

*The Programme and Iconography of the Fresco Decoration of the
Church of Santa Maria Collegiata in Kotor*

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The church of Santa Maria is located by the north stretch of the walls of the ancient city of Kotor running along the short course of the River Škurda. Together with the steep rock-hill of San Giovanni and the underwater sea spring of Gurdić, this river is one of the landmarks defining the territory of the urban nucleus of the old city of Kotor. Because of its location, this church is also known as the church of Sancta Maria de Flumine (Sveta Marija na Rijeci)¹.

¹ Among the citizens of Kotor, the church is also known as the church of the Blessed Ozana because of the relics of this highly venerated holy woman from Kotor which were kept in it from 1807. The blessed Ozana (1493-1565) was a shepherd girl from the village of Releze in Montenegro who had become a Dominican nun. She played an important role in the life of the city, especially in defending Kotor during the siege of Hairudin Barabarossa in 1539, cf. N. Luković, *Važniji spomenici grada Kotora*, in: *800 godina katedrale Sv. Tripuna u Kotoru (1166-1966)*, Kotor 1966, 142.

On the site of the present church, there stood an older three-nave basilica from the early Christian period, raised on this spot probably in the VI century, during the reign of emperor Justinian². Before the time of construction of the new cathedral of St. Tryphon in 1166, this basilica was the cathedral church of the city of Kotor³. The Romanesque church of Santa Maria Collegiata was raised in 1221⁴. It is dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The epithet Collegiata comes from the college of Prebendaries which, at the same time, was also the college of canons serving in the cathedral of St. Tryphon. In the hierarchy of Kotor's churches, it had the status of a con-cathedral church. The bishop of Kotor also bore the title of abbot of the church of St. Mary and for a certain period of time this church served as the burial chapel of the bishops of Kotor.⁵ Reasons for such close ties with the cathedral of St. Tryphon should be sought in the earlier function of the church of St. Mary and the significant role it played in the history of Kotor prior to 1166, i.e. prior to the construction of the present-day cathedral church.

Parallels between the cathedral of St. Tryphon and the church of Santa Maria Collegiata can also be found later on in history, and the most important among them is certainly the similarity in the specific iconographic programme of the wall decoration of the altar apses in the two churches.

Analysis of the wall paintings in the church of Santa Maria Collegiata

The medieval fresco decoration of the church of Santa Maria Collegiata is only partly preserved today. Because of the lack of any data related to the creation of the wall paintings, their date and the origins of the painters who made them can only be the subject of assumption. Judging by their iconographic and stylistic traits, they can roughly be dated to the period

² Based on most recent data, confirmed in the course of archaeological and architectural exploration carried out in the period between 1981 and 1986, M. Čanak-Medić offers an outline of all the known stages in the construction of this church, from the time of its founding to the latest restoration works, cf. M. Čanak-Medić, *Sveta Marija u Kotoru*, in: *Arhitektura Nemanjinog doba II*, Beograd 1989, 203-232.

³ On the early history and function of the pre-Romanesque and the early Romanesque church on the site of the present-day church of Santa Maria Collegiata cf. J. Martinović, *Ranohrišćanska krstionica ispod crkve svete Marije od Rijeke u Kotoru*, Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji 29, Split 1990, 21-31.

⁴ M. Čanak-Medić, *o.c.*, 203, 212-214.

⁵ N. Luković, *o.c.*, 144; J. Martinović, *o.c.*, 30.

around the year 1300⁶. Most of the frescoes have been preserved in the altar apse as well as on the western and the southern wall of the western bay. Smaller fragments of frescoes have also been preserved in the central part of the dome and on the southern part of the vault covering the western bay of the north aisle.

The frescoes in the apse are organised in three registers separated by red bands. In the uppermost zone, going from the northern to the southern side of the apse, we see the following scenes: *Christ Judged by Pilate*, *Mocking of Christ*, *Crucifixion*, *Descent from the Cross*, *Three Women at the Sepulcher* (fig. 1). Just two scenes are preserved in the central zone. On the northernmost side of the apse, directly below the scene of *Christ Judged by Pilate*, is the *Road to Calvary*. The other preserved scene in this zone is the *Laying Out of the Body of Christ* and it stands on the southernmost side of the apse, directly below the *Holy Women at the Sepulcher*. The bottom zone of this decoration ensemble displays fragments of several scenes. Two of them, *The Myrrhophores Inform the Apostles That They Have Found Christ's Tomb Empty* and *The Apostles Discovering Christ's Empty Tomb*, are merged into a single composition which lies on the same vertical axis as the *Mocking of Christ* in the uppermost zone. In the bottom zone, the central part of the apse is occupied by representations of universal resurrection and splitting of the dresses which belonged to the scene of the *Crucifixion* of which only the top of the cross remains in the uppermost zone. Further along the horizontal, north-south axis, in the bottom zone we find fragments of a scene which could be identified as *Mary Magdalen at the Tomb of Christ* and the composition of *Noli me tangere*. The last in this line of scenes is that of the *Entombment of Christ* (fig. 2).

In the western bay there are three scenes on the southern wall as well as several single figures on the southern and the western wall. The *Marriage at Cana* (fig. 3) from the cycle of Christ's *Miracles* is relatively well preserved. It is represented in two episodes which take up the uppermost zone of the southern wall. To the east of the *Marriage at Cana*, separated by

⁶ Compositional similarities with some of the works of the painters Michael and Eutykhios have been noted, mostly with their works from Staro Nagoričino and Gračanica. On the style of these artists cf. B. Todić, *Staro Nagoričino*, Beograd, 1993, 127-138. The drawing and the facial modelling in Collegiata can be compared to certain representations of saints from the church of Bogorodica Ljeviška, such as the representations of half-figures of archangels from the altar space, cf. D. Panić, G. Babić, *Bogorodica Ljeviška*, Beograd 1975, 81-93. However, the beauty and Hellenistic freshness of the rosy cheeks on the faces of the saints in Collegiata is reminiscent of the frescoes of the parecclesion of the Kariye Djami, cf. O. Demus, *The Style of the Kariye Djami and Its Place in the Development of Paleologan Art*, in: *The Kariye Djami*, vol.4, Princeton University Press 1975, 107- 160.

a red band, stands a very badly damaged scene which can not be identified based on the remaining fragment. On the western part of the southern wall, in the zone above the single standing figures, remains a part of a considerably damaged scene which could possibly be identified as the *Miracle of St. Francis with the Well*.

In the zone of standing figures, in the western corner of the southern wall, the single preserved figure is that of St. Francis. Below the figure of this saint, in the bottom zone, there are parts of preserved socle decoration with fresco imitation of marble revetment. On the south-western corner pilaster only the lower part of a saint remains thus making this figure difficult to identify. On the western wall, also in the zone of standing figures, there are four monumental figures of saints. One archangel and one saint are painted on either side of the entrance to the church (fig. 4 and 5). By the figures of archangels directly flanking the entrance to the naos we find two figures of apostles dressed in chitons and himations. Each carries a scroll in his right hand. The identification of these apostles based on their iconographic types is somewhat uncertain. Although they do differ in some aspects from the common type of representation of the apostles Peter and Paul, the fact that they are painted next to the archangels and flanking the entrance to the church⁷ nevertheless indicates that they can indeed be identified as the princes of the apostles. Directly above the pair of saints painted on the southern side of the entrance there are four much smaller figures preserved only in fragments. The two central figures are preserved only from the waist down. They are shown in a frontal stance and represent archangels in imperial dress and bearing scepters in their hands. The other two figures, one on each side of these archangels, could be identified as apostles, judging by the remaining bear feet and lower portions of chitons and himations. The socle of the western wall was also decorated with an imitation of marble revetment, only partly preserved today.

