
REVIEWS

Ognjen Krešić, *The Hilandar Monastery and the Eastern Balkans in the 18th Century: Cultural and Economic Ties*, Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute for Balkan Studies, 2021, 251 pp.

(Ognjen Krešić, *Manastir Hilandar i istočni Balkan u XVIII veku: Kulturne i ekonomske veze*, Beograd: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, Balkanološki institut, 2021, 251 str. (Serbian Cyrillic))

The position of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire during the 18th century has largely been discussed through the status of taxpayers (*re'aya*), and the organization of the Orthodox Church and its role among Orthodox taxpayers has mostly been examined through archival sources written in the Balkan languages. Research on the activities of church officials was then extended to the organization of monastic communities. Mount Athos, the most important center of Orthodox monastic life, has attracted the attention of numerous researchers. The internal organization of the monastery has mostly been presented on the basis of documents created at the monastery or by the local administration. Documents in the Ottoman language have been compared with recent historiography, which has contributed to a better understanding of the monastic community's external activities and its relationship with the Ottoman administration.

In *Mount Athos and the Hilandar Monastery in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–17th Centuries*, Aleksandar Fotić presented a construct of previous research and some new information about Mount Athos after the establishment of Ottoman rule. Ognjen Krešić has continued this with his research into the position of the Hilandar monastery during what is referred to in the historiography as the Ottoman Empire's period of transition during the 17th and 18th centuries. He has presented his findings in *The Hilandar*

Monastery and the Eastern Balkans in the 18th Century: Cultural and Economic Ties. The main focuses of his investigation were the activities of Orthodox monks in the wider area of the Balkans and the position of monastic communities in different socio-political contexts within the Ottoman Empire. This primarily refers to the area of today's Bulgaria, where the religious and economic influence of the Hilandar monastic community spread during the 18th century. A theoretical consideration of questions of collective identities in the pre-national age dictated the choice of the study's chronological framework.

This book is an amended and supplemented version of the author's doctoral dissertation, *The Hilandar Monastery and the Bulgarians in the 18th century: Cultural and Economic Ties*. The resulting monograph is the outcome of several years of field research in the Hilandar monastery's archive, the archive in Sremski Karlovci, and the Ottoman archive in Istanbul. The theoretical approach to the topic was determined by the sources available at the time and the degree of achievement of earlier research. It was necessary to primarily use the method of structuralist historiography, since research on this topic based on Ottoman archival material is scant. Any examination of the position of non-Muslims in the 18th century always involves an attempt to differentiate the organization of the individual ethnic groups existing at the time. Therefore, the author included some theoretical considerations based on the division of non-Muslims into religious and ethnic groups known as millets. An argument about the collective identity of the pre-national era is analyzed through a case study of Paisius, a Hilandar monk at who combined an awareness of ethnicity with a sense of belonging to a wider Orthodox community in his historical work and daily life as monk.

The monograph is partitioned into four thematic units preceded by an introductory discourse on previous research and the issue of

sources. The most important research results are presented at the end. In the first unit, *Adapting to New Challenges: The Hilandar Monastery in the 18th Century* (pp. 28–76), the context surrounding the brotherhood's survival and *modus operandi* is explained. At the beginning, readers are introduced to the structure of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, which is known in historiography as a century of transition and nominal change in the socioeconomic order. The monastery community also had to adapt to new challenges, which are presented in a section on the monastery's relations with the Ottoman administration and the community's tax obligations and privileges. In an attempt to make later descriptions of the Hilandar monks' development clearer to the reader, the author builds on previous research on the monastery's status under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and its connection to the Patriarchate of Peć, (i.e., the Metropolitanate of Karlovci). This is followed by a section on the organization of monastery life in the 18th century, which describes how the people of Hilandar worked to improve the monastery, and especially its economic position, by taking advantage of economic improvements in the eastern Balkans.

The second unit, *Hilandar in the Eastern Balkans: Monastery Properties and Collection of Alms* (pp. 77–125), presents the author's main research findings. The monks' journeys outside the monastery walls to collect alms is explained in chronological order—from obtaining travel permits from representatives of the Ottoman administration and residence permits by local church dignitaries, to the journey itself and their communication with the faithful. The time the monks spent among the faithful had two principal goals: collecting alms and fostering the Christian faith, and establishing religious endowments for the benefit of the monastery. The procedure for establishing the monastery's *metochia* is described in the context of the Ottoman legal system and the legitimacy of the endowments from non-Muslims, in this case Orthodox Christians. The author then presents an accounting of the Hilandar properties which lists all the cities inhabited by monks during the 18th

century and the people who left their personal property to the Hilandar monastery.

