



The Public Defense of the Doctoral Dissertation of

Anna Adashinskaya

on

Ktetor: Practices of Ecclesiastic Foundation, Sponsorship, and Patronage in Late Byzantium and Balkan Slavic Countries

will be held on

Friday, 24 January 2020, at 1:00 pm

in the

Monument Building, TIGY Room (203)

Central European University (CEU)

Nádor u. 9, Budapest

Examination Committee

Chair: László Kontler, CEU History Department

Members: Daniel Ziemann CEU, Medieval Studies Department (primary supervisor)

Gábor Klaniczay CEU, Medieval Studies Department (associate supervisor)

Béla Zsolt Szakács CEU, Medieval Studies

Zsombor Jékely, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church Hungary

External Readers: Ivan Biliarsky, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of History (present)

Michele Bacci, University of Fribourg (not-present)

The doctoral dissertation is available for inspection on the CEU e-learning site.
Should you wish to access it contact Csilla Dobos (dobos@ceu.edu)

Summary of the Doctoral Dissertation

My dissertation is devoted to the practices of ecclesiastic patronage on the Late Medieval Balkans (from the late 13th century to the mid of the 15th century). It attempts to define the *ktetoria* as a total social phenomenon manifesting itself in various aspects of Byzantine and Slavic Societies (such as flows of capital, land accumulation, state ideology, rhetoric, literacy, archival techniques, visual artistic expression, self-representation of individuals, and many others). It approaches this phenomenon by regarding the actors (patrons, founders, sponsors, benefactors), their motives, actions, and objectives, and their recipients, the ecclesiastic institutions and communities of believers.

This approach enables me to look at the patronage through the eyes of the medieval practitioners of the *ktetoria*, and to understand the ways this practice functioned in the Medieval societies. For the practitioners, the pious patronage encompassed three forms of benefactions: a foundation of an ecclesiastic or philanthropic institution; endowment with lands, land income, or other goods; and donation of precious objects. Consequently, I regarded them not as separate customs but as components of one tradition of pious giving to ecclesiastic institutions and I approached this tradition through the examination of various practices, associated with it, and the in-depth analysis of case studies based on charters, church inscriptions, and votive portraits.

The first chapter of the dissertation deals with the overview of the approaches to the patronage studies and the problems associated with them. It covers such problems as research on Byzantine and Slavic foundation law and traditions, theory and practice of gift-giving in the medieval Christian countries, the understanding of relations between the patronage and royal authority, as well as the representations of patrons and their meaning.

Besides the Introductory chapter, the dissertation is divided into two parts encompassing the examinations of foundation activities and gift-giving practices, described broadly. This perspective facilitated the comparison between these two pious activities and the terms applied for their description by the medieval sources. Thus, the second chapter aims at the typology of private ecclesiastic institutions in Byzantium and Medieval Balkan countries. It takes a closer look at a wide range of privately established ecclesiastic institutions whose size and purpose varied greatly, from the small household chapels to great hermitic monastic communities. It comes to conclusion that all these foundations can be divided into two predominant types: family institutions and hermitic communities. A family institution was meant for daily services, celebrations, burials, commemorations, and retirement of the members of one family and preserved certain ties with the profane world surrounding it. On the contrary, as a case study of Hosios Leontios of Monembasia and his monastery demonstrated, a hermitic institution was founded by a group of persons connected with spiritual ties who separated from the world and tried to achieve the spiritual perfection. The intentional seclusion and focusing on religious matters allowed to these monasteries to gain spiritual capital from the members of lay society and, therefore, to receive financial support from various external sources.

The third chapter focuses on patterns of ecclesiastic patronage, namely, it defines the use of the titles of the first and second *ktetor* as well as the modes of collective patronage. The studied material proved that the Byzantines and Balkans Slavs didn't differentiate between the initial founder and second and/or secondary founders of various types. The status of *ktetor* could be transferred or shared in several ways: through hereditary lines; because of the ties of respect,

apprenticeship, or friendship; for the political benefits received by foundations; due to a shortage of funds; by the appointment of a Patriarch etc. In this paradigm, *ktetoria* became a denomination for financial sponsorship and patronage, protection, but also preserved its initial meaning of (re)foundation, (re)construction and (re)building. Due to various social and political motives the acts of *ktetoria* could be undertaken as a group effort, by several persons in association as well as consecutively. In such groups one or several persons were the initiators and/or leaders of the patronage deed which was emphasised by the means of iconography and rhetoric.

