

ХИЛАНДАРСКИ ЗБОРНИК 14
RECUEIL DE CHILANDAR 14

OGNJEN KREŠIĆ
ОГЊЕН КРЕШИЋ

ADAPTING TO SHIFTING IMPERIAL REALITIES: MOUNT ATHOS
(CHILANDAR MONASTERY) IN THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
CONTEXT OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE

ПРИЛАГОЂАВАЊЕ ПРОМЕНЉИВИМ УСЛОВИМА ЦАРСТВА: СВЕТА ГОРА
(МОНАСТИР ХИЛАНДАР) У ПОЛИТИЧКОМ И ЕКОНОМСКОМ КОНТЕКСТУ
ОСМАНСКОГ ЦАРСТВА У ХВИИ ВЕКУ

БЕОГРАД 2017

ADAPTING TO SHIFTING IMPERIAL REALITIES: MOUNT ATHOS (CHILANDAR MONASTERY) IN THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE*

OGNJEN KREŠIĆ

Abstract. – The monastic life and the overall functioning of the Athonite monasteries were not completely isolated from the dynamics of the relations between the centre and the provinces in the Ottoman Empire, and even less to the recurrent reforms of the Ottoman tax system. On the contrary, Athonite monks had to navigate complex political and economic situation to secure the continuation and improvement of their monasteries. The research of the case of Chilandar monastery was used to analyse internal organization of the Athonite monasteries in the 18th century and their adaptations to new circumstances. Moreover, multifaceted ties (religious, cultural, and economic) between Chilandar and the territories beyond Mount Athos are presented. The monks had intensive contacts with both the Orthodox Serbian clergy and laity living in the lands under the Habsburg rule. On the other side, economic development that prompted an increase of the number of the affluent merchants and craftsmen in the Eastern Balkans opened new opportunities for an enriched religious and cultural life and intensified contacts between these regions and the Athonite monasteries.

Simplistic approaches to Ottoman history often considered the 18th century as one of the stages of the imperial decline. Over the several past decades the field of Ottoman studies acquired a more nuanced understanding of the processes marking the development of the Ottoman Empire after the middle of the 16th century or, in other words, after the so-called classical period. Thus, the concept of decline was

* The article represents a revised and extended version of a paper titled *Adapting to Shifting Imperial Realities: Hilandar Monastery in the 18th Century*, which was presented at the international congress Το Άγιον Όρος στον 17ο και 18ο αιώνα. Από τους μεταβυζαντινούς και νεώτερους χρόνους (Mount Athos in the 17th and 18th Centuries. From post-Byzantine to Modern Times) or-

ganized in Thessaloniki from the 9th to the 11th October 2015 by the Αγιορειτική Εστία (Mount Athos Centre). The paper results from the project of the Institute for the Balkan Studies *Medieval heritage of the Balkans: institutions and culture* (no. 177003) funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

balanced by those of adaptation and decentralization, and Ottoman history was interpreted from the perspectives of political, administrative and economic change with increasing attention given to relations between the centre and the periphery. The 18th century started with one of the greatest military defeats experienced by the Ottomans and it was marked by the interchange of relatively peaceful periods and periods of deep crisis, as well as by more or less consequential attempts of adaptation in order to face the many challenges that the Empire faced. These eighteenth-century attempts of reforming the military, administrative and financial systems had their culmination during the reign of Sultan Selim III (1789–1807).¹

Although the Ottoman Empire was not on the losing side of every war it fought during the 18th century, it can be asserted that it lost the most important confrontations of the period. The defeats were not only important in terms of territorial and political losses and as an instigation for military reforms, but they also put a great strain on the economic functioning of the state. The reforms of the tax system started in 1695, during the first in a series of wars that would deeply mark the eighteenth-century Ottoman history, with the introduction of life-long tax leases. They were further continued in 1775 with the creation of a new type of tax farming called *esham* (shares) – a form of long-term domestic borrowing similar to a bond issue, in which the state borrowed money by estimating the income of a particular source of revenue and afterwards dividing it into shares and selling it to interested parties. Through these processes of tax collecting decentralization, the state both acknowledged and furthered the transfer of political power toward the provinces. At the same time these reforms increased the tax burden and created new ways for malfeasance connected with the possession of land which undermined the prebendal system. Even though Constantinople, or the sultan's court, remained the ultimate seat of state power and the only source of legitimacy, local authorities, in cooperation with or sometimes opposed to the local elites, were acquiring ever greater autonomy in local affairs. Parallel to these developments, the economic and mercantile influence of the European states (in the first place: France and Great Britain) continued to grow and to play an important role in the trade networks of the Ottoman Empire.²

