

FROM CHRIST HELIOS TO THE SUN OF JUSTICE: SEVERAL SOLAR SYMBOLS IN THE BYZANTINE AND SERBIAN MEDIEVAL ART

The paper discusses the motive of Christ the Sun of Justice in the art of late antiquity and then in Byzantine art, viewed through the prism of Byzantine patristic interpretations. The concept of the meaning of the Sun and the solar cult with its standardized visualization was firstly embodied in Roman art of the imperial period. Depictions of twelve signs surrounded by a solar motif were often at the heart of pagan art, but also during the Middle Ages, such as on pages of Biblical and liturgical manuscripts, on facades and in the interior of churches, pavements and especially domes in the architecture of Byzantium. In the Old and New Testament, the solar context is mentioned in numerous verses, sometimes directly and sometimes through the kind of literary symbols embodied by the Lord. On this occasion, it is necessary to distinguish clearly the criticisms of astrolatry that appear in many places in the Old Testament in relation to the prominence of the sun as a kind of Old Testament prefiguration of Christ or light. The Sun of Justice is present in the everlasting Christian tradition, above all the celebration of certain holidays that have marked the Christian world: From the Birth of the Blessed Virgin until the three-day Resurrection. Thus, through the celebration of certain dates (December 25 / January 7), Epiphany, Easter can be analyzed astrotheologically, ie mythological symbols related to Christ announced by the Star in Heaven.

Key words: Sol Invictus, Christ the Sun of Justice, patristic, sun, light, Crucifixion, Resurrection, dome, rose windows