Western Chapels in Middle Byzantine Churches: Meaning and Significance

Abstract. — This paper examines functional and compositional relationship between the narthex and the western chapels adjacent to it in middle Byzantine churches. The author examines the architectural features, archaeological evidence, decorative programs and literary sources related to the western end of middle Byzantine churches and establishes that the process of integration of the western chapels with the narthex proper, seen in a number of Palaeologan monuments, actually began in middle Byzantine times.

Key words. — Western chapels, narthex, middle Byzantine churches, subsidiary chapels, funerary rites, blessing of water.

The proliferation of subsidiary chapels and their integration with the main body of the church in the Middle Byzantine period is a phenomenon frequently discussed by scholars.¹ The most conclusive arguments have been established about the eastern chapels, the pastophoria. Their integration with the bema is explained in both architectural and functional terms as a consequence of the development of the Eucharistic liturgy and the growing need for the enlarged functional space of the sanctuary.² Much less attention has been paid to the design of the western end of the church, however. Attached to the narthex, the western chapels also represent an important phenomenon in the development of the sacred space at the time: both functionally and in terms of their planning. As will become apparent from this study, the architectural design and ritual functions of the western end of the church parallel the development of the sanctuary in the intent to integrate the subsidiary chapels with the main components of the church. The spatial and functional integration of the narthex and the chapels adjacent to it is suggested by archaeological evidence, literary sources, and decorative programs.³

Separate chapels adjacent to the narthex in a variety of layouts are found in many Middle Byzantine churches. Some of the most common arrangements of chapels include a) chapels which occupy the place between the arms of the cross (fig. 1); b) chapels that flank the main chamber of the narthex and are integrated with it (figs. 2, 3); c) and chapels that flank the main chamber of the narthex and expand laterally beyond the body of the church (fig. 4). In many instances, these chapels are segregated from the main body of the church and communicate freely only with the narthex (fig. 1). Even when the chapels are opened to both the narthex and the naos of the church, their function and decoration appears to be much closer to that of the narthex.


³ Equally intriguing is the appearance of other annexed chapels, such as those flanking the naos, or the gallery chapels. While their examination goes beyond the scope of this study, both deserve further scholarly attention. Some preliminary thoughts have been provided by S. Ćurčić, The Twin–Domed Narthex in Palaeologan Architecture, Зборник радова биоградској археолошкој институцији, 13, 1971, pp. 313–323; Idem, What was the Real Function of the Late Byzantine Katechoumena?, Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers 19, 1993, pp. 8–9; Mathews, Liturgy in Byzantine Architecture, pp. 125–138; and L. Drewer, Recent Approaches to Early Christian and Byzantine Iconography, Studies in Iconography 17, 1996, especially pp. 27–29, n. 199–203.
The best example of the integration of subsidiary chapels with the narthex is provided by the churches in which the subsidiary chapels are placed between the arms of the cross, so that on the exterior they appear as an integral part of the main body of the church (fig. 1). The interior design, however, reveals that the chapels are spatially segregated from the naos and communicate only with the narthex. This is particularly evident in cruciform churches, such as, for example, in the church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi (fig. 1), the church at Mordoviz, at Kale, Krupiste, the church of St. Demetrios at Varassova, the church of St. Nicholas at Aulis, or in the church of the Virgin at Kosine in Epirus. In all these monuments the adjacent chapels appear to be expanding the space of the narthex; in terms of planning, they transform the western end of the church
into the shape of the letter U. Similar designs are also found in some octagonal churches, such as in the church of the Holy Apostles in Athens (fig. 5). The western chapels in the church of the Holy Apostles communicate with both the naos and the narthex. However, their western openings are substantially larger than the eastern ones; thus, the chapels appear spatially integrated with the narthex proper.

