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A COMBINED APPROACH TO THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE “SACRED LANDSCAPE” OF DUKLJA AND RAŠKA IN THE TIMES OF STEFAN NEMANJA BASED ON HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY, ART AND CHURCH HISTORY¹

This article strives for a combined approach consisting of historical geography and art and church History in the research of Duklja and Raška in the times of Stefan Nemanja. The article's first part addresses the circumstances of the birth of Stefan Nemanja and the question of Nemanja's two baptisms. Moreover, data on the churches and monasteries, their *patrocinia* and the *stećci* (funeral monuments) in the area of research has been gathered and then analysed with digital tools to offer a map-based reconstruction of the “Sacred Landscape”.

¹ This article represents a scholarly outcome of the project “Beyond East and West: Geocommunicating the Sacred Landscapes of ‘Duklja’ and ‘Raška’ through Space and Time (11th–14th Cent.) / HOLDURA” (FWF Austrian Science Fund International Project I 4330-G; in cooperation with the DFG German Research Foundation; <https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/subprojects/holdura> [12 September 2023]). We are indebted to the FWF Austrian Science Fund and the DFG German Research Foundation for their funding and support.

The second part focuses on the early medieval church of St. Stephen in Sušće, located near Herceg Novi in today's Montenegro. Among its church furnishings and sculptural decorations, a parapet slab, most probably from the 11th century, stands out. Besides highlighting similar solutions on the parapet slabs of churches along the eastern coast of the Adriatic, the paper draws attention to iconographic solutions as well as floral and geometric motifs and their importance within the sacred space of the church.

The third and final part of the article introduces an analysis of selected written sources illuminating the relationship of Duklja with the Latin Church, particularly with the Apostolic See in Rome, in the 12th and 13th centuries. It deals with the communication of the Papal Chancery with the archbishops of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) and Antivari (Bar) in the backdrop of the ongoing disputes over the church hierarchy in Southern Dalmatia.

Keywords: Stefan Nemanja; Duklja; Raška; Sacred Landscape; Digital Humanities; Historical Geography; Art History; Church History

1. Stefan Nemanja's Birth and Baptism

The birth of Stefan Nemanja, the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty, took place in politically and militarily dynamic times in the first third of the 12th century. Especially in the period from the last quarter of the 11th until the last quarter of the 12th centuries the Serbian principalities of Duklja and Raška, which were to become the two foundation stones of the Nemanjić Kingdom, tried to secure their existence in the face of Byzantine and Hungarian pressures and interventions. Zavida, Stefan Nemanja's father, and his entire family were deeply affected by this state of affairs and its consequences.²

Due to the lack of written sources, most aspects of Zavida's life and the related chronology remain in the dark. It is disputed in the secondary literature, whether Zavida was a son of the *Grand Župan* Vukan of Raška³ or of the *Grand Župan* Uroš I of Raška⁴. Tibor Živković's reconstruction of events, which remains a hypothesis, implies that Zavida was born in Zeta, in Ribnica (today's Podgorica; cf. *Fig. 1*), before 1083/84 and that he became *Grand Župan* of Raška after his father's death, but was overthrown by his uncle and cousins and was forced to flee⁵. It is, however, certain that his son Stefan Nemanja was born in Ribnica (perhaps around 1113 or, according to a recent hypothesis, around 1130⁶) and that he was baptised by Latin clergy (see below). Zavida seems to have regained the throne in Raška with

² An overview of the political history in this period can be found in: *Историја српског народа*, 156–211; *Живковић, Дукља*, 451–467. While this article focuses on the two Serbian principalities of Duklja and Raška, it needs to be highlighted that also the Serbian principalities of Travunija, Zahumlje, Konavle, Paganija and Bosnia played a crucial role in the foundation of the Nemanjić Kingdom. Cf. on this topic in detail and with a comprehensive bibliography: *Коматићина*, Константин Порфирогенит.

³ *Живковић, Портрети*, 119.

⁴ *Lešny, Stefan Zavida*, 37–49.

⁵ *Живковић, Портрети*, 119–125.

⁶ Nebojša Porčić has recently dealt with the dating of his birth in great detail and proposed the hypothesis that it took place around 1130: *Порчић, Један занемарени приступ*, 63–73.

the help of the Byzantine Empire. After that, his son Stefan Nemanja was eventually baptised a second time (see below). But Zavida was overthrown again.⁷

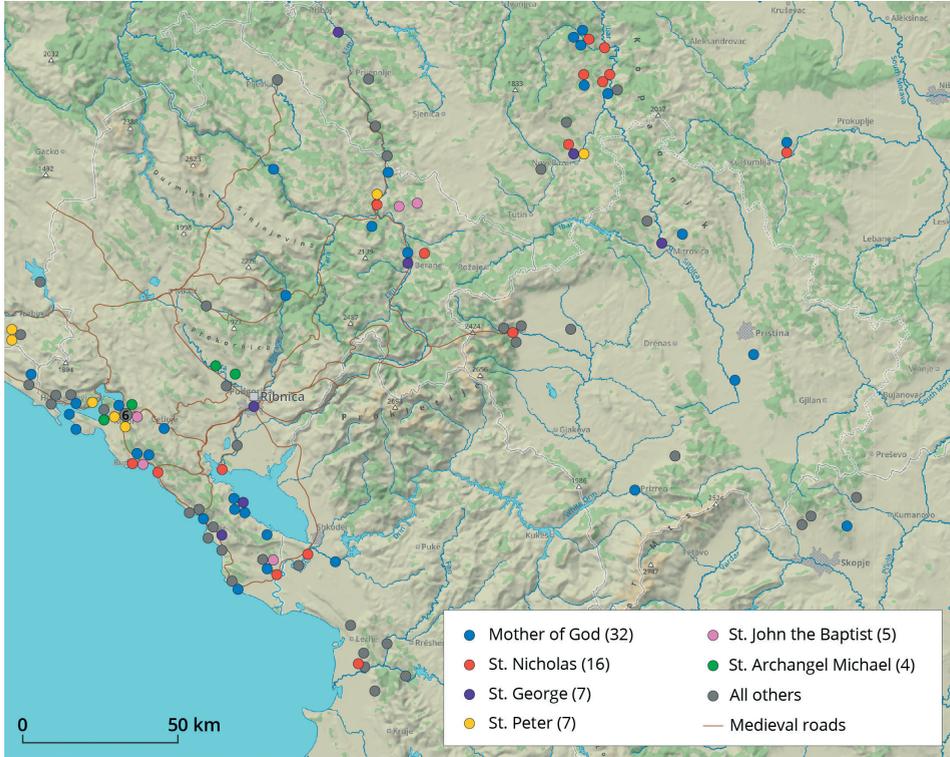


Fig. 1 The Dedications of Churches and Monasteries in the Area of Research (Map: Markus Breier, Data: Elisabeth Beer; Maps of Power OpenAtlas Database)

The alleged two baptisms of Stefan Nemanja in Zeta and in Raška are still very much in the dark. Nemanja's baptism evolved into an intriguing scholarly question during the 19th century with manifold interpretations, opinions and even severe polemics. The basis for these interpretations are the medieval written sources on Stefan Nemanja's life and deeds, here the works by Stefan Nemanja's sons Saint Sava and Stefan the First-Crowned.

Saint Sava reports on the birth and the baptism of Stefan Nemanja in his father's *Vita*, which he wrote around 1208⁸: "His birth took place in Zeta at Ribnica.

⁷ Cf. on this hypothesis: *Живковић*, Дукља, 456 sq.; *Живковић*, Портрети, 119–125. A summary of the hard facts can be found in: *Историја српског народа*, 208; *Блајојевић*, Србија, 35.

⁸ *Бојдановић*, *Историја*, 150; *Порчић*, Један занемарени приступ, 71, footnote 63. Gerhard Podskalsky dates this *Vita* to the period from 1208 to 1217: *Podskalsky*, *Theologische Literatur*, 357.

