

Dorđe N. ĐEKIĆ

University in Niš, Faculty of Philosophy, Niš, Serbia
djekicdj@ptt.rs

Miloš PAVLOVIĆ

OŠ “Jovan Jovanović Zmaj”, Aleksinački Rudnik, Serbia
pavlovic.n.milos@gmail.com

A KISS – A MEANING OF AN ACT IN SERBS BY THE EARLY 13th CENTURY

A kiss, for which the Serbs in the Middle Ages had three different words (*poljubac, celiv, mir*) is an expression of a special non-verbal communication and etiquette and it could be justifiably assumed that it carried an exact meaning and an exact moment of acting.

In international law, according to the available written sources, a kiss is an integral part of an act when a ruler appoints his vassal, so we have that Manuel kisses Stefan Nemanja, the emperor Samuel kisses Vladimir. Furthermore, a recorded act of kissing between the Serbian prince and a Byzantine strategos carries a meaning that they are equal in hierarchical terms.

A kiss, as a public act with its set meaning, is also recorded in familial relationships between fathers and sons and between brothers.

Its symbolic function is largely influenced by Christianity. According to John Chrysostom, each Christian person is a temple of Jesus Christ, while the kiss is the vestibule to the temple. Accordingly, an individual, most often in a joint ritual (or during a ritual), moves to kiss parts of the temple, sacred objects, icons, graves and relics. Here, kissing the temples and icons is, in its essence, expression of love to God, whereas kissing the graves and relics may be understood as how believers relate to the dead. A mutual kiss is recorded also among the clerics at an encounter or at partings. A single act of kissing the clerics bestow to their spiritual children, with or without a blessing. The sources indicate that in the Middle Ages a custom of the Laodicean Assembly was preserved, which included an act of kissing during the liturgy. In the former cases, a kiss can be seen as an act of etiquette, while in the latter case it is prescribed in the canon law.

Therefore we can make a conclusion that a kiss had a significant role in both the political and social relationships and particularly in the religious ones.

Keywords: history, communication, kiss, Serb

Throughout history, communication among human beings has been taking place in both verbal and non-verbal form. While for verbal communication it is necessary to be familiar with the spoken language, this obstacle is absent in non-verbal communication if participants are familiar with the meaning of certain expression, sign or symbol.

Kiss is a form of non-verbal communication assuming and expressing a certain relationship of a person offering the kiss to the person or object receiving

it. In this presentation we will demonstrate the phenomenon and try to explain the meaning of the kiss in Serbs, from its first appearance in records, in late 10th or early 11th century, until the beginning of 13th century and death of St. Sava. The Death of St. Sava in 1236 was chosen as a natural limit as this is the final date in his biographies made by Domentijan and Teodosije, while our research of this non-verbal act is mostly based on their written records. Therefore, the kiss will be discussed as a part of ritual practice as well as through its role in international, private and clerical relationships.

In order to properly research the stated subjects and precisely define certain meanings in the studied period, it was crucial to know whether Simeon (formerly Stefan Nemanja) was a saint at the time of his death, as this was often denied in the historiography. We have also followed the source, assuming that it had correctly reported the role of the kiss in certain act, regardless of the fact whether in the particular case this actually took place.

As part of ritual practice, the kiss is poorly presented in Serbian historiography. Kissing in old Christian Church was recorded in a contemporary text by Petar Vesin in late 19th century (Vesin 1895: 817–819), citing that many epistles by St. Apostle Paul and St. Apostle Peter end in expression that we should *kiss each other*. He also lists some examples of kissing known at his time, and mentions that as a sign of peace, love and brotherhood the kiss became part of the custom.

Rade Mihaljčić wrote about the kiss within the chapter on etiquette in the *Lexicon of Serbian Middle Ages*. He cites that Serbs followed Roman customs and if they met the Byzantine Emperor they would dismount from their horses and kiss his knee, while the Emperor remained in the saddle. When Stefan Dušan became the emperor, he demanded to be kissed in his knee at official receptions. Mihaljčić also cites Janja Kantakouzenos, who mentioned that Serbs retained the old custom that, when a Serbian ruler and a nobleman met after a long time, they would both dismount their horses, and the nobleman would kiss the ruler first in the chest and then in the mouth (Mihaljčić 1999: 186; Ćirković, Ferjančić 1986: 387–388).

In the Middle Ages, Serbs used three terms for kissing: ljubiti, celivati and mir.

The term ljubiti was most commonly used with the meaning “to love” (Domentijan 1988: i.e. 107), indicating that a kiss is an expression of love toward someone or something. Some records mention i.e. that Jacob loved Joseph the most among his sons, that Nemanja loved Rastko the most (Domentijan 1988: 255) by using the expression “ljubiti”.

In the meaning “to love“, ljubiti expresses the relationship toward God (Domentijan 1988: i.e. 192)¹ and His orders (Domentijan 1988: i.e. 193). The written sources from this period also use derivatives of term poljubac (kiss), for example ljubljeno in the meaning of loved – in father directly addressing his son (Domentijan 1988; 268),² or son addressing his father (Domentijan 1988: i.e. p. 299).³ The same expression was used in indirect speech (Domentijan 1988: i.e. p. 296).⁴ Other

¹ For example there is an expression “those who kiss the Lord”.