1 For more on the changing approaches to Ottoman history, and the 18th-century Ottoman Empire in general, see: B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, London-Oxford-New York 1960; N. Itzkowitz, *Eighteenth-century Ottoman Realities*, *Studia Islamica* 16 (1962), 73–94; Ş. Mardin, *Center-Periphery Relations: A Key to Turkish Politics*, *Daedalus* 101/1 (1973), 169–190; B. McGowan, *The Age of the Ayans 1699–1812*, in: S. Faroqhi, B. McGowan, D. Quataert, Ş. Pamuk (eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, Vol. 2: 1600–1914, Cambridge 1997, 637–758; D. Quataert, *Ottoman History Writing and Changing Attitudes Towards the Notion of 'Decline'*, *History Compass* 1 (Aug. 2003), 38–48; K. Barkey, *Empire of Difference. The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge 2008; V. H. Aksan, *Canikli Ali Paşa (d. 1785): A Provincial Portrait in Loyalty and Disloyalty*, in: E. Gara, M. Erdem Kabadayı, C. K. Neumann (eds.), *Popular*

Protest and Political Participation in the Ottoman Empire. Studies in Honor of Suraiya Faroqhi, İstanbul 2011, 211–224; M. Pavlović, *Форсирана или аутономна модернизација? Османске реформе у XVIII веку у контексту европских утицаја* [Forced or autonomous modernization? Ottoman reforms in the eighteenth century in the context of European influences], *Istraživanja* 22 (2011), 185–204.

2 B. McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe. Taxation, trade and the struggle for land, 1600–1800*, Cambridge 1981, 61–64; Idem, *The Age of the Ayans*, 639–645, 710–721, 724–739; Y. Cezar, *From Financial Crisis to the Structural Change: The Case of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*, *Oriente Moderno*, Nuova Serie XVIII/1 (1999) (K. Fleet (ed.), *The Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*), 49–54; F. Adanır, *Semi-Autonomous Provincial Forces*

The political and economic situation in the diverse Ottoman provinces was influenced by the above-mentioned general trends of the 18th century. The decentralization and the economic and trade policies had thorough impact upon the life of the Sultan's subjects, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. As in the previous centuries, the secluded communities of Orthodox monasteries could not keep themselves apart from the changing trends that shaped the political and economic framework in which they existed. Thus, in order to add new details to the picture of the Ottoman society in the 18th century, the case of the Orthodox monastery Chilandar on Mount Athos is analysed in this paper. Research on the functioning of the monastery and the life of its inhabitants offers information about many aspects of provincial politics and the relations between the central government and non-Muslims, as well as about the cultural and socio-economic developments among the Christian peoples of the Empire.

Unlike the numerous monasteries scattered across the Ottoman territories, the monastic community of Athos was recognized by the Ottoman state as a specific case. The most important consequence of such a recognition was that the Athonite monasteries had a right to organize the monastic life on the peninsula by themselves, without the intervention of the state authorities. The monasteries were under the direct jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and, although they tried to retain their autonomy in the internal issues of the community, the more authoritative patriarchs strived to assert a certain amount of control, both over the economic and the organizational issues. The role of the *protos* lost the significance it had in the previous centuries, and after Patriarch Gabriel IV unsuccessfully tried to revive it, he proscribed in 1783 that the administration of Mount Athos would thereafter be in the hands of a body of four representatives of the monasteries, which were elected every year.³ The sultan's representative on Athos was an officer of the *bôstâncı ocağı* with a title of *hâseki ağa* (also titled in the documents as *zâbit-i cezâire-i Aynarôz*), as the revenues from Mount Athos were partially dedicated to this military unit. This state official had the obligation to protect the monks from the attacks of pirates and bandits, and also from the unlawful acts of the local authorities. Aside from that, he had limited judicial rights inside the peninsula, and sometimes operated as a mediator between the monasteries.⁴

One of the important privileges that the Athonite monasteries enjoyed was the right to pay all their taxes as a lump sum, collected among themselves once a year at a meeting in Karyes. Unlike many other monasteries in the Empire, the monasteries of Mount Athos had to pay *cizye* or poll tax. This tax was paid according to three wealth ranks, and the change brought about during the 18th century is that the

in the Balkans and Anatolia, in: S. Faroqhi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey*. Volume 3: *The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603–1839*, Cambridge 2006, 157–185; V. H. Aksan, *Ottoman Wars 1700–1870: An Empire Besieged*, Harlow 2007, 83–170.

³ П. Христу, *Свѣта Гора Аѿѿонска. Истѿорија, начин живѿѿа, блаѿа* [Mount Athos. History, way of life, treasures], Belgrade 1994, 207.

