

Nikola Piperski
Faculty of Philosophy
University of Belgrade
piperski.nikola@gmail.com

HESYCHASM AND LIGHT IN THE LATE BYZANTINE CHURCHES¹

Abstract: *This text aims to examine the influence of Hesychasm on the treatment of light within late Byzantine churches, bearing in mind the importance of light in the hesychastic practice through which one should experience God. This paper will reconsider the special orchestration of light and its achieved effects together with the church program. It will be argued that, together with the liturgical rites, the sacral spaces emphasized the idea that the contemplation of the divine ends up with the vision of utmost brightness that dispels the gloom of the lesser spheres, making the invisible of the realm beyond accessible.*

Key words: *hesychasm, light, art, architecture, Byzantium*

This text aims to examine, “or at least to raise an issue” how much influence Hesychasm, a mystical movement whose teachings were synthesized in the 14th century by Athonite monk Gregory Palamas (1296-1357), potentially had on the treatment of light within late Byzantine sacred art and architecture, bearing in mind the importance of light in the hesychastic practice. Through hesychastic practice one should experience God as the vision of uncreated light (i.e. the light of Tabor) which is obtained by achieving the contemplative state of hesychia - inner tranquility which was achieved through the Jesus Prayer, leading to knowledge and experience of the divine.² The practice of hesychia has been part of Orthodox monasticism since the 3rd century, with monastic elders commonly passing down this tradition to their spiritual successors. However, it wasn't until the 14th century that Gregory Palamas (fig. 1) summarized hesychast teaching and defended it against attacks by Barlaam of Calabria (1290 - c. 1350), a leader of the humanist movement in Byzantium. The theological debate between Barlaam and Palamas led to the hesychast controversy.³ The dispute ended with a reassertion of Palamas' theological doctrines and an approval of the dogma of the real distinction between the essence and the energies of God.⁴

Our assumption that Hesychasm influenced the treatment of light treatment of light, both physical and artificial, as well as its representation within painting in Byzantine churches of the late Byzantine period is based on the belief that Hesychasm, especially as espoused by Gregory Palamas, had a profound impact on late Byzantine sacral art and architecture in general.

¹ The paper resulted from the project 1554 Assessing Neoplatonism in the Religious Tradition of the 14th and 15th Century Balkans (ANEB), part of the IDENTITIES (ИДЕНТИТЕТИ) program funded by of the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia.

² Brianchaninov 2006; Sjögren 1975.

³ Meyendorff 1959, 178; Meyendorff 1964, 27; Tsirpanlis 1993, 13–23.

⁴ Ševčenko 1981, 171–172.

Until recently, there have been a few speculations regarding such connection, but none of those has fully been accomplished to prove such a relation.⁵ Here, it is important to notice that some researchers have claimed that hesychasm had a stifling effect on the arts, and it was detrimental to the development of new artistic trends,⁶ and Hesychasm was supposedly responsible for a decline in art production in Byzantium in the 14th century.⁷ Nevertheless, one should keep in mind that the chief promoters of hesychasm, such as Patriarch Arsenus and Athanasius were one of the most influential people who have affected the flourishing of the so-called *Palaeologian Renaissance*.⁸ Finally, as Anita Strezova pointed out: “how is it possible that the artistic trends to which the monastic millennium was supposedly hostile or indifferent flourished in the Slavic lands, where hesychast ideals and literature were widely accepted and propagated?”⁹

The main issue which was and still is the main problem for making definitive conclusions on this topic is that unfortunately, there is no written document providing evidence for the connection between the emergence of new artistic trends in the 14th and 15th centuries and the prevalence of mystical trends during the Palaeologan era.¹⁰ However, some more comprehensive studies on this topic appeared recently, such as *Hesychasm and Art. The Appearance of New Iconographic Trends in Byzantine and Slavic Lands in the 14th and 15th Centuries* by Anita Strezova, published in 2014.¹¹ This book is mainly based on the analysis of iconographic changes and the emergence of new iconographic solutions in Byzantine art in the 14th and 15th centuries, focusing on Christological cycles, predominantly murals, manuscript illuminations, and portable panel icons across the territory of the Byzantine Empire, as well as in orthodox Slavic lands, Walachia and Moldova.¹² In the art of this period, some new themes appeared that are often described historical events, such as the victory of hesychasm, represented by the icon of the Sunday of Orthodoxy.¹³ Furthermore, important figures in hesychasm, such as Palamas and John Kantakouzenos, were also depicted in icons and wall paintings.¹⁴ As Strezova pointed out, under the influence of this spiritual ascetical tradition, narrative scenes from the lives of hermits replaced the space previously allotted to the warrior saints.¹⁵ New compositions emerged in the 14th century, including Barlaam and Iosaphat and various interpretations of the Akathist Hymn,¹⁶ while the theme of the Vision of Ezekiel, long represented from Dura Europos through Thessaloniki (e.g., Osios David) to Middle Byzantine art of the 11th and 12th centuries, was renewed with innovative iconographic details. According to Strezova these iconographic changes occurred due to the 14th-century formulation of the hesychast doctrine of uncreated light.¹⁷

If we accept this hypothesis, would it not be only natural to assume that these iconographic changes and novelties should rather be seen as a consequence of occurrences of hesychasm and current developments in the philosophy and theology of their time, we believe

⁵ Strezova 2014.

