THE DOUBLE-SIDED ICON
IN DINTR-UN LEMN MONASTERY[*]

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The silver clothing that covered almost entirely the icon of Mother of God in the Dintr-un Lemn Monastery in Vâlcea starting from 1812[1] and until the early 2000's, when began a thorough restoration process, had limited for a long period the access to the panel's painting. However, the attempts of dating and attributing the icon have a long history, beginning early on. A local legend, recorded by Paul of Aleppo in 1656, located this wonderworking icon not far from Râmnicu Vâlcea at the end of the 16th century, when a hermit built a hermitage for it in an oak forest[2], which later developed into the monastery known as "Dintr-un Lemn" (made of a single wood). Metropolitan Neophytos of Wallachia, visiting the Dintr-un Lemn Monastery in July 28th–29th 1746, read an inscription on the icon of Theotokos as "the hand of Damaskinos"/Damaskin[3], concluding, although reserved, that the icon is a 16th-century work of the Cretan school. He also noted an inscription on a cross (later disappeared) on the roof of the old wooden church of the hermitage, mentioning a shepherd by his name Radu, who built the wooden chapel for the icon during the rule of voivode Alexandru II[4]. Alexandru Obobescu, who studied the monument in 1860, mentioned a somewhat different story: the icon, which originated in Vâlcea, was moved for some time to Gura Motrului to a boyar Radu, being brought again in Vâlcea in the mid-16th century by a daughter of Lady Chiajna, who built the small hermitage for it[5].

[1] Bălan 2005, 423, cat. 575.

[2] *Călători* 6, 188–189. The hermitage is mentioned in documents starting with 1578–1579; Donat 1936, 315–316 (source not cited).

[3] Neofit, 91–92. The journal was written in Greek, so "Damaskinos" could be a Graecized form of an originally Slavic name, i.e. Damaskin.

[4] Neophytos read also a year at the end of the inscription, "7008" (1499–1500), which however does not coincide with the rule of Alexandru II (1568–1577); Neofit, 86, 89.

[5] The story appears in Odobescu's novella *Doamna Chiajna* (1860). It was credited also by Drăghiceanu 1931, 125–126, and Donat 1936, 316. Odobescu recorded several other times when the

The icon was an object of interest for many art historians, who proposed various hypotheses regarding its dating and provenience. André Grabar considered it to be an early Byzantine acheiropoietos[6]. Ion D. Ștefănescu chose to give credit to Metropolitan Neophytos and considered it a work of the Cretan school executed on Mount Athos in the second half of the 16th century[7], but he soon re-dated it to the end of the 15th century and the beginning of the next[8]. Other art historians claimed it to be a 15th century Byzantine artwork[9]. Alexandru Efremov, the first who studied the icon without the silverwork, identified it type as the Virgin of the Passion[10] (fig. 1). According to its stylistic features, he considered it a Palaeologan work dating to the end of the first half of the 15th century and assigned it to a master affiliated to a Byzantine workshop, assuming as a source of inspiration "a 13th century model, originating from an artistic atmosphere of Italian influence"[11].

The novelty brought by the removing of the icon's silver cloth consists not only in the identification of its iconographic type, but especially in discovering that it is a double-sided icon, bearing paintings on both its faces. Alexandru Odobescu had mentioned the existence of a Last Judgment scene on the reverse side of the Virgin's icon[12], but the later authors made but slight reference to it[13]. Neither I.D. Ștefănescu nor Alexandru Efremov studied the Judgment icon.

The icon of the Last Judgment has its field sculpted below the level, with narrow, taller frames let on the four sides (fig. 2). The carving of the panel's surface could not be made without putting the eventual painting of the reverse side to danger. Therefore, it seems most probable that the Judgment side was, chronologically, the first painted. Of all the bilateral icons known[14], this is the only case to contain a Last Judgment scene[15], which leads us to the assumption that the icon was initially designed as a sole-faced. The Theotokos side, which was treated lately for a long time as the main face of the icon – and consequently the sole, after putting the silver revetment –, was in fact painted later, the icon becoming thus

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icon was moved from its place: in 1797–1802, it was brought in the Bistrița cave to be saved from the plunders of Osman Pasvantoglu's soldiers and, during the Liberation Revolution of 1821, was transfered at Pătrunsa hermitage; Odobescu 1981, 77.

[6] Unpublished observations; *apud* Efremov 2002, 28.

[7] Ștefănescu 1931, 601–602 and fig. 45–46. This hypothesis was accepted also by Crețeanu 1966, 25.

[8] Ștefănescu 1932, 172, note 3.

[9] Maria-Ana Musicescu (unpublished research), Dumitru Năstase, *apud* Efremov 2002, 28 and n. 24.

[10] Efremov 2002, 28–29 and notes 22–32.

[11] Efremov 2002, 28–29, cat. 3, fig. 8–9.

