

“SO THE SUN STOOD STILL, AND THE MOON STOPPED”: REPRESENTATIONS OF SOLAR DISCS IN BYZANTINE AND LATE MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE IN SERBIA

The paper considers the presence of the solar discs in the Byzantine and Late Medieval Serbian architecture. The main aims of the paper are to offer a different approach to interpretation of the exteriority and to analyze specific positioning of solar *disci* executed in brickwork. Constantinopolitan examples offer us powerful stimulus for furthermore research of this topic. Position of *disci* in the upper zones provides more precise conclusions about purely Divine character of the motif hidden behind ‘strict’ geometrical appearance. When compared with preserved painted motives, both in illuminated manuscripts and fresco decoration, specific aspects of this motif refer not only to solar vision but also toward apocalyptic images. All mentioned examples are recognizable by their delicate architectural stimuli whose manner of execution provokes optical illusion in the eye of beholder. The paradigm behind solar motif could be traced back to Dionysos the Areopagites, Gregory of Naziansus, Gregory of Nyssa and Cosmas Indicopleustes.

Circularly materialized in brickwork, this motif depicts actually the same movement which is depicted in all circular shapes inside of the church embodiment of the Liturgy performed in the Heavens as on the Earth below. Vision of the God as sun and Light explains the reason of positioning in the upper zones of the church. That is the end of spiritual journey of believer, but this vision is vibrant and synchronous with other executed motives around solar disc.

Key words: solar discs, Theodore Metochites, Christ the Chora church, Cosmas Indicopleustes, brickwork decoration, Astronomy in Culture