⁴ М. Урсинус, *Holy Mountain and Supreme Council: Mount Athos at the Beginning of a New Era*, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 13 (1989), 270; А. Фоѿић, *Свѣта Гора и Хиландар у Османском царстѿѿу (XV–XVII век)* [Mount Athos and Chilandar in the Ottoman Empire (15th–17th centuries)], Belgrade 2000, 55–62; М. Yıldız, *Bahçivanlıktan Saray Muhafı-zlığına Bostancı Ocağı*, İzmir 2011, 78–79.

monks were not considered any more as universally belonging to the lowest rank. Instead, they had to pay the poll tax according to their individual wealth status. For example, in 1744 the distribution across the tariff ranks was: 10% of the highest tariff, 80.6% middle, and 9.4% lowest.⁵ The Ottoman authorities were not aware of every detail of the organization of life inside the monasteries, so these changes were most probably induced by purely economic reasons. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the introduction of the traits of the idiorhythmic style of monastic life, which can be perceived in the organization of some monasteries, indeed created differences between the monks with respect to wealth and property possession.⁶ Despite serious opposition from the highest church prelates, certain traits of idiorhythmy were still perceivable in this period, and Chilandar Monastery was also part of the trend.⁷ Traveller accounts confirm that communal dining, one of the main traits of coenobitic life, was respected in Chilandar at least until the 1740s and probably during the whole 18th century.⁸ On the other hand, the same travelogues and archaeological findings give information about the private rooms of every monk, furnished differently according to the wealth of their inhabitants. The numerous *omologias* (in this case contracts for taking the cells outside of the monastery in tenancy) also serve as proof for the popularity of a more isolated life among the monks coming to Mount Athos, and their wish not to be under the direct supervision of the authorities of the monastery.⁹

Along with the poll taxes for its monks, the monastery paid various taxes connected with the possession and use of land, namely the tithe or *öşür*. Following the trend of fiscal changes and consolidation, the Ottoman state undertook the re-assessment of the taxation of the Athonite monasteries along with the census of their monks and their estates in 1764. This case presents a good overview of the way in which the monasteries were taxed and what the changes brought about in the 18th century were. There are several copies of a *fermân* (an imperial order) issued by sultan Mustafa III in 1764 which accompanied the census and laid the ground work for the way in which the monasteries were going to pay a part of their dues to the state.¹⁰

5 Ursinus, *Holy Mountain*, 271–274; Фотић, *Светиња Гора*, 63–78; E. Kolovos, *Christian Influence and the Advent of the Europeans. Negotiating for State Protection: Çiftlik-Holding by the Athonite Monasteries (Xeropotamou Monastery, Fifteenth–Sixteenth C.)*, in: C. Imber, K. Kiyotaki, R. Murphey (eds.), *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies*, London 2005, 197–201.

6 Unlike monks of the coenobitic monasteries, those who lived according to the rules of idiorhythmy could live and dine separately while keeping their personal possessions and having the right to acquire new ones. *Idiorhythmic monasticism*, in: *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, Vol. 2, New York – Oxford 1992, 981–982.

7 Some Athonite monasteries started incorporating the traits of idiorhythmy into their organization in the 14th century, but it became the dominant type of monasticism during the 16th and the 17th century. Христу, *Светиња Гора АѠонска*, 206–207; Фотић, *Светиња Гора*, 106–107.

8 С. Ненадовић, *СѠановање монаха у Хиландару* [Monastic residency in Chilandar], Хиландарски зборник 6 (1986), 91–93; S. Petković, *Chilandar*, Belgrade 1999, 46–50, 88–91.

9 A relatively high number of these documents was produced during the first half of the 18th century: Архив манастира Хиландара, Српски списи (The Chilandar monastery archives, Serbian documents, hereafter: ChMA, SD), к. (Box) 1/II, ф. (Folder) 1702–1719, д. (Document) 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11; ф. 1722–1738, д. 8, 11, 12; ф. 1741–1749, д. 2, 6, 9.

10 The text of the *fermân* issued by Mustafa III is given in Latin transliteration in: E. Balta, *Landed Property of the Monasteries on the Athos Peninsula and its Taxation in 1764*, Arab Historical Review for Ottoman Studies, 19–20 (1999), 138–143. The analysis of a Cyrillic transcription of the same document is given in: V. Boškov, *Ein kyrillischer Transkriptontext des Osmanisch-Türkischen im Athoskloster Hilandar*, Stu-

As was the tradition of the chancellery, these sultanic edicts start with the pre-history of an issue and then move on to the proscription about what is to be done. This *fermân* thus consists of information about the taxation of the monasteries in Athos from the time of Sultan Murat II until the 18th century. The enumeration of the unlawful demands and the injustices done by the local officials (*vâlis*, *kadıs*, lower officials, representatives of the *bôstâncıs*) shows what the rights and the obligations of the monasteries were and how these rights were encroached upon.

