings)*, Novi Sad 1984. B. Kulić, *Manastir Rakovac*, Belgrade 1999. M. Timotijević, *Manastir Krušedol*, 1-2, Belgrade 2008. S. Čurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans from Diocletian to Süleyman the Magnificent*, New Haven – London 2010, 787-789, with earlier bibliography.

³ The idea of Fruška Gora as a holy monastic community developed and spread only in the 18th century and gained its full meaning in the 19th century. From then on, in literature it is referred to as the Holy Mountain. See Timotijević, op.cit. (n. 2), 103-104.

⁴ Čurčić, op.cit. (n. 2), with earlier bibliography.

displaying particular spatial and visual traits⁵. The architecture created in the vast region under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć in the second half of the 16th and during the following century, was determined by tradition in every aspect, just like post-Byzantine architecture in general⁶. A direct emulation of older architecture, otherwise an often repeated phenomenon in Byzantine art and architecture, was not necessarily marked by a decrease in the value of the structures produced, nor by simple copying. The models themselves offered ample ground for the production of novel solutions. During the period in question, emulation implied a continuation of old concepts of architecture and persistent upkeep of proven values of the architectural past. This provides indubitable proof of the existence of a strong and dedicated conviction among the milieu for which this architecture was intended: to remain beyond the reach of the religiously and culturally foreign Islamic world. The ktetors, mostly from the upper hierarchy of the church and the monastic world, but also from the lower strata of society⁷, were intent on preserving their own cultural independence.

The lack of new takes on architecture among Christians under Turkish rule narrowed down the field of possible innovation. True and large-scale novelties were few in number. This led to a conservatism typical of all Balkan regions, including Greece where building activity was most prolific and diverse in a typological,

⁵ M. Šuput, *Spomenici srpskog crkvenog graditeljstva XVI-XVII vek (Monuments of the Serbian church building XVI-XVII century)*, Belgrade 1991. S. Petković, *Srpska umetnost u XVI i XVII veku (Serbian art in the 16th and 17th centuries)*, Belgrade 1995, 16-20, 64-77. V. Korać – M. Šuput, *Arhitektura vizantijskog sveta (Architecture of the Byzantine world)*, Belgrade 1998, 395-399.

⁶ M. Šuput, "Smisao tradicije u srpskoj arhitekturi postvizantijskog doba" (The meaning of the tradition in the Serbian architecture of the post-Byzantine era), *Leskovački Zbornik XXXI* (1991), 5-15. Ch. Bouras, "The Byzantine Tradition in the Church Architecture of the Balkans in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", J. J. Yiannias (ed.), *The Byzantine Tradition After the Fall of Constantinople*, Charlottesville – London 1991, 107-145.

⁷ S. Petković, "Art and Patronage in Serbia During the Early Period of Ottoman Rule (1450-1600)", *ByzF XVI* (1991), 401-414, with earlier bibliography. S. Kalopissi-Verti, "Church Foundations by Entire Villages (13th-16th c.). A Short Note", *ZRVI 44/1* (2007), 333-340.



Fig. 1. Serbia, monastery of Hopovo, church of St. Nicholas. General view from the southwest.

constructive and morphological sense⁸. The actions of the church which was the sole institution bearing the continuity of the lost sovereign states and keeper of their tradition were consistent and decisive.

However, although it was based on older models, we should not overlook the fact that the architecture of the largest as well as of those churches smaller in scale

achieved true architectural standards of creativity⁹. It is precisely because of this creative component that it preserved the virtues of inherited architecture: a steadfast construction of space, characteristic forms, elements of structure and the noble complex of structure and measure.

The churches of the monasteries of Hopovo (Fig. 1) and Papraća (Fig. 2) appeared as part of the above mentioned architectural framework. Both rank as the largest among the monuments of their times and respective

⁸ Έκκλησίες στην Ελλάδα μετά την Άλωση, 6 vols, ed. Ch. Bouras, Athens 1979-2002. S. Vojadjić, Συμβολή στην ιστορία της εκκλησιαστικής αρχιτεκτονικής της κεντρικής Ελλάδος κατά το 16ο αιώνα. Οι μονές του Αγίου Βησσαρίωνος (Δούσιχο) και του Οσίου Νικάνορος (Ζάβορδα), Athens 2000. Ch. Bouras, Βυζαντινή και μεταβυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική στην Ελλάδα, Athens 2001, with earlier bibliography.

