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The Materials of Nikolai Okunev's Expedition of 1917 on the Wall Paintings of Parkhali¹

Unfortunately, the wall paintings in the mediaeval churches of Tao-Klardjeti have been lost completely or to a significant extent². Those in the church of St. John the Baptist in Parkhali, completed before 973 [3, pp.167–168, 304–305; 4, pp.178–190; 31, pp.134–143], have been white-washed for many decades. It is not known, how many of the images still survive and in what condition. As long as the church is now under restoration³, we consider it timely to present some new archival materials on its wall paintings⁴.

The frescoes of Parkhali are first mentioned by Georgi Kazbek, who visited the church in 1874. He wrote that in the apse there was an image of Christ surrounded by saints [12, pp.120–124].

One of the most important works on the monumental painting of Tao-Klardjeti is the book of Ekvtime Takaishvili first published only in 1952, basing on the materials of his 1917 expedition [24]. This book contains detailed descriptions of architecture, epigraphic evidence and paintings of Ishkhani, Oshki, Khakhuli and some other monuments. However, Otkhta Eklesia and Parkhali were examined by other members of the expedition after Takaishvili's departure. Therefore these descriptions are less complete and the information on Parkhali wall paintings is very scanty, whereas the illustrations included only two photographs of the paintings in the apse and other three photographs with fragments of paintings on the piers [24, p.99, pl.144 (1, 3), 147 (1, 2), 148 (1)]. So far these photos provided the only source for reconstructing the entire program of Parkhali apse decoration in the works by Ekaterina Privalova⁵ and Zaza Skh-

¹ The research is prepared with the support of the Russian Science Foundation (14–28–00213). The archival research and the identification of the subjects of wall paintings were carried out by the both authors, whereas the iconographical analysis was made by Anna Zakharova.

² For the bibliography on the monuments of Tao-Klardjeti see: <http://tao-klarjeti.com/portal/en/bibliography?showall=1&limitstart=> (accessed 06 April 2017).

³ On the current restoration at Parkhali see: https://www.facebook.com/pg/culturegovge/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1383369715044632 (accessed 20 September 2017).

⁴ We would like to thank our friend and colleague Andrey Vinogradov who drew our attention to these materials.

⁵ In her last article E. Privalova reconstructed Parkhali iconographic program as follows: "...murals were arranged in five (maybe six) registers here. Upper part was most likely to be the same [as in Otkhta] triumphal scene (if 'Choirs of Angels' are meant under the 'Choir of Saints' by G. Kazbegi) <...> Below the conch the Virgin flanked by two Angels is in the middle of the range of Apostles, below, there is a row of the Church Fathers and, small life scenes of Christ seem to be arranged in two registers" [17, p.66]. As professor M. Didebulidze

irtladze⁶. In summer of 1917, concurrently with the expedition of Takaishvili, these churches were examined by another expedition headed by Nikolai Okunev (1885–1949) [7; 8; 9]. Nikolai Okunev is mostly known as researcher who worked on Old Russian, Byzantine and mediaeval Serbian art. From 1905 to 1911 he studied at the faculty of History and Philology of Saint Petersburg University with professor Dmitry Ainalov. After graduating from the University in 1911, Okunev took part in the excavations of Ani headed by the academician Nikolai Marr. On the recommendation of Marr, Okunev became member of Russian Imperial Archaeological Society. In 1913–1914 he was the secretary of Russian Archaeological Institute in Constantinople. Back to Petrograd, he mainly worked on Old Russian art, but did not abandon his studies on the medieval art of Transcaucasia. In June 1917 Okunev was appointed assistant professor of Petrograd University. Right after that Nikolai Marr invited him to take part in an expedition to the province of Kars. This expedition was part of the Russian Academy of Sciences' activities aimed at research and preservation of Christian monuments in the East during the First World War.

In July of 1917 the expedition started at Erzerum, Gassan Kale and Baiburt. One of the team members, the architect Beloborodov, soon fell ill, and Okunev continued his work together with the photographer Bulbenko. In August they investigated and photographed the churches in the region of Chorokhi river: Otkhta Eklesia, Parkhali, Ishkhani, Oshki, Khakhuli. After that Okunev and Bulbenko passed by Olty and Bana to Kars, wherefrom they left for Tiflis. On their way they met Takaishvili's expedition moving by the same route in the opposite direction⁷. Upon his return to Petrograd, Okunev published a brief account of his expedition [15].

