

UDC 930.85(4-12)

YU ISSN 0350-7653

SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

BALCANICA

XXXIX (2008)

ANNUAL OF THE INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

Editor

DUŠAN T. BATAKOVIĆ

Editorial Board

FRANCIS CONTE (Paris), DIMITRIJE DJORDJEVIĆ (Santa Barbara),
DJORDJE S. KOSTIĆ, LJUBOMIR MAKSIMOVIĆ, DANICA POPOVIĆ,
GABRIELLA SCHUBERT (Jena), BILJANA SIKIMIĆ, ANTHONY-EMIL
TACHIAOS (Thessaloniki), NIKOLA TASIĆ (Director of the Institute for Balkan
Studies), SVETLANA M. TOLSTAJA (Moscow)

BELGRADE
2009



community where religious identity, rather than ethnic or linguistic, is central. The creation of the community of Evangelical Roma does not exclude, however, the preservation of boundaries between different Roma groups, as well as between the Roma as a whole and the *gadze*.

The volume is furnished with an extensive list of reference books, consulted Internet pages and periodicals as well as a list of Evangelical music CDs. Photographs, mostly made during her field research, are especially interesting and illustrative. It is also important to note that the author used the archival material as

well as church records. An appendix at the end of the volume offers a short history of the Evangelical churches included in the study. Seeking to shed light on the complex and challenging issue of the new religious identity of the Roma in Bulgaria, this valuable book can be seen as a useful starting point for future research on small religious communities to which many ethnic minorities in the Balkans belong. On the whole, the volume is a useful and attractive reading, and not only for scholars and experts, but also for a broader public interested in Roma communities and religious affiliations in general.

SMILJA MARJANOVIĆ-DUŠANIĆ, *SVETI KRALJ. KULT STEFANA DEČANSKOG (THE HOLY KING. THE CULT OF ST STEFAN OF DEČANI)*. BELGRADE: INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES, SP. ED. 97 & CLIO, 2007, pp. 655

Reviewed by Miroslav Timotijević*

The new book of Professor Smilja Dušanić-Marjanović, holder of the Chair in the General History of the Middle Ages and Auxiliary Historical Sciences at the Department of History, School of Philosophy, Belgrade University, is predicated on the methodological tenets of the “new cultural history” which provides a frame of reference for developing new approaches in the field of medieval studies as well. The adoption of multidisciplinary approaches has thus enabled a new approach to the phenomenon of royal sanctity, a key category of the medieval ideology of rulership. The work of many researchers, to mention but the most eminent, such as Jacques Le Goff, Robert Folz, André Vauchez, Jean-Claude Schmitt and Gabor Klaniczay, has highlighted the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon and its development, as well as religious and political specificities proper to different environments of medieval Europe. Focusing on the religio-political function of the holy king cult, Professor Marjanović-Dušanić in her opening remarks observes its long-term nature and

calls for incorporating the results of the new medieval studies into the broader framework set by the new cultural history. The need to interpret the holy king cult as a “changing long-term” phenomenon is clear and simple on the theoretical level, and it involves projecting the phenomenon into the contextualized structure of historical time.

To establish a methodological basis for testing a thesis thus posited is, however, a much more demanding task. Viewed from that perspective, Marjanović-Dušanić’s book is exemplary in terms of defining theoretical tenets through exploring a particular historical phenomenon. Interpreting the cult of the holy king Stefan of Dečani (Stefan Uroš III) as an identity *topos* of Serbian public collective memory, it looks at the original historical phenomenon from the perspective of its subsequent use in constructing religious, patriotic, national, official and popular collective mem-

* School of Philosophy, University of Belgrade

ory. Drawing upon the theoretical tenets of the French historians of the culture of memory Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora, based in turn on the pioneering work of Aby Warburg and Maurice Halbwachs, Marjanović-Dušanić approaches the cult of Stefan of Dečani through a meticulous historiographic analysis of the history of memory. Her theoretical and thus methodological tenets, however, diverge considerably from the views of Pierre Nora, which were prevailing until recently, and converge to those of his critics, Paul Ricoeur most of all.

