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" Two examples of the Constantinopolis school's Comnin period. The frescoes in the Bachkovo monastery's assuary - Bulgaria and the Holy Cross monastery's chapel - Jerusalem."

Plamena Racheva

The known examples of the art of the Comnin period are few. The Holy Cross monastery's chapel was acknowledged to be one of these after prolonged investigation- and restorative activities which ended in 1987. This is a rather important fact because of the chances for retrieval of new evidence about the stylistic evolution in the paintings of the Comnin period. Till present the concept about the period was based on a well known limited and thoroughly investigated circle of evidence. The artistic techniques and rules of the Constantinopolis workshops of the 11-12 c. were accepted in the whole Orthodox world and were rather naturally applied in the frescoes of the " Hagiu Stratau' Church of the Holy Cross monastery. This monument of icon painting has been thoroughly documented without being analysed within the context of the Comnin style developments and also outside the context of the national peculiarities' the latter playing a supporting role. The assuary of the Monastery of Bachkovo is one the most impressive ensembles of the Byzantine artistic circle of 11-12c. and no stylistic parallels of its frescoes were found till recently. The 11-12c. frescoes preserved in the Holy Cross monastery and their later 17c. replicas give ample comparative evidence. The possibility for thorough historical comparison between these two ensembles of the Georgian Orthodox church is yet another proof that in this classical age for the Byzantine art the expansion of the Constantinopolis school reached its climax.

The few preserved and studied monuments of the Constantinopolis school dated from the Comnin age are well-known fact. After a long period of restoration and research, these were joined by the frescoes of the Jerusalem Holy Cross temple, in 1987.

This is a fact of major importance since it provides new evidence on the stages of the stylistic evolution of the Comnin's age paintings. Until now, it was based on a number of monuments, well-known and described in the scientific media, including the Daphny's mosaics, the Sicily mosaics, the 11-th-12th c. Russian paintings, the Nerezi murals, the Kurbino and

Kastoria murals located quite faraway from the major centres of art.

It is a well-stated fact that the 11th-12th c. Constantinopolis artistic techniques and prescriptions propagated through the whole Slavic East-Orthodox community while the national specifics received subordinate and auxiliary function. They found their reflection and application in the murals of the Agiu Stratau temple of the Holy Cross monastery in Jerusalem and so far have been the subject of sparse scientific publications and references. This monument has been described in its completeness, without however being analysed in the specialised literature within the context and essence of the Comnin style developments and applications in the monumental church painting and national specifics, the latter being only supplementary elements to the iconographic specifics. The assuary of the Bachkovo monastery dated at the 11th-12th c. is one of these monuments. Today, the assuary is one of the most representative compositions of the Comnin age, both in Bulgarian and on the Balkans.

Regardless of the fact that this monument has been studied in detail and has been the subject of numerous publications, its iconography has never so far been found in so close stylistic semblance. The fragments preserved in the central temple of the Holy Cross monastery in Jerusalem dated at 11th-12th c. and their 17th c. replicas provide rich iconographic material for comparative study and analysis of both monuments.

The possibility for comparison between these two major monuments of the Georgian Orthodox church are related to the history of that church and to the history of the Crucifix sacralisation. This is yet another proof that in this classical age of Byzantine art, the expansion of Constantinopolis art reached its climax in both aesthetic aspect and importance for the Orthodox world.