⁶ Lazarev 1947, 225–235.

⁷ Palamite theology, presumably, reduced the Christian experience of direct contemplation of divine light and destroyed the main Christological basis of the iconography, thus introducing a ‘de facto iconoclasm’: Strezova 2014, 3.

⁸ Meyendorff 1981; Strezova 2014, 3.

⁹ Strezova 2014, 3.

¹⁰ Strezova 2014, 1.

¹¹ Strezova 2014.

¹² Strezova 2014.

¹³ Cutler 1981.

¹⁴ Cormack 2000, 150–156.

¹⁵ Petković 1995, 289–298.

¹⁶ Gerstel 2003, 225–39; Kartsonis 1986.

¹⁷ Strezova 2014, 4; Cheremeteff 1988, 125–162.

that iconographic changes were not the only thing that appeared in Byzantine art under the influence of Hesychasm, but its influences had to be reflected in the very style of sacred art and architecture. Additionally, phenomena such as the application of light in architecture and art, also could not remain immune to the influences of Hesychasm, especially when it is taken into account that light was one of the central themes of Hesychastic philosophy. However, as Jelena Bogdanovic pointed out: the theme of light in medieval art and architecture is extremely pervasive, deserving a book-length discussion of its own,¹⁸ so one should be careful when determining whether a particular change in the treatment of light was influenced by hesychasm or another philosophical and theological currents, or if it was simply a result of technical and technological advancements and the capabilities of Byzantine architects and artists of the time.

To gain a deeper comprehension of how Hesychasm could have influenced the use of light in Byzantine sacred architecture and art, it is necessary to briefly recall its basic characteristics. The Byzantine art of the 14th and 15th centuries, often referred to as *Palaeologan* or the *Last Byzantine Renaissance*, was not uniform, and its evolution cannot be defined in clear stages.¹⁹ The corpus of Byzantine art in the late 13th and early 14th centuries resulted primarily from a refined humanistic culture, faithful to artistic traditions rooted in the past.²⁰ Towards the end of the 14th century, classical painting trends started to decline, and new idealistic tendencies became more prominent in art. Art historians have noted that around the mid-14th century, variations in artistic patterns and styles began to emerge.²¹ The art of this period portrayed the world as wonderfully animated by the divine essence, "alive to natural beauty but dedicated to sacred purposes."²² Instead of the sensible realism which characterized the art of the late 13th and early 14th centuries,²³ new styles emerged, assuming spiritual qualities rather than temporal ones.²⁴ Cyril Mango describes a "distinct new style" in Palaeologus painting: this style is characterized by the multiplication of figures and scenes, a newfound interest in perspective (though rendered somewhat strangely), and a return to significantly earlier models such as 10th-century illuminated manuscripts.²⁵ Characteristic of this period of Byzantine ecclesiastical painting are the intricate narrative cycles, both in frescoes and icons. The traditional types of sacred paintings, with large portrait-type figures placed on a solid background, were partially replaced by landscape scenes. The participants in the cycles are relatively small and are often shown in motion. There were informal attempts to create illusions of three dimensions in works of art. The paintings of the period were characterized by a "small-headed, broad-bodied, 'boneless' style of figure." Solid, geometrically patterned highlights are used to give figures the appearance of volume, although without interest in depicting realistic anatomical construction or a coherent light source; such a conclusion would be justified only if the standards of the Italian Renaissance were taken as the only measure of quality and if the quality of the style of the Palaeologan Renaissance was judged solely based on them. However, unlike the Italian Renaissance, in which man was the measure of everything, the art of the so-called Palaeologan Renaissance still had God and otherworldly reality as the measure of everything. The church continued to be a reflection of the beyond through which the believer came into contact with the divine. In this sense, all these tools were there to show the other side as it approaches the one

¹⁸ Bogdanović 2011, 119.

¹⁹ Vasić 1930, 110–123.

²⁰ Chatzidakis 1994; Strezova 2014, 3.

²¹ Grabar 1975, 7–8.

²² Weitzmann, 1978.

²³ Hamburger 2002.

²⁴ Chatzidakis 1959, 11–40.

²⁵ Nelson, 2007.

who prays in the church. The inverse, that is, the reversed perspective had the role not to create the depth of the scene, but on the contrary, to show what comes from the depth, from the otherworldly reality here and now towards the believer standing in the temple; the incorporeality of the depicted figures was not a consequence of ignorance of human anatomy, but was a way to emphasize that the frescoes depict: Christ, the Virgin, saints and martyrs, i.e. those who have already freed themselves from their rotten earthly bodies, and the light coming from different sources, similar to the light in Northern Renaissance or late medieval art of the North, as in the Ghent Altarpiece by the van Eyck brothers, the light was not only earthly light, but the light of the heavenly Jerusalem²⁶ or uncreated light (i.e. the light of Tabor).