And there he received holy baptism. When this child was brought here, the bishop of the Church of the Holy Apostles⁹ took him, prayed for the child, anointed him with myron, and he received the second baptism. Because this was wonderful with this man: when he was a child, he received two baptisms.”¹⁰

The account by Stefan the First-Crowned, Saint Sava’s brother, who composed his father’s *Vita* around 1216¹¹, states that Stefan Nemanja was born in Ribnica and continues as follows: “As there was Latin clergy in this land, he was dignified by the will of God to receive the Latin baptism. When his father returned to the seat of power, he was also dignified to receive the second baptism by the hand of the bishops in the Serbian land in the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, ...”¹²

The third source regarding the baptism of Stefan Nemanja, which needs to be mentioned at this point, is the Serbian Genealogy called *Pajsijev rodoslov*. It was composed in the 17th century based on older textual evidence, which cannot be dated exactly¹³, and reports that Stefan Nemanja received baptism in a Church of the Saint Archangels in Latin rite and that he was then baptised in the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Raška by the Orthodox Bishop Leontije of Raška at the age of 30.¹⁴

⁹ The Church of St. Peter in Ras was built during the reign of the Serbian Prince Radoslav around 820. It seems that the Serbian Prince Mutimir restored the building approximately 60 years later, making it an episcopal seat. The church was decorated with fresco paintings at the beginning of the 10th century during the reign of the Serbian Prince Petar Gojniković (reigned 892–917). The building, made from sandstone and travertine, is a rotunda encircling an irregular tetraconch with vaults in the form of semicircles. The conch on the Eastern side, intended for the altar space, had a different shape and a larger area than the other three conchs. Above the central area is a dome, which is octagonal on the outside. The Eastern conch served as an altar, while on its Northern, Western and Southern sides the rotunda is embraced by a horseshoe-like ambulatory, above which are galleries looking onto the nave. Cf. on this church: *Дероко*, Архитектура, 49–57; *Ђурић*, *Бабић-Ђорђевић*, Српска уметност, 5–49; *Калић*, Coronation Churches, 7–18; *Коран*, О архитектури, 173–185; *Лађевић*, Резултати, 149–162; *Марковић*, *Војводић*, Црква; *Појовић*, Преиспитивање, 209–232; *Ђоровић-Љубинковић*, Живопис, 35–49.

¹⁰ English translation by Mihailo St. Popović. Edited in: Свети Сава, 188: “рождаствоу его быкшоу въ зетѣ на рыбници. и тамо прїедшоу светое кршченїе. изнесеноу младаѣнцоу томоу соушоу сѣлю. прїедъ епископъ светыхъ апостолъ цркъве. и молитвоу давъ младаѣнцоу соушоу. и мѣроу его помаза. и друго кршченїе прїедшоу емоу. се во дивно бысть со млоужн семь. младаѣнцоу емоу соушоу двое кршченїе прїе.”

¹¹ *Боѣдановић*, Историја, 153; *Podskalsky*, Theologische Literatur, 361; *Порчић*, Један занемарени приступ, 71, footnote 63.

¹² English translation by Mihailo St. Popović. Edited in: Стефан Првовенчани, 18, 20: “соушнмъ въ земли тон и латиньскнмъ иересомъ изволеннмъ же воужнмъ сподоби се и латиньское принети кршченїе възвращшоу же се оушоу его на столноу мѣсто и пакн сподоби се второе кршченїе принети оу роуку светитела и архинерѣта посредѣ српьскыне земле оу светью и оу всеславнью и врховнню апостолау петра и павла ...” The editors contest in their commentary that Stefan Nemanja was born in Ribnica based on their comparison of the manuscripts of the *Vita*. According to them, he was baptised in Ribnica in a Church of the Holy Mother of God (Стефан Првовенчани, 139). Unfortunately, we cannot corroborate their interpretation in this very respect.

¹³ Cf. on the dating: *Летописи*, IX–X. See also: *Podskalsky*, Theologische Literatur, 490–493 (with a comprehensive bibliography). And in general on the Serbian Genealogies: *Михаљчић*, Родослови, 625–627.

¹⁴ *Летописи*, 17, 19: “И приходитъ прѣвѣ въ цркъвъ светїихъ архїстратигъ силъ бесплѣтнїихъ, и прїедъ кршченїе латиньскїе ерси. ... Послѣдн приходитъ въ цркъвъ светыхъ апостолъ Петра и Павла, иже естъ по срѣдѣ Гаса, и тоу прїедлаеть светое кршченїе роукою прѣосвещенааго архїепископа ѿѣонтїа, тогда лѣтоу быст ·л· тидь.” In English

The quoted sources spurred an intensive discussion, even polemics, in historical research, whether Stefan Nemanja was baptised two times, firstly in Latin rite and then in Orthodox rite, or whether he was baptised in Latin rite and then anointed in Orthodox rite.

The “History of the Serbian People” (*Istorija Srpskog Naroda*), for instance, summarises that Stefan Nemanja was born in Ribnica (today’s Podgorica) in Zeta, that he was baptised by Latin clergy in Zeta and that he was baptised again (a second time) in the Church of the Saints Peter and Paul in Raška, after his family had moved to Raška.¹⁵ The historian Tibor Živković emphasised as well that Stefan Nemanja was baptised two times and that his second (Orthodox) baptism should be seen through the political prism of a rapprochement with Byzantium.¹⁶

The interpretation that Stefan Nemanja could have been baptised in Latin rite and then anointed in Orthodox rite has already been expressed in the 19th century. A manuscript entitled “On Nemanja’s second baptism” (“О другом крштењу Немањину”), in which the historian Ivan Pavlović analysed all three aforesaid medieval sources and stated that Stefan Nemanja was not the person who was baptised two times, but his father [sic!] Uroš, was reviewed by the archimandrite and historian Nićifor Dučić (1832–1900) and severely refuted.¹⁷ Amidst Dučić’s fierce critique, his hint is to be found that Stefan Nemanja was certainly anointed, because the baptism is one.¹⁸ The same thought was expressed by the archimandrite and historian Ilarion Ruvarac (1832–1905)¹⁹ and by the historian Miodrag Purković (1907–1976)²⁰. The historian Dimitri Obolensky (1918–2001) strictly ruled out the possibility of two baptisms and stated that the “second baptism” was in fact chrismation (anointing with holy oil).²¹

translation: “Firstly, he came to the Church of the Saint Archangels the Bodiless Powers and received baptism by the Latin heresy. ... After that, he came to the Church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, which lies in the middle of Ras, and there he received baptism by the hand of the Archbishop Leontije, when he was 30 years of age.” (translation by Mihailo St. Popović).

¹⁵ Историја српског народа, 208: “У немирним околностима прве половине XII века, Немањин отац, Завида, избегао је с породицом у Зету, где му се у Рибници родио син Немања. Касније се, у измењеним приликама, породица враћа у Рашку. Немања, кога су у Зети крстили латински свештеници, по повратку у Рас је у цркви Светог Петра и Павла био по други пут крштен, тада по православном обреду.”

¹⁶ *Живковић*, *Портрети*, 122, 124.

¹⁷ *Дучић*, *Извјештај*, 125–130.

¹⁸ *Дучић*, *Извјештај*, 127.

¹⁹ *Јовић*, *Стефан Немања*, 384–390.

²⁰ *Пурковић*, *Историја Срба*, 31: “... и тамо му се око 1113. године, у месту Рибници (код данашње Подгорице) родио син Немања. Тада је тамо било само католичких свештеника, па је стога Немања био крштен по обреду Католичке цркве, а тек доцније, кад му се отац вратио у Рашку, Немања је био миропомазан у Православној цркви.”

²¹ *Obolensky*, *Sava of Serbia*, 117, footnote 11.

