

---

*Halûk Çetinkaya*  
(Mimar Sinan University, Istanbul)

**TOMB OF MANUEL KOMNENOS I,  
PANTOKRATOR MONASTERY AND ITS IMPACT  
ON STEFAN UROŠ III DEČANSKI**

This paper intends to shed light on new discoveries made in the Pantokrator monastery and its impact on Stefan Uroš III Dečanski. Relations between Byzantines and Serbs were dynamic due to the common geography they shared. During the Late Roman period in particular some soldiers from the Balkans became emperors. Because of this, Balkans had a special place both in Roman and Byzantine empires. Constant shifting of the people in Late Roman period, which as a result ended the Empire, gave way to several new states. Christian Roman Empire in the East, or commonly accepted as Byzantine Empire, although it is a wrong term, was trying to get hold of as much territory in the west. Following the reign of Justinian I a new wave of migration in the following century occurred. The South Slavs arrived to the Balkans in two different times. First between 613-615 and second 630-634.<sup>1</sup>

Several attempts were made by Byzantines to convert Serbs into Christianity in 7th and 9th centuries.<sup>2</sup> It was due to Cyril and Methodius, upon whose creation of a new alphabet for christianizing Slavs, the process gained momentum in 9th century.<sup>3</sup> Areas settled by Serbs were prone both to the influence of Pope and Byzantines. Byzantine-Serbian encounters were hostile most of the time but by 12th century, despite fighting several wars, Byzantines were considered to be a good ally. In 12th century during the reign of Stefan Nemanja, Byzantine influence was felt stronger in every aspect of Serbian life, in particular, in religion.<sup>4</sup> Serbian involvement in Byzantine religious life was

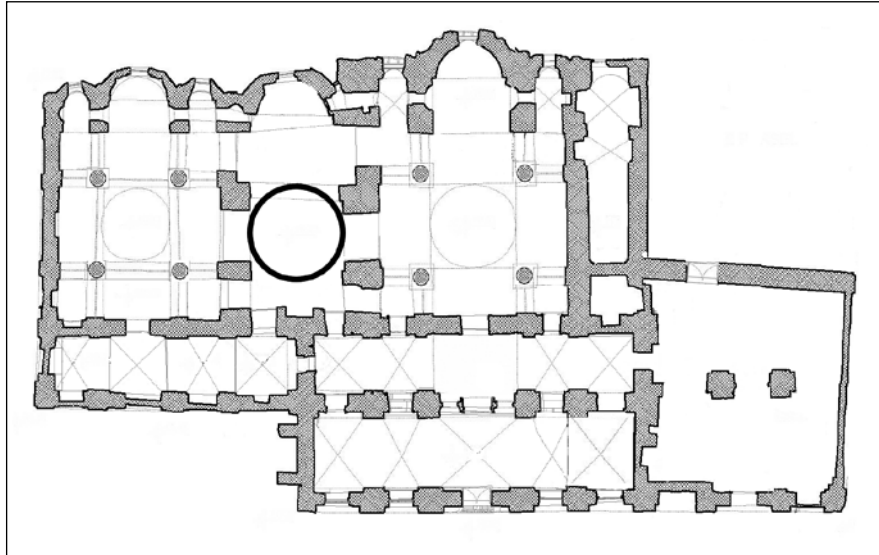
---

<sup>1</sup> T. Živković, *Južni Sloveni pod vizantijskom vlašću 600-1025*, Beograd 2007, 301; S. Pirivatrić, *The Dynamics of Byzantine-Serbian Political Relations*, Processes of Byzantinisation and Serbian Archaeology, ed. V. Bikić, Belgrade 2016, 17 – 36.

<sup>2</sup> P. Murdzhev, *Serbian Christianity*, The Encyclopedia of Christian civilization, ed. George Thomas Kurian, London 2011, 1-2.

<sup>3</sup> V. Cvetković, *The Serbian tradition*, The Orthodox Christian world, editor Augustine Casiday, Oxon 2012, 131.

<sup>4</sup> P. Murdzhev, *Serbian Christianity*, The Encyclopedia of Christian civilization, ed. George Thomas Kurian, London 2011, 2.



