

ВИЗАНТИЙСКО  
И  
ПОСТВИЗАНТИЙСКО  
ИЗКУСТВО:  
ПРЕСИЧАНЕ  
НА  
ГРАНИЦИ

BYZANTINE  
AND  
POST-BYZANTINE  
ART:  
CROSSING  
BORDERS

Martyrdom of Sts Kyrikos and Julitta, 17<sup>th</sup> century Cretan icon,  
Icon collection of Bachkovo Monastery, Bulgaria.  
Photo: Ivan Vanev

Мъченичеството на св. св. Кирик и Юлита,  
критска икона от XVII в.,  
Иконна сбирка на Бачковския манастир, България.  
Фотограф Иван Ванев

*Изкуствоведски времена 2017*

*Art Readings 2017*



ИЗКУСТВОВЕДСКИ ЧЕТЕНИЯ

*Тематичен рецензиран годишник за изкуствознание в два тома  
2017.I – Старо изкуство*

**ВИЗАНТИЙСКО  
И ПОСТВИЗАНТИЙСКО ИЗКУСТВО:  
ПРЕСИЧАНЕ НА ГРАНИЦИ**



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ART READINGS

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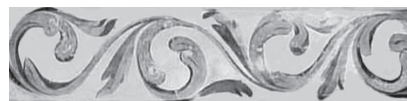
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## Jovan Četirević Grabovan – an 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Itinerant Orthodox Painter. Some Ethnic and Artistic Considerations

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**Abstract:** The paper presents new insights into some ethnic and artistic circumstances in the life and work of painter Jovan Četirević Grabovan in Slavonia and northern Croatia during the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. His probable origin as an Aromanian from what is now eastern Albania can be seen as crucial for the development of his business connections, due to extensive, mainly trade-related, migrations of his fellow countrymen to the southern provinces of the Habsburg Monarchy. Their significant financial and consequently cultural influence in the Orthodox communities of the region greatly contributed to Četirević's success and, to some extent, determined the iconographic and stylistic traits of his painting.

**Key words:** Jovan Četirević Grabovan, Aromani, Serbian religious painting – 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The biography and extensive Balkan and East European travels of painter Jovan Četirević (Çetiri) from Grabova in eastern Albania have attracted the attention of researchers since the beginning of the

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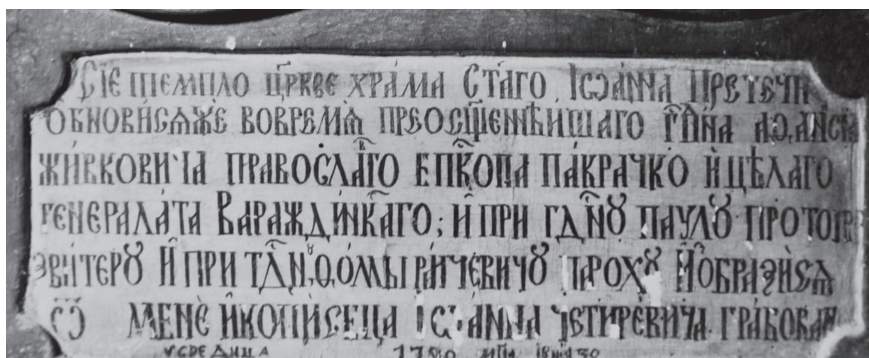


Fig. 1. Dedicatory inscription with the name of painter Jovan Četirević from the iconostasis in Velike Sredice (Northern Croatia), 1780

20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>2</sup>. This scholarly interest is probably in part the result of the many and far-reaching journeys undertaken by this artist during the 18<sup>th</sup> century – modern Albanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian and Serbian scholars alike have posed questions as to his ethnic origins, his artistic training and the iconographic characteristics of his painted works<sup>3</sup>. They have also investigated the ways in which Četirević established his connections in Orthodox communities in this wide, culturally and confessionally disparate, European region<sup>4</sup>. In spite of the significant amount of pioneering research that has been generated on this painter's life and work, this essay argues for the necessity of a fresh outlook, which would move beyond the “national”

2 For the latest survey of known biographical data about Četirević, with extensive references to older research and previously unpublished archival sources see *Todić*, Branislav. *Srpski slikari od 14 do 18 veka*. Novi Sad, 2013, Vol. 1, 281-291.