It was stressed that the monasteries had the right to continue using all of their properties, fields, orchards, vineyards, gardens, *çiftlik*s and cattle without any meddling from the state officials. Important exemptions from all kinds of the so-called extraordinary taxes (such as *avâriz*, *tekâlif-i şakka* and *tekâlif-i örfiye*) were reiterated several times. Thus, starting from 1765 the Athonite monastic community had to deliver as a lump sum 7,000 *kuruş* annually, in three instalments, in order to secure the prolongation of the exemptions from extraordinary taxes. In addition, the monasteries paid a combined sum of 7,800 *kuruş* for taxes on land and other possessions, including the annual payments for the meat and cloth for the *bôstâncıs*.¹¹ It should be added here that according to a document issued in 1756, each monastery on Mount Athos “willingly” gave every year 300 *kuruş* “as a neighbourly help” for the *tekâlif* taxes required from the *kaza* of Thessaloniki.¹² This custom might have been one of the ways in which the monasteries tried to secure their exemption from other taxes.

The mentioned censuses produced a series of registers that are valuable sources for the research of monastic economies in the second half of the 18th century. Chilandar monastery was in the fifth place among the monasteries by the amount of paid taxes and income, and yielded 8.34% of the total tax paid. It possessed on Mount Athos and the hinterland 128 *dönüms* of vineyards, 89.5 *dönüms* of hazelnuts, 14 *dönüms* of gardens, 10 *dönüms* of meadows, 60 *dönüms* of fields, 1,800 olive trees, 272 beehives and 4 mills.¹³

* * *

Landed properties were the basis of monastic economy and the main source of income, as can be inferred from the previous taxation analyses. The monks of Chilandar invested great efforts and knowledge of the Ottoman legal system into protecting their possessions and enlarging them. During the 18th century, the greatest part of the monastery’s lands continued to be positioned in the territory of Mount Athos and its hinterland.¹⁴ Numerous *hüccets*, documents issued by the *kadıs*, in the archives of the Chilandar monastery testify to the frequent contacts that monks had with the judicial authorities. These documents mostly deal with two main issues – one is litigations with other monasteries, predominantly about the borders of monastic estates and contested possessions, while the other group consists of recordings of the purchase/sales contracts. Among the examples of the first are the litigations between the

di Preottomani e Ottomani. Atti del Covegno di Napoli (24–26 settembre 1974), Napoli 1976, 69–74.

11 Boškov, *Ein kyrillischer Transkriptentext*, 70; Balta, 137–138.

12 Yıldız, *Bostancı Ocağı*, 79. *Kaza* is a territory under the jurisdiction of a *kadı*, in this case the *kadı* of Thessaloniki.

13 Balta, *Landed Property*, 149–153; Fotić, *Свеѡа Гора*, 78, 241–242. Data about the monastic properties is taken from the register: Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Kâmil Kepeci, 2541/1.

14 For a detailed overview of Chilandar’s estates see: Fotić, *Свеѡа Гора*, 241–397.

monasteries of Chilandar and Dionysiou, which arose from the fact that they possessed neighbouring lands. During the first half of the 18th century, there is a series of both *fermâns* and *hüccets* dealing with these litigations.¹⁵ It is not necessary to delve into the details here, but some aspects of the judicial process should be stressed. Throughout the 18th century Mount Athos was under the jurisdiction of Siderocausa's (*Sidrekapsi*) *kadi*, and, as a senior judicial post, the *kadi* of Thessalonica. The prolonged judicial cases instigated the monks of Chilandar to become knowledgeable about the workings and procedures of the court in order to protect their interests. Not only did they take part in the workings of the court as plaintiffs or respondents, but also as *şuhûd ul-hâl*. The names of this special kind of witnesses were recorded by the judge or his assistant below the adjudication and they guaranteed the legitimacy of the case in question, or were otherwise connected with it.¹⁶

The other group of cases was concerned with the purchase and sale of property. It should be remarked that in many cases a transaction recorded as a sales contract was actually a bestowment of property to the monastery. This was a practice that went back to the beginnings of the Ottoman rule. The territorial vicinity that made cultivation and control over the land easier, as well as the centuries-long tradition, explain why the bulk of Chilandar's estates were located on Mount Athos or in the villages of Chalcidice hinterland. Monks themselves cultivated only a small part of the land, but they were sent by the monastery to oversee the cultivation of land. They concluded contracts with the villagers or used wage labor. Aside from that the monastery borrowed money to the villagers living on its estates or directly helped them to pay taxes to the state.¹⁷ Though land cultivation remained an important source of Chilandar's revenue during the 18th century, the changed economic and political situation of the Empire prompted the monks to find new ways of expanding and stabilizing the income of the monastery. Over the course of the century two such methods became increasingly important for the monastery, both in the cultural and the economic sense. One was the relationship with the Serbian prelates and people leaving in the Habsburg Monarchy. The other was the interaction with the territories of the eastern Balkans, whose non-Muslim inhabitants were predominantly Bulgarians.

