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THE COOPERATION OF SERBIAN AND GREEK ART HISTORIANS

Contacts between Serbian and Greek art historians started with the beginning of our century, at universities of Paris and Berlin. Among the students of great scholars Oscar Wulf and Friedrich Gerke were Đorđe Manozisi, Manolis Chatzidakis, Mara Harisijadis and Stilianos Pelekanidis, while Aleksandar Deroko, Iva Zdravković, Đurđe Bošković and Andreas Xyngopoulos studied with Gabriel Millet in Paris. Although they studied together, in their later research Greek and Serbian art historians rarely relied on each other's scholarly results.

The turning point was the Congress of Byzantine Studies in Thessalonika 1953. There, a major issue for Serbian and Greek art historians were new results in conservation, presented by Greek art historians, on monuments in Thessalonika, Kastoria and the Mount Athos, and a new approach to the role of the painter, of Serbian art historians Lazar Mirković and Svetozar Radojčić. Of particularly long-lasting effects was the method of professor Radojčić, who gave a prominent role to the painter himself, as opposed to the previously favored attitude to the Byzantine art as a collective act. It is clear now that in this respect Radojčić shared opinion with Victor Nikitich Lazarev, who published his classical work „Istorija vizantiskago iskusstva“ in Moscow 1947. Dissatisfied with the iconographic method of older Russian art historians, led by Kondakov and Pokrovskij, Lazarev wanted to immerse deeper into the Byzantine aesthetics and the personality of the painter. He was the first to use the method of attribution

for the research of the Byzantine art, previously reserved for the Mediaeval Western art. With this approach one could bring together separate art works, recognize the hand of the master and the whole workshop, or define the position of the work within the broader framework of the city or regional school. Svetozar Radojčić published his attitude towards these issues in 1955, in his book „Majstori starog srpskog slikarstva“ (Masters of the Mediaeval Serbian Painting). Professor Radojčić broadened his concept in many later works and exposed his final ideas in his „Staro srpsko slikarstvo“ (Mediaeval Serbian Painting), although, strictly speaking, the later was not completely based on the definition of artistic personalities, as was his book from 1955.

Also 1955 professor Anders Xyngopoulos from Thessalonika published the book „Thessalonika and the Macedonian Painting“. The book was dedicate to Xyngopoulos's professor, Gabriel Millet, and was a confirmation *sui generis* of Millet's division of the Late Byzantine painting into two schools - Cretan and Macedonian. Xyngopoulos's results were that two schools in question were really Constantinopoletan and Macedonian, and that the center of Macedonian was in Thessalonika. Simply speaking, the prevalent traits of the alleged Constantinopoletan school were idealism and academism, and of the alleged Thessalonikan school, realism. A big part of the Xyngopoulos's book was the reaction to the research of the Serbian art historians dedicated to the masters' inscriptions on icons and frescoes. The differentiation of opinions was obviously concentrated around the issue of the nationality of the painters. While Vladimir Petković, the forerunner of professor Radojčić at the Department of Art History at the University of Belgrade, and some younger Serbian art historians, believed that the majority of painters' names found on frescoes and icons in Serbia and Yugoslav Macedonia belonged to Serbs, Xyngopulos thought all of them signed in Greek language were Greek.

The disagreement about the origin of the painters was only the introduction to the later fruitful research of many newly discovered or conserved monuments from the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th centuries, in Constantinople, Thessalonika, other cities of Macedonia, Mount Athos and Serbia. Scholars studied not only the names of the artists preserved there, but also the making and the maturing of the style of Palaeologs or, more popularly, the Renaissance of Palaeologs. The names of Michael, Astrapa, Eutichios, their collaborators known only by the initials inscribed, Manuel Panselinos, Georgios Kaliergis, Michael Proelevisis, Georgios tou

Marmara and many other less known or mentioned only once, as was the case of Jovan from Peć, Srđ from Dečani, or some contemporary painters from Kotor or Dubrovnik - started to circulate among the scholars. Those who studied complicated inscriptions of some of the aforementioned painters were Franz Dölger, Otto Demus, Richard Hamman-McLean, Horst Hallensleben, Petar Miljković-Peppek, Konstantin Kalokyris and Angelos Prokopiou. Moreover, they also tried to determine where these painters were from and where could they bring their artistic convictions from. Some of these scholars studied the issue of the Renaissance of the Palaeologs, its origin and development, in its entirety. Some scholars devoted themselves to major monuments or artists of the period. Besides previously mentioned ones, those who contributed more significantly to our knowledge of the art of the period of Palaeologs were: Manolis Chatzidakis, Pol Underwood, Sirarpie der Nersessian, Hans Belting, Tania Velmans, Jacqueline Lafontain-Dosogne, Gordana Babić, Doula Mouriki, Ana Tsitouridou, Branislav Todić, Sotiris Kissas. Almost all major monuments and painters of the Palaeologan Renaissance got their monograph, and the familiarity with the nature and origins of the period became more intimate. By time the acquaintance of the Greek and Serbian art historians became more complex, the relationship deeper. Many younger Greek and Serbian art historians learnt each other's language. Not only that they could follow each other's results in science; they started to rely on each other's results.

By the time it became clear that Constantinople, Thessalonika with its orbit (Veria, Ohrid, Mount Athos) and Serbia of the King Milutin, were the main artistic centers of the painting of the Renaissance of the Paleologs. It also became clear that the stylistic changes were synchronous in all these centers, and that there were no differences between them, nor in aesthetic approach nor in the artistic value. This was the case of the universal art of the Orthodox artistic tongue which was cultivated both at the Byzantine court and among Byzantine aristocracy and Church elite and at the Serbian court.