3 *Bogdanović*, Lazar. *Srbi slikari*. Jovan Četirević-Grabovan ili Jovan Čatir-Grabovan. – *Srpski Sion*, 1900, No. 10, 553-554; *Kašić*, Dušan. Jovan Četirević Grabovan srpski slikar 18 veka. – *Glasnik Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 1955, No. 36, 85-87; *Popa*, Theofan. *Piktorët mesjetarë shqiptarë*. Tiranë, 1961, 105-119; *Jovanović*, Miodrag. Jovan Četirević Grabovan. – *Recherches sur l'art*, 1965, No. 1, 199-222; *Šelmić*, Leposava. Jovan Četirević Grabovan. In: *Majstori prelaznog perioda srpskog slikarstva 18. veka*. Novi Sad, 1981, 24-30; *Nagy*, Marta. *Ortodox ikonostázionok Magyarországon*. Budapest, 1994, 150-151; *Moutafov*, Emmanuel. Ioannes Tsetiris from Grabovo or Jovan Četirević Grabovan? – *Ζητήματα μεταβυζαντινής ζωγραφικής στη μνήμη του Μανόλη Χατζηδάκη*, Athens, 2002, 217-228; *Kučeković*, Aleksandra. *Ikonostas Jovana Četirevića Grabovana u Orahovici*. – *Receuil du Musée national à Belgrade*, 2004, No. 17/2, 178-200; *Todić*, Branislav. *Skica za portret Jovana Četirevića Grabovana*. In: *Radovi o srpskoj umetnosti i umetnicima 18 veka: po arhivskim i drugim podacima*. Novi Sad, 2010, 355-389; *Ševo*, Ljiljana. *Crkva Rođenja Svetog Jovana Preteče u Stonom Beogradu*. Banja Luka, 2011, 99-122.

4 *Jovanović*. Jovan Četirević Grabovan, 201-202; *Moutafov*. Ioannes Tsetiris from Grabovo, 223-225; *Todić*. *Skica za portret*, 360-365; *Ševo*. *Crkva Rođenja Svetog Jovana Preteče*, 25-26, 30-31.



Fig. 2. Signature of Jovan Četir(ević) on the despotic icon of Christ on the iconostasis in Veliki Poganac (Northern Croatia), 1779

approaches that have hitherto dominated Četirević scholarship. It proposes a new line of investigation, which takes into consideration the “channels” through which the artist moved, and which – the present essay posits – were determined mainly by contemporary confessional and ethnic circumstances.

Četirević (Četirevič), the Serbianised variant of his last name that he probably coined himself<sup>5</sup>, left much information about his own life and work, mainly in surviving inscriptions on icons and iconostases he painted (Figs. 1, 2), and in biographical notes he wrote on the margins of the manuscript copy of his painter’s manual – the *Hermeneia Zographikes*<sup>6</sup>. However, entirely in keeping with the custom among Balkan Orthodox Christians in the 18<sup>th</sup> century of not specifying one’s ethnicity, Četirević never made any mention of his ethnic or national affiliation<sup>7</sup>. On several occasions in his inscriptions he explained his origins mainly in geographic (“from the town of Grabova” or “now an inhabitant of Osijek”), and, more importantly, in confessional and church jurisdictional terms. In 1775, on the iconostasis in the church in Orahovica in Slavonia, he stated

5 Četirević left several variants of his surname written and/or painted in Church-Slavonic: четиринги, четирь, чатирь, цатирь, четирлевичь, четиревичь. For variants he wrote in Greek also see *Todić*. *Skica za portret*, 358.

6 *Jovanović*. Jovan Četirević Grabovan, 200-209; *Todić*, *Skica za portret*, 355-389. It needs to be stressed that Četirević’s painter’s manual is written in Greek. The biographical notes he wrote on its margins are almost entirely in Greek language too, as cited and commented by *Moutafov*. *Ioannes Tsetiris from Grabovo*, 218-221. Greek was the language of “daily use” of the Aromani in the south of Balkans; their mother tongue was not written during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. *Nandriš*, John. *The Social Being of the Aromâni; the Vlachs of the Balkans and their Predilection for the Book*. In: *Travaux de symposium international le livre. La Roumanie. L’Europe, Tome 4: la quatrième section: Latinite Orientale*, Bucharest, 2010, 15; cf. *Zef*, *Mirdita*. *Vlasi, polinomičan narod*. – *Povijesni prilozi*, 2007, 33, 263-264.