The main problem that researchers of medieval architecture face is that medieval people seldom wrote about architecture, its theological-philosophical essence, or the sources of inspiration for specific solutions. Therefore, to arrive at certain answers or sufficiently convincing evidence indicating the possibility that certain philosophical currents influenced the development of architecture or that certain phenomena such as light in architecture were treated under the influence of certain theological and philosophical thoughts, it is necessary to use certain parallels and comparisons with examples for which there are written sources that confirm such a connection. Perhaps the most famous of all the examples in art history are the writings of the abbot Suger, whose name is closely associated with the beginnings of Gothic style.²⁷ Suger is one of the rare writers who left us behind his thoughts on architecture, on the theological-philosophical essence of architecture, or sources of inspiration for concrete architectural solutions for the first Gothic church of Saint Denis (1144).²⁸ Abbot Suger was inspired by the theology of Saint Dionysius the Areopagite, mostly because he identified Denny, the legendary apostle of Gaul, with Dionysius the Areopagite.²⁹ Suger's lines from his treatise *De Administratione* (1144-49) provide immediate insight into his intentions and goals in creating the Gothic style, as well as the role of light within it.³⁰ Suger introduced a new architectural style emphasizing height and light, reminiscent of the Dionysian concept of upward-directed lighting—both physical and spiritual. Although he never explicitly quoted Dionysius, Suger's notion of light and brightness,³¹ through which physical light reveals divine light, is closely intertwined with the meaning of the dynamics and corporeality of light in the church. Furthermore, Abbot Suger compared the new church of St. Denis to Mount Zion and further to the heavenly Jerusalem.³² The Franks probably first learned about Dionysius the Areopagite in the 9th century from Byzantium, during the period when the iconoclastic controversy was going on in Byzantium.³³ In 827, the iconoclastic Byzantine emperor Michael II Stammerer (820-829) — himself a member of the Cappadocian Christian sect that followed Jewish rites — sent a Greek manuscript of the works of Dionysius to King Louis the Pious (778-840). From there, the

²⁶ Brand Philip, 1971, 55-60.

²⁷ The example of Abbot Suger and his relationship to light, as well as the interpretation of the philosophical basis that Abbot Suger could have used, is given in detail in her work by Jelena Bogdanović: Bogdanović 2011, 116-18.

²⁸ Bogdanović 2011, 116.

²⁹ The art historian Erwin Panofsky was the first to suggest the influence of the works of Dionysius the Areopagite on Abbot Suger and the creation of the Gothic style: Panofsky 1979, 17-26; On the other hand, unlike Panofski, some authors believe that the knowledge of the Dionysian work of Abbot Suger and his influence on the creation of the Gothic style was non-existent or rather only nominal: Marksches, 1995; Kidson 1987, 1-17.

³⁰ Panofsky 1979, 51.

³¹ Bogdanović 2011, 116, fn 30.

³² Panofsky 1979, 105, 227, 241.

³³ Panofsky 1979, 18.

book was translated and revised several times into Latin by the abbot of St. Denis Hilduin (775-840), the Neoplatonist philosopher, poet and theologian John Scotus Eriugena (c. 815-877), the theologians Hugh (c. 1096-1141) and his disciple Richard (c. 1173) by Saint Victor and other scholars and theologians.³⁴ In 1408, the Abbey of Saint-Denis received another copy of the manuscript of Dionysius the Areopagite as a diplomatic gift from Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (1391-1425), through his ambassador Manuel Chrysoloras (1350-1415).³⁵ Chrysoloras is also known for teaching Greek at Italian universities, for his translation of Plato's Republic into Latin, and for his influence on the revival of Platonic ideas during the Italian Renaissance, all at the time of the hesychastic movement in Byzantium.³⁶ Therefore, although overlapping at critical times, artistic and architectural achievements that may have been based on the Dionysian legacy in the Christian East and West could have had independent, though not mutually exclusive, development.³⁷ Abbott Suger also compared the church of St. Denis with the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and its treasures, even though he never personally saw them.³⁸ When discussing Saint Sophia of Constantinople, it is essential to note that Byzantine writers, such as the court historian Procopius (c. 500-565) and the poet Paulus Silentiarius (died 575-580), who reported first-hand about the construction of Saint Sophia during the sixth century, emphasized the role of light as a spiritual element in architecture. However, they did not directly refer to Dionysius the Areopagite.³⁹