⁹ Korać – Šuput, op.cit. (n. 5), 389-399. On differing opinions regarding Byzantine architecture, see Bouras, op.cit. (n. 6), 119.

regions. The katholikon of Hopovo is, whatsmore, a creation of the highest merit. Their significance is reflected also in the impact they exerted on the architecture of their respective and broader regions¹⁰. The monastery of Hopovo¹¹ with the church of St. Nicholas is located on Fruška Gora, in the vicinity of the town of Irig. The construction of the katholikon in 1576 as an effort of several doubtlessly wealthy ktetors is attested by the inscription on the western portal.

The monastery of Papraća with a katholikon dedicated to the Annunciation to the Virgin is located in north-eastern Bosnia¹². It was built on the bank of the eponymous river, close to the town of Šeković¹³. The time of construction, as well as the ktetors, are unknown and its chronology is, thus, determined indirectly. Having in mind its monumental dimensions (14,45×30 m.) it could have been built around the time of the construction of Hopovo (1576), considering the favorable circumstances, or the large three-nave basilica of Piva monastery (1573-1586)¹⁴. Papraća was probably built at approximately the same time, that is in the 1570s.¹⁵

The churches of both Hopovo and Papraća have a single dome and belong to the Athonite triconch type¹⁶. Their architectural plans and spatial organization are

very similar. Papraća, as opposed to Hopovo, has a spacious exonarthex (Figs 3, 4)¹⁷. Undeniable typological analogies between the katholikon churches of Hopovo and Papraća and the churches of the so-called Morava school has prompted scholars to search for specific models in Morava architecture on which they could have been based. The two largest Morava churches, Ravanica (1376-1377) and Manasija-Resava (1407-1418), have been regarded as such models¹⁸. However, there are several reasons to question such a possibility. Firstly, there is no written record testifying whether the builders modeled their work on any specific structure, even less on buildings of such antiquity. Such a choice would have to be due to quite particular reasons, such as those documented by reliable written sources as is the case with some medieval and later churches (Banjska, Kovilj)¹⁹. We should also keep in mind the unfavorable historical circumstances, with the frequent migrations of the Christian population and massive settlement of Muslims, which could not sustain such a hypothesis. On the other hand, considering the interpretations regarding models and followers, introduced to historiography by R. Krautheimer and G. Bandmann²⁰, although they refer to a broad range of symbolic, ideological and other motifs, it would be very difficult to prove that the churches in question were built after any single particular model. Finally, a comparison between the spatial programs of the katholika of Hopovo and Papraća with Morava style cross-in-square type churches with lateral conchs²¹

¹⁰ Šuput, op.cit. (n. 2), 56-57, 83.

¹¹ In historiography, Hopovo is also called Novo Hopovo because an older, now destroyed monastery lays in its vicinity. A new one was constructed in its place in the 18th century. V. Matić, *Manastir Novo Hopovo*, Belgrade 2010, with earlier bibliography. B. Kulić – N. Srećkov, *Manastiri Fruške Gore*, Novi Sad 1994, 117-130. Petković, op.cit. (n. 5), 155-157.

¹² Šuput, op.cit. (n. 5), 188-192.

¹³ The proximity of the town of Zvornik is the point of reference for its location. However, today its location is associated with the somewhat closer town of Šeković, according to the documentation of the Committee for the protection of national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo.

¹⁴ Šuput, op.cit. (n. 5), 202-207.

¹⁵ Čurčić, op.cit. (n. 2), 789, is of the opinion that Papraća was not constructed much later than 1550.

¹⁶ P. Mylonas, "L'architecture du Mont Athos", *Thesaurismata* 2 (1963), 18-84. For a new interpretation of the origins of Athonite triconch churches, see A. Tantsis, "The so-called 'Athonite' type of church and two shrines of the Theotokos in Constantinople", *Zograf* 34 (2010), 3-11. S. Mamaloukos, "A contribution to the study of the 'Athonite' church of Byzantine architecture", *Zograf* 35 (2011), 39-50.

