





ЗНАМЕНИТИ  
СРБИ



THE MEMORABLE  
SERBS





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**THE MEMORABLE  
SERBS**

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*The future belongs to those who  
remember the past the longest.*

*“People who do not have own books and alphabet, own book writers and own book lovers may not be called people.*

*(...) Only peoples written about in books enter the history.”*

*Mile Medić, from Stefan Nemanja’s Legacy*

## Preface

**T**he *Memorable Serbs* is a rosary of venerable Serbs, from Stefan Nemanja to Sava Šumanović. This historical and spiritual reminder has been written based on the research of the archive documents and literature. Because of that, it conforms to the life and document. Such degree of the renewed, validated quest of the past may be reached only if there is a big knowledge about the general and national historical context and spiritual framework. Based on various and multi-layered historical facts and sources, the author has managed to consolidate the authentic biographies of the Serbian elite in time.

Knowledge of the history of own people creates the feeling of the continuation of life. Therefore, insight of the secrets of the past and the awareness of how the national paths used to be and what they are like today is not such a small benefit for a person. At the same time, some memorable, often forgotten persons, who not only left a distinguished trace in the Serbian history, but who also deeply sowed the seed in Holy Sava's "narrow path" which bears its fruits even today, continue to live through our knowledge about them.

Jakov Ignjatović used to write that he hoped that a time would come "when descendants will remember their teachers again and keep the memory of their valuable legacy. A man who is benevolent to his nation is a great man". The editors of this illuminating, nice, and soul-beneficial book are also among such meritorious practitioners, dedicated to "national rhetoric" nurturing.

It covers the medieval age of enlightenment, followed by the ages when the dark fell down, up to the First and Second Serbian Uprising, when the exhausting and not always salutary liberation wars began. At that time, the Serbian people were moving towards north and west, which is quite obvious in two great migrations, headed by Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević and Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta, when the Serbian elite crossed the Sava and the Danube, towards the territory of the Habsburg monarchy, where it found its orthodox compatriots, enrooted in Central Europe long time ago. It reminds us of the victims of the World War I, the gigantic heroes of the Thessaloniki Front, and the tragic destiny of painter Sava Šumanović, whose life and activities are described at the end of this series of the memorable Serbs.

The generations in which the living force of the Serbian soul was being nurtured for centuries will revive in front of us, in this long recollection. The heroes of these romanticised memories are those who provided legacy to their descendants – whose destinies were interwoven with great social, historical, and political processes, in complicated rules of life with unpredictable, oftentimes tragic

outcomes. Thanks to their love for activity and creation flamed in their hearts by God, they acted for the glory of the Nation and Fatherland.

Because of that, this creation, the authentic voice in these evil times, is to show what we were universally like, the depth of our roots, and the heights we are elevated to by our lineage. The author was predestined, once his narration skills immersed, to become a true interpreter of the deepest feelings of the soul of his people, of its unparalleled chivalrous and spiritual legacy, not letting it to be forgotten. In these interesting plots and even more interesting denouements, the heroes are alive in front of us thanks to the narrator who cogently presented the unrestrained narrations about "the life and adventures" of the selected persons.

This book is distinguished by the common love and glorification of God and his Nation. Because of that, it is suggestive and warm. The author made effort to make a harmonious unit, to elucidate certain neglected, yet so important issues of our present spirituality, history, culture, and education and to re-valuate some of our misapprehensions, to be a reminder and impact of deepening of our knowledge about the persons selected as memorable. The written material remains a testimony of the life, work, and creation of the Serbian rulers, ecclesiastics, scientists, field marshals, politicians, culture activists, and artists. Our antecedents were aware that "only the works of love shall remain", which is why they will remain the national role models.

The author, editors, and associates of the publisher know that giving is the most beautiful receiving, and that book is more valuable than any monument, because the book itself builds monuments in the heart of the reader. Glory to God now and forever, amen.

*Archpriest Stavrophor dr Dragomir Sando*

# STEFAN NEMANJA

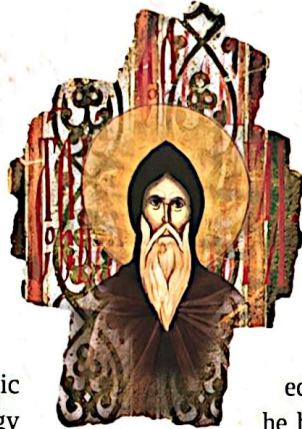
## Grand Prince of Serbia

(St. Simeon the Myrrh-streaming)