Dionysian concept of anagogical (upward-leading) illumination—both physical and spiritual—was also present in Byzantine churches, but the idea was understood and expressed in a visual language somewhat differently. At first glance, contrary to expectations, Byzantine churches from the late period, especially those within monastic communities such as Mount Athos, where Hesychasm was most widespread, were relatively modestly lit, especially compared to contemporary Gothic sacral spaces in the West. The layout of the openings of the Byzantine churches through which light entered the church was quite different than in Gothic churches, as well as the amount of light that penetrated the church, but the arrangement of the openings through which the light penetrated into the Byzantine church indicates meticulous planning and consideration. By opening the largest number of openings in the tambour, the light was strongest in the dome, creating a gradual fading effect.⁴⁰ Unlike the symmetrical horizontal rays in the upper part of the church, the beams entering through the side wall windows were slanted and weaker. Observed along a vertical line, the light was weakest at the bottom, and the strongest at the top, and the believer entering the church and following the light from the darkness of the lower zones where he was standing to the higher zones and the strongest light at the dome, according to Dionysian concept of anagogical illumination. Horizontally looking, the light was strongest in the altar, to decrease towards the west of the main nave, so that the believer, when he entered the church from the west side, again had the impression that he was stepping out of darkness and walking towards the light that came from the east, from the altar. This arrangement of lights (both vertically and horizontally) was associated with another Neoplatonic concept, which is the idea of hierarchy.⁴¹ This concept has its roots in the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite *The Heavenly Hierarchy* and *The Church Hierarchy* illustrate the ideological

³⁴ Leclercq 1987), 25-32; Rorem 1992, 16.

³⁵ Bogdanović 2011, 118; Cormack 2000, 192- 195; Nelson 1995, 209-235.

³⁶ Bogdanović 2011, 118, with older literature.

³⁷ Bogdanović 2011, 118, with older literature.

³⁸ Panofsky 1979, 65; Bogdanović 2011, 117.

³⁹ Procopius 2002, 15-78; Mango 1986, 80-91.

⁴⁰ Babić 1987, 61.

⁴¹ About the concept of hierarchy in medieval architecture see: Bogdanović 2011, 119-124

possibilities of pairing an earthly order with a heavenly counterpart.⁴² The intention was to depict the earthly church as a faithful reflection of the heavenly church.⁴³ In buildings of the central-plan type, the notion of the celestial and earthly order organized according to the defined hierarchy was very strong, and so was the concept of anagogical (upward-leading) illumination—both physical and spiritual, because the decoration and the all light sources were revealed in an instant.⁴⁴ Small dimensions of churches only contributed to this impression being experienced personally and intimately.

In addition to natural lighting, artificial lighting held special liturgical significance in every Byzantine church. It was provided by a large number of lamps, distributed in the outer parts of the church. We have information about the importance of artificial light from the construction period of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, as evidenced by Paul Silentiarius. According to him, the emperor Justinian presented Saint Sophia two hundred lamps and six thousand golden polycandles.⁴⁵ In the hierarchy of light, the most important thing was, as with natural light, the light what came from the dome. This was achieved with the help of *polyelei* installed, starting with Saint Sophia, in almost all Byzantine churches. In addition to the *polyelei*, there were other lamps in the churches, for example, in front of the solemn icons in the *proskinitars*, candles often burned continuously, and in the altar area and the prostheses, candles could also be lit. Some of those lights never went out. Images of especially revered saints were illuminated with lamps, and candlesticks were also lit during certain rituals in the liturgy, such as, for example, during the reading of parts from the Gospel, while a lighted candlestick with the Gospel was carried in the small entrance and during some other ceremonies.⁴⁶

When talking about light, it is noticeable that in this period mosaics on the timeless and extraterrestrial golden background, that was so characteristic of the paintings of the era of Doukas, Comnenus and Angelos dynasties (1059-1204),⁴⁷ were more and more often replaced with frescoes on a blue background, which in some cases, such as the churches of monastic communities on Athos, was often quite dark (see fig.1).⁴⁸ There were also churches, such as the church Hagioi Apostoloi in Thessaloniki (1310-14), where at the same time both mosaic and frescoes were used in the interior, with the fact that more areas of the church and the dome were covered with sparkling mosaics, while the frescoes complete the decoration on the lower levels of the main church, but also on the narthex and one of the chapels, which also emphasizes the hierarchy of zones as well as the hierarchy of lights. For frescoes with a blue background, gold—traditionally symbolizing the divine light, which sparkled from the mosaics of previous eras, was more and more retained only in individual scenes or was reduced to details such as the halos of saints. On the walls covered with a large number of fragmented narrative scenes, the gold from the saints' halos looked like a series of sparkling dots, i.e. the achieved effect resembled the light of candles whose illumination guides the eye through rather dark scenes of the painted program ascending as if in concentric circles, from the lower to the upper zones, toward the strongest source of light in the dome. Thus, the final result of such spatial arrangement followed both the

⁴² On the Dionysius the Areopagite and his works: Rorem 1992, 3-6; Rorem, Lamoreaux 1998, 1-22; Perl 2008, 1-4; Rosemary 2008, 1-41.

