

# **POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPE**

**Life under the shadow of the Ottoman  
Empire's Expansion (15<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> centuries)**

Proceedings of the 3<sup>rd</sup> international conference  
3<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> October 2019, Timișoara

Editor  
**Zsuzsanna Kopeczny**

Editura Mega  
Cluj-Napoca  
2021



CONSILIUL  
JUDEȚEAN  
TIMIȘ



DTP and Cover:  
Mega Publishing House

On the cover: Ottoman miniature depicting the siege led by Kara Ahmed Pasha against the fortress of Timișoara  
(after Jancsó Árpád – Balla Lóránd, *Temesvár régi ábrázolásai. 16-18. század*, Marosvásárhely, 2005, p. 50.)

© Authors, 2021

Descrierea CIP a Bibliotecii Naționale a României

*Politics and society in Central and South-East Europe: life under the shadow of the Ottoman Empire's expansion (15th-16th centuries): 3-5th October 2019, Timișoara* / ed.: Zsuzsanna Kopeczny. – Cluj-Napoca: Mega, 2021

Conține bibliografie

ISBN 978-606-020-359-9

I. Kopeczny, Zsuzsanna (ed.)

94



EDITURA MEGA | [www.edituramega.ro](http://www.edituramega.ro)  
e-mail: [mega@edituramega.ro](mailto:mega@edituramega.ro)

# CONTENTS

---

## ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, POPULATIONS

### **Beatrix F. Romhányi**

Populations and Religions: the Transformation of the Danube-Tisza Mureş/Maros Interfluve between the Mid-Thirteenth and the late Sixteenth Century.....9

### **Aleksandar Krstić**

The Orthodox Church in Northern Serbia during the First Century of Ottoman Rule (1459–1557) .....21

### **Zoltán Iusztin**

Testimonies about Mobility in the Becskerek Nahije in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.....39

## MILITARY AND POLITICAL HISTORY

### **Ligia Boldea**

The Banat elites involving in defence of the Magyar Kingdom's southern border during Sigismund of Luxemburg's age.....61

### **Elek Szaszko**

From Bestowal to Betrayal. The Military and Political Role of Nicolas Csáki and Nicolas Marcali between 1399 and 1401.....69

### **Neven Isailović**

The Battle of Lašva (1415) – The Greatest Hungarian Defeat after Nicopolis Revisited.....83

### **Adrian Magina**

*As the Turks Moved on Them...* New Documents on Severin and the Lower Parts of the Hungarian Kingdom Before the Battle of Mohács.....93

### **Nándor Virovecz**

Shifting Allegiances and the Questions of Resilience: Lords of the Hungarian and Transylvanian Border During the Fortress Wars of 1560's.....101

### **Florin Nicolae Ardelean**

The Siege of Timișoara from 1596 in the Works of Bernardino Beccari Da Sacile.....117

### **Zoltán Péter Bagi**

The 1596 draft on a Future Fleet on Dnieper.....125

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCHES AND ARTIFACTS

### **Bogdan Alin Craiovan, Dorel Micle**

Taking a Stroll on the Streets of Ottoman Timisoara. Archaeological Data Regarding  
Timisoara's Street Layout during the late middle Age.....133

### **Szabolcs Kondorosy**

From Imperial to Local. Clay Tobacco Pipes In Front Of The Walls Of Buda Castle.....151

### **István Pánya, Szabolcs Rosta**

Research summary of the Turkish fortress of Dunapataj – Szentkirály .....169

### **Erika Wicker**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Century Jewelry Hoard from Rácszentpéter (today Sánpetru Mare, Timiș County,  
Romania) (poster).....187

# THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN NORTHERN SERBIA DURING THE FIRST CENTURY OF OTTOMAN RULE (1459–1557)

Aleksandar Krstić\*

**Keywords:** Orthodox Church, northern Serbia, Ottoman Empire, 15<sup>th</sup> century, 16<sup>th</sup> century, monastery.

**Abstract:** The paper analyses the legal position of the Orthodox Church in northern Serbia and its attitude towards the Ottoman authorities and the Archbishopric of Ohrid during the first century of Ottoman rule in that area. Based on the data that are primarily provided by the Ottoman censuses (*defters*) from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, but also by other sources, the legal and economic position and the number of monasteries in northern Serbia are analysed. The data in these sources about the parish clergy are also considered, as well as the process of Islamization, which was primarily characteristic of urban settlements and their overall transformation into the centres of the oriental type.

The period from the fall of Smederevo in 1459 until the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557 was one of the most difficult in the history of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The establishment of Ottoman rule brought about a huge change for the Church and a deterioration of its position. From a privileged institution and one of the pillars of medieval Christian society it became a religious organization of the subdued Christian *reaya* in an Islamic state. The Church was under full control of Ottoman authorities although they did not interfere in its internal organization, hierarchy and administration. Bishops, metropolitans and patriarchs could not be elected and appointed without approval of the Sublime Porte and the Orthodox Church leaders were responsible for the obedience of their religious communities. Ottoman authorities treated the Church as an *iltizam* – a tax farm (*piskopos mukata'ası*), producing and collecting revenues for the state and provided significant income to the Imperial treasury. The Church dignitaries had to pay high taxes (*peşkeş*) for sultan's *berâts* – the documents of the appointment and confirmation of their positions. They were also obliged to pay an annual tribute (*kesim*) to the Imperial treasury. In return, hierarchs were mandated to collect revenues from ecclesiastical landholdings, annual taxes paid by local clergy and their communities, as well as fees charged for weddings and baptisms and the income from saints' festivals.<sup>1</sup> While the fiscal and social status of the parish priest was not much different from the status

\* Institute of History, Kneza Mihaila 36/II, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, e-mail: aleksandar.krstic@iib.ac.rs; albited@gmail.com.

<sup>1</sup> Radmila Tričković, *Srpska crkva sredinom XVII veka*, in *Glas Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti* (hereafter: *Glas SANU*) 320, Odeljenje istorijskih nauka, vol. 2/1988, pp. 61–82; Vančo Boškov, Dušanka Bojanić, *Sultanske povelje iz manastira Hilandara. Regesta i komentar za period 1512–1601*, in *Hilandarski zbornik*, 8/1991, pp. 170–175, 206–208; Nebojša Šuletić, *Srpska crkva posle 1459. godine*, in Momčilo Spremić (ed.), *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, (Beograd: SANU, 2011), pp. 331–332, 338–339; Halil Inalcik, *Ottoman Archival Materials on Millets*, in Benjamin Braude, Bernard Lewis (eds.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*, (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982), pp. 437–449; Idem, *The Status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate under the Ottomans*, in *Turcica*, 21–23/1991,

of other *reaya*,<sup>2</sup> the monks could have some privileges, because they were often exempted from paying the *djizya* (*haraç*), as well as some other taxes and extraordinary levies.<sup>3</sup>

Due to a very small number of historical sources, there are different opinions about the legal position of the Orthodox Church in northern Serbia, which has been organized as the Smederevo sanjak after 1459. As the Ottoman conquest of Serbian lands was progressing during the last decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, Serbian eparchies were gradually falling under the jurisdiction of the Archbishopric of Ohrid. The monasteries of Peć and Žiča, the seats of the Serbian Patriarchate, experienced the same fate after the Ottoman conquest of the southern parts of the despot's state in 1454/1455.<sup>4</sup> With the shift of the state centre to the north, into the Danube and Sava regions, the church centre moved as well, and in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the Belgrade and Smederevo Metropolitanates gained great importance.<sup>5</sup> According to some, mainly older historiographers, the Serbian Church was officially put under the jurisdiction of the Ohrid Archbishopric after the death of the last Serbian patriarch Arsenius II around 1461.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, other scholars stated that after the conquest of Smederevo, the Ottomans recognized the Serbian Church in the state in which they found it. That is, the southern dioceses were incorporated into the Archbishopric of Ohrid after 1455, while parts of the Serbian Church in northern Serbia, southern Hungary, Herzegovina and Zeta kept their autonomy until 1525–1528, or 1532, when the Serbian Patriarchate was officially subjugated to the Archbishopric of Ohrid.<sup>7</sup> This view is now mostly accepted in Serbian historiography.<sup>8</sup>

For example, records from 1508 and 1509 mention Archbishop John, and in 1524 Metropolitan Mark, who were said to “rule the churches” and “hold the throne of Saint Sava”. Such a term was used for the head of the Serbian Church at the time of its independence.<sup>9</sup> It is very likely that the seat of these archbishops was Smederevo. The Metropolitan of Belgrade, on the other hand, was based in Hungarian territory until 1521, when the Ottomans finally captured Belgrade. Some sources lead us to believe that in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the Metropolitan of Belgrade was the spiritual

pp. 407–436; Tom Papademetriou, *Render unto the Sultan: Power, Authority, and the Greek Orthodox Church in the Early Ottoman Centuries*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 63–175.

<sup>2</sup> Ema Miljković, Aleksandar Krstić, *Parohijsko sveštenstvo u Braničevu u drugoj polovini XV veka*, in *Crkvene studije*, 5/2008, p. 332. On priests in the medieval Serbian state and their legal and social position, see: Marija Koprivica, *Popovi i protopopovi Srpske crkve u srednjem veku*, (Niš: Centar za crkvene studije, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Hamid Hadžibegić, *Glavarina u Osmanskoj državi*, (Sarajevo: Orijentalni institut, 1966), pp. 16–20; Halil Inalcik, “Djizya (II. Ottoman)”, in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. II (C–G), (Leiden: Brill, 1991), p. 563; Cf. Aleksandar Fotić, *Sveta Gora i Hilandar u Osmanskom carstvu XV–XVII vek*, (Beograd: Balkanološki institut SANU, 2000), p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> Ernst von Dobschütz, *Ein Schreiben des Patriarchen Gennadios Scholarios an den Fürsten Georg von Serbien*, in *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, XXVII/1905, pp. 246–257; Momčilo Spremić, *Despot Đurađ Branković i njegovo doba*, (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1994), pp. 419–423, 429–433, 436–438, 464–465.

<sup>5</sup> Marija Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije Srpske crkve u srednjem veku*, (Beograd: Istorijski institut, 1985), pp. 92–96, 152–155, 187–191; Jovanka Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd u srednjem veku*, (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1967), pp. 92, 307–310.

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed review of the Serbian historiography on this issue, see: Radovan Samardžić, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva u XVI i XVII veku*, in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. III/2, (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1993), pp. 14–17; Nebojša Đokić, Marija Živković, *Srpska crkva od pada Despotovine do obnove Pečke Patrijaršije*, in *Leskovački zbornik*, LVIII/2018, pp. 61–65.