At the very beginning of XII century (presumably in 1113), in the place of Ribnica near Podgorica, (Stefan) Nemanja was born to his father Zavida. Besides Nemanja, Zavida had other sons, Tihomir (the eldest), Stracimir, and Miroslav. At that time, Zeta was exclusively a Catholic country there was no Orthodox clergy thus, Nemanja was baptised by a Catholic priest. "And, since Latin clergymen are in this country, he was honoured, by God's will, to receive Latin baptism in the temple" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

Almost nothing, even the exact time when Zavida returned to Raška with his whole family is known about Nemanja's youth. The biographer only mentions that Nemanja was, immediately upon his return to Raška, baptised by an Orthodox priest. "And when his father returned to the place of his rule, he deigned to take the second baptism from the hands of saints and archpriests in the centre of the Serbian country in the temple of holy and glorious and supreme apostles Peter and Paul" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

According to already common custom prevailing in Serbia, Nemanja, after reaching certain age, got married "When he reached the age of a young man, he was united in a legal marriage..." (Domentijan) with a noblewoman Ana and he got the part of Serbian land to govern. In his part of the territory, he ruled fully independently from other brothers which could result in their dissatisfaction. Yet, their relations were kind of tolerant,



but after Nemanja met Byzantine Emperor Manuel Komnenos, between 1158 and 1161, everything changed. At that time, the Byzantine Emperor was staying in Niš and invited Nemanja there in order to eventually give him the area called Dubočica. "And, having been delighted with the wisdom of this young man, he bestowed imperial dignity and various gifts upon him. And, he allocated the part of his land called Dubočica to him" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

It seems that Nemanja became the Emperor's vassal, which awakened his hopes to become, of course, with the Emperor's support, the ruler of Raška. However, his hopes vanished since around 1166, Nemanja's eldest brother Tihomir sat on throne of the principality. Shortly afterwards, (1167–1168), dissatisfied Nemanja initiated a rebellion against his brother, but still weak, he was defeated in this conflict. The brothers caught and put him in the dungeon: "He was caught and tied up and iron shackles were put on his hands and legs, and some of his servants were also confined" (Domentijan).

With someone's support, probably Hungarian, Nemanja managed to escape from the dungeon and seize the principality rule in Raška, whereas his brothers Tihomir, Miroslav, and Stracimir, fled to the Byzantine Emperor. Shortly afterwards, his brothers, with the support of the army received from the Emperor, went to Raška. "And a number of those scattered and ill-minded, having gathered in the empire of the Greek land,

hoping to receive support from the Greek Emperor, were in a haste to slaughter the holy one and destroy the holy memory of him" (Domentijan). Nevertheless, near the place of Pantina (1168) they suffered terrible defeat, and during retreat, Tihomir drowned in the Sitnica river. Now, there was no one who could contest the rule and title of Grand Prince to Nemanja.

From that year (1168), Nemanja's complete activity was directed to uniting as many Serbian lands as possible, thus, he led several wars. The majority of the conflicts were with Byzantium since all of Nemanja's plans were related to conquering only those lands that were under its rule. However, successes were only partial. At one time, Nemanja even had to surrender to the mercy of Emperor Manuel. However, it turned out that it was a useful move since the Emperor left him at the throne of the principality thus, Nemanja saved the throne for him and the country from destruction.

Based on this experience, Nemanja did not attack Byzantium until 1180, but from 1180, when Emperor Manuel died, up to 1190, he used all opportunities to increase the territory of Raška. At that time, he had the alliances with the Hungarians (1183), Bulgarians (1185), and, finally, with the German Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa, when the latter led his army through the Byzantine territory to the Second Crusade (1189). Thus, Raška was considerably expanded. "And he restored his patrimony, and established it better with God's help and his wisdom, given by God, and he rebuilt his ruined patrimony, and out of coastal countries, he seized Zeta with its towns, Pilot from the Arbanasi, and Lab with Lipljan, Dubočica, Reke, Zagrlat, Levče, Belica, Lepenica from the Greek land" (*Charter of Hilandar by Stefan the First-Crowned*).

However, Byzantium did not accept the existing situation and it managed to gather sufficient forces heading towards Raška during 1191. Nemanja accepted the battle but, finally, better trained Byzantines won near the Morava River. Although winners, the Greeks could not fully use the victory, therefore, they negotiated with Nemanja. Finally, the peace was made under which some territories had to be returned to Byzantium,

whereas all other conquests were recognised. Indeed, these negotiations meant that Byzantium, after so many years, finally accepted the independence of Serbia, and in order to further confirm it, marriage was agreed between the niece of the Byzantine Emperor, Isaac II Angelos, called Eudocia (daughter of the Emperor's brother Alexios) and Nemanja's middle son, Stefan.