Marjanović-Dušanić's enquiry into the complex phenomenon under study is structured clearly in the book. Part One, *The patterns of royal sanctity*, consists of two extensive chapters. The first of the two discusses the origin and development of the institution of royal sanctity in medieval Christian Europe (pp. 17–84). Using the reference literature in a critical way, the author interprets the shaping of the holy king concept in political theology, the creation of different types of royal sanctity, their function and different manners in which they were employed in different European environments until late medieval times. The second chapter is devoted to the patterns of royal sanctity in medieval Serbia (pp. 85–194). The author suggests that the ideological (re)presentation of royal sanctity under the Nemanjićs did not rely on analogies with the Komnenian and Arpadian dynastic patterns, but had its own distinctive character and line of development. The phenomenon of royal and dynastic sanctity in medieval Serbia, initially based on the cult of the founder of the dynasty—St Simeon (Nemanja), later on came to rest on that of the priestly twosome—Sts Simeon and Sava, which helped establish “symphony” between the institutions of state and church and led to the uninterrupted succession of holy kings. The holy ruler ideal, originally based on the “holy root” concept, increas-

ingly gained prominence; the subsequent generations of the Nemanjićs, however, accommodated it to the changing political needs and to the needs of particular saintly cults. As a result, it underwent essential changes over time. Taking into account the fact that the cult of holy rulers in the medieval Nemanjić state played a more prominent and different role than elsewhere, Marjanović-Dušanić argues for developing a separate typology.

Part Two, *The creation of royal memoria*, focuses on Stefan of Dečani. Several strong reasons lie behind the author's choice of this particular holy king for her case study. Firstly, Stefan of Dečani has certainly been among the most popular Serbian saints alongside Sts Simeon and Sava; moreover, his veneration in public memory has gone through all stages from a saintly cult to the cult of a national hero. Secondly, the monastery of Dečani with the holy king's tomb has become an unavoidable place of memory for Serbian religious, patriotic and national identity. Thirdly but no less importantly, the cult of Stefan of Dečani played a significant role not only in the official religion but also in popular piety, group as well as private. This has made it possible for the author to demonstrate the multilevel functioning of the holy king cult over a long span of time from the late middle ages to the present day.

Part Two also consists of two chapters. The first addresses the relationship between the historical, biographical, facts and the king's subsequent hagiographical image (pp. 197–336). In keeping with the view that historical reality and subsequent memory are conflated rather than opposed, the author shows that the Lives of the medieval Serbian rulers, including Stefan Uroš III, are imitative in nature and accommodated to the stereotype of anticipated sanctity. Accordingly, she shows that the historian's primary task is not to test hagiography against biography,

but to look at their interaction whose ultimate outcome is the production of royal *memoria* centred on the saintly cult. Analyzing the stages of the cult's evolution, the author observes that it eludes standard classifications. Initially, the creation of the cult of Stefan of Dečani followed the well-known dynastic cult pattern. In the post-Kosovo period, however, it was transformed into a typical martyrial cult. The transformation was made possible by the historical biographical facts, which were incorporated into the saint's Life as well. The main motivation, however, was to accommodate the saintly royal *memoria* to the current religio-political situation. "The historical and hagiographical accounts," the author stresses, "unfold against the same ideological backdrop", whereby a theological notion of the past becomes a tool for interpreting the present. This changeability stands in contradistinction to the unchanging quality of the place of memory embodied in the saint's relics enshrined in his funerary church at the monastery of Dečani. From the perspective of liturgical time, this unchangeability finds expression in the cyclic annual repetition of devotions to the saint. From the perspective of historical time, it too is liable to constant change, which finds expression in the changing reception of Dečani in public memory.

The second chapter of Part Two offers a detailed interpretation of the process of shaping the cult of Stefan of Dečani and the cult's subsequent transformation in public memory (pp. 337–551). Analyzing the process of including Stefan of Dečani among the saints, the author shows that it unfolded within the established framework of medieval political theology and well-known stereotypes, according to which the death is followed by the revelation of the relics, their translation into another shrine and the proclamation of sanctity. Initially, the cult of the holy king, in the forming of which his son, emperor