The fourth chapter juxtaposes various images depicting the secondary ktetors, namely, the sponsors presented as supplicants and the portraits of the founders' children included into the votive compositions. In both cases, the depicted figures had a smaller measure of participation than the main founders, but their social status differed. If the secondary ktetors, depicted as small-scale figures or commemorated in additional inscriptions, were either the successors of the initial ktetor or the minor economic sponsors, the children participated with their future inheritance in the foundation. Moreover, the depiction of children was applied as a communicative tool: this way, the portraits demonstrated the succession in the inheritance of economic and political rights and preserved the memory about the family's status and wealth.

The fifth chapter deals with the exclusive rights of the founders in the opposition to that of the sponsors and patrons, and investigates two problems, related to the church dedication and the mentioning of political authorities in the dedicatory inscriptions. Thus, founders used the ecclesiastic institutions under their patronage for the shaping and promotion of their public images whereas the act of foundation itself was regarded as a reflexion of the founders' identities, religious belief, personal hopes, political affiliations, economic might, family position, and social achievements. The choice of spiritual patron for a foundation was one of these identity matters that, as the case study of the Hodegetria's churches proves, depended on the pious beliefs and political motives of the commissioners. More precisely, such circumstances as a desire to imitate the arrangements of the capital or an acquisition of a personal replica of the famous icon could influence the selection of the dedication. On the other hand, the references to the worldly authorities in the church dedicatory inscriptions can be perceived in the context of changing political landscape on the Late medieval Balkans. Though the reasons of the rulers' names inclusion in the dedicatory texts could vary from political and economic opportunism to the expression of true loyalty, the ruler-reference formula demonstrated the political affiliations of the founders and their places in the networks of power.

The second part of the dissertation focuses on the sponsorship as a practice of making investments, imperial as well as private, into already existing monastic institutions. The sponsors were interested into the establishment of spiritual bounds with and the assurance of commemorations at venerable, famous institutions. For the sake of the remembrance rituals, the donors passed their patrimonial properties, money and expensive artistic gifts (manuscripts, icons, textiles, liturgical objects) to the monks. Thus, this part of the dissertation compares several social groups of the donors: royalties, aristocracy, private persons, and women; it also analyses how the economy of salvation, i.e. endowment against the commemorative prayers, functioned in rhetoric and the negotiation of agreements between private persons and monasteries.

Relying on the case studies of the imperial donations to the monasteries performed by the Serbian Tsar Stefan Dušan, the sixth chapter investigated the ways in which the landed donations given to great monasteries changed the economic and political situation in the regions of Macedonia and Thrace. Moreover, it demonstrated how the donor's political position during Byzantine civil wars, the Serbian coup d'état and the Byzantine-Serbian conflicts shaped their choice of monastery for commemoration and their family ties. As the Serbian ruler enriched foundations which assisted in the promotion of his legitimacy (primarily, the Slavic monasteries, the Menoikeion and Vatopedi), many of the Serbian noblemen and Greeks, loyal to Stefan Dušan, followed his example while making their benefactions. Thus, the conquest of Macedonia by Stefan Dušan changed the property landscape, as the Tsar generously granted new possessions to the monasteries supporting his political claims. And the rhetoric of his donation deeds accommodated not only private concerns and expression of individual piety, but also the political concepts and propaganda messages.

The seventh chapter regards the donations to monasteries made by nobility and members of lower classes, from average bourgeoisie to the wealthy peasants. The documents issued by the members of nobility attested their attention to the commemorative rituals and rites, necessary for the salvation of the donor's soul. Sometimes, this rhetoric could be merely a cliché masking real economic motives of a donor or a recipient. More often, however, the relations of patronage established stable connections between noble families and certain monasteries, arranged functioning communication networks between monks and laymen, and created a diverse market of commemorative services, being the subject of negotiations between the noble donors and the monasteries. At the same time, the members of the rich peasantry and village priesthood had the appropriate legal status, authority and means to become the minor donors of the ecclesiastic foundations. Their reasons for patronage seemed to be both, pious and practical. As a donation could be a way to pay respect to a monastery, to assure future commemoration and/or burial place as well as to become a member of a brotherhood or to receive a life-long adelphaton. Consequently, practically all classes of the Balkan societies were involved into the performance of the pious land offerings to ecclesiastic institutions, to the degree of their economic possibilities.

The next chapter analyses the complex relations between the Orthodox theology of the Afterlife, the diversification of commemoration rituals, and the economy of salvation, regarding the commemorations as commodities bought by the economic investments. Thus, under the influence of the Purgatory polemics with the Latins, the Orthodox theology formulated the concept of the intermediary judgement and regarded commemorations performed by the living as a measure to improve the conditions in the Afterlife. This intellectual development led to the rapid growth of commemoration demands and the establishment of exchange relations between the foundations and the individuals (gifts for commemorations). During the 14th century, one can observe the diversification of commemoration rituals and funerary services having different 'prices' for the donors. The strong demand for different modes of remembrance made the descriptions of the rites, inserted into the transfer agreements, much more detailed and diverse. The growing number of requests led to the development of private liturgical commemorations that could be performed in the subsidiary monastery spaces. However, as the memorial services occupied the increasing amount of liturgical time, the Memorial books were developed to range the donors in a certain hierarchy. Moreover, the content of these Memorials and their entries

conflicting with the policies of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate proved that the members of the monastic communities could manipulate the commemorations, including or excluding some names at their sole discretion.