[12] On July 30th 1860, Odobescu inspected the icon and noted, although incorrect, that the Last Judgment was painted on canvas glued on wood and that the names in the inscriptions were written in Serbian. He also noticed the damages of the depiction of Mother of God; Odobescu 1981, 77.

[13] Ștefănescu 1931, 602; Ștefănescu 1932, 172 n. 3; Efremov 2002, 28–29.

[14] A catalogue of 80 double-sided icons was published by Vocotopoulos 1998, 304–307.

[15] The well-known 11th century Sinai icon of the Last Judgment which was part of a hexaptych meant for private worship is not double-sided; Weitzmann 1984, 108.

bilateral. The initial Last Judgment icon had probably a processional function, considering its large size, of 150 cm/ 110 cm. Such icons were used for processions in the Meatfare Sunday (the Sunday of the Last Judgment), which precedes the beginning of the Great Lent. The Russian Last Judgment panels dating from the 14th–16th centuries have about the same large dimensions[16].

The icon of the Last Judgment has an abbreviated composition, reduced to the representation of Christ on a throne surrounded by Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist and the seven archangels, with five of them having their names inscribed: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel and *Athalsail*, which appears to be a corrupt form of the name of the apocryphal Archangel Salathiel, who is honoured the fifth in hierarchical order after Raphael and Uriel[17] (see the *Addendum*, no. 1). The names of the angels coming from apocryphal sources had been generally rejected by the Church early on, because of the magical rituals of the Gnostic sects in which angels were invoked[18]. Representations of the seven archangels with their names mentioned in inscriptions are completely absent in the Byzantine painting; only the names of the three canonical archangels and those of the nine angelic orders were virtually accepted[19].

The inscriptions on the Last Judgment icon are poorly written, containing wrong letters, incorrect hyphenations, and also elements of phonetic hypercorrection, such as the numerous ь. The name forms – the West-Bulgarian Иован for John the Baptist, or Михь<н>ль, Гаврнль, which were common in Bulgaria and Macedonia[20] – seem to indicate that the painter originated in a Balkan area where apocryphal

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[16] The icon from Novgorod (late 15th – early 16th cent.), today in the Tretiakov Gallery, has sides of 164cm/ 116 cm; Hunt 2007, 275, note 1.

[17] Uriel and Salathiel appear together in the 4 Ezdras, an apocryphal Old Testament book tolerated by the Byzantine Church and included later as canonical in the Russian Orthodox Slavonic Bible (Ostrog Bible – 1581, Empress Elizabeth Bible – 1751, and later Russian Synodal Bible). The latter two archangels' names lately accepted by the Orthodox Church, Jegoudiel and Barachiel, are mentioned in apocryphal 1 Enoch and 3 Enoch.

[18] Such practices were denounced by the 4th local council of Laodicaea (ca. 363–365), canon 35; Hefele 1907, 1017. See, for example, a reference to a text intitled "The Names of the Angels" in an index of prohibited books translated in Romanian from a Slavonic source in 1667–1669 (Ms. Rom. 1570 BAR); Cartojan 1974, I, 332.

[19] The theory of the nine celestial orders, described by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in the 5th century ("On the Celestial Hierarchy", 6.7), had a major influence on the Byzantine theology and iconography. However, while the angelic categories were largely accepted, cults by individual names were not encouraged, with the notable exception of Archangel Michael. In the Byzantine holy services dedicated to the archangels were named only Michael and Gabriel. Also Raphael was considered canonical, due to his apparition in the Book of Tobias. Uriel, found in the apocryphal Book of Enoch, was tolerated, but never mentioned within offices. Archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel were depicted with their names inscribed in the mid-12th-century dome mosaics (between 1146 and 1151) in Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio (Martorana) and in the dome of the Palatine Chapel in Palermo (1160–1170); Demus 1950, fig. 13, 46. Uriel appears later in the Virgin Nativity cathedral of the St. Ferapont Belozero in Russia (1502), painted by master Dionisy and his sons.

[20] They are also found, for instance, in the monastery of our Lady in the Matka Canyon near Skopje, painted in 1496–1497; Dimitrova *et alii* 2011, 183–200 and the illustrations on the pages 194 and 197.

writings about angels circulated at the popular level, as evidenced by the vulgarized or corrupted forms of the names of the archangels. It cannot be excluded also a Bogomil reminiscence, being known the veneration of the Bogomils for archangels[21]. During the rule of Tsar Ivan Alexander, the Bogomilism had a vigorous return in the northern and central parts of the Bulgarian empire, however reshaped by the diverse provincial specificities[22], the many contacts, compromises and finally by a formal, external conformity to the Orthodox Church[23]. Also monks from Tarnovo, Thessalonike and Mount Athos became influenced by the Bogomilic ideas and literature, as denounced the orations of Saint Theodosius of Tarnovo at the First anti-heretical Council of Tsar Ivan Alexander (c. 1350) and the Life of Saint Theodosius written by Patriach Callistus I[24]. Bogomilism was condemned again at the Second Bulgarian Council in Tarnovo (c. 1360)[25]. The still alive influence of the Bogomilic angelology by the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the next can be glimpsed in the suggestive answers on the controversy of the veneration of angels given in a letter by Patriarch Euthymius of Tarnovo to Nicodemus the abbot of Tismana in Wallachia[26]. Saint Symeon of Thessalonica still fought the Bogomilic deviations in the first decades of the 15th century (before 1429)[27].

