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*Stela Doncheva*

## SYMBOLIC EMPHASISES IN THE MEDIAEVAL RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

As a fine art, architecture has the task to represent the inorganic as an allegory of the organic. According to F.Shelling, all those forms of architecture, in which it's expressed an allegory of the organic through the inorganic, are beautiful themselves.<sup>1</sup> The architecture depends on the time and manifests its inner structure by gradually revealing its form.

When the material side of a culture is the affair in question, in most of the cases we are prone to treat the object explored from its outer, visible point, without going deep into the principles and laws, which have originated this sensuous image. Such is the case with architecture, too. It's often explained as a harmony in forms and the exploration of the elements and attitudes, generating this harmony, is considered unnecessary.

The current statement is an attempt for representing of both sides of the religious architecture in the Mediaeval Byzantine world – ideological- symbolical loading and the commitment with its purely practical purpose in the Christian religious life.

The shaping of a church building is an image moving, solving of the conflict between the awareness of God's existence and the circumstance that He is a pure abstraction – an idea, unapproachable for the intellect. The artistic element here is revealed in the leveling essence of architecture and its ability to create the illusion of satisfaction and to appear in the role of a peacemaker between the inapproachability by mind in the religious view and the real things in life. In this sense, the artistic function is deliberate and active towards the meaning of the religious activity and it operates directing the attention on the idea of the compositional conception.

The forming of the new religious kind of cruci-domed temple relies on the tradition, on the accepted from the previous development basilical type of the space, but with a durable meaning of bilateral symmetry as a shaping compositional principle. The compositional, artistic rationalization of the bilateral symmetry in the church's interior is a crucial moment in the direction of the

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<sup>1</sup> Ф. Шелинг, *Философия на изкуството*. – В: И. Колев, *Философия на изкуството. Тематична антология*, С., 2003, 100.

specific visualization of the idea.<sup>2</sup> Namely the movement and the gravitational coordinate are the invariant directions – horizontal and vertical ones of the spatial construction in the architecture<sup>3</sup> and in particular of the domed temple.

The cruci-domed form originated in the practice of the Constantinopolitan School in the 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> century and it marks the mature period of the Byzantine architecture. On its part, the broad temple building requires such a type of buildings, which allows their mass reiteration; easy for realization in a project scheme and on the very terrain; reliable in its constructive characteristics. Such a type should fit the creative method of the mediaeval building art, in which the most important role belongs to the stable habit, inherited in the course of time and the ability of adapting the conventional type to the local conditions. The constructive principle of the cruci-domed architecture matches all these requirements.

The model itself is an example of artistic penetration into the sense of the idea and its reflection. Besides, the very development of the spatial form hasn't changed in the course of centuries and becomes a symbol of the mediaeval religious architecture not only for Byzantium, but also in whole the Orthodox world. The full of meaning motive for creating of the centric model – canon, is the priority of the attribute of the divinized monarch. Namely it appropriates the idea of the center, in contrast to the case with the Western church, where the altar's position is committed with the idea of a center and gets the relevant spatial dimension.

As a composition, the cruci-domed plan system has been generated from the necessity of subdividing of the religious building into a central part and surrounding space. The four walls form a square in the plan and enclose a place, in which there are symmetrically disposed four supports. This divides the main square into nine parts, among which the biggest central square is outlined. Through it, it's canonized the way of visualizing or architectural marking of the idea of a center. That's why the dome above the central square is an organizing compositional element. The cover serves as a key for understanding whole the system. The transition from square plan to circle is realized by tromps or pendants, and the axes of the cylindrical vaults form in height a cross with the dome's diameter. Thus, the compositional fundament of the building is outlined by means of the three main spatial directions – the vertical axis and the two axes, perpendicular to each other.

In the so represented cruci-domed system, there are shown up four compositional elements: a square, a circle, a cross and a center, consolidating all the rest.

The square is one of the four main symbols<sup>4</sup>, together with the center, the circle and the cross. It's a symbol of the earth as opposed to the sky. It's an anti-dynamic figure and symbolizes the stopping or the instant held.

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<sup>2</sup> А. Якобсон, *Закономерности в развитии раннесредневековой архитектуры*, Ленинград 1983, 23 сл.; М. Иванова, *Форма и композиция в Средневековната архитектура. Проблеми на историческата теория*, С., 1988, 29.

<sup>3</sup> Р. Арнхайм, *Динамика архитектурных форм*, М., 1984

<sup>4</sup> Ж. Шевалие, А. Геербрант, *Речник на символите*. Т.1, 459; М. Елиаде, *Образи и символи*. ИК "Прозорец", 35-42; 48-52; *Сакралното и профанното*, 1998, 25-32.

Plato thinks that the square and the circle are absolutely beautiful themselves<sup>5</sup>, and the Jews transformed the Tetragram into the unpronounceable Name of God (YHWH).<sup>6</sup> In the Pythagoreans' theories<sup>7</sup>, the fourfold is connected with the materialization of the idea, and the threefold – with the idea itself. The fourfold expresses the phenomena and the matter, and the threefold – the essences and the spirit. The threefold pertains to the symbolism of the vertical line, while the fourfold belongs to the symbolism of the horizontal line. The first one unifies the three worlds, and the other one – separates them, treating each one of them at its own level, the unfolding starting from the immovable center and follows the cross, formed by the directions of the world, as it's just in the cruci-domed system.

In the Christian tradition<sup>8</sup> the square also symbolizes the Cosmos – from the time-space we find ourselves in the Eternity's heavens. The Church is a starting point of the spiritual evolution and a symbol of its supreme end. The square form in the base of the cruci-domed building gradually turns into a height in a circle. Having served for calculating of the year, the circle has been converted into a measure of time, and then – into a measure of Eternity and finally it acquired the meaning of Infinity.

The circle and the square symbolize the two main aspects of God: the Oneness and the Divine Manifestation. The circle expresses the celestial, and the square – the terrestrial, but as created and not as opposed to the heavenly. Therefore, the circle is the same, compared to the square, as the sky is to the earth, as well as the Eternity to the time, but the square is inscribed into the circle, i.e. – the earth is dependent on the heavens.

The structure, consisting of a cube- a dome- a base of the cruci-domed architectural system, is a material expression of this dialectics. In an architectural plan, the circle precedes the dome, whose semi-spherical form is a sign of perfection.

The cross is the base of all the symbols of orientation<sup>9</sup>. Just like the square, the cross symbolizes the earth, but it manifests its intermediate, dynamic and hardly perceptible sides. In it, the sky meets the earth; the time and the space intertwist.

In the Christian tradition, the cross is something more than just an embodiment of the Salvation's history and the martyrdom of Christ; it's His human destiny and even – His Personality.

So, the temple is always built in a human image. The cruci-domed temple ensues from the square in the plan, according to the inserted into the circle axes

<sup>5</sup> Платон, *Диалози*, Т. 2, С., 1982, 324-336.

<sup>6</sup> Н. Шиваров, Сл. Вълчанов, *Вечното в двата библейски завети*. (Сб. с материали по библеистика) В. Търново 1993, 17-24.

<sup>7</sup> Евклид. *Начала*. Т. I-IV, М., 1948; В. Михайлов, *Витрувий и Елада. (Основы, античной теории архитектуры)*. М., 1967, с.-50.

<sup>8</sup> Дж. Фергюсон, *Християнски символизъм*. Серия "Символы" Кн. VIII, М., 1998, 255; Н. Фрай, *Великият код*. С., 1993, 175-206.

<sup>9</sup> Дж. Фергюсон, Цит. съч. с.255; Ж. Шевалие, А. Геербрант, Цит. съч. с.560-568; Д. Фоли, *Энциклопедия знаков и символов*. М., 1998, 166-196; Ж. Приор, *Универсалните символи*, С., 1991, 214-216.

of the world's directions, shaping a cross. The temple, actually, is an *imago mundi* (an image, a resemblance of the world) and a chronogram, which symbolizes and leads the holy cosmography and topography of the Universe, whose ideal center and regulator it is.<sup>10</sup> The temple is the connection between the heavens and the earth.