¹⁷ Čurčić, op.cit. (n. 2), fig. 902, shows the plan of Papraća without the exonarthex although conservation works and related research never indicated that the exonarthex was added at a later date. See Z. Kajmaković, "Odsjaj moraske umetnosti u Bosni", *L'école de la Morava et son temps*, ed. V. J. Đurić, Belgrade 1972, 301.

¹⁸ Kajmaković, op.cit. (n. 18), 301-304. Šuput, op.cit. (n. 5), 64-77.

¹⁹ M. Šuput, *Monastery Banjska*, Belgrade 2003, 22. Eadem, *Crkva manastira Resave kao graditeljski uzor, Manastir Resava. Istorija i umetnost (Church of the Resava Monastery as a architectural master, Resava Monastery. History and art)*, Despotovac 1995, 135-160.

²⁰ R. Krautheimer, *Introduction to an iconography of Medieval and Renaissance art. Studies in Early Christian and Renaissance Art*, New York 1969, 115-150. G. Bandmann, *Architektur als Bedeutungs Träger*, Berlin 1978.

²¹ For Morava school architecture, see V. Ristić, *Moravska arhitektura*, Kruševac 1996.



Fig. 2. Bosnia, monastery of Papraća, church of the Annunciation. General view from the southwest.

reveals certain differences between the two. Hopovo and Papraća have an additional eastern bay between the altar space and the space beneath the dome (Figs 3, 4) which makes their plan similar to the spatial solution of the katholikon of Hilandar. We should also point out the difference in concept between the central, main spaces of the katholika of Hopovo and Papraća and those of Morava style churches. As opposed to the Morava triconchs in which it takes on the form of an elongated rectangle, passed on from Serbian architecture of the previous period, in Hopovo and Papraća this space is almost square. This, too, points to Athonite models²². As

²² V. Korać, "Arhitektura katolikna manastira Hilandara između Atosa, Srbije i Carigrada" (Architecture of the Catholic Monastery of Hilandar between Athos, Serbia and Constantinople), *Osam vekova Hilandara*, ed. V. Korać, Belgrade 2000, 457-466,

for the exterior, we can only speak about Hopovo, because the exterior appearance of Papraća is not original (Figs 5, 6)²³. The facade of Hopovo which reflects simply

fig. 4. B. Vulović, "Učešće Hilandara i tradicije u formiranju moravskog stila" (The role of Hilandar and of the Serbian tradition in the formation of the Morava style), *L'école de la Morava et son temps*, op.cit. (n. 17), 169-174, figs 3, 4. Mamaloukos, op.cit. (n. 16), figs 1, 3 A, B.

²³ The monastery and the church were seriously damaged at the end of the 17th century; as a result, the monastery was abandoned between 1717 and 1729. The church was first restored after 1853 and later in 1861. This second restoration probably gave it the appearance it had until 1985 when the mortar was taken off the facades, along with corbel friezes of Saracen arches. The dome, tambour carré and lateral niches received a new coat of mortar. The facades, tambour carré and lateral niches were given friezes of arcades. A wooden porch was raised in front of the western façade.



Fig. 3. Serbia, monastery of Hopovo, church of St. Nicholas. Axonometric section.

and directly the entirety of its monumental space (Fig. 8) displays significant differences in relation to the decorative architecture of the Morava school. The general

For information on the mentioned works and photographs of the church's present-day appearance I relied on the documentation of the above-mentioned Committee (see *op.cit.*, n. 13). I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. M. Mulović-Handan once again for her collegial assistance.

structure of the facades of Hopovo built in roughly cut blocks of stone and brick, has a horizontal direction accentuated also by a stone moulded stone cornice. The facades of Morava churches, as is well known, display a vertical pull in their decorative system. Whatsmore, the architectural decoration of the facades of Hopovo has none of the polychromy of brick and low relief stone decoration of the Morava churches which represents the most valuable innovation of their architectural



Fig. 4. Serbia, monastery of Papraća, church of the Annunciation. Axonometric section.

identity²⁴. The facades are divided into two zones. The upper zone is treated meticulously while the lower one stands without any decoration. The architectural composition of the facades consists of blind arcades applied to the upper zones and the lateral sides of the tambour carré. They are constructed with brick, topped by capitals, and rest on shallow pilasters. The arches of the arcades have approximately the same span and are symmetrically distributed in a regular rhythm (Fig. 7). This indicates a true observance of the real meaning of the architectural treatment of the facades. The facades end in highly elaborate straight corbels, also quite different from those found in the Morava style churches.