Pl. 1 Suggested dome of the Archangel Michael (plan by author)

Табла 1. Предложен изглед куполе цркве Св. Арханђела Михајла, план: аутор

mostly as benefactors of existing institutions. Although his father made some donations to important monastic centers of Byzantium, Stefan Nemanja is considered to be who made most of donations outside the Serbian homeland.<sup>5</sup> He made donations to several well-known churches of the Byzantine Empire such as St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki, Archangel Michael in Skopje, St Panteleemon in Niš and most important of all the monastery of Theotokos Euergetis in Constantinople.<sup>6</sup> Stefan Nemanjić the second son of Stefan Nemanja was crowned by Pope Honorius III as king and despite the expectations of Papacy, their influence was not as high as expected. Sava Nemanjić, later known as St Sava, the youngest son of Stefan Nemanja, became the first archbishop of Serbia in 1219<sup>7</sup> hence Serbian church was established. Nemanja dynasty had to handle both Catholic and Orthodox states with utmost care. Byzantine influence was felt stronger in Serbian life due to St Sava and his writings. Key element in this was Mount Athos - Chilandar monastery, where St Sava was living. Despite having Byzantine influence in nearly every aspect of life, relations were not always friendly. As Serbia gained more land, Byzantines had nothing to stop them. As part of peace agreement with king Stefan Uroš II Milutin, emperor Andronikos II had to send his young daughter Simonis to marry the king.<sup>8</sup> Through peace or war relations between Byzantines and Serbs were al-

<sup>5</sup> M. Marković, *Serbia in Byzantium-The patronage of Serbian ktetors in Byzantine empire*, Sacral art of the Serbian lands in the Middle Ages, editors Ljubomir Maksimović - Jelena Trivan – Danica Popović – Dradan Vojvodić, Belgrade 2016, 57.

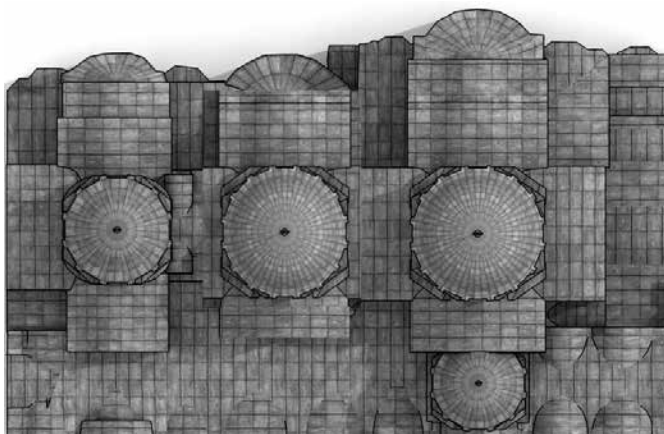
<sup>6</sup> M. Marković, *ibidem*, 57.

<sup>7</sup> V. Cvetković, *op. cit.*, 131.

<sup>8</sup> A. Ducellier, *Balkan powers: Albania, Serbia and Bulgaria (1200-1300)*, The

Dr. 1 Roof level of three churches with a suggested dome of Archangel Michael in the middle (drawing by Tayfun Öner)

Цр. 1. Ниво крова све три цркве са предложеним изгледом куполе цркве св. Арханђела у средини, цртеж: Тајфун Онер



ways close. One area impact of these relations was field of medicine. Medicine, based on monastic institutions, Byzantine monasteries of Constantinople played a vital role. Starting with Early christianity, medical services became part of the churches and monasteries. It continued until the end of Byzantine empire.<sup>9</sup>

It was Stefan Uroš II Milutin, who renovated monastery of Petra in Constantinople, with the addition of *ξενών του Κράλη*, in its courtyard. Funding these philanthropic institutions provided Serbian kings and probably dignitaries a place to stay during their visit of Constantinople.<sup>10</sup> Petra monastery was probably not the only one permitted to be used by Serbs. It may be safe to assume medical personnel had part of their training or exposed to different ones in the capital of the empire.