² Simeon addresses Sava as *čedo ljubimo* (ljubljeno).

³ Sava addresses Simeon with words *ka menim, ljubimom čedu svome*.

⁴ “*Blagoslovi ljubimoga sina svoga Savu*”.

recorded terms were ljubimče – person who is kissed/loved (Domentijan 1988; i.e. p. 294), čedoljupče – person who loves his or her child (Domentijan 1988; i.e. p. 295) etc. Therefore, person being given a kiss i.e. person who is kissed is also protected by this act (Stefan 1988: 93–95).⁵

However, giving a kiss is also used in its literal meaning, so Samuel kissed Vladimir (Ljetopis 1988: 127; Gesta I 2009: 131), while prince Stefan Vojislav and Ragusan strategos Katakalon Klazomenski kissed when they met (Ferluga 1966: 212) etc.

The other term for kissing is already mentioned *celivati*. In this context it was mentioned by Domentijan when he says that *deca otečestva njegova usnama celivaše mošti svete* – children of his fatherhood kissed the holy relics with their lips (Domentijan 1988: 115–116). Later, Simeon hugged and kissed his son Sava after he brought good news of Emperor Alexios' approval for rebuilding Hilandar (Teodosije 1988: 133). Kiss could also be on the mouth, as done by St. Sava who kissed Stefan The First-Crowned in order to resurrect him and later turn him into a monk under the name Simon (Domentijan 1988: 167).

The term mir in meaning of kiss is used only in *Zakonopravilo Svetoga Save* (Law Rules by St. Sava).

Although celov and kiss are commonly stated to be singular, there are records of multiple kisses. For example Simeon kissed Sava several times; first after the arrival at Holy See, where he met him for the first time (Teodosije 1988: 130), then while Simeon was ill in bed (Teodosije 1988: 133) etc. In the Holy Land, Sava performed many *celivanje* kisses, for example he kissed the rock upon which the church dedicated to St. Prophet Elijah was built on one of the hills on the road to top of Sinai Mountains (Domentijan 1988: 209).

Kisses were specified to be given to head, mouth or hands. Simeon gave them to Sava when they met for the first time at Mount Athos and when Simeon was sick in bed (Teodosije 1988: 130, 133). We already mentioned the kiss to the mouth used by St. Sava to resurrect Stefan The First-Crowned (Domentijan 1988: 167). In this period there were no documented instances that a nobleman would kiss his master to the mouth. Sava placed the hands of his just deceased father on his own hand and then kissed them (Teodosije 1988: 144). King Stefan The First-Crowned, after being resurrected by his brother, kissed his hands (Teodosije 1988: 222).

As a public act, the kiss appears in international relations, with several meanings and purposes.

In the international law, it was recorded in relations with Byzantine, Bulgarian – Samuel's Empire, Kingdom of Hungary and the Bulgarian nobleman Strez.

The Byzantine sources mentioned kissing only once, by Kekaumenos in mid-11th century. In description of meeting of Duklja prince Stefan Vojislav and Ragusan strategos Katakalon Klazomenski, it is mentioned that they both kissed each other (Ferluga 1966: 212).

⁵ Namely, when Stefan The First-Crowned was listing to the miracles performed by St. Simeon, he mentioned that, in the same manner as he had kissed him before, he also did not leave him on his own when he was attacked by Michael Komnenos Doukas. The prayer was successful and Michael was killed so Stefan The First-Crowned was protected.

In the Serbian-Byzantine relations, the kiss is mentioned again in the Serbian sources. This time Stefan Nemanja received a kiss from the emperor Manuel Komnenos Doukas. Stefan The First-Crowned states that after hearing about the purity, humility and modesty of his father, during the visit to Nišava region he invited Nemanja, then a regional Serbian ruler, to an audience. On that occasion he kissed them and awarded him personally with *carski san*, while Dubročica County was given to him and his descendants as awarded property (Stefan 1988: 65).

The kiss mentioned by Mihaljčić in his *Lexicon* was not recorded in Serbian-Byzantine relations in this period.⁶

Although scarce, these data on meetings of Serbian rulers with representatives of Byzantine Empire lead to certain conclusions. Kisses were exchanged by persons with same or approximately similar title (Katakalon Klazomenski and Prince Stefan Vojislav). The kiss given to Stefan Nemanja by Manuel was an act of investment. It is a part of ritual in which Manuel becomes a suzerain and Stefan Nemanja his vassal.

As an act of international relations, the kiss is mentioned in the Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja (*Letopis popa Dukljanina*). During the meeting of Prince Vladimir with emperor Samuel, who for that occasion was brought from the emperor dungeon at Prespa, it was stated that the emperor kissed him in front of his noblemen (Gesta I 2009: 131). We believe that this kiss had the same meaning as the kiss given by emperor Manuel Komnenos Doukas to Stefan Nemanja, i.e. this kiss was part of investiture in which the suzerain names and approves his vassal.