About the Temple's symbolism, Joseph Flavius writes, that the yard symbolizes "the sea, the altar – the earth, and the sanctuary – the heavens"<sup>11</sup>, i.e. The Temple is perceived as a copy of a celestial archetype. Thus, the holy architecture just accepts and further develops the cosmological symbolism. The concrete task is reduced to searching for a compositional idea, thorough which the architectural shaping of the interior will symbolize "the presence", but sanctified or purposefully inserted into the idea by means of the attribute of the divinizing.

The complicated and rhythmic organization of the construction is a material expression of the main theological idea – the idea of overcoming the disruption between the sky and the earth. The removal of the contradiction between the spiritual and the material in the artistic image relies on the compositional balance, created on the base of the two kinds of symmetries and the dynamics of the physical stability.

From the 7<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> centuries on, the Byzantine theologians began developing this system of "symbolical" perception of the Holy Liturgy<sup>12</sup>, which, together with the signs' loading of the architectural composition, forms an overall image.

The two dimensions of this image – the church building and the liturgy as a mirror of the Salvation's Mystery; the church building and the liturgy as a cosmic and eschatological image of the Heavenly Kingdom and its Liturgy, appeared as early as the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the Byzantine liturgical interpretation's evolution in the century from St. Maximus Confessor (ca. 630) to the Constantinopolitan Patriarch St. German the First (ca. 730).

Around the 8<sup>th</sup> century, on the eve of the iconoclastic crisis – the traditional Maximian "cosmic" liturgical interpretation<sup>13</sup> of the "philosophical-notional" sense of the whole and its elements, starts giving up in front of a more literary and representative concept about the liturgical "history".

<sup>10</sup> М. Елиаде, *Окултизъм, магия и културна мода*, ИК "Прозорец", С., 31-32.

<sup>11</sup> М. Елиаде, *Сакралното и профанното*, С., 1998, 29; Й. Флавий, *Юдейски паметници*, III, VII, 7.

<sup>12</sup> Р. Тафт, *Византийский церковны обряд. Краткий очерк*, Санк-Петербург 2000, 44-46, 58-61; Р. Тафт, *Византийското богослужение*. В: Р. Тафт, Е. Фаруджа, *Теология на литургията и теология на символа*, С., 1992, 39-40. Г. Вагнер, *Византийский храм как образ мира*. ВВр; т.47, 1986, 163-181. Y. M. J. Congar, *The Mystery of the Temple. Westminster* (Md.), 1962, ch.8.

<sup>13</sup> Преп. Максим Исповедник, *Творения*. Кн. 1, М., 1993 (Святоотеческое наследие), 154-184.

Without leaving the cosmic typology of the heavenly- earthen liturgy, St.German includes a new level of interpretation<sup>14</sup>, namely – that the Eucharist is not only an anamnesis, but also a real symbol of the Salvation's history.

Thus, two trends had been formed<sup>15</sup>. The first and more spread one developed a “real” symbolism (St.Cyril of Jerusalem, the 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> centuries; St.German of Constantinople – the 8<sup>th</sup> century; St.Simeon of Thessalonica – the 15<sup>th</sup> century), and the second one – the one that was more closely connected with the individual perception developed the “notional” symbolism (St. Maximus Confessor – the 7<sup>th</sup> century).

The first trend understands the liturgy and the temple space as a system of differentiated “images”<sup>16</sup> - symbols. The other aspect of the liturgical symbolism interprets the temple as “an image and a representation of whole the world, consisting of visible and invisible entities.”<sup>17</sup>

Thus, whole the notional symbolism is directed to rationalization of the liturgy and the temple's architectural image as a special, inscrutable way of knowledge, as a higher “enigmatic” stage, which completes the system of “the Byzantine gnoseology”.<sup>18</sup>

The symbol and its concrete realization in the cruci-domed temple system appear among the Byzantine theologians as aesthetic categories, helped by the involvement of arts<sup>19</sup> and in particular the architecture in the system of their religious gnoseology. The monuments of the Constantinopolitan School are examples for meaning of the Byzantine centric model- canon and its adaptation to the concrete conditions.

Some of the first temples, where it's expressed the idea of centralization, though with a certain archaism, are built in the 9<sup>th</sup> century churches, known under their Turkish names – the Atik mosque (ca.859) (**Fig.1**) and the Kalender mosque (the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century) (**Fig.2**). The final establishment of the centric canon has been realized at the church in the Constantine Lips monastery (Feneri Isa) in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century (**Fig.3**) and in the cemetery church of the Emperor Roman Lakapin (Budrum mosque) of 920-944 (**Fig.4**). The later examples – the Eski Imaret (Christ Pantepopt) and Klisse, built in the 11<sup>th</sup> century are a further development and confirmation of the advisability of the centric formula, which gets a figurative adequate expression in the hierarchical style of living of the Byzantine state and society.

<sup>14</sup> Св. Герман Константинопольский, *Сказание о Церкви и рассмотрение тайнств*, Москва 1995.

<sup>15</sup> В. Бичков, *Византийска естетика*. С., 1984, 118.

<sup>16</sup> Св. Герман Константинопольский. Пос. Съч.; Симеон Солунски. По: Тафт, Р. *Византийский церковный обряд...* 83-85.

<sup>17</sup> Преп. Максим Исповедник, Пос. Съч. , с. 159.

<sup>18</sup> Й. Майендорф, *Византийско богословие*, С., 1995, 252-263; Г. Каприев, *Византийската философия*, С., 2001, 43-114; В. Зеньковский, *Основы христианской философии*, М., 1996, 90-101; В. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия восточной церкви*, Догматическое богословие, М., 1991, 24.

<sup>19</sup> Първото описание на християнска църковна постройка е от VI в. и е посветено на катедралния храм в Едеса. С. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453. / Sources and Documents/*. New Jersey, pp. 57-60.

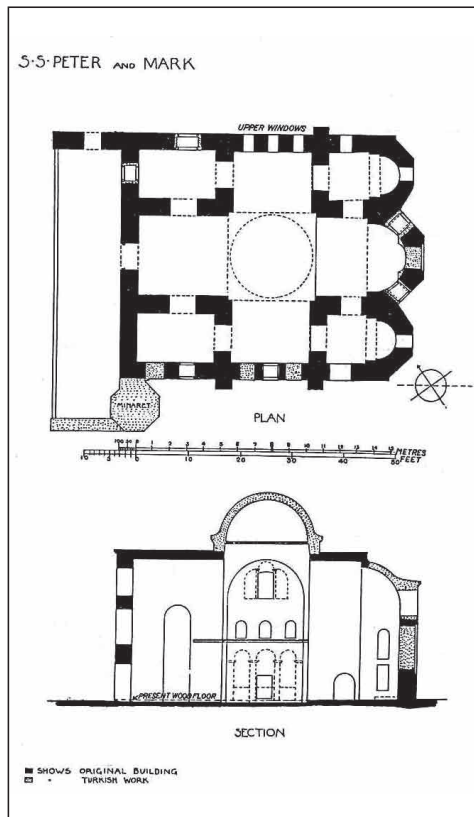


Fig. 1 Atik Mustafa jamiisi  
(the church of SS. Peter  
and Mark – ca. 859)  
Plan and Section (A. van Millingen)

Сл. 1 Атик Мустафа џамија  
(црква св. Петра и Марка –  
око 859. год.).  
План и пресек.  
(А. ван Милинген)

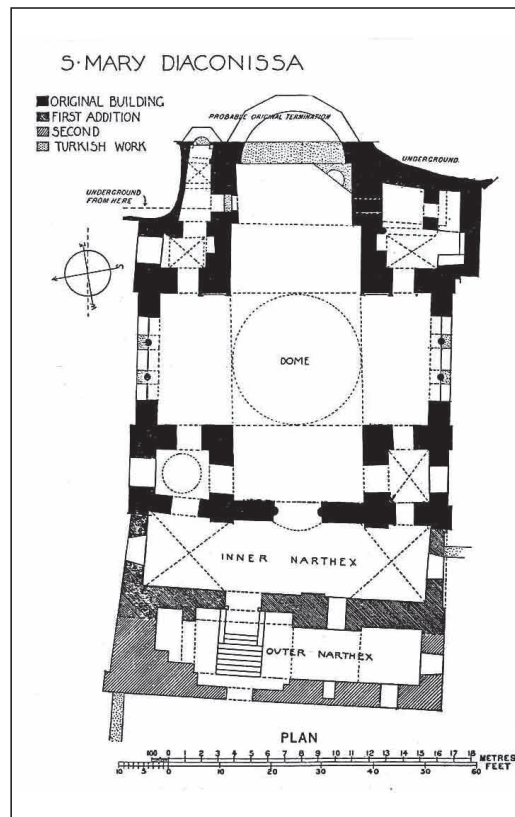


Fig. 2 Kalender Haneh jamiisi  
(the church of S. Mary Diaconissa –  
the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century) Plan.  
(A. van Millingen)

Сл. 2 Календер Ханех џамија  
(црква св. Богородице Ђаконије  
– друга половина IX века).  
План.  
(А. ван Милинген)

In the 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> centuries a large number of churches were built not only in Byzantium, but also in the surrounding Christian world, accepting and further developing the religious view of life and the cultural archetypes, connected with it<sup>20</sup>. After 870, for example, when Bulgaria finally determines its own status to the Byzantine church, there were built most of the cruci-domed temples, mainly

<sup>20</sup> С. Дончева, *Една архитектурна концепција в православното християнство на Балканите*. – В : Епископ – Константинови четения, Т. 4-5, Шумен 2001, 144 – 151.