7 *Popović*, Dušan J. *O Cincarima: prilozi pitanju postanka našeg građanskog društva*. Belgrade, 1937, 15.

that he was born in the “Ochrid Eparchy”<sup>8</sup>. Confessional affiliation as “Christians” was the dominant mode of group self-identification among Četirević’s countrymen who found themselves scattered over the wide territories of the Ottoman Balkans and Habsburg Monarchy<sup>9</sup>. Although not conclusively, it can be proposed that Jovan Četirević was ethnic Aromanian (Vlach or Tsintsar)<sup>10</sup>. Some recent linguistic and ethnological researches of his native village strongly suggest that it was almost exclusively inhabited by Aromani until the third quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>11</sup>. The migrations of Grabovans, as well as of other “Christians” from towns and villages in the area of Moschopolis, Elbasan and Korçe, and their subsequent settlement in the Habsburg Monarchy, would decisively determine Četirević’s sojourns in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The nature of Četirević’s early travels after 1736, before the final settlement in Osijek in Slavonia, probably in 1771<sup>12</sup>, makes it likely that he planned to lead a life typical of an 18<sup>th</sup> century enterprising Aromanian professional: taking long and distant trips in search of work, and making intermittent visits to his family back in his native village. The trading networks of his fellow countrymen established in the Balkans and in Eastern and Central Europe opened channels for his connections, engagements and further recommendations. Unfortunately, this first part of Četirević’s professional life, marked mainly by his travels to Wallachia and Moldavia and by his returns to native Grabova, remains largely unknown. It is worth noting that his final crossing to the Habsburg lands came in 1769, when

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8 *Jovanović*. Jovan Četirević Grabovan, 204; *Todić*. Skica za portret, 358.

9 *Davidov*, Dinko. Kult svetog Nauma u Budimskoj eparhiji. In: Spomenici Budimske eparhije. Belgrade, 1990, 165; cf. *Moutafov*. Ioannes Tsetiris from Grabovo, 228. The phenomenon was described by Cvetan Grozdanov as “a kind of diocesan patriotism”. *Grozdanov*, Cvetan. Portreti na svetitelite od Makedonija od IX–XVIII vek. Skopje, 2016, 229-230; cf. *Zef*. Vlasi, polinomičan narod, 262-263.

10 The arguments for his Greek ethnicity were elaborated by *Moutafov*. Ioannes Tsetiris from Grabovo, 217, 227. Later considerations, mostly due to exploration of Četirević’s associations after his settlement in Osijek, speak in favour of his Aromanian ethnicity. *Todić*. Skica za portret, 359.

11 *Bardu*, Nistor. La aromânii din localitatea Grabova (Graeva) din Albania. Observații socio-lingvistice. In: Distorsionări în comunicarea lingvistică, literară și etnofolclorică românească și contextual European, Section lingvistică. Bucharest, 2009, 17-27; *Kocój*, Eva. Artifacts of the Past and Traces of Memory. The Aromanian Cultural Heritage in the Balkans. – *Res Historica*, 2016, No. 41, 167, 189.

12 *Todić*. Skica za portret, 364.

he brought his whole family to Novi Sad<sup>13</sup>, and that this move coincided with the first sack of Moschopolis by the Turks, an event that traumatized and scattered its Aromanian inhabitants and immediately thereafter acquired the aura of their national doomsday<sup>14</sup>.