Directly underneath the vault of the northern aisle, on the southern wall, remains a fragment of a saint bearing a scroll - assumed to be a representation of the prophet Elijah⁸. The text on the scroll is written in Serbian-Slavonic and clearly reads: "Said Elijah unto Elisha".⁹ Since the rest of the frescoes, those in the dome, the apse and the western bay are accompanied by Latin inscriptions, this Slavonic texts stands out as an exception.

⁷ On representations of the apostles Peter and Paul in this period cf. B. Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting, The Age of King Milutin*, Beograd 1999, 162.

⁸ M. Čanak Medić, *o.c.*, 215.

⁹ V.J. Đurić, *Jezici i pismena na srednjovekovnim fresko- natpisima u Boki Kotorskoj: značaj za kulturu i umetnost*, in: *Crkva Svetog Luke kroz vjekove*, Kotor, 1997, 259.

In the apex of the dome appears a quite badly damaged image of Christ Pantocrator. The preserved portions include the haloed head and part of the bust. A part of the reddish-ochre chiton is visible as well as the blue himation hanging over the left shoulder.

Fresco decoration in the apse

Judging by their iconographic and, to some extent, the stylistic traits, the preserved frescoes in the altar apse belong to the circle of Byzantine art of the Palaiologan era. During that period, the cycles of Christ's *Passion* and *Resurrection Appearances* gain in importance in decorative programmes of Byzantine churches. This is evident not only in the increasing number of scenes within both cycles but also in the transfer of the entire cycles from the narthex (where they were depicted from the XI to the XIII century) to the naos and, in some cases, even into the altar space. This phenomenon is the result of a pronounced influence of liturgical rites and texts on the art of the Palaiologan renaissance¹⁰.

The wall paintings from the Collegiata date from around the year 1300 at which time Kotor was located within the boundaries of the state of king Milutin. This accounts for the understandable general iconographic and stylistic similarities of the frescoes in question with Byzantine and Serbian painting of the first decades of the XIV century. However, parallels for the iconographic programme of the altar space can only be found in the city of Kotor itself, namely among the remaining fragments of the *Passion* in the apse of the cathedral of St. Tryphon, created at a somewhat later date than the frescoes in the Collegiata¹¹.

Because the church of St. Mary Collegiata belongs to the Roman Catholic rite, these frescoes can be viewed as Byzantine only formally (and even so, only to a certain measure). Therefore, an interpretation based on the requirements of the Eastern Christian liturgy is valid only for a strictly iconographic and stylistic analysis of these paintings. On the other hand, the

¹⁰ On the significance of the cycles of *Passion* and *Resurrection Appearances* in this period, based on examples of paintings from the age of king Milutin, cf. B. Todić, *Gračanica- slikarstvo*, Beograd- Priština, 1988, 121, 186; id, *Staro Nagoričino*, 109- 110. In the Patriarchate of Peć, in the church of St. Demetrios we find a representation of the *Crucifixion* in the altar space, cf. S. Radojčić, *O slikarstvu u Boki Kotorskoj*, Spomenik CIII, Beograd 1953, 56. Scenes from the *Passion* cycle, dating from 1329-1330, are found in the altar space and in the lower zone of wall painting in the church of St. Nicholas in Banja Pribojska, cf. S. Radojčić, *O slikarstvu u Boki Kotorskoj*, Spomenik CIII, Beograd 1953, 56.

¹¹ S. Radojčić, *o.c.*, 56; N. Luković, *Freske i slike katedrale sv. Tripuna*, in: *800 godina katedrale sv. Tripuna u Kotoru (1166-1966)*, 63-65; V. J. Đurić, *Vizantijske freske u Jugoslaviji*, Beograd 1974, 58, n. 61.

choice of scenes and the place of their depiction is most closely related to the needs of Roman Catholic liturgy and had to be in complete harmony with the dogma of the Catholic church.

For those reasons, in the analysis which follows, the frescoes painted in the altar space of the Collegiata shall be viewed in the light of Roman Catholic dogma. Through analogies with the contemporary, as well as with earlier examples from the world of Western Christendom, we shall follow the fundamental eucharistic concept which comprises the essence of programmes of altar space decoration of Catholic churches.

The theme of the *Crucifixion* represents the main axis of the programme of decoration of the altar space of the Collegiata. As we have already mentioned, the central part of the altar apse was dominated by a representation of the Crucifixion with other scenes from the cycle of Christ's Passion and Resurrection Appearances, of smaller dimension, grouped around it. If, for a moment, we stop to consider the development and alterations the altar space has undergone since the time of the painting of these frescoes, we shall see in what other ways the theme of the Crucifixion was also emphasised and in how these means of emphasising followed the contemporary trends in Western European, Catholic art. Namely, it seems that the old early Romanesque altar screen stood in the church interior all the time until the restoration of 1434, because many of its parts were found in the fill-ins above the vaults of the sacristy and the added western extension of the lateral nave¹². The height of the altar screen did not hamper the visibility of the frescoes in the apse, including, of course, the *Crucifixion*. A new, tall altar screen may have been installed already in the XV century. A wooden *Crucifix* dating from the XIV century, later transferred to the Baroque altar raised in 1682, may have belonged to this fixture which was damaged in the fire of 1563. It is during the Baroque phase of sanitation works that the semicircular apse received its fill-in, the walls were stripped of the frescoes and the entire interior whitewashed and given a new coat of paint¹³.

The exceptional significance of the *Crucifixion*, as the main theme of the iconographic programme of the Collegiata, found another means of expression in the small wooden crucifix dating from the XV century placed in a specially constructed niche hung on the south facade of the church.¹⁴ That crucifix functioned as a *simulacrum* of the monumentally sculpted Gothic crucifix located in the altar and represented a special accent, a sign

¹² M. Čanak- Medić, *o.c.*, 206.

¹³ Z. Čubrović, *Barokizacija romaničkog Kotora*, Godišnjak Pomorskog muzeja u Kotoru XXXIX- XL, Kotor 1991- 1992, 32-33.

¹⁴ J. Belamarić, *Gotičko raspelo iz Kotora*, Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji 26, Split 1986- 1987, 141.

whose purpose was to point out on the outside the image which enjoyed special veneration inside this place of worship. That is exactly why it was placed on the south facade of the church, facing one of the main street of Kotor, the one connecting the cathedral of St. Tryphon and the Collegiata.

There are two other similar cases in Kotor itself where imagery on church facades plays a special role in emphasising the specific sacral contents of a given place of cult. Closely related with the crucifix from the exterior of the Collegiata is the sculpted Baroque crucifix located underneath the loggia of the bell tower of the church of St. Francis on Gurdić. It had the same function of exterior sign of the miraculous crucifix located inside the church¹⁵.

The other example is significantly different from the two previously mentioned in both meaning and technique of production. This is a fresco representing St. Christopher painted on the entrance facade of the church of St. Anne and dating, based on its stylistic traits, from the close of the first half of the XIV century. It had an apotropaic function because of the belief that seeing an image of St. Christopher has the power to save one from any unpleasantness which may come on that day¹⁶.

The established data concerning the alterations of the altar screen and the entire altar space of the Collegiata, brings us to the conclusion that the earliest representation of the *Crucifixion* known to us in this church was that painted in fresco on the wall of the altar apse around the year 1300. We cannot establish definitely whether some wooden crucifix, presumably earlier in date than the Gothic object from the close of the XIV century, was carved at the same time. There is a possibility the frescoes, including, of course, the representation of the *Crucifixion*, were the sole exponents of the general programme of the altar space based on liturgical symbolism. In those days, in Dalmatia and Italy, the so-called *croce dipinta* are found more often in church interiors than monumental, carved crucifixes. Such painted crucifixes (*croce dipinta*) could be placed on the central axis of altar screens, while they were still in use, or on the high altar itself. It could also hang on the triumphal arch or stand upright in the middle of the central nave¹⁷. North of the Alps, the same spot could be taken by tridimensional, carved

¹⁵ There were two miracle working wooden crucifixes in Kotor. One in the Collegiata and the other in the church of St. Francis, later transferred to the cathedral of St. Tryphon, cf. *ibid*, 135-141.