The image of heaven is missing from the composition in the Dintr-un Lemn icon, probably as a consequence of the icon's specific function within the office of the Meatfare Sunday, which has as central motif the repentance and remembrance of the future judgment. In the hell area, only groups of churchmen were represented – hierarchs and monks. The inscriptions mention "Arius" and "priests", characters traditionally present in Last Judgment scenes. "The Antichrist" appears held by Hades in his arms, although the latter was usually displayed holding Judas[28]. The two heads of the Leviathan devour two human souls, represented as little children.

The representation of Christ on throne has as distant prototype the composition of the Last Judgment at Dečani Monastery (fig. 3), and not the usual Byzantine formulas in which Christ appeared in a mandorla, sitting on the rainbow. The hand of God weighing the souls – and not the archangel, as in the Byzantine depictions of the 11th–14th centuries – appeared at Bogorodica Ljeviška in Prizren (1307–1313) and became widespread throughout the 15th century[29]. The faces of

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[21] In the Life of St. Gerardus of Sagredo (980–1046), the Bishop of Morisena/Csanád (present-day Cenad in Timiș), was recorded that the Bogomils in the kingdom of Achtum, called in text "Bulgarians", venerated Archangel Uriel and worn amulets with his name, whom they invoked in magic rituals (Ivánka 1955).

[22] Lavrin 1929, 278; Obolensky 1948, 250–262; Theodorescu 1974, 243–248.

[23] Lavrin 1929, 279–280.

[24] Petkov 2008, 287–314.

[25] See the Bulgarian Canon Law miscellanies of the 14th cent.; Tsibranska-Kostova 2014.

[26] Kałužniacki 1901, 209–214 [first Romanian edition: Sfântul Eftimie, 13–44]. For the influences of the Bogomilism in the Romanian culture, see Cartojan 1974, I, 39–87; Panaitescu 2000, 321–323.

[27] Hamilton, Hamilton 1998, 282–287.

[28] Garidis 1985, 63.

[29] The hand of God is found also in the Russian mural paintings (Vladimir, 1408) and icons in the 15th century; Himka 2009, 46–47.

demons are yet anthropomorphic, following the Byzantine tradition, and not zoomorphic as in the later trend emerged in the first decades of the 16th century[30].

The Archangel Michael supports his feet on a cushion – an aulic detail extracted from the Palaeologan repertoire, not usually found in his representations in the Last Judgment. The horizon of the upper half of the composition is much lowered to obtain the effect of monumentality, solution that is a characteristic of the artistic traditions prior to the 15th century. Contrariwise, in the 16th century Cretan painting, the horizon began to be much lifted, to serve developing rich narrative compositions. The faces' skin is not sallow like in the 16th-century paintings, but pink and bright, although the figures are rather stereotype and the flesh has a harsh modelling. The eyebrow arches pronouncedly contoured, the angled nose root and the sharp shadows under the eyes, together with the rigid folds of the garments denote the provincial decadence of the Palaiologan traditions whose features are found in the 15th century Epirus and Macedonia. However, while the faces in the upper composition look clumsy and stereotype, those in the lower part are finely drawn, reminding the Palaeologan miniature (fig. 4). It is possible that two different hands worked on the panel, but the general impression regarding the author(s) is of a poor skilfulness, or more likely of a lack of proper training. The red cinnabar background and the nimbi of different colours also recall the Macedonian painting features of the 14th–15th centuries.

The icon was painted on the reverse with a Passion-type representation of the Virgin and Child, apparently by a different hand from that of the Judgment. At the top, two half-length angels, named Archangels Michael and Gabriel in inscriptions (see the *Addendum*, no. 2), flank the Mother of God, with Gabriel at the right holding a bowl with the instruments of Passion – the Cross and a spear. On both the lateral sides are represented apostles[31]: at left, Peter, Luke, Mark, and Andrew, and at right, Paul, Matthew, John, Thomas, and Simon. The processional icons of Theotokos for the period of the Great Lent – the Sunday of Orthodoxy and the Akathist Saturday – are very common in the 14th and 15th centuries (the pictorial representations of the last stanza of the Akathist Hymn usually displayed such icons in processions). Sometimes, they bear on the reverse Crucifixion or Jesus in the Tomb scenes[32]. Here, the other side being already painted, a Passion-type variant of Hodegetria framed by apostles was selected to combine the two subjects which were usually depicted on each side. In the rest of the year, the icon was probably put on display in the iconostasis, with the Judgment side visible in the altar[33].