#### *Pantokrator monastery and Stefan Uroš III Dečanski*

Pantokrator monastery is located in an area known as Zeugma to the Byzantines. The area of the Pantokrator monastery, prior to its Christian use was a cemetery at first. This cemetery, which houses not only epitaphs but also a hypogea, covers approximately 3 kilometres. Among re-used materials in the entrance to the churches of the monastery, a *tabula ansata*, probably of 2nd century, part of a sarcophagus was used for the third time on the inner western wall of the outer narthex of Pantokrator church. Same area in the following centuries was used as grounds for the residence of a certain noble lady, Hilara, hence the area was known as *tes Ilaras*.<sup>11</sup>

It was also suggested the either immediately the same area or its vicinity was also used as a brothel, which was converted into a hospital during the

Cambridge history of the Byzantine empire c. 500-1492, ed. Jonathan Shepard, Cambridge 2008, 801-802.

<sup>9</sup> T. S. Miller, *The birth of the hospital in the Byzantine empire*, Baltimore 1997, 118.

<sup>10</sup> M. Marković, *op. cit.*, 62.

<sup>11</sup> P. Magdalino, *Constantinople Médiévale; Études sur l'évolution des structures urbaine*, Paris 1996, 46-47.



Dr. 2 Original gates in the west (drawing by Tayfun Öner)

Цр. 2. Првобитни портали на западној страни, цртеж Тајфун Онер

reign of Constantine I. During the following period it became the residence of Isidoros first, later turned into a nunnery and finally, during the reign of emperor Theophilos was used as a hospital named after the same emperor.<sup>12</sup>

At the beginning of 12<sup>th</sup> century it was founded as a monastery by the imperial family, which was recorded on a long inscription, which was carved on a stone and visible until 1739.<sup>13</sup>

The most important part of the monastic complex was its churches. These were dedicated to Jesus Christ the Ruler of All (Christ Pantokrator), Mary the Merciful (Maria Eleousa) and Archangel Michael. Chronology of churches for their construction date was that the southern church, Pantokrator, was built first, followed by the northern church, Maria Eleousa. Between them the church of Archangel Michael, believed to be the funeral structure to house the tombs of the Komnenos dynasty was constructed.<sup>14</sup> Architect of the monastic complex was Nicephoros.<sup>15</sup>

Typikon of the monastery provides the most detailed information. It was signed by emperor John II Komnenos in 15 October 1136.<sup>16</sup> Prior to that date empress Piroshka / Irene died in August 1134 and was buried inside the monastic complex. This indicates that the churches of the monastery were already completed.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> A. Berger, *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople The Patria*, Cambridge-London, 2013, 95.

<sup>13</sup> L. A. Muratorio, *Novus Thesaurus veterum inscriptionum*, vol. I, Mediolani 1739, 268.

<sup>14</sup> A. Hubert – S. Megaw, *Notes on the recent work of the Byzantine Institute*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963), 344.

<sup>15</sup> G. Moravcsik, *Szent László leánya és a bizánci Pantokrator-monostor*, *Mitteilungen des Ungarischen Wissenschaftlichen Institutes in Konstantinopel* Heft 7-8, Budapest-Constantinopoly 1923, 80.

<sup>16</sup> P. Gautier, *Le Typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator*, *Revue des études byzantines* 32 (1974), 131.

<sup>17</sup> M. Loukaki, *Empress Piroshka-Eirene's collaborators in the foundation of the Pantokrator monastery: The testimony of Nikolaos Kataphloron*, Editor Sophia Kotzabassi, The Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople, Boston-Berlin 2013, 198.



D. 3 Hypothetical reconstruction of funeral chapel with indoor burial ground  
(drawing by Tayfun Öner)

Цр. 3. Хипотетички изглед гробне капеле са унутрашњим делом за сахрањивање,  
цртеж: Тајфун Онер

Monastic complex survived the conflagrations started by 4th Crusaders on 12-13 April 1204 but on the following day it was looted.<sup>18</sup> It is important to note that Monastery of the Pantokrator was the seat of the Podesta of Venice whereas the seat of Venetian patriarch was Hagia Sophia during Latin occupation until 1261.<sup>19</sup>

Pantokrator monastery was intended to be not only a safe haven in case of dire times but also a proper burial ground for the ruling dynasty. Alas, locations of the burials are not described in the typikon.