<sup>7</sup> Mirko Mirković, *Pravni položaj i karakter Srpske crkve pod osmanskom vlašću (1459–1766)*, (Beograd: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 1965), reprinted in: Idem, *O pravnom položaju Srpske crkve u našoj prošlosti*, (Beograd: Pravni fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, Dosijske, 2000), pp. 66–83; Branislav Đurđev, *Uloga crkve u starijoj istoriji srpskog naroda*, (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1964), pp. 111–112; Idem, *Odnos između Ohridske arhiepiskopije i srpske crkve od pada Smedereva (1459) do obnavljanja Pečke patrijaršije (1557)*, in *Radovi Akademije nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine*, XXVIII, Odeljenje društvenih nauka 13/1970, pp. 185–209.

<sup>8</sup> Ema Miljković-Bojanić, *Smederevski sandžak 1476–1560. Zemlja, naselja, stanovništvo*, (Beograd: Istorijski institut, 2004), pp. 273–274; Šuletić, *Srpska crkva*, pp. 347–348; Đokić, Živković, *Srpska crkva*, in *Leskovački zbornik*, pp. 61–98.

<sup>9</sup> Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. I, (Beograd: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1902), pp. 124, 142–143, nr. 399, 451; Đurđev, *Uloga crkve*, p. 106; Mirković, *O pravnom položaju*, pp. 80–83; Đokić, Živković, *Srpska crkva*, in *Leskovački zbornik*, pp. 68–69. Cf. Šuletić, *Srpska crkva*, pp. 340–342.

leader not only of Serbs, but also other Orthodox believers in the Kingdom of Hungary. For example, in 1479 King Matthias Corvinus, at the request of Joannicius, the Metropolitan of Belgrade (*Iowanichius Metropolitanus Nandoralbensis*), declared the Orthodox Romanian priests in Maramureş County, who were subordinate to the Metropolitan of Belgrade, tax-exempt.<sup>10</sup> During the first decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Belgrade's Metropolitan Gregory and his successor Theophanes received financial assistance from the Grand Prince of Moscow Vasily III Ivanovich.<sup>11</sup> After Theophanes, the Metropolitan of Belgrade and Srem became Maksim Branković (1513–1516), a former Serbian despot in Hungary. He had previously resided in Wallachia, where Voivode Radu the Great appointed him Metropolitan of Wallachia.<sup>12</sup>

The main sources dealing with the relationship between the Serbian and Ohrid churches are documents created in the 1530s over the conflict between Metropolitan Paul of Smederevo and Archbishop Prochorus of Ohrid.<sup>13</sup> It is not entirely clear whether the conflict began with the Archbishop of Ohrid, who wanted to subjugate the remaining Serbian eparchies, or Paul, who began the struggle to restore the Serbian Church to its former proportions. It is possible that the conflict over jurisdiction between Paul and Prochorus was caused by changes in the administrative organization of Church tax farms made by Ottoman authorities.<sup>14</sup> In any case, in 1528 or 1529 the Ohrid synod condemned all metropolitans and bishops who, without the knowledge of the Archbishop of Ohrid and the synod, sought *berâts* for appointment through other *kadis* (judges) and not through the *kadi* of Ohrid. None of the bishops from northern Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were among the bishops present at that assembly, while the names of the bishops of some of the southern

<sup>10</sup> Magyar nemzeti levéltár országos levéltára, Budapest, *Diplomatikai levéltár* (DL) 36886; Ioan Mihalyi de Apşa, *Istoria comitatului Maramureş. Diplome maramureşene din secolele XIV și XV*, vol. I, (Sighet: Tipografia lui Mayer și Berger, 1900), p. 536, nr. 313 (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Dragoş Vodă, 2009<sup>4</sup>, p. 753, nr. 313), where the name of the Belgrade metropolitan is incorrectly transcribed as *Iovanychik*; Augustin Bunea, *Ierarchia Românilor din Ardeal și Ungaria*, (Blaş: Tipografia Seminariului Archidiecezan, 1904), pp. 122–162; Nicolae Iorga, *Sate și preoți din Ardeal*, (Bucureşti: Carôl Gobl, 1902), p. 14; Zenovie Pâclişanu, *În jurul ierarchiei Românilor ardeleni în secolul XV*, in *Revista Istorică Română*, XIII–2/1943, pp. 13–14; Alexandru Filipaşcu de Dolha și Petrova, *Istoria Maramureşului*, (Baia Mare: Editura Gutinul, 1997<sup>2</sup>), pp. 73–74, misinterpreted the document; Radoslav Grujić, *Duhovni život*, in Dušan Popović (ed.), *Vojvodina I. Od najstarijih vremena do Velike seobe*, (Novi Sad: Istorijско društvo u Novom Sadu, 1939), pp. 340–341; Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd*, p. 310; Sima Ćirković, “Srpski živalj na novim ognjištima”, in Jovanka Kalić (ed.), *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. II, (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1982), p. 444; Sava Vuković, *Srpski jerarsi od devetog do dvadesetog veka*, (Beograd: Evro, Podgorica: Unireks, Kragujevac: Kalenić, 1996), p. 232; Idem, “Joanikije”, in Čedomir Popov (ed.), *Srpski biografski rečnik*, vol. IV, (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 2009), p. 414. In recent times, some Romanian church historians believe that *Nandoralbensis* was erroneously written in the charter instead of *Nandorensis*, so Joannicius would not be the Serbian metropolitan from Belgrade but a Romanian from the village of Nandru in Hunedoara County: Mircea Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. I, (Bucureşti: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1991), pp. 295–296; Vasile Muntean, *Istoria Bisericii Românești (de la începuturi până în 1716) – Curs sintetic*, (Timișoara: Editura Marineasa, 2010), p. 68.

<sup>11</sup> Stevan Dimitrijević, *Grada za srpsku istoriju iz ruskih arhiva i biblioteka*, in *Spomenik Srpske kraljevske akademije* (hereafter: *Spomenik SKA*), LIII/1922, pp. 16–20; Grujić, *Duhovni život*, pp. 341–342; Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd*, pp. 307, 310; Vuković, *Srpski jerarsi*, pp. 139, 299–300, 490.

<sup>12</sup> Svetlana Tomin, *Vladika Maksim Branković*, (Novi Sad: Platoneum, 2007), pp. 25–46. See also: Nicolae Iorga, *Istoria Bisericii Românești și a vieții religioase a Românilor*, vol. I, (Vălenii de Munte: Tipografia Neamul Românesc, 1908), pp. 121–124; Emil Turdeanu, *Din vechile schimburi culturale dintre Români și Jugoslavi*, in *Cercetări literare*, III/1939, pp. 148–157; Nicolae Șerbănescu, *Mitropoliții Ungrovlahiei*, in *Biserica Ortodoxă Română*, LXXVII, 7–8/1959, pp. 745–747; Ion-Radu Mircea, *Relations culturelles roumano-serbes au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, in *Revue des études Sud-Est européennes*, I/1963, pp. 385–387; Dan Ioan Mureșan, *La visite canonique du patriarche Pacôme Ier dans les Principautés roumaines (1513) et le modèle davidique du sacre*, in *Sfântul voievod Neagoe Basarab – titot de biserici și cultură românească*, (Bucureşti: Cuvântul vieții, 2012), pp. 37–38, 40; Snežana Božanić, *The Political and Cultural Life of Despot Đorđe Branković in Syrmia*, in *The cultural and historical heritage of Vojvodina in the context of classical and medieval studies*, (Novi Sad: Department of History, Faculty of Philosophy, 2015), pp. 191–203.

<sup>13</sup> Petar Kostić, *Dokumenti o buni smederevskog episkopa Pavla protiv potčinjavanja Pečke patrijaršije arhiepiskopiji Ohridskoj*, in *Spomenik SKA*, LVI/1922, pp. 32–39.

<sup>14</sup> Šuletić, *Srpska crkva*, pp. 346–347.

eparchies were recorded.<sup>15</sup> Before September 1530, Paul began to replace the bishops who were loyal to the Archdiocese of Ohrid, and to appoint his own people. He proclaimed himself a patriarch in Peć, and even succeeded in holding Archbishop Prochorus and some bishops imprisoned. He certainly could not have achieved this without the consent of not only the clergy and the faithful, including the local Serbian leaders, but also the Ottoman authorities. Numerous Serbian warriors from northern Serbia at that time were still involved in the Ottoman military system and participated in the campaigns across the Sava and Danube.<sup>16</sup>

Archbishop Prochorus soon succeeded in freeing himself and obtaining the sultan's *ferman* for the benefit of his archbishopric; that is, finally putting the Church of Smederevo under his jurisdiction. In addition to enjoying the full support of the patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch, it can be assumed that the Archbishop of Ohrid had support of Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha, who was of Greek descent. At the synod in Ohrid in March 1532, Paul pleaded guilty, and he and the bishops he ordained were defrocked and stripped of their priestly vocation. The document was also signed by all newly appointed bishops of the Serbian eparchies. Among them were Metropolitan Roman of Belgrade, Bishop Theodosius of Smederevo, and Metropolitan Joseph of Hungary.<sup>17</sup> Afterwards, Paul went into exile in Russia, Poland and Wallachia, where he was received as a Serbian archbishop while seeking help. However, even after this success, the Archbishop of Ohrid did not seem to have succeeded in fully placing the northern eparchies under his jurisdiction.<sup>18</sup> Although he failed to preserve the independence of the Serbian Church, Paul's action showed its strength and vitality in these difficult times, which would, under different circumstances, lead to the restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557, partly due to the support of Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha.<sup>19</sup>

\*

After the establishment of the Ottoman rule, eparchies and monasteries were deprived of the biggest part of their estates and they were mostly included in Ottoman *hasses*, *zeamets* and *timars*. For small portions of their former properties left to them as tenancies, the monasteries had to pay the tithe and other fees and taxes. Parts of their real estate, like gardens, vineyards and mills, could also be in full ownership (*mülk*), and represent a *vakıf*, a possession bequeathed to the monastery. In this way, the matter of Christian endowment was legalized, albeit to a very limited extent.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Kostić, *Dokumenti*, pp. 35–37.

<sup>16</sup> Kostić, *Dokumenti*, pp. 33–34, 38; Đokić, Živković, *Srpska crkva*, in Leskovački zbornik, pp. 82–83.