Yet most of his materials, including his notes and more than 400 photographs, remained unpublished. The photographs taken by Okunev and Bulbenko are kept in the Photographic Department of the Scientific Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture in St. Petersburg (Fund 23, Collection 177/1-427, negatives II-7687–8113, albums of prints O. 186–192). Some of these photographs, mainly that of Ishkhani cathedral, were published by Nikolai Tokarsky [27], while the others remained unknown to the scholarly community. Among these the photographs of Parkhali are probably the most interesting (F. 23, Coll. 177/71-82, negatives II-7757-7768, prints O. 187.6-17).

The wall paintings in Parkhali were preserved in the altar apse; some unidentifiable fragments also survived in the niches of the eastern piers. The paintings were partially damaged or stained with paint. Yet with the help of Okunev's photographs it is still possible to reconstruct Parkhali iconographic program on the whole. The paintings in the apse comprised six tiers: Theophany at the top, two tiers with the figures of apostles and prophets, two tiers with Gospel scenes and another tier with unidentifiable subjects.

kindly informed us, there is a more extensive unpublished description of Parkhali murals made by E. Privalova basing on E. Takaishvili's materials. Unfortunately, this description was not accessible for us.

⁶ Z. Skhirtladze also supposed that Parkhali program was similar to that of Otkhta: "...in Parkhali the painting of the chancel was distributed in five registers, and painting also adorned the eastern walls adjoining the chancel and the eastern pair of the piers separating the aisles <...> Christ in Glory with the hosts of Angels was represented in the conch; the subsequent three registers featured rows of figures; a half-figure was represented in the medallion in the arch of the single window, while the soffits had one figure each; the lower register was assigned a row of scenes" [22, p. 358].

⁷ Okunev wrote about it to Marr in his letter of September 4, 2017 from Tiflis, published by J. Jancárková [8, pp. 508–509].

The photo of the upper part of the apse (F.23, Coll. 177/75, negative II-7761, print O.187.10) (Ill. 150, Fig. 1) allows us to discern more details of Christ's image in the conch: the contours of the mandorla, the face, the nimbus, an open Gospel book in Christ's left hand, the lower parts of the throne, the podium and Christ's feet. Next to the mandorla on the right there is a fragment of a raised wing and a little halo. These must be the fragments of a tetramorph. On the left we see the fragments of a nimbed head. This was probably one of the archangels flanking Christ. At the top there are segments of sky with a ray descending to Christ's head in the center and fragments of half-figures of flying angels on the sides.

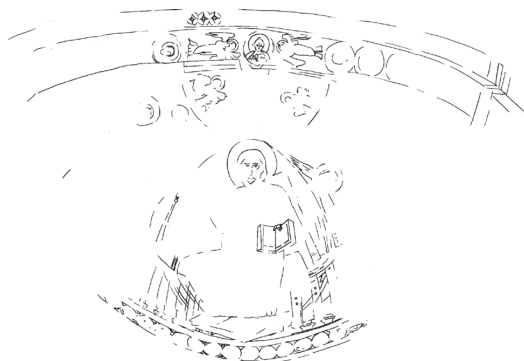


Fig. 1. Scheme of the fragments of paintings in the conch of the apse: Angels carrying medallion with Christ and Theophany. Church of St. John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Drawing by O. Voropaeva

In the 9th and 10th centuries the images of Theophany were wide spread in the Christian East including Cappadocia and Georgia [29, pp. 19–30; 21, pp. 174–200]. For example, we can refer to the paintings in Haçlı kilise in Kızıl Çukur (early 10th century) or New Tokalı church in Göreme (mid-10th century), Cappadocia [11, pp. 50–53, 99, pls. 39, 40, 65].

Other similar examples are known in Georgia, in the 9th and 10th century paintings at David Garedja and Svaneti. The earliest examples are found in the cave churches of Sabereebi and St. Dodo monastery [2, pp. 30–35, pls. 17–23; 20, pp. 9–16, pls. 26, 27, 34, 48–50; 30, pp. 3–13; 21, pp. 178–194]. One of the closest parallels can be found in the Church of Our Saviour in Chvabiani, Svaneti [20, p. 16; 1, pp. 27–29; 29, pp. 26–27]. The initial paintings in this church dated to 978–1001 are distinguished by the highest quality and are similar to the paintings of Tao-Klardjeti in many ways [33]. Theophany in Chvabiani also has the half-figures of flying angels at the top of the central part.