The role of Aromanian traders and their families in the establishment and subsequent economic strength of the Orthodox community in Osijek in eastern Slavonia (Croatia) during the 18<sup>th</sup> century is well documented<sup>15</sup>. They were the main financial contributors to the building and decoration of the Orthodox church of the Assumption of the Virgin in Osijek's lower town, built after 1756. It was one of the first baroque Orthodox churches in Slavonia and for a short time the cathedral of the Pakrac-Slavonian Bishopric<sup>16</sup>. The iconostasis in the church was painted in 1761 by Janko Halkozović (or Halkozo, as his surname also appears in



Fig. 3. Jovan Četirević, Pentecost, Orahovica (Slavonia), 1774/5

13 Todić. *Skica za portret*, 361-364.

14 Popović. *O Cincarima*, 66; cf. *Bardu*. *La aromânii din localitatea Grabova*, 21.

15 *Bösendorfer*, Josip. *Pravoslavni elemenat kao sekundarni faktor u oblikovanju građanskog staleža u Osijeku*. – *Osječki zbornik*, 1948, No. 1-3, 48-126; *Todić*. *Skica za portret*, 357-360.

16 *Kučeković*, Aleksandra. *Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije u 18 veku*. Belgrade, 2014, 26-27.



Fig. 4. Jovan Četirević, Baptism of Christ, Orahovica (Slavonia), 1774/5



Fig. 5. Christoph Weigel, Baptism of Christ, Biblia Ectypa. Bildnußen auß Heiliger Schrift deß Alt- und Neuen Testaments. Augsburg 1695

sources), probably another Aromanian. Četirević came to Osijek a decade later, following his stay in Novi Sad, where Halkozović permanently resided<sup>17</sup>. Family ties caused Četirević's relocation, since his brother Anastas, a trader in "Austrian goods", bought a house in

<sup>17</sup> Šelmić, Leposava. Janko Halkozović. In: Majstori prelaznog perioda srpskog slikarstva XVIII veka, 80; cf. Todić. Srpski slikari, vol. 1, 231-237.

Osijek in 1765<sup>18</sup>. Četirević's first big engagement, the painting of the iconostasis (Figs. 3, 4), choirs and the bishop's throne in the church of the Virgin in the Slavonian town and trading post of Orahovica, probably came as a result of the acquaintances and connections he made after settling in Osijek.

The largest Orthodox monastery in the region – Orahovica (Fig. 6), also had important ties to, and even property in, Osijek<sup>19</sup>. The parochial church in Orahovica was under the monastery's jurisdiction, and Četirević mentioned the hegoumenos' name in the inscription on the iconostasis<sup>20</sup>. But, more importantly, archival sources allow us to appreciate the influence of the Orthodox traders from his homeland in the Orahovica parish proper. Četirević's inscription on the iconostasis stated the name of the church tutor – Konstantin Dimčović. In the list of "Turkish" merchants in Virovitica County, issued by the Habsburg customs in 1777, he was registered as Kosta Dimčović, a merchant born in Moschopolis<sup>21</sup>. Another merchant from Moschopolis, named only as Georgije, was probably a major financial contributor to the church building in Orahovica, since he earned the honour to be buried by the western portal in the narthex when he died in 1777<sup>22</sup>. As to Četirević himself, after finishing the job in Orahovica in 1775, he started working on a series of iconostases in northern Croatia, first in the Lepavina Monastery, then on iconostases in villages with strong Orthodox communities in the regions of Koprivnica, Križevci and Bjelovar in northern Croatia, where he worked until 1785. Koprivnica was an important destination for Orthodox settlers since the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>23</sup>. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century their number increased; in contemporary sources they were registered as "Greek" (Graccum) merchants of different ethnic provenance<sup>24</sup>. The Orthodox population of Koprivnica was ob-

18 Todić. Skica za portret, 364-365.

19 Kučeković. Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije, 71.

20 написана сѣ тѣмъплъ зачатретьво і ѿкв(ни) при и҃бѣиенѣ маѣиѣиѣ поповиуѣ и при тѣторолѣиѣ господ константин димчовиу. трѣ(а) же ивана четиревиу грабованѣ, родом же ѿт епархїи ѿхридїцкои ѿт вароша граково нїи҃к же житѣлѣ осыукуы мїсца мїрт 1775 лѣта. Jovanović. Jovan Četirević Grabovan, 204; cited after: Todić. Srpski slikari, Vol. 1, 284. (Some corrections in the Old-Church-Slavonic text, re-cited here, were made by Emmanuel Moutafov in his capacity of an editor for this volume.)