The dome of Hopovo with its unique structural and architectural solution is the dominant feature of the church building (Fig. 1). Its twelve-sided drum has elongated,

arched window openings surmounted by a corbel frieze of the same moulding as that on the facades and the tambour carré. A bas relief arcade is placed on each space. The drum of the dome is narrower than the tambour carré so that its perimeter is dotted with free standing colonettes. They stand out and away from the drum thus forming a pseudo porch, i.e. a narrow gallery around the dome. The colonettes have polyhedral capitals and are decorated and reinforced by sculpted stone "spheres" placed half way down their shafts.

In view of all the above stated facts, there can be no doubt that the sources of the architecture of Hopovo and Papraća lie among the architectural solutions of Mount Athos²⁵. However, it is important to determine the place of the architecture of Hopovo and Papraća within the context of post Byzantine building activity in the broader area of the Balkans in the 16th century,

²⁴ N. Katanić, *Dekoratívna kamena plastika moravske škole (Decorative stone plastics of the Moravian school)*, Belgrade 1988. Ristić, op.cit. (n. 21), 96-141.

²⁵ Vulović, op.cit. (n. 22). Šuput, op.cit. (n. 5), 270, 191-192. Čurčić, op.cit. (n. 2), 789. Šuput, op.cit. (n. 2), 82-83.



Fig. 5. Bosnia, monastery of Paprača, church of the Annunciation. General view from the northwest.

i.e. at the time the two monuments were constructed. The impact of Mount Athos on cultural production in general is all too evident and needs no further explication and the same holds true for ecclesiastical architecture of Christians in the Ottoman Empire²⁶. It can be compared with the impact of the Byzantine capital on the entire Eastern Christian world prior to 1453. The broad dispersal of Athonite influences, reaching the distant parts in which Hopovo and Paprača were erected, were greatly abetted by the continued ties the monastic communities maintained with Athonite monasteries. Chilandar which had throughout the centuries been an axis of Serbian historical tradition, played the important role of the intermediary²⁷. The influence of the monastic communities which nurtured strong ties with Mount Athos was manifested also in the transfer of various Athonite customs and monastic rules. The monastic communities of Fruška Gora of the 16th and 17th centuries had, among other things, also adopted

²⁶ A. Fotić, *Sv. Gora i Hilandar u Osmanskom carstvu XV-XVII vek (Mount Athos and Chilandar in the Ottoman Empire)*, Belgrade 2000.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 83-180.



Fig. 6. Bosnia, monastery of Paprača, church of the Annunciation. View of the dome and the south niche after conservation works.

Athonite *typika*²⁸. An openness towards all things Athonite, including the liturgical practice and rituals which had remained steadfastly traditional, influenced the creation of spatial programs of churches. This was the basis upon which rested the process of shaping spaces which hosted the performance of characteristic liturgical rites, such as narthexes-λιτές²⁹ and lateral

²⁸ Timotijević, *op.cit.* (n. 2), 76.

²⁹ S. Vojadžis, “Κιονοστήριχοι νάρθηκες – λιτές στη μοναστηριακή αρχιτεκτονική”, *DChAE* 33 (2012), 37-54 (English summary:

conchs—*χοροί*³⁰. These spatial units are present in both Hopovo and Papraća.