Mutual kissing was also recorded at separation of Sava and Hungarian king Andrew II. At the time, Sava was performing negotiations with the Hungarian king, who was ready to attack Serbia as he was dissatisfied with the fact that Serbia became a kingdom (Teodosije 1988: 218). The act of kissing indicates that they separated as equals and that the Hungarian king has treated Sava, a diplomat and the ruler's brother, as his equal.

There is also another, conditional role of the kiss. It is connected to Sava's diplomatic mission, which was performed at behalf of his brother Stefan in front of Bulgarian nobleman Strez. The two had some unresolved issues, as Strez at first recognized Stefan as his master, but then turned against him and joined his opponents. Teodosije mentions that after meeting Sava, Strez behaved the same as he did while he recognized Stefan as his ruler: fell on the ground and bowed before him. Then Sava gently helped him get up and bestowed a kiss (Teodosije 1988: 182). Therefore this record proves that Strez was Stefan's vassal, and that was the reason why he fell to the ground and bowed before Sava as well. The other sources,

⁶ The Kiss is also absent after the defeat at Tara, when Grand Prince Uroš II joined emperor Manuel (VIIN IV 1971: 37), and when Manuel returned him to the throne from which he was removed by Desa (VIIN IV 1971: 192). On the other hand, Desa will not kiss the emperor when he usurped the Grand Prince throne (VIIN IV 1971: 58–59) or when he arrived with excuses for being unfaithful to the emperor (VIIN IV 1971: 62, 139, 181): There are several surviving descriptions on how Nemanja looks when he meets Emperor Manuel. He appears with a rope around his neck, bare-handed and barefooted, but kiss is also lacking in this occasion (VIIN IV 1971: 103, 147–148, 218–220).

however, do not record the act when a vassal would fall down on ground and bow in front of a suzerain, a member of his family or a deputy. Sava's kiss is very similar to Manuel's treatment of Nemanja and Samuel's treatment of Vladimir, indicating that Strez did not have status of Stefan's nobleman but of a vassal ruler, at the same level as Nemanja and Vladimir.

Therefore in the international relations, people only kissed their equals. Equals included not only the actual ruler but also his brother. A kiss given by only one side was a kiss by suzerain toward his vassal, whether newly appointed or already in that position. None of the recorded cases mentions the part of body where kiss was bestowed (cheek, head...).

The kiss appears in Serbian sources in descriptions of interrelations in Serbs, as a part of legal practice, etiquette and family relations.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE. The Kiss was prescribed in the Serbian medieval law as a religious act. In the second Charter of Žiča, the ceremony of ordaining a hegumen prescribed that he should be presented godlike by the archeparch, while for the king it is said that he determined him by giving him the scepter and a kiss (Novaković 1912: 573; Prvovenčani 1988: 112; Solovjev 1926: 21).⁷ The statement that he should be presented godlike meant that he was ordained personally by the archeparch. Regarding the king's right to ordain a hegumen, this was part of benefactor right belonging only to kings and emperors. In all other cases, *ius praesentationis* included only the right to suggest a potential hegumen to the eparch, while in this case the ruler had greater jurisdictions, being able to personally choose the future hegumen instead of just suggesting him (Troicki 1935: 117–118).

ETIQUETTE. Rastko was kissed by both the duke and his noblemen after they discovered him in monastery Panteleimon (Teodosije 1988: 109). The fact that he was kissed by noblemen indicates that this celov was part of etiquette, a reflection of relationship toward the Prince, and perhaps also toward all members of ruling family. This is also evidence that celov given to Strez by Sava was part of international legislations, and not just a reflection of internal Serbian etiquette.

FAMILY. Reciprocal kissing was recorded within the family. Father and son kissed on departure (Teodosije 1988: 130) and meeting after a period of time (Teodosije 1988: 130; Domentijan 1988: 83). Brothers also kissed each other (Domentijan 1988: 167; Teodosije 1988: 202).

The sources also mention one-sided celivanje kissing. Sava states that during his first meeting with his father at Holy See, only Simeon kissed Sava and not vice versa (Sveti Sava, 108). Sava got a kiss from his father after the returned from Constantinople, after acquiring the charter on establishing Hilandar as emperor monastery (Teodosije 1988: 141). The meaning of this one-sided kiss is not clear. A question remains if it was simply omitted to say that the kiss was reciprocal. It is not possible to answer with any precision whether these examples indicate that practice was changed or that relationships between the father and the son were different from

⁷ It should be also noted that Alexios III Angelos, when he presented Sava with the charter on establishment of Hilandar as an emperor monastery, also have him the scepter so it may be kept at church, and when the brotherhood is choosing an hegumen they may have at their side instead of emperor himself (Teodosije 1988: 135).

presented by writers of life chronicles. It may be assumed that bestowing celov upon the return from Constantinople was a form of congratulation. However there is no definite answer.