The varied connections of the Chilandar Monastery with the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate were complicated at the beginning of the 18th century because of the changed political and military situation on the borders between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empires. The migration of the highest church prelates to the territories ruled by the Habsburgs somewhat shifted the centre of their influence northwards, which was only to be further consolidated after the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1766. Sremski Karlovci became one of the most important religious, cultural, and political centres of the Serbs. The monks of Chilandar

15 Архив манастира Хиландара, Turcica, (The Chilandar monastery archives, Turcica, hereafter: ChMAT) 3/228, 3/230, fermâni III/99, 100, 101, 102.

16 Фотић, *Света Гора*, 42–43, 61. A detailed list and an analysis of the relevant documents is given in: О. Крешић, *Хришћани као сведоци чина (şuhûd ul-hâl) на кадијским судовима у Османском царству* [Christians as Şuhud ul-hâl

at Kadi Courts in the Ottoman Empire], *Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju* 89 (2014), 30–31.

17 E. Kolovos, *Monasteries in the Rural Society and Economy of the Greek Lands under the Ottomans. A Historiographical Appraisal*, in: E. Kolovos (ed.), *Ottoman Rural Societies and Economies. Halcyon Days in Crete VIII, A Symposium Held in Rethymno 13–15 January 2012*, Rethymno 2015, 169.

recognized this new situation, and from the start developed intensive relations with the church and lay notables in the Habsburg lands. These relations were based on the special position that Chilandar held on the religious and cultural map of the Serbian Church, the position that was further highlighted by a growing interest for the medieval past among the educated Serbs in the Habsburg monarchy.¹⁸

Faced with the economic challenges and with unexpected accidents (like the great fire that destroyed many of the monastery's buildings), the monks kept the high church prelates informed about the situation in the monastery and received help from them. Aside from gifts in money, of great importance were the permits granted to the monks to collect alms for the monastery. This relationship grew to have a mutual importance. The metropolitans of Sremski Karlovci included Chilandar as one of the most prominent surviving institutions from the mediaeval times, in their counter-propaganda against Catholicism and their political and cultural struggle for the improvement of the position of the Serbian Church under the Habsburg rule.¹⁹ Though the religious and cultural aspects of these connections with the people and the Church in the Habsburg lands had deep and long-lasting consequences, from the financial point of view attention should be drawn to the fact that Chilandar bought two houses, one in Sremski Karlovci and another in Novi Sad, in 1743. These houses could have been rented, but they also functioned as places where the monks, who arrived in the Habsburg lands both as envoys to the metropolitan's court and to collect alms, could reside. Nevertheless, this practice ended when the Austrian authorities forbade foreigners to own real estates and the Chilandar's houses had to be sold after 1769.²⁰

The Habsburg Monarchy was not the only area with which the monks of Chilandar developed crucial contacts during the 18th century. The other region that started to play an increasingly important role in the life of the monastery was the eastern Balkans. Unlike the territory of modern day Serbia, which was several times lost and reconquered by the Ottomans, leaving a considerable impact on its economic and demographic situation, the eastern parts of the Balkan peninsula saw a significant economic development among the Christian population based upon the manufacture and the greater participation of the local people in the mercantile enterprises. That helped the creation of a well-to-do group of Christian merchants and craftsmen, who were now able to not only increase their affluence, but also enrich their religious and

18 Д. Медаковић, *Манастир Хиландар у XVIII веку* [Chilandar monastery in the 18th century], Хиландарски зборник 3 (1974), 9–30. Idem, *Идеје историјизма у српској графичкој уметности XVIII века* [The ideas of historicism in the Serbian graphic arts of the 18th century], in: D. Davidov, R. Samardžić (eds.), *Српска графика XVIII века* [The Serbian graphic arts in the 18th century], Belgrade 1986, 8.