The high degree of integration of the subsidiary chapels with the narthex is also seen in the second type of design, that is in the churches in which the chapels flank the main body of the narthex in the interior and are contained within the body of the edifice on the exterior (figs. 2, 3). In the churches of this design, the western chapels communicate only with the narthex and appear as its integral part. Such is a case, for example, in the Church of Sedam Prestola in Bulgaria (fig. 3), the church of the Assumption (fig. 2) in the Yeletsy Monastery (12th century), the Gate church of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of Caves near Kiev

---

4 For plans and discussion on churches at Mordoviz and at Kale, Krupiste, see B. Alexeova, Εκκλησία του Μορδοβίζ, Πρίγισσα, 1989, pl. 81–85, fig. 4; and P. Miljkovic-Perpek, L’architecture chrétienne chez les Slaves macédoniens à partir d’avant la moitié du XIe siècle jusqu’à la fin du XIIe siècle, The 17th International Byzantine Congress, Washington, 1986, p. 491, pl. 2. For plan, discussion and bibliography on the Varassa church, see: A. K. Orlandos, Ho Ἄγ. Δημήτριος τῆς Βαρασοβᾶς, Αρχαιολογικόι Μνημείοι τῆς Πολιτικής Ακαδημίας 1, 1935, pp. 105–120. The church of St. Nicholas is now destroyed. It is known to us only from drawings, photographs, and hypothetical reconstructions. See: Ćurčić, Architectural Significance of Subsidiary Chapels, pp. 101–102; and Ch. Bouras, Συμπλέγματα στοιχεία γίγαντας και τοπογραφίας τῆς Βοιωτίας, Delion tòn Christianikès Archaologikès Hetairias 4, 1964–65, pp. 227–244. According to the reconstruction, the walls which separate the western chapels from the naos in the church of the Virgin at Kosine are later additions. However, the basis for this reconstruction is unclear since there is no evidence to suggest that either piers columns were originally used instead of walls. For a reconstruction, see G. Koch, ed., Albanien. Kulturdenkmäler eines unbekannten Landes aus 2200 Jahren, Marburg, 1985, pp. 36–37.

5 See A. Frantz, The Church of the Holy Apostles, Princeton, 1071, fig. 8g.
the narthex proper. By the Middle Byzantine period, the narthex assumed many functions. Most commonly, the narthex was used for the liturgy of the hours, for the gathering of monks after the orthros, for greeting of the abbot, as well as for the vespers, for the rites of the blessing of water, and for some funerary ceremonies. Although most of the furnishings and painted programs in subsidiary chapels are no longer in existence, what has remained suggests that they shared two particular function with the narthex – the funerary services and/or the ceremony of the benediction of water.

The western chapels of the Katholiken of the Monastery of Hosios Loukas are the most studied and best preserved example testifying that these ceremonies were performed in the subsidiary chapels adjacent to the narthex. The chapels at Hosios Loukas are screened off from the main body of the church and communicate freely only with the narthex. The funerary function of the north-west chapel has been established by scholars. The arcosolium on the north wall, the connection of the chapel with the tomb of St. Luke, as well as the


7 For Patleina, see Mniarek, Археологические о срдневековьем България, p. 115, fig. 120; for Ylianaka Bayir and Lavra Monastery, see Curcić, Architectural Significance of Subsidiary Chapels, pp. 97–99, figs. 5, 7.


10 While large openings connect the chapels with the narthex, their communication with the naos is minimized. The south chapel is completely separated from the naos by a wall, and a small passageway connects the north chapel to the naos. See Chatzidakis-Bacharès, Les peintures murales de Hosios Loukas. Les chapelles occidentales, p. 16, sch. 1.
themes of death and burial emphasized in the painted decoration, indicate that the chapel was used for funerary rites. The south-west chapel of Hosios Loukas was used for the benediction of water. This has been deduced from the presence of a small baptismal font, from the decorative aspects of the chapel, and from the text inscribed on the scene of the Meeting of Christ and St. John the Baptist which is related to the ceremony of the benediction of baptismal water. The large size of this chapel suggests that the entire rite of Baptism may have been performed there.

