

RETHINKING TRADITION AND INDIVIDUALISM AS KEY TRAITS OF JACOV ORFELIN'S STYLE - A CASE STUDY ON ICONOSTASIS PAINTING IN THE HISTORICAL BANAT

Tradition redefined by innovations is the topic our study proposes to investigate as fragments of visual transformations in the episode of Jacov Orfelin iconostasis painting. In this field, the particular example we have studied was not a singular manifestation, although it can be subsumed under the artistic evolution of the period, but a paradigmatic case of East meeting West, having as result a new perspective of visual dogma, getting endowed with new connotations. Viennese, Russian and Ukrainian baroque tendencies are the most obvious directions through which Serbian painters propose the new stylistic orientation. Those who proliferated the innovative models asserted themselves predominantly in Serbia, where they created a religious painting deeply contaminated by the inputs of the modern age, and acknowledged by the historiography of the subject as “the founders of the Serbian Baroque”. Although written sources corroborate information on biographies of the Serbian artists in connection with their artistic discourse and evolution, the study rethinks some of the concepts involved in the configuration of eighteenth-century artistic genre in the historical Banat. Moreover, the topic addressed will highlight the key aspects of Serbian late baroque, rococo and neoclassical art assimilation and advent throughout comparative - analytical methods, focusing on iconography and formal changes. In order to do so, the artwork under scrutiny is positioned within the original socio political, and religious frameworks focusing on examples that uphold or deconstruct the role this painter played in fostering a visual change. Issues regarding the ornaments will be also of reference as the iconostasis is a complex formal and iconographical medium.

Keywords: Jacov Orfelin, baroque, rococo, neoclassicism, tradition, individualism, iconostasis painting, Banat

In a period of medieval heritage and Enlightenment advocacy the multiethnic province of Banat, was at the break of the eighteenth-century in a particular situation of accepting influences as identity makeovers. Tradition was redefined by innovations in the field of iconostas painting, the particular

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² This article is part of the research carried for the Centre for Scientific Study of Serbian Culture in Romania/ Центра за научна истраживања и културу Срба у Румунији при Савезу Срба у Румунији Истраживање културе и историје Срба у Румунији.

example we have studied was not a singular manifestation, although it can be subsumed under the artistic evolution of the period, but a paradigmatic case of East meeting West, resulting a new perspective of visual dogma, endowed with new connotations. Viennese, Russian and Ukrainian baroque tendencies are the most obvious directions through which Serbian painters propose the new stylistic orientation. Those who proliferated the innovative models asserted themselves predominantly in Serbia, where they created a religious painting deeply contaminated by the inputs of the modern age, and were later identified in the historiography of the subject as “the founders of the Serbian Baroque”. Although written sources corroborate information on biographies of the Serbian artists in connection with their artistic discourse and evolution, the study rethinks some of the concepts involved in the configuration of eighteenth-century artistic genre in the historical Banat. Moreover, the topic addressed will highlight the key aspects of Serbian late baroque, rococo and neoclassical art assimilation and advent through a particular example, a case study on Jacov Orfelin iconostasis painting.

The construction of a discourse on the subject debates on the bias of tradition versus individualism that arose from the Enlightenment ideology of late 1700s in the area where the painter was formed, that of central Europe. Having to do with the fact that Banat was a multicultural province, where an assimilation of nationalities occurred since the Middle Ages, our empirical-analysis follows a comparative methodology to underline the key concepts behind Orfelin's creation. Following academic tenure at the Viennese Academy of Painting and Sculpture in Vienna, the painter found determination to remain traditional, following Byzantine patterns and hermeneutics. The change that occurred in this case is a clear example of what Heinrich Wölfflin indicates when signaling the transformation that occurred in art history when passing from line defined compositions to picturesque (Wölfflin, 1968:94-95), or in our case the transition from traditional to modern, by modern meaning an eclectic mixture of baroque, rococo, and neoclassic. This took place in the province of Banat where European ideas penetrated from governing in the spirit of monarchical absolutism to enlightened despotism, an experimental policy that proved to be a successful one, as the province modernized, and feudality ceased to exist.