Athonite architecture had “exported” –to use the term employed by S. Ćurčić– a type of triconch building to late Byzantine architecture. Its distribution was uneven, depending on the different circumstances in the various regions of the Balkans. An active building practice on Mount Athos where over just a single decade (1540-1550) a total of six katholikon churches of previously founded older monasteries³¹ produced a strong impulse and inspired the construction of triconch churches in Greece where they appear in considerable numbers, the largest group of such churches in the Balkans. In Thessaly, and in Meteora in particular, in the ancient monastic community which grew into a great monastic center, older churches were enlarged and new ones were built. Building activity is noted also in western and central Macedonia and other parts of mainland Greece³². Intensive construction works undoubtedly employed a large number of builders (master builders) and other craftsmen organized in companies (*ταίφάς*). They built churches which perpetuated the concepts of Athonite katholika as well established models which basically remained unaltered. However, changes can be noted in the glossary of architecture and forms of church exteriors. The above mentioned master builders did adopt the forms of Athonite katholika but only those dating from late Byzantine times, as seen in monuments located not too far away from the building sites of their employment. They transformed the shapes and forms offered by the models, both interior and exterior, and applied them in their work in accordance with their own understanding of building practice and their craftsmanship. Simply put, the masters take on an eclectic stance without much preconceived and systematic matching and choice of forms and details of different origin.³³ Their works are, thus, not recognized as a specific style but rather as entities of particular characteristic traits, a typical feature of late Byzantine architecture which has no concept



Fig. 7. Serbia, monastery of Hopovo, church of St. Nicholas. The dome and part of the south facade.

of a single style. However, common features do exist in the architecture of these entities, as well as a basic repertoire of its forms which consists of similar elements.

This brief overview of post-Byzantine architecture in the above mentioned regions of Greece poses the question of the means and modes of transferring the Athonite triconch type of church to the different areas where churches of this plan were built. More precisely, was this achieved through direct contacts with Mount Athos or through the mediation of the mentioned Greek regions? A thorough comparative analysis of triconch churches found throughout the Balkans, along with research into the broader historical framework of their making, could yield an answer. At the moment, I shall attempt to point out a possible answer indicated by certain data regarding painters and their organized

“Column-Supported Narthexes – Lites in Monastic Architecture”).

³⁰ Korać, *op.cit.* (n. 22), 457-458.

³¹ Bouras, *op.cit.* (n. 8), 245.

³² Vojadjis, *op.cit.* (n. 30), 110-130.

³³ *Ibid.* On Meteora, see G. Sotiriou, “Μοναὶ Μετεώρων”, *ΕΕΒΣ* 9 (1932), 382-415.



Fig. 8. Serbia, monastery of Hopovo, church of St. Nicholas. General view from the east.

groups. It has long since been established in historiography on post-Byzantine painting that artists from various regions of Greece were engaged in producing wall paintings of a considerable number of churches in the 16th and in particular the 17th century within the territory under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć.³⁴ Thus

³⁴ E. N. Kyriakoudis, "Les artistes grecs qui ont participé à la

the frescoes of the altar space and the naos of the church of St. Nicholas at Hopovo, dating from 1608, along with those from the narthex, dating from the middle of the 17th century, are also the work of Greek painters, probably

peinture murale des régions sur la juridiction du Patriarcat de Peć pendant sa renovation (1557-1690)", *Balkan Studies* 24/2 (1983), 489-510. M. Garidis, *La peinture murale dans le monde orthodoxe après la chute de Byzance (1450-1600) et dans les*

from Mount Athos.³⁵ It is possible, therefore, that ateliers of its masons and builders had also arrived from those parts. Unfortunately, as opposed to actual written records related to the painters, data on the builders is meagre. We are, therefore, far from possessing the necessary information regarding their work and the manner of their education. The only thing we know for certain is that knowledge was transferred from generation to generation within a family of a workshop (...). The exceptional value of the architecture of Hopovo indicates that the architect and his masons could have been in possession of such knowledge. The architecture of Hopovo

pays sur la domination étrangère, Paris 1989. S Pejić, *Manastir Pustinja*, Belgrade 2002, 141-144, with earlier bibliography. Lj. Ševo, *Manastir Lomnica*, Beograd 1999.

³⁵ Pejić, op.cit. (n. 36), 159.

is above all the result of the imagination of its master builder, inspired by the architecture of Mount Athos.³⁶

³⁶ Mount Athos and its architecture still make a deep impression on architects, even today. Le Corbusier wrote the following on Mt. Athos: "But this architecture, however diminished in volume, commands my admiration, and I spend hours deciphering its firm and dogmatic language (...) what a divine calling for the ancient builders. The purity of their purpose, of their efforts is lost. The discipline from now on is unknown to us, the builders of today (...) yet the hours spent in those silent sanctuaries inspired in me a youthful courage and the true desire to become an honorable builder." Le Corbusier, *Journey to the East*, Cambridge, Mass. 1991, 193, 195.