The western chapels of the church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi, although much smaller than those of Hosios Loukas, may have housed related functions. The western chapels at Nerezi are crowned by domes, measure 1.40 m by 1.50 m in plan and, as mentioned earlier, are segregated from the naos proper by full walls; they communicate with the narthex through openings measuring 2.00 m x 0.45 m (fig. 1). The painted decoration of the north-west chapel, consisting of a gallery of mostly unidentifiable images of saints on the walls and an image of Christ in the medallion, reveals little about its function; the archaeological evidence, however, deserves further attention. The northwest chapel is distinguished by the remains of a tomb which consists of two parts: the lower, which represented an actual burial place, 1.90 m long, 0.68 meters wide, and 0.86 m deep; and an upper section in the shape of an arcosolium with a diameter of 1.14 m and height of the arch measuring 0.96 m (fig. 6). The tomb is contemporaneous with the church, built within and supported by the north foundation wall.

The presence of a tomb with an arcosolium in the north-west chapel at Nerezi suggests its funerary function. That at least complies with the function assigned to a number of chapels adjacent to the narthex and containing arcosolia, such as the above discussed north-west

12 Ibid., pp. 27–35; 83–103; 113–118.
Fig. 5. The Church of Holy Apostles, Athens (after Frantz)

chapel in Hosios Loukas, as well as the chapels in the Katholiken of the Lavra monastery on Mount Athos, in the Gate church of the Holy Trinity monastery of the Caves in Russia, and in a number of Cappadocian churches. The small size of these chapels, however, precludes any elaborate ceremony and points to the office of pannychis as the most probable function performed there. This rite involves monastic commemoration of the dead and was performed along with Vespers at the tombs of the deceased monks or the founders of the monastery. As indicated by surviving literary evidence, the rite was meant to honor the deceased and was performed by a church official who led the liturgical procession and who conducted the service by chanting in the cemetery chapel. The office of the pannychis gained in popularity since the ninth century, and in the light of its frequent use in the Middle Byzantine monastic circles it is quite likely that it was performed in the chapels housing the

14 There were three types of pannychis performed at the time, the one discussed being the most related to a monastic context. For a discussion and bibliography on funerary rites in general and the pannychis in particular, see C. L. Connor, Art and Miracles in Medieval Byzantium. The Crypt at Hosios Loukas and Its Frescoes, Princeton, 1991, pp. 83–92; and M. Arranz, Les prières presbyérales de la »Pannychis« de l’ancien Euchologie byzantin et la »Panikhidas« des défunts, Orientalia Christianae Periodica 40, 1974, pp. 314–343; 41, 1975, pp. 119–139.
15 Ibid.
Water basins of any kind are commonly related to Baptismal rites. Quite often, however, as at Nerezi, the chapels and the narthex proper are too small to house a function of such an elaborate nature. Moreover, by the twelfth century, baptismal basins became small and portable, so that the rite could have been performed anywhere in the church.21 The presence of the water basin or a fountain can be associated, however, with the rite of the blessing of water, as is the case in Hosios Loukas.

Known since the fourth century when it was performed on the feast of the Epiphany, the ceremony

arcosolium in the majority of churches such as, for example, at Nerezi.16

The archaeological findings in the south-west chapel at Nerezi are also revealing in terms of its function. According to an unpublished report of the excavations in the church in the early 1970’s, the chapel once featured a pit in the center of its floor (fig. 7).17 The pit, dug in a shape of a pithos, reached the depth of 2.29 m, with its upper portion 0.85 m beneath the floor level. Incidentally, for reasons unknown to me, the pit was covered during the same campaign.

In the absence of the Typicon or any other literary evidence, the use of this pit can not be determined.18 A comparative analysis, however, calls for some speculation. The pit could have been used for burials, as some kind of storage space or, more likely, as a reservoir or a container for the keeping of the blessed water.19 The presence of the blessed water in the south-west chapel at Nerezi would comply with the function commonly assigned to the chapels in comparable locations, as seen in Hosios Loukas, in the Cathedral of the Assumption in the Yeletsky Monastery and in the cathedral of St. Sophia, Kiev.20 Even when the churches did not have chapels adjacent to narthex, a fountain or a basin for keeping of the blessed water was located in the comparable location of the narthex as will be seen below.

