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СЪДЪРЖАНИЕ



<b>Маргарита Куюмджиева.</b> Ветхий денми във византийската живопис . . . . .	3
<b>Георги Геров.</b> Двустранна икона от Несебър с Христос Пантократор и Разпятие . . . . .	13
<b>Иван Ванев, Надежда Цветкова.</b> От църквата до музея. По пътя на несебърските икони. . . . .	21
<b>Бисерка Пенкова.</b> Св. Йоан Рилски в Боянската църква – иконография и археология . . . . .	28
<b>Нона Петкова.</b> Към типологията на византийските обкови на евангелия. . . . .	32
<b>Athanassios Semoglou.</b> À propos du moule métallique des reliures des évangélistes du Musée archéologique national de Sofia. . . . .	39
<b>Емануел Мутафов, Иван Тютюнджиев, Пламен Събев.</b> Надписът от олтарната абсида на търновската митрополитска църква „Св. св. Петър и Павел”. . . . .	42
<b>Диана Косева, Константин Тотев.</b> Средновековни фрески, открити при разкопките във Велико Търново . . . . .	48
<b>РЕЦЕНЗИИ</b>	
<b>Юлия Вълева.</b> Многоезичен речник на термините от византийската архитектура и скулптура . . . . .	58
<b>Емануел Мутафов.</b> Ars longa, index brevis est. . . . .	60
<b>РЕЗИЮМЕТА.</b> . . . .	63

## CONTENTS

<b>Margarita Kuyumdzhieva.</b> The Ancient of Days in Byzantine Painting. . . . .	3
<b>Georgi Gergov.</b> The Bipartite Icon from Nessebar with Christ Pantokrator and a Crucifix. . . . .	13
<b>Ivan Vanev, Nadezhda Tsvetkova.</b> From the Church to the Museum. The History of the Nessebar Icons . . . . .	21
<b>Bisserka Penkova.</b> St. John of Rila in the Boyana Church – Iconography and Archaeology . . . . .	28
<b>Nona Petkova.</b> On the Typology of Byzantine Gospels' Covers. . . . .	32
<b>Athanassios Semoglou.</b> Remarks on the Decoration of the Metal Mould for Forging Gospel Covers from the National Archaeological Museum of Sofia . . . . .	39
<b>Emmanuel Moutafov, Ivan Tyutundzhiev, Plamen Subev.</b> The Inscription in the Altar Apse of the „Sts Peter and Paul” Bishopric Church in Veliko Tarnovo . . . . .	42
<b>Diana Kosseva, Konstantin Totev.</b> Mediaeval Frescoes of the Archaeological Excavations Accomplished in Veliko Tarnovo . . . . .	48
<b>REVIEWS</b>	
<b>Julia Valeva.</b> Multilingual Illustrated Dictionary of Byzantine Architecture and Sculpture Terminology . . . . .	58
<b>Emmanuel Moutafov.</b> Ars longa, index brevis est . . . . .	60
<b>SUMMARIES.</b> . . . .	63



## SUMMARIES

### THE ANCIENT OF DAYS IN BYZANTINE PAINTING

*Margarita Kuyumdzhieva*

The representation of the *Ancient of Days* is crucial as a meaningful reflection of *Homo Byzantinus*' notion of God's likeness in all its theologian and dogmatic complexity. It was by the creation of this image that important dogmatic postulates in Byzantine art and the art of Orthodoxy in general were visualized such as the idea of the full divinity or consubstantiality of the Son in Christology or of the monarchy of the Father in Orthodox triadology. The article discusses the theological interpretation, and liturgical connotations of the name *Ancient of Days*, and the emergence, iconography, and function of the image that is signified with the correspondent inscription in Byzantine art.

### THE BIPARTITE ICON FROM NESSEBAR WITH CHRIST PANTOKRATOR AND A CRUCIFIX

*Georgi Gergov*

The icon that this text is dedicated to has large dimensions: height 143 cm and width 99 cm. In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was located in the royal raw of the iconostasis of the bishop church of St. Stephen in Nessebar (the so called New Bishop Church). Later it was moved to the National Museum, Sofia, while in the mid 1960s – in the Mediaeval and Revival Department of the National Art Gallery in the Crypt of the St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. Its restoration was done by the artist Dana Decheva and was completed at the end of 2009. The activities, connected with this were part of a larger project, financed by the Leventis Foundation. This is one of the oldest preserved in Bulgaria icon which in its long history undertook many changes. The oldest is the image of Christ Pantokrator with Deesis. It was dated from the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> and was possibly the work of a master from Constantinople. From the iconographic point of view of interest is the purple Gospel with golden letters which Christ is holding in his hand. By the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century the old icon, which by that time was quite damaged, was cut on the borders and placed in a new