Imperial family members were buried in the circular funeral structure next to the Holy Apostles church until it was filled in 1028.<sup>20</sup> Some of the emperors, such as Romanos I Lecapenos, on the other hand chose to be buried in the monastic grounds like Myrelaion. Burials within Pantokrator complex should be categorized: First group consist of imperial household, second group clergy members who served there and finally monks served in the monastery.

During the excavation-restoration of the complex in 1950-60's a location for empress Irene's tomb was suggested to be within the large arcosolium in the transition area between the Middle and Southern churches.<sup>21</sup> A sarcophagus

<sup>18</sup> T. F. Madden, *The fires of the Fourth Crusade in Constantinople, 1203-1204: A damage assessment*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 84/85 (1991/1992), 85.

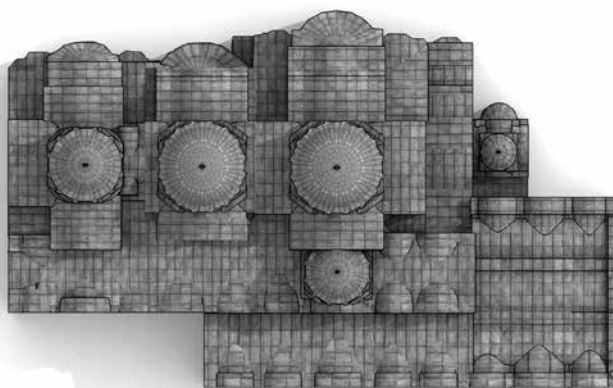
<sup>19</sup> S. Bettini, *Venice, the Pala d'Oro, and Constantinople*, *The treasury of San Marco Venice*, editor David Buckton, Milan 1984, 39 footnote 7.

<sup>20</sup> P. Grierson, *Tombs and obits of the Byzantine emperors*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), 29.

<sup>21</sup> A. Hubert - S. Megaw, *Notes on the recent work of the Byzantine Institute*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963), 343.

Dr. 4 Hypothetical appearance of the churches at roof level with funeral church attached (drawing by Tayfun Öner)

Цр. 4. Хипотетички изглед црква у нивоу крова са гробном капелом, цртеж Тајфун Онер



made of verd antique, claimed to be of empress Irene's, is on display in the outer narthex of Hagia Sophia. There is no inscription to determine for whom it was made. It was recorded to be in Pantokrator monastery until 1846.<sup>22</sup>

In a recent article the founder emperor's tomb was suggested to be below the western dome, in the middle of naos of Archangel Michael church.<sup>23</sup> Most peculiar part of the monastic complex, the church of Archangel Michael, did not get enough scholarly attention. Since it was considered to be built last, irregular shape of the structure at ceiling level was thought to be due to lack of space or time. In fact when typikon, our main source of information, provides very important details with the help of which original appearance of church may be re-built in 3 dimension. In typikon special attention was paid to lighting of churches. In case of church of Archangel Michael it was clearly stated to have a single lamp in the dome of the church.<sup>24</sup> Given the peculiar arrangements of domes, it is clear that in its original it had a single dome (**plan 1, drawing 1**). Most probably due to earthquakes buildings were damaged, as a result of which parts of all three churches were rebuilt including the Archangel Michael. A recent study indicates an entire line of crack along the northern and inner narthex ceilings of the Eleousa church.<sup>25</sup> Impact of the earthquakes were different at each one of the three churches. The reason for this could be to have a weak substructure, poor workmanship or poor quality of construction material. As mentioned above, substructure of church of Eleousa is a place where impact

<sup>22</sup> Patriarch Constantius, *Constantiniade ou description de Constantinople ancienne et moderne*, Istanbul 1846, 95.

<sup>23</sup> R. Ousterhout, *Byzantine funerary architecture of the twelfth century*, ДРИ. Русь и страны византийского мира XII в, St. Peterburg 2002, 11.

<sup>24</sup> R. Jordan, translator, *Pantokrator: Typikon of Emperor John II Komnenos for the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator in Constantinople*, editors John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero, Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents, Translator Washington D.C. 2000, 756.

<sup>25</sup> U. Almaç, *Zeyrek camii (Pantokrator kilisesi) kuzey bölüm strüktür analizi ve sağlama önerileri* (Structural analysis of northern part of Zeyrek mosque (Pantokrator church) and proposals for its consolidation), Istanbul Technical University Department of Architecture Unpublished Doctoral dissertation Istanbul 2011, 36/40.



