

UDC 930.85(4–12)

ISSN 0350–7653

SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

BALCANICA

XLIII

ANNUAL OF THE INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

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BELGRADE
2012



barred from access to the sites, they struggled to rescue from oblivion, if they could not from decay, an important testimony to an authentic monastic spirituality and presence in Metohija. Unreservedly dedicated to their work, which involved field research in a less than friendly environment, they were given a generous reward: in company with Dečani monks, they lived to “hear, after more than three centuries, the gorge of the Bistrica reverberate with the sound of *troparia*, which, at least for a brief moment, restored to the

Dečani Desert some of its original spirituality and blissful peace”. D. Popović, B. Todić and D. Vojvodić have given future generations of scholars, as well as interested readers, a remarkable book which will be a must-read for a comprehensive understanding of the Serbian past of Kosovo and Metohija. At the same time, it will be a comprehensive and exceptionally well-documented case study for comparative research into Eastern Christian anchoritic monasticism.

NICOLAS VATIN, GILLES VEINSTEIN AND ELIZABETH ZACHARIADOU, *CATALOGUE DU FONDS OTTOMAN DES ARCHIVES DU MONASTÈRE DE SAINT-JEAN À PATMOS. LES VINGT-DEUX PREMIERS DOSSIERS*. ATHENS: FONDATION NATIONALE DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE, INSTITUT DE RECHERCHES BYZANTINES, 2011, pp. 673.

*Reviewed by Ognjen Krešić**

In 1997, the Institute for Byzantine Studies (*Institut de recherches byzantines*) of the National Foundation for Scientific Research (*Fondation nationale de la recherche scientifique*) and the Centre for Turkish, Ottoman, Balkan and Central-Asian Studies (*Centre d'études turque, ottomans, balkaniques et centrasiatiques*) of the National Centre for Scientific Research (*Centre national de la recherche scientifique/CNRS*) started collaboration on an archival research project concerning the Ottoman documents preserved in the monastery of Saint John the Theologian on Patmos. The actual archival work began four years later, when the first research team arrived in the monastery. It was made up of Elizabeth Zahariadou, retired professor of Turkish studies at the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Crete, Nicolas Vatin, director of research at the CNRS, and Gilles Veinstein, professor at the Collège de France and director of studies at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (*École des hautes études en sciences sociales*).

The result of their work is the first volume of a catalogue of Ottoman documents published in 2011. The volume offers the summaries of 823 documents divided into folders (Z, 1b, and from 1 to 20), which span the period from the fifteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century, including several documents dating from later centuries. The remaining part of the archival material, consisting of 522 mostly eighteenth- and nineteenth-century documents, is in the process of being prepared by Michael Ursinus, and should also appear in the form of a catalogue.

The book consists of an introduction to the Catalogue and Appendix (pp. 9–28), the Catalogue with summaries of every document (pp. 29–566), the indexes of personal names, most important functionaries and place names, a topical index, a chronological list of the monastery's

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hegumens, a genealogical table of the Diakos family, and a glossary (pp. 567–664). The authors made detailed summaries of every document, which provide basic diplomatic information about the type of document, date of issue, issuer and recipient, signature and seal, contents of the reverse side, dimensions, a summary of the main text in French and, where needed, additional remarks. Most documents have short commentaries or additional information written on them in Greek, and the authors included them in summaries. They also included in their remarks all available information about the persons mentioned in the documents or drew attention to interconnections between different documents.

At the time when the Ottomans incorporated the island of Patmos into their sphere of influence the monastery of Saint John had already had a long history. It was not only the religious centre of the island but, during the last decades of Byzantine rule, it also became the most important administrative institution that governed the lives of the islanders. Facing the new developments on the neighbouring Anatolian coast, where the Turkish emirates of Aydın and Menteşe were founded, and the rapid decline of Byzantine central authority, the monastery continued to fortify its influence, and the island became a “small, practically independent, monastic state”. In exchange for the preservation of its autonomous status, the monastery paid a tribute to the emirs of Menteşe. It is believed that the monastery established relations with the Ottomans as soon as they conquered the coastal emirates, but it was only after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, that Patmos finally became part of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman central government did not formally recognize the temporal authority of the hegumen and his status was not sanctioned by a *berat*. As a result, communication went through the Patri-

archate and the local authorities. On the other hand, the local authorities were well aware of the influential role of the monastery and its hegumen in the life of the inhabitants of Patmos.