The study of a fragment of Serbian heritage from the Banat region, was focused primarily on documenting the particularities of the ‘Illyrian language of the Baroque’ as a phase within the multifaceted, multicultural and multinational expression of the style that emerged from Counter-Reform formulations of the Trento Council in Rome. The concept that defines baroque as multinational is not new, different authors suggesting that before the 1800's, the international style found means to express piety in various ways, in imperial Europe at the crossroads of civilizations, where the local expressions built on tradition emerged as dialects within the same universal language.

How does one define the Serbian art of the period? A rich corpus of sources mention that history favored Serbs in their evolution throughout the entire

eighteenth century, as what was intended as an exodus, turned out to be a period of development under the Habsburg policy. National identity was preserved, and Serbs were involved in the Habsburg army as a force to be reckoned, as the times were of uncertainty and dissolution. The new enlightened man of the period had to be educated, artists seeking to shape their style in following a master or attending years of practice at the art academies of Europe. The Viennese Art Academy³ influenced the social, economic, and artistic aspects of education, as it was the third institution after *Accademia di San Lucca* in Rome, and *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* in Paris (Kolbiartz,2021:1). In 1726, the academy was reopened at the initiative of Jakob von Schuppen, following his predecessor Peter Strudel. Developing initially as a private institution, the academy was made public by Emperor Joseph I in 1705 (Pevsner,1940:120). The curricula followed the French model and it was in Kolbiartz's opinion 'a place from where European ideas, models and stylistically ordered principles spread across the territories newly acquired to the Habsburg Empire'. As the academy supplied most of the qualified working hand in the empire, it is quite necessary to establish its role in disseminating the models at periphery, in the eighteenth-century imperial province of the Banat. Prince Anton Wenzel von Kaunitz underlined the importance of the Viennese academy in the education of the artists, as they studied drawing, composition, nature and classical art. This type of education, made students independent and were no longer dependent on copying other artist's works with large impact on other innovations (Wagner, 1967:37-38). It was inside the academy that artists gained social and professional status.

What J. Orfelin as Byzantine *zographoi* learned at the academy situated him in the gallery of western painters of the baroque, rococo as well as neoclassicism, as he played with the light and shadow, ordering of views, light sources, manipulation of movement inside all compositions, illusion of space, transforming the static, stereotype expression of painting into a kinetic episode.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Vlăsceanu, 2022a, 2022b) it is important to make a distinction between what composes a traditional, Byzantine iconostasis and one influenced by Russian and Ukrainian typology favouring an import and development of iconographical displays. Lower in height the Byzantine panel was composed of two, three registers while the Russian iconostasis grew in height to the point that the entire height of the apsis was separated from the naos with this medium, and displayed four registers. To do so, the traditional themes were enhanced, new ideas and dogmatic definitions were introduced, expansion that finally led to a completely modernized repertoire.

³ We will not engage in the analysis of the academy evolution however, an overlook into the existence of this institution is mandatory as Jacob Orfelin was under direct influence of Zaharija Orfelin, and his mannerist approach individualizes the development in the area where he activated after his academic formation. As the academic movement raises issues, our study does not provide a complete picture of this phenomenon, but constructs the pretext for further scientific investigations of the topic.

The Serbian church, although traditional was extremely receptive to innovations as a way of protecting the Orthodox values within the Habsburg Empire. Among the variants of the Baroque style, the 'Serbian baroque' was marked by the influence of the theological literature from Kiev and Greece and by the Ukrainian painting, followed by the one of the painters' direct contacts with the academies of occidental art. A constant contact with neighboring provinces, Transylvania and Wallachia, purveyors of qualified artists and hermeneia since medieval times, was also considered important (Pârvulescu, 2003:199). The Orthodox Serbian church embraced the style that made visual the concepts of Catholic victor as strategy to survive and thrive amongst imperial colliding forces, the western input on eastern themes having as a result the modernization of art. The spiritual academy of Pecerska Lavra in Kiev overtook the western baroque patterns, offering the theological background⁴ to support it (Vârtaciu, 2017: 285; Pârvulescu, 2003).