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[30] One of the first such representations is found at St. Nicholas Anapafsas, Meteora (1527), painted by Theophanes the Cretan; Garidis 1985, 38–39.

[31] Not prophets, as were mistakenly identified by Metropolitan Neophytos and I. D. Ştefănescu.

[32] Vocotopoulos 1998, 304–306. See a resume and bibliography of the subject at Tomić-Djurić 2012, 304–307; Another suggestion on the possible liturgical source and use of this kind of bilateral icons is given by Fr. Maximos Constas, *Painting and Poetry in the Middle Byzantine Period: A Bilateral Icon from Kastoria and the Stavrotheotokia of Joseph the Hymnographer*, forthcoming in Gerstel 2016.

[33] For the tendency of moralising the altar iconography destined for the priests, in the Late Byzantine period, see Gerstel 2006, 155.

The iconographer chose a type of Hodegetria in which the Virgin turns her head and gaze to the Child, who responds by turning and blessing her. It characterizes some old icons of the Athonite monasteries such as the Portaitissa at Iveron, dated to late 10th – early 11th century[34] (fig. 5), the Bematarissa (10th century, heavily repainted; the subsequent copies display its original iconography)[35] and a series of 13th century icons of the Virgin Mary at Vatopaidi[36], especially one with a posture similar to the icon in Dintr-un Lemn, and with large dimensions, of 128 cm/ 91 cm[37] (fig. 6). The Peribleptos type, developed in the Ohrid area during the 13th and 14th centuries, is also characterized by a slight turn of the head of Mother of God towards her Infant Christ, but her gaze remains pointed forwards, while the Child is blessing the viewer[38]. The Virgin's gaze focused on her Child's eyes as in initiating a conversation characterizes also the Dexiokratousa[39], a Hodegetria who holds Jesus on her right hand, variant most popular in the 13th century[40] and in the first decades of the next (Virgin ἡ χώρα των ἀχώρητον at Chora).

The first preserved examples of Hodegetria with apostles are a double-sided Cypriot icon with Virgin and Crucifixion dated to the late 14th to early 15th century, found today at the Patriarchate of Jerusalem[41], and a Hodegetria of the early 15th century, preserved in the Pantocrator Monastery on Mount Athos (fig. 7)[42]. Also the Portaitissa icon received in the early 16th century from Ambrosi, a Georgian nobleman of royal descent, a silver cloth with busts of apostles on the lateral sides[43].

The earliest representation of the Virgin of the Passion iconographic type is found in the late 12th century murals at Lagoudera (Cyprus). Also several 13th-14th-centuries Serbian and North-Greek mural examples were preserved (Žiča, Latomou, Konče, Markov), but the first portable icons of this kind date from the 15th century at the earliest: an icon at Sinai (early 15th century)[44] and the icon of Mother of God φοβεράς προστασίας ("Dreaded Protection") at Koutloumousiou, likely of the mid-15th century[45]. A definitive type will be fixed in the second half of the 15th century by Andreas Ritzos[46], in which it is reiterated the iconography of the Φοβεράς προστασίας: the Child turns his gaze away from his Mother to the rear, towards a flying angel who shows him the Cross and the nails, while another angel at the right of the Virgin holds a jar (of sour wine?) containing the lance and the reed.

[34] Vocotopoulos 1996; Chryssochoidis 2005, 133–142.
[35] Tsigaridas, Papadimitriou 2007, 1–7, fig. 2–10.
[36] Tsigaridas 2000, 135–137, 143, fig. 16, 18, 30.
[37] Tsigaridas 2000, 135–136 and fig. 16.
[38] Tatić-Djurić 1969, 335–354. See also Tsigaridas 2000, 145 and fig. 30.
[39] For a general survey of this type, see Chatzidakis 2005, 338 (with bibliography).
[40] Tsigaridas 2000, fig. 15 (Chilandar), 38 (Thessaloniki); Chatzidakis 2005, 339 (Cyprus).
[41] Vocotopoulos 1998, 297–300, fig. 4.
[42] Papamastorakis 1998, 86, 88, fig. 39.
[43] Skhirtladze 2005, 148–219.
[44] Milliner 2011, 91–92 and fig. 27.
[45] Milliner 2011, 93 and fig. 31.
[46] Chatzidakis 1982, 311.

However, several variations continue to coexist throughout the 15th–16th centuries. Symptomatic are the icons preserved in Romania: a late 15th century Andreas Ritzos' type of Cretan school at Şcheii Braşovului[47]; an icon at Prislop which is a classical Hodegetria with two small-scaled angels holding the Passion instruments – a probable Wallachian work, dated largely in the 16th century[48]; and the Glykophilousa at Snagov, with an angel holding the Cross and the two spears, a work attributed to the painter Dobromir the Younger and dated between 1563–1565[49]. In a Hodegetria icon in Ostrov Hermitage, worked most probably after mid-16th century[50] but repainted heavily in 1701–1702 and 1795, the Infant Christ himself holds a small vessel with the Passion instruments.