In 1961, at the Congress of Byzantine Studies in Ohrid, it was again Victor Nikitich Lazarev whose ideas had a long-lasting effect. Relying on monuments which, at that point, were not sufficiently discovered and researched, Lazarev suggested that the frescoes in St. Sophia in Ohrid, St. Sophia in Thessalonika, Panaghia Chalkeon in Thessalonika and in Vodoča, are stylistically archaic and based on local Macedonian and Slavic tradition. As he used to do, and successfully, number of times before, Lazarev

tried to define a local, Macedonian, still not national, school. His hint got large, sometimes nationalistic acceptance, among some local scholars in Bulgaria and in Skoplje. The reaction of Greek scholars was sometimes exaggerated and not always justified. However, later research proved those who believed the aforementioned frescoes belonged to the Byzantine koine right. To that conclusion much contributed, among others, S. Radojčić, P. Miljković-Peppek, R. Ljubinković and S. Pelekanidis.

One of new points of contacts between Serbian and Greek art historians started to open gradually between 1960 and 1970. In those years I had been published my research in the Thessalonikan origin of the painting in Resava and Sisojevac, from the time of the Despot Stefan, and in the same origin of the painting even in the time the Prince Lazar. Then only few Thessalonikan monuments from the middle or the second half of the 14th century - which had the characteristics later developed into the style of the Morava school - were known. They were: St. Apostles, Nea Moni, St. Demetrius and the chapel of St. Anargiri of Jovan Uglješa in Vatoped. Some objected that the minor - so they thought - monuments from Thessalonika could have been the creative stimuli for Serbia, earlier known as the site of artistic masterpieces and in the time of the Prince Lazar and the Despot Stefan the state of the great buildings and magnificent decorations. A newly discovered and restored series of frescoes and icons from Thessalonika and surroundings from the second half of the 14th century testify that in those years she was again a strong artistic center. Those are: frescoes and icons from Vlatadon monastery (cca. 1380), from the monastery of Pantokrator on Mount Athos (cca. 1363), at the Old Metropolis in Voden (cca. 1370-80), the double-sided icon from Poganovo (seventh decade of the 14th century). Today we know that the refined, noble and cool in color, painting of Resava was brought up in the aristocratic circles of the second city of Byzantium.

Mount Athos and the monastery of Chilandar have been the places of contact for Serbian and Greek art historians during the whole second half of the 20th century. In the first place it is „Hilandarski zbornik“ which publishes the studies of Greek, Serbian and other European researchers of the Athonite heritage of architecture, painting and decorative arts. On the pages of the „Hilandarski zbornik“ and other similar scientific journals have crossed the opinions many scholars of Byzantine architecture, the most famous of whom are: Anastasios Orlandos, Đurađ Bošković, Aleksandar Deroko, Paul Milonas, Slobodan Nenadović, Vojislav Korać. Svetozar

Radojčić i Vojislav J. Đurić had been conducted the research of the painting - whether fresco, icon or miniature - of Chilandar and Mount Athos for years. Other researchers of the Chilandar and Athonite painting have been: Sreten Petković, Zdravko Kajmaković and Stilianos Pelekanidis. The monographs about the monastery of Chilandar (1978) and the books on the monasteries of Stavronikita and Simonopetra are only the heralds of the future studies of the Athonite heritage.

We should also mention Serbian, Greek and other scholars, who made the research into the painting of Serbian ktetors at Meteora in Thessaly, or the Postbyzantine icon and fresco painting in Macedonia, Serbia or at the Adriatic coast. Lazar Mirković, Vangelis Kyriakoudis, Gojko Subotić, Cvetan Grozdanov, Manolis Chatzidakis, Sreten Petković and Milton Garidis - are only among the most important. Recently new pages in the development of the painting and graphics in the 18th-19th centuries were opened. Our Barokologists Dejan Medaković, Dinko Davidov, Miodrag Jovanović and Leposava Šelmić, with the assistance of some Greeks, a tireless Sotirios Kissas among others, threw new light on artists, art works and artistic currents that were coming from the South, mainly from Thessalonika and the Holly Mountain.

Other stage of intensive contacts have been symposia, mainly organized by the Department of Art History at the University of Belgrade, but also by other institutions, as the Institute for Balkan Studies in Belgrade or the same institute in Thessalonika. The occasions for symposia have been the anniversaries of the most famous Serbian monasteries - Sopoćani, Studenica, Mileševa, Resava, Gračanica - or Serbian historical personalities - St. Sava, the Prince Lazar, the Archbishop Danilo and others. There have always, with a particular attention, been discussed the relationship of the Byzantine and Serbian milieus, of the spiritual and cultural centers of the one or the other side. The leading discipline there have always been the art history. There is probably no significant art historian from Serbia or Greece of our time that has not participated at those symposia.

Three generations of the Greek and Serbian art historians have mostly devoted themselves to the studies of the Late Byzantine art, in much lesser degree to the art of the Postbyzantine period. They have left behind themselves the whole library of books, studies and articles, as a permanent contribution of two mutually close national sciences. Today one must esteem very highly the contribution of the Serbian and Greek art historians to the research of architecture and painting in the period of Byzantine dynasties

of Komnenoi and Palaeotgoi and the Serbian dynasties of Nemanjić and Lazarević. The contribution of art historians to developing the friendship and cooperation of two cultural milieus is noteworthy.