<sup>17</sup> Kostić, *Dokumenti*, pp. 37–39; Ljubomir Stojanović, *Srpska crkva u međuvremenu od patrijarha Arsenija II do Makarija (oko 1459–63. do 1557. g.)*, in Glas SKA, CVI/1923, pp. 113–131; Đurđev, *Uloga crkve*, pp. 114–116; Mirković, *O pravnom položaju*, pp. 84–87; Miodrag Al. Purković, *Srpski patrijarsi srednjega veka*, (Diseldorf: Srpska pravoslavna eparhija zapadnoevropska, 1978), pp. 160–163; Samardžić, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, pp. 22–26; Šuletić, *Srpska crkva*, pp. 344–346; Đokić, Živković, *Srpska crkva*, in Leskovački zbornik, pp. 75–85. After a critical analysis of the last of the documents published by Kostić, Đokić and Živković concluded that there was no third synod in Ohrid in 1541, at which Paul and his followers were allegedly finally convicted, as was thought in earlier historiography.

<sup>18</sup> For example, several persons with the title of Archbishop were mentioned in Serbian sources during the 1530s and 1540s: Đokić, Živković, *Srpska crkva*, in Leskovački zbornik, pp. 85–90.

<sup>19</sup> Samardžić, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, pp. 39–64, where the previous literature on this issue was listed.

<sup>20</sup> According to sharia, the bequest was not to be in the name of a certain monastery, but in the names of its monks. These *vakıfs* would be intended for supporting the poor, servants, travellers and for the construction of bridges and fountains. The monastic property in the Balkans was taken away during the reign of Selim II (1566–1572) with the legal explanation that sharia formula on *vakıfs* had not been respected. The monks who could not buy back their monasteries were forced to leave them: Olga Zirojević, *O manastirskoj svojini u vreme turske vladavine*, in *Bogorodica Gradačka u istoriji srpskog naroda. Naučni skup povodom 800 godina Bogorodice Gradačke i grada Čačka*, (Čačak: Narodni muzej, 1993), pp. 155–162; Idem, *Hrišćansko zadužbinarstvo u periodu osmanske uprave*, in *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju*, 46/1997, pp. 131–139; Aleksandar Fotić, *The Official Explanations for the Confiscation and Sale of Monasteries (Churches) and Their Estates at the Time of Selim II*, in *Turcica*, XXVI/1994, pp. 33–54.



The monasteries whose possessions had the status of *timar*, with the obligation of giving men for military service, were rare. For example, of the 17 monasteries in the area of the Braničevo *vilayet* in northeastern Serbia, recorded by Ottoman censuses from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, only Ravanica and Resava, the two most significant ones, enjoyed modest *timars*. However, the fate of these monasteries was different. Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović (1371–1389) donated to his main endowment Ravanica more than 140 villages across the Serbian state, in addition to other income in 1381,<sup>21</sup> but this monastery retained only one village as a *timar* in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, the village was also taken away from the monastery in 1477, and so, until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the *timar* of the monks of Ravanica consisted of several fields, meadows, vineyards and watermills in the immediate vicinity of the monastery.<sup>22</sup> The Ottomans seized the fortified Resava monastery, the burial church of Despot Stefan Lazarević (1389–1427) in May 1458, and housed a large crew made up of Muslims and Christians in its fortifications. The Resava brotherhood, led by monk Nikon, kept two villages as a *timar* in 1467, with the obligation of giving two soldiers to serve in the fortress of Resava. However, the monastery was abolished and the church of the Holy Trinity converted into a fortress warehouse before the next census in 1477.<sup>23</sup> Some Serbian annals record that at about the same time, at the end of 1476, big monastery bells were seized and taken away at the behest of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror.<sup>24</sup> The same fate also befell the Monastery of St. Nicholas in the Gornjak Gorge, which was turned into the residence of the Smederevo sanjak-bey Mihaloğlu Ali-bey during the same period.<sup>25</sup>

Little is known about medieval Orthodox monasteries in the vicinity of Belgrade. Charters and other written sources were lost and monastery churches and other objects have repeatedly been destroyed and burned. Some of them are just ruins or under-explored archaeological sites, known only from the Ottoman *defters* from the mid–16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>26</sup> These were mostly smaller monastery complexes, some of which were certainly built in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, at the time of the Serbian despots. According to the spatial arrangement of the monasteries that formed the sacral environment of Belgrade during this period, two basic groups can be observed. The seven monasteries known today (Rajinovac, Vinča, Sveti Đorđe near Leštani, Slanci, Rakovica, Prevelika near Železnik, Sveti Hristifor near Mislođin) were distributed in the vicinity of Belgrade, at a distance of about 10 to 20 km from the city, in a semicircle that stretched from the banks of the Danube, across the foothills of Mount Avala, to the banks of the river Sava. Another group of four monaster-

<sup>21</sup> Aleksandar Mladenović, *Povelje kneza Lazara: tekst, komentari, snimci*, (Beograd: Čigoja štampa, 2003), pp. 49–108; Gavro Škrivanić, *Ravaničko vlastelinstvo*, in *Manastir Ravanica 1381–1981. Spomenica o šestoj stogodišnjici*, (Beograd: Izdanje Manastira Ravanice, 1981), pp. 83–99; Ema Miljković, Aleksandar Krstić, *Braničevo u XV veku. Istorijско-geografska studija*, (Požarevac: Narodni muzej, 2007), p. 224, *passim*.

<sup>22</sup> Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA) İstanbul, *Tapu Tahrir Defterleri (TD)* 16, p. 648; Olga Zirojević, *Turske vesti o Ravanici do kraja XVI veka*, in *Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju*, 50/1994, pp. 100–101; Miljković, Krstić, *Braničevo u XV veku*, p. 225.

<sup>23</sup> Momčilo Stojaković, *Braničevski tefter*, (Beograd: Istorijски institut, 1987), pp. 250–251; BOA, *TD* 16, pp. 601, 705–706; Miljković, Krstić, *Braničevo u XV veku*, pp. 218–220.

<sup>24</sup> Dragutin Anastasijević, *Letopis Nikoljski*, in *Bogoslovlje*, 9/1934, p. 368; Ljubomir Stojanović, *Stari srpski rodoslovi i letopisi*, (Sremski Karlovci: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1927), p. 296; Relja Novaković, *Brankovićev letopis*, (Beograd: SANU, 1960), pp. 56–57; Aleksandar Krstić, *Resavska zvona i monaška izdaja – o jednoj vesti Nikoljskog i Brankovićevog letopisa*, in Gordana Jovanović (ed.), *Srednji vek u srpskoj nauci, istoriji, književnosti i umetnosti*, vol. XI, Dani srpskoga duhovnog preobraženja, vol. XXVII, (Despotovac: Institut za srpski jezik SANU, Biblioteka “Resavska škola”, 2021), in press.

<sup>25</sup> Stojaković, *Braničevski tefter*, p. 93; BOA, *TD* 16, p. 338; Miljković, Krstić, *Braničevo u XV veku*, pp. 216–218.

<sup>26</sup> That is the case with the monasteries of Sveti Đorđe (Saint George) near the village of Leštani, southeast of Belgrade, and Prevelika near the village of Železnik (today one of the western suburbs of Belgrade). The localities of these monasteries have not yet been archaeologically excavated: Hazim Šabanović, *Turski izvori za istoriju Beograda, Katastarski popisi Beograda i okoline 1476–1566*, vol. I/1, (Beograd: Istorijски arhiv Beograda, 1964), pp. 506, 528; Marko Popović, *Sakralno okruženje Beograda u doba despota Stefana*, in *600 godina manastira Pavlovac*, (Mladenovac: Gradska opština Mladenovac, 2017), pp. 18, 21.

ies (Pavlovac, Kastaljan, Tresije, Velika Ivanča) was located on the slopes of Mount Kosmaj, which was a significant mining area during the Middle Ages and the first century of Ottoman rule.<sup>27</sup> It has recently been suggested that such a spatial layout of the monasteries in the area of Belgrade was not accidental, but that the locations for new monastic centres at the time of Despot Stefan Lazarević were deliberately chosen with the idea of creating a spiritual line of defence for the capital city.<sup>28</sup>

The monastery of Rajinovac (dedicated to the Nativity of the Mother of God), near the village of Begaljica southeast of Belgrade, was listed in the *defter* of 1528 as “the monastery of saint Rajko”. At that time and later (in 1536 and 1560), the monastery was without monks, and its estates were cultivated by the inhabitants of the neighbouring village of Gornja Begaljica. The monastery was renewed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup> The monastery of Vinča, dedicated to the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, was situated near the village of Vinča on the Danube (famous for its Neolithic site). Only one monk lived in the monastery in 1560, when it was recorded for the first time in the Ottoman *defters*.<sup>30</sup> The monastery of Slanci, dedicated to Saint Stephen and situated in the village of the same name east of Belgrade, might also be mentioned for the first time in the Ottoman *defter* of 1560.<sup>31</sup> The monastery of Saint Christopher (*Sveti Hristifor*) in Mislođin near Obrenovac was also recorded for the first time in the *defter* of the Smederevo sanjak of 1560, when one monk lived there. Only the foundations of the original monastery church remained. It was a building of modest dimensions with a three-leaf base, a dome, a narthex and an open porch on the west side.<sup>32</sup>

The Pavlovac monastery, dedicated to Saint Nicholas, is located in the area of the village of Koraćica, on the southern slopes of Mount Kosmaj. Popular tradition attributes the construction of the monastery to Despot Stefan Lazarević, who indeed issued a document at a place with same name in 1424.<sup>33</sup> Based on archaeological findings, fragments of frescoes and the architectural conception of the monastery, it is concluded that Pavlovac dates back to the first quarter of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The monastery complex consists of a single-domed church belonging to the Moravian architectural school, residential buildings, a refectory, economic buildings and a fountain. The monastery was

<sup>27</sup> Aleksandar Krstić, *Kučevo i Železnik u svetlu osmanskih deftera*, in *Istorijski časopis XLIX/2002*, pp. 156–159; Idem, *Okolina Beograda u poznom srednjem veku (od početka XV do prvih decenija XVI stoleća)*, in Gordana Jovanović (ed.), *Srednji vek u srpskoj nauci, istoriji, književnosti i umetnosti*, vol. IX, Dani srpskoga duhovnog preobraženja, vol. XXV, (Despotovac: Institut za srpski jezik SANU, Biblioteka “Resavska škola” Despotovac, 2018), pp. 212–215.

<sup>28</sup> Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, p. 39.

<sup>29</sup> In the mentioned *defters*, next to the monastery of (Saint) Rajko, another name was also written. However, the editor Hazim Šabanović transcribed it differently in each of the *defters* – as Sopot, Sveti Todor (Saint Theodore) or Sveti Petar (Saint Peter): Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 97, 142, 371, 553; Branko Vujović, *Crkveni spomenici na području grada Beograda*, II, in Saopštenja Zavoda za zaštitu spomenika kulture grada Beograda (hereafter: Saopštenja), XIII/1973, p. 251; Olga Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri na području Pečke patrijaršije do 1683. godine*, (Beograd: Istorijski institut, Narodna knjiga, 1984), p. 62; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 22–23.