16 The presence and prominent position given to saints who are protectors of cattle and land in this chapel indicates that the chapel may have also been used for special prayers related to the wellbeing of cattle and land, as suggested by D. Baranen-Strajkoyska, Za tematstva programma na zhivopisot vo Nerezi, Kul'turno nasledisvo 22–23, 1995–96, pp. 7–25. However, the author’s claim that this chapel could not have been used as a funerary chapel, contradicts both archaeological findings in that chapel and the remaining components of its painted decoration. See I. Sinkov, The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi: Architecture, Programme, Patronage (Wiesbaden, forthcoming).

17 I am grateful to my colleagues at the Institute for the Protection of Monuments in Skopje for bringing this report to my attention.

18 The dating of the pit is also questionable. The archaeological report states that it is contemporaneous with the church, yet it does not explain the reasons for this attribution.

19 Pits in the shape resembling that at Nerezi were used for funerary purposes since Antiquity. It is thus possible that this chapel, like the north–west chapel, functioned as the funerary chapel. Although tombs of such shape were not, to my knowledge, commonly found in twelfth-century Byzantium, the possibility that the pit was used as some kind of a tomb should not be excluded. In that event, the chapel could probably have housed the office of pampyrchis. The pit could have been used as some kind of storage, too. As Dr. Svetlana Popovic kindly brought to my attention, recent excavations in Serbian monasteries revealed several pits dug under various portions of churches and identified as treasuries. These pits are, however, of a later date and lack the regularity of shape of the pits at Nerezi. Thus, while the pit at Nerezi may have, at some point of time, acquired the function of a treasury, the absence of any remains of its contents and its actual shape challenge the hypothesis that this was its initial use.

20 For Yeletsky Monastery, see Faensen and Ivanov, Early Russian Architecture, p. 337; for St. Sophia, see N. Okunev, Un type de baptistère byzantin, Revue biblique, 31, 1922, pp. 583–589; and A. Powstenko, The Cathedral of St. Sophia of Kiev, New York, 1954, pp. 58, 64.

of the blessing of water developed during Middle Byzantine times when it became performed more frequently.\textsuperscript{22} Moreover, according to literary evidence, by the ninth century there were two distinctive locations for the rites of the blessing of water: in the center of the church and in the narthex or another portion of the church which contained a phiale or a water basin.\textsuperscript{23} There is also literary evidence that the rite could have been performed by a single official who sprinkled the water from a small vessel.\textsuperscript{24} In the liturgy of the Orthodox church, there are three ceremonies related to the blessing of water: the blessing of water to be used for the sacrament of the Baptism; the great blessing of water done at the feast of the Epiphany; and the lesser blessing of water, performed whenever the need for additional blessed water may arise.\textsuperscript{25} United in their meaning – to

\textsuperscript{22} It was performed not only during the Epiphany, but also during the Sunday liturgy and the liturgy of the Church Feasts. See Chatzidakis-Bucharas, \textit{Les peintures morales de Hosios Loukas}. \textit{Les chape lie occidentals}, p. 116; and Millet, \textit{Recherches au Mont-Athos}, pp. 110–116.

\textsuperscript{23} Millet, \textit{Recherches au Mont-Athos}, p. 116.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid, p. 117.