While Simeon was bedridden at the end of his life, he often kissed Sava in the head (Teodosije 1988: 133). It is assumed that these kisses had the meaning of forgiveness but also of blessing, and certainly of his fatherly love, too.

Immediately before his death, father Stefan Nemanja, now Simeon the monk, blessed his son, prayed for him, hugged him through tears and gave him his last celov (Teodosije 1988: 143). It was not mentioned where he kissed him, but it was certainly part of the blessing ritual. His son, who at the same time was a monk, was crying. He took the hands of his just deceased father, placed them on his own head and then kissed them (Teodosije 1988: 144). Kissing the hand of the dead father is certainly an expression of respect, gratitude and forgiveness.

After King Stefan The First-Crowned was resurrected by his archeparch brother, he kissed brother's hands. Then he adopted the monk rank, while he *gave his kingdom* to his son and kissed him (Teodosije 1988: 222). The very act of kiss was differently recorded by various writers of life chronicles. In contrast to Teodosije, Domentijan states that after the resurrection the brothers kissed each other in the mouth (Domentijan 1988: 167). Therefore, Teodosije mentions in two cases that the kiss was given to one hand or both hands. It is interesting to note that Domentijan, who lived in another time, before Teodosije, mentions kissing to the mouth. Is this evidence that the custom of where a kiss is directed has changed over time? Maybe.

The custom that a father should be kissed in the hand while he was blessing his son is mentioned in another description. When Sava visited the protos in Karyes, the protos placed his hands on Sava's head, blessing him as a father, while Sava kissed his hand (Teodosije 1988: 158). The statement that he was blessing him as father indicates that Sava assumed the metaphoric role of the son. At the same time this is an indication that kissing one's father in the hand is a custom that existed not only in Serbs but also in the Greek, as it may be justifiably concluded that the protos was Greek.

Another expression of love is kissing an object exchanged between members of a family. For example, when Stefan Nemanja, as a ruler, was given a letter from his son Sava writing from Mount Athos, he rose from the throne, "bowing to the son's love as if to saints", kissing the letter even before he opened it and read it (Teodosije 1988: 126).

KISS IN CHRISTIANITY. We have already mentioned the great significance of the kiss, celov, which in Christianity was also called mir.

Kiss also had particular importance both in the Old and the New Testament.

For example in the Old Testament Isaac called his son Jacob to kiss him and then bless him.⁸ When Jakob met his cousin Rahel (maternal uncle's daughter),

⁸ "And his father Isaac said unto him: come near and kiss me my son. And he went to him and kissed him. And he smelled the savour of his raiment and blessed him." (The first book of Moses, 27: 26–27.)

he kissed her. Laban kissed Jakob, as a son of his own sister.⁹ It was recorded that grandfather Laban had blessed his daughters and grandchildren through these daughters by kissing them¹⁰, while Jacob kissed the grandchildren through his son.¹¹

The kiss kept into importance in the New Testament as well. Thus a sinning woman, asking for forgiveness from Christ, kisses his legs, while Christ reprimands Simon for not kissing him when he entered his house,¹² indicating that such ritual, although not compulsory, was a sign of respect bestowed by host to the guest of house. In the Parable of the Lost Son, when he repented for spending his inheritance and returned home, his father went out in front of him, hugging and kissing him, as a sign of forgiveness.¹³ However, the kiss is mostly mentioned as bestowed by departing students, to St. Apostle Paul¹⁴, or disciples of St. Apostle Peter and St. Apostle Paul among themselves to each other.¹⁵ However, the most spectacular meaning of the kiss is in Christ's words directed to Judas: "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"¹⁶

It should be also noted that Emperor David also states an example where something opposing God may also be kissed, for example a curse.¹⁷

John Chrysostom said that Christians are a temple of Jesus Christ, the kiss is an vestibule of that temple, and Christ himself enters that temple each time when we sincerely bestow each other a kiss (Vesin 1895: 817–818).

What was recorded as a recipient of kisses?

Kisses were made during the religious practices; persons, icons, temples, letters, holy relics but also the grave of the deceased could be kissed. Celov of grave and holy relics may or may not be the same. Not every grave belongs to holy persons.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. Vesin describes that the kiss also appears during the religious practices. After the end of Liturgy of Catechumens, the deacon says *Greet one another with a holy kiss*. Then men kissed men and women kissed women.¹⁸ These kisses also appear in Liturgy of St. Basil. Before the widespread

⁹ The first book of Moses, 29:11, 29:13.

¹⁰ "And early in the morning Laban rose up and kissed his children and his daughters, and blessed them." (The first book of Moses, 31: 55).

¹¹ "And Israel beheld Joseph's sons and said: What are these? And Joseph said unto his father: They are my sons, which God hath given me here. And he said: Bring them to me, and let me bless them. And the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them to him, and he kissed them and embraced them." (The first book of Moses, 48: 8–10).

¹² Gospel of Luke, 7: 37, 38, 44, 45.

¹³ Gospel of Luke, 15: 12–32.

¹⁴ Acts of the Apostles 20: 37.