Without any doubt, a similar image of Theophany was in Otkhta Eklesia (late 970s — early 980s) [22, p. 310]. It survives in a very poor condition, we can see only the remnants of mandorla, some contours of Christ's shoulder, head and halo, as well as the fragments of flying angels at the top and the segment of sky⁸.

In Parkhali there was another image of Christ in the altar arch. Christ was shown half-length in a medallion, benedicting with His right hand and holding the Gospel book in His left hand. The medallion was carried by two flying angels. On the either side there were six medallions showing half-figures of bearded saints holding scrolls, most probably prophets.

Medallions with prophets were often put in the altar arch around the central image of Theophany both in Cappadocia and Georgia [10, pp. 174–178]. Some examples may be found in

⁸ In the most recent Skhirtladze's reconstruction, there is also the dove of the Holy Spirit descending from the segment of sky to the head of Christ [22, pp. 49–52, 318, figs. 41–44, pl. IV. 1, V. 1]. This version is supported by Dvali and Andghuladze [5, pp. 40, 43, 47]. Thierry, Velmans and earlier Skhirtladze wrote about the hand of God [25, p. 76; 29, p. 27; 23, p. 101].

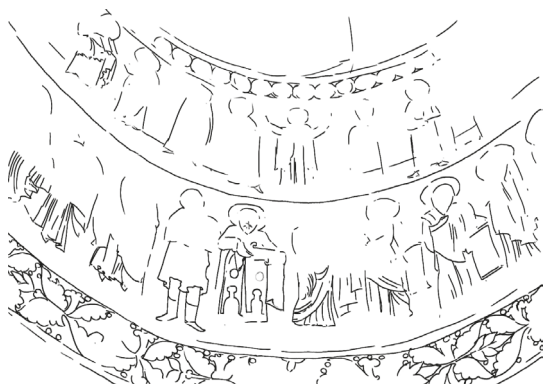


Fig. 2. Scheme of the fragments of paintings in the apse: the Virgin, apostles and prophets. Church of St. John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Drawing by O. Voropaeva

Haçlı Kilise in Kızıl Çukur (early 10th century) [11, pp.50–53, pls.39, 40], in the church of Saviour at Nesguni, Svaneti (first half of the 10th century) [20, pls.64–66] and other.

An image of Christ in a medallion carried by the angels is more rare. It can be interpreted either as an abbreviated version of Ascension or as an image of Christ in Glory, which is preferable in our case, as soon as it is flanked by the prophets and not apostles. Among some coeval parallels we can refer to the wall paintings of Kılıçlar kilise in Göreme and Karabaş kilise in Soğanlı, Cappadocia⁹, or to the 12th century images in the

churches of Achangels in Tsvirmi and Pusda in Svaneti¹⁰.

In Parkhali under the Theophany there was a broad ornamental strip, unlike Otkhta which had the angels venerating the Hetoimasia [25, p. 76; 29, pp. 27–28; 23, p. 101; 22, pp. 51–54, 318, figs. 41, 42, 45–50, pl. V.2,3; 5, pp. 40–47]. Then followed two tiers of standing figures (Fig. 2). In the first of these tiers, the central figure is represented as orans, with arms raised and draperies falling down in characteristic broad folds. This must be the image of the Virgin Orans. By analogy with Otkhta [22, pp. 54–56, 319, figs. 51–53, pls. IV.1, VI.1], we can assume that she was flanked by the archangels. Unfortunately, Okunev's photo is not sharp enough to see it clearly. Other figures in this tier wear chitons and himatia, some of them have books in their hands. This allows us to identify them as apostles.

In the next tier almost all figures that can be discerned also wear chitons and himatia, but hold unfolded scrolls in their hands, which is characteristic for the prophets. In the centre two prophets may be identified by their distinctive clothes: David and Daniel, the former wearing a rich dress with embroidery over its lap and the knees, the latter wearing a short chiton, trousers and high boots¹¹.