⁴³ After the Iconoclasm, in the Middle and Late Byzantine periods, we see works of art once again begin to draw explicit parallels between the earthly church and the heavenly kingdom. The development of iconographic themes that connect the realms of the Church and heaven in narrow parallelism is one of the key innovations of later Byzantine art: Woodfin 2012, 311.

⁴⁴ Babić 1987, 61.

⁴⁵ Mango 1986, 100.

⁴⁶ Čanak-Medić 2002, 226, 227.

⁴⁷ Lazarev 2004, 87.

⁴⁸ Lazarev 2004, 87.

Dionysian concept of hierarchy and that the visible exposes the invisible.⁴⁹

It is also important to point out that after the Iconoclasm, the liturgy was reduced to a series of "appearances" of clergy to the faithful. The clergy essentially remained concealed behind the iconostasis most of the time during the liturgy,⁵⁰ but during the late Byzantine time, the iconostasis (or templon) was fully developed,⁵¹ so the effect was even more emphasized with the new, higher iconostasis. The liturgical rites and their setting emphasized the contemplation of the heavenly from "darkness" to light, where light conceals darkness, making it invisible in the realm beyond.⁵² Such paradoxes "capture the very essence of symbolism: to hide what it reveals by revealing it and to reveal what it hides by hiding it."⁵³ In the Incarnational context of the church, this typological approach emphasizes that the symbol becomes the reality, as Christ, God-incarnate, has come into manifestation for us from beyond being.⁵⁴ Along with the liturgical rites, the sacred space highlights the idea that contemplating the divine leads to seeing the brightest vision of light that dispels the darkness of the lesser spheres, making the invisible realm beyond accessible almost present.⁵⁵

Some of the most eloquent examples of our topic were created in medieval Serbia, during the reign of King Milutin: the Prizren cathedral, the church of the Virgin of Ljeviška (1309-1313), the church of St. George in Staro Naogoričino (circa 1313-1318), the Catholicon rebuilt from the ground up Hilandar Monastery on Athos (circa 1321), and among these churches, the church of Dormition of Gračanica Monastery (circa 1311-1321) stands out.⁵⁶ This surprisingly small, but monumental in appearance, five-dome church features a pyramidal composition and a vertically attenuating design (fig.2), highlighting the integration of hierarchical monumental decoration with architectural design. The church also upholds a tripartite horizontal hierarchical organization: the narthex, nave, and tri-partite sanctuary. Of course, the lighting was strongest in the highest parts - in the central dome (fig.3) and on the easternmost side, that is, in the sanctuary (fig.4). The intricate painting depicted a richly detailed arrangement of scenes from religious history in concentric circles on a blue background. The hierarchy was clearly established, from lower zones leading up to the highest level where the angelic hierarchy was represented on the central dome and four smaller domes, adorned with images of thrones, seraphim, and angels.⁵⁷

Although we have no reliable evidence that such tendencies in the architecture and art of the late Byzantine period were a direct consequence of hesychastic currents within the Byzantine church, the described ambiance of the late Byzantine church certainly corresponded to hesychastic practice. Intimately lit, modest-scale churches from the late Byzantine period, adorned with numerous scenes from sacred history, which interpretation required commitment and contemplation, created an intimate environment suitable for the consecrated prayer. Together with the liturgical rites, the small and rather dark sacral spaces, with its carefully

⁴⁹ Bogdanović 2011, 129.

⁵⁰ Bogdanović 2011, 129.

⁵¹ Strezova 2014, 4.

⁵² Bogdanović 2011, 129.

⁵³ Perl 2008, 107; Bogdanović 2011, 129.

⁵⁴ Perl 2008, 101-109, citation on 109.

⁵⁵ Bogdanović 2011, 129.