Illustration credits

Figs 1, 7, 8: Photos by Marica Šuput. Figs 2, 5, 6: Archive of the Committee for the protection of national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Figs 3, 4: Architectural drawing: N. Aleksić, after Šuput, *Srpska arhitektura*, op.cit. (n. 2), p. 55, 82.

Marica Šuput

ΤΑ ΚΑΘΟΛΙΚΑ ΤΩΝ ΜΟΝΩΝ ΗΟΠΟΒΟ ΚΑΙ ΡΑΡΑĆΑ ΚΑΙ Η ΘΕΣΗ ΤΟΥΣ ΣΤΗ ΜΕΤΑΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΗ ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝΙΚΗ

Μετά από μια σύντομη αναφορά στη σερβική εκκλησιαστική αρχιτεκτονική της εποχής της τουρκοκρατίας καθώς και στα κυριότερα ρεύματα και χαρακτηριστικά της, παρουσιάζεται η αρχιτεκτονική των καθολικών των μονών Ηοποβο και ΡαπραĆα, σπουδαίων μνημείων του δεύτερου μισού του 16ου αιώνα. Κατόπιν, εξετάζονται οι προτάσεις της έρευνας για την προέλευση των σχεδίων και των προτύπων τους, δηλαδή τα πρότυπα βάσει των οποίων είχαν κτισθεί το Ηοποβο και η ΡαπραĆα.

Με την έκθεση των ιστορικών γεγονότων της εποχής εκείνης και τη σύντομη ανάλυση της αρχιτεκτονικής των δύο ναών δεν υποστηρίζεται η καθιερωμένη υπόθεση ότι τα πρότυπά τους βρίσκονται στην αρχιτεκτονική του τελευταίου ύφους της σερβικής μεσαιωνικής ναοδομίας, της λεγόμενης Σχολής του Μοράβα.

Σύμφωνα με την καθιερωμένη άποψη, η Ravanica και η Manasija (Resava) θεωρούνται τα άμεσα πρότυπα. Στην εργασία αυτή επικεντρώνεται η προσοχή στις αισθητές διαφορές, οι οποίες απομακρύνουν την αρχιτεκτονική των δύο μονών του 16ου αιώνα από τη Ravanica και τη Manasija, που και αυτές οι ίδιες, άλλωστε, διαφέρουν μεταξύ τους ως προς τα αρχιτεκτονικά τους χαρακτηριστικά. Λαμβάνοντας υπόψη τις διαφορές μεταξύ αυτών των οικοδομημάτων, τονίζεται ότι η αναζήτηση των συγκεκριμένων προτύπων, για τα οποία δεν υπάρχουν γραπτές μαρτυρίες, όπως εκείνες που υπάρχουν για κάποιους από τους μεσαιωνικούς και μεταγενέστερους ναούς, οδηγούσε τις έρευνες αποκλειστικά σε μία κατεύθυνση. Γι' αυτό και προτείνεται εδώ, για την πληρέστερη κατανόηση της αρχιτεκτονικής του Ηοποβο και της ΡαπραĆα, η προσέγγιση να γίνει

και από άλλη οπτική γωνία. Αυτό σημαίνει ότι η αρχιτεκτονική τους πρέπει να εξετασθεί και κατόπιν να προσδιορισθεί η θέση τους στη μεταβυζαντινή ναοδομία της ευρύτερης περιοχής των Βαλκανίων, δηλαδή στον χρόνο κατά τον οποίο κτίστηκαν αυτές οι δύο εκκλησίες. Επειδή και οι δύο, ως προς τη βασική τους μορφή, ανήκουν στον τύπο του λεγόμενου αθωνικού τρικόγχου, αδιαμφισβήτητη είναι η αγιορειτική τους προέλευση, για την οποία, εννοείται, έχει ήδη γίνει λόγος και στις παλαιότερες υποθέσεις. Για τον λόγο αυτό τονίζεται ιδιαίτερα η μεγάλη σπουδαιότητα του Αγίου Όρους στην όλη πολιτισμική δραστηριότητα των χριστιανών στον χώρο της Βαλκανικής κατά την περίοδο της τουρκοκρατίας. Από την άποψη αυτή, η ιδιαίτερη συμβολή του Αγίου Όρους μπορεί να συγκριθεί με εκείνη που η βυζαντινή πρωτεύουσα είχε μέχρι το 1453 σε σχέση με όλο τον ορθόδοξο κόσμο.