What the visual reform consisted of was a rearrangement and selection of traditional subjects, as new themes having moralizing and didactic purpose introduced the enlightened spirit of the epoch. The iconography of traditional descent found new ways of expressing dogmatic issues, leading to an enrichment of manifestation and new ways of expressing abstract concepts, such as the Immaculate. This happened with the iconography of the *Theotokos*, and we assist at an increase of western descent formulation, such as The coronation of the Virgin as queen of Heavens (*Regina coeli*)⁵. The other direction that had a large impact on the evolution of the genre itself, comes out of Arsenie IV Sacabent's advises for how an equilibrium was established between the two directions, especially as connections with Wallachia never seized during the years of conflicts with the Ottomans. A takeover of themes without an understanding of the content, was a common postulate, and painters, such as Jacov Orfelin who understood connotations and the way an image can express different ideas in different historical contexts, made a clear change. The copy book of Stan 'zograf'/'mahler, moaler in Romanian, is one such example, where one can identify the visual reformation that transformed the stereotyped scenes of the dogmatic cycle into animated scenes where multiplicity prevails, charging the connotations with new meanings.

⁴ Briefly in: Vârtaciu, 2017: *Valori de artă europeană din Banat*, Ed. Interart Triade, Timișoara, 2017 and extensively in: Pârvulescu, 2002: *Iconostasul în Banat. Din cea de-a doua jumătate a secolului al XVIII-lea până în deceniul al treilea al secolului al XIX-lea*, Timișoara: Excelsior, and Vuksan, 2006: *Barokna tematika srpskog ikonostasa 18. veka*, doktorska disertacija, Filozofski fakultet Univerzitetu u Beogradu, Beograd.

⁵ The role of Mary as an instrument of the incarnation is highlighted by the way in which the theme of the coronation of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity is interpreted in Nicola Neșcovici, in the middle register of the iconostasis of St. George church in Timișoara. In that case, parallels can be noticed with the western formula of treating the Mother of God, which is different from the stereotomy of Platytera and Orant, figured as traditional eastern images of the dogmatic cycle, as noticed in Vlăsceanu, 2022 b: 49.

The contamination with western pictorial baroque, the spatial accents and studied volumes as formal principles, were different from the rigid compositions arranged in scenes with horizontality as dominant and the narrative character of Byzantine tradition. By using accessories specific to baroque props such as the swirling clouds on which the characters float, the author reinterprets with baroque language a theme that reaffirms the quality of *Theotokos*, in an interpretation that implies formulations of the post-Tridentine iconography (Immaculate). Ornamentation also plays a decisive stylistic role in this case, the motifs of the baroque repertoire being obvious such as the bell and rose flowers, wave crests and the *rocaille*, *acroterions*, used in the decoration of the heavily decorated frames, contributing through their dynamics and gilded appearance to the accentuation of the movement. Woodcarver Aksentija Marković presented a repertoire of composite forms in the sculpted panels (frames for each icon), a manner easy recognizable in the iconostasis royal doors of Siklós Serbian church in Hungary (Nagy,1994:63), underlining the central perspective arrangement of each. Dejan Medaković studied the work of the two Marković brothers and mentions that “Arsenije⁶ was a distinctly baroque artist, with discerning rococo tendencies especially obvious in the frequent use of the rose motif. While in Aksentije’s work, there are already positive signs of the modern neo-classical tendencies: laurel wreaths, oak leaves, with or without acorns, *amphorae*, vessels on consoles over the architrave or acroterions on top of the iconostasis”. These luxurious ornaments were gilded by Lazar Ianić in 1862 (Pârvulescu,2002b: 48).What was decoration in Byzantine art becomes scenery, landscape in the baroque. As often the case, the image becomes document in investigating post-Byzantine models and the western promoted ideas that promoted specific aesthetic criteria as echoes of a modern society. It was not a case of abandoning the traditional hieratic manner, but a transformation of the saint *facies* according to an intropathic view, where the figure suffered a humanisation (Kuceković, 2016:45).The hieraticity remained one major characteristic of the genre, as the Orthodox church leaders struggled to preserve the *Corpus separatum* concept within the composite imperium. Religious and political rights of the Serbs were safe under the protection of *Ilyrian Privilegiae* since the seventeenth century. The theoretical perspective of this study promotes the idea that the political position of the Serbian Orthodox elite was to be part of the social and cultural fabric of the Habsburg Monarchy. It all resided in the same idea that the concept of coming under a Christian state rule was by far an option for the Serbs, as opposed to the Ottoman rule, option that in fact triggered the great migration into Hungary in 1690.