In Otkhta eklesia the prophets occupy only the central part of the tier. Four prophets are standing on either side of the window, then follow the images of the Church fathers [25, pp. 81; 23, p. 102; 22, pp. 58–65, 319, figs. 56–69, pls. IX–XII; 5, pp. 51, 62]. It is possible that Parkhali paintings also had the same combination, but so far we couldn't discern a single figure wearing

⁹ [11, pp. 139, 267–270, pls. 86, 148, fig. 1]. The half-figure of Christ in Kılıçlar is not put in a medallion. These paintings are generally dated either to ca. 900 or to the first half of the 10th century. In Karabaş kilise the first layer of the early 10th century was repainted in 1061 showing the same composition.

¹⁰ [20, pl. 101; 28, p. 63]. The central image on the triumphal arch in Tsvirmi is in a very poor condition, we are not sure whether it had a half-figure of Christ in medallion.

¹¹ On the iconography of the prophets Daniel and David see the entries by K. Wessel in [19, cols. 1113–1120, 1145–1161].

the bishop's attire. Therefore we tend to believe that all figures in this tier were prophets and, possibly, patriarchs.

The images of the Virgin and the apostles under the Theophany were wide spread in Eastern Christian church decoration of the 10th century. Yet in Parkhali the prophets are put in a separate register and thereby are given prominence. This is not very usual although quite logic. One of the reasons for this solution could be the great height of the apse. Another reason is the dedication of the church to St. John the Baptist, who was the last and the greatest of the prophets. Most probably his image was painted either in the center of the upper tier next to the Virgin Orans or in the lower tier next to David. Unfortunately, the photographs are not sharp enough to see it clearly. The third reason for putting accent on the prophets could be the desire to enhance the significance of the Theophany in the apse as an image of the eternal glory of Christ foretold in the Old Testament¹². We should also pay attention to the prominent position given to the prophet David — the patron saint of the ktetor David kouropalates and of Bagrationi dynasty on the whole¹³.

Other cases of allotting to the prophets an entire register in the apse are known in the church decoration of Transcaucasia. This was the case in Tatev, Syunik (930) [14], and in Betania, Kartli¹⁴. In the latter David is also put in the centre of the register and Daniel is represented next to him.

In the lower part of Parkhali apse there are double horizontal strips that mark the divisions between three more registers of paintings. Two of these registers had Gospel scenes. The paintings in the lowest register so far remain unidentified. These three tiers suffered the most both from the flaking of the plaster and mainly from the deliberate disfiguring by the local muslims who purposefully spilled dark paint over the figures and faces. Yet we could identify almost all the scenes in the upper register and some of the scenes in the middle on the photographs F. 23, Coll. 177/76 (negative II-7762, print O. 187.11) and F. 23, Coll. 177/77 (negative II-7763, print O. 187.12) (Ills. 151, 152; Fig. 3).

The upper register had Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Presentation of Christ in the Temple, Baptism, Transfiguration, Raising of Lazarus and probably the Entry into Jerusalem.

In the Annunciation we can clearly see the figure of the Archangel moving to the Virgin on the right with his arm stretched in greeting. In the next scene we can discern two female figures embracing in the center while on the sides there are buildings. The Nativity can be identified by the circular opening of the cave in the center with the figure of Mary and the manger inside. Above the cave on the right we can guess the images of angels under the stains of paint. The next composition must have been the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, as is suggested by an

¹² On the relationship between the images of the prophets and the Theophany in the art of Byzantium, East Christian world and Transcaucasia see [22, pp. 342–343].

¹³ On the special veneration of the prophet David in Tao-Klardjeti see [22, pp. 345, 353–357].

¹⁴ Regarding the church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Betania, E. Privalova considered the murals in the altar to be painted earlier than those in the naos commissioned by Orbeli family before 1155–1156; she also drew some iconographic parallels with the wall paintings of Tao-Klardjeti. In her articles, however, she has not put forward a more precise dating for the altar murals of Betania [16; 18]. Z. Skhirtladze dated Betania altar murals to the early 11th century [22, p. 342]. A. Makarova suggested that the existing Betania church was built around 1128. She also pointed to the stylistic difference between the wall paintings in the naos and in the altar, the latter being close to an archaizing trend in the art of the first third of the 12th century [13].