21 Gavrilović, Slavko. Prilog istoriji trgovine i migracije Balkan – Podunavlje 18 i 19 stoleća. Belgrade, 1969, 5, 266, 272-275.

22 Kučeković. Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije, 71.

23 Petrić, Hrvoje. Koprivnica u 17. stoljeću. Samobor, 2008, 178-179.

24 Petrić. Koprivnica, 179.

structed in their efforts to erect a church in the city centre for most of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and only managed to obtain permission and build the church in 1791–1794<sup>25</sup>. Preserved documents concerning the plights to the state authorities of the “Greek” merchants from the trading town of Križevci show that in the mean time they were using the church in the nearby village of Vojakovac, where Četirević had painted the iconostasis in 1782<sup>26</sup>. The trading town of Slatina in Slavonia was also a hub for Orthodox merchants from the southern Balkans. Četirević painted the iconostasis there, probably also due to the fact that his countrymen from Moschopolis were the most numerous traders in this town. Indeed, it is possible to find evidence of the settlement of merchants from his native Grabova in the nearby small town of Voćin<sup>27</sup>. We can estimate their influence among the Orthodox in Slatina and the surrounding region by Četirević’s inscription on the iconostasis of the church – after a long series of inscriptions in Church-Slavonic and in the Cyrillic script, here he reverts to Greek, stating his profession and residence in Osijek<sup>28</sup>.

It seems that this situation was a result of a favourable attitude of Habsburg authorities towards the settlement of “Turkish” or “Greek” merchants, as they were denoted in contemporary documents, in Slavonia and northern Croatia during the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>29</sup>. The economy of this region was not stable and trade was particularly underdeveloped. The social class of merchants was weaker than in other parts of the Monarchy inhabited by Orthodox population<sup>30</sup>. In many market towns of the region “Turkish” merchants were the only people practicing a trading profession<sup>31</sup>. As archival sourc-

25 *Gavrilović*. Prilog istoriji trgovine, 83-90; cf. *Kučeković*. Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije, 71-72.

26 *Gavrilović*. Prilog istoriji trgovine, 94-95. About the iconostasis in Vojakovac see *Todić*. Skica za portret, 373; cf. *Todić*. Srpski slikari, Vol. 1, 287-288 and *Kučeković*. Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije, 278.

27 *Gavrilović*. Prilog istoriji trgovine, 266, 274-276.

28 The inscription was written in Greek language but in Cyrillic script:  $\kappa\upsilon\rho$  (probably  $\chi\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron$ )  $\text{Ιωαννης}$   $\text{υατιηρ}$   $\text{γρακovan\textsuperscript{s}}$   $\text{ισ(т)}$   $\text{орнограф\textsuperscript{s}}$   $\text{ек}$   $\text{подес}$   $\text{осеке}$  1785. *Jovanović*. Jovan Četirević Grabovan, 209. Unfortunately, its characteristics could not be verified because the entire iconostasis was destroyed in the Second World War; cited after: *Todić*. Srpski slikari, Vol. 1, 288.

29 The common terms denoting Orthodox traders from Ottoman dominions, used by Habsburg administration during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were: Graeci quaestores, Graeci, Graccum, Griechiche Handelsleute, turcici quaestores, turcici negotiatores, Türkische Handelsleute. *Gavrilović*. Prilog istoriji trgovine, 5.

30 *Popović*. O Cincarima, 78-79; cf. *Gavrilović*. Prilog istoriji trgovine, 48.

31 *Gavrilović*. Prilog istoriji trgovine, 48.



Fig. 6. Orahovica monastery church (Slavonia), second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century

es show, the large majority of them were, from the beginning of the century, migrating primarily from Moschopolis, but also from Kozani, Grabova, Sipiska and other villages inhabited by Aromani<sup>32</sup>. They created small but tight-knit colonies, and their fierce commitment to Orthodoxy was, in many cases, the driving force behind the prosperity of the Orthodox Church municipalities throughout the region. Although many of them were of Aromanian ethnicity, in the Habsburg Monarchy during the 18<sup>th</sup> century they were subjected to

<sup>32</sup> Popović. O Cincarima, 23.