Also, this study scientifically establishes and explains the ways in which the prevailing discursive either cultural, socio-political, and religious climate in the Habsburg Monarchy and its provinces, in our case the Banat, found its expression

⁶ The same source mentions that he painted the icons of Almaska church in Novi Sad.

in the iconostasis of the Orthodox Serbian Church. Art has the capacity to mirror changes in every stylistic period, depending on shifting ideologies. The genre of wooden panel (iconostasis) was bound in the previous centuries to the canons of Byzantine origin. Tracing the origins and development of iconostasis expression, the study establishes the general tendencies and directions of the iconostasis painting expansion and construction, and defines the changes that occurred in architectural forms, depending on changes in religious ideology and contamination with the academism. Rethinking some of the ideas found in recent studies, Jacob Orfelin's creation can be rediscovered in local, regional and European context.

What individualizes J. Orfelin's icons of the Mother of God, as his iconographies, place him in the gallery of painters who looked at the beautiful Renaissance Madonnas of the West and got inspired (Milosević,2016:33-38). The Immaculate is one such theme, where allegory intervenes in transmitting the idea, which is a concept of western Baroque. We followed the changing aspects of Byzantine iconography in this episode of contamination with the metaphor, where the iconostasis is a stage where dogmatic aspects turn visual, in the same manner as the main altar in the Catholic Church, having the same function, highly didactic and moralizing. In recent years, scholars have uncovered much new information about images charged with devotional meaning, and the parallel between the Old and the New Testament was since early Christian art a way to highlight Christian faith. The templates for the countless iconostases raised in Orthodox Serbian churches disseminated throughout the Habsburg territories, and the new *zogranoi*, became *Mahler*, as they took little, but visible steps in rethinking the stereotypical themes.

Various sources point out that Baroque painting developed in Serbia under Russian (Pecerska Lavra) and Ukrainian influences, profoundly emerged into the specificity of the south Balkans where the artist sought the change as western art was more dynamic and diverse. It was only during Joseph II that all restrictions, previously imposed by Empress Maria Theresa, were abolished, and we refer here to the Protestant and Orthodox Christian religion.

One of the paradigmatic cases of Byzantine and baroque composed structure is the iconostasis of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Sremski Karlovci, painted by the author between 1780-1781 (Figure 1).



Figure 1. J. Orfelin iconostasis architecture and iconography of St. Nicholas Cathedral, Sremski Karlovci, 1780-1781. Image source: <http://racunarska-grafika.com/karlovci/>

In this case he collaborated with Teodor Kračun, the iconostasis being considered by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts as “a summit of Baroque painting in Vojvodina”, and a synthesis of styles and techniques. The input of artistic education coming from his uncle Zaharije Orfelin, with whom he worked on different church commissions’ later, can also be traced in the formal

and pictorial expression. Between 1766 and 1770 the master pursued his art studies in Vienna at the Art Academy and took courses at the newly-founded engraving academy directed by Jakob Matthias Schmutzer (1733-1811). His career will gravitate around the commissions made in historical Banat, Srem and Bačka (Pârvulescu, 2003: 177-178). One of his earliest work was the iconostasis in Kikinda (1773) and Grgeteg Monastery (1774-1775)⁷, (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Grgeteg Monastery church iconostasis painted by Jakov Orfelin between 1774-1775. Image source: Panacomp zemlja cuda.

Also, J. Orfelin painted the iconostasis in Irig and Deliblato, Stapar (1790-1792), Kupinovo and Kraljevci, and with Stefan Gavrilović made the iconostasis of Jarak. His last work made between 1802-1805 was the iconostasis of the Bezdin Monastery, today Munar (Arad county), replacing the iconostasis realized by Ștefan Tenețchi⁸ in 1753.

The iconostasis of Bezdin monastery presents a thematic partition that was based on Byzantine hermeneia, where traditional concepts such as the anticipation of the Incarnation illustrated by the prophets, based on the troparion *From Above the Prophets Foretold of You* (Kuceković, 2016: 39; Milosević, 2016: 33-38) appear in connection with the Mother of God. Here, instead of The Last Supper on the focal thematic zone of the iconostasis, Orfelin paints the *God's Watchful*

⁷ Replaced in 1902 with an entirely new iconostasis done by Uroš Predić.

⁸ Ștefan Tenețchi was an outstanding figure of the Kievean School, he painted his saints not plastic but as visual representations of the idea, as demanded by eastern canons, see M. Nagy, 1994: *Ortodox Ikonostázionok Magyarországon*, Debreczen: FabianB.T, 186.