wooden 'coffin'. A local icon painter was asked to restore the losses of the old image and he drew on the back side a Crucifixion. In this way the icon became bipartite, designed to be used at church processions during important church holidays. At the same time the old image of Christ Pantokrator was decorated with a precious repousse cover. Besides the silver gold-plated nimbus it included numerous silver bands (some of them – gold-plated) which covered Christ's body. In the period 1598-1599 when the Nessebar New Bishop Church was renovated and decorated with new murals the icon was also renovated. Christ's face was drawn anew while the ktetor Manuel Julianu added a silver Gospel and a blessing right-hand. The services of the noted citizen of Nessebar were marked with a special inscription in the western part of the New Bishop Church and next to the inscription a specific mural 'copy' of the ancient, respected icon was drawn where all the additions to the repousse cover made by Manuel Julianu were noted. During the period between 1780 and 1791 the image of Christ was drawn for the third time. Most probably the ktetor was Bishop Constantine, whose portrait was placed next to the above-mentioned mural 'copy'.

### FROM THE CHURCH TO THE MUSEUM. THE HISTORY OF THE NESSEBAR ICONS

*Ivan Vanev, Nadezhda Tsvetkova*

The transfer of icons from Nessebar with the aim of preserving them has started at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when from the iconostasis of the church of St. Stephen the famous icon of the Virgin Mary with silver repousse cover from the time of King Ivan Alexander. After the Balkan War when Nessebar officially came under the jurisdiction of Bishopric of Sliven conditions were created for the first general activities undertaken by the state for the preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the city. Commissioned at that time in Nessebar was the manager of the Department of Mediaeval History Petar Mutafchiev who organized the fortification of churches and he stored in the museum some architectural sculptures as well as some icons.

Two of the most large-scale campaigns

for the collection of icons from the Nessebar churches were undertaken under the leadership of Krastio Mityaev in 1924 and in 1926. Regretfully detailed documentation about the exact number of collected at that time icons has not yet been found. The bombing of Sofia during the Second World War when part of the museum was destroyed could be one of the reasons for the lack of documentation. Destroyed at that time were all of the museums index-boxes. In December 1926 the icons from Nessebar were stored in the collection of the Plovdiv National Library and Museum. During the following years icons from Nessebar were included also in the collection of the Church Museum in Sofia. The best documentation can be found about the icons collected in the National Museum by the restorer Carl Yordanov who was sent to Nessebar during the second half of the 1940s to transfer the mural paintings from the almost totally destroyed churches in the city.

After the National Museum in Sofia became part of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences an inventory of the funds and part of the Nessebar icons was undertaken and they received new inventory numbers. In the new inventory lists many mistakes were made that were directly connected with the identification of the objects. These changes coincided with the creation of the Branch for Ancient Bulgarian Art at the National Art Gallery. In this way an important part of the Nessebar icons became part of the new exposition with incorrect inventory numbers and incorrect data about their origin. During the inventory some of the icons were attributed to the so called Confidential Fund which was created during the time of the First World War and included objects from the territories which were later taken away from Bulgaria. In 1979 this fund was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from 1991 part of it went to the National Museum of History.

The present study attempts to clarify the origin of some of the Nessebar icons and to which church they belonged and to correct some of the accumulated during the years incorrect data in the different academic literature. Information from the old inventory books of the former National Archaeological Museum in Sofia, some not that

well known documents as well as photographs from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been used in the article.

### ST JOHN OF RILA IN THE BOYANA CHURCH – ICONOGRAPHY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

*Bisserka Penkova*

The image of St John of Rila in the narthex of the Boyana church is the oldest known picture of the saint. It is unique with the very concrete realia of his monk's clothes. The most interesting of them is the hardly recognizable on the analabion mysterious cross. This cross is of irregular „soft” form as a knitted lacing and its two tags are hanged over his belt. Such a detail has no parallels in art, but there are analogous finds from Ukraine and Russia dated in thirteenth century. Here we have an so called paraman of polystaurion. When one analyzes the particular image, there is obvious that the painter reproduced with a maximum accuracy the separate elements of the monk of great schema's robes, who is an abbot, which we can understand from the tape in light ochra in the end of the mantle of the hermit, which is not peculiar to the images of the other monks in the church. The image in the Boyana church is an evidence for the fact that in the middle of the thirteenth century there is a Bulgarian iconographic tradition for depicting St John of Rila as a monk of the great schisma of the highest range. The study of this image is also a contribution to the reconstruction of the monk's clothes of the age.

### ON THE TYPOLOGY OF BYZANTINE GOSPELS' COVERS

*Nona Petkova*

According to the tradition of the Christian East the luxurious metal binding was made exclusively for covers of the altar Gospel which was used both as a service book and as a church implement with exactly determined role in the practice of liturgy. The precious cover is an expression of the great veneration rendered to the Gospel as a vessel of the Word of God and symbol of Christ himself.

