



MONASTERY DECANI

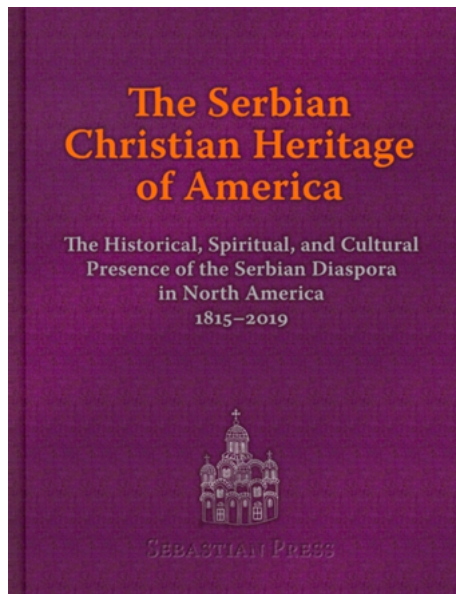
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MONASTERY DECANI

Visoki Decani Monastery is a major Serbian Orthodox monastery, situated in Kosovo & Metohija, 12 km south from the town of Pec. Its cathedral is the biggest medieval church in the Balkans which contains the largest preserved monument of Byzantine fresco-painting.

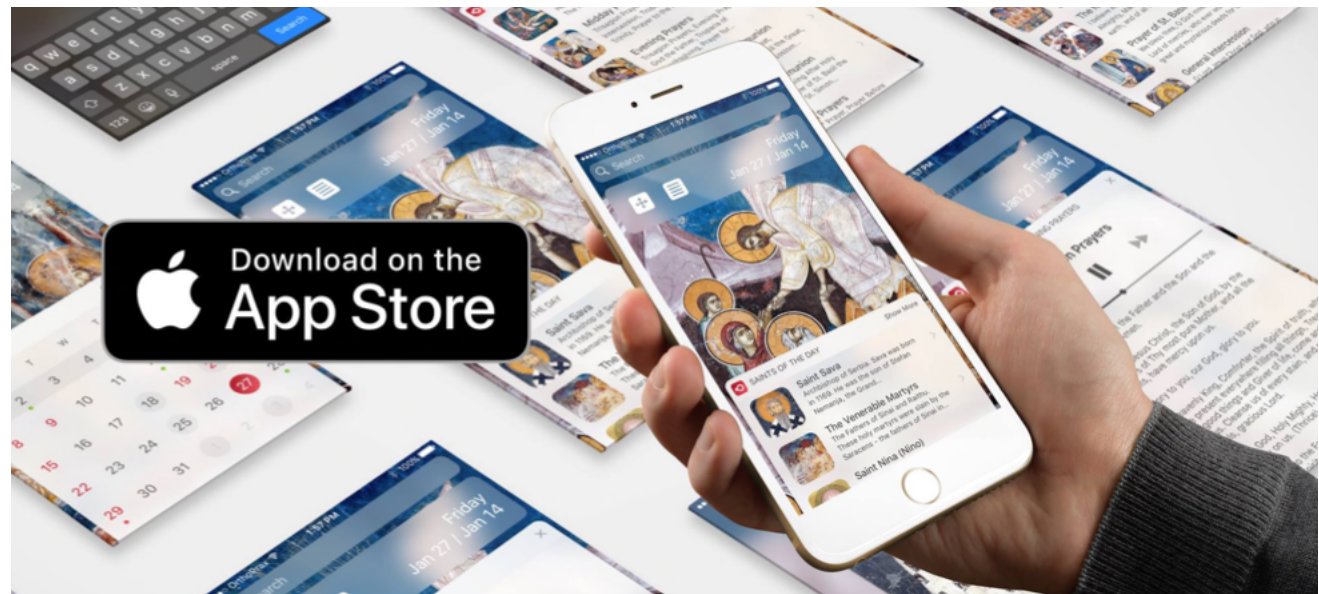
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The monastery was established in a chestnut grove by king Stefan Decanski in 1327. Its original founding charter is dated to 1330, however.

Next year the king died and was buried at the monastery, which henceforth became his popular shrine. The construction activities were continued by his son Stefan Dusan until 1335, but the wall-painting was not completed until 1350.

The cathedral, dedicated to Christ Pantocrator and built from blocks of red-purple, light-yellow and onyx marble, was constructed by master-builders under the Franciscan monk Vitus of Kotor.

It is distinguished from other contemporary Serbian churches by its imposing dimensions and obvious Romanesque features. Its celebrated frescoes comprise some 1000 portraits and cover all major themes of the New Testament.

The cathedral contains original 14th-century wooden iconostasis, hegumen's throne and carved sarcophagus of king Stefan.

In 2004, UNESCO listed the monastery on the World Heritage List, citing its frescoes as "one of the most valued examples of the so-called Palaeologan renaissance in Byzantine painting" and "a valuable record of the life in the 14th century".



You Can Help

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Help us reach our goal for the next year. Many collections are planned, including the Church of Bogorodicia Ljeviska in Prizren, and rare manuscripts from Kosovo monasteries, but it will all depend on the funds available. Our goal is to raise \$10,000 in donations that we can match with funds available for this purpose from our long-time patrons and institutions.

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