¹⁶ R. Vujičić, *Freska s likom sv. Hristofora na pročelju crkve sv. Ane u Kotoru*, Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji 24 (1984), 39- 44. On representations of St. Christopher in Serbian art, cf. I. Đorđević, *Sveti Hristofor u srpskom slikarstvu srednjeg veka*, Zograf 11, Beograd 1980, 63- 66.

¹⁷ G. Gamulin, *Slikana raspela u Hrvatskoj*, Zagreb 1983, 7.

crucifixes¹⁸. The production of *croce dipinta* ceases at some time during the second half of the XV century, at which time sculpted crucifixes become entirely predominant. In a number of cases, there are both painted and sculpted crucifixes in a given church at the same. That is when "duties" are divided between the two kinds of crucifixes, with the painted crucifix taking on the task of encouraging common contemplation of Christ's sacrifice, redemption and salvation, while the carved crucifix, placed on the altar, was there to attract and "perform daily favours" to those who bear offerings in return¹⁹. From the end of the XIV century on, a similar "division of duties" could also have existed in the Collegiata, between the fresco representing the *Crucifixion* in the apse and the "miraculous" wooden crucifix on the altar. Images of the *Crucifixion* in the altar space, whether painted or carved, marked a station in *Vadunt ante Crucem* processions, as prescribed for Easter vespers by the antiphony of St. Peter's in the XII century. The faithful would greet these images with the cry: *Ave, Rex noster*²⁰.

The representation of the *Crucifixion* in the Collegiata stood out among other scenes from the cycles of the *Passion* and *Resurrection Appearances* in dimension and especially by the location it took in the centre of the apse. In that manner, it was extricated from the narrative course of the cycles and assumed the function of an emblematic representation.

Such a manner of extracting the scene of the *Crucifixion* from the narrative sequence of the cycle has a long history in Western European art. One of the earliest known examples is that in the church of Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome whose altar space was decorated with a narrative cycle at the beginning of the VIII century. The monumental and dominant representation of the *Crucifixion* in Santa Maria Antiqua is tied to the growing cult of the Cross and directly reflects liturgical practices. Namely, in Rome, the feast celebrating the Elevation of the True Cross was established late in the VIII century and this resulted in the erection of a special altar under the mentioned fresco²¹. The other example which also dates from the VIII century was located in the old basilica of St. Peter in

¹⁸ G. Schiller, *The Italian Painted Cross ("croce dipinta") from Twelfth Century to the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century*, in: *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol.2, London 1972, 149.

¹⁹ In the cathedral of Trogir, together with a painted crucifix, there was also a wooden crucifix which arrived in 1508 from Venice. A similar situation may also have existed in the cathedral of Split, J. Belamarić, *o.c.*, 146.

²⁰ G. Gamulin, *o.c.*, 7, 48.

²¹ M. Aronberg Lavin, *The Place of Narrative, Mural Decoration in Italian Churches, 431-1600*, The University of Chicago Press 1990, 21-22, 27.

Rome. The south wall of the central nave was dominated by a *Crucifixion* singled out from the narrative cycle by its large dimensions²².

The mentioned examples were points of dissemination of ideas throughout the Middle Ages, enhanced by the great esteem the two churches enjoyed in Western Christendom. In Western European art, Christ's death on the cross was first clearly associated with the sacraments in Carolingian times²³. The visualisation of Christ's death receives particular emphasis in Carolingian art as an image depicting the source of the holy sacraments of communion and baptism. Ties between the theme of the *Crucifixion* and eucharistic and ecclesiological doctrine are explicitly represented on Carolingian ivory plaques with the dominant theme of the *Crucifixion* which comprise a specific iconographical group²⁴. On them we most often find as accompanying motifs, constituent parts of the *Crucifixion* scene proper, the following scenes: Universal Resurrection, Holy Women at the Sepulcher, Splitting of the Garments, personifications of the Church and the Synagogue, the Sun and the Moon, the Earth and the Ocean, Rome and Jerusalem. These representations are usually organised in three horizontal registers and expound the complete exegesis of the *Crucifixion* which assumes a dominant, central position on the vertical axis of these ivory plaques. Closely related in idea to this phenomenon is also the association of Christ's death with the establishment of the Eucharist. According to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, through the *Crucifixion*, Christ's body was transformed into the communion bread - the mystical body of the Eucharist. Thus, already from the VI century on, the hymn *Vexilla Regis* by Venantius Fortunatus was sung during mass on Good Friday, following the rite of the adoration of the cross and in the course of transportation of communion bread to the main altar²⁵.

The trans-substantiation doctrine became a dogma of the Roman church at the IV Lateran Council held in 1215²⁶. As a result of the celebration of Christ's sacramental body, the feast of *Corpus Christi* was established in 1264²⁷. This ideas is going to have significant influence on

²² This can be established from the drawings of Giacomo Grimaldi, dating from the first half of the XVII century, cf. *ibid*, 23-24.

²³ G. Schiller, *The Passion as Interpreted in the Latin Middle Ages*, in: *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. 2, 10.

²⁴ S. Ferber, *Crucifixion Iconography in a Group of Carolingian Ivory Plaques*, *The Art Bulletin* XLVIII, n.3 & 4, New York 1966, 323.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 327.

²⁶ G. Schiller, *The Passion as Interpreted in the Latin Middle Ages*, in: *Iconography*, 11.

²⁷ At around the same time celebration also begins of the feast of the Holy Trinity. In the later Middle Ages, these two themes, *Corpus Christi* and the Holy Trinity, will often intertwine in the visual arts, cf. *ibid*, 11.

late medieval piety. However, even before those times, in the *Theologia crucis* of St. Bernard of Clairvaux we notice a general preoccupation with the Passion of Christ²⁸. It is understandable why during the XII century, in the age of the first crusades, the attention of the faithful focuses more and more on the Holy Sepulcher and thus also on the theme of the *Passion* which also assumes a prominent position in contemporary literature. In the next century, in Italy, St. Francis preaches on Christ's humble earthly existence and the mystery of Christ's passion, reminding the faithful to be aware of their sins which brought on the death of Christ²⁹.

This circle of themes introduces us to the discussion of the other idea which takes an equally significant place in the programme of decoration of the altar apse in the church of the Collegiata, alongside that of Christ's death on the cross, the theme of Christ's sepulchre. Representations of Christ's grave in the apse of the Collegiata appear in several scenes: the Lamentation, Entombment, Holy Women at the Sepulcher and Apostles Discovering the Empty Tomb.

In the mentioned scenes, except the Entombment, Christ's tomb is depicted in the form of a marble sarcophagus. The representation of the sarcophagus with Christ's dead body laid out in it is full of sacramental symbolism. The sarcophagus, that is the tomb of Christ, is seen as the altar. Christ's body resting in the sarcophagus represents the communion bread laid out on the altar table in the moment of consecration³⁰. The tradition of associating Christ's tomb with the altar is long and tied to the liturgy on Good Friday and Easter. In the Catholic church, during mass on Good Friday, in the ceremony of *Depositio*, the communion bread is "laid in the grave" in a special ritual. Before Easter mass, the "buried Christ", i.e. the communion bread, is returned to the altar in the ceremony of *Elevatio*. Once the communion bread is taken out of the altar space the resurrected Christ is present among the faithful. At that time the priest plays the role of the myrrhophores who discovered the empty tomb and repeats their dialogue with the angel³¹. The developed symbolism of Christ's tomb as the altar is also found in the first liturgical dramas. Thus, in the text of *Quem Queritus* from the X and XI centuries we find descriptions of the communion bread being "buried" on Good Friday, because consecration is not allowed at the service of Good Friday. The vessel into which communion bread is "buried" is described in the text as *sepulchrum*. The communion bread would often be buried together with the crucifix and covered by a cloth to symbolise Christ's

²⁸ *Ibid*, 10.