In the third unit, *Contributors and Pilgrims from the Eastern Balkans in Hilandar* (pp. 127–150), the socioeconomic status position of the Orthodox faithful in the community mentioned in the sources as contributors to the monastery is examined. This unit is the most significant for understanding Orthodox Christians' position in the Ottoman Empire. This mainly introduces the reader to the local Orthodox Christians elite within the wealthy social classes, mostly from the urban areas, who fought for greater freedom of action in favor of their religious communities. All of this was accomplished through the mediation of the judicial authorities. The time the monks spent among common faithful also contributed to pilgrimage journeys and visits by the faithful to the Hilandar monastery, and sometimes even contributed to individuals from the Orthodox community choosing to take monastic vows. Pilgrimages were often undertaken in search of healing and for various other religious reasons. According to the findings presented in both chapters, it appeared the monastic community was relatively financially secure. Nevertheless, some sources indicate that, despite the monastery's vast holdings, it was still forced to borrow significant amounts of money due to excessive tax obligations. These findings once again confirm the author's thesis that the Ottoman eighteenth century was a period of uncontrolled tax burdens on the Ottoman Empire's non-Muslim subjects.

The final unit, *Hilandar and the Collective Identities of the Balkan Christians* (pp. 151–208), deals with the issue mentioned earlier of group identities in the Ottoman Balkans during the pre-national era. The argument about the status of religious communities raises questions of ethnicity and the Ottoman administration's position regarding group identities. The author's collective approach is based on the Greek or "Roman" identity, as was the generally accepted name in Ottoman administrative circles. Despite the Ottoman administration's general restraint around this issue and the common lack of interest in distinctions between ethnic groups, the author

presents findings that confirm existence of a very strong Serbian and Bulgarian ethnic self-awareness among the Hilandar monks. This issue is presented from within the monastery walls through the figure of monk Paisius and his work, *The History of the Slavic-Bulgarians (История славянобългарска)*.

In this highly regarded book, *The Hilandar Monastery and the Eastern Balkans in the 18th Century: Cultural and Economic Ties*, significant new research findings are presented and some long-held beliefs in historiography are thoroughly reexamined. Thus, the contribution made here to historiography is manifold. The primary significance of the findings outlined in it are fully considered and clearly explained through the Ottoman legal context within which the monastic community managed to survive. The very existence of self-awareness of ethnicity, as the authors concludes, did not affect the survival of monastic community's common social, cultural, and religious behavioral patterns or behavioral patterns among Orthodox faithful. This conclusion is supported through an investigation of the Ottoman administration's attitude toward divisions among the empire's non-Muslim subjects. Considering the research findings it presents, this monograph greatly contributes to clarifying the position of Orthodox Christians during the transitional period of Ottoman history. The true value of the book, however, is the wide range of archival material it analyzes.

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Radoš Ljušić, *Prince Miloš Obrenović I of Serbia: the State-building Monarch*, Pravoslavna reč, Novi Sad, 2021, 923 pp.

(Radoš Ljušić, *Knez Miloš: državotvorni vladar*, Novi Sad: Pravoslavna reč, 2021, 923 str. (Serbian Cyrillic))

From the pen of an esteemed Serbian historian and Belgrade University Lecturer, Professor Radoš Ljušić, a leading expert on 19th

century Serbian history, has come a monograph about Prince Miloš Obrenović I of Serbia. This monograph is a seminal publication in Serbian historiography. A quick glance at Professor Ljušić's curriculum vita, which includes 500 bibliographical references and several dozen special editions, shows immediately that this monograph, along with its focus, stands out as an endeavor of the utmost significance. It should be noted that the author has spent decades researching and documenting 19th century Serbian history. Some of his monographs are currently regarded as canonical books of Serbian historiography, such as *Биографија Војска Карађорђа (A Biography of Vozhd Karadjordje)*, the monograph *Српска државност 19 века (Serbian Statehood in the 19th Century)*, *Кнежевина Србија 1830–1839 (The Principality of Serbia, 1830–1839)*, and *Књига о Начертанију (The Book of Nacertanije)*. The author focuses specifically on defining and documenting the chronological history of Serbia, including all of the crucial events and turning points during the 19th century, thereby assuming a pivotal role both as a historian and a contributor to the field. To that end it can be stated that the this book is the product of decades of devoted research and writing, and an entire century after the biography written by Mihailo Gavrilović, it has emerged as a full and complete historical account of life and politics of Prince Miloš Obrenović.

The book demonstrates impeccable methodology and structure. It has been assembled and organized according to the highest standards of contemporary historiography. The author has skillfully composed a historical narrative that informatively and consistently includes all the relevant sections that comprise the chronology of events in the turbulent personal history of Prince Miloš Obrenović. Organized into six chapters with several well-grouped subchapters, the author narrates the life and history of Prince Miloš with a clear, comprehensible style and in a consistent and lucid manner. Not a single event in Prince Miloš Obrenović's life has been left unaccounted for. Starting with his early childhood, we discover a string of historical