\textsuperscript{25} The lesser blessing of water is also performed at the feast of the procession of the holy cross. For a discussion on the meaning of water in the Orthodox church, see A. Schmemann, \textit{Of Water and the Spirit}, St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1974; and A. Yavoraitzky, \textit{Holy Water in Liturgy and Life}, M. A. Thesis, St. Vladimir’s Seminary, pp. 19–29.
identity the water being blessed with the water which was sanctified at Christ’s Baptism – and sharing a select number of prayers, the different ceremonies of the blessing of water, however, accentuate different themes. In a series of petitions, the rite of the blessing of baptismal waters relates to the specific needs of the candidate for Baptism: the great blessing of waters is addressed to God and refers to the participation of the entire community, while the lesser blessing of water assumes a more penitential character and asks of God to sanctify the water and thus aids us in salvation.²⁶

Insufficient evidence and the mobility of water vessels in most churches often make it impossible to determine which one of the rites of the blessing of water may have been celebrated in a particular chapel or wherever the water basin was located. The case of Hosios Loukas is a rare example in which the text directly relates to the feast of the Epiphany and the blessing of water associated with the feast.²⁷ Another chapel which probably reveals the type of the ceremony performed there is the south-west chapel at Nerezi. Although non-descript at first sight, the painted decoration of Nerezi’s chapel seemingly relates to the readings of the service of the lesser

²⁶ ibid.
²⁷ See Chatzidakis-Bucharas, Les peintures mitrales de Hosios Loukas. Les chapelles occidentales, p. 115. The size of the chapel at Hosios Loukas is sufficient for all three ceremonies, and it is likely that they might have been performed there.
blessing of water, thus suggesting that the chapel may have housed that particular ceremony. The chapel at Nerezi exhibits the image of Christ–Priest in the medallion of the dome, the procession of angels holding liturgical vessels in the drum, and images of mostly damaged individual saints with prominence given to the standing figures of the holy martyrs who occupy the walls of the lower zone of the chapel.\textsuperscript{28} The presence of Christ–Priest and the procession of angels holding liturgical gifts suggests the liturgical function of the chapel. The meaning of this arrangement may be connected with the content of the liturgy of the lesser

\textsuperscript{28} See I. Sinkevič, \textit{The Church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi. Architecture, Programme, Patronage}, Wiesbaden, 2000, p. 27.
blessing of water.\textsuperscript{29} This rite, much less festive than other ceremonies of the blessing of water, focuses on the passion of Christ as the avenue to our salvation. In addition, the prayers invoke intercessory powers of the holy personages with special emphasis placed upon the martyrs.\textsuperscript{30} It is thus possible that numerous saints and particularly the prominently placed martyrs in the chapel at Nerezi reflect the intercessory characters of us in understanding the rather unusual appearance of the medallion of Christ represented as priest in the dome. Very seldom seen in Byzantium prior to Nerezi, the image of Christ as priest reflects the epistle reading from St. Paul’s letter to Hebrews (2; 11–18) recited during the rite of the lesser blessing of water; the Biblical text identifies Christ as the high priest whose suffering offered salvation to human kind.\textsuperscript{31} Thus the medallion displaying Christ as priest might have been used to illustrate the service performed in the chapel and to emphasize its penitential character. Such interpretation would at least relate the southwest chapel to the program of other components of the church, focused on the themes of passion and intercession. Moreover, the south-west chapel at Nerezi may be seen as another example of a subsidiary chapel which housed the rite of the blessing of water, thus suggesting that it could have been customarily celebrated in related areas of other Byzantine churches.

Funerary rites and the rite of the blessing of water performed in the chapels adjacent to the narthex were also commonly officiated in the narthexes. For example, it is well known that the remains of burial sites in the narthexes of Middle Byzantine churches exist throughout the empire.\textsuperscript{32} Some of the best known examples are the narthex of the Pantokrator Monastery, of the North and South Church of the Lips Monastery, and the parekklesion of the Pammakaristos and the Kariye Camii in Constantinople, to mention just a few.\textsuperscript{33} Moreover, baptismal fonts are found in the narthexes of the church of the Holy Apostles in Athens, probably from around 1000, in the south church of the Pantokrator Monastery, dated in the 12th century, and in the church of St. Mary of the Admiral, also dated in c. 12th century.\textsuperscript{34}