19 Р. Грујић, *Одношаји светиоорских и других манастира са митрополијима Карловачким* [Relations between the Athonite and the other monasteries with the Metropolitans of Sremski Karlovci], *Споменик СКА*, 51 (1913), 43–69; Д. Давидов, *Манастир Хиландар на бакорезима XVIII века* [The Chilandar monastery on 18th-century engravings], *Hilandarski zbornik* 2

(1971), 156–159; Д. Медаковић, *Идеја државности код Срба у XVI, XVII, XVIII и првој половини XIX века* [Idea of statehood among the Serbs in the 16th, 17th and 18th, and the first half of 19th century], *Глас САНУ, Одељење историјских наука* 390/11 (2001), 51–53.

20 М. Костић, *Хиландарски манастири у Карловцима и Новом Саду* [Chilandar's metochia in Karlovci and Novi Sad], *Летопис Матице српске* 313 (1927), 485–491; Л. Чурчић, *Прилози о везама Хиландара и Срба у Угарској у 18. веку* [Contributions about the ties between Chilandar and the Serbs in Hungary in the 18th century], *Hilandarski zbornik* 2 (1971), 188–199; Медаковић, *Манастир Хиландар*, 21–23.

cultural life.²¹ Examining the names recorded in the *kondika* (registers) of merchant guilds, and also in the Ottoman documents, one can find an increasing number of individuals bearing the title of *haci*.²² Of course, the greatest pilgrimage to Jerusalem could still be performed by just a fraction of Christians, because of how dangerous and expensive long-distance travel was. A much greater number of people conducted pilgrimages to the most important holy sites of the Balkans, of which Mount Athos was certainly a prominent one. Thus, a two-way communication developed between the Athonite monasteries and the region of the Eastern Balkans. The monasteries were visited by groups of pilgrims throughout the year, but especially during the most important holidays, particularly Easter. Sometimes these groups were very numerous, counting more than 100 people. Such visits must have made a significant impact on the life of every monastery, and monks adapted to them by having strict rules about how the guests and pilgrims were to be received and what was to be shown to them. The visitors to a monastery had the opportunity to buy handworks made by monks as well as icons and other religious items.²³ Although most pilgrims made small donations to the monastery, there were rich merchants from the territories of modern-day Bulgaria who visited Chilandar and helped with the restoration of several parts of the monastic complex. Such generous gifts exemplify the greater involvement of the inhabitants of the eastern Balkans in the life of the monastery in comparison to the earlier centuries.²⁴

The monks welcomed pious visitors and pilgrims to their monastery, but, on the other hand, they also visited their coreligionists and benefactors on a regular basis, as was mentioned in the example of the Habsburg Monarchy. The activity of travelling in order to collect alms was recognized and approved by the Ottoman state, which allowed these so-called travelling monks to bypass some of the restrictions imposed on the non-Muslim subjects of the sultan. By acquiring an official certificate those monks were allowed to ride horses, change into civilian clothing, and even wear arms.²⁶ They were not only asking for alms, but they

21 С. Димитров, *Занаяти и трговия в Софија през XVIII век* [Crafts and trade in Sofia in the 18th century], in: Софија през вековите. Том I: Древност, средновековие, Възраждане [Sofia throughout the centuries. Vol. I: Ancient History, Middleages, National Revival], Sofia 1989, 95–112; McGowan, *The Age of the Ayans*, 686–688, 698–704; S. Ivanova, *Varoş: The Elites of the Reaya in the Towns of Rumeli, Seventeenth–Eighteenth Centuries*, in: A. Anastasopoulos (ed.), *Provincial Elites in the Ottoman Empire*. Halcyon Days in Crete V, Rethymno 2005, 206–233; S. Ianeva, *Activités professionnelles et réseaux commerciaux de quelques marchands bulgares pendant la période initiale de l’incorporation des Balkans ottomans dans l’économie-monde (fin du XVIIIe–début du XIXe siècle)*, *Études balkaniques* 47, 4 (2011), 76–96.

22 For example, the register of the *abaci* [woollen cloth makers] guild in Plovdiv: *Кондика на Пловдивският абаджийски еснафъ* [The Register book of Plovdiv abacis guild], I–II, Sofia 1931; ChMAT 3/242, 3/263, 3/271, 3/280, 3/285,

3/305, 3/308, 3/316, 3/328, 3/398, 3/406, 3/417.

23 Б. Райков (ed.), *Хиландарската кондика от XVIII век* [Chilandar monastery’s register book from the 18th century], Sofia 1998, 21b, 52a, 54a, 67b, 68b, 70b, 71a, 80a, 82a, 89b, 91a, 92a, 93b, 94a, 95a, 97b, 114a; R. Walpole, *Memoirs relating to European and Asiatic Turkey and Other Countries of the East*, London 1818, 199–201; A. Anghelou, *J. D. Carlyle’s Journal of Mount Athos (1801)*, *Ἡ Ἐρανιστις*, 3 (1965), 43; Г. Зелић, *Животопис* [Biography], Belgrade 1988, 84–85; T. Gabashvili, *Pilgrimage to the Mount Athos, Constantinople and Jerusalem 1755–1759*, translated and annotated by Mzia Ebanoidze and John Wilkinson, Richmond 2001, 88–90, 94, 98.