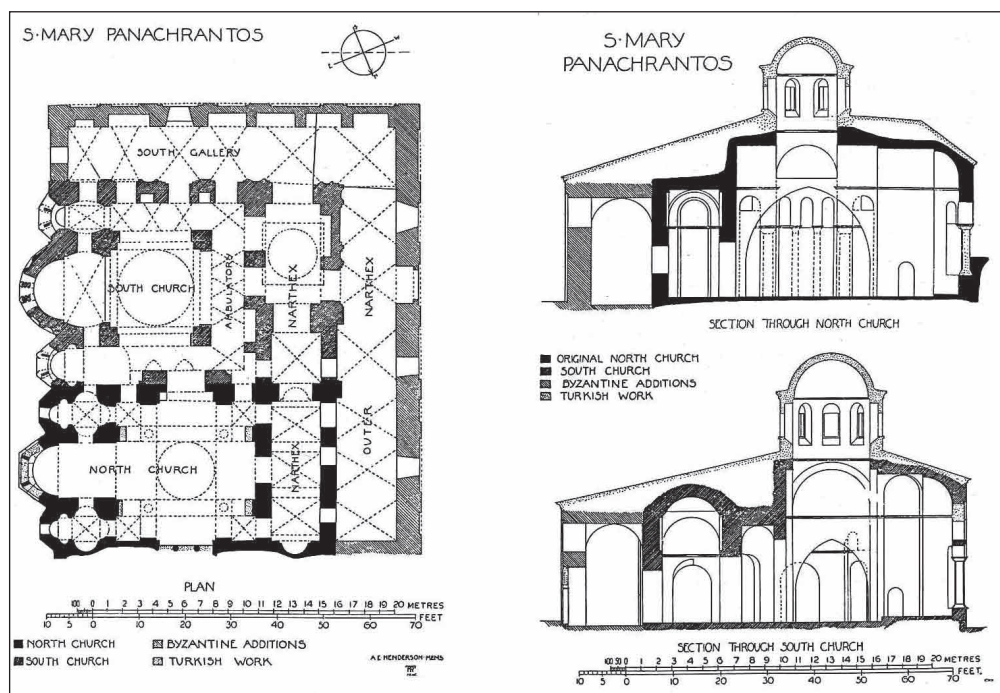


Fig. 3 Feneri Isa jamiisi (the church of S. Mary Panachrantos –the early 10<sup>th</sup> century)  
Plan and Section. (A. van Millingen)

Сл. 3 Фенери Иса џамија (црква св. Богородице Пречисте – рани X век).  
План и пресек. (А. ван Милинген)

in the second Bulgarian capital Preslav (about 30 churches), whose architectural composition was accepted and imposed as a ready scheme from Constantinople (Fig.5-9).<sup>21</sup>

The monuments of the Greek School<sup>22</sup> are significant – especially some of the cruci-domed churches, situated in monastery environment – the Daphne monastery (Fig.10), and Caesariani (Fig.11) near Athens, St.Luke church in Fokida (Fig.12), the monastery settlements in Mystra – a center of the Greek Middle Ages period, created in the 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (Fig.13- 14).

<sup>21</sup> С. Дончева, *За произхода на един църковен архитектурен тип.* – В: Трудове на катедрите по История и Богословие, Т. 1, Шумен, 1997, 132 – 140; С. Дончева, *Към методите на оразмеряване на кръстокуполните църкви в Преслав*, Археология, 1 – 2, 1999, 85 – 91; С. Дончева, *Метрични зависимости и оразмерителни принципи в църковното строителство на Първата българска столица*, В: Плиска – Преслав, Т. 8, 2000, 114 – 124; С. Дончева, *Метричен анализ на някои кръстокуполни храмове от Велики Преслав*, В: Преславска книжовна школа, Т. 5, 2001, 94 – 106; С. Дончева, *Някои акценти в архитектурното проектиране на църковното строителство в Първото българско царство*, Археология, 3, 2002, 49 – 56.

<sup>22</sup> Б. Полевой, *Искусство Греции*, М., 1973; В. Полевой, *Искусство Греции. Средние века*, М., 1984, 250 – 274.

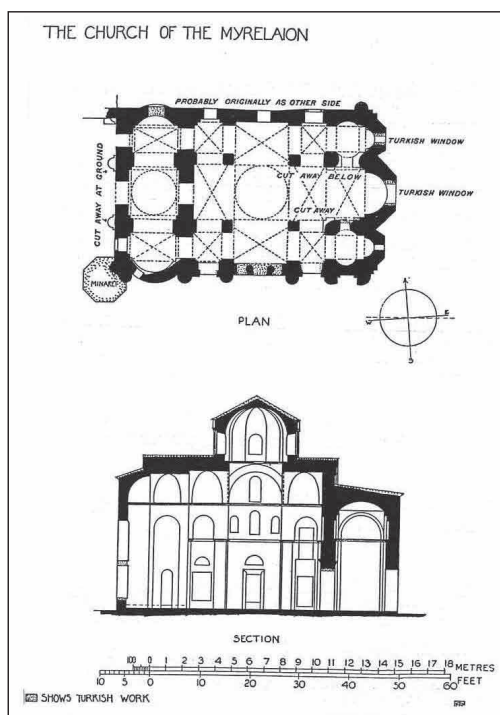


Fig. 4 Bodrum jamissi (the church of the Myrelaion – 920 – 944, the cemetery church of the Emperor Roman Lakapin). Plan. (A. van Millingen)

Сл. 4 Бодрум џамија (920-944. год., гробна црква императора Романа Лакапина). План. (А. ван Милинген)

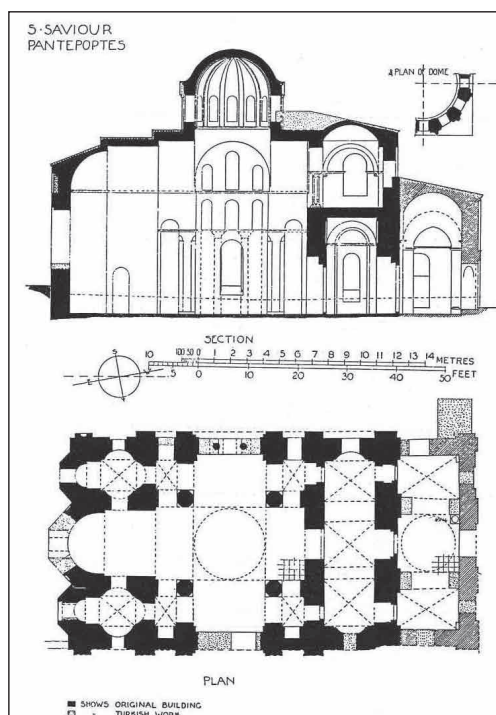


Fig. 5 Eski Imaret jamissi (the church of S. Saviour Pantepoptes – 11<sup>th</sup> century). Plan. (A. van Millingen)

Сл. 5 Ески Имарет џамија (црква св. Спаситеља Пантепоптеса – XI век). План. (А. ван Милинген)

The representatives of the cruci-domed compositional scheme in Serbia<sup>23</sup> (which united some small states in the Nemanichi's kingdom) are also remarkable. The earliest monument is the St. Nicholas church in Topolitza (Fig. 15) that together with the church in Rasa (12<sup>th</sup> century) (Fig. 16) belongs to the Rash architectural school. Its finally accomplished architectural shape appears in the Studenitza's church (Fig. 17). In the later representatives of the type from the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Sopochani, Mileshevo, Moracha, Gradachi, the Jicha monastery) (Fig. 18-19) the aspiration is the central part to be perceived as an individual spatial unit, without breaking the geometric form of the cross sign.