The final chapter of the dissertation addresses the modes of female gift-giving and patronage and juxtaposes the rhetoric of donation and the actual mobile gifts, made by the noble Byzantine and Serbian ladies to important monasteries. Female rhetoric of piety had several distinctive features: it always contained references to the male kinsmen of the commissioners (sons, brothers, father, husband, etc.) and/or their marital status. The writings of female authors/commissioners reflected their ambiguous position in the Byzantine society, as the women of the late Byzantium and Serbia had political and economic power but felt sinful being actively involved in the social matters. Though, formally, their writings display the narratives of submission and humbleness, women actively participated into the composition of the text of deeds. Among the donors and founders of the Byzantine Empire, Serbian state, and the Orthodox territories under the Ottoman rule, widows were the most active participants and their gifts displayed a complex of ideas, connected with the preservation of familial memory, pointing out to their social status and keeping the spiritual ties between family generations. Non-royal nuns were more active on the Byzantine territories but rarely appeared as sponsors of ecclesiastic art in Serbia, while the Serbian royal ladies were equally active patrons as their male counterparts.

This two-partial study helped me realize that the *ktetor* and *ktetoria* were umbrella terms covering a wide range of pious activities, such as the establishment of a foundation, the donation of properties or expensive gifts to ecclesiastic institutions, the restoration of a church or a monastery, and the performance of a patron who became a representative and protector of the foundation. Consequently, the title of *ktetor* was applied to various categories of benefactors, sponsors, and patrons, who exercised material support and administrative assistance to an ecclesiastic institution. Regarding the development of patronage practices in the Slavic and Wallachian Medieval states, I came to conclusion that this expansion of meaning of the word *ktetor* led to the appearance of a concept associating the imperial political power, inheritance of the Byzantine ideology, and symbolic leadership in the Orthodox world with the involvement into the patronage over monasteries of Mount Athos during the post-Byzantine period in Serbia and Wallachia. On the other hand, placing various strategies of patronage and endowment in the framework of the reciprocal gift-giving and gift-responding relations, I demonstrated that the monasteries and churches received the benefaction in exchange for various commemorative rites, advocating services, and petitioning prayers, and that these pious rites turned into “commodities” having their own market value. However, the donation/patronage motives were not limited to church rituals; the established foundations as donations to God, the texts of charters accompanying the transfer of assets, and the material gifts themselves became the means for expressing the complex system of medieval social being which included personal image, as well as a status in community and political position. Thus, in my opinion, these three components joint together, i.e., political motives, community organization, and individual representation, became the moving force behind the practices of *ktetoria*.

Curriculum Vitae

Education

- 2011- PhD in Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary (supervisors Daniel Ziemann and Gábor Klaniczay)
- 2008-2009 MA in Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary (supervisors Niels Gaul and Gábor Klaniczay)
- 2002-2008 Specialist degree in Art History and Slavic History, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia (supervisor Olga Popova)

Scholarships, Grants, Awards

- 2018-2019 Global Teaching Fellow at Al-Quds Bard College, East Jerusalem
- 2017 Award for Advanced Doctoral Students for Academic Excellence, Central European University
- 2016 ICR Scholarship for Foreign Researchers, Romanian Cultural Institute, Bucharest
- 2015 New Europe College (Bucharest), 5-month Research Scholarship, Bucharest
- 2014 Universite de Fribourg (Switzerland), 4-month Research Stay, Switzerland
- 2013-2014 ARCS US-based Pre-doctoral Fellowship, American Research Center in Sofia, Bulgaria

Conference Papers Relevant to the Dissertation

- 2019 “Divine Enforcing Legal: Icon and Relics in Juridical Rituals of the Medieval Orthodox Countries,” *Fourth medieval workshop in Rijeka*, 30-31 May, 2019.
- 2018 “Gaining Access to the Prohibited Sacred: The Agency of Women’s Liturgical Gifts to Athonite Monasteries,” *Step by Step towards the Sacred*, the University of Brno, 16-17 May, 2018.
- 2018 “Eloquence as a Gift: the Rhetoric of Piety in Donation Documents of Three Palaiologan Ladies”, *51st Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies at Edinburgh: the post-1204 Byzantine World. New Approaches and Novel Directions*, School of History, Classics & Archaeology, The University of Edinburgh, 13–15 April 2018.
- 2017 “Between Piety, Memory and Law: Common Structure of Prosaic Dedicatory Church Inscription in the Late Byzantine Commonwealth,” *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art: Crossing Borders. Art Readings*, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, March 31 – April 4, 2017.