Fig. 7. Holy Virgin with angels and saints, Orahovica monastery, first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century (left wing repainted by Jovan Četirević)

intensive assimilation into the Serbian majority and the jurisdiction of Serbian Orthodox Church, i.e. the Metropolis of Karlovci<sup>33</sup>.

Inscriptions in the Greek language found on icons painted by Jovan Četirević can be considered indicators of his Aromanian (or indeed Greek) countrymen living in Slavonia and northern Croatia, and of their roles as patrons or purchasers of his works. It is worth noting that most of his painted inscriptions in Greek can be found on portable icons, probably largely originating from the sphere of private devotion<sup>34</sup>. Another indicator of Četirević's Aromanian clientele could be the choice of particular saints that he painted, whose cults were strong among the Aromanians in the South Balkans, and particularly in the Archbishopric of Ochrid. Unfortunately, many

33 *Davidov*. Kult svetog Nauma, 165-167.

34 The full list of Četirević's surviving portable icons is yet to be compiled. One of those with Greek inscriptions, representing the Coronation of the Virgin, belongs now to the Orthodox Church in Hungarian town of Miskolc, where the influence of the Orthodox population from the Southern Balkans (including Aromani) was very prominent during the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Četirević signed it: Χ(ε)ΙΟΥ ΔΕ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ ΓΡΑΜΠΟΒΑΝΟΥ 1773, as cited by *Todić*. Srpski slikari, 1, 290; cf. *Nagy*, Marta. A magyarországi görög diaszpóra egyházművészeti emlékei 1. Iknok, ikonostázionok, Debrecen, 1998, 123-125.



**Fig. 8.** Jovan Četirević, Virgin Kykotissa with Archangel Michael and Saints Athanasius and Naum the Miracle Worker, Orahovica monastery (Slavonia), around 1775

of them are now lost and known only indirectly through earlier descriptions or photographs. In 1777, Četirević painted the vita icon of St Jovan Vladimir with Greek inscriptions. It has been suggested that the icon was probably done for one of his countrymen from the vicinity of Elbasan or the Ardenica Monastery, where the saint's relics were venerated<sup>35</sup>. The cult of St Jovan Vladimir was strength-

<sup>35</sup> Until the Second World War the icon was in the possession of the Serbian Orthodox church in Virovitica in central Slavonia. *Todić*, *Skica za portret*, 370; *Pavlović*, *Leontije*. *Kultovi lica kod Srba*

ened among the Orthodox population in the Habsburg Monarchy when Hristofor Žefarović included the saint's image in Serbian *Stematographia*, in 1741<sup>36</sup>. A year later, in Vienna, Žefarović made a separate graphic vita icon of St Jovan Vladimir that might have been known to, and used by, Jovan Četirević<sup>37</sup>. The famous Ardenica Monastery vita icon of the saint painted by Constantine in 1739 could also have been the model for Četirević's painting in Slavonia<sup>38</sup>. Another lost icon of Četirević but fortunately known from photographs, belonged to the Orahovica Monastery. The popular Virgin Kykotissa was represented together with three-quarter figures of saints Michael, Athanasios and Naum of Ochrid with Church-Slavonic inscriptions (**Fig. 8**). But, the well-known text on the scroll in Christ's right hand (Is. 61,1; Luc. 4,18) was written in Greek<sup>39</sup>, reinforcing the transfer of thaumaturgic potential of the Athonite original. As far as we know, this is the only baroque version of the Kykotissa known from Slavonia and northern Croatia from the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>40</sup>. The selection of saints accompanying the Virgin, especially St Naum, strongly indicates the patron of the icon as yet another from Četirević's homeland<sup>41</sup>. His high reputation in the Orahovica Monastery may be the reason why the brethren entrusted him with the repainting of the left wing on the inner side of the triptych icon depicting Virgin with saints and Serbian Sts Simeon and Sava (**Fig. 7**), dating from the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and probably origi-

i Makedonaca: (istorijsko-etnografska rasprava). Smederevo, 1965, 33-41; Đekić, Đorđe, Živanov, Dragojla. Kult Svetog kralja Jovana Vladimira u Karlovačkoj mitropoliji. – Communications, 2016, No. 48, 275-290.