Eye (Proverbs 15:3). On the same icon an inscription⁹ attests his authorship and chronology:

Napisana ot Iakova Orfelina, Cesaro Kraljevske Akademije maleram mecjata nojembrija, 19 dne 1802 goda” (Jovanović,1970; Pârvulescu,2002b:48-49).

The iconostasis complexity resides in the structure (of Ukrainian type) with 31 icons and a particular choice of thematic presentation¹⁰ (Jovanović,2000; Brdarić,2018; Pârvulescu,2002b,2004). The Miracles of Christ, illustrate Orfelin’s artistic evolution from linear to pictorial, the figures being positioned in backgrounds composed of landscapes and architectural scenery (Figure 3 a, b). Both panels constructed the third register, each being positioned on each side of the middle icon *The Descent from the Cross*, and beneath *The Crucifixion* on top (molenie).



Figure 3 a, b. *The Miracles of Christ*, fragments of the third register, Bezdin monastery iconostasis. Image source: personal picture (Collection of the Serbian Bishopric of Timișoara).

⁹ There is also a contract that attests that J. Orfelin was the author of the iconostasis painting, dated November 21, 1800, in which he agrees to begin works and to finish within one year, in return the commissioners (Isaia Mihailovici, Dimitrie Paunchici and Gedeon Popovici agree to pay an amount of 1600 forints), see Jovanović,2000:132.

¹⁰ For a detailed report published after the conservation and restauration made between 2013 and 2017, see Brdarić,2018: *Konservacija iconostasa manastira Bezdina*, Arheon, god.1, broj.1, 397-405.

Infant *Jesus sleeping on the Cross*, a reference to divine love inspired by a passage in the Songs of Songs (5:2): "I sleep, but my hearth waketh", appears just above the *God's Watchfull Eye*. As Pârvulescu noticed, the Ukrainian import consisted of the architecture of the altar, gaining monumentality, the complex iconography reflecting new enlightened ideas, based on western illustrated Bibles: Piscator, Ectipa and Kilian, important sources since the seventeenth century (Pârvulescu,2004:195). The dissemination of western iconography was carried through the *zographoi hermeneia*, enriched with engravings in *Stematographia* of Hristofor Jefarovici and Thomas Mesmer, Christoph Winckler and Johann Feisler, or Zaharia Orfelin who had a major role in Jacov Orfelin's creation¹¹. Zaharia Orfelin's engravings were used as tools of propaganda, as one may notice from the official policy of the Metropolitanate of Sremski Karlovci in displaying a visual proof of ecclesiastical continuity of the medieval Serbian church, especially in their confrontation with the Roman Catholic church. Mediators of this continuity were Saint Simeon and Saint Sava, and their presence in the reinvested iconography increased, as was the case with the iconostasis of Saint Nicholas Church in Sremski Karlovci (Simić,2020:55).

From a stylistical point of view, the figures of saints painted by J. Orfelin usually have large heads and bulky bodies, with volumetric disposition of clothing leaning and underlining their massiveness, manner defined as sculpturesque. The compositions often arranged according to a multiple perspective, convey continuity of space, the light disposition being dynamic. Sometimes he painted using warm and cold tonalities as in the pinkish garment of Saint Michael defeating Satan, icon positioned on the first register (left of the deacon doors) at the St. Nicholas iconostasis in Sremski Karlovci (Figure 4), or the artistic individualism observed in the scene where *Saint Dimitry defeating Maximian/Kaloyan* (Figure 5) at the Bezdin monastery church.

¹¹ In Stan Zugravu's hermeneia, some files are encribed as belonging to an unknown artist, but the style and iconography send the investigator to the repertory of shapes constructing Zaharija Orfelin's style. Take for example leaf 6.12, 9.18,11.22, 16.31 and 34.68, for details see,Pârvulescu,2008: *Un caiet de modele de zugravie din secolul al XVIII-lea*; On how the printed image became an efficient tool of propaganda, see,Simić, 2020: *Popular Piety and the Paper Icons of Zaharija Orfelin*, Balcanica, LI, 45-64.