- 2016 “Textile Gifts of Church Female Donors in the Countries of Late-Byzantine Commonwealth,” *Max Plank Institute for Art History Conference: Textile Gifts in the Middle Ages – Objects, Actors, and Representations*, November 3-4, 2016.
- 2016 “Between Memory and Inheritance: Appearance of Children in Votive Compositions and Social Changes in Balkan Late Medieval Societies,” *IXe Rencontres internationales des doctorants en études byzantines, Paris, Association des Etudiants du Monde Byzantin*, October 7-8, 2016.
- 2016 “A Guide for Last Journey – The Mother of God Hodegetria as Typical Receiver of Funerary Prayers in Late-Byzantium” *23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade, Thematic session “Type and Archetype in Byzantine Cultural Landscape”* August, 22-27, 2016.
- 2015 “Legislation on display: juridical documents as monumental church inscriptions in Byzantium, Serbia and Bulgaria of 13-15th centuries,” in *“Law, Custom and Ritual” Society for the Medieval Mediterranean conference, University of Lincoln*, July, 13-15, 2015.
- 2015 “Holy Corporations: Participation of Great Provincial Monasteries in Urban Economy during the Late Byzantine Period,” *American Research Center in Sofia: Town and Country in the Byzantine World: Social and Economic Perspectives* (Sofia). May, 7-8, 2015.
- 2014 “Associated Ktitorship in Serbia under the Nemaníci and Its Balkan Context, Public Talk at Das Mediävistische Institut der Universität Freiburg Schweiz, October 27, 2014
- 2014 “The Presence of Monastery in City: Urban Possessions of Great Monasteries in the 14th and 15th Centuries,” *The Oxford Byzantine Society’s 2014 International Graduate Conference: The City & the cities: From Constantinople to the frontier*”, February 28th – March 1st, 2014.

Publications Relevant to the Dissertation

- 2018 “Archives and Readers: Preservation and Circulation of Documents in Byzantine Monastic Archives,” *New Europe College Black Sea Link Program Yearbook 2014-2015* [2018]: pp. 21-60.
- 2018 “Founders or Donors? Images and Inscriptions of Supplicants in Later Byzantium and Medieval Serbia,” *Нун и Византија / Niš and Byzantium* 16 (2018): 195-220.

- 2018 “Between Loyalty, Memory and the Law: Byzantine and Slavic Dedicatory Church Inscriptions Mentioning Foreign Rulers in the 14th and 15th Centuries,” in: *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art: Crossing Borders*, eds. E. Moutafov, I. Toth (Sofia 2018): 303-324.
- 2018 “Функции парного культа Симеона и Савы сербских: от афонского монашества до национальных святых,” (The Functions of the Joint Cult of Simeon and Sava of Serbia: From The Athonite Monasticism to the National Saints) in: *Европа святых. Социальные, политические и культурные аспекты святости в Средние века* (Europe of Saints. Social, Political and Cultural Aspects of Sanctity during the Middle Ages), ed. S. Yatsyk (St. Petersburg: Aleteia, 2018): 177-207.
- 2017 “Inscribed Scrolls in Votive Portraits: On Applied Rhetorical Techniques in the Art of the Late 14th – Early 16th Century,” *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire de l'Art. Série Beaux-Arts* 54-55 (2017-2018): 3-45.
- 2017 [with Dragoș Năstăsoiu] “New Information on the Dating of the Murals of St. Nicholas Church in Ribița: A Hypothesis”, *MuseIKON. A Journal of Religious Art and Culture/Revue d'Art et de Culture Religieuse* 1 (2017): 25-44.
- 2015 “Recovery from crisis: The “Uncultivated lands” of Macedonia and Stefan Dušan’s “benevolence” in: *Proceedings of the Conference “Immagini, interpretazioni e reazioni nel mondo greco, latino e bizantino”* ed. Angiolillo, R. et als. (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2015), 147-164.
- 2011 “Организация света в византийском пространстве на материале ктиторских типиков” (The Arrangement of Lighting in the Byzantine Founder's Typika), In: *Огонь и свет в сакральном пространстве. Материалы международного симпозиума* (Light and Fire in the Sacred Space: The Collection of papers for the International Symposium), ed. by A. Lidov (Moscow: 2011), p. 85-95.