Dušan, was instrumental, was predominantly dynastic in nature. The essential change occurred in the aftermath of the Battle of Kosovo (1389). The cult of Stefan of Dečani was then accommodated to a different pattern, that of the martyrial cult of prince Lazar, for the purpose of legitimizing the new Lazarević dynasty. Central role in this ideological reshaping was played by Grigorije Camblak (Gregory Tsamblak), the learned *begoumenos* of Dečani and the writer of the holy king's Life and Office. His writings laid the basis for the spread of the king's saintly cult, but, as a result of the Ottoman invasion and the fall of the Serbian medieval state and church, it remained local in nature and mostly associated with the monastery of Dečani. The cult did not begin to spread until after the Patriarchate of Peć was restored, under Ottoman rule, when Stefan of Dečani was recognized as the moral model of unswerving faith. With the spread of the cult, accompanied by an ever increasing number of the holy king's visual depictions, the monastery of Dečani increasingly gained repute. The stance of the restored Patriarchate became the mainstay of the newly-established Metropolitanate of Karlovci (Karlović) within the Habsburg monarchy. In its baroque-style historicism, Stefan of Dečani retained the role of an ideal model, while Dečani emerged as the *topos* of the golden age of the sacralized Serbian land whose restoration as a sovereign state was promulgated at first within Habsburg dynastic patriotism and then within the popular patriotism of the Enlightenment. Its transformation into a national ideology led to the transformation of the Serbian saints into historical heroes. The turning point was the famous *History* of Jovan Rajić, where the Serbian saints were interpreted and visually depicted as secular heroes. This ushered the cult of Stefan of Dečani into a new structure of progressively understood historical time. The new

notions did not find their full expression until the restoration of the Serbian state, when the glorification of the past and its greats became one of the main identity categories. In official culture's symbolic politics Stefan of Dečani was not assigned an important role, but in public national culture he became a favourite hero, as shown by his central role in many visual depictions and historical plays. The historicization of Stefan of Dečani did not, however, imply suppression of his cult. In the nineteenth century it underwent a revival, especially in private popular piety, and the attention of the faithful became focused on the monastery of Dečani, still an unavoidable *topos* of religious and patriotic pilgrimage.

In its theoretical postulates and methodological approach, the book of Smilja

Marjanović-Dušanić belongs to the domain of total cultural history. The introduction of a specifically medieval subject into a broader temporal and spatial frame and its multidisciplinary analysis in the light of the history of memory shows more than convincingly how the "vertical" historical approach can elucidate "horizontal" historical strata. Of course, a productive implementation of such an approach to a period of more than six centuries requires outstanding scholarly abilities and erudition, and these are obvious in every single page of this book. The book is furnished with an English summary (pp. 565–583), list of sources (pp. 585–590), bibliography (pp. 591–620), and index (pp. 621–647). Moreover, its 137 mostly colour illustrations fully contribute to the visual presentation of the phenomenon under study.

GREEK ICON PAINTERS IN BULGARIA AFTER 1453

Е. МУТАФОВ, И. ГЕРГОВА, А. КУЮМДЖИЕВ, Е. ПОПОВА, Е. ГЕНОВА, Д. ГОНИС,
ГРЪЦКИ ЗОГРАФИ В БЪЛГАРИЯ СЛЕД 1453 Г. СОФИЯ: ИНСТИТУТ ЗА ИЗКУСТВОЗНАНИЕ ПРИ БАН,
 2008. Е. ΜΟΥΤΑΦΩΦ, Ε. ΓΚΕΡΓΚΟΒΑ, Α. ΚΟΥΠΥΜΤΣΙΕΦ, Ε. ΠΟΠΟΒΑ, Ε. ΓΚΕΝΟΒΑ, Δ. ΓΟΝΙΣ,
ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΑΠΟΓΡΑΦΟΙ ΣΤΗ ΒΟΥΛΓΑΡΙΑ ΜΕΤΑ ΤΟ 1453. ΣΟΦΙΑ 2008, pp. 272, ill. 337

Reviewed by Ljiljana Stošić*

After the already classical two-volume encyclopaedia of post-Byzantine Greek painters (M. Chatzidakis and E. Dracopoulou, *Έλληνες ζωγράφοι μετά την Άλωση*, Athens 1987/97), a Bulgarian team gathered round the Institute of Art History of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences published a bilingual Bulgarian-Greek catalogue *Greek Icon Painters in Bulgaria after 1453*. The realization of this ambitious project was made possible by the previous ten-year work of collecting the material, published as *The Corpus of Eighteenth-Century Bulgarian Icon Painters* (Sofia 2007).

Apart from the catalogue as its most extensive part, the book offers Elena Popova's precious introductory study on

Greek painters in Bulgaria between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, which is chronologically divided into the earliest period or the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries and the eighteenth century, while the nineteenth-century painters are additionally discussed by area: southeast Bulgaria (Nesebar, Sozopol), central Bulgaria (Plovdiv, Asenovgrad) and southwest Bulgaria (Melnik, Kyustendil). For each of the eighty icon painters arranged in alphabetic order there is a short biography with their associates, signatures, works and the basic literature. The painters bearing the same name (e.g.

* Institute for Balkan Studies, Belgrade