This article is aimed towards the systematization of Gospels' covers according to their typological characteristics. The research is based on the examples from Byzantine and Post-Byzantine

period and offers their classification by types and subtypes which is the first of this kind. It displays the existence of three basic types of Gospels' covers in the Orthodox world – single-structured, multi-structured covers and bindings with the shape of a box, something that has not been mentioned yet. Further comparison between examples in each of these groups shows the presence of subtypes among the multi-structured covers and box bindings. Differences in Gospels' multi-structured covers are related to the arrangement of the variously shaped metal fittings on the codex's surface for which there are two known variants. In the first the elements don't cover closely the base on which they are fitted and the effect of the bookbinding as a whole is achieved by the combination of metal components with other materials such as leather or luxurious fabric. The second subtype of the multi-structured covers appears a little bit later and becomes widely spread among the goldsmiths on the Balkans during the Post-Byzantine epoch. Usually in this case elements are arranged close to each other and they completely fill the covers. The main aim here is to accomplish resemblance with the effect of the covers made from one single sheet of metal. We could also find two subtypes among the examples of the last type of precious covers for Gospels as box bindings. First are separate containers (caskets) while the second are fixed to the wooden boards of the codex but have the shape of a box too.

### REMARKS ON THE DECORATION OF THE METAL MOULD FOR FORGING GOSPEL COVERS FROM THE NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF SOFIA

*Athanassios Semoglou*

In this paper we try to reconsider the dating of the metal mould for forging gospels, which is part of the collection preserved in the National Institute of Archaeology with Museum in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia. Till now the work whose provenance remains unknown was attributed to the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

We focus on the exceptional depiction of the New Testament allegory as a young woman encircled in a mandorla supported by two angels in the upper part of the Descent to Hell in the one of the two leaves of the mould, a composition destined to decorate the front cover of the gospel. The incorporation

of the New Testament allegory in the Anastasis composition seems to be a post-byzantine innovation which is found similarly in a group of churches in north-west Greece during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, such as the catholicon of Molivoskepastos in Epirus (1521-1537), the catholicon of Diliou monastery in Ioannina (1543), the catholicon of Hosios Nicanor in Zavorda of Grevena (1542-1548) and the other one of Varlaam in Meteors (1548). This original iconography inspired from the paleologean painting enlarges the eschatological character of the Anastasis expressing the „new time”, a notion relating to the Apocalypse – a desire that was of most concern to the Christians under the Ottoman rule. However, according to our data, the 16<sup>th</sup> century should be defined as a *post – quem* for the date of the metal mould of the National Museum in Sofia. Moreover, its post-byzantine dating even in the more advanced period (at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) could be supported by the rich decorative style combined with the classic aspect of the figures, an artistic phenomenon revived during this period.

### ЗА ЕДИН МЕТАЛЕН КАЛЪП ЗА ОБКОВИ НА ЕВАНГЕЛИЕ ОТ НАЦИОНАЛНИЯ АРХЕОЛОГИ- ЧЕСКИ МУЗЕЙ В СОФИЯ

*Атанасиос Семоглу*

В тази статия сме се опитали да преизгледаме датировката на метален калъп за обкови на евангелие, който е част от колекцията на НАИМ в София. Акцентираме специално върху персонализацията на Новия завет, представена като допоясен образ на млада жена в поддържан от два ангела медальон над фигурата на Христос от Слизането в ада – сцената, която украсява предната част на евангелието. Доказахме, че това много оригинално съчетание на алегорията с композицията Слизане в ада се среща най-напред в една група паметници от XVI в. в Северозападна Гърция. За това свидетелстват примерите от католикона на Моливдоскепастос в Епир (1521-1537), от манастира Дилиу на Янина (1543), от Хосиос Никанор в Заворда, Гревена (1542-1548) и от манастира Варлаам на Метеорите (1548). Тази поствизантийска иконографска иновация, чийто източници се откриват в палеологовата живопис, подчертава есхатологичния аспект на Въз-

кресението, като изразява стремежа към „новото време“ в сотириологичен смисъл, което е изключително важно за християните под османска власт. Така, според разгледаните данни, XVI в. може да се посочи като *terminus postquem* за датирването на паметника от НАИМ. От друга страна, неговата принадлежност към покъсния период от поствизантийското изкуство (вероятно края на XVII – началото на XVIII в.) може да бъде подкрепена от подчертано декоративния стил на произведението, съчетан с класическото представяне на фигурите, характерни за тази епоха.