As far as painted programs are concerned, frescoes of the Baptism, reflecting the use of the blessed water, are seen, for example, in the narthexes of Panagia ton Chaikeon in Thessaloniki, in St. Nicholas Kasnitzi in Kastoria, and in the Church of St. Peter of Kalyvia.\textsuperscript{35} The themes of death and burial are also prominent. For example, the Last Judgment is the principal theme of the narthexes of St. Stephen in Kastoria, Panagia ton Chaïkeon in Thessaloniki, Hagios Stratigos on Mara, and in Mavriotissa in Kastoria.\textsuperscript{36} Other themes relevant to the death and burial of Christ, such as the Crucifixion, the Betrayal, and the Washing of Feet, are also displayed in the narthexes of Hosios Loukas, Nea Moni on Chios, Daphni, and Hagioi Anargyroi in Kastoria.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{29} The lesser blessing of water begins with two litanies common to other blessings. Two additional petitions recited in this rite pray to God to save us by sanctifying the water. In addition, Psalms 51 and 143 and the troparia sung during the liturgy ask for God’s mercy, for his aid in cleansing sins, human salvation, and compassion. See J. F. Hapgood, \textit{Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church}. New York, 1922, pp. 470–478.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{31} “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.” From ibid, p. 473.

\textsuperscript{32} For the studies which discuss the use of the narthex for the commemorative services in the Middle Byzantine and Palaeologan times, see Bach, \textit{La fonction funéraire du narthex dans les églises byzantines du XIIe au XIVe siècle}, pp. 25–33; Papageorgiou, \textit{The Narthex of the Middle Byzantine period in Cyprus}, pp. 437–438; Čuřič, \textit{Twin-domed Narthex}, pp. 333–344; N. Teteriatnikov, \textit{Burial Places in Cappadocian Churches, The Greek Orthodox Theological Review}, 29/2, 1984, pp. 143–148; R. Ousterhout, \textit{The Architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul}.


\textsuperscript{35} For the Church of the Holy Apostles, see Frantz, \textit{The Church of the Holy Apostles}, p. 17, pl. 10; for the Pantokrator Monastery, see A. H. S. Megaw, Notes on the Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul, \textit{Dumbarton Oaks Papers}, 17, 1963, pp. 335–364; for St. Mary of the Admiral, see Čuřič, St. Mary’s of the Admiral, pp. 45–46.

\textsuperscript{36} Concerning Panagia ton Chaïkeon, the scene is now destroyed; see A. Tsitouridou, \textit{Hé Panagia tô Cháikéon}, Thessaloniki, 1975, pp. 45–48; pis. 7. 8. For St. Nicholas, see M. Chatzidakis, \textit{Kastoria}. Athens, 1985, p. 65, pl. 20; and for St. Peter, see N. Caumbarakis-Panselinos, \textit{Saint-Pierre de Kalyvia-Kouvara et la chapelle de la Vierge de Mérenta}, Thessaloniki, 1976, pp. 58–59, pl. 29.

\textsuperscript{37} For St. Stephen and Mavriotissa, see Chatzidakis, \textit{Kastoria}, pp. 6–22; 66–84; for Panagia ton Chaïkeon, see Tsitouridou, \textit{Hé Panagia tô Cháikéon}, pp. 45–49.

\textsuperscript{38} For H. Anargyroi, see Chatzidakis, \textit{Kastoria}, pp. 22–50; for Hosios Loukas, Nea Moni, and Daphni, see E. Diez and O. Demus, \textit{Byzantine Mosaics in Greece: Hosios Lucas and Daphni}. Cambridge, Mass., 1931, pls. 119–121.
The placement of water basins and tombs in the narthexes of Middle Byzantine churches is also attested by a number of typica which most commonly identify the rites of thepannychis and the blessing of water as those performed in the narthex. This is at least suggested by the Typicon of Irene from 1027 and the Euchologion from 1077, as well as by the several Typica from the monastic foundations on Cyprus, such as the Typicon of the Monastery of Makhairas, Ritual Ordinance of St. Neophytos, and the Typicon of the Monastery of St. John of Koutsouvidis. Thus, according to written sources, the rites performed in the narthexes correspond to those which took place in the western chapels.