<sup>23</sup> Ђ. Бошковић, *Архитектура Среднег века*, Београд 1957; Ђ. Бошковић, *Средневековна уметност у Србији и Македонији*, Београд 1959.



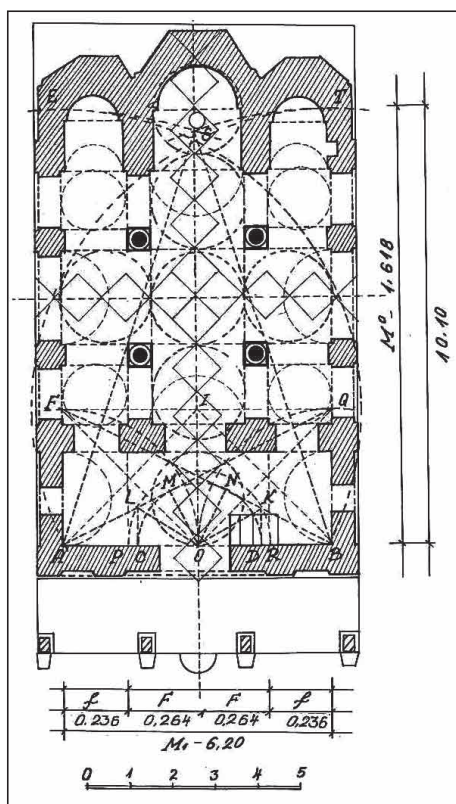


Fig. 6 Preslav - Avradaka 1 (the 10<sup>th</sup> century)  
Plan and Metrical analyze.  
(reconstruction of St. Doncheva)

Сл. 6 Преслав – Аврадака 1 (X век).  
План и метричка анализа.  
(реконструкција С. Дончеве)

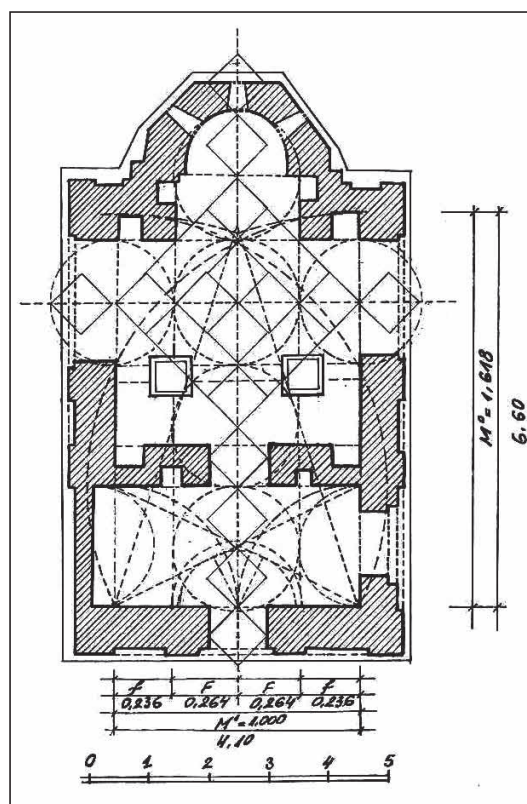


Fig. 7 Preslav – Bjal Briag 3 (the 10<sup>th</sup> century)  
Plan and Metrical analyze.  
(reconstruction of St. Doncheva)

Сл. 7 Преслав – Бјал Бријаг 3  
(X век). План и метричка анализа.  
(реконструкција С. Дончеве)

The examples observed are bearers of that common and typical, which unites the complete building of the centric composition. The balance between the superior – the spiritual and the material – the terrestrial can be seen in the close scale of the individual buildings that transforms them into balanced groups or into entire complexes.

An analogical duality is manifested also in human essence – an original microcosmos, decomposing into spiritual and material principles. In overcoming of the sinful material nature as well as in the continuous striving for God the Middle Ages person sees the final aim of his existence.

In the cosmic or hierarchic scheme, the church and the rite are an image of the terrestrial existence of the Church, in which the Divine Blessing is given to the earthen people (the naos) from the heavenly bounds (the altar) and its celestial worship (the liturgy, served there).

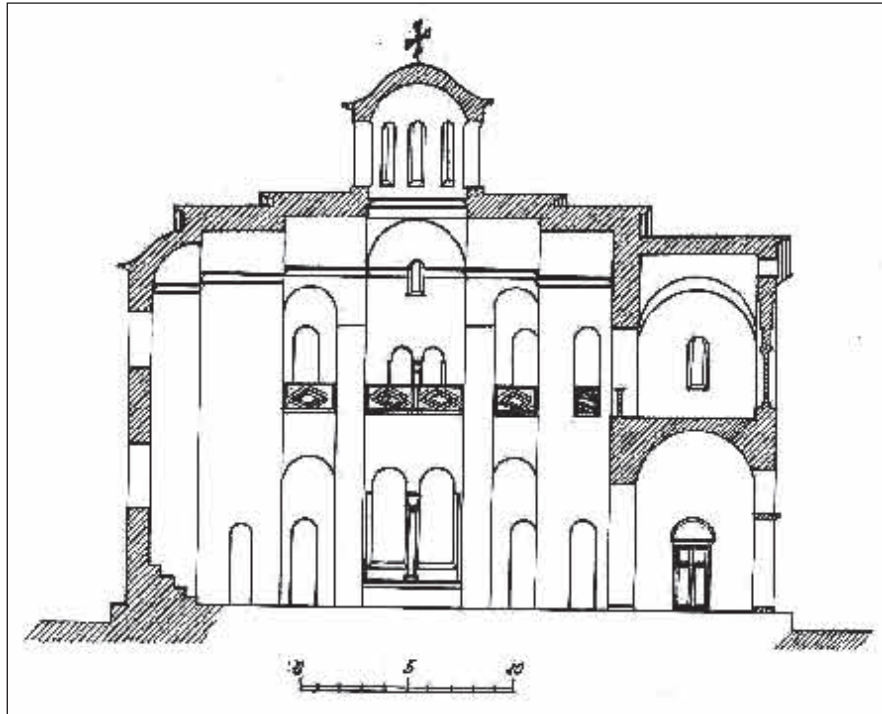


Fig. 8 Preslav – Chupkata 2 (the 10<sup>th</sup> century). Section. (reconstruction of St. Doncheva)

Сл. 8 Преслав – Чупката 2 (X век). Пресек. (реконструкција С. Дончеве)

St. Simeon of Thessalonica (+1429) – the last one of the classical Byzantine mystagogians, synthesizes this conception in chapter 131 of his treatise, called “About the holy temple”: “The church as a home of the Lord, is an image of whole the world, because God is everywhere and above everything... And it (the liturgy) is performed both above and down, here, but with the only difference – above it’s not veiled with any symbols and here it’s performed by means of symbols.”<sup>24</sup>

In the cruci-domed temple, in combination with the visual dematerialization of the forms it’s generated the feeling of abstraction from the immediate perception, feeling of high intellectualism. This art is not of the soul, but of the spirit” as St. Gregory of Nissus notes.<sup>25</sup>

The complicated rite and cult<sup>26</sup>, invoked to ascend the believer from the terrestrial world into the celestial kingdom, are combined with the rich symbolism in the base of the cruci-domed temple.

<sup>24</sup> PG 155, 337-340 - В: Р. Тафт, *Византийското богослужение*, Пос. Съч. с. 53.

<sup>25</sup> Григорий Ниский, *Толкования к надписям псалмов*, Памятники византийской литературы -VI-IX в., М., 1968, 85.