Would such a procedure of a baptism in Latin rite and then an anointment in Orthodox rite be admissible from the point of view of canon law? The Serbian-Orthodox bishop and expert on Orthodox canon law Nikodim Milaš (1845–1915) excludes strictly the possibility of two baptisms.²² He outlines that Christians, who are not Orthodox, are accepted as members of the Orthodox Church either through baptism, or through anointment or through penance and commitment to the Orthodox faith. In the case of Roman-Catholic Christians, who of course confess to the Holy Trinity and who have not received anointment yet, the anointment has to be administered from the Orthodox part. If the Roman-Catholic Christian has already received the anointment, then the penance and the official commitment to the Orthodox faith by stating the Orthodox creed apply. In other words, a second baptism is not envisaged for Roman-Catholic Christians.²³

Based on the aforesaid known and often discussed written sources and without new source-based evidence, the question of the baptism or two baptisms of Stefan Nemanja cannot be solved with certainty. From the point of view of canon law a second baptism can be excluded, while from a political point of view, as emphasised by Tibor Živković, it cannot be ruled out as a viable possibility. The most recent synopsis on this question was given by Miodrag Marković and Dragan Vojvodić, who speak of Nemanja's anointment in the Church of St. Peter in Ras at the earliest in 1119 and at the latest in 1123/1127.²⁴ We also tend to discern in Stefan Nemanja's „second baptism“ in fact an anointment. Be that as it may, we do see the results in the historical developments of the 12th and 13th centuries, which were summarised by Aleksandar Loma aptly as follows: “The Serbs finally choose between the spheres of Western and Eastern Christendom the latter. Nemanja is baptised again, this time in the Orthodox rite and persecutes the Bogomils, while Saint Sava achieves the independence of the Serbian Church within the Orthodox World.”²⁵

Therefore, we need to ask the question, what the religious landscape looked like in our area of research, i.e. in Duklja within the borders of today's Montenegro and in Raška within the borders of today's Montenegro and Serbia, at the time of the birth of Stefan Nemanja as well as during the course of the 12th and 13th centuries. For this reason, we have embedded manifold data on the respective Orthodox and Latin churches and monasteries, their respective dedications and their location, on the *stećci* (funeral monuments) and on the road network²⁶ into our *Maps*

²² *Milasch*, Das Kirchenrecht, 553 sq.: “Die notwendige Bedingung zum Eintritt in die Kirche und zur Erlangung der vollberechtigten Mitgliedschaft in derselben ist die Taufe. Die nach der kirchlichen Lehre vollzogene Taufe kann nicht wiederholt werden, und der Geistliche, welcher eine solche Wiederholung vornimmt, wird abgesetzt.”

²³ *Milasch*, Das Kirchenrecht, 558 sq.

²⁴ *Марковић, Војвођић*, Црква светих апостола Петра и Павла у Расу, 49, 52.

²⁵ Translated from Serbian in: *Лома*, Неки славистички аспекти, 106.

²⁶ Cf. on the method, which we applied to reconstruct the road network in the area of research: *Popović et al.*, On the Crossroads.

of *Power OpenAtlas Database*, which allows us to extract layers based on these data sets and combine them in distribution maps²⁷. Through this approach we aim to discern the integral parts and characteristics of the “Sacred Landscape” in the period of Stefan Nemanja and to undertake the effort to offer an approximation, what it might have looked like.²⁸

2. The *Patrocinia* of Churches and Monasteries in the Area of Research

Our follow-up question, based on our data sets in the aforesaid database, is, if the dedications of the churches and monasteries reveal certain clusters of Latin or Orthodox influence in the respective landscape. On the one hand it has been emphasised, for example, that dedications of churches to Saint Peter bear witness to a Latin influence in the area of research.²⁹ On the other hand Stefan Nemanja had a special relation to Saint George. According to the *Vita* by Stefan the First-Crowned, Stefan Nemanja was rescued by Saint George from the cave, into which he had been thrown by his brothers. After that, he defeated his brothers in a battle near to the village of Pantino in Kosovo with God’s and Saint George’s help.³⁰ These events most probably occurred between 1166 and 1168.³¹ It is further known that Stefan Nemanja built the Monastery of Djurdjevi Stupovi in Raška, near today’s city of Novi Pazar, as an expression of gratitude to Saint George in 1170/71. The monastery’s church is a combination of Byzantine and Latin spatial composition and construction, and as such belongs to the so-called Raška school of architecture.³² Moreover, Stefan Nemanja had also a strong relation to the Holy Mother of God and Saint Nicholas.³³

Therefore, the question arises, whether Stefan Nemanja’s personal belief is mirrored in the *patrocinia* of churches and monasteries in the area of research during his lifetime and whether we may discern specific clusters of *patrocinia* after his death until the 13th century? Such an approach is based on the fact that Stefan Nemanja united Raška and Duklja politically and militarily. He was born in Ribnica, which constituted a border zone of Duklja towards Raška at that time³⁴, and conquered Duklja with its coastland at the beginning of the 1180s in order to establish, amongst others, a united economic zone with an access to the Adriatic Sea.³⁵

²⁷ Cf. on the meaningfulness of “distribution maps”: *Rackham*, *History*, 9.

²⁸ Cf. on the definition of a “Sacred Landscape” with a comprehensive bibliography: *Vionis*, *Interdisciplinarity*, 121–140.

²⁹ *Maritch*, *Papstbriefe*, 3.

³⁰ Стефан Првовенчани, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32.

³¹ *Историја српског народа*, 209; *Ivanović*, *Serbian Hagiographies*, 114.

³² *Чанак-Медић*, *Бошковић*, *Архитектура*, 54–76.

³³ Стефан Првовенчани, 32.

³⁴ *Живковић*, *Портрети*, 124.

³⁵ *Комајина*, *Црква и држава*, 157–159; *Комајина*, *Римокатоличка црква*, 281–292; *Живковић*, *Дукља*, 464.

Our data from the database reveals that the most widespread *patrocinia* in the area of research are the Holy Mother of God, followed by Saint Nicholas, Saint George, Saint John the Baptist and Saint Archangel Michael (Fig. 1). In the case of the churches and monasteries dedicated to the Holy Mother of God and Saint Nicholas a specific pattern of distribution cannot be discerned. They are both to be found on the coast of Duklja as well as in the hinterland of Raška. Interestingly, neither churches nor monasteries dedicated to Saint Archangel Michael, who was the patron saint of the rulers of Duklja/Zeta, nor of Saint Stephen, who was the patron saint of the Nemanjić dynasty, are present to such an extent as to form some kind of cluster in the area of research.³⁶

The case of Saint George seems to be more instructive in this sense. His *patrocinium* stretches from the Church of Saint George in Ribnica (today's Podgorica) to the South as well as to the North following the road network. To the South we find the Church of Saint George on the island of Beška (15th century) and the Church of Saint George in Stari Bar (12th century). To the North there are the Monastery of Djurdjevi Stupovi in Berane (between 1170 and 1190) and the aforesaid Monastery of Djurdjevi Stupovi near Novi Pazar.³⁷ In this case one could hypothesise that the *patrocinium* of Saint George is linking the coast and the hinterland.

3. Stefan Nemanja, the Bogomils and the *stećci*

Our next step in the effort to offer an approximation of the “Sacred Landscape” in the times of Stefan Nemanja is the introduction of written sources on the Bogomils on the one hand and of a layer of archaeological data regarding the, in academia intensely discussed, funeral monuments (*stećci*) in the area of research on the other hand.³⁸ Whereas the *stećci* were connected to the Bogomils in older publications, it seems to have become clear in newer research that these funeral monuments are a mixture of Christian and archaic-magical elements, which are not a strictly confessional, but especially a territorial phenomenon. Their distribution pattern seems to be tied to the Dinarides and to its stockbreeding population.³⁹

While the Bogomil heresy spread via Duklja and Raška to the West and North-West, i.e. to Bosnia, Dalmatia and Croatia, its history and development in

³⁶ See on both patron saints: Лома, Рани слојеви, 11.

³⁷ The data on these monasteries and churches in our *Maps of Power OpenAtlas Database* can be freely accessed and explored via: <https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/balkan/digital/explore> (12 September 2023). Also cf. <https://maps-of-power.oeaw.ac.at/> (12 September 2023).

³⁸ There is a very comprehensive bibliography on the Bogomils in the Balkans, but there are in contrast scarce publications on their presence in today's Montenegro. Cf. the following selection of publications on the Bogomils in general: Ђирковић, Богомили, Богумили, 51–52; Драјојловић, Крстјани; Fine, The Bosnian Church; Комајћина, Црква и држава, 164–178; Пејировић, Кудугери, 35–75; Šidak, Studije; Tyras, Die Bogomilen, 76–100. Cf. on the *stećci*: Bešlagić, Leksikon, 164–165; Bešlagić, Stećci – kultura i umjetnost, 495–496, 512–513.

³⁹ Појовић, Стећци, 708 (with bibliography).

Raška can only be traced in the written sources from the end of the 12th century⁴⁰, which makes it impossible to localise their spheres of action in our distribution map (Fig. 2). According to Saint Sava and Stefan the First-Crowned, Stefan Nemanja was actively engaged in the fight against the Bogomils in his realm.⁴¹

Regarding the funeral monuments (*stećci*), we used the publication by Šefik Bešliagić in order to embed his data in our database and to enrich with it our distribution map for further analysis and discussion. One of the challenges lies in the fact that the respective *stećci* in Montenegro are mostly undated.