Dr. 5 Hypothetical appearance of the eastern facade with attached funeral church  
(drawing by Tayfun Öner)

Цр. 5. Хипотетички изглед источне фасаде са гробном црквом, цртеж Тајфун Онер

of the earthquake can be observed easily. Probably same earthquake destroyed, at least partially, the church of Archangel Michael which was most probably built by spolia. Existence of reused bricks from earlier centuries, as early as 4th century, was reported.<sup>26</sup>

According to laboratory analysis made for a dissertation indicate that Byzantine bricks are categorized under four periods: 4-6th century, 8-10th century, 11-12th century and Later period. Weakest of all periods were 4-6th century bricks, whose absorption of water were highest and coarsest grains, which makes bricks weaker, were used.<sup>27</sup> Basing on this, if re-used Early Christian period bricks were used for saving time and money in the construction of Archangel Michael, it weakens its statical behaviour against tremmors. As a result, this could be a reason for reconstructing its roof with two domes instead of one, as it was in its original. A theory of building a dome in the east after the western one was interesting, though without explaining its necessity.<sup>28</sup> A careful observation of the plan of the Archangel Michael church indicates that the western dome does not correspond properly on the supports, instead, it is off centered. This alone, indicates that there was a need to move the western dome further west. The gap created due to its re-positioning there arose a need to fill in the gap created in the east. This space had to be covered, choice of the reconstruction team was an oval dome. To be buried in the naos was a very rare issue, especially for an emperor it was not the case. For that reason having the emperor's tomb in the naos is not countable. Instead, together with empress, their burials must have been either at the transition between the Archangel Michael and Pantokrator church or more likely beneath the arches in west.

<sup>26</sup> R. Ousterhout, *Architecture, art and Komnenian ideology at the Pantokrator monastery*, Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, topography and everyday life, ed. Nevra Necipoğlu, Leiden-Boston-Köln 2001, 143 footnote 20.

<sup>27</sup> Y. Kahya, *Istanbul Bizans mimarisinde kullanılan tuğların fiziksel ve mekanik özellikleri* (Physical and mechanical peculiarities of bricks used in Byzantine architecture of Istanbul), Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Istanbul Technical University Department of Architecture, Istanbul 1992, 65-68.

<sup>28</sup> R. Ousterhout, *Master builders of Byzantium*, Princeton New Jersey 1999, 107.

During restorations of 2008-2018 a discovery was made beneath the church of Eleousa. A substructure with the same tri-apsidal plan as superstructure which also houses some skulls and skeletons were discovered. During the excavation and restorations in 1960's vaults below the bema of Pantokrator church were also discovered. Whether further attempts to locate any substructure below the entire superstructure were made are not mentioned in the reports.

Substructure of Eleousa church had columns separating nave from the aisles which were most probably cracked down because of earthquakes. As a result they were enveloped by a thick wall instead of being replaced by new set of columns (**photo 1**). Church of Archangel Michael must have suffered similarly. That must have been the reason for the addition of a peculiar looking oval dome in the east. Pantokrator monastic complex served as a burial ground not only for Komnenos dynasty but centuries after it was used by the Palaeologan dynasty as well, during which 8 members were buried.<sup>29</sup>

Interestingly all the sarcophagi perished. Very recently an observation made by the author inside the Pantokrator church around by minbar of the mosque, indicated part of verd antique material had a cross on it (**photo 2**). It was either part of a sarcophagus or screen panel. Rest of the same material is used as a band of ornamentation on and around the minbar.