<sup>26</sup> А. Карасавин, *Святые отцы и учителя церкви*, М., 1994, 126, 132; А. Карасавин, *Църква, православие, евхаристия*. (кратка антология на съвременното

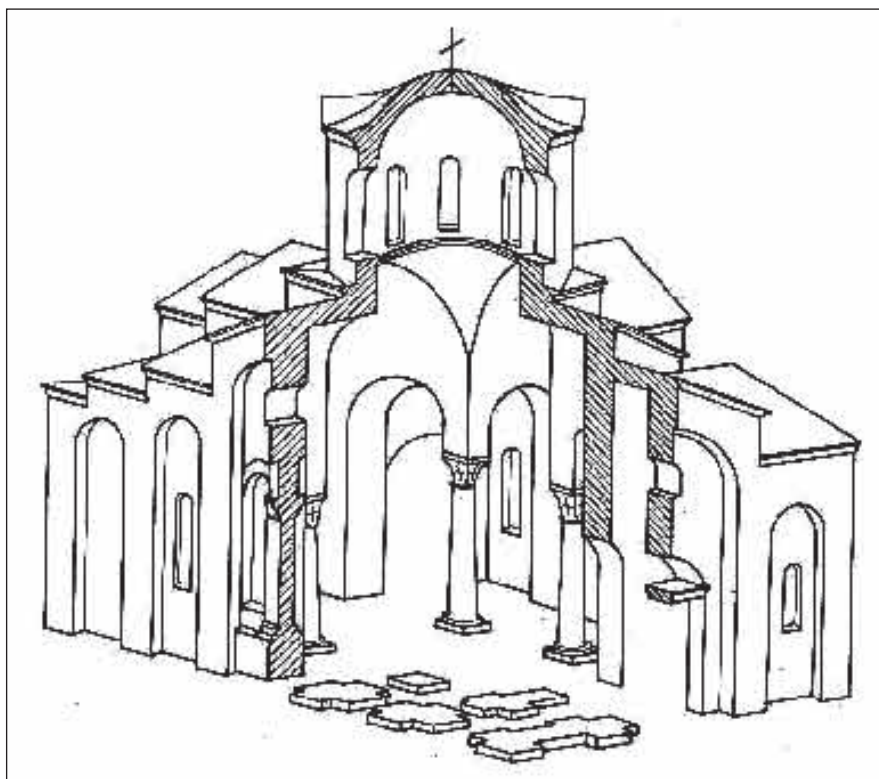


Fig. 9 Preslav – the church of Mostich (the 10<sup>th</sup> century). Axonometry.  
(reconstruction of St. Doncheva)

Сл. 9 Преслав – црква Мостич (X век). Аксонометрија. (реконструкција С. Дончеве)

србско богословие), Ч.1, С., 1999, 35-123; Л. Мирковић, *Православна литургија или наука о богослужењу православне источне цркве*, Београд 1965, 1-15; Хр. Димитров, *Същност, форма и символика на православното богослужение*, ГДА, Т.IX, 6, 1959-1960, 211-231; И. Гошев, *Старобългарската литургија*, ГСУ Бф. 1932, IX; Т. Станчев, *Тълкование на божествения молитвеник дом*, Русчюк 1873; Киприан, *Евхаристия*, Париж 1947; О. Strunk, *The Byzantine Office at Hagia Sophia*, DOP, 1956, 9-10, 175-202; A. Schmemmann, *The Historical Roud of Eastern Orthodoxy*, Mass. 1963, 210-216.; R. Taft, *Some Notes on the Bema in the East and West Syrian Traditions*, OCP, 1968, XXXIV, 326-359; R. Taft, *How Liturgies Grow: the Evolution of the Byzantine „Divine Liturgy“*, OCP, 1977, vol. XLIII, 355-378; R. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Great Church; An Initial Syntesis of Structure and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasin*, DOP, 34-35, 1980-1981, 45-75; R. Taft, *The Great Entrance. A History of the Transfer of Gifts and Other Preanaphoral Rites of the Liturgy of St. John Chrisostom*. OCA, 200, 3end, Rome 1978; R. Hoddinot, *Early Byzantine Churches in Macedonia and Southern Serbia*, London 1963, 23-32.; T. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy*. University Park, Pennsylvania 1971.

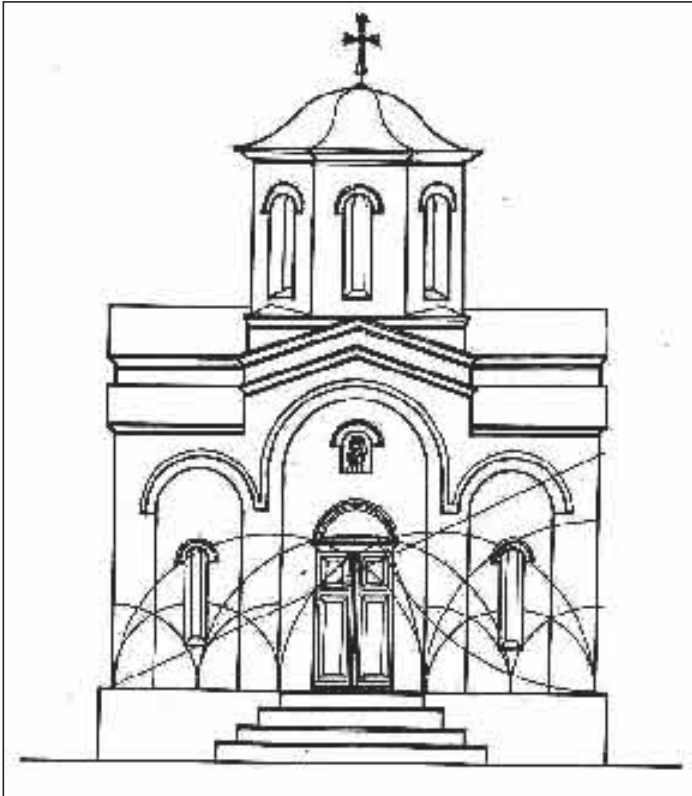


Fig. 10 Preslav – the church of Mostich (the 10<sup>th</sup> century). Facade. (reconstruction of St. Doncheva)

Сл. 10 Преслав – црква Мостич (X век). Фасада. (реконструкција С. Дончеве)

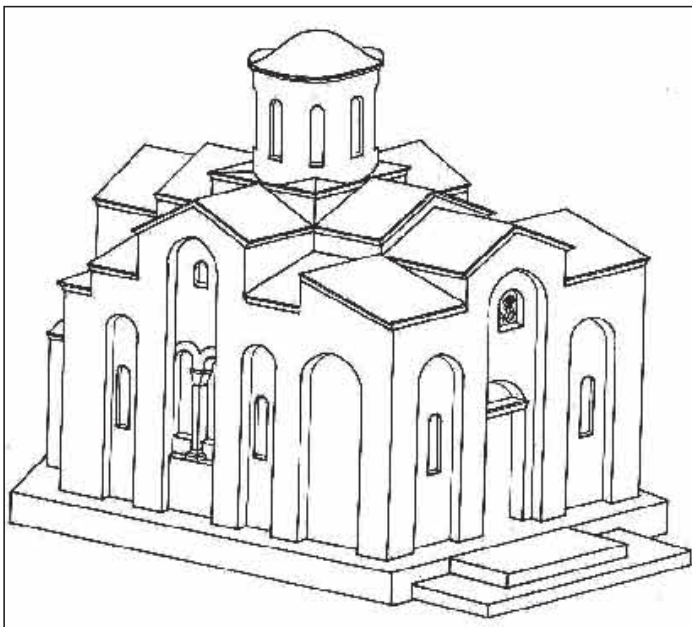


Fig. 11 Preslav – Avradaka 2, the 10<sup>th</sup> century, Axonometry. (reconstruction of St. Doncheva)

Сл. 11 Преслав – Аврадака 2 (X век). Аксонометрија. (реконструкција С. Дончеве)

Fig. 12 Greece. Dafni monastery – the church (the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century). Plan. (B. Polevoj)

Сл. 12 Грчка. Манастир Дафни – црква (крај XI века). План. (Б. Полевој)