¹⁵ Epistle to the Romans, 16: 16; First Epistle to the Corinthians, 16: 20; Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 13: 12; First Epistle of Peter, 5: 14.

¹⁶ Gospel of Luke, 22: 48. Compare: Gospel of Matthew, 26: 48, 49, Gospel of Mark, 14: 44, 45.

¹⁷ "He loved to pronounce a curse— may it come back on him." (Psalm 109: 1, 17).

¹⁸ Epistle to the Romans by St. Apostle Paul, 15: 16.

kissing, the presbyter used to read a special prayer made just for this occasion, and it explains the reason for kissing. “O God the Great and the Eternal, who formed man in incorruption, filled the earth with the heavenly peace... According to your good will, O God fill our hearts with your peace. Cleanse us from all blemish, all guile, all hypocrisy, all malice and the remembrance of evil entailing death. And make us all worthy, O our Master, to greet one another with a holy kiss, that without falling into condemnation, we may partake, of your immortal and heavenly gift in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Vesin 1895: 818). The available literature sources do not provide the answer on whether these rules were obeyed by Serbs in early 13th century.

According to the explanation by Zonara, repeated by Aristin and Valsamon, and included in St. Sava’s *Zakonopravilo*, the kiss is mentioned in the 19th rule of the Laodicean Assembly. It is particularly important that the kiss is designated by word *mir*. After the end of the prayer of the Catechumens, who then depart, it should be prayed for those who repent their sins, and they also depart. At the end there was kissing, but sources do not explain who kisses whom, and after that holy sacrifice.

The explanation of this rule of Laodicean Assembly says that the eparch should teach the Catechumens in private, and then pray for them before they leave the temple. After that the eparch reads the prayer for those who repent their sins, who also leave the church premises. Finally the priests read three prayers for believers. The first one is read silently while the second and the third are read aloud. After that the presbyters i.e. priests bestow *mir* i.e. *celov* to eparchs as a sign of love. It is said that love leads to peace. Then the *mir* receivers were supposed to bestow kisses on the presbyters, and the source says that this part was no longer used at the time of writing. The bloodless sacrifice was then offered (Petrović 2004: 251–253).

Records of occurrence and locations where this rule was followed state that immediately after arrival of Simeon (Stefan Nemanja) to the Mount Athos, a prayer was performed at a monastery (certainly Vatopedi) where monks approached him, hugged him and kissed him (Teodosije 1988: 130). After the return from Constantinople to Hilandar, where he received a charter designating Hilandar as an emperor’s monastery, Sava himself performed the holy prayer and holy kissing (Domentijan 1988: 93). The same information from *Life of St. Sava* is repeated by Domentijan in *Life of St. Simeon* (Domentijan 1988: 281). The statement that he performed the holy prayer and holy kissing can pertain to this rule only.

Information on kissing at occasions of baptism and engagement, as stated by Vesin, were not recorded in this particular period.

PERSONS. Persons were kissed for several reasons.

The kiss was an act of congratulating someone who became a monk, hegumen or archeparch. It was bestowed by others upon the person who acquired the new title. For example, monks congratulated Rastko for becoming monk Sava (Teodosije 1988: 115). In the typikon of Hilandar and Studenica, when a new hegumen was chosen, after the end of ritual the new hegumen stood at a special place in the temple reserved for hegumens, where he was approached by all the monastery brothers who kissed him (Ćorović 1928: 79). Through this act the monks congratulated Sava when he became an archeparch and came to Mt. Atos (Teodosije 1988: 199). At his

arrival to Holy Land, Sava chose St. Arsenije for his heir, and bestowed him a kiss at the departure (Teodosije 1988: 234).

However, Domentijan has recorded that after the ordaining for archeparch, Sava kissed the protos of Sveta Gora (Domentijan 1988: 140).

Kissing was also a sign of gratitude. For example, after receiving the charter on establishing Hilandar as the emperor's monastery and presents from the emperor, Sava kissed the emperor and the patriarch (Teodosije 1988: 141) in the following order: the Patriarch awarded Sava with archeparchy and autocephaly, Sava first kissed the Patriarch and then the Emperor (Teodosije 1988: 198).

Kissing was also a part of the monastery etiquette. At arrival to the monastery the guest would kiss the hosts (Teodosije 1988: 200, 201). Simeon and Sava bestowed kisses to protos and other monks during the visit to the Temple of St. Mother of God in Karyes. During the visit to Lavra of St. Athanasius they also kissed the hegumen and the other monks (Teodosije 1988: 132).

Kiss to the hand was recorded after the received blessing (Teodosije 1988: 158). After the return from Hilandar on his way from Holy Land, Sava started his journey back to Serbia, giving the monks peace, blessing and kiss in the Lord (Teodosije 1988: 229). This practice was also recorded at Mount Athos and the Thessaloniki. It was recorded that Sava kissed all the monks who came to visit and greet him on his stay at Vatopedi (Domentijan 1988: 182), of course giving them his blessings.