Immediately out of the southern church in its south during restorations one skeleton facing east was discovered. This area, which was partially occupied by the ramp leading to Sultan's lodge, most probably had more burials. Unfortunately it remained unexcavated. Further evidence indicates that this area was covered. Springing of the arches of barrel vaults are still visible on top of current gate in the west (**photo 3**). Traces of frescoes were discovered by the author inside a windowsill in the far eastern end of the lot indicate the indoor use of the space. More interesting discovery was made immediately east of this lot. Two white marble column bases and half of an apse, made of bricks was unearthed (**photo 4**). The ruined building was adjacent to the Pantokrator church but did not continue its apse, terminated approximately 3 metres before that. Since it was a restoration project excavation of this chapel was not completed. Approximate size of this church was 10 x 6 metres. On spot observation and measurements taken by the author allows to suggest the original look and function of this building. Sizewise it is as big as Hiram Ahmet paşa mescidi, sometimes referred as church of Trullo (**photo 5**). This must have been one of the most important areas of the entire monastic complex. Entrances of the important parts of the complex is clearly marked by a large gateway. This was the case for the entrance of the all three churches in the west. A gate much more wider and higher indicate the importance of it. Same applies to the entrance of this newly discovered burial area. It has a high and wide gate as it was for the entrance of the churches (**drawing 2**)

Basing on the finds a hypothetical original appearance of the chapel was made (**drawing 3-4**). To my knowledge there is no free-standing imperial funeral chapel built as parekklesion in Byzantium. A similar example from Canosa / Sicily next to San Sebastiano church of Bohemund dated to 1111 was

<sup>29</sup> R. Jordan, translator, *op.cit.*, 725-726.





Fig. 1 Enveloped columns in the substructure of the church of Maria Eleousa (Nuran Nar)

Сл. 1. Стубови у субструктури цркве Богородице Елеусе, фото: Нуран Нар

brought to scholarly attention.<sup>30</sup> Tomb of Manuel I Komnenos attracted scholars since 1960's. Description of the lid of his tomb was described and a drawing claimed to be of it made in 1750 was published.<sup>31</sup>

According to Khoniates the tomb of Manuel Komnenos I was “..beside the entrance to the church of the Monastery of the Pantokrator, not in the temple itself but in the shrine attached to it. Where the church wall led round to an arch, a broad entrance way was opened around the sepulcher, which was faced with marble of a black hue, gloomy in appearance, and was divided into seven lofty sections.”<sup>32</sup> Until recently the place described was thought to be the church of Archangel Michael with a broad entrance from south. It is apparent that there are several broad arches in the south. New arches were discovered during the recent restorations in south where the funeral chapel is located.

Andronikos I Komnenos' hatred towards Manuel I Komnenos resulted in the murder of his son, young emperor Alexios, whose body was mutilated and dumped into the sea in a lead coffin.<sup>33</sup> If the funeral church was really

<sup>30</sup> N. P. Ševčenko, *The tomb of Manuel I Komnenos, again*, 1. Uluslararası Sevgi Gönül Bizans Araştırmaları sempozyumu (1<sup>st</sup> International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium), proceedings editors Ayla Ödekan – Engin Akyürek – Nevra Necipoğlu, Istanbul 2010, 611.

<sup>31</sup> C. Mango, *Three imperial Byzantine sarcophagi discovered in 1750*, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), 399.

<sup>32</sup> Niketas Choniates, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, translated by Harry J. Magoulias, Detroit 1984, VII - 222.

<sup>33</sup> *ibidem*, VIII-274.



Fig. 2 Piece of a cross on minbar  
(photograph by author)

Сл. 2. Део крста на мимбару, фото: аутор

of Manuel I Komnenos it would have suffered in the hands of Andronikos as well. He either did not restore damaged structure from earthquake or ordered it to be pulled down. For the first explanation one possible cause could be a huge conflagration of 25 July 1197, during which the nearby area of Maria Kyriotissa monastery was destroyed.<sup>34</sup> But none of the travelers mention such a disaster. Another possibility of the destruction might have been the earthquake of 1201.<sup>35</sup> There is strong probability that the funeral church was destroyed by the order of Andronikos I Komnenos. Whatever the reason was, the funeral church did not survive long time. When the structure was in existence it add-

ed dramatically to the view of the Eastern façade (**drawing 5**)

Tomb of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos was mentioned to be in the outer *heroon*. It was taken as if it was below the second dome of the church of Archangel Michael. But if, as I suggested, church had only one dome at the time of Manuel I Komnenos, that means outer *heroon* needs to be somewhere outside. Recent discovery of the church attached to the southern wall of the Pantokrator church fits well as the site of the outer *heroon* and most probably was built for Manuel I Komnenos.