Figure 4. Detail of the iconostasis panel with Saint Michael defeating Satan, Saint Nicholas Church in Sremski Karlovci. Image source: <http://racunarska-grafika.com/karlovc/>

Figure 2. Saint Dimitry defeating Maximian/Kaloyan, Bezdin iconostasis, tempera on canvas, J. Orfelin, 1802. Image source: personal picture

Reiterating most of the sources quoted, for Orfelin it could be said: “that he is the typical representative of the transition period between the baroque, rococo and neoclassic styles”, with a composite manner, almost historicized.

The Bezdin iconostasis¹² is representative for monasteries as they comprised a form of religious life imbedded in medieval times. ‘Migrations contributed to the creation of unique cultural and artistic networks of the Orthodox population, which surpassed state borders and connected the Ottoman Balkans with Habsburg lands’ (Makuljević,2017:54-55). This fact found evidence in the constitution of the network of Orthodox parish churches and monasteries on the territory of the

¹² After investigatory works on the deteriorated icons of the panel, conducted in 2013, a team of experts from The Provincial Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments in Novi Sad started the conservation and restoration process. The results were published by Olivera Brdarić in the aforementioned source, for details see (Brdarić, 2018: 397-405).

Habsburg Empire, also the transfer of icons and sacred objects from the Balkans, and a profound influence of artists from Habsburg lands into the Balkans. Icons reflecting extraordinary admiration, glorification of and trust in the Holy Virgin as virtuous patron and wonder-worker appeared among the Serbs in the opening decades of the eighteenth-century as unambiguous signs of the rise of the Western Marian religiosity in the Baroque period, reflecting the concept of *Regnum Marianum*.

The adoption of decrees and ecclesiastical and monastic rules modelled after the Russian Regulations and imposed by Metropolitanates of Belgrade and Sremski Karlovci, and the Serbian Patriarchy between the two Great Migrations (1690 and 1739), was accompanied by great resistance among the Serbs in the Austrian Empire. Apart from the decree granting privileged position to Ukrainian painters, the Circular Letter of patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta, sent to ecclesiastical authorities in the Srem Diocese in 1743, reveals the awareness of the popularity of local self-taught *zographoi* (painters) among common people. As an expression of the deepest concern of the highest ecclesiastical officials in the Metropolitanate of Sremski Karlovci for a particular field of art, Šakabenta's letter banning buying and selling of icons painted by *zographoi* is "the crucial testimony of the coexistence of russification and rustification of the cultural life" (Stošić,2006:244).

The western influence in Orfelin's work represents that part of his creation where individualism is at its climax, as this type of personal affirmation has a clear new iconography, departed from the traditional art standards. How does one perceive this new image proposed by the master, through a sense of materiality and bodiliness, from stereotypical Theotokos (Mother of God) to The Immaculate, in an ambiance of allegorical pathos? The Annunciation¹³ theme on the royal doors, highlight J. Orfelin's ability to construct a scene with layers of shapes and diffuse light, melting the background in warm tonalities and a mist of bulky clouds, again with sculpturesque vocabulary. There is a clear evidence of academic formation in this representation, as the post-Byzantine models were overpassed by a study of light, and perspective above all, abandoning the traditional diagonal scheme, or even the psychological perspective (Iovanović, 2000 b: 141), (Figure 6 a, b).

¹³ Currently under professional conservation and restauration of the wooden frames.



Figure 6 a, b. The Annunciation theme on panels of the royal doors, Bezdin monastery.
Image source: personal picture.

Forms derived from the national monuments of the middle ages symbolized Serbian statehood and contained ethnic and religious attributes representative of the Serbian nation (Pantelić,1997). This translates in a broad spectrum of nuances present in the artistic phenomenon of the period investigated, and the issues related to Jacov Orfelin's creation. The formal language of the period found new ways to express the doctrinal aspect and a rational approach, but it was in the latter, where the master found his characteristic expression. How the 'new artistic discourse' was constructed on the Bezdin iconostasis by J. Orfelin can be observed in the height of this panel that separates the seen world of the unseen, with episodes referring to the idea of sacrifice. The Orthodox iconostasis

accommodates new images of the dogma, throughout a parallel between the Old and New Testament. Hence, *The sacrifice of Avraam, Agar and Ismael in the dessert*, both themes allusion to the sacrifice of the Logos, *Archangel Raphael and Tobias* (Figure 7) hypostasis drawn from the deuterocanonical text of the Old Testament and the iconography of the archangel ' healer ', and the symbol of incarnation *The Annunciation* theme on the royal doors were not a common feature for the churches of Karlovci Metropolitane (Pârvulescu,2002a: 16). Christ as *Salvator Mundi*, was another western influence on eastern patterns. Also, the presence of national Saints Sava, Simeon, Basil the Great, ang Gregory attest the national identity of comissioners at the Bezdin site.