One particularly interesting example of the relationship between the narthex and the subsidiary chapels may be provided by the western end of the church of the Virgin Kosmosoteira at Pherrai (fig. 8). The hypothesis that the tomb of Issak Komnenos, the founder of the monastery, may have been located in the north-west chapel, while not archaeologically proven, is nonetheless intriguing. The western end of the Virgin Kosmosoteira is composed of two domed chapels flanking the elongated western arm of the cross. The Typicon of the church states that the tomb was to be located in the left or the north part of the narthex. If that section, comprised of the elongated western bay and the two chapels indeed, as Osterhout suggested, represents the narthex of the church, it would be apparent that neither the Typicon nor the design or decorative aspects of the church draw any distinction between the narthex proper and the chapels adjacent to it.

While the case of Pherrai remains inconclusive, the other examples discussed above demonstrate that the narthex and the chapels adjacent to it were related architecturally and that they housed related functions. It is thus plausible to assume that the chapels functionally formed an integral part of the narthex. Echoing the integration of the sanctuary, the development and increased importance of the rite of pannychis and that of the blessing of water in the Middle Byzantine period quite possibly affected the architectural and functional integration of the western end of Middle Byzantine churches. The chapels, integrated spatially with the narthex proper, extended its functional space. For example, in the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas, the Liturgy of the Hours was most likely performed in the main narthex space, while the blessing of water and the pannychis became relegated to chapels. In churches without chapels, or in those in which the chapels were needed for other functions, such as, for example for the private liturgy, the same rites might have been performed in the narthex proper.

Later developments of functional use and spatial composition of subsidiary chapels testify to the intention to unify the chapels and the narthex proper. For example, the thirteenth-century churches with twin-domed narthexes, discussed by S. Đurđić, make the existence of the chapels apparent on their exteriors; in the interior, the space is unified. Moreover, the fourteenth-century church at Dečani represents the final product of that integration. The narthex of Dečani is in the shape of a large rectangular chamber with four free-standing columns (fig. 9). While the wall barriers have been dissolved, the painted decoration and archaeological findings indicate that the narthex consists of two separate chapels flanking the central space. The north-west bay of the narthex at Dečani contains four tombs – one

38 For the Typicon of Irene, see A. Dimitrijević, Описание ликих патриархских рукоятий, 2, Киев [1901, 1051]; for a discussion, see Millet, Recherches au Mont Athos, p. 116. For the bibliography and discussion on Cypriot Typica, see A. Papageorgiou, The Narthex of the Churches in Cyprus, p. 447; and C. Mango, The Monastery of St. Chryso Stornos at Koutsouvidis and Its Wall Paintings. Part I: Descriptions, Dunbarton Oaks Papers, 44, 1990, pp. 63–94.
39 For a comprehensive discussion about the architecture of the church, see S. Sinos, Die Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira in Bera (Vira), Munich, 1985; for plans see Ibid., pls. 13, 14, 143.
40 This suggestion was made by R. Osterhout, who connected the passage from the Typicon which states that the tomb should be located in the left or north part of the narthex, to the remains of the painted decoration revealing the scene of the Holy Women at the tomb – a common funerary image. N. Sevčenko, however, brought to our attention that the text of the Typicon does not specify the domed compartment as the place of the tomb. Thus, despite many analogous examples of churches which house the tomb in that area, the final location of the tomb has to be determined by archaeological evidence. See R. G. Osterhout, Where was the Tomb of Isaac Komnenos?, Byzantine Studies Conference. Abstracts, 11, 1985, p. 34; and N. P. Sevčenko, The Tomb of Isaac Komnenos at Pherrai, Greek Orthodox Theological Review 29, 1984, pp. 135–140. For English translation of the Typicon, see http://www.doaks.org/typ039.pdf. Sinos too considers the location of the tomb as problematic, but suggests the possibility that it might have been located in the north-west chapel. See Sinos, Die Klosterkirche der Kosmosoteira, pp. 52–62.
41 For the narthex, see T. F. Mathews, The Sequel to Nicea II in Byzantine Church Decoration, Perkins Journal 41/3, 1988, p. 17, n. 25; for chapels, see Chatzidakis-Bachar. Les peintures murales de Hosios Loukas, pp. 115–118.
43 In its design, it very much reminds us of the lit. For a discussion on the lit and bibliography, see P. Mylonas, Gavits Armeniens et Lias Byzantins, Cahiers archéologiques, 38, 1990, pp. 101–119.
sarcophagus tomb placed along the north wall and three floor tombs. In addition, the east wall is dominated by a large scene representing the Church Fathers Officiating before the dead Christ. Although there are no niches on the east wall, the scene of the officiating bishops is, as a rule, depicted only in the main apse and is relevant to its liturgical function. Its placement elsewhere in the church clearly alludes to liturgical aspects of the architectural space. If the tombs and images of the death and burial relate to funerary rites, the huge Nemanjić dynastic tree and the font displayed in the south portion of the narthex are to be associated with the rituals related to the blessed water. Thus the size, decoration, and furnishing at Dečani reveal the complete integration of the narthex proper and its subsidiary chapels. While this phenomenon is not evidenced in all Byzantine churches, it represents a common trend which, as this article argued, began in the Middle Byzantine period.