Fig. 2 The Denominations of the Monuments in the Area of Research
(Map: Markus Breier, Data: Elisabeth Beer; Maps of Power OpenAtlas Database)

When we take the Orthodox and Latin churches and monasteries into account as well, a pattern emerges. While the *stećci* are present in the North-West of the area of research, the Orthodox monuments are located mainly in the hinterland to the

⁴⁰ Драгојловић, Јеретичке цркве, 28.

⁴¹ Свети Сава, 150, 194, 214; Стефан Првовенчани, 32, 34, 36. Also cf. Хеквић, Вештица, 17 sq.

North-East, with two exceptions on the coast itself. The Latin monuments for their part are to be found only along the coast. In two cases we witness a mixed denomination on the coast, namely in Kotor and in Spič. Furthermore, we discern that in the area in the North-West, where the *stećci* are mainly located, are neither Orthodox nor Latin churches and monasteries in the period under research. Could this be due to the fact that the local stockbreeding population was highly mobile and, thus, gravitating towards religious centres in other areas?

This reconstruction of the “Sacred Landscape” has to be seen as an approximation and basis for further discussion. The enrichment of this picture can be achieved, amongst others, by the means of Art History, which can bring forth still unknown artistic interactions between the Latin West and Orthodox East *in situ* and help shape the zones of influence and interaction.

Mihailo St. Popović

4. The Early Medieval Church of St. Stephen in Sušćeapan and Its Parapet Slabs

At this point we would like to highlight as a concrete case study in the field of Art History the Early Medieval church of St. Stephen. It is located in Sušćeapan, on a hill above Igalo, to the North-West of Herceg Novi, in the area of the former Travunija parish of Dračevica. Today, there is a newer church with a surrounding cemetery in its place (*Fig. 3*), dated to the end of the 19th century, while the existence of an older church, from the Early Medieval period, is testified by discovered parts of church furnishings, sculptural decorations, as well as by the very toponym of Sušćeapan, Sustjepan itself⁴², which derived from the name of Saint Stephen.⁴³

The first records about the church were made in 1894 by Mladen Crnogorčević in the publication “Šematizam pravoslavne eparhije bokokotorske”.⁴⁴ After describing the church, its surroundings and the preserved sculptural decoration, Crnogorčević pays special attention to the parapet slabs, which once formed an integral part of the altar screen and which, as he states, were built into the lower part of the bell tower. The rectangular slabs are decorated in the upper half with, as he states, “two winged lions or vultures, with bird’s heads and with raised tails”, while in the lower part there

⁴² The name “Sušćeapan, Sustjepan” derived from the Latin toponym of “Sanctus Stephanus”, see Лома, Рани слојеви, 1–18, esp. 10; *Putanec*, Refleksi, 149 sq.; *Šimunović*, Toponimi, 112.

⁴³ To date, no major archaeological research has been carried out on the church and its surroundings, except for the survey of the terrain carried out by Ilija Pušić in 1971. On that occasion a small excavation was opened along the Northern wall of the present-day church, which allows the assumption that the newer church was built on the foundations of the older one, but in order to emphasise this claim, more thorough archaeological investigations are necessary, see *Pušić*, Preromanička arhitektura; *Pušić*, Preromanička dekorativna plastika, 183–186; *Pušić*, Tragovi arheoloških lokaliteta, 1–23, esp. 6; *Pušić*, Predromanička umjetnost, 31. It is certain that a surrounding medieval cemetery was established around the church.

⁴⁴ *Црногорчевић*, Шематизам, 42.



Fig. 3
The Church of St. Stephen in Sušćeapan
(Mihailo St. Popović, 2021)



Fig. 4
A Photograph of the Parapet Slabs
as the Bases of the Stone Table
taken in the Church of St. Stephen in Sušćeapan
(Miodrag Marković, 2017)

are “curves with palmettes, similar to Italian inlays”.⁴⁵ After the reconstruction of the church in 1898, parapet slabs were used as the bases of the stone table located in the churchyard (Fig. 4).⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Црногорчевић, Шематизам, 42. In 1876, Mladen Crnogorčević visited the grounds and left a record of the church and its decoration.

⁴⁶ Сивојановић-Максимовић, Неколико прилога, 49 sq., fig. 1.

Apart from the parapet slabs, fragments of plastic with floral motifs and a damaged capital were found, which together formed a former stone iconostasis.⁴⁷ In the wake of the modern renovation of the church, stone parapet slabs were built into the inner side walls of the nave, in its Northern and Southern sides, where they are still located today (Figs. 5, 6).⁴⁸



Fig. 5 The Stone Parapet Slabs in the Nave Today
(Miodrag Marković, 2017)



Fig. 6 The Stone Parapet Slabs in the Nave Today
(Miodrag Marković, 2017)

Jovanka Maksimović paid special attention to the stone sculpture of the church in Sušcepan in her research, which she dated to the 11th century and further connected them with the sculptures of the churches of St. Michael in Ston, St. Jurja (George) near

⁴⁷ *Stojanović-Maksimović*, Неколико прилога, 49 sq.

⁴⁸ *Stojanović-Maksimović*, Неколико прилога, 49 sq.; *Ђурић, Бабић-Ђорђевић*, Српска уметност, 33. Jovanka Stojanović-Maksimović states that the stone parapet slabs were a part of the stone table that was located at the entrance along the Southern wall of the church. During the next renovation of the church, the slabs were embedded along the Northern and Southern inner side walls of the nave, near the altar area, where they are still located today.

Janjina on the peninsula of Pelješac and St. Michael on the island of Koločep, and later included a representation of a griffin from the gable of St. Martin above the Golden Gate in Split.⁴⁹ Bearing in mind the palaeographic and epigraphic semblance of the mentioned monuments, and following the research by Miljenko Jurković, we can also add the church of Our Lady of Lužina on the peninsula of Pelješac to this group.⁵⁰ We have to point out the conflicting opinions regarding the dating of the sculptures of the church in Sušcepán in the research. While Ilija Pušić believes that they are from the 10th century⁵¹, Jovan Kovačević places them in the 9th century⁵², and Đorđe Janković, which seems unfounded, dates them to the 8th century⁵³. Bearing all of the aforesaid in mind, and based on stylistic and iconographic characteristics, as well as analogies of the reliefs of nearby monuments, we are inclined to agree with the analysis and conclusions of Jovanka Maksimović and to date the pre-Romanesque parapet slabs to the 11th century, although we would still leave the question of a more precise dating open, since it goes beyond the scope of this paper. There is also the possibility of assuming that they were created in the same stonemason's workshop, perhaps in Dubrovnik or Kotor, although more detailed research is necessary for such presumptions.⁵⁴

In question are two well-preserved limestone parapet slabs, approximately 86 × 50 × 5.5 cm in size, with identical decoration (Figs. 5, 6).⁵⁵ They are framed by threefold braids, inside of which circular motifs are placed, while a horizontal strip, which is placed in the middle of the slab, divides them into two units. In both cases, representations of griffins in relief are placed in the upper halves of the panels, while in the lower units there are representations of spirally twisted floral motifs, which form the shape of a stylized lyre.

Stylized griffins are placed in profile, with open large eyes and small ears, spread wings which spirally twist forward at the tip, raised tail and front right claw or paw. The body is covered with stylized feathers with heart-shaped motifs located

⁴⁹ *Сивојановић-Максимовић*, Неколико прилога, 49 sq. Of the same opinion are: *Petricioli*, *Od Donata*, 63; *Бојосављевић*, *Символика*, 41. More on the sculptural decoration: *Bjelovučić*, *Ruševine crkvice*, 117–122; *Jurković*, *Pleterna skulptura*, 165–184; *Jurković*, *Skulptura*; *Jurković*, *Prilog*, 183–199; *Jurković*, *Natpisi*, 83–89; *Peković*, *Violić*, *Brajnov*, *Oltarna ograda*, 1–8; *Tomas*, *Nova promišljanja*, 41–60.

⁵⁰ *Jurković*, *Natpisi*, 83–89.

⁵¹ *Pušić*, *Tragovi arheoloških lokaliteta*, 1–23, esp. 6; *Pušić*, *Preromanička arhitektura*, 30–32.

⁵² *Kovačević*, *Od dolaska Slovena*, 279–444, esp. 336, 380.

⁵³ *Janković*, *Srpsko pomorje*, 151 sq.