²⁹ *Loc. cit.*

³⁰ B.G. Lane, "*Depositio et Elevatio*": *The Symbolism of the Seilern Triptych*, *The Art Bulletin* LVII (1975), 26.

³¹ G. Schiller, *The Holy Sepulchre*, in: *Iconography*, 181-182.

garments and the cloth covering his head which the apostles found in his tomb after his resurrection³².

The choice of the scenes in the altar of the Collegiata is directly influenced by the requirements of Catholic services of Good Friday and Easter. The *Lamentation* and the *Entombment* glorify the sacramental symbolism of Christ's dead body. The same idea is also present in another scene which, although badly damaged, can be identified as the *Deposition from the Cross* based on the contours of the heads and the halo. The resurrection of Christ is represented through two scenes: *Holy Women at the Sepulcher* and the *Apostles Discovering the Empty Tomb*. The scene which most directly confirmed the corporeal death of Christ was that of the *Lamentation*³³. In the scene found in the Collegiata, Christ's dead body is laid on top of a sarcophagus of reddish marble. This underlines the symbolism of the sarcophagus as the altar on which the sacrificial offering is laid out while the red colour of the marble points to *lapis purpureus* and Christ's blood³⁴.

As far as the emphasising of Christ's dead body in the decoration of the apse of the Collegiata is concerned, note should also be made of a contemporary cult which was very widespread in the Catholic world of that time. The cult of Christ's wounds experienced a sudden growth during the XIII and XIV centuries. *Quinquepartitum vulnus* is associated with Christ's redemption of the sins of mankind, those which man commits with his five senses. From the XIII century on, there is a growing number of songs, prayers, oaths, feasts and masses (*Humilitavit*) dedicated to the five wounds of Christ. This mass gained popularity by virtue of its authorship supposedly ascribed to the evangelist John himself. It was believed that five such masses could free one soul in Purgatory³⁵.

The general cult of Christ's wounds was especially developed by the Franciscans. Crucial in that sense, was an event which took place on Monte Alverno in 1224 when St. Francis had a vision of the Crucifixion and experienced stigmatisation or, as Dante put it, "*l'ultimo sigillo*"³⁶. Viewed in

³² B.G. Lane, *o.c.*, 27.

³³ Most significant explanations of the origin of the Lamentation in: E. Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol.1, Icon Editons, New York 1971, 21-24. Most complete, and thus elemental in discussing this problem, is the study of K. Weitzmann, *The Origin of the Threnos*, in: *De artibus opuscula XI, Essays in Honor of E. Panofsky*, New York 1971, *passim*.

³⁴ M.A Graeve, *The Stone of Unction in Caravaggio's Painting for the Chiesa Nuova*, *The Art Bulletin* XL (1958), 228.

³⁵ J. Belamarić, *o.c.*, 147- 148.

³⁶ L. Réau, *Francois d' Assise*, in: *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, tome III, vol.I, Paris 1958, 517.

this light, the figure of St. Francis represented on the southern wall of the western bay of the Collegiata becomes a special iconographical highlight of the idea of *quinquepartitum vulnus* and the idea of St. Francis being *Christi imitator*³⁷. We shall return to this question later, in the discussion of the ties between the representation of St. Francis and the remaining scenes from the cycle of Christ's Miracles in the western bay.

The growth of the cult of Christ's wounds in the late Middle Ages is also attested by another stigmatisation, that experienced by St. Catherine of Sienna in 1375 while she was praying in front of a crucifix in the church of St. Catherine in Pisa³⁸. St. Catherine of Sienna (Caterina Benincasa) was perhaps the greatest figure in the religious life of Italy of the second half of the XIV century. Her teachings, to a point even controversial, left a deep imprint on the new religious sentiment of the age. To her, blood was an obsessive symbol. She often began the letters she wrote with the words: "Io, Caterina, serva e schiava dei servi di Gesù Cristo, scrivo a voi nel prezioso sangue suo"³⁹.

The new religious sentiment, in which love is the basic category, and emulating the passion of Christ the road to uniting with God, is also present in the words of St. Bernardine speaking about Christ crucified: "Behold the head of Jesus, bent down to kiss you, his arms spread wide to embrace you, his palms pierced to distribute, his side open to love, his body stretched out to give itself in its entirety"⁴⁰.

This new sentiment of the late XIV century is also the framework for observing the Gothic crucifixion from the Collegiata which at one time stood in the altar space of the church alongside the mentioned frescoes. In the course of restoration of this crucifix, three copper coins minted in the city of Kotor, with the Angevine coat of arm on the averse and the image of the holy protector of the city, St. Tryphon, on the reverse, were found inside the torso of Christ⁴¹. Those three coins were placed "upon the heart" of Christ

³⁷ This idea of similarity is developed following the publishing by fra Bartolomeo da Piza (1334-1401) of a list of similarities between the life of Christ and that of St. Francis which appeared in his book entitled "*Liber Conformitatum vitae Beati ac Seraphici Patris Francisci ad vitam Jesu Christi Domini nostri*", cf. *ibid*, 518; *I Fioretti di San Francesco*, Assisi 1989, 3.

³⁸ J. Belamarić, *o. c.*, 148.

³⁹ Citation after M. Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death. The Arts, Religion and Society in the Mid-Fourteenth Century*, Princeton University Press 1978, 88-89.

⁴⁰ After J. Belamarić, *o. c.*, 148.

⁴¹ The city of Kotor was under the rule of Louis d'Anjou and his wife Elisabeth Kotromanić between 1371 and 1385, and this period is regarded as the *terminus ante quem* of the creation of this Gothic crucifix, cf. *ibid*, 135, 147.

through the great wound on his chest. In the late Middle Ages this wound was the subject of great attention of the faithful. Since the spear of Longinus reached to the area of Christ's heart, the *apertio laternis* became the *apertio cordis* where the believer should dwell, having been united with Christ. St. Catherine of Siena called Christ's chest wound the "*bottega del sangue*"⁴².

Moreover, in XIV century Germany there was a practice of "burial" of eucharistic bread (as a part of the *Depositio* ceremony) into so-called Holy Sepulchers, actually groups of figures in sculpture gathered around the dead Christ laid out on a sarcophagus. The eucharist would be placed in an opening formed at the spot of Christ's chest wound⁴³.

The long duration of the cult of Christ's wounds in the city of Kotor is also attested by the fact that the blessed Ozana, whose relics are kept today in the church of Santa Maria Collegiata, slept for forty four years in willing isolation on a bed of bare wooden planks with five steps leading to it as a symbol of the five wounds of Christ⁴⁴.

In the iconographic programme of the altar space of the Collegiata, the sacramental symbolism of Christ's dead body is clearly underlined also through the scene of the *Entombment* which together with the *Lamentation* comprises one single composition.

The representation of the entombment of Christ had complex eucharistic connotations in both the Eastern and the Western Church. This is attested by an example from earlier history, namely, an illuminated manuscript of the Homilies of Gregory of Naziansus dating from the last decades of the IX century (Paris, Bibl. Nat. grec. 510). The scenes of the *Crucifixion*, *Descent from the Cross* and *Entombment* are depicted within a single, tripartite composition. In that manner they are given a dogmatic interpretation and are not shown as mere narrative illustrations of scenes from the cycle of Christ's passion. This sort of composition has all the characteristics of a monumental, solemn image of the feast of Good Friday⁴⁵.