**THE INSCRIPTION IN THE ALTAR APSE OF THE “STS PETER AND PAUL” BISHOPRIC CHURCH IN VELIKO TARNOVO**  
*Emmanuel Moutafov, Ivan Tyutundzhiev, Plamen Subev*

In the context of the latest research, grounding on the contemporary analysis of the frescoes it was assumed that the second layer of murals in the „Sts. Peter and Paul” church was fulfilled in the 60’s of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This period coincides with the last years of the life and the activity of bishop Ignatius of Tarnovo who chaired the episcopacy before 1435-1464. In the present study the authors are making analysis of an inscription which ends in mystic signs, entwined in a whole.

The inscription is preserved in the altar apse. In fact the Greek inscription in the apse is interpreting and adding to the old Bulgarian „Изрядно о Пресвятый” (Immaculately about the Holiest) with a signature of the donor-hierarch: [...(ΥΠΕΡ?)ΕΥΛΟΓΗ]ΜΕΝΗC ΔΕCΠΟΙΝΗC ΗΜΩΝ Θ(ΕΟΤΟ)ΚΟΥ Κ’ ΑΕΙΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΥ ΜΑΡΙΑC, and after it there is an entwined cryptograph whose interpretation, according to us is: ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΤΗC ΙΓΝΑΤΙΟC ΤΥΡΝΟΒ[ΟΥ]. In translation this is “To the most gracious Holy Virgin Maria, Bishop Ignatius of Tarnovo”. For the period of 14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> centuries this type of cryptographs were typical and furthermore this was the most usual signature (common usually in known medieval manuscripts) of any representative of the

political or spiritual authority of Byzantium. The signature itself is borrowed and depicted there in order to mention the bishop’s name in the liturgy. With this correct interpretation E. Moutafov and his colleagues are declining the old thesis that it is the signature of “icon painter Nickolas”. The name mentioned there is that of Ignatius who most probably is the commissioner of the wall-paintings in the 60’s of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Logically in the Tarnovo cathedral church they wrote the bishop’s name in Greek language not only because the previous citing is in the same language. Despite the inscriptions on the murals which are in Bulgarian, the name of Ignatius should be written in the only language that is officially recognized by the jurisdiction of Constantinople, as a symbol of obedience to the Universal patriarch and an expression of the community to the Orthodoxy.

**MEDIAEVAL FRESCOES OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS ACCOMPLISHED IN VELIKO TARNOVO**  
*Diana Kosseva, Konstantin Totev*

Our research is aiming at displaying the results of our observations and the conclusions drawn from the work with the new mural material uncovered throughout the excavations done at six churches situated on the city citadels of Tzarevetz and Trapezitza (№ 9, 12, 2, 19) and on the Great Laurel „Sts. Holy Forty Martyrs” in the medieval capital of Bulgaria. The coming mural material has been selected, conserved and analyzed, however in some of the excavated churches the work is not accomplished yet and the observations are just preliminary. In other cases all the fragments have been uncovered, however the conservation, the fortification and the sorting of the murals is not accomplished yet, hence we do not exhausted all the possibilities for recreation and reconstruction of images, scenes or details.

While processing the fragments we have few groups differentiated according to the depictive repertoire. The first one comprises parts of backgrounds of a single colour. Others are showing parts of limiting frames of the depictive areas. Another differentiated group of frag-

ments consists of pieces with floral and geometric ornaments. The most common element is a dragged spiral ornament which had filled the architectural joints of the interior. Parts of the geometrical ornaments decorated the plinth surfaces, the concave panes, pilasters or formed separate compositions of ornaments. Of another group of fragments we have parts of garments – folds, wrist-cuffs, necklines, sleeves and others but there is not a possibility of fitting the pieces into a whole picture or figures. A separate group of fragments is the one of hand depictions. Amongst the numerous fragments there are pieces of depictions of thirty different faces. We accented over the biggest ones, since they are expressing most clearly the stylistic characteristics of the artistry.

The earliest ones are the images from the church № 19 on Trapezitza (first layer) and church 9 on Tzarevetz which are from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. In one of the images the faces are outlined by black lines, while the depiction is done in an expressive way – which means large dark spots, and others are somehow „dried” while the details are more schematically outlined. The frescoes uncovered in lime pits, holes and building levels on the north of the „Sts Holy Forty Martyrs” church are connected to the second painting of the temple which took place in 1230 and the decoration of the narthex added to it around the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The paintings here are brighter, the volumes are graded by hews and are building an impression of a stronger physical presence of the images. We can still sense the influence of the monuments of the Comnenus age which creates some misunderstanding concerning the conclusions from the stylistic and iconographic analysis of the depictions.

The mural fragments of the churches № 12 on the Tzarevetz and № 2 on the Trapezitza hills are falling under the same aging which is the late 13<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. To the middle and the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century is falling the third layer of murals of the church № 19 and the preserved frescoes from the newly found church south of the Great Laurel „Sts. Holy Forty Martyrs”.