⁵⁴ *Jurković*, *Prilog*, 197. We consider it necessary to carry out a detailed analysis of the sculptural decoration of monuments in Boka Kotorska and possible workshops in order to see more clearly the development of the entire corpus of early Romanesque sculpture in the area of Southern Dalmatia and the Eastern Adriatic. At the same time, we are of the opinion that the analysis of the eventual polychromy, i.e. the pigments of the relief, would be important, which would greatly help to better understand the significance and meaning of the entire sculptural decoration as well as its place in the church.

⁵⁵ *Максимовић*, *Скулптура*, 27. Meri Zornija provided a somewhat different dimension 49,5 × 90 × 5,5 cm, see *Zornija*, *Ranosrednjovjekovna skulptura*, 495. We must emphasise that the griffin on the left parapet slab is slightly smaller compared to the one on the right. Also, the left panel is damaged in the upper left corner, at the place of the braid, and it was obviously broken and assembled at some point.

at the back leg, or to be more precise at the thigh and wings, inside which cross motifs are carved. Beneath the griffin's beak develops a spiral band in the shape of a reclining letter S, while beneath the raised leg is a stylized floral motif, with sharply indented leaves (bands). The griffins were obviously designed to be placed facing each other, as guardians of the altar area, as will be discussed further in the text.

Below the griffin, in the lower zone, there is a representation of a stylized lyre, which, in its upper part, forks into a three-part leaf at the spirally twisted ends that are joined by a single horizontal band. In the lower part of the floral motif, a double tripartite leaf emerges from the spiral curls.

Apart from the church of St. Stephen in Sušćepan, griffin motifs on the parapet panels can also be found in the church of St. Michael on Koločep. Inserted into a circular motif filled with interlacing and framed by floral motifs, the griffin is eagle-beaked and has ears on its head, spread wings with spirally curled ends, and a raised tail, so that it fully corresponds to our example.⁵⁶ J. Maksimović finds a similar motif in the church of St. Martin in Split, as well as on an altarpiece in Aquileia and in Corinth in the Peloponnese.⁵⁷ In her doctoral dissertation, Meri Zornija quoted another example of a griffin that she identified among the fragments of the altar screen of the church of St. Stephen in Dubrovnik, tentatively dated to the second half of the 11th century.⁵⁸ Griffins can also be found on a fragment of the plutei of the parapet slab of the Cathedral of St. Tryphon in Kotor, dated to the second half of the 9th century⁵⁹, the portal of St. Lawrence in Zadar from the 11th century⁶⁰, on the pediment from Majdan in Solin⁶¹, a fragment of plutei (?) of the church of St. Krševan in Zadar⁶². When it comes to the motif of the lyre, it is visible, apart from Sušćepan, as we have already pointed out, also in churches in Koločep and Gospa od Lužina.

In order to understand the selection of two antique motifs on the parapet slab, it is necessary to consider their origin, function and significance. In our analysis, our interest lies on the iconographic characteristics of the motif of the parapet slab, while we will leave the analysis of the appearance and development of parapet slabs in general in the art of the Late Antique and Medieval periods for future research. Bearing in mind that the mentioned parapet slabs were developed in a territory with a long ancient tradition and that they are very well-known ancient motifs that are to be found in Early

⁵⁶ *Максимовић*, Скулптура, 30, fig. 18; *Бојосављевић*, Символика, 42, Т. VIII, 1; *Милошевић* et al., Oltarna ograda, 9–18; *Пековић*, *Виолић*, *Брајнов*, Oltarna ograda, 1–8.

⁵⁷ *Максимовић*, Скулптура, 27 (with literature).

⁵⁸ *Zornija*, Ranosrednjovjekovna skulptura, 190, T. XXXIV.

⁵⁹ *Zornija*, Ranosrednjovjekovna skulptura, 191, 475; *Čuburović*, Kataloška jedinica, 110, no. 31; *Čanak-Medić*, *Čubrović*, Katedrala, 188; *Abramović*, Romaničke crkve, 140.

⁶⁰ *Jurković*, Pleterna skulptura, 165–184; *Jurković*, Skulptura; *Jurković*, Prilog, 183–199; *Jurković*, Natpisi, 83–89; *Petricioli*, Plastika, 39–46, esp. 44 sq.; *Žile*, Predromaničko crkveno graditeljstvo, 84, T. XIX/3.

⁶¹ *Petricioli*, Pojava.

⁶² *Petricioli*, Pojava; *Jakšić – Hilje*, Umjetnička baština, 142 sq.

Medieval art, we will refer to the analysis of Željko Rapanić, who in his book “Predromaničko doba u Dalmaciji” pointed out the importance of the Early Christian heritage in the formation of Early Medieval art in the area of the Eastern coast of the Adriatic.⁶³ Also, he indicates the possibility of survival and continuity of workshops since ancient times. Further research in this direction was carried out by Nikola Jakšić, who, first of all, identified the above-mentioned motifs on the floor mosaics of the Ancient and Late Antique periods, and then traced the intertwined bands that form braids and knots in the tradition of Insular art, that reached the mentioned area through Carolingian influences.⁶⁴ Floral stylized motifs are also known in the art of Byzantium and Western Europe, especially today’s Italy, as emphasized by Jovanka Maksimović. In support of the thesis of the mentioned influences, Miljenko Jurković discerned, during the research of the sculptural decoration of the so-called South-Dalmatian groups of pre-Romanesque sculptures, apart from Early Christian and Western European influences, also the significant role of Byzantium.⁶⁵ Regardless of the direction of influence, we can assume that their meaning remained largely unchanged, and was incorporated into a new, modern narrative.

The study of the intercultural transmission and exchange of iconographic motifs of the Ancient period represents one of the prominent and important ways to understand Medieval art and culture, which is comprised of equally prominent emissions coming from both the West and the East. In our case, these are the motifs of the griffin and the lyre, as the supporting themes of the parapet slabs of the altar partition, the liminal space that physically but also symbolically separates the most sacred space of the church from the nave. The mythological, exotic, complex and fluid solar creature, the griffin, is tied to the land of the Hyperboreans and Scythians, as well as to the god Apollo⁶⁶ (whose symbol is also the lyre), that is, Dionysus, as they pull his chariots⁶⁷. The motif of the griffin, as previous research shows, developed in the art of the East and it seems that through Sassanid influences, first of all through fabrics, i.e. silk, reached Byzantium and finally Western Europe, where it retained a similar or the same meaning.⁶⁸ Presented in profile, it often appears in the art of

⁶³ Rapanić, *Predromaničko doba*, 115–130.

⁶⁴ Jakšić, *Dalmatinski primjeri*, 395–406; Jakšić, *Riflessi*, 17–26; Jakšić, *Klesarstvo*.

⁶⁵ Jurković, *Prilog*, 197. On the research of Byzantine hagiotopography in the Adriatic, see Preradović, *Bisanzio sull’Adriatico*.

⁶⁶ ODB, 884; Sidonius Apollinaris, 138–175; Mayor, Heaney, *Griffins*, 40–66; Herodotus, 4. 13. 1; Schrader, *Medieval Bestiary*, 18.

⁶⁷ ODB, 884. In ancient iconography they are commonly shown pulling the chariot of the Sun, becoming at the same time guardians of light, as evidenced by the eagle’s beak, claws and wings.

⁶⁸ Maguire, *Profane Aesthetic*, 189–205. Intercultural iconographic emulation is imbued with the needs of ktetors/artists, who have chosen certain motifs for a reason and with a clear goal in order to convey certain aspects of personal or collective identity. Fabrics with griffin motifs were often worn by members of the imperial family, as it signified social, political achievements and affirmation of status, imported from the East, as most researchers agree, see Walker, *Islamicising Motifs*, 391–402.