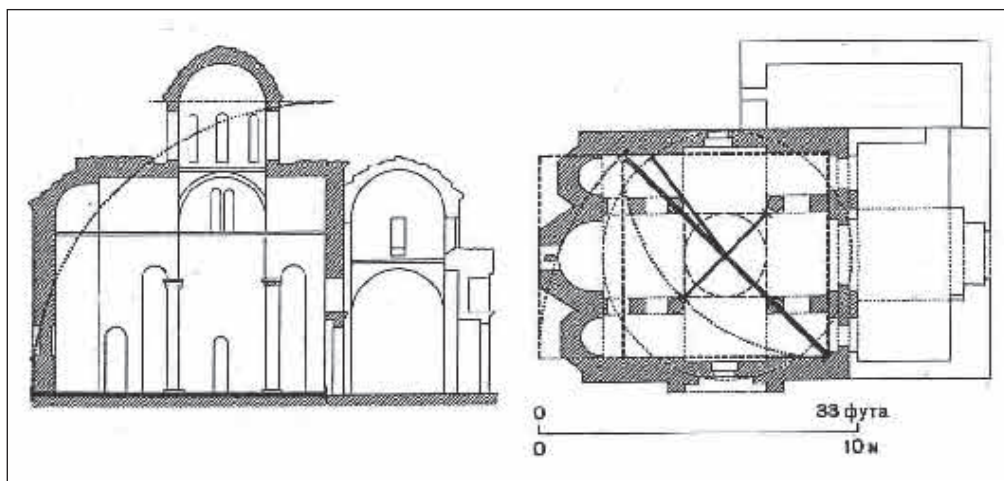
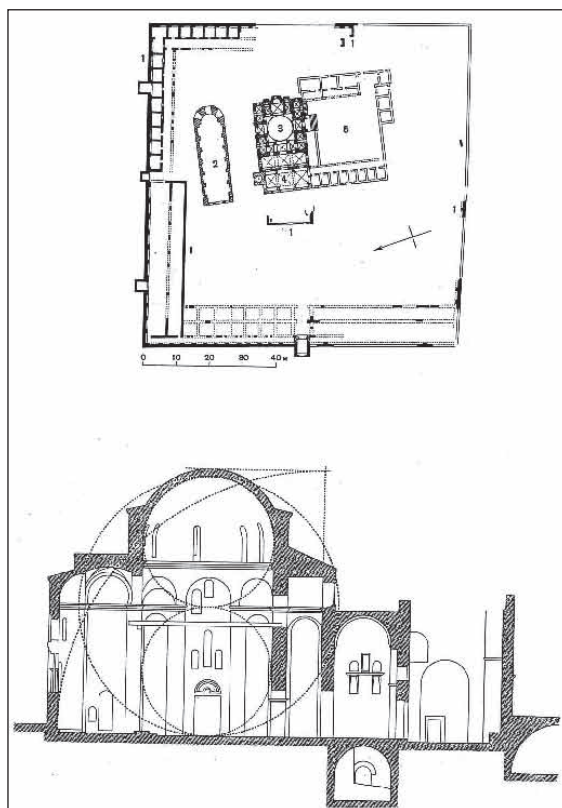


Fig. 13 Greece. Kesariani, near Athene the catholicon in monastery (the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century). Plan. (B. Polevoj)

Сл. 13 Грчка. Кесаријани, поред Атине. Епископска црква у манастиру (друга половина XI века). План. (Б. Полевој)

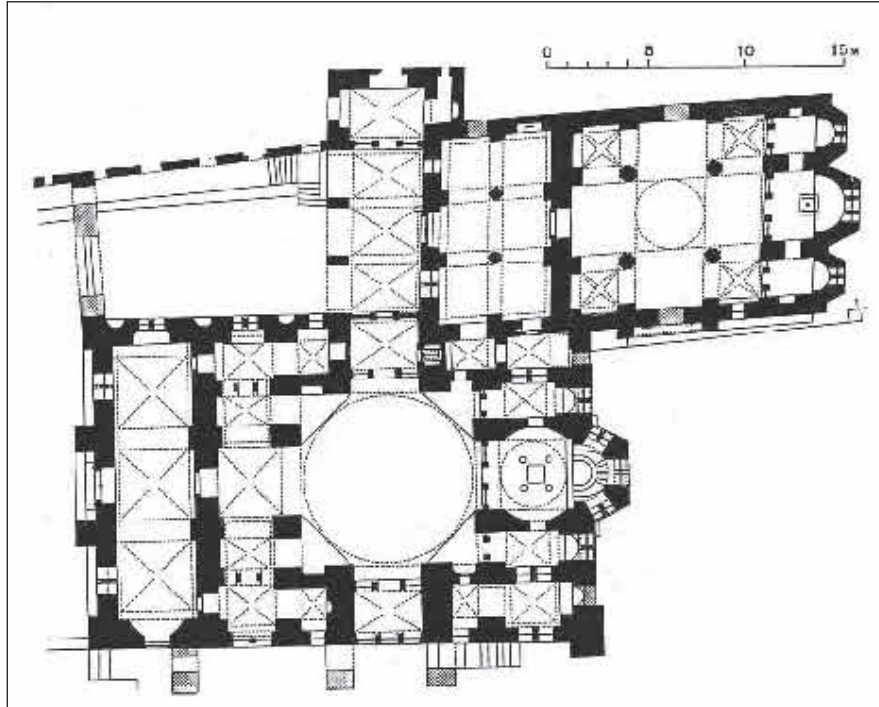


Fig. 14 Greece. Fokida – the church in monastery S. Luke  
(the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century). Plan. (B. Polevoj)

Сл. 14 Грчка. Фокида – црква у Манастиру св. Луке (крај XIII века).  
План. (Б. Полевој)

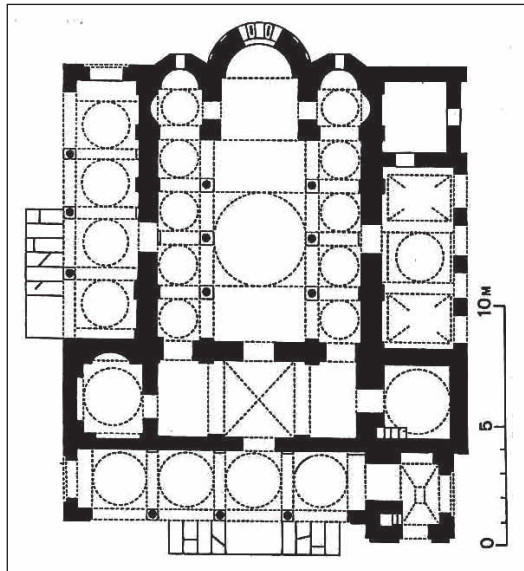


Fig. 15 Greece. Mystra – the catholicon in monastery Bronthohion,  
the 13<sup>th</sup> century. (B. Polevoj)

Сл. 15 Грчка. Мистра  
– епископска црква у Манастиру  
Бронтохион, XIII век. (Б.  
Полевој)