Η επίδραση της τέχνης και της ναοδομίας του Αγίου Όρους, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και όλων εκείνων που ζωγραφίζονταν και κτιζόνταν σε αυτό και κατά τον 16ο αιώνα, είχε ευρύτατα επεκταθεί σε όλες τις περιοχές της Βαλκανικής. Είναι ευνόητο ότι πιο έντονα εκδηλώνονταν στις ελληνικές περιοχές, όπου και αναπτυσσόταν και η μεγαλύτερη οικοδομική δραστηριότητα. Αυτή η επίδραση έφθανε όμως και στις απομακρυσμένες βόρειες σερβικές περιοχές. Σε αυτές, μετά το 1557 (ανασύσταση του Πατριαρχείου του Ιπεκίου), δημιουργήθηκαν προϋποθέσεις για πολιτιστική, και συνεπώς και για οικοδομική, δραστηριότητα, η οποία κατά το δεύτερο μισό του 16ου αιώνα, όταν κτιζόνταν το *Horono* και η *Papraća*, εμφανίζει μεγάλη άνοδο. Οι συνεχείς δεσμοί των Σέρβων μοναχών με τις αγιορειτικές μοναστικές κοινότητες και το Χιλανδάρι συνέβαλλαν

ιδιαίτερα στη διάδοση των αγιορειτικών επιδράσεων. Αποτέλεσμα αυτών ήταν η αποδοχή του τύπου του αθωνικού τρικόγχου ναού στη σερβική αρχιτεκτονική του 16ου αιώνα και μέσα από αυτήν και στη μεταγενέστερη αρχιτεκτονική. Όμως, παραμένει ερώτημα με ποιον τρόπο διαδίδονταν αυτές οι επιδράσεις. Οι από παλιά τεκμηριωμένες γνώσεις για τις εργασίες Ελλήνων ζωγράφων, μεμονωμένων και μελών συντεχνιών, στους ναούς του ανασυσταθέντος Πατριαρχείου του Ιπεκίου ενισχύουν την υπόθεση ότι και οι οικοδόμοι προέρχονταν από τις ίδιες περιοχές. Μάλιστα, οι τοιχογραφίες του *Horono*, στον κυρίως ναό (1608) και στον νάρθηκα (1654), είναι έργο Ελλήνων ζωγράφων, όπως και οι τοιχογραφίες ορισμένου αριθμού άλλων σερβικών ναών.

Αφετέρου, στη μοναδική αρχιτεκτονική του *Horono* έχουν συγκεντρωθεί διαφορετικά συστατικά της αρχιτεκτονικής των αγιορειτικών ναών καθώς και εκείνων του ελληνικού χώρου, οι οποίοι κτίστηκαν με πρότυπο τους αγιορειτικούς. Αυτό ενισχύει την άποψη ότι το *Horono* δεν είχε κτισθεί με βάση κάποιο συγκεκριμένο πρότυπο, δηλαδή κάποιον ναό που είχε επιλεγεί για να χρησιμεύσει ως υπόδειγμα. Το εξαιρετικό της αρχιτεκτονικής του *Horono* είναι επίτευγμα της φαντασίας ενός άριστου πρωτομάστορα, εμπνευσμένου από την αγιορειτική αρχιτεκτονική. Αυτό είναι και ένα παράδειγμα –όχι μοναδικό στη μεταβυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική–, για το γεγονός ότι με βάση τις παραδοσιακές λύσεις είναι δυνατή η οικοδόμηση ενός έργου με νέες και υψηλές αξίες.

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