Byzantium after the end of iconoclasm, especially on fabrics, seals, miniatures, jewellery, ivory, stone reliefs, etc.⁶⁹ Namely, when it comes to stylistic and iconographic characteristics, a significant Islamic (primarily Fatimid) influence has been suggested in the research. This is reflected in the artistic expression by linearity, often with an animal presented in profile with abstract motifs that frequently include ribbons or beads on the wings and motifs of tears on the flanks of the animal. A characteristic example of this style is the seal of a certain John, *protospatharios*, from the 10th century.⁷⁰ The appearance of the griffin in the art of the Middle Ages, and also at the case at hand, indicates that it becomes an integral part of the narrative that directly and clearly communicates with the medieval audience and not exclusively the Byzantine one, especially if we bear in mind that textiles with representations of griffins were often diplomatic gifts⁷¹ or subjects of trade. Therefore, in question are motifs, but also symbols, whose meaning was understandable to a wider range of audience, and apart from decorating the imperial chambers and clothing, griffins found their place on altars, sarcophagi, relic covers or, as in the case of the church of St. Stephen in Sušće, parapet slabs.⁷²

As we have already mentioned, griffins have a long history within which they carry multiple and multi-layered meanings. Seemingly terrifying, woven from a lion, an eagle and sometimes having a serpent for its tail, they were guardians of entrances, passages, gates, tied, as we already mentioned, to the solar god Apollo, then also Dionysus. Presented alone or in pairs, facing each other, or while hunting, they had the apotropaic role of protectors of the ruler, his power and ideology, as evidenced by representations on thrones, throne halls, as well as in tombs, on sarcophagi, amulets, in both Antiquity and later in the Middle Ages.⁷³ They are common in the sacral art of the Middle Ages, as evidenced by griffin motifs on fabrics, which were often used to wrap relics, and as we have seen in the above-mentioned examples, they

⁶⁹ In the time after iconoclasm an iconographic type of griffin was formed, which is somewhat different from its ancient predecessor, such as we can see on the example of the Imperial Palace in Constantinople, and indicates a noticeable Sasanian and Late Antique influence of the Eastern Mediterranean, see *McClanan*, *Illustrious Monsters*, 133–146, esp. 134. On examples in the art of Byzantium, see *Trilling*, *The Roman Heritage*, 1–112; *Bouras*, *Griffon*; *Otto-Dorn*, *The Griffin-Sphinx Ensemble*, 303–310; *Evans – Wixom*, *The Glory of Byzantium*, cat. no. 150, 269; *Walker*, *Islamicising Motifs*, 385–413. The Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus described in the “Book of Ceremonies” large reddish-purple curtains hanging in the Chrysotriklinos with motifs of, among others, griffins, see *Porphyrogenitus*, 581–588, 595. Descriptions of fabrics and silk can be found in the *Liber Pontificalis*, see *Liber Pontificalis* II, 12, 29, 57, 75–77, 82, 107–109, 114, 120 sq., 130, 145, 194. Also see *Muthesius*, *Silk*, 99–110, esp. 100; *Brubaker, Haldon*, *Byzantium*, 84, 88, T. 1; *Galliker*, *Silk*, 346–373.

⁷⁰ *Walker*, *Islamicising Motifs*, 387 sq., fig. 1.

⁷¹ *McClanan*, *Illustrious Monsters*, 139.

⁷² *Muthesius*, *Silk*, 99–110.

⁷³ *Бођановић*, *Каталог ћирилских рукописа*, 90, fig. 62; *Ćurčić*, *Griffins*, 600; *Чанак-Међућ*, *Канђућ*, *Архитектура*, 193–195; *Чанак-Међућ*, *Рашко градитељство*, 233–248; *Tešić-Radovanović*, *Svetiljka*, 219–234; *Dubcová*, *Griffin*, 163–178.

can appear in relief on capitals, parapet slabs, windows, portals, illuminated manuscripts, and other.⁷⁴ At the same time, floral motifs, interweaving geometric motifs, continuously survive in art from ancient times and often fill sacred spaces carrying a multi-layered symbolic meaning of future eternal life.⁷⁵

Bearing in mind that griffins, that are represented on the parapet slabs of the church of St. Stephen in Sušćepan, which separate the most sacred part of the temple intended for the clergy, from the one where the faithful reside, are meant to serve as guardians of the liminal space of the “two worlds”. At the same time, being connected to the ancient solar deity and light, it was not by chance that they were chosen as guardians of the most sacred and illuminated part of the building, the altar space. Having a prophylactic role that specifically refers to light, they were supporting the Christian God who manifests Himself to believers as Light (John 8: 12) enabling the onlookers’ salvation.⁷⁶ Griffins, undoubtedly Christian with incised crosses on their bodies, and floral motifs that form the shape of a lyre, another attribute of the god Apollo, indicate the light-filled ritual experiences of believers, who look at them during the liturgical act that took place in the sacred space of the church. Connected with the presence of God, the light inside the building, and especially within the altar space of the church, clearly represented a Theophanic manifestation, but also enabled the believers to communicate with God, through a subjective perception that, after all, shaped the medieval society formed on the foundations of the Ancient and Late Antique system. The analysis of the ritual scene, from the point of view of the believers and in the context of the liturgical act that took place inside the space, testifies to the selected and carefully articulated motifs of griffins as the most valuable guardians of the temple, and especially of the altar area, which at the same time indicate a similarity with the non-Christian, but spiritualized customs woven into the heritage of the Eastern coast of the Adriatic. In this way, the Theophanic character of the pre-altar and altar area of the church of St. Stephen in Sušćepan, provided the faithful and the clergy with an iconic dimension that became the main feature of the sculptural decoration of early Romanesque art. Undoubtedly, the Eastern coast of the Adriatic and the church of St. Stephen in Sušćepan represent a striking example of the influence of East and West on artistic, historical and cultural production on the territories of this “Sacred Landscape”, shaping the zones of interaction and influence, which, after all, can also be seen in all parts of the temple.

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⁷⁴ McClanan, *Illustrious Monsters*, 136 sq.; *Бојосављевић*, *Симболика*, 92–94.

⁷⁵ *Вранешевић*, *Слика раја* (with literature).

⁷⁶ Griffins, being in part eagle and in part lion, also referred to the dual nature of Jesus Christ. They were very common in Byzantine art as they adorned sarcophagi, altar screens, etc., see *Evans – Wixom*, *The Glory of Byzantium*, cat. no. 2A.

5. Dioclea's Ecclesiastical Development between 1102 and 1199: Obedience to Rome and Power Struggle between Ragusa and Bar

At this point we need to enrich the reconstruction of the “Sacred Landscape”, as presented in the first part and in the art historical interpretation of the second part, by analysing Latin written sources regarding the ecclesiastical development of Dioclea (Duklja), focusing on the advancement of the Latin church in this area. After the developments of the 11th century, when the metropolitan centre of the Roman ecclesiastical territory of Dioclea underwent a shift from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) towards Antivari (Bar), a period of the newly-founded archbishopric's struggle for independence from the *archiepiscopatum ragusiensis* followed.⁷⁷

Numerous Papal charters of different types (originals, later copies, *spuria* etc.), which were issued on different occasions, such as the inauguration of a new Pope or of a new archbishop, document the changeable perception of the Southern Dalmatian Roman ecclesiastical affairs. In the time span between the alleged founding of the archbishopric of Bar in 1089 and the establishment of the Nemanjić Kingdom, the territory of Dioclea underwent a process, in which the Roman church affirmed itself in its land and defended its ecclesiastical primacy. A process, which was to be accomplished through strengthening Dioclea's ties with the Roman curia and through defending its claims.⁷⁸

Upon his study of the High and Late Medieval Latin church hierarchy, Conrad Eubel defined six dioceses in medieval Dalmatia and Epirus: the *dioceses Jadrensis, Spalatensis, Ragusinensis, Antibarensis, Duracensis et Achridensis*.⁷⁹ For the first diocese in focus, Ragusa, he further defined its suffragan bishoprics as following: [*episcopatus*] *Buduensis, Resinensis, Stagnensis et Curzolensis, Tribuniensis*.⁸⁰ Excluding Kotor, which was under the supervision of the archbishopric of Bari in Southern Italy, Eubel defined for the diocese of Bar the following suffragans: *Arbanensis, Ballearensis, Dagnensis, Dulcinensis, Polatensis, Sardensis, Sappatensis, Savae, Scodriensis, Scutarensis, Suacensis, Drivastensis*.⁸¹ Eubel's hierarchical model does approach to a certain degree the actual church circumstances of the time, but the ecclesiastical map of Southern Dalmatia appears to be much more complex in the 12th and 13th centuries and, according to the sources discussed in the following, not at all that consistent with Eubel's proposed classification.

⁷⁷ Cf. the following overviews on Latin Christianity in the area of research in the 12th century: *Коматићина*, Црква и држава, 192–211; *Коматићина*, Римокатоличка црква, 281–292.

⁷⁸ Ivana Komatina doubts the year 1089 as date of the founding of the archbishopric of Bar: *Коматићина*, Црква и држава, 140–144.

⁷⁹ *Eubel*, *Hierarchia*, 543.

⁸⁰ *Eubel*, *Hierarchia*, 543.

⁸¹ *Eubel*, *Hierarchia*, 543.