In Western art the practice of glorification of Christ's eucharistic body is especially present following the establishment of the feast of *Corpus Cristi* in 1264. We already mentioned the connection between the scene of the Entombment and the symbolic sacrifice offered at the service of Good Friday with the "burial" of the eucharist bread. An excellent example of this connection are the so-called sacrament shrines common in Western art of the

⁴² *Ibid*, 148,150.

⁴³ B.G. Lane, *o.c.*, 27.

⁴⁴ J. Belamarić, *o.c.*, 148.

⁴⁵ K. Weitzman. *o.c.*, 479- 480.

XIV century. Most often they are decorated with sculptural representations of the *Entombment* placed directly below the opening of the reliquary⁴⁶.

In the wall painting of the Collegiata, in scenes related to the glorification of Christ's sacramental body, the role of the Virgin is specially emphasised. In the *Entombment* she is shown standing close to Christ's feet and silently mourning her loss. This scene is filled with eucharistic symbolism. The following text is spoken at the celebration of the holy sacrament: "*Ave, verum Corpus natum de Maria Vergine*". In *De Sacramentis* St. Ambrose writes: "*Hic panis, manu sancti spiritus formatus in virgine, Igne passionis est decoctus in cruce...Quamodo potest qui panis est, corpus esse Christi?...*"⁴⁷. In that manner, the Virgin, as the mediatrix in the incarnation of the Logos, also takes part in the mystery of redemption.⁴⁸ The death of Christ is the precondition for the salvation of all mankind. The Church, according to theological doctrine created from the flesh and blood of the crucified Christ, warrants the strivings of mankind toward salvation. Christ is the mystic body of the church and this is the point of origin of the idea of Mary as *Mater Ecclesiae*⁴⁹.

Along with the scenes related to the sacramental symbolism of Christ's dead body, in the altar space of the Collegiata there are also three other scenes which illustrate the discovery of Christ's empty tomb: *Holy Women at the Sepulcher*, *Apostles Discovering the Empty Tomb* and probably *Noli Me Tangere!* As an illustration of the confirmation of Christ's resurrection, these scenes are a part of the programme of decoration of the altar space which is based directly on the requirements of Catholic services of Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Easter Sunday. As we have already mentioned, in the course of the ceremony of the *Elevatio*, when the eucharist is being brought to the altar, the resurrected Christ is symbolically present in the church.⁵⁰ Together with the scenes related to the resurrection of Christ, the soteriological meaning of the programme of decoration of the apse is also underlined through one specific accent. In the lowest zone of fresco decoration, as an integral part of the original *Crucifixion* scene placed at the centre of the apse, we find a representation of the motif of universal resurrection. The motif of the resurrected rising out of their graves

⁴⁶ B.G. Lane, *o.c.*, 27.

⁴⁷ M. A. Graeve, *o.c.*, 236-237; E. Panofsky, *o.c.*, 472, note 283.

⁴⁸ The soteriological role of the Virgin is underlined through a typological juxtaposition of Mary and Eve. Ephrem the Syriac interprets the difference between the Virgin and Eve by relating the Virgin to the eucharist: "*Maria ci ha dato il pane della vita, anziché il pane della sofferenza che ci ha dato Eva*", cf. G. Söll, *Storia dei Dogmi Mariani*, Roma 1981, 113, 117.

⁴⁹ S. Ferber, *o.c.*, 325- 326.

⁵⁰ B.G. Lane, *o.c.*, 26.

(sarcophagi), incorporated into the *Crucifixion*, represents a rare iconographic peculiarity⁵¹. The oldest preserved examples are found on the already mentioned Carolingian ivory plaques from the IX-X centuries.⁵² It seems that in subsequent times, in Western European art the motif of universal resurrection ceases to be depicted within the scene of the *Crucifixion* but rather only as a part of the scene of *Universal Judgement*.

In Byzantine art, the first preserved example of the representation of this iconographic motif as a part of the *Crucifixion* is that found in an illuminated gospel created in the XI century in the monastery of St. John the Stoudite in Constantinople (Paris, Bibl. Nat. Par. gr. 74). Based on assumptions that the illumination of this gospel is based on an older prototype it is believed that the mentioned motif originated in the Byzantine spiritual milieu.⁵³ In Byzantine monumental painting, the first preserved examples date from the XIII century and can be found in the church of St. Peter in Kalyvia Kouvara, the refectory of the monastery of St. John on Patmos and in Sopoćani. In the XIV century, the same iconographic solution is applied in the church of the Virgin Peribleptos in Mistra⁵⁴.

Judging by the distribution of the auxiliary scenes around the dominant image of the *Crucifixion*, with the Splitting of the Garments and the Universal Resurrection placed at the foot of the cross, iconographically and compositionally most similar to the solution found in the Collegiata are those of the Carolingian ivory plaques. The horizontal registers and the dominant axis of the *Crucifixion* proper create a division between the celestial and the terrestrial domain corresponding to the cosmological scheme found in Bede's *De natura rerum*⁵⁵. Christ's triumph on the cross, as an image of the foundation of the Church and the sacraments, unites the celestial and the terrestrial zones and represents the zone of the *Revelation*. The dead, rising from their graves, belong to the material world. By leaving their graves to join Christ in his triumph over death they cross over from the terrestrial into the domain of the *Revelation*. Roman soldiers splitting between them Christ's garments belong to the terrestrial zone. On the other hand, the garments themselves, which they did not succeed in splitting, stand as a symbol of unity and strength of the Church⁵⁶.

The tripartite scheme, applied in this manner, and the role of the motif of universal resurrection as the medium category connecting the material and celestial world, brings on associations of a tripartite division of the world

⁵¹ D. Popović, *Srpski vladarski grob u srednjem veku*, Beograd 1992, 74.

⁵² *Loc. cit.*; S. Ferber, *o.c.*, 327-328; G. Schiller, *o.c.*, 113-114.

⁵³ D. Popović, *o.c.*, 74.

⁵⁴ *Loc. cit.*

⁵⁵ S. Ferber, *o.c.*, 328.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 331.

into hell, purgatory and heaven. In view of the fact that in the XIII century the idea of purgatory was dominant in contemporary theology and dogma,⁵⁷ the tripartite division applied in the Collegiata, into the celestial (*Crucifixion*), the terrestrial (*Splitting of the Garments*) and the zone of uniting of these two (the dead rising from their graves), may also be interpreted in this light. Prayers for the dead which specifically underline the hope in dwelling in the *refrigerium* and the bosom of Abraham until resurrection on the Day of Judgement speak in favour of this assumption. The eucharistic offering gives hope in the eternal salvation of the soul. In the early Middle Ages, liturgical texts emphasised the idea of first resurrection. The following words were chanted in services: "*Habeat partem in prima resurrectione*". Viewing such prayers within the millenaristic framework, the temporary resting place after death and the first resurrection was associated with the bosom of Abraham or pastures populated by souls dressed in white (from Bede's Vision of Dritelmus)⁵⁸.

The programme of painted decoration of the apse of the church of Santa Maria Collegiata is liturgical in character. Scenes of eucharistic and eschatological meaning are clearly pointed out. Complex theological ideas with several semiotic levels are expressed through the use of an iconographic idiom imbued with the new sensibility. This brings us to a new question, namely the humanization of religious practice, both in Byzantine and Western European religious art of the XIII and XIV centuries, as well as to the question of their mutual relations and influences. The most vivid example of expression of emotions and psychological states in the programme of decoration of the altar space of the Collegiata is the theme of the *Lamentation* represented as a part of the *Entombment* scene. The gestures and facial expressions of the figures taking part in the lamentation are based on Hellenistic formulas used to express emotional states, preserved in their original form in Byzantine art⁵⁹.