<sup>30</sup> Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, p. 482. The Vinča monastery was abandoned in 1740 and later razed to the ground: Vujović, *Crkveni spomenici*, pp. 77–80; Gordana Marjanović-Vujović, *Gde je bio manastir Vinča u Vinči*, in *Starinar XXXI/1980*, pp. 193–201; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 78; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 17–18.

<sup>31</sup> The monastery of *Vavedenje* (The Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple) with one monk, named Raphael, was listed twice in the *defter* of 1560, with the remarks that it was situated by the villages of Oršljan and Vinča respectively. The village of Oršljan, which exists no more, was situated between the villages of Vinča and Slanci. According to one opinion, these entries referred to two different monasteries – Vinča and Slanci, while another interpretation is that the monastery of Vinča was (erroneously?) two times recorded in the *defter*: Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 466, 482; Vujović, *Crkveni spomenici*, p. 313, note 5; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 185; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 15–17. In any case, the monastery of Slanci existed during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but it was heavily damaged in 1690 and 1739, during the Austro-Ottoman wars: Zoran Simić, *Manastir Slance kod Beograda*, in Saopštenja, XXIX /1997, pp. 138–141.

<sup>32</sup> Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, p. 436; Marija Birtašević, *Manastir sv. Hristifora u Mislođinu*, in *Starinar XIX/1968*, pp. 273–275; Vujović, *Crkveni spomenici*, pp. 194–195; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 201; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 21–22. The monastery was renewed and rebuilt a few years ago.

<sup>33</sup> Aleksandar Mladenović, *Povelje i pisma despota Stefana: tekst, komentari, snimci*, (Beograd: Čigoja štampa, 2007), p. 84; Velibor Katić, Nemanja Marković, *Šest vekova manastira Pavlovac, in 600 godina manastira Pavlovac*, (Mladenovac: Gradska opština Mladenovac, 2017), p. 46.

recorded in the Ottoman *defters* of the Smederevo sanjak since 1536, but it was later destroyed, probably in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>34</sup>

The Kastaljan monastery dedicated to St. George was located in the village of Nemenikuće, on the eastern slopes of Mount Kosmaj. The monastery complex, built probably in the first decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, consisted of a single-nave church of an elongated rectangular base with a dome and narthex, a refectory and a building for the stay of monks and guests of the monastery.<sup>35</sup> The monastery was first entered in the *defter* of 1530, when it was in the possession of a priest *timar* holder. The monastery was active throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and it was abandoned at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>36</sup>

The monastery of Tresije at the northern foothills of Kosmaj is dedicated to the Holy Archangels. The time of construction of this monastery is not known, but tradition attributes it to Despot Stefan. The monastery was recorded for the first time in the *defter* of 1560, when 12 monks lived there and paid dues in the amount of 400 *akçe*. The original monastery church was a rectangular single-nave building.<sup>37</sup> The archaeological remains of a church of a very similar base in the village of Velika Ivanča could belong to a smaller monastery complex, built in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. According to some opinions, it could be connected with the monastery of Vavedenje–Brestovica, which was recorded in the *defter* of 1560.<sup>38</sup>

Most of the monasteries in the vicinity of Belgrade which are recorded in the *defter* of 1560 could be characterized as poor monastic communities. Seven of them had tax liabilities of less than 200 *akçe*, which amounted to less than three ducats a year. Slightly wealthier monasteries, such as Tresije and Kastaljan, paid five ducats a year, and a similar amount was given by the monastery of Rakovica. According to the amount of income, the monastery of Vavedenje–Brestovica stood out somewhat, and its dues amounted to slightly less than six ducats. According to the income listed in the *defter*, most of the monasteries had vineyards, among which Rakovica and the monastery of Vavedenje–Brestovica stood out. It seems that income from vineyards was their main economic resource. Most monasteries also had beehives. Significant revenue came from cereals, about one-third in total.<sup>39</sup>

The Rakovica monastery, dedicated to the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel, is one of the most significant monasteries in the area of Belgrade recorded in 1560.<sup>40</sup> There are different opinions

<sup>34</sup> Thanks to archaeological research and conservation and restoration works carried out during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the monastery church was renovated and Pavlovac is again an active monastery: Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 337, 557; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, 158; Marko Popović, *Manastir Pavlovac*, *Starinar* XXX/1979, pp. 75–81; Idem, *Arheološka iskopavanja u manastiru Pavlovcu*, *Saopštenja XIII/1981*, pp. 115–125; Idem, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 28–34; Katić, Marković, *Šest vekova*, pp. 45–60.

<sup>35</sup> There are different opinions among the scholars about the time when the monastery was founded, the stages of construction of the church and other buildings and their original purpose. Cf. Gordana Marjanović-Vujović, *Manastirski kompleks Kastaljan*, in *Starinar* XXX/1979, pp. 83–88; Svetlana Popović, *Krst u krugu. Arhitektura manastira u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji*, (Beograd: Prosveta, Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, 1994), pp. 223–225, 281, 309–310; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 25–28.

<sup>36</sup> Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, p. 545; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 100.

<sup>37</sup> Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, p. 544; Vujović, *Crkveni spomenici*, pp. 335–337; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 45; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, p. 24. About medieval monasteries and churches on Mount Kosmaj, see also: Stefan Novaković, *Srednjovekovni manastiri i crkve u kosmajskom kraju*, in *Axios. Student journal for Archaeology and History of art*, I/2016, pp. 176–195.

<sup>38</sup> Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, p. 557; Zoran Simić, *Crkva u selu Velika Ivanča na lokalitetu „Manastir“*, in *Saopštenja XVIII/1986*, pp. 245–251; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 34–35. The remains of some other late medieval churches have been archaeologically excavated in the area of Mount Kosmaj. In the village of Stojnik, the remains of a village church were found, probably built at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and demolished during the 17<sup>th</sup> century: Vujović, *Crkveni spomenici*, pp. 318–319; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 190. The church of the simplified Moravian style from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which remains were found at the Crkvina site in the village of Babe in 2002, was probably the endowment and grave church of a local nobleman (according to the data presented at the official website of the city of Belgrade in 2003).

<sup>39</sup> Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 436, 466, 482, 506, 508, 528, 544, 545, 553, 557, 567; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 36–37.

<sup>40</sup> The claim that the oldest mention of the monastery (*Racouincense monasterium*) comes from the writings of Felix Petančić of 1502 is incorrect: Petar Matković, *Putovanja po Balkanskom poluotoku XVI veka*, in *Rad Jugoslavenske*

about the founder, the time of the founding and the original location of this monastery, situated in the Belgrade municipality of the same name.<sup>41</sup> The Wallachian Voivode Constantin Brâncoveanu issued a charter to the Rakovica monastery in 1701, giving it a hundred large pieces of salt annually. According to this charter, the monastery was erected by “a good Christian, the late Voivode Radu”.<sup>42</sup> According to some, the person in question was the Wallachian Voivode Radu I (circa 1377–1385), who was in good relations with Prince Lazar,<sup>43</sup> and according to others, Radu IV the Great (1496–1508), during whose reign the Metropolitan of Wallachia was Maksim Branković.<sup>44</sup> According to one study, the architecture of the church of the present-day Rakovica monastery is the closest to the church of the Dealu monastery near Târgoviște in Wallachia, which was erected at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, during the reign of Radu the Great. This would support the thesis that Voivode Radu of Brâncoveanu’s charter is Radu the Great.<sup>45</sup>

Voivode Radu the Great also erected the new church of the monastery of Lapušnja, near Mount Rtanj in eastern Serbia, dedicated to St. Nicholas. The preserved inscription states that the church was erected by “Lord Jovan Radul, the voivode and lord of all Hungaro-Wallachian lands” and Grand Pârcălab, Jupân Gergina in 1501, and painted with the efforts and means of *knez* Bogoje and his family in 1510.<sup>46</sup> According to the local tradition, Voivode Radu the Great also renewed some other monasteries in northeastern Serbia, like the Manastirica monastery in the Ključ region near the town of Kladovo.<sup>47</sup>

---

akademije znanosti i umjetnosti (hereafter: Rad JAZU), XLIX/1879, pp 115–116, 127–128; Vujović, *Crkveni spomenici*, pp. 257; Zoran Simić, Marko Janković, *Stari manastir Rakovica*, in Saopštenja, XLI/2009, p. 319; Popović, *Sakralno okruženje*, p. 19. Actually, Petančić, who used the work of Martino Segono, mentioned *Ravanicense monasterium*, i.e. the Ravanica monastery, the endowment of Prince Lazar: *De itineribus in Turciam libellus Felice Petantio cancellario Segniae autore*, ([Wien]: Joannes Singrenius, 1522), p. 7; Agostino Pertusi, *Martino Segono di Novo Brdo Vescovo di Dulcigno. Un umanista serbo-dalmata del tardo Quattrocento, Vita e opere*, (Roma: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1981), p. 90. Pertusi was wrong when he tried to identify the Ravanica monastery mentioned by Segono and Petančić with the Kalenić monastery near Rekovac: *Ibidem*, pp. 194–195.

<sup>41</sup> The monastery of Rakovica was recorded for the first time in the *defter* of 1560, noting that the monastery was situated by the village of Hrčin (present-day Vrčin, southeast of Belgrade). According to some opinions, the monastery was originally situated at the *Crkvište* (*Crkvine*) locality in Vrčin and it was later translated to the current location in Belgrade: Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, p. 567, note 17; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 174. On the other hand, in addition to the Belgrade suburb of Rakovica, there is also the village of Rakovica south of Belgrade, and there is a tradition, recorded in the mid–19<sup>th</sup> century, that the original monastery of Rakovica was located there. Later, due to the Ottoman atrocities, the monastery was reportedly removed to the present-day location. Extensive archaeological excavations of a multi-layered site which was traditionally associated with the old monastery of Rakovica were carried out in 2007 and 2008. The horizons of prehistory, the Middle Ages and the period from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were discovered at the site, but there were no traces of a monastic complex: Simić, Janković, *Stari manastir Rakovica*, in Saopštenja, pp. 319–330.

<sup>42</sup> Radu Flora, *Povelja Konstantina Brankoveana. Prilog pitanju postanka manastira Rakovice*, in Zbornik Matice srpske za društvene nauke, 15/1956, pp. 72–74.

<sup>43</sup> Dušan Kašić, *Manastir Rakovica*, (Beograd: Pravoslavlje, 1970), pp. 17–21.