Fig. 3. Scheme of the fragments of paintings in the apse: Gospels scenes. Church of St. John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Drawing by O. Voropaeva

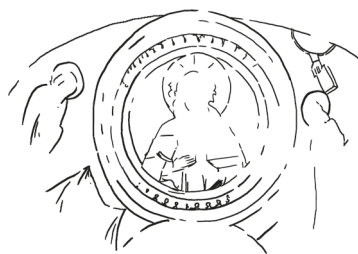


Fig. 4. Scheme of the paintings in the altar window: The Holy Sion, Moses and Melchisedec. Church of St. John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Drawing by O. Voropaeva

elaborate building in the centre. On the right from the window there is the Baptism. The figure of Christ in the center is almost completely disguised by the stains of paint, yet the bare feet are still visible; St. John the Baptist and the attending angels on the both sides were heavily overpainted. On the right there was a Transfiguration, with a clearly visible circular mandorla in the center. The three stains against the mandorla disguise the figures of Christ, Moses and Elisha, while the three stains beneath it must be the figures of the three apostles. The next scene could be the Raising of Lazarus as is suggested by the fragments of two figures kneeling before an overpainted figure standing on the left, probably that of Christ with Martha and Mary kneeling before Him. The last scene is lost due to the flaking of the plaster. It must have been the Entry into Jerusalem as is suggested by the logic of the Gospels cycle.

In the next register we identified some of the scenes on the left from the window. The first composition was the Last Supper. A beautifully draped sitting figure of Christ can be seen at the left. He is envisaged in a complex posture, turning to the right. A colonnade topped by a rotunda is in the background. On the right there were apostles lying around a circular table, their figures are disguised by the stains of paint. The next composition should have belonged to the Passion cycle, it probably represented the Carrying of the Cross. There follow the Crucifixion and the Deposition from the Cross. These scenes were most heavily stained with paint, yet in the both of them the forms of the Cross are still visible as are the feet of Christ Crucified and of the attending persons. Most probably there followed the Entombment, but we could not discern any element. On the right side of the window, judging by the vertical strips, there were five more scenes that most probably represented the events after Christ's resurrection. By analogy with Otkhta Eklesia, these could have been Anastasis, the Holy Women at the Tomb, Christ appearing to the Holy Women etc. Yet so far we could not identify any of these compositions.

Placing the Gospels scenes in the lower part of the apse in Parkhali has its closest parallel in Otkhta Eklesia [25, pp. 81–84; 29, pp. 27–29; 23, p. 102; 22, pp. 72–81, 320, 346–348, figs. 78–90,

pls. XIII–XIV; 5, pp. 58, 76]. The latter, however, has one single register with compositions only partially coinciding with the larger cycle in Parkhali. In Otkhta there were the Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism, Transfiguration, Crucifixion, the Descent into Hell, the Holy Women at the Tomb and Christ appearing to the Holy Women and two unidentified compositions. As Zaza Skhirtladze convincingly argued, in Otkhta placing the Gospel scenes in the lower part of the apse was caused by the desire to concentrate the whole iconographic program in the altar thus making its meaning complete and integral [22, pp. 347–348]. The painters of Parkhali must have had similar motifs.

Placing the Gospels scenes in the middle or lower part of the apse is sometimes encountered in coeval Byzantine art. Thus, a different parallel may be found in the main apse of the New Tokali church in Cappadocia [6, pp. 73–75, figs. 83–87; 11, pp. 96–98, pls. 6, 64; 26, p. 170, fiche 35]. It has Crucifixion in the conch and five compositions in the lower register including the Deposition from the Cross, The Entombment, Anastasis, Christ appearing to the Holy Women. The Gospels scenes in the apse are excerpted from a vast cycle covering the walls and the vaults of the church thus putting an accent on the theme of Christ's salvific Sacrifice.

So far we could not identify the images in the lower register of Parkhali apse, partially stained with paint and partially flaked off. This register has the same height as the other two. It is unlikely that it had ornaments, otherwise the Turks wouldn't have disfigured it so badly. Here we can't see the vertical strips usually marking the limits of compositions. It is under this register, to the right from the window, that the inscription of the presbyter John was found, published by Takaishvili [24, p. 99, pl. 144(2)]. It seems that to the left from the window some circular forms may be discerned. If we are not mistaken, these could be medallions with the busts of saints. A similar solution with some Gospel scenes in the middle register and medallions of saints in the lower register can be found in the coeval wall paintings of the northern apse in the church of Tağar near Ürgüp in Cappadocia¹⁵.