The theme of the *Lamentation* (*Threnos*) originated in Byzantine iconography and receives its developed scheme in the XII century, at the time when the new emotional quality also imbued the other scenes from the cycle of the *Passion*, in particular the *Crucifixion* and the *Descent from the Cross*⁶⁰. The problem of the origins of the theme of the *Lamentation* is complex and should be observed as a gradual process of separation of this

⁵⁷ Ž. Le Gof, *Nastanak čistilišta*, Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad 1992, 265.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 112- 114.

⁵⁹ On the modes of expressing sorrow in Byzantine art and on their Hellenistic origins cf. H. Maguire, *The Depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art*, DOP 31 (1977), 125-174.

⁶⁰ T. Velmans, *La peinture murale byzantine à la fin du moyen âge*, vol. I, Paris 1977, 99-106.

scene from the representation of the *Entombment*⁶¹. The process of transformation of the simple, narrative representation of the *Entombment* into a self-sufficient, hieratic and complex image of the *Threnos* was influenced, most of all, by liturgical requirements. As a result of adopting classical and Hellenistic elements the emotional qualities of religious subjects were enhanced, especially those of the scenes from the cycle of *Passion*. This process was under way in the art of the Macedonian era⁶².

In the period following the defeat of iconoclasm there is a conspicuous tendency of representing human emotions, especially sorrow, in Byzantine art, including the scenes representing events from the gospels. The expression of sorrow through gestures and facial expressions in scenes of *Descent from the Cross*, *Lamentation* and *Entombment* had a deeper meaning corresponding to the situation following the restoration of the cult of the icons. In that manner the reality of Christ's incarnation was confirmed.⁶³ Literary models which directly influenced the visualisation of the scene of the *Lamentation* were dramas (*Christos paschon*), in the first place, as well as hymns, services and a special rhetorical genre, the *threnos*, whose roots go back to the classical and Hellenistic tradition of Byzantine spirituality.⁶⁴ In Byzantine literature, the theme of the Virgin's lamentation is developed from the VI century on. One of the most significant examples is found in the homily of Gregory of Nicomedia on the subject of the *Crucifixion* and the *Entombment*. The lamentation of the Virgin explicitly confirms Christ's carnal nature (together with the divine)⁶⁵. Because of its liturgical significance, note should also be made of the canon sung at vespers on Good Friday as well as the *Epitaphios Threnos*, a liturgical lamentation sung at matins on Good Saturdays. The origins of this lamentation are unclear but it is known that it did become a part of the liturgy in the first half of the XIV century⁶⁶.

However, in the theme of the *Lamentation* represented as a part of the scene of the *Entombment* painted in the altar space of the Collegiata, the figure of Mary Magdalen and not the Virgin, is dominant both compositionally and in the domain of expression. While the Virgin, resting

⁶¹ K. Weitzmann, *o.c.*, passim.

⁶² *Ibid*, 490.

⁶³ E. Kitzinger, *The Hellenistic Heritage in Byzantine Art*, DOP 17, 113-114; H. Maguire, *o.c.*, 160-161.

⁶⁴ On the development of the lamentation as a literary genre and its influence on art in Byzantium cf. H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium*, Princeton University Press 1981, 91-108.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 97-98.

⁶⁶ *Evandjelja stradanja, Iz bogoslužjenja Velike nedelje*, Beograd 1964, 52-61; H. Maguire, *Art and Eloquence in Byzantium*, 101.

her head on her hand⁶⁷, conveys her pain more through her facial expression while Mary Magdalen throws her arms wide open in strong movement⁶⁸ which draws back the drapes of her red cloak which discloses the tumbling black locks of her long hair. Neither the colour of the Virgin's maphorion nor the place she assumes in the composition attracts attention at first sight, as opposed to Mary Magdalen which represents the very centre of the composition. The symmetric disposition of her raised arms and the red colour of her cloak⁶⁹ stand out as a strong contrast to the other figures, in particular to that of the Virgin. The frequent appearance of Mary Magdalen in the programme of decoration of the apse of the Collegiata is certainly interesting. In these scenes her figure is always emphasised if not even the most prominent in the composition⁷⁰. Moreover, on most of the frescoes in the altar space of the Collegiata there is a noticeable presence of a great number of figures of women. In scenes of the *Passion* and the *Resurrection Appearances*, figures of women most often express feelings of sorrow, whether through facial expressions and gentle hand movement or through vehement outpours of sorrow and despair. This question should certainly be observed within the framework of the new religious sensibility of the XIV century.

Wall Paintings in the Western Bay

In the western bay there are several preserved scenes from narrative cycles and a somewhat greater number of representations of saints in the zone of the standing figures. As we have already mentioned, there are two scenes illustrating the *Marriage at Cana* and a part of another scene which may be identified as an illustration of the *Miracle of St. Francis with the*

⁶⁷ On expressing sorrow through the gesture of raising a hand to the head of a standing figure cf. H. Maguire, *The depiction of Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art*, 140- 151.

⁶⁸ On expressing sorrow through the gesture of throwing ones arms open cf. *ibid*, 158-160.

⁶⁹ In the apse of the cathedral of St. Tryphon, in the scene of the *Descent from the Cross* Mary Magdalen is also depicted in a very expressive manner, cloaked by a red maphorion, cf. N. Luković, *Freske i slike katedrale sv. Tripuna*, 64.

⁷⁰ In this context, we should also mention that there was a church dedicatd to St. Mary Magdalen in XIV century Kotor. It is mentioned in 1326 while in 1676 it is mentioned that it still exists. It was located in the vicinity of St. Anne, in the upper part of the city *in criapis*, lying at the very foot of the hill of San Giovanni. This church gave its name to the part of the city surrounding it (*contrata S. Mariae Magdalенаe*), cf. I. Stjepčević, *Katedrala sv. Tripuna u Kotoru*, Split 1938, 59.

Well⁷¹. We can thus conclude that, apart from that depicted in the altar space, there were at least two other cycles in the original programme of fresco decoration of the Collegiata. One is the cycle of Christ's *Miracles* and the other that of St. Francis.

In Byzantine art of the period around the year 1300 the number of scenes in the cycles of Christ's *Miracles* and his *Public Ministry* is increasing. The extended cycle of Christ's *Miracles* and *Parables* is influenced by liturgy because these scenes complement the picture of Christ's redeeming mission⁷². According to St. Athanasios of Alexandria, the Logos became incarnate for the sake of returning mankind to the road to salvation. People saw him as a man but his deeds convinced them that he was not only man but also God, Word and Wisdom of the true God.

Christ's miracles took a prominent place in services because they were interpreted as a revelation of his divine nature as well as a symbol of the beginning of the Kingdom of God⁷³.

The text of the gospels referring to Christ's miracle of turning water into wine at the marriage in Cana was read, already from the IV century on, at services of the feast of Epiphany. Thus, in the VI century illuminated gospel from Milan (Ambrosiana, MS C. 39 inf.), by the representation of the Marriage at Cana we find an inscription reading *In vigiliis epiphaniae domini*⁷⁴. Like Christ's miracle of multiplication of the loaves and fishes, the Marriage at Cana was viewed as an allusion to the Last Supper. The eucharistic symbolism of both scenes is stressed in San Apollinare Nuovo because the *Marriage at Cana* and the *Last Supper* are painted one across the other⁷⁵. The text of the gospel of St. John represents Christ's miracles as prefigurations of the liturgy. Thus, the *Marriage at Cana* and the *Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes* are prefigurations of the Eucharist. Christ himself at the marriage feast in Cana says to the Virgin that his hour has not yet come (John 2,4). This hour refers to the hour of his death when he shall offer as sacrifice his body and his blood for eternal life. Christ's words indicate that, already at Cana, he was aware of the redeeming mission

⁷¹ When compared to the iconography of scenes from the cycle of St. Francis it becomes obvious that the figure of the saint on a hill in a praying stance appears in the scene of the *Miracle of St. Francis with the Well*, cf. G. Kaftal, *Iconography of Saints in Tuscan Painting*, Florence 1952, 385- 415.