<sup>44</sup> Flora, *Povelja*, in Zbornik Matice srpske, pp. 79–80.

<sup>45</sup> Marko Nedeljković, *Prilog datovanju crkve manastira Rakovice*, in Saopštenja, XVII/1985, p. 159. On the Dealu monastery, see: Constantin Bălan, *Mănăstirea Dealu*, (București: Editura Meridiane, 1965); Mihaela Palade, *Biserica Mănăstirii Dealu – istorie în forme și culori*, (București: Editura Sophia, 2008).

<sup>46</sup> Gheorghe Balș, *O biserică a lui Radul cel Mare în Serbia, la Lopușnia*, in Buletinul Comisiunii Monumentelor Istorice, IV/1911, pp. 197, 199, Fig. 14; Branka Knežević, *Manastir Lapušnja*, in Saopštenja, XVIII/1986, pp. 89–90, Fig. 4. It is not known when the Lapušnja monastery was founded, but it has been recorded in the Ottoman *defters* of the Vidin sanjak starting from 1455. On the *ktetors* and the history of the monastery, its architecture and fresco painting see: Branka Knežević, *Ktitori Lapušnje*, in Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske, VII/1971, pp. 35–54; Eadem, *Manastir Lapušnja*, in Saopštenja, pp. 83–114, where sources and earlier Serbian and Romanian historiographical works are listed.

<sup>47</sup> Like some other monasteries in the regions of Timočka Krajina and Ključ in northeastern Serbia, the Manastirica monastery is considered to be the endowment of St. Nicodem of Tismana: Emil Lăzărescu, *Nicodim de le Tismana și rolul său în cultura veche românească I (pîna în 1385)*, in Romanoslavica, XI/1965, pp. 258–259, 274–275; Émile Turdeanu, *Les premiers écrivains religieux en Valachie: l'hégoumène Nicodème de Tismana et le moine Philothée*, in *Études de littérature roumaine et d'écrits Slaves et Grecs des principautés Roumaines*, (Leiden: Brill, 1985), pp. 27–29; Branka Knežević, *Manastir Manastirica – predanje i istorija*, in Saopštenja, XVII/1985, pp. 161–166.

Radu the Great was not the only Wallachian voivode who supported the Orthodox Church and its monasteries in northern Serbia during the first century of Ottoman rule. Voivode Neagoe Basarab (1512–1521) helped the Oreškovića monastery in the Braničevo region, and decorated the reliquary with the relics of St. Gregory of Gornjak kept in this monastery.<sup>48</sup> The monastery of Oreškovića, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was also erected at the time of Prince Lazar. Although revered for its relics, as evidenced indirectly by the reconstruction undertaken by the voivode of Wallachia, Oreškovića was a very poor monastery in the 1530s. At that time, the monastery paid only 150 *akçe* in fees, but the monks still managed to copy the liturgical books. In the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, only three monks lived in the Oreškovića monastery, and in 1582 the monastery fraternity sought the help of Russian emperor Ivan the Terrible for the rebuilding of the ruined church.<sup>49</sup>

Many churches and monasteries from the territory of northwestern Serbia (the medieval region of Mačva) were traditionally considered to be the foundations of King Stefan Dragutin, who ruled that region from 1284 to 1316.<sup>50</sup> However, in most cases the data on these churches and monasteries were provided by the sources only from the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and later. The *defter* of the Zvornik sanjak of 1548 records six monasteries and churches in the *nahiye* of Šabac (Čokešina, Ivanje, Krivaja, Kaona, Radovašnica and Kamenica).<sup>51</sup> The monastery of Čokešina, dedicated to the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos, is situated near the village of the same name at the foot of Mount Cer. The village and the monastery were named after the nobleman Bogdan Čokeša from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, who might be its founder.<sup>52</sup> In 1548, monks of the church of “The Holy Lady” (*Sveta Gospoja*) paid for their fields and vineyards only 250 *akçe*, which testifies to their poverty and small possessions of the Čokešina monastery at the time. On the other hand, prominent members of the local Christian community supported the monastery, so *knez* Radoslav donated a book to the monastery in 1541.<sup>53</sup> The monastery of Radovašnica near the village of the same name on the northern slopes of Mount Cer is dedicated to the Holy Archangels. According to some assumptions, the monastery could date to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but the first mention is in the *defter* from 1548. At that time, the monks were exempted from all taxes because they performed the duty of the sultan’s

<sup>48</sup> Branka Knežević, *Manastir Oreškovića u Braničevu*, in *Glasnik Društva konzervatora Srbije*, 30/2006, pp. 80–82; Émile Turdeanu, *Les Principautés Roumaines et les Slaves du Sud: Rapports littéraires et religieux*, in *Études de littérature roumaine et d’écrits Slaves et Grecs des principautés Roumaines*, (Leiden: Brill, 1985), p. 12; Damaschin Mioc, *Kulturne veze između Vlaške i Srbije u XIV i XV veku*, in *O knezu Lazaru*, (Beograd: Filozofski fakultet, Narodni muzej u Kruševcu, 1975), p. 309. See also: Nicolae Moraru, *Daniile Sfântului Voievod Neagoe Basarab către așezămintele ortodoxe din Balcani*, in *Sfântul voievod Neagoe Basarab – ctitor de biserici și cultură românească*, (București: Cuvântul vieții, 2012), pp. 115–126.

<sup>49</sup> Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 157; Miljković, Krstić, *Braničevo u XV veku*, pp. 215–216.

<sup>50</sup> One of them is the Tronoša monastery near the town of Loznica in the Podrinje region, which played an important role in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. According to one record, the monastery was erected at the earlier church site in 1559, but archaeological excavations have shown that no previous medieval building stood at its place: Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. I, pp. 189–190, nr. 602; Svetlana Mojsilović-Popović, *Manastir Tronoša*, in *Saopštenja*, XIV/1982, pp. 63–92; Milica Janković, *Arheološka istraživanja u manastiru Tronoši*, in *Saopštenja*, XVI/1984, pp. 141–170; Marica Šuput, *Srpska arhitektura u vreme turske vlasti*, (Beograd: Filozofski fakultet, Institut za istoriju umetnosti, 1984), pp. 69–78.

<sup>51</sup> The Ivanje monastery was located below Mount Vidojevica, northeast of the town of Loznica. The Krivaja monastery, dedicated to the Transfiguration, is nowadays a parish church in the village of the same name southwest of Šabac. The Kaona monastery, dedicated to the Holy Archangels, is located near the village of the same name southwest of the town of Vladimirci. The church in the village of Kamenica west of the town of Koceljeva was dedicated to Saint Matthias. See: Adem Handžić, *Šabac i njegova okolina u XVI vijeku*, in *Šabac u prošlosti*, vol. I, (Šabac: Istorijski arhiv, 1970), pp. 163–164; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, pp. 108, 117, 168.

<sup>52</sup> The monastery is probably identical to the church near the village of Obramić, taken away from Bogdan Čokeša together with his other possessions in 1458: Franjo Rački, *Prilozi za sbirku srpskih i bosanskih listina*, in *Rad JAZU*, I/1867, p. 157; Miloš Blagojević, *Naselja u Mačvi i pitanje srpsko-ugarske granice*, in *Valjevo – postanak i uspon gradskog središta*, (Valjevo: Narodni muzej, Beograd: Odeljenje za istoriju Filozofskog fakulteta, 1994), p. 83; Siniša Mišić, *Posedi velikog logoteta Stefana Ratkovića*, in *Moravska Srbija: istorija, književnost, umetnost*, (Kruševac: Istorijski arhiv, Filozofski fakultet u Beogradu, 2007), p. 12.

<sup>53</sup> Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 204.

falconers.<sup>54</sup> The Petkovica monastery under the northwestern slopes of Mount Cer, dedicated to St. Paraskevi, had a scriptorium where manuscripts were copied and illuminated in the 1560s.<sup>55</sup> It can be noticed that several monasteries were located in the area of Mount Cer, where there was a certain mining activity during the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>56</sup> However, it seems that the main reason for this concentration of sacral buildings in the area of Mount Cer is the fact that lonely and secluded places, often locations at the foot of wooded hills and mountains along rivers and streams, were mostly chosen for the construction of monasteries in medieval Serbia.<sup>57</sup>

Only one monastery in the Valjevo *nahiye* was listed in the *defter* of the Smederevo sanjak of 1516. It was situated by the village of Gradac near Valjevo and belonged to the *timar* of a Christian *sipahi*, *knez* Vojin. Four persons, three of them monks, lived in the monastery at that time. The monastic possessions included a large area under vineyards, partially used by the neighbouring population, and generated income of 1321 *akçe*.<sup>58</sup> The *defters* from the 1530s record four monasteries in that area, while six monasteries were registered in the *nahiye* of Valjevo three decades later. In 1560, only one or two monks lived in each of these monasteries, with the obligation to pay dues in the amount between 60 and 380 *akçe*. However, the monasteries listed in the *defter* of 1560 are not identical to those recorded and taxed in the 1530s.<sup>59</sup> Some of them have not yet been identified, so the question remains whether or not they are identical with some of the churches and monasteries mentioned later, during the last decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> and in the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, and which still exist today. It seems that the disappearance of some and the emergence of other, small and poor monasteries in the area of Valjevo between 1530 and 1560 reflect the changes and difficulties the Orthodox Church faced in that period. In those times, as in other parts of northern Serbia, the Church could only count on the support of its believers, primarily of a new layer of local headman – the *knezes* and *premikurs*.<sup>60</sup> Thus, for example, Vukdrag Velimirović rebuilt the desolate and ruined church of St.

<sup>54</sup> Handžić, *Šabac*, pp. 164; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 173.

<sup>55</sup> Nadežda Sindik, *Dva skriptorijuma sa planine Cer iz druge polovine 16. veka*, in *Valjevo – postanak i uspon gradskog središta*, (Valjevo: Narodni muzej, Beograd: Odeljenje za istoriju Filozofskog fakulteta, 1994), pp. 162–173.

<sup>56</sup> Mihailo Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji i Bosni*, vol. I, (Beograd: SANU, 1955), p. 72; Handžić, *Šabac*, pp. 163–164; Momčilo Spremić, *Jadar u srednjem veku*, in *Jadar u prošlosti*, vol. I, (Loznica: Muzej Jadra, Radio Podrinje, SIZ Kulture Loznica, 1985), pp. 53, 61; Sima Ćirković, Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, Ruža Ćuk, *Staro srpsko rudarstvo*, (Beograd: Vukova zadužbina, Novi Sad: Prometej, 2002), pp. 54, 83, 103, 160, 191.