Finally, in the window of the apse, there was a half-figure in a medallion flanked by two scenes. Judging by the fragments seen in Okunev's photo F. 23, Coll. 177/79 (negative II-7765, print O. 187.14) (Ill. 153, Fig. 4), this composition was similar to that in Otkhta eklekia [23; 22, p. 64–71, 319–320, 332–346, 358, figs. 70–77, pls. VII–VIII]. The figure in the medallion holding the church model in her hands is most probably The Holy Zion. The scene on the right is Moses receiving the tablets of Law. On the left a figure is standing before a rectangular table with curtains, most probably representing Melchisedec before the altar.

Some other fragments in different places of the church are visible in the photographs. Thus, in Okunev's photo F. 23, Coll. 177/72 (negative II-7758, print O. 187.7) (Ill. 154) showing the north aisle of the church we can see a large fragment of a saint's figure on one of the piers facing westwards; there are also fragments of ornaments in other places. Similar fragments are still preserved in Otkhta Eklekia [22, pp. 79–84, 320–321, figs. 91–99, pl. XV; 5, pp. 63, 77]. However, it seems unlikely that any extensive cycles or scenes were represented in other parts of the church. There were also some fragments of paintings in the niches of the piers, visible in the photos made both by Okunev (F. 23, Coll. 177/71 and F. 23, Coll. 177/81, negatives II-7757 and

¹⁵ [11, pp. 213–215, pls. 13, 131, fig. 1]. For the dating around ca. 1000 see [32, pp. 203–204].

II-7767, prints O.187.6 and O.187.16 (Ill. 155)) and Takaishvili¹⁶ expeditions. By 1917 these fragments were too scanty to allow for the reconstruction of the subjects.

In Parkhali, as in Otkhta, the wall paintings of the altar represented an integral self-sufficient program (Ill. 156). Christ in glory was represented in two different compositions at the top. There followed extended series of prophets and apostles, who foretold the coming of Christ and assisted Him in His mission on Earth. Special place was reserved for the Virgin as the intercessor for the mankind upon Christ's second coming, as well as most probably for St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of the church. There followed a sequence of Gospels scenes telling the main events of Christ's earthly life and sacrificial death. The meaning of this sequence was amplified by two Old Testament prefigurations in the altar window and the personification of the Church, the Holy Zion. The latter paintings have clear ecclesiological meaning. They accentuate the eternal predestination of Christ's salvific ministry and of His giving the New Testament to the mankind which is fulfilled by the Church.

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¹⁶ Takaishvili [24, 99, pl. 147 (1, 2)] thought that there was an image of the abbot in one of the niches, which is hardly possible in our opinion.

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Title. The Materials of Nikolai Okunev's Expedition of 1917 on the Wall Paintings of Parkhali.

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Abstract. The paper presents a reconstruction of the iconographic program of the 10th century. Georgian murals in the church of St. John the Baptist in Parkhali (Tao-Klardjeti, nowadays Eastern Turkey). The wall

paintings have been white-washed for many decades. Before that, in summer of 1917, they were examined and photographed by the expedition headed by Nikolai Okunev (1885–1949). The photographs are now kept in the archive of the Institute of History of Material Culture in St. Petersburg, they are here published for the first time.

The partially damaged wall paintings were mainly preserved in the apse. There was an image of Christ in Majesty in the conch. Then followed a row of apostles with the Virgin probably flanked by archangels in the middle, and another row of prophets. In the next two tiers there were some Gospel scenes. The authors identified Annunciation, Meeting of the Virgin with St. Elizabeth, Nativity, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism, Transfiguration, and the Raising of Lazarus, as well as some scenes from the Passion cycle: the Last Supper, Crucifixion, Deposition from the Cross. The images of the lowest tier so far remain unidentified. In the altar window there was a half-figure in a medallion representing the Holy Zion. It was flanked by two compositions, probably Moses receiving the Law and Melchisedec before the altar.