Резиме:
ИДА СИНКЕВИЋ, Лафајет колеџ, Истоп, САД

НАМЕНА И ЗНАЧЕЊЕ КАПЕЛА НА ЗАПАДНОЈ СТРАНИ ЦРКАВА ИЗ СРЕДЊОВИЗАНТИЈСКОГ ПЕРИОДА

Предмет овог чланка је анализи функционалних и композиционих веза нартекса и западних капела у црквама средњовизантијског периода. Разматрају се цркве у којима су бочне капеле везане за нартекс. Наводећи бројне примере, аутор истиче да западне капеле средњевизантијских цркава у великом броју случајева показују слична композиционе решења. Капеле су постављене или између кракова крста, као што је случај у цркви Св. Пантелејмона у Нерезима, или фланкирају нартекс али не превазилазе ширину наоса у екстерјеру, као, на пример, у цркви Селам Престола у Бугарској, или фланкирају нартекс који се простире у ширини наоса, тако да капеле прекривају западни део цркве, као у католикону манастира Лавре на Светој Гори.

У анализи просторне организације западног дела цркве аутор истиче да су у великом броју споменика средњевизантијске епохи, као у цркви у Епископима на Сантопинију и у Панагији у Халки на Наксосу, западне капеле потпуно сепарисане од наоса и комуникаирају само са нартексом. Чак и у случајевима где постоје отвори између капела и наоса, као на пример у цркви Св. Апостола у Атини или у католикону манастира Св. Лука у Фокиди, они су знатно мањи од отвора који повезују нартекс са капелама, те је стога комуникација са нартексом доминантна.

Испитивање функције ових простора и њихових декоративних програма, такође указује на уску повезаност бочних капела и нартекса. Анализирају се, између осталих, западне капеле и нартекси у католикону манастира Св. Луке у Фокиди, цркви Св. Пантелејмона у Нерезима, катедрали Успења Јелешког манастира, Св. Софија у Кијеву, манастира Константина Липс и Пантократора у Царицарцу, Панагиј ток Халкеон у Сољуну, Хагиос Стратегос на Манију и Св. Стефану и Мавриотиси у Касторији.

На основу иститивања археолошких остатака, декоративних програма и писаних извора, аутор закључује да су се и нартекс и бочне капеле користиле за сличне ритуале, као што су, на пример, фунарарне службе као и службе освећивања свете воде. Заједнички обели, као и просторна повезаност капела и нартекса, указује на чињеницу да је процес интегрисања нартекса са бочним капелама, које достиже своју зрелу варијанту у многобројним црквама палеолошког периода, започео у горе наведеним споменицима средњевизантијске епохи.