⁷² B. Todić, *Gračanica*, 113; id, *Staro Nagoričino*, 90- 92; id, *Manastir Resava*, Beograd 1995, 87.

⁷³ G. Schiller, *Christ Turns Water into Wine- The Marriage in Cana*, in: *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol.1, 162.

⁷⁴ P.A. Underwood, *Some Problems in Programs and Iconography of Ministry Cycles*, in: *The Kariye Djami*, vol.4, 256.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 257.

envisaged for him by God the Father and that, following his death, his blood would be turned into wine⁷⁶.

Beside the eucharistic symbolism, the *Marriage at Cana* is also regarded as an image of Christ's unity with his "bride", the Church. Also, the changing of the water into wine is a symbol of crossing over from the age of the law of the Old Testament to the age of mercy of the New Testament⁷⁷.

The cycle of Christ's *Miracles* received a special level of interpretation in the Collegiata if it is observed as a constituent part of the overall programme of decoration of the western bay. The possibility that an entire cycle dedicated to St. Francis once existed in the zone below Christ's *Miracles*, offers an interesting perspective in the interpretation of the fresco decoration of the western bay of the Collegiata based on Franciscan teaching. If these two cycles and the preserved figures of saints and angels are observed as one whole, parallels in the iconographic programme can be found in the mother of all Franciscan churches, the church of St. Francis in Assisi. There is certainly a degree of indecision as to the possibility that definite conclusions can be drawn on the basis of just a few preserved frescoes in the western bay of the Collegiata which opens the possibility that the similarity with the Assisi programme is just a fortunate coincidence. However, the fact that the figures of these saints assume a prominent place in the church of Santa Maria Collegiata (St. Francis is painted below the preserved fragment of the scene of the *Miracle with the Well* while two archangels and the apostles Peter and Paul are depicted by the western entrance) does open the possibility to view the choice of cycles and saints as a reflection of Franciscan teaching. The life and miracles of St. Francis are interpreted as a divine mission within the framework of divine providence of redemption.

The connection between Christ and St. Francis is underlined in all the more significant literary and theological texts relevant for the iconography of the St. Francis's cycle, such as the *Legenda maior* by Bonaventura, the *Legenda Monacensis S. Francisci*, *Vita prima* and *Vita secunda* by Tomaso da Celano and *De Conformitate* by Bartolomeo da Pisa⁷⁸ Based on conformities between the lives and miracles of Christ and St. Francis, in these works we note the development of the concept of St. Francis as *Christi*

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 260, 265.

⁷⁷ *Svadba u Kani*, in: *Leksikon ikonografije, liturgike i simbolike zapadnog kršćanstva*, ed. A. Badurina, Zagreb 1979, 553.

⁷⁸ The problem of creating the narrative cycle dedicated to St. Francis and its literary sources are studied in detail by A. Smart, *The Assisi Problem and the Art of Giotto, A Study of the Legend of St. Francis in the Upper Church of San Francesco, Assisi*, Oxford 1971.

imitator and *alter Christus*⁷⁹. The same connection is also underlined in a service ascribed to Bonaventura which says: "*Item Beatus Franciscus fuit creatus ad similitudinem Humanitatis Christi, videlicet quantum ad tria: quantum ad vitam, quantum ad passionem, et quantum ad resurrectionem*"⁸⁰.

In the visual arts, Christ and St. Francis are often compared in several ways. Thus, St. Francis is often depicted within scenes from cycles dedicated to Christ (in particular in the scene of the *Crucifixion*) and, in such cases, these scenes are extricated from the narrative context and given a specific theological interpretation. However, a more explicit comparison is realised through connecting cycles dedicated to Christ and St. Francis. Certainly the most influential model of this type of iconographical solution is found in the decoration of the Upper Church of St. Francis in Assisi⁸¹.

In the Collegiata, only a part of one scene from the cycle of St. Francis is preserved, probably the *Miracle with the Well*. It is located below the *Marriage at Cana*. The miracle of St. Francis with the well is interpreted as an allusion to the miracle of Moses on Mt. Horeb (II Moses, 17, 1-7). In the iconographic programme of the church of St. Francis at Assisi, this scene is particularly emphasised by being extracted from the narrative of the *Legenda maior*⁸².

Although there are clear allusions to St. Francis as the New Moses in the representation of this miracle, its sacramental symbolism is related to the *Marriage at Cana*. Note should also be made of the fact that among a series of conformities from the lives and miracles of St. Francis and Christ there is also the miracle when St. Francis turned water into wine for his *fratres minores* (*Franciscus, Christi imitator, signo crucis commutat aquam in vinum*)⁸³.

Along with the mentioned scenes from narrative cycles, there are also preserved representations of single figures in the western bay of the Collegiata – St. Francis, St. Peter, St. Paul and two archangels. On the western wall, in the zone above the standing figures, there are images of angels. Together with the idea of *Franciscus alter Christus*, early Franciscan theology also places special emphasis exactly on archangel Michael, the angels, Sts. Peter and Paul, the Virgin and, above all, the crucified Christ.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 18; L. Réau, *o.c.*, 28.

⁸⁰ After: A. Smart, *o.c.*, 28.

⁸¹ On the iconographic programme of the Upper Church at Assisi cf. *ibid*, 3- 45, et passim.

⁸² It is painted on the eastern, entrance wall, on the left side of the portal while the *Sermon to the Birds* is painted on the right side of the entrance, cf. *ibid*, 188-191.

⁸³ L. Réau, *o.c.*, 526.

The tradition of St. Francis's special pious regard for these saints receives its full theological form in the *Legenda maior*,⁸⁴ while its visualisation is realised in the decoration of the altar space and the transept of the Upper Church of St. Francis at Assisi.⁸⁵ The main altar in this church is dedicated to the Virgin and a narrative cycle of scenes from her life appears in the apse. The altars located in the arms of the transept are dedicated to archangel Michael and St. Peter. On the western wall of the southern arm of the transept appears a dominant figure of archangel Michael while scenes from the lives of Sts. Peter and Paul are found in the southern arm of the transept. On the eastern walls of both transept arms there are images of the *Crucifixion* painted directly across from the altars dedicated to the archangel Michael and St. Peter. In the south arm of the transept and on the western wall (below the figure of the archangel) and on the eastern wall (above the image of the *Crucifixion*), one across the other, are depictions of angelic orders⁸⁶.

The veneration of St. Peter on the part of St. Francis is related to Peter's apostolic mission on earth which was continued by St. Francis.⁸⁷ In the teachings and the example St. Francis set in his life, the archangel Michael played a significant role. St. Francis dedicated his prayers in solitude on Monte Alverno exactly to the «wandering knight» of the angelic order. He identified himself with the archangel Michael, as the angel of the Apocalypse, who marks the righteous with the «seal of Living God» (Revelation 7, 2-8). In the *Legenda maior*, the stigmata of St. Francis are interpreted as the «seals of Living God». The same idea is also found in earlier texts, for example, in the hymn *Caput Draconis* written for pope Gregory IX. In this hymn St. Francis is referred to as the other Michael sent by Christ to triumph over the dragon of mendacity. Thus, St. Francis becomes the *novus legatus* bearing on his body the holy stigmata, the signs of the cross⁸⁸.

The interpretation of the appearance of the archangel Michael within the programme of decoration of the western bay of the Collegiata, apart from the influences of general Christian learning and Franciscan teachings in particular, should also be based on studying the local popularity of the cult of this archangel which was very widespread in the region of Zeta. The veneration of this cult grew in particular after the foundation of the

⁸⁴ M. Aronberg Lavin, *o.c.*, 30; A. Smart, *o.c.*, 9- 10.

⁸⁵ These frescoes date from the 1270's and were painted by Cimabue and his disciples, cf. A. Smart, *o.c.*, 9- 18; J. White, *o.c.*, 111- 121.