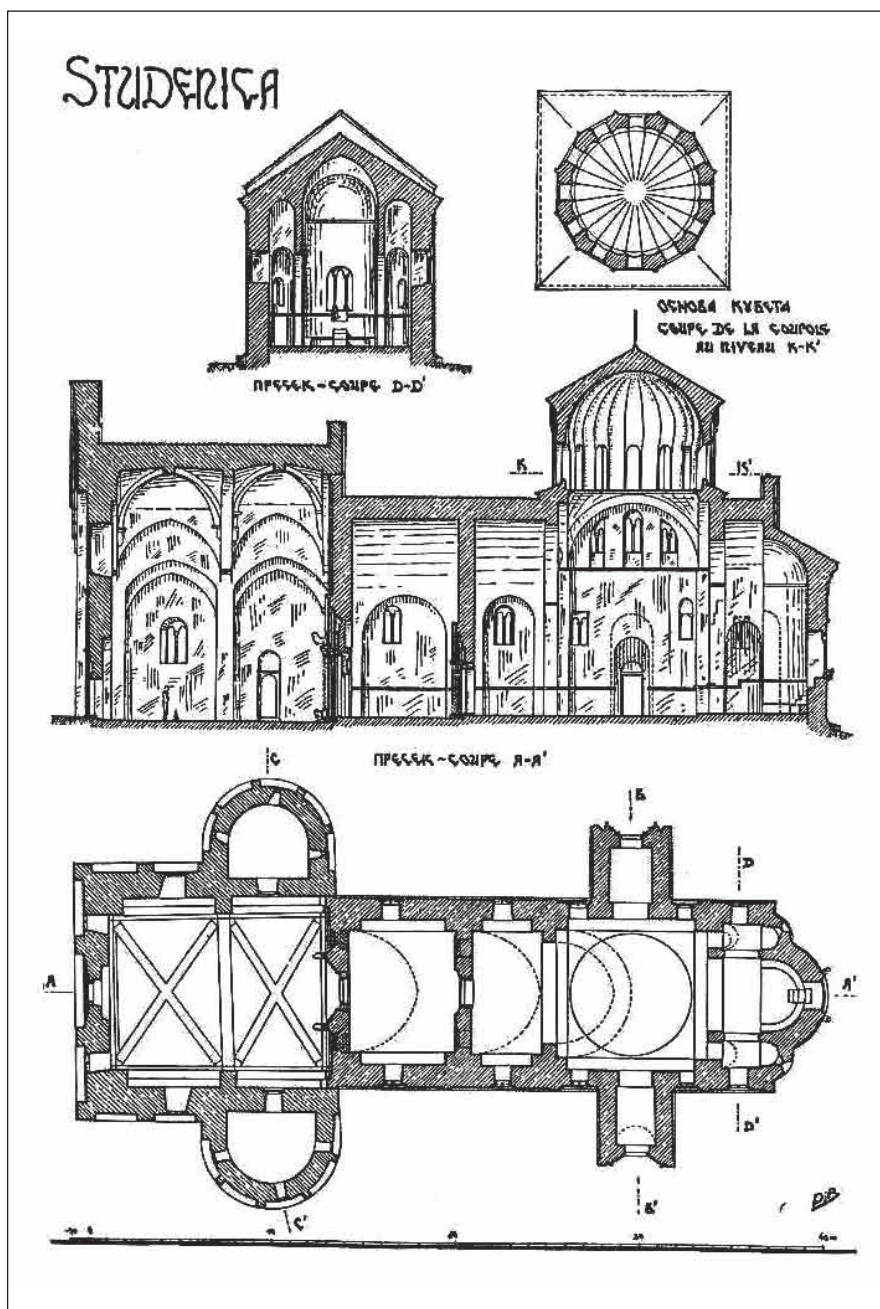


Fig. 16 Serbia. Studenica – the church of the Virgin (the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century – the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century). Plan and Section. (B. Bošković)

Сл. 16 Србија. Студеница – Богородичина црква (крај XII века – почетак XIII века). План и пресек. (Б. Бошковић)

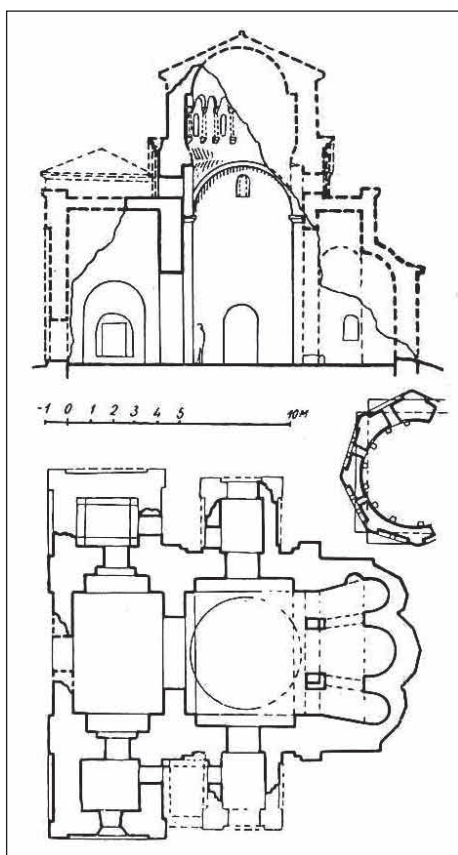


Fig. 17 Serbia. Rasa – the church, the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Plan. (B. Voškovic)

Сл. 17 Србија. Рас – црква, XIII век.  
План. (Б. Бошковић)

The dome has an architectural and sign concentration. Overcoming the limits of the space, locked in the architectural masses, it is perceived as a celestial habitation of the Lord, as a “earthly heaven”.<sup>27</sup> The drum under the dome outlines much more the mystagogical character of whole the building.

By raising up, the spiritual contemplation is reduced to concentration and releasing of the mind, in order to reach a mystic divine enlightenment. The movement of the thought is accomplished through a tangible from above to down, during which the supports are not perceived as supports of the heavenly world, but as divine “roots”<sup>28</sup>, from which the believer obtains strength in order to achieve a full amalgamation with the Divine spiritual essence.

The habitation of the transcendent God, embodying the ideas of the pure spiritualism takes the upper levels on the vertical axis, and the naos (nave) is the visible Heaven, “our world”, “the ship of the faithful”<sup>29</sup>. Such an image of

<sup>27</sup> Св. Герман. Константинопольский. Пос. Съч., с. 43

<sup>28</sup> O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration*, London, 1947, p.12

<sup>29</sup> С. Аверинцев, *Порядок космоса и порядок истории в мировоззрении раннего средневековья*, М., 1975, 280.



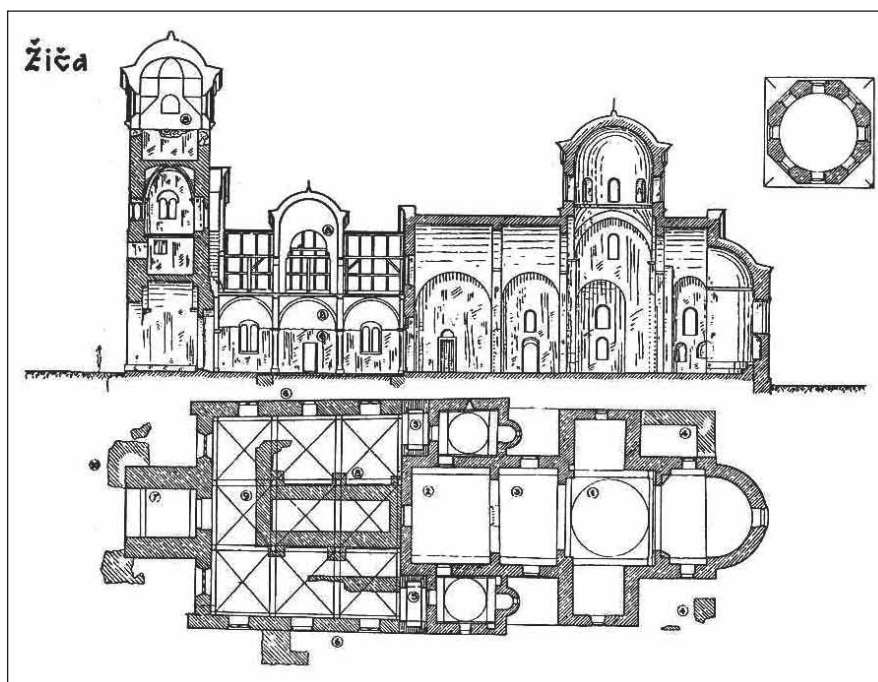


Fig. 18 Serbia. Zica – the catholicon of the monastery, the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Plan and Section.  
(B. Bošković)

Сл. 18 Србија. Жича – епископска црква у манастиру, XIV век. План и пресек.  
(Б. Бошковић)

the two extents of the temple space totally responds to the mediaeval idea of the world's image, composed of two levels, in which the Old Testamentary and the Plato's traditions<sup>30</sup> intermingle.

Following the horizontal line, the sacral value increases with moving closer to the altar. That's why according to Apostle Paul (Ephes.1:23; Collos.1:18), the temple is perceived as an image of the mystical Christ's Body, which allegorically and immediately expresses the undepictable.

In every act of the liturgy, the believer sees a symbolic implication about the supernatural world. The spiritualistic aesthetics creates in the cult a special form of "mystical materialism",<sup>31</sup> in which the transcendent God embodies the idea of the pure spiritualism. And the closer the believer feels the Lord, the more perfect the rite in his eyes is.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> А. Лосев, *Очерки античного символизма и мифологии*, М., 1993, 365-475.

<sup>31</sup> В. Н. Лазарев, *История Византийской живописи*, М., 1986, 17.

<sup>32</sup> А. Голубцов, *Соборные чиновники и особенности службы по НИМ*, М., 1907, 147-148; А. Рудаков, *Краткое учение о богослужении православной церкви*, СПб., 1902.