It has been suggested by other scholars that the wall paintings in Parkhali were similar to those in a neighboring Otkhta Eklesia dating to the same period. The authors make more detailed comparisons between these two ensembles and discuss them in a wider historical and artistic context.

Keywords: mediaeval Georgian wall paintings; Parkhali; Otkhta Eklesia; Tao-Klardjeti; Nikolai Okunev; Institute of History of Material Culture.

Название статьи: Материалы экспедиции Н. Л. Окунева (1917 г.) о фресках Пархали.

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Аннотация. В докладе представлена реконструкция иконографической программы грузинского ансамбля росписей X в. в церкви Св. Иоанна Предтечи в Пархали (Тео-Кларджети, ныне Восточная Турция). Фрески в течение многих десятилетий были забелены. До этого летом 1917 г. они были обследованы и сфотографированы экспедицией, возглавлявшейся Н. Л. Окуневым (1885–1949). Эти фотографии хранятся сейчас в архиве Института истории материальной культуры в Санкт-Петербурге. В данной статье они публикуются впервые.

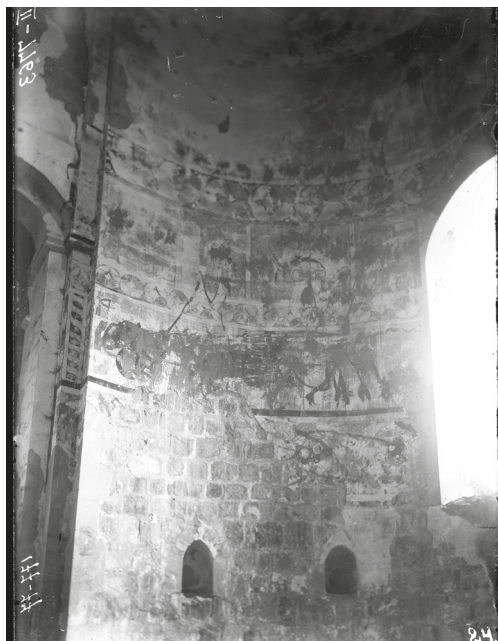
Частично поврежденные росписи находились, в основном, в апсиде. В конхе был образ Христа во славе, далее шел регистр с апостолами и Богоматерью Орантой посередине, вероятно, с архангелами по сторонам, а ниже — ряд пророков. В следующих двух ярусах располагались евангельские сюжеты. Авторы идентифицировали Благовещение, Встречу Марии с Елизаветой, Рождество, Сретение, Крещение, Преображение, Воскрешение Лазаря, а также несколько сцен Страстного цикла: Тайная вечеря, Распятие и Снятие с Креста. Изображения в самом нижнем регистре пока отождествить не удалось. В алтарном окне была полуфигура в медальоне, представляющая Св. Сион, по сторонам от нее — Моисей, получающий заповеди, и Мелхиседек перед алтарем.

Исследователи ранее предполагали, что росписи Пархали подобны современным им фрескам в находящемся недалеко храме Отхта Эклесия. Авторы проводят более детальное сопоставление между двумя ансамблями и рассматривают их в широком историко-художественном контексте.

Ключевые слова: средневековые грузинские фрески; Пархали; Отхта Эклесия; Тео-Кларджети; Николай Окунев; Институт истории материальной культуры.



Ill. 150. Theophany, the Virgin, apostles and prophets. Church of St John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Photographic Department of the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg. F. 23, Coll. 177/75, negative II 7761



Ill. 151. Gospels scenes. Church of St John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Photographic Department of the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg. F. 23, Coll. 177/77, negative II 7763



Ill. 152. Gospels scenes. Church of St John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Photographic Department of the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg. F. 23, Coll. 177/76, negative II 7762



Ill. 153. The Holy Sion, Moses and Melchisedec. Church of St John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Photographic Department of the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg. F. 23, Coll. 177/79, negative II 7765



Ill. 154. The north aisle. Church of St John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Photographic Department of the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg. F. 23, Coll. 177/72, negative II 7758

Ill. 155. View of the northern side of the nave. Church of St John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Photographic Department of the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg. F. 23, Coll. 177/71 negative II 7757





Ill. 156. Paintings in the altar. Church of St John the Baptist in Parkhali. Ca. 973. Photographic Department of the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg. F. 23, Coll. 177/74, negative II 7760