Also particular in the Dintr-un Lemn icon is a vestment detail: the neckline of the Virgin's tunic is not single-pieced, as in the classical models, but ends in two bordered parts reunited. Similar necklines can be seen in the 13th century Hodegetria icon at Vatopaidi (fig. 6), at the Virgin Episkepsis icon at Anargyroi Saints Church in Ohrid (early 14th century)[51], in an icon of Theotokos attributed to either Eutychios or Michael Astrapas, at the Museum of Macedonia in Skopje (1312–1318)[52] and, subsequently, in two icons of Virgin Mary on throne painted by monk Longin for Lomnica (1577–1578) and Dečani (late 16th century) monasteries[53].

The fold of the garment that falls over the left palm of the Virgin was completed recently by the restorer, who opted for a debatable, radical visual reintegration of some of the damaged areas (fig. 8). This detail was characteristic for the 13th century icons, when the drawing style of the drapes was extremely fluid – see, for example, the mosaic icon of the Virgin Episkepsis in the Byzantine Museum of Athens[54] or the Hodegetria in full length in the Byzantine Museum of Kastoria[55]. However, before the restoration, the zone in question was severely damaged (fig. 1) and no detail seemed to indicate the existence of a garment fold originally in that location.

The Virgin bears on her right forearm an inscription which is poorly preserved. Traditionally, such letterings reproduced the verse of Psalm 44, 15 (45, 13): "her gown is interwoven with gold". This discreetly evocative iconographic element, inspired by hymnography and probably with Constantinopolitan origins, made a career in the 14th–15th-centuries Macedonian Pelagonitissa icons[56]. Thessaloniki

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[47] Porumb 1981, 69–70, fig. 78, 81, 82.
[48] Porumb 1998, 230; Dumitran, Hegedüs, Rus 2011, 127–128, fig. 102. The 12 prophets on the lateral sides were added in 1751–1752.
[49] Efremov 2002, 44–46, fig. 39.
[50] Sabados 2013, 37, 41, fig. 2.
[51] Miljković-Pepek 1971; Georgievski 1999, 57–58, cat. 21.
[52] Miljković-Pepek 1967.
[53] Babić, Chatzidakis 1982, 348, 350.
[54] Evans 2004, 210, fig. 7.2.
[55] Tsigaridas 2000, fig. 7.
[56] Babić 1991.

had an important role in spreading this element in the Balkans[57] and incidentally on Mount Athos, as proves the 15th century icon in Pantocrator Monastery, where the inscription was treated as a pseudo-Kufic script (fig. 7).

Stylistically, the Theotokos icon is characterized by loyalty to the Palaeologan canon, discernable in the graceful posture and drawing of the Virgin's head. However, the style has particular manneristic features which are difficult to attribute to a certain artistic circle. The linear and fluid manner of working and the suggestion of realism and profound emotion, which previously had been considered as evoking 13th century Italian influences[58], might be due to using as models Athonite icons of the late Comnenian to early Palaeologan period.

Some deformities can be seen at the nimbi, which were drawn without a compass, and also an hesitation is evident in designing the composition, which resulted in the central scene overlapping partially the lateral registers of the apostles – the left containing four busts, and the right five. It seems that the author was not possessing a superior studio discipline and did not establish his composition from the beginning, being forced to adapt it unskilfully along the way.

Mixed Greek and Slavic name forms were used for the apostles on the Virgin's icon, as ΛȢΚΑS, ΜΑρΚΟS, but also ΜΑѲΕΗ and ΔΝΔΡΕΗ, which demonstrate the Balkan Slavic ethnicity of the painter. The Balkan Slavs were not spread in the Middle Ages only in Bulgaria, Serbia, Western and Eastern Macedonia, but also in Southern Macedonia (the Greek Macedonia), where "Bulgarians" were at times attested[59]. However, the poor Greek knowledge of the author of the icon makes his localization in the Greek Macedonia doubtful.

Another particularity of language consists in the use of Bulgarian form ρъêâ (hand) in the Last Judgment icon. The word evolved during the late Middle Ages from Old Church Slavonic ρжκΑ[60], like also the Serbian form ρȢκΑ, and Macedonian ρΑΚΑ. Accordingly, the paleographer Christo Andreev considers the inscriptions as Bulgarian or West-Bulgarian (as the presence of the name form Ηοβαη seems to indicate), dating from the 15th century at the earliest.

The inscriptions and the iconographic particularities of both the Last Judgment and the Virgin of the Passion point to Western Bulgaria or its Macedonian borders as the origin of both the painters of the double-sided icon. According to inscriptions, iconography and style, the Last Judgment scene is most likely a late 14th or an early 15th century work, and for the icon of the Virgin a period of up to the mid-15th century can be considered[61].