<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, it should be noted that during the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century 10 monasteries were recorded in the area of Mount Rudnik, the most important mining centre in northern Serbia during the Middle Ages and the first period of Ottoman rule. There was the highest concentration of monasteries in the entire Smederevo sanjak: Bogumil Hrabak, *Brojnost sveštenstva i manastira i organizovanost crkve u Srbiji od 1470. do 1570. godine*, in *Bogorodica Gradačka u istoriji srpskog naroda*, (Čačak: Narodni muzej, 1993), pp. 132, 133, 136–137; Branka Knežević, *Manastiri u zapadnoj Srbiji po turskim popisima od 1476. do 1572. godine*, in *Saopštenja, XXVII–XXVIII/1995–1996*, pp. 203–212. On the mining in the area of Rudnik, see: Dinić, *Za istoriju rudarstva*, vol. II, pp. 1–23; Ćirković, Kovačević-Kojić, Ćuk, *Staro srpsko rudarstvo*, pp. 28, passim; Srđan Katić, *Rudnik pod osmanskom vlašću u XV i XVI veku*, in *Istorijski časopis, LV/2007*, pp. 133–155. See also: Siniša Mišić, Dejan Radičević, Marko Šuica (eds.), *Rudnik i Venčac sa okolinom u srednjem veku i ranoj modernosti*, (Arandelovac: Narodni muzej; Beograd: Filozofski fakultet, 2018).

<sup>58</sup> Apart from vineyards, hives and a watermill were also taxed. The monastery in Gradac was not recorded in the *defters* after the 1530s, when it was inhabited by three monks and three laymen: Ahmed Aličić, *Turski katastarski popisi nekih područja zapadne Srbije XV i XVI vek*, vol. I, (Čačak: Istorijski arhivi Kraljeva, Čačka i Titovog Užica, 1984), p. 618; Olga Zirojević, *Popis manastira Smederevskog sandžaka iz 1516*, in *Saopštenja, XXVI/1994*, p. 158; Eadem, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 87. According to some opinions, this monastery is identical with the present-day monastery of Čelije south of Valjevo, which is not close to the Gradac settlement (a suburb of the town of Valjevo), but is located in the valley of the Gradac river: Knežević, *Manastiri u zapadnoj Srbiji*, p. 209.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, pp. 41–43, 70, 87, 96, 137, 172, 184, 197–198.

<sup>60</sup> During the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Ottoman authorities settled Vlachs from the territory of present-day Herzegovina, Montenegro and western Serbia in the devastated and depopulated areas of northern Serbia. After the abolition of the special status of Vlachs in the Smederevo and neighbouring sanjaks around 1530, the organization of Vlach communities transformed into a specific institution of home-rule of all Christian *reaya*, represented before the Ottoman authorities by the *knezes* and *premikurs/primićurs* (who were subordinate to the *knezes*): Branislav Đurđev, *O naseljavanju Vlaha – stočara u sjevernu Srbiju u drugoj polovini XV vijeka*, in *Godišnjak društva*

Peter and Paul of the Ribnica monastery (near the village of Paštrić southeast of Valjevo) in 1542.<sup>61</sup> By all accounts, Vukdrag Velimirović was the same person as *knez* Vuk, the son of Velimir, who was recorded with his family in the village of Osečenica in the Valjevo *nahiye* in 1528.<sup>62</sup> *Knez* Petar Velimirović, who was the son of *knez* Vuk, began the construction (or renovation) of the church of St. George in Bogovađa near Lajkovac together with his brother.<sup>63</sup> The spiritual initiator and leader of this construction was hieromonk Mardarius. The works seem to have lasted for several years, until 1554, but the newly erected church was very small and cramped, which is why a new church was built in its place at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>64</sup> This clearly shows how limited funds the new *ktetors* had at their disposal in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the monasteries with great importance for Serbian culture was Mrkšina Crkva near the present-day village of Pambukovica, north of the town of Valjevo, where the last old Serbian printing house was operating. It was led by hieromonk Mardarius, who, prior to the liturgical books printed in Mrkšina Crkva in 1562 and 1566, also printed books in Belgrade in 1552. The name of this village, recorded in the Vlach census of the Valjevo *nahiye* from 1528, testifies that an older church stood in that place. It seems that the Mrkšina Crkva monastery was established (or renewed?) in the 1530s or early 1540s, at the same time as the other monasteries of the Valjevo *nahiye* listed in the *defter* of 1560 and afterwards.<sup>65</sup>

\*

Data on the parish clergy in northern Serbia in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries are provided primarily by Ottoman *defters*, which recorded persons labelled as “pop” (priest). It cannot be claimed with certainty that all priests were consistently recorded in the *defters*, but given that their registration was not a sporadic phenomenon, as they appear in significant numbers, it can be assumed that most of them were recorded. It is certain that priests enjoyed a certain reputation in their settlements, which is probably the reason why the censuses record them as such. Otherwise, from the point of view of fiscal policy, which is the primary purpose of the *defter*, there

---

istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine XXXV/1984, pp. 9–34; Ema Miljković-Bojanić, *Knežinska samouprava u Smederevskom sandžaku u drugoj polovini XV i prvoj polovini XVI veka*, in *Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju*, 57/1998, pp. 87–97; Eadem, *Smederevski sandžak*, pp. 227–241. See also: Miloš Luković, *Zakon Vlahom (Ius Valachicum) in the Charters issued to Serbian Medieval Monasteries and Kanuns Regarding Vlachs in the Early Ottoman Tax Registers (Defters)*, in *Balkanica Posnaniensia. Acta et studia*, XXII/1, *Ius Valachicum* II/2015, pp. 29–46, esp. 40–43; N. Isailović, *Legislation Concerning the Vlachs of the Balkans before and after Ottoman Conquest: an Overview*, in Srđan Rudić, Selim Aslantaş (eds.), *State and Society in the Balkans before and after Establishment of Ottoman Rule*, (Belgrade: Institute of History, Yunus Emre Enstitüsü Turkish Cultural Centre, 2017), pp. 25–42.

<sup>61</sup> This can be learned from an inscription that was rewritten in the old monastery church after its renovation in 1823. According to another inscription in the church of the same period, the monastery was founded by certain brothers Savko and Radul in 1518: Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. II, p. 367, nr. 4026, 4027, vol. VI, pp. 98–99, nr. 10049; Vladimir Krivošejev, *Kad su živeli knezovi Velimirovići ktitori manastira Bogovađe*, in *Zbornik Istorijiskog muzeja Srbije*, XXVIII/1994, pp. 42–43.

<sup>62</sup> BOA, TD 144, p. 206. The village of Osečenica is situated southeast of Valjevo and it is less than 10 km away from the Ribnica monastery.

<sup>63</sup> In 1560, *knez* Petar Velimirović lived in the village of Papkovac, where the monastery of Bogovađa was situated: Ema Miljković-Bojanić, *Valjevski kraj u prvim decenijama turske vlasti*, in *Valjevo – postanak i uspon gradskog središta*, p. 159.

<sup>64</sup> Krivošejev, *Kad su živeli*, pp. 33–40; Slobodan Živojinović, *Manastir Bogovađa*, (Bogovađa: Manastir Bogovađa, 1971, 2007<sup>2</sup>), pp. 7–10; Gordana Babić, *Stare crkve u Valjevu*, in *Valjevo – postanak i uspon gradskog središta*, pp. 139–140. The significant role of the Velimirović family in this area is also remembered in the local folk tradition. Among other stories, they are associated with the remains of a small monastery complex in the village of Ključ near the town of Mionica, which is called *Velimirovi dvori* (“Velimir’s manor”) due to the popular belief that there was their fortified residence: Nikola Vulović, *Opisanije Grada u selu Ključu*, in *Podunavka*, 13/1847, pp. 50–51; Krivošejev, *Kad su živeli*, pp. 41–43. On this complex, see: Tihomir Dražić, *Velimirovi dvori u Ključu*, in *Glasnik Društva konzervatora Srbije*, XX/1996, pp. 121–123.

<sup>65</sup> Srđan Katić, *Manastir Mrkšina Crkva: poslednja stara srpska štamparija*, in *Istorijiski časopis*, LXVIII/2019, pp. 155–173.

is no reason for their special labelling. Thus, in the area of Braničevo, according to the census from 1467, 73 priests performed the clerical service for 5,500 houses in about 300 settlements. Priests were regularly present in larger settlements with over 30 houses, as well as in market places.<sup>66</sup>

In 1477, at the time of the next census of Braničevo, the total number of priests increased slightly (80). Nevertheless, there is a real trend of a declining number of priests in relation to the entire population, given the fact that the number of Christian households, not counting the Vlach population, increased by 28.4%. This means that one priest, on average, served 128 houses in 1477, instead of 75 households as in 1467. Among the Vlachs in Braničevo in 1477, there were 18 priests on 1295 households, unevenly distributed among the *knezdoms* and *nahiyes*. Some priests were mentioned in both *defters*, and there were cases when a monk performed the duties of a priest. Some priests were even *timar* holders, while some were listed among the *voynuks*.<sup>67</sup>

After 1477, no extensive census (*mufassal tahrir defteri*) of the Smederevo sanjak was preserved for the next 40 years, which makes it impossible to follow the parish clergy in Braničevo and examine changes in their position until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is worth noting that in the *defter* of 1516, which does not contain data on a large number of settlements in Braničevo, there are no specially recorded priests in this area. This, of course, does not mean that they did not exist. In other parts of the Smederevo sanjak, priests were also recorded more rarely than four decades earlier. It is not entirely clear whether this testifies to the reduction in the number of parish priests and the difficulties the Orthodox Church faced at that time, or to some other reason.<sup>68</sup>

This phenomenon can also be found in the area of Belgrade, which was largely under the Hungarian rule until 1521, and was then organized as the Ottoman *nahiye* of Belgrade. Between 1528 and 1560, the *defters* of the Smederevo sanjak recorded a very small number of parish priests in the Belgrade *nahiye*. In 1528, 14 persons labelled as priests and three as sons of priests were recorded in a total of 2142 households in the Belgrade *nahiye*, while in 1530 only four priests and two sons of priests were listed in a total of 155 villages with 2480 Christian and 57 Muslim households.<sup>69</sup> Four years later, in 1536, Ottoman enumerators listed a total of 163 villages with 2665 households in the Belgrade *nahiye*, including 16 priests and four priests' sons, who were recorded in 20 villages.<sup>70</sup> A quarter of a century later (1560), in the same area, which was then divided into the *nahiyes* of Belgrade and Avala, with a total of 172 villages, only 15 priests and eight sons of priests were recorded in 21 rural settlements.<sup>71</sup> Such a small number of priests in the settlements around Belgrade during several decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century raises the question of whether all priests were really listed, although some of them appear in several *defters*. As in the case of Braničevo in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the practice that sons could succeed their fathers in the position of priests also existed in the vicinity of Belgrade during the next century.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>66</sup> M. Stojaković, *Braničevski tefter*, passim; Miljković, Krstić, *Parohijsko sveštenstvo*, in *Crkvene studije*, pp. 333–334.