#### *Stefan Uroš III Dečanski and Pantokrator monastery*

Stefan Uroš III Dečanski was born around 1275 of Helena, daughter of sebastocrator John of Thessaly and spent some time started in 1292 as hostage in the court of Nogay khan.<sup>36</sup>

He was blinded by the order of his father and exiled to the monastery of Pantokrator where he stayed with his wife and children between 1314-1321.<sup>37</sup> Unless a miracle occurred in the later phases of his life, future king was not entirely blinded. There were several methods in blinding. Removal of the eye

<sup>34</sup> P. Magdalino, *Constantinopolitana*, Aetos: Studies in honour of Cyril Mango, editors Igor Ševčenko – Irmgard Hutter, Stuttgart 1998, 228-230.

<sup>35</sup> V. Grumel, *La Chronologie*, Paris 1958, 480.

<sup>36</sup> M. A. Purković, *Two notes on Medieval Serbian history*, The Slavonic and East European review, Vol. 29 No. 73 (June 1951), 547-549.

<sup>37</sup> S. M. Ćirković, *The Serbs*, Oxford 2004, 61.



Fig. 3 Spring of archivaults in the southern burial area (photograph by author)

Сл. 3. Архиволте у јужном простору за сахрањивање, фото: аутор



Fig. 4 Funeral church attached to the church of Pantokrator (photograph by author)

Сл. 4. Гробна црква до цркве Христа Пантократора, фото: аутор

balls by a sharp object, burning the eyes by heat, pouring boiling liquids or hitting the iris with a heated sharp object.<sup>38</sup> It seems nearly impossible to maintain the eyesight once exposed to any of these methods. In this case either the executioner was paid off to pretend blinding the future king, or he was loyal to him. In any case Stefan Uroš III Dečanski was not fully blinded. Blinding as punishment is believed to have reached Byzantium from Persia. This punishment was most common at the beginning of the 4th century during the reign of Diocletian against Christians, which was ended by Constantine I only to be submerged at the beginning of 8th century.<sup>39</sup> In the following centuries occasionally this punishment is mentioned. Stefan Uroš III Dečanski was familiar to the Byzantine culture even before his exile thanks to his mother. But his exile must have provided him more chances to penetrate more into that culture in particular monastic life. During his stay, his character was appreciated not only by the abbot and monks but also by emperor Andronicus II as well.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> J. Lascaratos-S. Marketos, *The penalty of blinding during Byzantine times*, *History of Ophthalmology* 5 (1992), 134-135.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 133.

<sup>40</sup> V. Geronimi, *La vie du roi Serbe Étienne de Dečani: De la biographie Serbe à la dénationalisation deu texte hagiographique en Russie*, *Revue des études slaves* vol. 79 no 1/2 (2008), 54.



Fig. 5 Hırami Ahmet paşa mescidi or Trullo (photograph by author)

Сл. 5. Хирами Ахмет Паша џамија или Труло, фото: аутор

Stefan Uroš III Dečanski, upon the death of King Milutin was crowned as the new king in 1321. Before his coronation he removed the eye bandages and miraculously regained his sight.<sup>41</sup> As mentioned above, either a miracle occurred with which the king had his sight restored or he was cured in Pantokrator monastery. Whatever the reason was, it had a great impact on the king. It is interesting to note that part of the Pantokrator hospital was reserved for ophthalmology.<sup>42</sup> Hence it is quite possible that the future king had a treatment there.

According to Gregory Tsamblak, who lived in the second half of 14th and first half of 15th centuries, upon returning from Constantinople, the king established a monastery based, at least partially, on the principles of the Pantokrator monastery. The main church was dedicated to Pantokrator, besides, soon after completion of the monastery a leproseries at a convenient distance, was estab-

<sup>41</sup> *Visoki Dečani monastery*, Eds. Monks of Dečani, Dečani 2014, 10.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Jordan translator, *Pantokrator: Typikon of emperor John II Komnenos for the monastery of Christ Pantokrator in Constantinople*, Byzantine monastic foundation documents, Vol. 2, Washington D.C. 2000, 757.

lished, just like Pantokrator monastery.<sup>43</sup> According to the tradition, first ophthalmological hospital in Serbia was named after Stefan Uroš III Dečanski.<sup>44</sup> Although intentions of the king for the site of his tomb is not entirely known, it could have been influenced from the imperial tombs located just below the dome of the funeral chapel of Archangel Michael of the Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople. In any case king Stefan Uroš III Dečanski was deterred nearly at the same location as it was in Pantokrator where the founding emperor, just like himself the founder of the monastery, buried.