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[57] A. Tourta, in Evans 2004, 162–163.

[58] Efremov 2002, 29.

[59] *Documenta Veneta*, 150, 188.

[60] Miklosich 1866, 815, *s.v.* "ρжκΑ".

[61] The arguments of style invoked by Efremov 2002, 28–29 cannot be easily refuted in favour of a later dating (like the one proposed by I. D. Ştefănescu), as long as the icon does not have any „post-Byzantine" features, admitting that the provinces were usually subjected to inertia in what concerns innovation and style.

Regarding the use of Athonite models and the processional use of the icon, it can be assumed that both the painters worked a command for a monastic establishment, since in the Balkans, after the Ottoman conquest, the public processions in towns and villages became drastically restricted[62] and such icons could not be carried anymore in corteges. Moreover, the iconography of both the icons suggests that the painters were probably monks. As far as the use of Athonite iconographic models is concerned, although Mount Athos at that time was not yet a common destination for pilgrimage, it was largely frequented by Balkan monks[63]. During the 14th century, the Athonite wonderworking icons started to become an attraction for pilgrims and replicas of them began to appear by the same time[64]. Also the heterodox particularities of the Last Judgment composition plead for a monastic destination of the icon, considering that most of the accusations of "Bogomilism" in the 14th century usually referred to "monastic heresies", excesses and deviations practiced by monks[65].

The icon must have been produced in a rural milieu, which would explain the writing mistakes and the corrupt or idiomatic name forms in the Last Judgment composition. It possibly belonged to a Bulgarian monastic community which migrated during the late 15th to the mid 16th century to Oltenia, around Râmnicu Vâlcea, bringing with it the icon[66].

Addendum

1. The Last Judgment:
<Archangel> Michael: **Михьль**
Mother of God: [**МИР**] Ѳ**ȣ**
<Archangel> Salathiel (?): **Дѳалан/ль**
Jesus Christ: **IC XC**
<Archangel> Gabriel: **Гавриль**
<Archangel> Raphael: **Раѳилы**

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[62] According to the Pact of Umar, used later by the Porte for regulating the status of non-Muslims in the Ottoman empire, Christians could retain their own customary practices according to their traditios, but no public religious processions, such as those traditionally held at Easter, were to be allowed; Masters 2001, 21–23. An exception made the religious fairs and the marriages; Giakoumis 2006, 76–112.

[63] Brouskari, Skoulas 2008, 101–103.

[64] Weyl-Carr 2002, 87, 89–90; see also Brouskari, Skoulas 2008, cat. 3, p. 205.

[65] Wolski 2014, 233–241.

[66] For this Bulgarian migration phenomenon in Wallachia in the 14th–15th centuries, see; Sacerdoțeanu 1961, 322 (Râmnicu Vâlcea); Rădvan 2004, 151–152, 220, 270 (Câmpulung). Such migrations of Bulgarians, carriers of Bogomilic reminiscences, to the northern bank of Danube began as early as the 11th century and were prolonged up to the 16th (Balotă 1964; Cantacuzino 1979) and even the early 18th century (Sacerdoțeanu 1961, 324).

St. John the Baptist: **сты Иован**[67]

<Archangel> Uriel: **Уриль**

"The Hand of God weighs the justice and the injustice": **рька/ господьнѣ /кьпнѣть правда и крнв[ь]да**

"The archangel stabs < the devil> so the injustice shall not weigh": **арьхангель /пробадае / дане влѣче / неправьда**

"The just are taken <away from> the devils": **праве / дниа вь / земать / д[ѣ] воли**

"<Archangel> Gabriel blows the trump [...]": **Гавриль трьби/ ньмреиндандзи /коледа**[68]

"The rising of the dead": **вьськьрьсени / мьрь / твь /мь**

"The injustice of the sinners <is> carried by the devils": **неправьда и грѣшнихь носа /дьѣволи**

"Priests"[69]: **попове**

"Arius": **Лрїѣ**

The Leviathan: **[к]ить**

"Antichrist": **[ан]диіхристь**

"....":**п[...]ать/ са[...]и вьзаньсь / сл[...]вранчьвцѣ/ [...]имУ[...]**[70]

2. Virgin of the Passion with Child:

Archangel Michael: [...]ар[...]**М**[...]; [ὁ] ἀρ[χ]<άγγελος> Μ[ιχαήλ]

Mother of God: **МИ[Р]** Θ[У]; Μή<τη>[ρ] Θ<εο>[ῦ]

Archangel Gabriel: **о арх** [...]**Г**[...]; ὁ ἀρχ<άγγελος> Γ[αβριήλ]