One of the most common testimonies of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and territorial claims were the systatic letters, in which the reigning Pope conferred the *pallium* to the given archbishop upon the death of his predecessor. Also, these charters were usually issued upon the election and consecration of a new Pope. Ragusa, being the earlier established archbishopric (between 928 and the 950s) in the area⁸², made several territorial claims throughout the 12th and 13th centuries as the metropolitan archdiocese. Acting as an example for similar charters. The charter from 11 June 1142 issued by Pope Innocent II on the Tiburtian hill stipulates in its *dispositio* that the following parishes are to be recognized as Ragusa's suffragans: "*scilicet Zachulmie regnum, et regnum Servilie, Tribunieque regnum, civitatem quoque catharinensem seu Rose, atque buduanensem Auarorum, uliciniensem atque scodrensem, nec non driuas-tensem et polatensem cum abbatii, ecclesiis et parochiis earum.*"⁸³

With regard to the coastal cities, it is disputable to what extent Ragusa or Bar were indeed the supervisors of Kotor (*civitatem catharinensem*), which both of them claimed many times as discernible in the Papal charters.⁸⁴ As it is known from multiple other sources, Kotor became a suffragan of Bari in Puglia at the end of the 11th century, continuing until approximately 1172.⁸⁵ Therefore, it is unlikely that either Ragusa or Bar had some actual power over the bishopric of Kotor. Through this association, Kotor and its neighbouring areas became a recipient of Southern Italian influence, especially regarding the cultural and palaeographical features of Latin Christianity.⁸⁶

Regarding the development in the area at focus in the 12th century, it is discernible how the archbishopric of Bar struggled for independence from Ragusa. When new Papal letters were issued confirming the archbishops of Ragusa and the *pallium*, Bar would very often be listed as a suffragan of Ragusa (29 December 1167,

⁸² *Комашина*, Црква и држава, 64–67, especially 67.

⁸³ Codex diplomaticus, 33.

⁸⁴ When we take into account what is intelligible in the *dispositiones* of the Papal charters, apart from the usual formula, the charters strongly reflect the contents of previously sent supplications of the given supplicant – therefore it testifies, so to say, the supplicant's self-claim within the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Cf. *Herde, Jakobs*, Papsturkunde (especially the following papers: *Hiestand R.*, Die Leistungsfähigkeit der päpstlichen Kanzlei im 12. Jahrhundert mit einem Blick auf den lateinischen Osten, 1–26; *Weiß S.*, Die Legatenurkunde des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts zwischen Papst- und Herrscherurkunde, 27–38); *Wiedemann*, Papal Overlordship, 1–20.

⁸⁵ *Sforza*, Bari e Kotor, 81–107; *Fedalto*, Cattaro, 73–80.

⁸⁶ Unfortunately, we cannot dedicate here more space for a deeper palaeographical analysis of some significant sources regarding the cultural aspects of the Latin rite in medieval Southern Dalmatia. At least, we would like to point out some of the most important research outputs in this respect, such as the works in musicological palaeographical research, especially *Gyug*, Liturgy and Law. In this critical edition of a unique manuscript including a lectionary, a pontifical and sermons, with several layers of scripture (palimpsests) dating from the 12th to the 13th centuries, *Gyug* sheds light on a practice of rich cultural exchange between Kotor and Bari. On the development of the scribal culture in medieval Dalmatia and its reception of various cultural influences, see: *Miklas et al.*, *Psalterium Demetrii Sinaitici*; *Gli-betić*, New 'Finds', 188–199; *Saviš*, Српска књижевна реч, 113–137.

from Benevento) “*Alexander III. papa Tribuno archiepiscopo Ragusino successoribusque eius ad exemplar praedecessorum suorum [...] parochias ad ius commissae ei ecclesiae pertinentes scilicet regnum Zachulmie, regnum Servilie ac regnum Tribunie, civitatem quoque Catharinensem seu Rose, Guduanensem [...], Auarorum*⁸⁷, *Liciniatensem, Scodrinensem, Driuastensem et Polatensem [...]*”⁸⁸ This letter serves as an example of Bar’s opposition towards the metropolitan status of Ragusa, because it was followed by two further charters issued at the same date by the Pope Alexander III addressing problems regarding ecclesiastical obedience towards Ragusa. In the first charter, the Pope orders the bishops of Pilot, Svač, Drivast and the clerics of Ston, Scodra and Trebinje to obey the archbishop of Ragusa.⁸⁹ In the other charter, Pope Alexander III declares the clerics and the laymen of the bishoprics of Bar and Ulcinj for excommunicated, because of their inobedience towards their archbishop Tribunius (of Ragusa).⁹⁰ In this case, it is possible to assume that a supplication from Tribunius to Rome preceded the issue of these charters, maybe even that Tribunius, as we will discuss on the example of other cases in the next part, was favoured by Rome in his position because of his possible personal ties to the Apostolic See.

It appears that Bar regained its independent metropolitan status in 1199. Though there were some previous cases, where a cleric named Gregorius issued letters to lay princes as “*Gregorius Antivarensis archiepiscopus*”, this same cleric usually wrote to the Apostolic See as “*Gregorius, Dioclitanae atque Antivarinae ecclesiae humilis minister*”⁹¹ or “*Gregorius, Antivarensis antistes*”⁹², which confirms that he was not acknowledged as the archbishop of Bar in Rome. In this time, which coincided with Stefan Nemanja’s monastic entry and his founding of the Hilandar monastery together with his son Saint Sava associated with the first steps towards the birth of the Serbian autocephalous church⁹³, it was the *Grand Župan*’s other son, Vukan (*Wulcanus*), who proved to be instrumental in the implementation and strengthening of the Roman church in Dioclea (Zeta).⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Antivari (Bar)

⁸⁸ Acta et diplomata, 32 (No. 94).

⁸⁹ Acta et diplomata, 32 (No. 95).

⁹⁰ Acta et diplomata, 32 (No. 96).

⁹¹ Acta et diplomata, 33 (No. 99).

⁹² Acta et diplomata, 35 (No. 106).

⁹³ Јанковић, Епископије и митрополије, 15–33; Коматина, Црква и држава, 247–300.

⁹⁴ Коматићина, Римокатоличка црква, 291. Without deeper examining the problematic of the nomenclature “Dioclea” and “Zeta” when referring to this land belonging to Stefan Nemanja at the time, it can be observed that in the time of 1198/99, the term Zeta appears to be used almost solely in the Slavonic manuscripts (cf. Acta et diplomata, p. 37, No. 113), the term being derived from the Slavonic name of the river Zeta, whereas the Latin manuscripts adhere to the traditional ecclesiastically connotated term “Dioclia, Diocliaensis”.

It was Vukan who invited the Roman church with the principles of reform Papacy into his realm.⁹⁵ On his intervention⁹⁶, the Pope sent two legates (*Johannes capellanus* and *Symeon subdiaconus*) to the territory of Dioclea, to bring the *pallium* for “*Johannes Diocliensi archiepiscopus*”⁹⁷ and to preside over a church council that was to be held in Bar. It seems though that the Papal chancellery was, after all, cautious to consecrate the archbishop of Bar. In the letter from 26 January 1199 Pope Innocent III orders his legates not to hand over the *pallium*, unless they can confirm that the predecessors of the archbishop of Bar had been acknowledged with this dignity.⁹⁸ The background of this directive was that, according to their report and according to the register of the chancellery⁹⁹, the church of Bar was listed as a suffragan of the Ragusan metropolitan archdiocese.¹⁰⁰ From the backdrop of this issue, it is somewhat more comprehensible, why Vukan appealed in his letters to the Pope that the council in Bar, which he appointed, took place where church councils were held from ancient times.¹⁰¹ For Waldmüller, these expressions appear to be simply Vukan’s misconception and therefore a textual fault¹⁰², but it can be argued that Vukan was trying to create a narrative of a more ancient descent for the church of Bar in order to support Bar’s claim against Ragusa.¹⁰³

The council was not only an opportunity for Vukan to present his adherence to the Latin church, but it was the church as well who grasped the opportunity to infiltrate deeper into this, by the Byzantines ever so influenced territory. The council of Bar dealt with problems peculiar to the principles of the Latin Reform Church, such as simony, lay investiture and celibacy.¹⁰⁴ By inviting Roman plenipotentiaries to Dioclea, by taking up the reform principles of the Latin church and by strengthening

⁹⁵ Cf. on Vukan, the Pope and the ecclesiastical status of Bar: *Историја српског народа*, 266–267; *Историја Црне Горе*, 399–410; *Коматићина*, Римокатоличка црква, 291; *Waldmüller*, Synoden, 162.