### Conclusion

Serbs, once subjects to the Byzantine empire was in rivalry in the following centuries. Especially after 1299 by having Byzantine princesses as wives to the Serbians kings, the intention of transforming the kingdom into an empire became clear.<sup>45</sup> Byzantine influence was also felt in everyday life in Serbia as well. But most important impact was on religion. Pantokrator monastery is important for that aspect. Pantokrator served both as a religious centre and a place of confinement and played a role in the lives of rulers both in Byzantium and beyond. Part of it was used as a burial ground for the imperial household. As works in and around the building continues new discoveries will be made such as the suggested burial chapel of Manuel Komnenos I.

Importance of the monastery was not solely due to its imperial patrons and their burials but also secondary buildings which were ahead of their time. Philanthropic institutions surrounding the monastery and medical services provided for the needy impressed the visitors let aside the ones who stayed there. As a result, whoever spent some time in the monastic institution had an idea of an empire serving the needs of both the clergy and the laymen.

Stefan Uroš III Dečanski was probably the longest staying non-Byzantine person in the institution. Because of his stay, he gained access to every part of monastic complex, which, in future most probably inspired him for a new establishment based on “the ideal monastery” namely Dečani. He chose not to imitate Byzantine religious practices but had the approach of humane part of the monastic life. As a result of which Dečani came into being.

---

<sup>43</sup> E. Mineva, *References to the monastery of Pantokrator in Old Slavonic literature*, Editor Sophia Kotzabassi, *The Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople*, Boston-Berlin 2013, 91.

<sup>44</sup> K. Janicijević (et al.), *Blind Serbian rulers and famous persons*, Sanamed 11 / 3 (2016), 249.

<sup>45</sup> S. Marjanović-Dušanić – D. Vojvodić, *The model of empire - The idea and image of authority in Serbia (1299-1371)*, *Sacral Art of the Serbian lands in the Middle ages*, editors: Dragan Vojvodić – Danica Popović, Belgrade 2016, 299.

*Халук Четинкаја*

(Мимар Синан Универзитет, Истанбул)

### ГРОБНИЦА МАНОЈЛА I КОМНИНА, МАНАСТИР ПАНТОКРАТОР И ЊИХОВ УТИЦАЈ НА СТЕФАНА УРОША III ДЕЧАНСКОГ

Рад има за циљ да укаже на поједина нова открића до којих се дошло током рестаураторских радова у манастиру Пантократор, од 2008. до 2018. године. Аутор указује да је током шездесетих година дошло до открића сводова испод средишње беме манастира Пантократор, међутим у извештајима нема помена остатака субструктуре.

Према лабораторијским налазима у Пантократору су биле у употреби опеке које су произведене у временском расподу од IV до XII века. Могуће је претпоставити да је употреба такве, старије опеке, зарад уштеде финансија и времена, допринела слабљењу одређених делова трију целина, што је допринело и слабљењу статичких елемената. Вероватно је то могао бити разлог за реконструкцију крова тако да су конструисане две а не једна купола као што је то првобитно био случај.

Црква Богородице Елеусе има наос који је подељен стубовима, а свакако рестаурација је показала и првобитну дебљину зидова овог храма. Слично је било и у цркви Св. Арханђела Михајла. Аутор разматра места гробова династије Комнина потом и Палеолога, потом утицај овог манастира на српско-византијске односе, нарочито за време Стефана Дечанског. Манастир Пантократор није био само мазулеј владарске породице већ и место од централног значаја за потоњу историју византијске државе и њених односа са Србијом. Манастир је био окружен здањима попут болница што се показало нарочито битним у случају Стефана Дечанског који је према тврдњи аутора имао приступ свим објектима у манастиру. У закључном делу текста указано је да је у стварању своје задужбине Дечани, Стефан Дечански у највећој мери био инспирисан архитектуром и контекстом манастира Пантократор. По тврдњи аутора, Дечански је одабрао да пренесе у Дечане филантропски концепт какав је постојао у манастиру Пантократор.