Jesus Christ; the Being: **IG XG, О WH**; Ἰ<ησοῦ>ς Χ<ριστό>ς, ὁ ὤν

Apostles, right raw: Peter, [...]; Luke, **ЛУ/кас**; Mark, **Мракос**[71]; Andrew, **Д[н]/ дреи**; left raw: Paul, [...]; Matthew, **Ма/ѳеи**; John, **Iwан**>; Thomas (?), Θο[72][...]; Simon, **G[...]/мо[...]**

Upon the Mother of God's right forearm: [...]**вар[...]дар**[73]

[67] West-Bulgarian form for John / **Iwан**.
[68] Unintelligible text. The last word may be **коледа**, meaning Christmas carol and, originally, beginning.
[69] The inscription is above a group of hierarchs wearing phelonia and mitres.
[70] Unintelligible text (rewritten?).
[71] Sic; letter inversion.
[72] Rewritten: uî.
[73] The letter â was transformed during the 2003–2008 restoration into a cross. Constantin Bălan read: "†ар[...]адтр"; Bălan 2005, 424, no. 575. He considered it to be the painter's signature to which referred Metropolitan Neophytos. However, the latter mentioned that the inscription was found "below the right hand of Theotokos (...) written with large letters" (Neofit, 91). Unfortunately, that area today is a large lacuna (see fig. 1 and 8).

Fig. 1. Virgin of the Passion with Child, Dintr-un Lemn Monastery
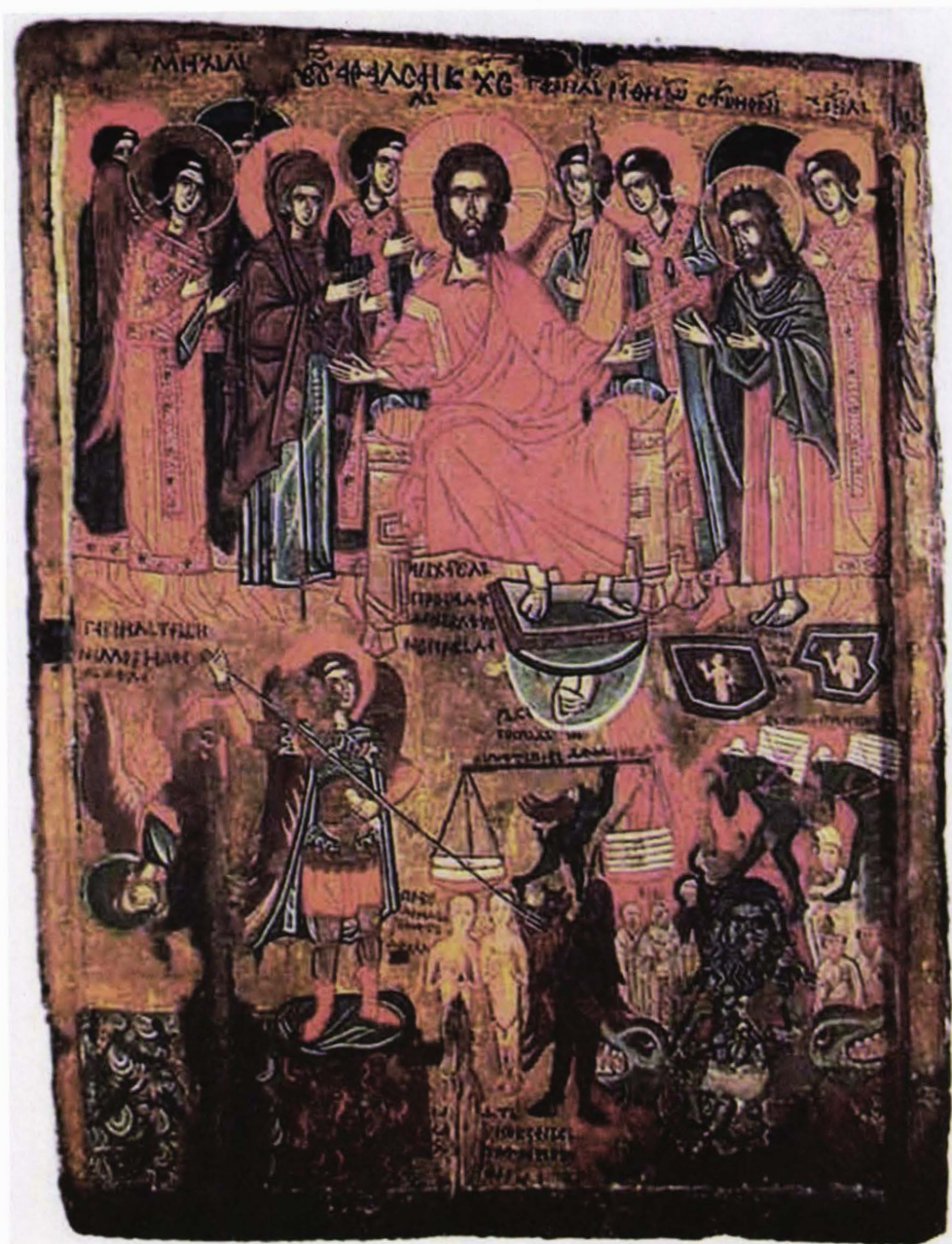(during restoration).