Having such an approach towards the art, we reach its out-of-space and out-of-time character, where it wins the irrealty principle. One of the most powerful means for raising of the believer from the visible to the invisible, from the sensual to the supernatural, is the architectural image of the cruci-domed temple. According to Dyonisus Areopagitus, one reaches “the divine contemplation”<sup>33</sup> by means of sensual images. Namely through the visible image, the thought must rush towards the spiritual striving, towards the invisible grandeur of the Lord.

The two dimensions of the Middle Byzantine theological synthesis – the cruci-domed building of the temple, symbolizing the idea of the cosmos, as a terrestrial relic of the celestial architecture and the liturgy as a mystery of the Salvation of the microcosmos through the spiritual fulfillment of the road towards the temple put the Middle Age person in the center of an arranged world (cosmos). From the intersection of these two main axes – the material and the spiritual one – it’s obtained the cross of the full orientation of the person in the two levels – the immanent earthly microcosmos and the transcendental world above the time. Only after revealing the meaning of the structure and rationalizing the role of the image, there can be clarified also the principles of the geometrical harmonization, mastered by the Mediaeval architect, which are expressed in the cruci-domed temples in our lands, too.

Сте́ла Дончева

СИМБОЛИЧКО НАГЛАШАВАЊЕ У СРЕДЊЕВЕКОВНОЈ  
ЦРКВЕНОЈ АРХИТЕКТУРИ

Када говоримо о материјалном аспекту културе, у већини случајева склони смо да испитивани објекат третирамо са његове спољашње, видљиве стране, без упуштања у принципе и законитости који су произвели тај чулни утисак. Такав је случај и са архитектуром. Она се често објашњава као хармонија облика, док се истраживање елемената и ставова који су створили ту хармонију сматра непотребним.

Овај рад је покушај да се представе обе стране црквене архитектуре из средњевековне Византије: њено идеолошко-симболичко значење и њена чисто практична сврха у хришћанском религиозном животу.

Обликовање црквене зграде је репродуковање једне представе, решавање конфликта између свести о постојању Бога и чињенице да је Господ чиста апстракција - а ту идеју интелект не може да прихвати.

Формирање нове врсте храма са куполом у облику крста базирано је на традицији, на претходно развијеном просторном облику базилике, али уз трајно прихватање билатералне симетрије као принципа композиционог обликовања. Форма куполе у облику крста настала је у константинопољској школи у IX-X веку и обележава зрели

<sup>33</sup> Њ. Майендорф, *Византијско богословие*. С., 1995, 252-263; В. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия восточной церкви. Догматическое богословие*. М., 1991, 24.; J. Vanneste, *Is the Mysticism of Pseudo - Dionysius Genuine?* - IPQ, vol. III, 1963, 2, 286-306.; K. Wesche, *Christological Doctrine and Liturgical Interpretation in Pseudo-Dionysius*. - St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly. Vol. 33, 1, 1989, 53-73.

период византијске архитектуре. Сам модел представља пример уметничког продирања у смисао идеје и њеног израза. Осим тога, ова просторна форма се вековима није мењала и постала је симбол средњовековне црквене архитектуре не само за Византију већ и за цео православни свет.

Систем пројектовања куполе у облику крста је, као композиција, настао из потребе да се црквена грађевина подели на централни део и околни простор. У тако представљеном систему, истичу се четири композициона елемента: квадрат, круг, крст и центар који спаја остале делове.

Круг и квадрат симболизују два главна аспекта Бога: Јединство и Божанску појаву. Круг представља небеско, а квадрат земаљско, али као Богом створено, а не супротстављено небеском. Структура коју чине коцка – купола – крстаста основа архитектонског система представља материјални израз ове дијалектике. У архитектонском плану, круг претходи куполи чија је полусферна форма знак савршенства.

Крст је основа свих симбола оријентације. Управо као и квадрат, крст симболизује земљу, али манифестује њене посредне, динамичке и тешко уочљиве карактеристике. У њему се небо сусреће са земљом: време и простор се преплићу.

У вези са симболиком храма, Џозеф Флавијус пише да „двориште симболизује море, олтар – земљу, а олтарски простор – небо“, другим речима, храм се схвата као копија небеске архитектуре. На тај начин, црквена архитектура једноставно прихвата и даље развија космологијски симболизам.

Од VII-VIII века надаље византијски теолози су почели да развијају овај систем „симболичког“ виђења Свете литургије која, заједно са знацима које носи архитектонска композиција, формира целину слике.

На тај начин, створена су два тренда. Први и раширенији развио је „реални“ симболизам (Св. Кирил Јерусалимски, IV-V век; Св. Герман Константинопољски - VIII век; Св. Симеон Солунски - XV век), а други, више везан за индивидуалну перцепцију, развио је „појмовни“ симболизам (Св. Максим Исповедник - VII век).

Први тренд схвата литургију и простор храма као систем диференцираних „слика“ – симбола. Други аспект литургијског симболизма интерпретира храм као „слику и представу целине света, сачињеног од видљивих и невидљивих ентитета“.

Стога је целокупни појмовни симболизам усмерен ка рационализацији литургије и архитектонског изгледа храма у смислу специјалног, недокучивог начина сазнавања као вишег, „енигматског“ ступња којим се комплетира систем „византијске гносеологије“.

Споменици константинопољске школе представљају примере за разумевање значења византијског центричног модела – канона и његовог прилагођавања на конкретну ситуацију.

Неки од првих храмова у којима је испољена идеја централизације, мада донекле архаична, изграђени су у IX веку, а сада су познати под турским именима – Атик џамија (око 859. године) и Календер џамија (друга половина IX века). Коначна форма центричног канона постигнута је у цркви Манастира Константина Липса (Фенери Иса) у раном X веку и у гробној цркви императора Романа Лакапина (Бодрум џамија) у периоду 920-944. године.

У периоду од X до XII века је, не само у Византији већ и у другим хришћанским областима, подигнут велики број цркава, чијом су изградњом прихваћени и даље развијани религиозно схватање живота и културни архетипови повезани с њим. Након 870. године, на пример, кад је Бугарска коначно дефинисала свој сопствени статус у односу на византијску цркву, изграђена је већина храмова са куполом у облику крста, углавном у другом главном граду Бугарске Преславу (око 30 цркава), чија је архитектурална композиција била прихваћена и наметнута као готов образац из Константинопоља.

Значајни су и споменици грчке школе – посебно неке од манастирских цркава са куполом у облику крста – Манастир Дафне и Кесаријани у близини Атине, Црква св. Луке у Фокиди, манастирска насеља у Мистри – центру грчког средњовековног доба, грађени у периоду XIII и XIV века.

Представници композиционе шеме са куполом у облику крста у Србији такође су вредни пажње. Најстарији споменик је црква св. Николе у Топлици која, заједно са црквом у Расу (XII век), припада рашкој школи архитектуре. Ова архитектонска форма добија свој коначни облик у студеничкој манастирској цркви. У каснијим представницима ове форме из XIII века (манастири Сопоћани, Милешева, Морача, Градац, Жича) тежња је била да се централни део осмисли као посебна просторна целина без ремећења геометријског облика крста.

Разматрани примери носе значење општег и типичног, које обједињава целокупну грађевину центричне композиције. Равнотежа између узвишеног – духовног и материјалног – земаљског може се запазити у блиској размери појединачних објеката која их трансформише у уравнотежене групе или у комплетне комплексе.

У космичкој или хијерархијској шеми, црква и црквени обред представљају приказ овоземаљског постојања цркве, у којој се божански благослов даје земаљским људима (наос) из небеског простора (олтар) путем узвишеног богослужења (литургија која се тамо служи).

Ове две димензије средње-византијске теолошке синтезе – црквена грађевина са куполом у облику крста, која симболизује идеју космоса као овоземаљска реликвија небеске архитектуре, и литургија, као тајна спасења микроkozма кроз духовно испуњење на путу ка храму – стављају средњовековног човека у центар уређеног света (космоса). У пресеку ове две главне осе – материјалне и духовне – добија се крст у којем се човек потпуно оријентише у два нивоа – у унутарњем овоземаљском микроkozму и у трансценденталном ванвременом свету. Тек након откривања значења структуре и рационализовања улоге оваквог приказа може се говорити о средњовековној архитектури, која је изражена и у храмовима са куполом у облику крста на нашим просторима.