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**SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
OF THE MONASTERY OF STUDENICA
PAST, PERSEVERANCE, CONTEMPORANEITY**

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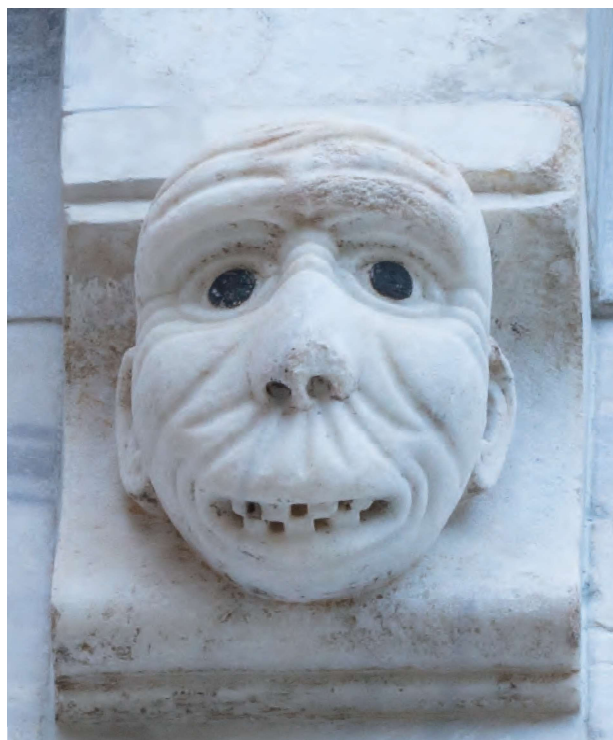
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moustache is rendered in the same manner, as well as the short hair combed back behind the ears, with one strand extending down the middle of the forehead.

A similar treatment of the face, and primarily the beard and the hair, can be noted on the figures of the apostles on the doorpost of the main, western, portal. This refers especially to the apostles represented in the lower section of the north doorpost. Classical peace, naturalness and harmony - noted as important characteristics of Studenica sculpture - are fully reflected in the man's head with an elongated beard. In that sense, Studenica sculpture belongs to the Romanesque art trend that fostered the traditions of classical antiquity, as was the case in coastal cities on both sides of the Adriatic Sea.

Studenica's consoles have not been the subject of a special study and the degree to which they have been researched so far is inadequate for establishing their role in the concept of sculptural decoration of the Church of the Mother of God. They belong to the classical iconographic repertoire of marginal sculpture of the time, featuring a high level of artistic expression, which additionally underlines the extraordinary skills of the stone masons of Studenica.

REFERENCES: *Manastir Studenica*, 1986, 124–127 (Maksimović).

DUBRAVKA PRERADOVIĆ

8. CONSOLE. THE APE-LIKE HEAD OF AN ELDERLY MAN

Studenica, Church of the Virgin, south façade, ca. 1190, copy
Cast by Krsta Avakumović, 1952
Plaster, cast 23 × 21 cm

Gallery of Frescoes of the National Museum in Belgrade

Particularly distinctive in the series of consoles of the arcade frieze on the south façade is yet another one, which is the first to be noticed when observing the frieze from the western part of the church. It features the sculpted ape-like head of an elderly man, with a high, protruding and wrinkled forehead, and thick eyebrows overhanging his wide-open and deep-set eyes, with lead pupils and fan-like wrinkles at the outer corners. The snout is represented as having radially set wrinkles, and the mouth is open with his jaws visible. The nose is wide featuring two horizontal lines at the apex, and the ears are large and slightly sticking out.

In the *Physiologus*, the ape is likened to the devil himself, while early Christian church fathers insisted on the disquieting similarity between the ape and man, attributing a series of negative connotations to the ape. In Christian iconography the ape is often represented as holding a mirror, a symbol of the weakness of the human spirit, or as shackled, symbolizing evil and destruction. While representations of apes did appear in Romanesque art, their role was marginalized. From the 12th century on, ape-like creatures began symbolizing human beings degenerated by sin. It is exactly this symbolic context that underlies the representation on the console in Studenica.

The rich gallery of consoles of the katholikon of the Monastery of Dečani also includes a console that was crafted after the model of the Studenica protome described here, located on the main apse of the church.

REFERENCES: Bošković, Petković, 1941, 85; *Manastir Studenica*, 1986, 121–122, fig. 90. (Maksimović); Walker Vadillo, 2013, 63–77.

DUBRAVKA PRERADOVIĆ