36 Žefarović, Hristofor. Стематографія... [или] Изображеніе оръжіи Иллирическихъ / авторомъ Павломъ Рѣттеромъ В' діалектъ Латинскомъ изданное На свѣтъ... На Славено Сербскій Языкѣ Преведенное..., Vienna 1741, 8.

37 Davidov, Dinko. Srpska grafika 18. veka. Novi Sad, 1978, 259-260, ill. 34; cf. Đekić, Živanov. Kult Svetog kralja Jovana Vladimira, 282-283.

38 Drakopoulou, Eugenia. Catalogue (Saint John Vladimir and Scenes from his Life). In: Anastasia Tourta (ed.). Icons from the Orthodox Communities of Albania. Thessaloniki, 2006, 136-144; Grozdanov. Portreti na svetitelite, 241-248.

39 Borčić, Vera. Zbirka ikona odjela Srba u Hrvatskoj. Zagreb, 1974, 68, cat. No. 240; ill. 28.

40 Četirević's version adheres to the famous Axion Estin from Protaton on Mount Athos, i.e. the image beneath the actual ornate plaque on the icon dating from 1863, better known by numerous 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century prints. Tatić-Đurić, Mirjana. Ikona Bogorodice Kikotise. In: Studije o Bogorodici. Belgrade, 2007, 429-442; cf. Tsigaridas, Evthimios N. L'icone de la Vierge Axion Estin du Protaton et ses copies. – Receuil des travaux le l'Institut d'études byzantines, 2007, No. 44, 341-353.

41 Davidov. Kult svetog Nauma, 170-176.



Fig. 9. Jovan Ćetirević, Saint John the Forerunner, despotic icon on the iconostasis in Veliki Poganac (Northern Croatia), 1779

nating from the Chilandariou Monastery<sup>42</sup>.

The pre-eminence of Jovan Četirević as a painter favoured by the Orthodox communities in Slavonia and northern Croatia in the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was facilitated by connections he made along ethnic and confessional lines, as was probably the case also with his occasional travels and works in Hungary<sup>43</sup>. But, his entrepreneurial spirit greatly contributed to this status – he, with his collaborators, offered a full service to his clientele – complete painting of the icons and decorative painting of the iconostasis and church furniture, and we know that he employed a wood carver as well<sup>44</sup>. Somewhat traditional iconographic features of his iconostases and his distinctive style, due to his initial training in the Greek tradition, also contributed to his popularity among the Orthodox population in the areas constantly under pressure to yield to the Church Union<sup>45</sup>. Četirević's works can be seen as a sort of counterweight to elaborate baroque schemes introduced into this territory by Ukrainian painter Vasilij Romanovich in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>46</sup>. However, the two had an important common feature – the extensive use of *Biblia Ectypa* of Christoph Weigel<sup>47</sup>. It is known that Jovan Četirević had his own copy of this famous volume, and relied heavily on its illustrations (Figs. 4, 5)<sup>48</sup>. We can not tell for certain where or when Četirević acquired an Ectypa copy – his four-year “Moscovite” sojourn (1746-50), undertaken in order “to study painting”, might be considered pivotal for his adoption of the Western baroque iconographic templates. He probably went to Kiev Pechersk Lavra<sup>49</sup>. Painters educated here favoured the Ectypa<sup>50</sup>. Some preliminary assumptions, yet

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42 The triptych was one of the most prized possessions of the monastery in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and permanently displayed in front of the iconostasis. *Kučeković, Aleksandra*. *Manastir Orahovica u Slavoniji*. Zagreb, 2007, 140-143, ill. 68.

43 *Todić*. *Skica za portret*, 365-366, 369-370; *Ševo*. *Crkva Rođenja Svetog Jovana Preteče*, 25-26, 30-31.

44 *Kučeković*. *Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije*, 150-152.

45 *Kučeković*. *Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije*, 274.

46 *Kučeković*. *Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije*, 258-271; *Kučeković, Aleksandra*. *Vasilije Romanović – još jedan ikonostas u Slavoniji*. – *Receuil du Musée national à Belgrade*, 2016, No. 22/2, 178-200.