In the Holy Land, St. Sava gave and received kisses with patriarchs, hegumens, hieromonks and monastery brothers, both at arrival and at departure (Teodosije 1988: 224, 238; Domentijan 1988: 200, 218).

However, there are also cases of one-sided kiss. At departure, a guest would kiss the hosts who saw him out to the road (Teodosije 1988: 243). At the Church of St. John the Baptist, where he arrived after crossing the Jordan river at the place of Christ's baptism, Sava said his prayers, gave gifts to the church and received a kiss from the monk (Teodosije 1988: 225). It is not possible to say with any certainty whether these examples of one-sided kiss were accidental or had some special meaning. In both cases this could be an act of gratitude, in the first case for helping on the journey and in the other because of gifts. We have already mentioned this type of kiss.

St. Sava and the Bulgarian patriarch Joachim exchanged kisses on the night before Sava's death (Teodosije 1988: 248–249). This is the only case of kiss in Bulgaria, preventing us from reaching deeper conclusions, but we must note that this is the same practice that was recorded at the Holy Land.

GRAVE. Kissing of a grave should be differentiated from kissing the saint's relics, as not every grave belongs to a saint. The first recorded cases of grave kissing are kissing the grave of one's father. However, the most common practice was to kiss a saint's grave.

After Simeon has deceased, Sava placed his body in the center of Hilandar temple. The liturgy for the dead started after the morning service. Hymns were sang

first by Greeks, then by Georgians (Iberians), Russians, Bulgarians and finally by Serbs. After the end of service, all of them approached to kiss the deceased body (St. Sava 1986: 115). The fact that this ritual was reported first-hand by Sava who was present at the ceremony provides additional validity.

Kissing of Simeon's grave was often recorded. Sava states that his father was alive as of yesterday, and today people bow while they kiss his holy grave (Teodosije 1988: 167). The term "holy" in this case indicates that the grave was treated as a holy place, although Simeon at the moment was not yet considered holy.

The grave is also kissed – at the anniversary of death, when healing myrrh flows out of his fresco and grave; Sava kisses his father's grave, drenching it in tears (Domentijan 1988: 110, 304). At that moment Simeon was still not canonized.

After the protos informed him that myrrh ran out of his father's grave, St. Sava comes to thank God and kisses the myrrh-forming grave. He continued to kiss the grave during his stay at Hilandar (Teodosije 1988: 154, 156).

In the cited cases when Sava is kissing his father's grave, it is difficult to determine how much it is son's relationship toward father, and how much it is the relationship of two monks.

After his first return from the Holy Land, Sava arrived to Hilandar, where he kissed the original grave of St. Simeon, which was already emptied (Teodosije 1988: 229). This indicates that the gravesite of saint and father that no longer contained the relics was still an object of kissing and respect.

RELICS. Kissing of the saint's grave and relics will be discussed together, as it is not always possible to determine when only the grave is kissed and when it also includes the relics.

During their stay at Mt. Atos, Simeon and Sava kissed the grave of St. Athanasius in his Lavra (Teodosije 1988: 124, 132).

It was recorded that Sava has kissed the open grave of St. Dimitrije in Thessaloniki (Domentijan 1988; 183), grave of St. Mother of God at Getsimania (Domentijan 1988: 174) and Christ's grave in Jerusalem (Teodosije 1988: 238, 243).

The most common records pertain to kissing of relics or grave of St. Simeon. For example, on their arrival to Serbia, they were kissed by all the *children of the fatherhood* (Domentijan 1988: 115–116). Domentijan particularly notes that the ritual included his son – ruler Stefan Nemanjić, and then also his entourage (Domentijan 1988: 314). Teodosije only mentions that they were kissed by Stefan Nemanjić (Teodosije 1988: 163). In this case the term *entourage* should be understood to include the clergy – archieromonks, priests, hegumens, monks, deacons, and secular persons, too.

After St. Sava became an archeparch, he kissed St. Simeon's grave during a visit to Studenica (Domentijan 1988: 143) as well as on departure from this monastery (Teodosije 1988: 187). It was recorded that after kissing, Sava also performed anointment with myrrh. While myrrh was flowing out of the grave of St. Simeon in Studenica, Sava kissed the grave and anointed himself, his brother Stefan, and later those who were in their company (Teodosije 1988: 166).

Archeparch Arsenije, eparchs, hegumens and others kissed the relics of St. Sava when they were brought from Bulgaria (Teodosije 1988: 258).

TEMPLES. Kissing of temples – churches and monasteries, was recorded in Serbia, Mt. Atos, Constantinople, Nikea, Holy Land, Sinai, Egypt.

For Serbia it is mentioned that Sava kissed Studenica after ending his service there (Domentijan 1988: 146), before this departure to Mt. Atos (Teodosije 1988: 187).

At Mt. Atos, Simeon and Sava kissed the temple of Holy Mother of God at Karyes (Teodosije 1988: 132), also the Lavra of St. Athanasius (Domentijan 1988: 280; Teodosije 1988: 124), and Sava also kissed a smaller temple with an icon of Virgin Mary Portaitisa at the monastery Iviron (Domentijan 1988: 181).