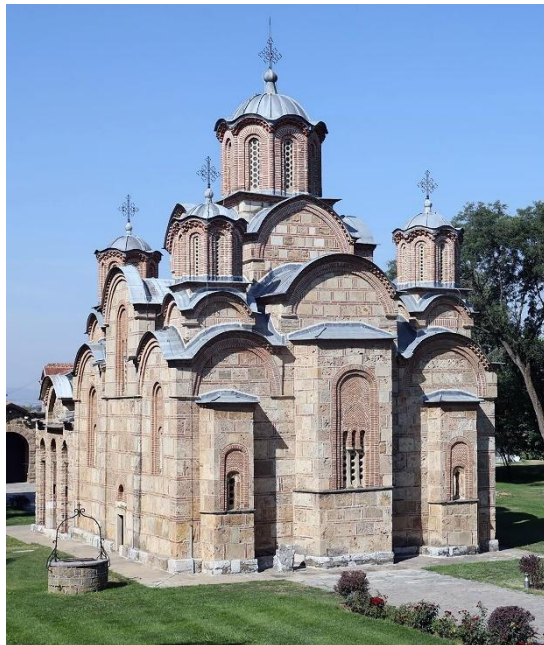
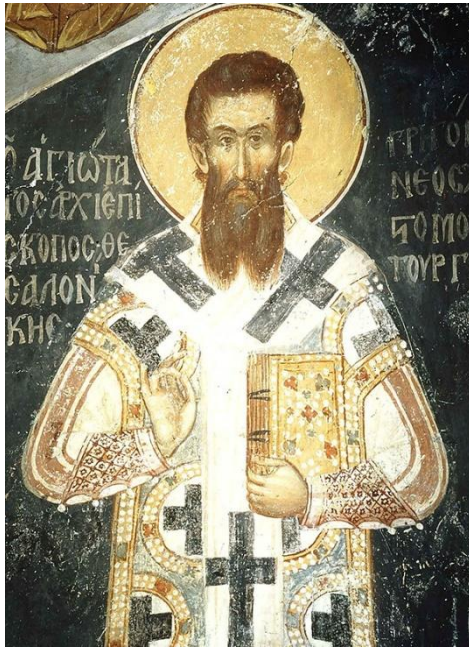
⁵⁶ The only endowment of King Milutin, which sets out from this group is the King's Grave Church of St. Stefan from the Banjska monastery, which followed some other visual concepts, strained on the tradition of older Raška Mausoleums of construction of Studenica, Mausoleum of the Nemanjić Dynasty, Stefan Nemanja: Čanak-Medić 2007, 99-104.

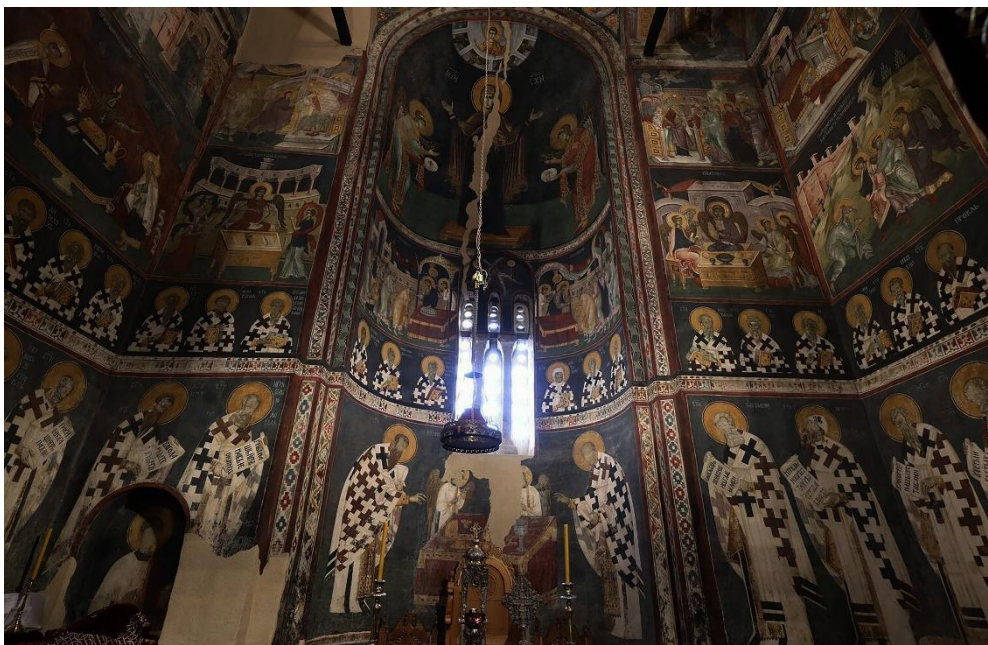
⁵⁷ Todić 1988, 80-98; Ćurčić 1988, 100-129.

considered natural, artificial, and painted lightning, that leads the eye from darkness to light, emphasized the idea that the contemplation of the divine ends up with the vision of utmost brightness that dispels the gloom of the lesser spheres, making the invisible of the realm beyond accessible. The old "Dionysian" concepts, well-known and long cherished in the Byzantine Church, seem to have fit perfectly with Hesychastic practice.⁵⁸ It appears that during the late Byzantine period, certain concepts gained increased significance and emphasis within the Byzantine church. This is supported by the enhancement of the iconostasis in both periods, which increasingly obscures the light of the altar, but reveals it when its doors are opened as required by liturgical practices. Having a larger iconostasis only made this effect more striking. As we stated at the beginning, through hesychastic practice one should experience God as the vision of uncreated light (i.e. the light of Tabor). Hesychastic practice begins with repentance and feats to cleanse the soul and body of passion, which represents darkness and continues with the constant practice of inner prayer of the heart.⁵⁹ The result of such a feat is seeing divine light, like the apostolic one on Mount Tabor during Jesus' transfiguration. Didn't the light of Mount Tabor fill the darkness of this world like the light illuminates the dark walls and space of the Byzantine church? Shouldn't it be expected that when hesychasm became officially recognized within the Byzantine Church, and when, as we mentioned earlier, some of the most important representatives of the Byzantine Church, such as the patriarchs Arsenus and Athanasius, were hesychasts themselves, this practice should have been associated with the church and it's conducted inside the church? It seems only logical that as Hesychasm became an established doctrine within the Byzantine church, it no longer could stay just an individual practice of turning inward, but it had to become intertwined with the fullness of church life.