⁸⁶ M. Aronberg Lavin, *o.c.*, 30- 31; A. Smart, *o.c.*, 10- 11.

⁸⁷ M. Aronberg Lavin, *o. c.*, 302, n. 54.

⁸⁸ A. Smart, *o.c.*, 10- 11.

Benedictine monastery of St. Michael, the holy protector of this monastic order, on Prevlaka⁸⁹.

The depiction of Sts. Peter and Paul can be observed from the point of view of particular veneration of these saints nurtured in the Bay of Kotor. On the measure of local development of the cult of apostles Peter and Paul, as well as archangel Michael, speaks the frequent appearance of these saints on icons from the collection of jupanus Desa which the citizens of Kotor took over in 1281⁹⁰.

The joint cult of the apostles Peter and Paul was propagated in Rome, especially at the time of formation of the Lyon union of the churches (1274-1281)⁹¹. This data could be of interest to us provided that the iconographic programme of the Collegiata could be observed from the point of view of unionist policy. The fact that this is difficult to sustain is corroborated by other examples of preserved frescoes in the churches of Kotor which, regardless of the time of their creation, display the characteristic mixture of Byzantine and Western iconographic and stylistic elements. Therefore, the peculiar nature of the iconographic programme and style of decoration of the Collegiata reflects, most of all, the specific spiritual climate of the city of Kotor in the Middle Ages.

Depictions of the archangels and the princes of the apostles in the western bay of the Collegiata should also be observed in the context of the symbolism of the space surrounding the entrance to the church. Images of the apostles Peter and Paul often appear around church entrances in both Byzantine and Western European art. This ecclesiological theme, as an image of the *ecclesia coelestis*, is used to accentuate the church door as an entrance to paradise⁹².

Judging by the above mentioned facts, it appears to possible to draw parallels between the iconographic programme of the original Franciscan church in Assisi and the western bay of the Collegiata. Thus, in Collegiata we find that the basic Franciscan idea of St. Francis as Christi imitator is

⁸⁹ P. Mijović, *Formiranje kotorske slikarske škole*, in: *Istorija Crne Gore 2/1*, Titograd 1970, 275.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 274- 275.

⁹¹ Thus, St. Peter was associated with the primacy of Rome while St. Paul was viewed by the Orthodox church as its first organiser, cf. *ibid*, 275.

⁹² B. Todić, *Predstava Hrista sa apostolima na zapadnom portalu Studenice*, Saopštenja XXVI, Beograd 1994, 19-20. Images of the apostles Peter and Paul painted around church entrances are imbued with particular symbolism, especially in the art of the Palaiologan era. In Serbian art of those days they appear in the portico of the entrance tower to the katholikon of Žiča and on the western wall of the naos of Bogorodica Ljeviška, cf. M. Kašanin, Đ. Bošković, P. Mijović, *Žiča*, 182- 187; D. Panić, G. Babić, *Bogorodica Ljeviška*, 58, 127.

underlined along with the very saints whom St. Francis himself held in special reverence. The most important ideas of early Franciscan theology, highlighted in this manner and represented all in one place, communicate on the west-east axis with the image of Christ crucified and the scenes of his passion in the altar space. This stresses one other important idea in Franciscan teaching, the idea of conformity of St. Francis and Christ on the *ad passionem* level. That is why the Franciscans devote special attention to the development of the cult of the *Cross* and the *Crucifixion*. In Franciscan theology, the theme of St. Francis's meditation of Christ's passion becomes the main issue. One of the most significant works on the subject is certainly *De meditatione passionis Christi per septem diei horas libellus* by Pseudo Bede⁹³.

Although the church of Santa Maria Collegiata did not belong directly to the Franciscan or any other monastic order but served, rather, as a congregational church, there is reason to assume that the inspiration for the iconographic programme came from some member of the Franciscan order. Thus, in its main characteristics, the iconographic programme reflects the religious sensibility which was most significantly influence by Franciscan teachings.

Based on its iconographic and stylistic traits, the wall paintings of the church of Santa Maria Collegiata could be observed within the framework of *pictura graeca*, an expression usually used to determine the nature of medieval painting in Kotor's churches⁹⁴. The specific synthesis of Byzantine and Gothic iconographic and stylistic elements in the Collegiata is a trait of the local *pictura graeca* from Kotor. Catholic prelates from Kotor were able to commission such artists who could decorate the Collegiata with wall paintings mostly based on models found in Byzantine art because such solutions offered them possibilities of forming their own programme based on the liturgy of the Catholic Church. Ready-made formulas were adopted from Byzantine art, those which could express the specific Catholic ideas and spirituality inspired by the Franciscan religious sentiment.

⁹³ A. Derbes, *Images East and West: The Ascent of the Cross*, in: *The sacred image, East and West*, Illinois Byzantine Studies IV, University of Illinois Press 1995, 110- 131.

⁹⁴ On the formation of the so-called "Kotor school of painting", with a choice of earlier bibliography, cf. P. Mijović, *Romano- gotska i vizantijska simbioza i kotorska slikarska škola*, in: *Istorija Crne Gore 2/1*, 263-305.

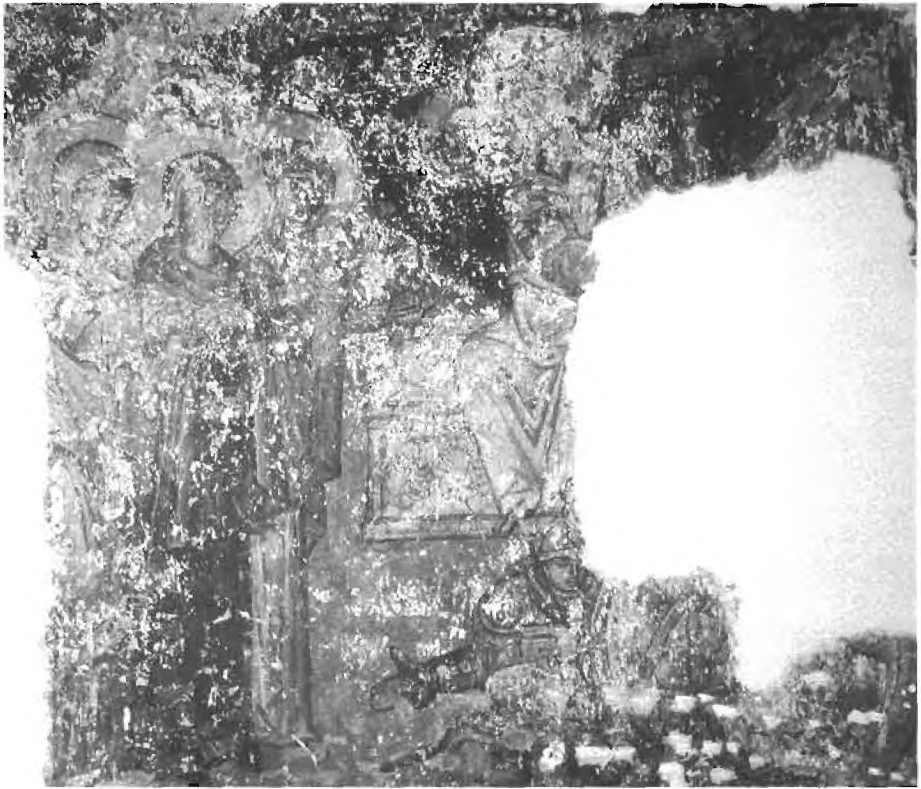


Fig. 1 : Holy Wouch at the Sepulcher



Fig. 2 : The Entombment (detail)



Fig. 3 : The Mariage at Cana (detail)



Fig. 4 : Saint Paul and Archangel



Fig. 5 : Saint Peter and Archangel