Figure 7. J. Orfelin, *Archangel Raphael and Tobias*. Bezdin monastery iconostasis.
Image source: personal picture

The creator mediated a new approach on the themes treated in the manner imposed by the technique, tempera on canvas. These observations make up the conception and reworkings of the eclectic manner of Orfelin, as he was baroque, rococo and neo classical (composite) at the same time. Also the woodcarving

motifs were composite, the rose flower symbol of *Vanitas* in baroque, pointing to the idea of mortality, turned classical as symbol of the renewed cycle of love. One knows in regard with the naturalism of the seventeenth century that it was bound with a metaphysical view of the world, and familiar objects of visible reality, become symbols of a higher invisible reality. Orfelin used the allegory, as tool of evangelism. For example, the western iconography where Christ is sleeping on the Cross becomes the *God's Watchfull Eye*, composition signed and dated by the author, in a specific interpretation. The repertoire was chosen by the monastic communities, such as the one of Bezdin. Christ sleeping on the Cross appears in this case right above the deacon doors. Other rare thematical approaches are the selection made for the cycle of Miracles and Teachings of Christ. As the images functioned as visual dogma, only those having a rich and dramatic content were illustrated.

The study proposed refers to selected issues related to Orfelin's *opus*, from which one can draw conclusions supplementing the existing research, which is rather plentiful.

The artistic patterns were in constant movement between East and West, highlighting the globalization present in any period, whatever the spheres of influence were in ensuing ideological and aesthetic constructions of history. As the period studied was seen rather of 'transhistorical times' (Eugenio d'Ors), when more than ever before the church becomes a 'space for reflection' (Heinrich Wollfflin), these ideas will emerge as a conclusion in our study when referring to Jacob Orfelin's artistic discourse.

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PROMIŠLJANJE TRADICIJE I INDIVIDUALIZMA KAO KLJUČNE ODLIKE STILA JAKOVA ORFELINA - STUDIJA SLUČAJA IKONOSTASA U ISTORIJSKOM BANATU

Rezime

Tradicija redefinisana inovacijama je tema koju naša studija predlaže da istražuje kao fragmente vizuelnih transformacija u epizodi ikonostasa Jakova Orfelina. U ovoj oblasti, konkretan primer koji smo proučavali nije singularna manifestacija, iako se može podvesti pod umetničku evoluciju tog perioda, već paradigmatičan slučaj susreta Istoka sa Zapadom, koji kao rezultat ima novu perspektivu vizuelne dogme, dobijanje obdarenosti sa novim konotacijama. Bečke, ruske i ukrajinske barokne tendencije su najočigledniji pravci kroz koje srpski slikari predlažu novu stilsku orijentaciju. Oni koji su umnožavali inovativne modele afirmirali su se pretežno u Srbiji, gde su stvorili religiozno slikarstvo duboko kontaminirano inputima modernog doba, a koje historiografija te teme priznaje kao „osnivače srpskog baroka“. Iako pisani izvori potkrepljuju podatke o biografijama srpskih umetnika u vezi sa njihovim umetničkim diskursom i evolucijom, studija preispituje neke od ovih koncepata koji su uključeni u konfiguraciju umetničkog žanra osamnaestog veka u istorijskom Banatu. Štaviše, tema koja se obrađuje će istaći ključne aspekte srpske kasnobarokne, rokoko i neoklasične umetnosti asimilacije i pojavljivanja kroz uporedno-analitičke metode, fokusirajući se na ikonografiju i formalne promene. Da bi se to postiglo, umetničko delo koje se ispituje pozicionirano je u originalne društveno-političke i verske okvire sa fokusom na primere koji podržavaju ili dekonstruišu ulogu koju je ovaj slikar imao u podsticanju vizuelne promene. Referentna će biti i pitanja ornamentike jer je ikonostas složen formalno-ikonografski medij.

Ključne reči: Jacov Orfelin, barok, rokoko, neoklasicizam, tradicija, individualizam, ikonostasno slikarstvo, Banat