47 *Stošić, Ljiljana*. *Zapadnoevropska grafika kao predložak srpskom slikarstvu XVIII veka*. Belgrade, 1992, 38-52.

48 *Kučeković*. *Umetnost Pakračko-slavonske eparhije*, 273-274, 281-284.

49 *Todić*. *Skica za portret*, 360.

50 *Stošić*, *Zapadnoevropska grafika*, 38-40.

to be confirmed, about Četirević's subsequent travel to Moldavia and work in the town of Roman in 1755, suggest that he might have started using the Ectypa graphic illustrations very early on in his career<sup>51</sup>.

As far as we know, Jovan Četirević was the most sought after painter from the south of the Balkans in the Orthodox communities in Slavonia and northern Croatia in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He developed a successful career, even a kind of monopoly. At what point his career came to an end is still not precisely known, but he probably died sometime after his last recorded iconostasis in Kula in Bačka in 1787 (aged around 70)<sup>52</sup>. No reliable clues as to his activity after this date exist, although there have been suggestions that he returned to Albania and worked there for another quarter of a century<sup>53</sup>. The painter Jovan Cetiri from Grabova, whose works date from the last two decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is almost certainly the namesake of our Četirević. He may even be a member of his extended family, which produced several painters in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>54</sup>. He developed his painting style with more pronounced post-Byzantine features and less contact with the contemporary baroque stylistic tendencies characteristic of Orthodox painters active in the Habsburg Monarchy<sup>55</sup>. The comparison of some of the best works of Jovan Četirević (Fig. 9) and those of his later namesake make this quite clear. Jovan Četirević's two sons were also active as painters in Slavonia, but neither was as successful as their father – Nikolas is recorded working in their resident city of Osijek up until 1824, and Constantine was probably the one who was favoured by his father and who inherited his business connections, along with his precious copy of Biblia Ectypa<sup>56</sup>.

51 Sabados, Marina I. Catedrala Episcopiei Romanului, Roman, 1990, 104-106.

52 Todić. Skica za portret, 376.

53 Moutafov. Ioannes Tsetiris from Grabovo, 225.

54 Todić. Skica za portret, 358-359.

55 Tourta (ed.). Icons from the Orthodox Communities of Albania, 184-191.

56 Gavrilović, Slavko. Ispisi iz stare arhive srpske crkvene opštine u Oseku (18-19 vek). – Recueil des travaux sur les Serbes en Croatie, 2009, No. 7, 458; Todić. Skica za portret, 376-377; cf. Todić, Srpski slikari, Vol. 1, 299.

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## Йован Четиревич Грабован – един пътуващ зограф от XVIII век. Етнически и художествени значения

Александра Кучекович



Пресичащата културните граници значимост на живота и творчеството на зографа Йован Четиревич Грабован в изследването на художествените взаимодействия на Балканите и в Централноевропейския район от втората половина на XVIII век е заявена още от началото на XX век с вниманието, което получава в научни изследвания на международно ниво. Макар че той е задълбочено изследван, един съвременен поглед върху етническите и религиозните обстоятелства в творческото му развитие в Славония и Северна Хърватия в последната четвърт на XVIII век разкрива нова информация, свързана с неговите връзки и „каналите“, по които той се е придвижвал. По презумпция арумънският му произход е смятан за един от ключовите фактори на неговия успех като предпочитан зограф в православните общности на Славония и Северна Хърватия, където по-голямата част от градовете и търговските средища през XVIII век са с подчертано арумънски елементи. Финансовото влияние върху сънародниците на Четиревич, което идва от района на Москополи, както и от останалите, преимуществено арумънски области на Южните Балкани, при превръщането на православните общини в прилежащи на Хабсбургите територии допринася значително за неговата популярност и достъп до скъпо платени поръчки, които гореспоменатите общности могат да предложат. Иконографските и стилови предпочитания в неговата работа също могат да бъдат видени в контекста на посочените обстоятелства. Той постига симбиоза между традиционно поствизантийски и барокови елементи в резултат на художествения опит, който придобива, както и на пътуванията си, простиращи се от Гърция до – вероятно – Киево-Печерската лавра, като създава един свършен визуален продукт за православна общност, съществуваща в преимуществено католическа среда.