⁹⁶ *Acta et diplomata*, 38 (No. 115): “[...] legatos ad partes eius ad petitionem eius [=Wulcani] directos [...]”.

⁹⁷ In the letters from 1199 considering Vukan’s communication with the Apostolic See the terms “*Diocliensis*” and “*Antibarensis archiepiscopus*” appear to be used simultaneously, meaning the archbishop of Bar.

⁹⁸ *Acta et diplomata*, 38 (No. 116): “[...] euis predecessores fuisse palleis decoratos et dignitatem metropolitancam habuisse.”

⁹⁹ *Acta et diplomata*, 38 (No. 116): “libri censualis camere”.

¹⁰⁰ *Acta et diplomata*, 38 (No. 116).

¹⁰¹ *Waldmüller*, Synoden, 159.

¹⁰² *Waldmüller*, Synoden, 159.

¹⁰³ A notion that was to be repeated by the church of Bar also in later ecclesiastical feuds, cf. the charter from 25 February 1252 from Perugia: “Et prelati Antibarensis inter multa et inaudita dixit per suum iuramentum, quod in tota Dalmacia ab antiquo non fuerunt nisi duo archiepiscopatus videlicet Salona et Dioclea. Et in loco Salone est Spaletum et in loco Dioclee est Antibarum. Et episcopus Ragusinus subiacet archiepiscopo Spalatensi.”; in: *Acta et diplomata*, 63 (No. 211).

¹⁰⁴ *Waldmüller*, Synoden, 161–162.

the status of the church of Bar, Vukan sought to reinforce his own position in the envisaged struggle for power for his father's legacy. In this way, he also (unintentionally) created a breeding ground for the Roman Church in Dioclea, which was subsequently able to defend and develop its position there much more confidently. Rome's increased agency in this exposed area was to be reflected, among other things, in the emerging activity of influential religious orders.¹⁰⁵

Dorota Vargová

Through a combined approach based on Historical Geography, Art and Church History we have addressed various episodes in the history of Duklja and Raška in the times of Stefan Nemanja. Our starting point has been Stefan Nemanja's baptism, which highlights the existence of Latin and Orthodox clergy in the area of research. At the same time, it emphasises the contact of this Serbian ruler to both religious denominations, which again stresses the notion of Duklja and Raška as being a zone of contact between East and West. From Stefan Nemanja's baptism we have shifted our view to the macro-level and have asked, what the "Sacred Landscape" could have looked like in Duklja and Raška in his times.

We have resorted to data on *patrocinia* of churches and monasteries as well as on their denominations (Orthodox or Latin or mixed) and on funeral monuments (*stećci*) from our *Maps of Power OpenAtlas Database*. This approach enabled us to create distribution maps, which have to be understood as approximations, and to test our research questions. In the case of the *patrocinia* we would hypothesise that the *patrocinium* of Saint George has been linking the coast and the hinterland, i.e. Duklja and Raška. While we cannot locate centres of the Bogomils, who were fought by Stefan Nemanja, we discern that Orthodox monuments are located mainly in the hinterland to the North-East, with two exceptions on the coast itself, and that Latin monuments for their part are to be found only along the coast. Furthermore, we realise that in the area in the North-West, where the *stećci* are mainly located, are neither Orthodox nor Latin churches and monasteries in the period under research. The question remains what the connection was/is between these three entities of monuments. This again illustrates the value of distribution maps, as they help us to visualise researched data and to deduce new questions.

Therefore, such a pattern of distribution of monuments needs input and analysis from Art History as well. Here, the Early Medieval Church of St. Stephen in Sušćepan and its parapet slabs serve as a vivid case study. Since the medieval written sources have been analysed in detail in many publications and cannot bring forth exceptional new results on the "Sacred Landscape" of Duklja and Raška,

¹⁰⁵ Cf. on later ecclesiastical developments between Ragusa and Bar in the 13th century: *Комашина, Црква и држава*, 300–334. On the religious orders in the area: *Митровић, Краљица Јелена и бенедиктинске традиције у Приморју*, 65–81; *Цвейковић, Гаврић, Краљица Јелена и Фрањевци*, 113–130.

Eastern and Western influences in art could help us to define the areas of contact, interaction and delimitation more adequately. This approach needs to be developed in the future and intertwined with the history of the Latin Church in the region, which was at times under pressure and at times supported by Serbian rulers and which had to adapt its internal structures due to Papal orders and local conflicts, like the one between Ragusa and Bar.

Of course, such approximations cannot provide clear-cut answers, but they have the capability to instigate new discussions and research endeavours.

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КОМБИНОВАНИ ПРИСТУП РЕКОНСТРУКЦИЈИ
„СВЕТОГ ПРОСТОРА“ ДУКЉЕ И РАШКЕ У ВРЕМЕ
СТЕФАНА НЕМАЊЕ ПОМОЋУ ИСТОРИЈСКЕ ГЕОГРАФИЈЕ,
ИСТОРИЈЕ УМЕТНОСТИ И ЦРКВЕНЕ ИСТОРИЈЕ

У чланку се примењује приступ који комбинује историјску географију, историју уметности и црквену историју у проучавању Дукље и Рашке у време Стефана Немање. Иако је заснован на претходним истраживачким подухватима и узима у обзир већ постигнуте научне резултате, овај рад изнова комбинује податке из наведених дисциплина како би понудио реконструкцију два сложена средњовековна подручја, која овде називамо „светим простором“ и омогућио нам да формулишемо питања и размишљања у будућим истраживањима на основу реконструкција и тумачења која нам могу помоћи да унапредимо неке постојеће истраживачке резултате. То садејство трију дисциплина оличено је у подели чланка на следећа три дела.

У првом делу, бавимо се околностима у којима је Стефан Немања рођен, односом између Дукље и Рашке у то време и питањем Немањиних двају крштења. Ту су прикупљени и потом анализирани дигиталним средствима разноврсни подаци о црквама и манастирима, њиховим посветама и стећцима у истраживаном подручју да бисмо предложили картографску реконструкцију „светог простора“ у време Стефана Немање.

У другом делу, пажњу смо усмерили на раносредњовековну цркву светог Стефана у месту Сушћепан као студију случаја из историје уметности. Црква се налази у близини Херцег Новог, у данашњој Црној Гори. Међу црквеним намештајем и пластичним украсима издваја се сасвим очувана парапетна плоча која је некада красила и раздвајала олтарски простор од главног брода цркве. Вероватно из XI века, правоугаоне парапетне плоче су украшене рељефним представама грифона у горњој половини панела, док су у доњим зонама

спирално увијени мотиви који формирају облик стилизоване лире. У овом делу чланка, уз навођење сличних решења на парапетним плочама из других цркава дуж источне јадранске обале, скрећемо пажњу на иконографско решења грифона, као и цветних и геометријских мотива, њихов функционални и симболички значај и значење у сакралном простору цркве. Наглашавајући порекло поменутог иконографског решења и источне и западне утицаје на његов изглед и функцију, истичемо и важност поменуте цркве у обликовању зона сусрета и утицаја на том „светом простору“.

Када је Бар (Антивари), као средиште Римске цркве у Дукљи (касније Зети), добио архиепископску столицу 1089. године, и даље је морао да брани независност од главног конкурента, надбискупије Рагузе. Папска писма из XII века откривају актуелне заваде око хијерархијског поретка, при чему је Рагуза настојала да задржи надређени статус митрополије у односу на барску бискупију, сматрајући њеног бискупа за свог суфрагана. Парадоксално, дешавања после 1199. године и успостављања српске аутокефалне цркве захваљујући постигнућима Стефана Немање оснажила су не само суверени статус барске надбискупије него и доминантни положај Римске цркве у самој Дукљи. У овом делу чланка показано је да је раст латинског утицаја у Дукљи био директно повезан са добронамерним деловањем локалних владара, од Немањиног сина Вукана до Стефана Уроша I и његове супруге Јелене (1252, 1288). Преузимајући контролу над ширењем латинске цркве, владари Дукље настојали су да учврсте положаје суверена у својим земљама, поготово у односу на византијске ривале. Ослањајући се на Римску цркву и на реформу црквене политике на својој територији, ти владари су, међутим, утрли пут латинском првенству, које је кроз неколико канала, посебно помоћу монашких редова попут фрањеваца, временом постало главно у питањима Римске цркве и њених структура у Дукљи.