<sup>67</sup> BOA, *TD* 16, passim; for more detail see: Miljković, Krstić, *Parohijsko sveštenstvo*, in *Crkvene studije*, pp. 335, 337–339. The *voynuks* were Christian soldiers, light spearmen, awarded free possessions (*baština*) for their military service: Olga Zirojević, *Tursko vojno uređenje u Srbiji 1459–1683*, (Beograd: Istorijski institut, 1974), pp. 162–169; Miljković-Bojanić, *Smederevski sandžak*, pp. 242–248; Miljković, Krstić, *Braničevo u XV veku*, pp. 64–66.

<sup>68</sup> Miljković, Krstić, *Parohijsko sveštenstvo*, in *Crkvene studije*, pp. 343. According to the calculation of Bogumil Hrabak, based on the Ottoman *defters*, one priest, on average, served 250 households in the area of western Serbia in 1477, while four decades later one priest performed the clerical service for 363 households in the same area. This author relates the decrease in the number of priests to the deteriorating position of the Church and increased Islamization in western Serbia in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century: Hrabak, *Brojnost sveštenstva*, pp. 129–132.

<sup>69</sup> BOA, *TD* 978, pp. 160–164, 878–959; Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 142–242.

<sup>70</sup> BOA, *TD* 187, pp. 257–347; Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 267–268, 285–397.

<sup>71</sup> BOA, *TD* 316, pp. 22–24, 370–429, 288–318; Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 461–577. On parish priests in the area of Belgrade (1528–1560) cf. Hrabak, *Brojnost sveštenstva*, pp. 138–139, 141, where slightly different figures are given. Based on the data on a small number of priests and monasteries, both in the vicinity of Belgrade and in other areas, Hrabak concludes that the church organization almost did not exist in northern Serbia in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>72</sup> See Miljković, Krstić, *Parohijsko sveštenstvo*, in *Crkvene studije*, pp. 341. In medieval Serbia, the service of parish



\*

The influence of Islamic civilization on Serbian villages during the first century of Ottoman rule was very limited, as evidenced by the sporadic Islamization among the rural population.<sup>73</sup> Not counting the Ottoman military troops in the fortresses of Resava and Golubac, the *defter* of 1477 registered only two Muslim communities in the market places of Topolovnik (18 households) and Ždrelo (42 households) in the Braničevo area. Apart from them, 52 more converts were recorded in 35 villages in Braničevo, which, on an estimated population of 43,000 to 58,000, is less than 1 permille.<sup>74</sup> The town of Valjevo in northwestern Serbia and its *nahiye* are examples that Islamization was more prevalent in urban than in rural areas. According to the census of 1530, the Valjevo *nahiye* had between 12,000 and 17,000 inhabitants and 29 converts in 12 villages. According to the census of 1560, between 10,000 and 13,500 people lived in the *nahiye*, while there were only 20 converts in ten villages.<sup>75</sup> Thus, there were between 1 and 2.5 permille of newly converted residents. The centre of the *nahiye*, the settlement of Valjevo, gives, however, a completely different picture. According to the census of 1530, Valjevo had 48 Christian households with 23 unmarried men, while the Muslim community had 27 households. Three decades later, there were five Muslim and one Christian *mahalle* in Valjevo with 293 Muslim and 51 Christian households.<sup>76</sup>

Unlike relatively isolated monasteries and churches in rural, mostly Christian communities, city churches had a far worse fate. They were in many cases demolished or converted into mosques, leaving only smaller churches to Christians. Non-Muslims were prohibited from erecting new places of worship, and the restoration of dilapidated churches was possible with the necessary permission of the authorities, provided that Muslims did not live in the area and that the church was not located between two mosques. During the reconstruction, the temple could not be expanded or upgraded beyond its pre-existing dimensions. As cities gained an increasingly Islamic character over time and as the number of Christians in them was dwindling, the remaining churches often lost their function or were converted into Muslim places of worship.<sup>77</sup>

According to the testimony of the contemporary Ottoman chronicler Aşıkpaşazâde, immediately after the conquest of Smederevo in 1459, the churches were turned into masjids and their bells were demolished.<sup>78</sup> Archaeological research has confirmed that a church in the southeastern corner of the Smederevo fortress was indeed turned into a mosque,<sup>79</sup> while the main endowment of Despot Đurađ Branković, the Church of the Annunciation, was demolished and a part of the construction material

---

priests became inheritable until the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century: Marija Koprivica, *Naslednost popovske službe u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji*, in *Crkvene studije*, VII/2010, pp. 363–373.

<sup>73</sup> Ema Miljković, *Prilog proučavanju islamizacije na srpskom etničkom prostoru: tok islamizacije u seoskim naseljima u prvom veku osmanske vladavine*, in *Crkvene studije*, VII/2010, pp. 375–384.

<sup>74</sup> Miljković, Krstić, *Braničevo u XV veku*, pp. 53–54; Ema Miljković, Aleksandar Krstić, *Na raskršću dve epohe: kontinuitet i promene društvene strukture u Braničevu u 15. veku*, in *Istorijski časopis*, LVI/2008, p. 300. The converts can be distinguished in the *defters* due to the fact that they were marked as “sons of Abdullah” instead of mentioning their Christian father’s name. See also: Olga Zirojević, *Konvertiti – kako su se zvali: islamizacija na južnoslovenskom prostoru*, (Podgorica: Almanah, 2001), pp. 25–39.

<sup>75</sup> BBA, TD 978, pp. 704–825; TD 316, pp. 26–31, 528–643.

<sup>76</sup> BBA, TD 978, pp. 821–822; TD 316, pp. 528–532; Miljković-Bojanić, *Smederevski sandžak*, pp. 297–298; Eadem, *Prilog proučavanju islamizacije na srpskom etničkom prostoru u prvom veku osmanske vladavine: gradska naselja kao nosilac islamske kulture i civilizacije (na primeru Smederevskog sandžaka)*, in *Crkvene studije*, 6/2009, p. 439.

<sup>77</sup> Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, pp. 15–33; Rossitsa Gradeva, *Ottoman policy towards Christian church buildings*, in *Etudes balkaniques*, 4/1994, pp. 14–36.

<sup>78</sup> Aşık Paşazade, *Osmanoğulları'nın tarihi*, Hazırlayanlar: Kemal Yavuz, M. A. Yekta Saraç, (İstanbul: Koç Kültür Sanat, 2003), p. 501; Aleksandar Krstić, *Pad Srbije iz ugla osvajača: Aşıkpaşazade i Dursun-beg*, in Momčilo Spremić (ed.), *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, (Beograd: SANU, 2011), pp. 318–319.

<sup>79</sup> Mladan Cunjak, *Smederevska tvrđava: novija istraživanja*, (Smederevo: Istorijski arhiv, Akademija SPC za umetnost i konzervaciju, Newpress, 2011<sup>3</sup>), pp. 94–96; Marko Popović, *Ka problemu srednjovekovnih crkava Smederevskog grada*, in *Starinar*, L/2001, pp. 205–210, 216.

was used for the reconstruction and upgrading of Smederevo walls and towers and the construction of the great Firuz Agha's hammam in the 1480s and 1490s. In fact, some Ottoman documentary sources suggest that the Church of the Annunciation was also turned into the Sultan's mosque, but it was later demolished, most probably due to the severe damage it suffered in the Hungarian siege of Smederevo in 1476.<sup>80</sup> The conquerors also turned into mosques a church near the main fortress gate, and a chapel in the dungeon in the Castle. These mosques belonged to the Ottoman state, while all the later mosques and masjids built in the fortress were the work of private Muslim endowments.<sup>81</sup>

The Smederevo fortress was the seat of the Smederevo sanjak until 1521 and home to a military garrison and an exclusively Muslim population. The Christians, as well as some of the Smederevo Muslims, lived in the town in front of the fort, which was surrounded by a palisade rampart and a moat. Although all seven Christian *mahalles* in the town of Smederevo were named after priests in 1585, in only four *mahalles* priests were registered as their residents. Based on this, it can be concluded that at that time there were more than one Orthodox and one Catholic, Ragusan church in the town.<sup>82</sup> The monastery of the Dormition of the Mother of God on the hill south of the town was inscribed in the *defters* beginning with 1560. It is the present-day church in the old Smederevo cemetery, most likely erected during the time of Despot Đurađ Branković. In the 1560s only one monk resided in the monastery, while a quarter of a century later two monks lived there. From the *defter* of 1572 it can be seen that the monastery had its own vineyards.<sup>83</sup>

There were several Orthodox and Catholic churches and monasteries in Belgrade during the late Middle Ages. Despot Stefan Lazarević, who made Belgrade his residency and the capital of Serbia (1403/4–1427), renewed and rebuilt the Metropolitan Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God. The despot transformed this church into the monastery, which he richly endowed with estates. He also erected the churches of Saint Nicholas (with a hospital) and The Three Hierarchs in the capital. The church of Saint Paraskevi stood in the Lower Town of Belgrade.<sup>84</sup> One of the most important Catholic ecclesiastical institutions in Belgrade was the Franciscan monastery, also located in the Lower Town.<sup>85</sup> However, the Metropolitan Church and several other Orthodox and Catholic churches in Belgrade were converted into Islamic places of worship after the conquest of the city in 1521, when Serbian residents were expelled to Constantinople. They brought their holy objects with them in exile, among which the icon of the Most Holy Theotokos and the relics of Saint Paraskevi and Empress Theophano were especially revered.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>80</sup> Srđan Katić, Aleksandar Krstić, *Firuz Agha and his Hammam in Smederevo*, in *Starinar* LXVIII/ 2019, pp. 193, 196–197; Srđan Katić, *Mitropolijska crkva Blagoveštenja u Smederevu*, in *Istorijski časopis* LXIX/2020, 107–126.

<sup>81</sup> Srđan Katić, *Islamski verski objekti u Smederevskoj tvrđavi u prvim godinama osmanske vlasti*, in *Svet srednjovekovnih tvrđava, gradova i manastira*. Omaž Marku Popoviću, (Beograd: Arheološki institut, Omladinsko pozorište Dadov, 2020), 69–79.