24 Медаковић, *Манастир Хиландар*, 41–42; Ненадовић, *Свиановање монаха*, 164; Idem, *Јужни конаци у јужној мали њре и њосле њожсара 1722. године* [South Residency Building in the *Južna Mala* before and after the fire of 1722], *Хиландарски зборник* 5 (1983), 241–242.

also preached, brought holy relics with them, and talked about their monastery in the towns and villages that they were visiting. They added a didactic aspect to their religious activity by spreading knowledge about history and myths and thus enriching the social and religious lives of Christians. At the same time, the money gifts brought from these travels were an integral part of monastery's economy, as they ranged from a dozen *kurus* to up to more than 1,000.²⁶

The intensification of relations with the eastern Balkan region had as a consequence the creation of a network of Chilandar's estates that gradually developed throughout the 18th century in the towns and villages of modern-day Bulgaria. This trend shows both how important the cultural links with the Balkan hinterland were for the monastery, and it serves as one more example of how the monks were able to adapt to new socio-economic realities of the Empire. Monks could use these properties as bases and dwelling places when visiting the local population. Some of the monks were appointed to the same place for several years, taking care of monastic property and serving as a kind of proxy between the monastery and the local Christians. Together with the lay priests they took part in religious life, and in some places, such as Vratsa in north-western Bulgaria, they used the monastery's house as a school.²⁷

An important source of information about the transactions and real estate ownership of the monastery are documents – *hüccets* issued by the local judges and preserved in the monastic archives. It should be noted that sometimes these documents do not provide a clear connection to the monastery, but the fact that they were brought back by the monks to Chilandar can itself be used as a testimony of their involvement in the transactions. Ottoman documents inform us about the existence of monastery's estates in eastern Bulgaria: Sofia, Vratsa, Dupnitsa; in central Bulgaria (from North to South): Pleven, Lovech, the village Aline near Veliko Tarnovo, Kazanluk (Akçe Kazanlık), Chirpan, Plovdiv (Filibe), the village Ambelino near Plovdiv, Pazardzik (Tatarpazarı), and in eastern Bulgaria: Razgrad (Hezargrad) and Sliven (İslimiye).²⁸ Except for the estates in Sofia (the first document mentioning it is from 1745) and Razgrad (1731), the others were either acquired or just mentioned for the first time in a document during the second half of the 18th century. These estates consisted mainly of houses with one or two rooms, often accompanied by the surrounding facilities, such as an outer kitchen, a stable or a small garden.

As was already mentioned, the sources are often unclear whether a house was bought by the monks or bequeathed to the monastery. As a custom, *kadı*s recorded

25 A. Fotić, *Athonite Travelling Monks and the Ottoman Authorities (16th–18th Centuries)*, in: E. Čaušević, N. Močanin, V. Kursar (eds.), *Perspectives on Ottoman Studies. Papers from the 18th Symposium of the International Committee of Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Studies (CIEPO) at the University of Zagreb 2008*, Berlin 2010, 157–165.

26 Медаковић, *Манастир Хиландар*, 16–18; P. Kitromilides, *Orthodox Culture and Collective Identity in the Ottoman Balkans during the Eighteenth Century*, Oriente Moderno, Nuova Serie XVIII/1 (1999) (K. Fleet (ed.), *The Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*), 136.

Every travelling monk after returning from his trips handed over the money and the amount was registered into the monastery's *kondika*, examples in footnote 24.

27 ChMAT, 3/337; И. Радев, *Таксидиотство и таксидиоти по български земи през XVIII–XIX век* [Collecting alms and travelling monks in Bulgarian lands in the 18th–19th centuries], Sofia 2008, 17, 23–27, 95.