After acquiring from emperor Alexios the charter proclaiming Hilandar as the emperor monastery, it was recorded that Sava kissed the holy churches in Constantinople (Teodosije 1988: 141).

After being ordained for archeparch, Sava visited Mount Athos on this journey toward Serbia. On his way he bowed and kissed all holy churches (Domentijan 1988: 140). It should be noted that specific temples are indicated neither in Constantinople nor along the journey.

Sava was often recorded kissing churches and monasteries in the Holy Land.

During his first visit to the Holy Land, he first visited the church of Holy Sepulcher and kissed it, and after that he kissed the church at Golgotha (Teodosije 1988: 244), the temple of St. Mother of God at the premises of St. Sava Monastery, which was then populated by Georgians (Iberians), then the church in Kalomonias dedicated to the Holy Mother of God, at the place where the Holy Family rested while escaping the Holy Land (Domentijan 1988: 206, 370). After climbing Mount Tabor, the place of Christ's transfiguration in front of his disciples, Sava shed tears in the church and bestowed kiss (Teodosije 1988: 226).

On this journey he also kissed all the churches he encountered on this route along the coast of the Black Sea (Domentijan 1988: 177). In the Egyptian desert, St. Sava kissed places where the Holy Fathers St. Anthony the Great and St. Arsenius the Great made their deeds (Teodosije 1988: 242). After the return from Sinai he honorably and courteously kissed all the churches of Jerusalem (Domentijan 1988: 218) but the names of the buildings were not precisely listed.

Also kissed were remnants i.e. ruins of former churches, for example those dedicated to St. Elijah on the road to the top of Sinai Mountains (Domentijan 1988:209).

HOLY PLACES. Whenever kissing of holy places was mentioned it always included tears.

Bowing with many tears in the church of St. Prophet Elijah, he kissed the rock in the church, marking the spot where the Lord told Moses to climb in order to see him from the back, as for a mortal person it is impossible to see God's face (Teodosije 1988: 242–243).

With many tears Sava kissed the Christ's Grave in Jerusalem, St. Golgotha but also all the holy places where Christ willingly suffered the holy passions in a mortal body for the sake of human beings (Teodosije 1988: 243).

ICONS. The Kissing of icons was rarely recorded.

On his visit to the church situated in the place where Christ used to live with his mother and Joseph, Sava kissed the Christ's icon (Domentijan 1988: 179). At the grave of St. Sabbas the Sanctified, Sava of Serbia also kissed his icon (Domentijan 1988: 177).

OBJECTS. It was recorded that other objects of the cult could also be kissed. Stefan The First-Crowned, after receiving a glass jar of holy myrrh that originated from relics of his father, bowed in front of it and kissed it (Teodosije 1988: 159).

BLESSING. Blessing is a special form of kiss. It already appeared in the Old Testament. Its importance is in the Lord's promise that those the Lord blesses will inherit the land, but those that He curses will be destroyed (Psalm 37: 22). In the Old Testament there is a common motif of God blessing people (for example the First book of Moses, 49: 25.). In the New Testament, Christ blessed children by putting their hands on them (Gospel of Mark 10: 14–16), while on the Secret Supper he blessed through bread and wine that he shared to his apostles (Gospel of Matthew 26, 26–28). There were also bread and fish that he used to feed a large number of people (Gospel of Mark 6: 41–44). In the Bible, not only God may bless, but people may also bless each other. For example in the Old Testament the servants bless the emperors by using words (the First Book of Kings 1: 47). These cases do not include celov – the kiss.

However, in the Bible there are recorded cases where the kiss appears together with the blessing. We have already mentioned Isaac's kiss of Jacob, preceding the blessing¹⁹, grandparents blessing by kiss their daughters²⁰ and sons²¹ and their children.

Although at the first sight the celov-blessing belongs to the typical church customs, this is not completely true. The blessing has a much broader meaning. In Serbs it was recorded both in international and in church customs. Kissing is also part of blessing of the spiritual children.

In international relations, kissing in the form of blessing appears after the completion of St. Sava's negotiations with the Hungarian king. After the negotiations were completed favorably for the Serbian side, the attendees approached St. Sava and touched his hand with their heads to get a blessing, then stepping aside while kissing his robe (Teodosije 1988; 217). Placing their heads to his hand may indicate that they kissed his hand at the same time. He was probably kissed as head of the church, but also because of the successfully completed negotiations.

After the return from the Holy Land, Sava blessed King Radoslav, the eparchs and the hegumens who welcomed him, and gave them a celov *in the Lord* (Teodosije 1988: 229). After the return to Studenica, he first bowed in front of the Holy Mother of God and the relics of his father Simeon, and then kissed his spiritual children and blessed them (Domentijan 1988: 183). The outlaws at Mount Athos heard

¹⁹ The first book of Moses, 26: 26–27.

²⁰ The first book of Moses, 31: 55.