⁵⁸ The "Dionysian" variety of thought which led to the concept of *theosis* and *hesychasm* can be observed in the visions of uncreated, divine light experienced by a monk Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022). His works had a long-lasting legacy especially in Slavic world and above all in the Grand-principality of Moscow: Alfeyev 2000, 169-174; 215-240; 278-281.

⁵⁹ Strezova 2014, 10-13





Bibliography

- Alfeyev, Hilarion (2000). *St Symeon the New Theologian and the Orthodox Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Babić, Gordana (1987). *Kraljeva crkva u Studenici*. Belgrade: Prosveta.
- Bogdanović, Jelena (2011). Rethinking the Dionysian Legacy in Medieval Architecture: East and West. In: Filip Ivanović (Ed.), *Dionysius the Areopagite between Orthodoxy and Heresy* (pp. 109–134). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Brand Philip, Lotte (1971). *The Ghent Altarpiece and the Art of Jan van Eyck*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Brianchaninov, Ignatius (2006). *On the Prayer of Jesus*. Boston: New Seeds.
- Cheremeteff, Maria (1988). The Uncreated Light: Hesychasm, Theophanes the Greek and Russian Iconostasis, *Записки Русской Академической Группы в США: The Uncreated Light: Hesychasm, Theophanes the Greek and The Russian Iconostasis*, 21, 125–162.
- Chatzidakis, Manolis (1959). L'Icone Byzantine, *Saggi e memorie di Storia dell'Arte*, 2, 11–40.
- Chatzidakis, Manolis (1994). *Hellenike Techne: Byzantina Psephidota*. Athens.
- Cormack, Robin (2000). *Byzantine Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cutler, Anthony (1981). Main Source of Patronage in Byzantium. *Jarbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 31, 759–82.
- Ćurčić, Slobodan (1988). *Gračanica: Arhitektura*. Beograd: Prosveta.
- Čanak-Medić, Milka (2002). Светильке и првобитни пасхални обреди у жичкој Спасовој цркви и њихови антички извори In: Ljubomir Maksimović, Ninoslava Radošević, Ema Radulović (Eds.), *Трећа југословенска конференција византолога, Крушевац, 10-13. мај 2000* (pp. 225–234). Beograd: Vizantološki institut Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti.
- Čanak-Medić, Milka (2007). Banjski hram i crkva Vaznesenja Hristovog u Dečanima: srodnost i zajednički uzori. In: Dragiša Bojović (Ed.), *Manastir Banjska i doba kralja Milutina: zbornik sa naučnog skupa održanog od 22. do 24. septembra 2005. godine u Kosovskoj Mitrovici* (pp. 99–104). Niš: Centar za crkvene studije; Kosovska Mitrovica: Filozofski fakultet.
- Geanakoplos, Deno J. (1969). Some Aspects of the Influence of the Byzantine Maximos the Confessor on the Theology of East and West. *Church History*, 38:2, 150–163.
- Gerstel, Sheron E. J. (2003). Civic and Monastic Influences on Church Decoration in Late Byzantine Thessalonike. In Loving Memory of Thalia Gouma-Peterson, Symposium on Late Byzantine Thessalonike. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 57, 225–39.
- Grabar, Andre (1975). The Artistic Climate in Byzantium during the Palaeologan Period. In: Paul A. Underwood (Ed.), *The Kariye Djami*, vol. 4, (pp. 1–16). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hamburger, Jeffrey F. (2002). *St. John the Divine: The Deified Evangelist in Medieval Art and Theology*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Kartsonis, Anna D. (1986). *The Anastasis: The Making of an Image*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kidson, Peter (1987). Panofsky, Suger and St Denis. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 50, 1–17.
- Lazarev, Viktor N. (1947). *История Византийской Живописи*. Москва: Искусство.
- Lazarev, Viktor (2004). *Istorija vizantijskog slikarstva*. Beograd: Brimo.
- Leclercq, Jean (1987). Influence and Noninfluence of Dionysius in the Western Middle Ages. In: Colm Lulibheid (Transl.), *Pseudo-Dionysius, The Complete Works* (pp. 25–32). New York: Paulist Press.