Fig. 2. Last Judgment, Dintr-un Lemn Monastery

Fig. 3. Last Judgment (detail), Dečani Monastery (1335–1350).

Fig. 4. Last Judgment (detail), Dintr-un Lemn Monastery.

Fig. 5. Virgin Portaitissa, Iveron Monastery (late 10th – early 11th century).

Fig. 6. Virgin Hodegetria with Child, Vatopedi Monastery (second half of the 13th century).
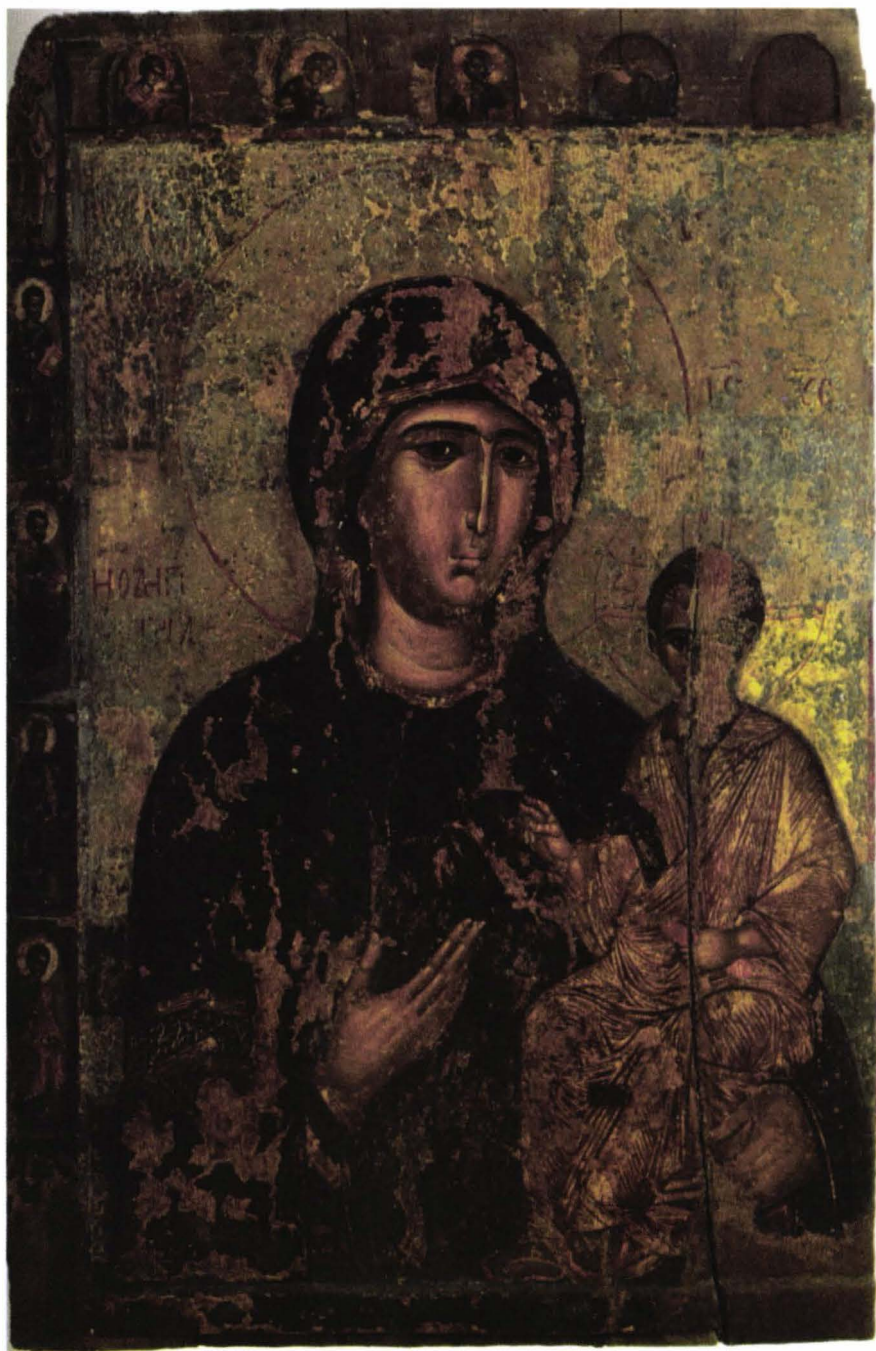
Fig. 7. Virgin Hodegetria with Child, Pantocrator Monastery, Mount Athos (early 15th century).

Fig. 8. Virgin of the Passion with Child, Dintr-un Lemn Monastery (after restoration).

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