28 ChMAT 3/309, 3/310, 3/333, 3/321, 3/381a, 3/358, 3/393, 3/395; 3/337, 3/338, 3/293, 3/300, 3/284, 3/387a, 3/327/370, 3/294, 3/328, 3/398, 3/406; 3/250, 3/256, 3/266, 3/308, 3/382.

the actions of founding an endowment (or *vakıf* in Ottoman legal terminology) by Christians as a purchase contract between an owner of a house or other property and monks.²⁹ For example, in a *hüccet* issued on 22 September 1768 it is recorded that Yordan, son of Gerasim, sold to the monks of Chilandar (“... Hilandâr manâstırı mütemekkinlerinden fukarâ keşişlere...”) a one-story house with a stable in the village Aline in the province of Tirmova (Veliko Tarnovo).³⁰ Nevertheless, sometimes it is explicitly stated that the property was a *vakıf*, as in the case recorded on 6 January 1762 in the town of Akçe Kazanlık. An inhabitant of that town, Kosta, son of Dimo, stated in front of the local *kadı* and two monks that he bestowed a house with a stable, a stove and a garden to Chilandar monastery (“...Hilandâr manâstırına vakf-i sahîh-i şer’îyle vakf eyledim...”). Abiding by the rescripts of şeyhülislam Ebusuud from the 16th century that demanded that the property should be bequeathed to monks and servants of a monastery and not to a monastery as an institution, this document states that the house is to be used by the monastery’s poor.³¹ These cases are yet another telling example of how the monks had to acquaint themselves with nuances of the complex Ottoman legal system in order to preserve and improve the functioning of the monastery.

* * *

This short overview could not exhaust all the complexities of monastic life, especially when the monastery in question was a part of the most important Orthodox monastic community of the Balkans. The research has once again showed that Mount Athos was not excluded from the tumultuous circumstances of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire and the ever-changing political, cultural and economic trends. A secluded monastic life, devoted to God and prayer, had to be balanced with mundane challenges. The analysed documents testify that the relations monks maintained with the Ottoman authorities were based on their proficient knowledge of the judicial and political practices of the Empire. In order to maintain the monastery’s economy, they had to diversify their activities and broaden the network of connections with the Christians in the Balkan Peninsula and abroad. Following the relative economic prosperity of the territories comprising modern-day Bulgaria, that region became one of the most important for the monastery, both in terms of financial aid as well as cultural and religious relations and influences. Nevertheless, Chilandar never lost its ties with the prelates of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which only became more varied after the gradual rise in the influence of new political and cultural ideas coming from Western Europe. Consequently, the monastery successfully retained its special position on the religious map of the Balkans, especially among the South Slavs, and an adherence to medieval traditions did not impede changes in the organization of the monastery and its relations with the world.

29 Фотієв, *Свеіа Гора*, 232–235; Idem, *Concealed Donation or a Sale: The Acquisition of Christian Monastic Property in Ottoman Empire (XV–XVII C.)*, in: XIV. Türk Tarih Kongresi. Ankara: 9–13 Eylül 2002. Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler, II/1, Ankara 2005, 722–726.

30 ChMAT 3/300.

31 ChMAT 3/284; A. Fotić, *The Official Explanations for the Confiscation and Sale of Monasteries (Churches) and their Estates at the Time of Selim II*, *Turcica* 26 (1994), 36–37; J. C. Alexander, *The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away: Athos and the Confiscation Affaire of 1568–1569*, in: *Athos in the 14th–16th Centuries* (Athonika Symmeikta 4), Athens 1997, 149–200.

ПРИЛАГОЂАВАЊЕ ПРОМЕНЉИВИМ УСЛОВИМА ЦАРСТВА: СВЕТА ГОРА (МОНАСТИР ХИЛАНДАР) У ПОЛИТИЧКОМ И ЕКОНОМСКОМ КОНТЕКСТУ ОСМАНСКОГ ЦАРСТВА У XVIII ВЕКУ

Циљ рада био је да се Света Гора и манастир Хиландар сместе у контекст политичких, економских и друштвених промена које су се одвијале у Османском царству током XVIII века. Живот монаха и свеукупно функционисање манастира били су изложени утицајима развоја односа између центра и провинција, као и честим реформама османског пореског система. Како би обезбедили опстанак и унапређење свога манастира, монаси су морали да буду упознати са сложеном политичком и економском ситуацијом османске државе. У раду су анализирани односи монаха са различитим нивоима османских административних власти и начини на које су они обезбеђивали заштиту својих права. Поред тога, монаси су морали бити упознати и с војно-политичком ситуацијом, обележеном у XVIII веку серијом ратова и промена граница. Постепено померање центра Српске православне цркве ван Османског царства, подстакло је чланове хиландарске обитељи да успоставе чврсте везе с православним клером и становништвом на територијама Хабсбуршке монархије. С друге стране, даљи развитак имућнијег слоја трговаца и занатлија у областима источног Балкана, створили су нове могућности за обогаћивање културног и религијског живота. Хиландарски монаси редовно су посећивали православно становништво путујући у писанију, док је сам манастир представљао важно место ходочашћа. Сложеност тих веза, довела је и до формирања мреже хиландарских метоха на просторима данашње Бугарске.