<sup>82</sup> Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü Ankara, Kuyud-i Kadime Arşivi, TD 168 (184), pp. 88b–89b. On the Christian *mahalles* and the Ragusan community in the town of Smederevo, see: Srđan Katić, Bojan Popović, *Smederevska varoš od 1459. godine do kraja XVI veka*, in *Istorijski časopis*, LXII/2013, pp. 91–94.

<sup>83</sup> Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, p. 577; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, pp. 181, 185; Mladen Cunjak, Branislav Cvetković, *Crkva Uspenja Presvete Bogorodice u Smederevu*, (Smederevo: Srpska pravoslavna crkvena opština, 1997), pp. 14, 16; Popović, *Ka problemu*, pp. 203, 217; Dejan Crnčević, *O mogućoj prvobitnoj funkciji crkve Uspenja Presvete Bogorodice u Smederevu*, in *Istorijski časopis*, LIV/2007, pp. 72–86.

<sup>84</sup> Konstantin Filozof, *Život Stefana Lazarevića despota srpskoga*, ed. Vatroslav Jagić, in *Glasnik Srpskog učenog društva*, XLII/1875, pp. 287; Dimitrijević, *Grada*, pp. 16–17. None of these churches exist anymore and their exact locations are still unknown. See: Branko Vujović, *Natpis despota Stefana Lazarevića*, in *Zbornik za likovne umetnosti Matice srpske*, IV/1969, pp. 175–187; Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd*, pp. 67–68, 91–92, 307–308; Marko Popović, *Srednjovekovna crkva Uspenja Bogorodice*, in *Zbornik Narodnog muzeja*, IX–X/1979, pp. 497–512; Idem, *Sakralno okruženje*, pp. 12–14. The remains of a palace in the Lower Town are considered to be the residence of the Belgrade metropolitans: Marko Popović, Vesna Bikić, *Kompleks srednjovekovne mitropolije u Beogradu, istraživanja u Donjem gradu Beogradske tvrđave*, (Beograd: Arheološki institut, 2004).

<sup>85</sup> Željko Škalamera, Marko Popović, *Novi podaci sa plana Beograda iz 1683. godine*, in *Godišnjak Grada Beograda*, XXIII/1976, pp. 43–44, 53.

<sup>86</sup> Stojanović, *Stari srpski rodoslovi i letopisi*, p. 299. The expelled Serbs built a new church in Constantinople,

In place of previous inhabitants, the Ottoman authorities started to settle a new military crew and civil population in Belgrade, which both predominantly consisted of Muslims and to a much lesser extent of Christians. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century some groups of Serbs participated in the Ottoman military forces in Belgrade as the *martolos* and members of other auxiliary troops, while the non-Muslim part of the civil city population consisted of Serbs, Greeks, Ragusans, Gypsies, Jews, later Armenians and others. As Belgrade developed into an important military, administrative and economic centre of the Ottoman Balkans, the share of Orthodox Christians in the city's population decreased over time.<sup>87</sup> For example, there were four Muslim and 15 Christian *mahalles* in the town of Belgrade with 79 Muslim and 139 Christian households in 1536. In addition, 374 *martolos* were enrolled, of whom only five were Muslims.<sup>88</sup> A quarter of a century later, 16 Muslim and 11 Christian *mahalles* were recorded in Belgrade, with 365 Muslim and 109 Christian households respectively. As for the military crew, there were 35 Muslims and 13 Christians among the gunners, while the vast majority of the *martolos* were Christians (88 out of 92), as well as 18 craftsmen. Many Muslim soldiers, especially among the *azabs*, the gunners and the various auxiliary troops were in fact converts.<sup>89</sup>

Although there was still a significant Orthodox population in Belgrade during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the number of parish priests and churches was small. In 1532, two priests lived in the town of Belgrade outside the walls, while in 1536 there were three priests and two priests' sons among the *martolos*. At the same time, a *mahalle* named *Papashane* ("Priest's House") was recorded in the Belgrade town, but without any priest listed in it. In another Christian *mahalle* there was a monk.<sup>90</sup> In 1560, the number of priests in Belgrade was again reduced to two, and there was also a Christian *mahalle* named *Kilise* ("Church").<sup>91</sup> This church probably stood on the site of the present-day Holy Archangels Cathedral on the Sava slope of the Belgrade town and it would be identical to the Serbian church mentioned by Stephen Gerlach in 1578. Gerlach also reported that a Serbian church located in the Belgrade town near the main square on the Danube slope was demolished due to the construction of the bedesten and caravanserai by Sokollu Mehmed-pasha.<sup>92</sup> The area around the Cathedral

---

also dedicated to the Dormition of the Mother of God: Kalić-Mijušković, *Beograd*, pp. 263–266; Mirjana Tatić-Đurić, *Ikona Bogorodice Beogradske*, in *Godišnjak grada Beograda*, XXV/1978, pp. 147–161; Janković, *Episkopije i mitropolije*, pp. 189–191; Danica Popović, *Relikvije svete Petke: Gloria Bulgariae – Gloria Serviae*, in *Pod okriljem svetosti. Kult svetih vladara i relikvija u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji*, (Beograd: Balkanološki institut, 2006), pp. 287–293; Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić, *Dinastija i svetost u doba porodice Lazarević*, in *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta*, XLIII/2006, pp. 87–92; Jelena Erdeljan, *Chosen Places: Constructing New Jerusalems in Slavia Orthodoxa*, in Florin Curta (ed.), *East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450*, vol. 45, (Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 182–188.

<sup>87</sup> Hazim Šabanović, *Beograd kao vojno-upravno i privredno središte u XVI–XVII veku*, in Vasa Čubrilović (ed.), *Istorija Beograda*, vol. I, (Beograd: Prosveta, 1974), pp. 341–343; Idem, *Grad i njegovo stanovništvo u XVI i XVII veku*, Ibidem, 393–413; Radovan Samardžić, *Dubrovčani u Beogradu u XVI i XVII veku*, Ibidem, 425–451; Marija Koprivica, *Islamizacija i položaj pravoslavne crkve u drugoj polovini XV i u XVI veku*, in Siniša Mišić, Marija Koprivica (eds.), *Šumadija u XV veku*, Kolektivna monografija, (Beograd: Centar za istorijsku geografiju i istorijsku demografiju Filozofskog fakulteta, 2018), pp. 129–130.

<sup>88</sup> Two groups of Gypsies were also recorded in the town of Belgrade in 1536. One of them was Christian (20 households), while the other was Muslim (11 households): Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 269–283.

<sup>89</sup> Jews – five households with two unmarried men – were recorded for the first time in Belgrade in the *defter* of 1560. At the same time, there were four Gypsy groups in Belgrade, one Muslim (18 households) and three predominantly Christian. Out of 37 enrolled persons in these three groups, four were converts: Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 437–460; Miljković-Bojanić, *Prilog proučavanju islamizacije: gradska naselja*, pp. 346–348.

<sup>90</sup> The *Papashane mahalle* was situated at the main square of the Belgrade town outside the walls (in the present-day quarter of Dorćol), where the market was held: Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 118–119, 272–273, 277–278, 280–281; Marko Popović, *Srednjovekovna predgrađa Beogradskog grada*, in *Godišnjak Grada Beograda*, XXV/1978, pp. 125–128.

<sup>91</sup> This *mahalle* was different from the previous *mahalle Papashane*, which was named *Cay-i Bazar* ("Market") in 1560: Šabanović, *Turski izvori*, pp. 448–449; Idem, *Grad i njegovo stanovništvo*, pp. 393, 396, 402.

<sup>92</sup> According to Gerlach, there were four priests in Belgrade at that time: *Stephan Gerlachs deß Aeltern Tagebuch (...)*, (Frankfurt am Mayn, 1674), pp. 529–530; Popović, *Srednjovekovna predgrađa*, pp. 125; Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri*, p. 51.

Church on the Sava side survived as a Serbian part of the town throughout the Ottoman rule in Belgrade, until its end in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>93</sup>

\*

After the collapse of the medieval Serbian state, the Orthodox Church found itself in a difficult position both because it lost its former privileges and status and became subordinate to the Islamic Ottoman state, and because of the efforts of the Ohrid Archbishopric to submit it entirely to its jurisdiction. The fight for the independent Serbian Church led by Metropolitan Paul of Smederevo during the second quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was only temporarily unsuccessful. At that time, numerous elements of Serbian society in northern Serbia were still included in the Ottoman military system and the Church also indirectly benefited from those circumstances. Even before the Serbian Patriarchate in Peć was restored in 1557, the renewal of monastic life and the renovation and construction of church buildings in northern Serbia began during the fourth and fifth decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was all the more necessary because these parts had long played the role of the Ottoman-Hungarian border area and were exposed to destruction and depopulation (1459–1526).<sup>94</sup> As the sources show, in addition to the clergy, members of the new layer of local headmen (*knezes*) also played an important role in the renewal of church life. However, the newly built or renovated monasteries in the area of northern Serbia were mostly small and poor monastic communities, which nevertheless performed their pastoral and cultural role among the Serbian population. With the exception of urban settlements, which quickly gained an oriental physiognomy and predominantly Islamic population, as it happened throughout the Ottoman Balkans, the process of Islamization during the first century of Ottoman rule in northern Serbia was very limited. Although the number of parish priests was small, most of the Serbian population remained faithful to the Orthodox Church.

<sup>93</sup> The old Cathedral Church was demolished in 1690, after the Ottoman reoccupation of Belgrade. The new Cathedral Church, built during the Habsburg rule in northern Serbia in the 1730s, was heavily damaged after another Austro-Ottoman war in 1739. It was later rebuilt, and the present-day Cathedral Church was erected in its place between 1837 and 1845. See: Rajko Veselinović, *Beograd pod vlašću Austrije od 1717. do 1739. godine*, in Vasa Čubrilović (ed.), *Istorija Beograda*, vol. I, (Beograd: Prosveta, 1974), p. 529; Radmila Tričković, *Glavna tvrđava Carstva prema Evropi*, Ibidem, p. 615; Zoran Simić, *Rezultati arheoloških istraživanja izvedenih u porti beogradske Saborne crkve*, in Godišnjak Grada Beograda, XXVII/1980, pp. 40–41; Isidora Točanac Radović, *Belgrade – Seat of the Archbishopric and Metropolitanate (1718–1739)*, in Srđan Rudić, Selim Aslantaş (eds.), *Belgrade 1521–1867*, (Belgrade: Institute of History, Yunus Emre Enstitüsü Turkish Cultural Centre, 2018) pp. 161–162.

<sup>94</sup> Aleksandar Krstić, *Smederevski kraj u drugoj polovini 15. i početkom 16. veka*, in *Smederevski zbornik*, 2/2009, pp. 46–54; Idem, *Okolina Beograda*, pp. 205–207.