²¹ The first book of Moses, 48: 8–10.

about Sava from his spiritual father Macarius and kissed him, and Sava blessed them (Teodosije 1988: 123). On another occasion on Mount Athos, Sava kissed a repenting outlaw who approached him, bowing; he prayed for him and became his spiritual father (Domentijan 1988: 139).

In addition, after he arrived to Žiča he first bowed in front of Spas, to whom the temple is dedicated; then he prayed above the grave of his brother Stefan The First-Crowned, monk Simon, and finally he kissed his spiritual children, blessing them as he raised his hands (Domentijan 1988: 183–184). As it may be noticed, the person who gives the blessing may both give and receive the kiss. However, there is no strict rule whether the celov was given or received first, before the blessing, or the blessing took place before the kiss.

However, certain cases indicate that celov could be given with the blessing even if it was not specifically stated.

For example, after Simeon's arrival to Mount Athos, monks led by the protos came to bless themselves with him (Domentijan 1988: 277). Expression *to bless themselves with him* indicates that they also blessed each other. After departing from the monastery of St. Athanasius the Athonite, Simeon and Sava received a blessing from the monks of that monastery (Domentijan 1988: 280). Sensing that his death was close, Simeon asked Sava to call the protos and all the monastery brothers so they can bless each other (Domentijan 1988: 294). After the relics of St. Simeon, after being transferred to Serbia, started producing myrrh again, Sava used it to anoint all those who were present and blessed them all (Domentijan 1988: 318). Stefan The First-Crowned visited Sava to get a blessing when he was in danger from the Hungarian king Andrew II (Stefan 1988: 99).

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the collected data has shown that choice of this topic was justified. The kiss was often practiced in nonverbal communication. We have shown its significance in international relations, etiquette, family relations, and finally, those cases where it was recorded most commonly – in religious practice.

This study concentrated only on written sources. However, we believe that visual art sources are also good evidence on this topic and it would be advisable to study them as well. We have shown the importance of the kiss in religious relations, and that Christianity both in the Old and the New Testament has influenced its transition to other facets of life. It also elucidated relationships within the family, relationships within the ruling class as well as between rulers of different countries. The fact that it was used for so many purposes indicates the importance of this type of nonverbal communication in the studied period.

Through analysis of kiss we have also shown that Strez was a vassal, with the status of semi-sovereign country in relation to Stefan The First-Crowned, but not that he was involved with his country.

Our study has shown some evidence of what Vesin wrote about the kiss. We have presented the only case when this was taken from the canon and where it

may be assumed according to the source. Considering the other literary sources, we have also shown that these data do not pertain to the period before the start of 13th century, the period that our study is concentrated on.

The most common meaning was religious and it was most commonly used in religious practice. However it also reflected relationships within the family, within the ruling class, as well as between the rulers of different countries. The very fact that it was used in such wide social contexts shows that this form of nonverbal communication had extraordinary significance in the studied period of history.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ВИИНЈ IV 1971:** *Византијски извори за историју народа Југославије IV*, уредник Љубомир Максимовић, Београд 2007.
- Ферлуга 1966:** *Византијски извори за историју народа Југославије III*, уредници Георгије Острогорски и Фрањо Баришић, Београд 1966.
- Gesta I 2009:** *Gesta regnum Sclavorum I*, приредили и превела Драгана Кунчер, Београд 2009.
- Доментијан 1988:** Доментијан, *Живот Светога Саве*, у: Доментијан, *Живот Светога Саве и Живот Светога Симеона*, приредила Радмила Маринковић, Београд 1988, 51–233.
- Новаковић 1912:** Стојан Новаковић, *Законски споменици српских држава средњег века*, фототипско издање из 1912. године, приредио Раде Михаљчић, Београд 2005.
- Петровић 2004:** Миодраг М. Петровић, *Законоправило Светога Саве*, Епархија Жичка. Манастир Жича, 2004.
- Првовенчани 1988:** Стефан Првовенчани, *Сабрани списи*, приредила Љиљана Јухас-Георгијевска, Београд 1988, 52–118.
- Свети Сава 1986:** Свети Сава, *Сабрани списи*, приредио Димитрије Богдановић, Београд 1986.
- Соловјев 1926:** Александар Соловјев, *Одабрани споменици српског права од XII до XV века*, Београд 1926.
- Теодосије 1988:** Теодосије, *Житија*, приредио Димитрије Богдановић, Београд 1988, 99–261.
- Ћирковић, Ферјанчић 1986:** *Византијски извори за историју народа Југославије VI*, уредници Фрањо Баришић и Божидар Ферјанчић, Београд 1986.
- Весин 187:** Петар Весин, “Лобзаније” у старој хришћанској цркви, Српски Сион бр. 50, Сремски Карловци, 817–819.
- Михаљчић 1999:** Раде Михаљчић, Етикеција у: Лексикон српског средњег века, Београд 1999, 185–187.
- Троицки 1935:** Сергеј Троицки, *Ктиторско право у Византији и Немањинској Србији*, Београд 1935, Глас СКА CLXVIII, 117–118.