- Mango, Cyril (1986). *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453, Sources and Documents*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Markschies, Christoph (1995). *Gibt es eine "Theologie der gotischen Kathedrale"?: nochmals, Suger von Saint-Denis und Sankt Dionys vom Areopag*. Heidelberg: C. Winter.
- Meyendorff, John (1959). Introduction à l'Etude de Grégoire Palamas. *Patristica Sorbonensia*, 3: 38, 297–298.
- Meyendorff, John (1964). *A Study of Gregory Palamas*. London: Faith Press Ltd.
- Meyendorff, John (1981). *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia: A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nelson, Robert S. (1995). The Italian Appreciation and Appropriation of Illuminated Byzantine Manuscripts, ca. 1200-1450. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 49, 209-235.
- Nelson, Robert S. (2007). *Later Byzantine Painting: Art, Agency, and Appreciation*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Panofsky, Erwin (1979). *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St Denis and Its Art Treasures*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Perl, Eric (2008). *Theophany: The Neoplatonic Philosophy of Dionysius the Areopagite*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Petković, Sreten (1995). The Lives of Hermits in the Wall Painting of the Katolikon of the Monastery at Josanica. In: Christofer Moss and Katherine Kiefer (Eds.) *Byzantine East and Latin West, Art Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann* (pp. 289–298). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Procopius (2002). *On Buildings*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Remond, Paul and Lamoreaux, John C. (1998). *John of Scythopolis and the Dionysian Corpus: Annotating the Areopagite*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Remond, Paul (1992). *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Text and an Introduction to Their Influence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rosemary, Arthur A. (2008). *Pseudo-Dionysius as Polemicist: The Development and Purpose of the Angelic Hierarchy in Sixth Century Syria*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Ševčenko, Ihor (1981). *Society and Intellectual Life in Late Byzantium*. London: Variorum Reprints.
- Sjögren, Per-Olaf (1975). *The Jesus Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Have Mercy upon Me*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Strezova, Anita (2014). *Hesychasm and Art. The Appearance of New Iconographic Trends in Byzantium and Slavic Lands in the 14th and 15th Centuries*. Canberra: Australian National University Press.
- Todić, Branislav (1988). *Gračanica: Slikarstvo*. Beograd: Prosveta.
- Tsirpanlis, Constantine N. (1993). Byzantine Humanism and Hesychasm in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Synthesis or Antithesis, Reformation or Revolution. *The Patristic and Byzantine Review*, 5:12, 13–23.
- Vasić, Miloje (1930). L'Hésychasme dans l'Eglise et l'Art des Serbes du Moyen Age. *L'Art Byzantin Chez les Slaves, Les Balkans: Mélanges Théodore Uspenskij*, 1, 110–123.
- Weitzmann, Kurt (1978). *The Icon: Holy Images-Sixth to Fourteenth Century*. New York: George Braziller.
- Woodfin, Waren (2012). Celestial Hierarchies and Earthly Hierarchies in the Art of The Byzantine Church. In: Paul Stephenson (Ed.), *The Byzantine World* (pp. 303–19). London: Routledge.

Никола Пиперски

ИСИХАЗАМ И СВЕТОСТ У КАСНОВИЗАНТИЈСКИМ ЦРКВАМА

Овај текст има за циљ да испита потенцијалне утицаје исихазма на третман светлости у оквиру архитектуре и уметности касновизантијских цркава, имајући у виду значај светлости у исихастичкој пракси. Исихастичка пракса почиње покајањем и подвизима за очишћење душе и тела од страсти, што представља таму и наставља се непрестаном праксом унутрашње молитве срца. Резултат таквог подвига је виђење божанске светлости, попут оне апостолске на гори Тавор током Исусовог преображења. Логично би било очекивати да је, када је исихазам постао званично признат унутар Византијске цркве, и када су неки од најзначајнијих представника Византијске цркве, као што су патријарси Арсеније и Атанасије, били сами исихасти, ова пракса требало да буде повезана са црквом и да се спроводи унутар цркве. Чини се логичним да, како је исихазам постао устаљена доктрина унутар византијске цркве, он више није могао остати само индивидуална пракса окретања ка унутра, већ је морао постати испреплетен са пуноћом црквеног живота. Цркве скромних размера касновизантијског периода, украшене бројним сценама из свете историје, чије је тумачење захтевало посвећеност и контемплацију, створиле су интимно окружење погодно за молитву у тишини. Прилично тамни простори ових цркава, са својим пажљиво промишљеним природним, вештачким светлом, као и сликаним светлом у овиру сликаног програма, које воде око из таме у светлост, истицали су идеју да се контемплација божанског завршава визијом највеће светлости оностраног која распршује мрак. Томе у прилог говори и унапређење иконостаса у оба периода, који све више заклања светлост олтара, али је открива када се његове двери отворе како то захтевају литургијске праксе. Није ли светлост Таворске горе испунила таму овога света као што светлост обасјава мрачне зидове и простор византијске цркве? Иако немамо поузданих доказа да су нове тенденције у архитектури и уметности, које су се јавиле у касновизантијском периоду, биле директна последица исихастичких струјања унутар византијске цркве, амбијент позновизантијске цркве свакако је одговарао исихастичкој пракси.