The fact that the monastery was so involved in the functioning of the island's society and that it had developed relations with Ottoman authorities, especially local, explains the great number and diversity of Ottoman documents preserved in its archive. Most are various types of certificates and attestations issued by the *kadı* (*hüccets*, *temessüks*), but there is also a rich collection of documents issued by the central (*fermans*, *berats*) and local authorities (such as pashas, beys, kapudan-pashas). An especially interesting feature of the monastery's Ottoman collection is that it contains a considerable number of documents of a private nature. Given that the island was a sacred and geographically well protected place, many people, and not only locals, chose to deposit their valuables and important documents in the monastery vaults. Moreover, the islanders used the monastery as a kind of public archives. Therefore, those interested in the life of the islanders can obtain information about various types of everyday transactions and about the kind of problems that caused them trouble.

The archive of such an important institution as the monastery of Saint John on Patmos undoubtedly is a mine of information for various areas of academic interest. In the first place, there are economic topics. The monastery possessed a large number of estates, scattered on different Aegean islands, and its monks were actively engaged in trade. Thus, researchers can follow the functioning of the monastery's economy, the collection of revenues from its properties and the complicated operation of transporting products both to the island and to other Ottoman territories. Closely connected with this is the question of rela-

tions between the monastery and local authorities and payment of taxes due to the state. The monastery's rights over its estates and sources of income were often disputed by neighbours or local notables, and with a help of many documents one can reconstruct how such problems were handled and resolved. Also, the Ottoman documents can provide some information about the relationship between the monks and religious authorities, notably the Patriarchate in Constantinople.

The archival material from a monastery situated on an island is, of course, of great interest to researchers concerned with any topic relating to the sea. Patmos was involved in the Aegean trade network, but its trade connections were not limited to the nearby regions, but encompassed the whole of the Mediterranean. Apart from trade, the documents also provide information about agriculture and animal husbandry on the Aegean islands. The sea can bring as many problems as benefits to insular communities. The Patmiots expe-

rienced many problems caused by piracy, and several documents testify to the aid they extended to the victims of pirate attacks.

The *Catalogue of the Ottoman documents in the Archive of the Monastery of Saint John on Patmos* can be highly useful to all researchers interested in the history of the Orthodox monasteries in the Ottoman Empire. The documents provide information about the functioning of the monastery as an institution, about its economic activities and its relationship with Ottoman central and local authorities. Moreover, given the distinctive role that the monastery of Saint John played in the society of the island, its archive is also a source of valuable information about the life of all inhabitants of the island. Taken as a whole, these documents can give us a picture of the life on an Aegean island under Ottoman rule, which could never be completely isolated from events taking place elsewhere across the vast empire.

JOVAN DJ. AVAKUMOVIĆ, *MEMOARI* [MEMOIRS], ED. SLOBODAN TURLAKOV.
SREMSKI KARLOVCI – NOVI SAD: IZDAVAČKA KNJIŽARNICA ZORANA STOJANOVIĆA,
2008, pp 686.

*Reviewed by Aleksandra Kolaković**

Jovan Avakumović (1841–1928), Serbian jurist, politician, and member of Royal Serbian Academy, was one of the figures who marked the political and social scene in Serbia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A descendant of the merchant Babadudić family, he graduated in law from the Great School (*Velika škola*) in Belgrade and then continued his law studies in Germany, France and Switzerland. Avakumović began his career as first secretary of the Court of Cassation (1871), and held the office of mayor of Belgrade (1875), chief of the Police Department of the Ministry

of Interior (1875–1880) and judge of the Court of Cassation (1881–1887).

As a member of the Liberal Party, Avakumović served twice as Minister of Justice, in the cabinet of Jovan Ristić (1881) and the coalition cabinet of Liberals and Radicals (1887). He was Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1892 until the King Alexander Obrenović's coup d'état of 1893, which was the reason why the Radicals demanded that Avakumović and some other

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