Having had Stefan married with the Byzantine Princess, Nemanja determined his heir, thus, he broke the rule of Raška that the throne of the principality was inherited by the eldest son. Later, this caused great dissatisfaction of his eldest son, Vukan, who ruled Zeta and Trebinje at that time.

Not much time elapsed after these events and during 1196, Nemanja abdicated and became a monk under the name of Simeon and his wife Ana became a nun under the name of Anastasija: "And he was given the name of sir Simeon on 25<sup>th</sup> March on the Holy Annunciation in the year of 6703 (1195). On the same day, his God-given wife, who was the lady of the whole Serbian land, Ana, also received the holy position and was given the name of Anastasija" (St. Sava).

At first, he stayed in the monastery of Studenica, then he went to the Holy Mountain (1197), and, apparently, the impact by his youngest son, Rastko (St. Sava), who stayed in the Holy Mountain for some longer time, was decisive to make such a step: "And quickly going from the hill, he came down to the plain, namely to the Holy Mountain, where, as he had heard, calm and serene life was lived in a meadow where orthodox religion was deeply rooted and brightly shining, and a tree was gloriously standing with sanctified branches and God-fearing and Christ loving monks and all of sanctified church clergy; and in the middle of them all, as a sweet voiced bird, Sava the monk, a gentle consolation to the Christ loving old man; clear leaves and beautiful flowers, prophetic sermons, that is to say, the doctrines of honourable gospels and apostolic traditions and orders of holy fathers and a multitude of fruits, this is thrust in faith" (*Charter of Hilandar by Stefan the First-Crowned*).

At first, upon his arrival to the Holy Mountain, he lived with his son, St. Sava, in the Monastery of Vatopedi, until the monastery of Hi-

landar founded by him (Simeon) was completed "Because he left his fatherland and went to this holy meadow, that is to say, the Holy Mountain, and found a former monastery, that it to say, Mileja, Presentation of the Holy and Blessed Virgin, fully destroyed by infidel warriors. And he made another great accomplishment and confirmed his old age, and me, even if I was unworthy, whom he had with himself where the works were done. As he renewed and established everything here, he also had this holy place rebuilt in order not to deprive us there of the renewal and commemoration and sanctuary" (St. Sava).

Not only due to his old age but also due to his illness, Nemanja (Simeon) lived in Hilandar for only eight months and passed away there on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1200.

Nemanja's death was appealingly described by his son Saint Sava. This description certainly belongs to the most compassionate and the most beautiful pages of the Serbian medieval literature. Every word and every page show strong emotions towards his father and great pain because of his death so that St. Sava's emotions during death bed agony of his father Nemanja can be felt quite well.

According to Domentijan's writings, Simeon's agony lasted for five days and during all that time, his son did not leave the bed of his sick father: "And God praising master Sava was intently sitting up all night taking dedicated and prudent care about the ascension of the venerable as the only one for his only one and no one else helped him to move away from the venerable" (Domentijan).

While he was still conscious, Simeon asked for the Mother of God icon to, in accordance with his oath, pass away in front of her: "My child, bring me the most holy Mother of God because I have such an oath, to release my spirit in front of her" (St. Sava). This Byzantine icon of the Mother of God Hodigitria, made in late XII century in mosaic, is still kept at Hilandar.

During the night, Simeon asked him to fulfil his last wish: "My dear child, for the sake of love, lay me down on the cloak for my funeral and fully prepare me in a holy manner, as I will be lying in my grave. And, spread a cattail mat on the ground,

and lay me down on it, and put a stone under my head to repose on it until the Lord takes me out of here" (St. Sava).

And, it suddenly happened. "And suddenly, there was a murmur, as if the place where they were lifted up. And look, an invisible angel song: Glory to the supreme God, peace on Earth, gentle love to men. And the three-blessed ones sang with them in front of everyone. Thus, he gloriously gave his spirit away to the hands of the Lord. His face was smiling and having an unspoken appearance. And everyone looking at it were marvelled" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

After all rites, Simeon's body was laid into the grave located in Hilandar Minster (Catholicon) next to the entrance to the nave, along the southern wall: "Thus, looking forward to the Holy Spirit, they sent the grateful songs for the honourable's passing away, having sung God praising songs, his holy relics were laid down in the church of the most holy Mother of God of the Hilandar Lavra" (Domentijan). Simeon's body was laid down in the grave by St. Sava personally: "And, I, the sinful one, having embraced the honourable body, laid him down in his new grave, as he had commanded me and I fulfilled his command" (St. Sava). After that, religious ceremonies in Hilandar lasted for nine more days: "After many monks had gathered, I did not let them go until after the ninth day, serving him the service every day" (St. Sava).

Simeon's grave in Hilandar was only a temporary one, because Simeon himself asked St. Sava to transfer his relics to Studenica: "When God deigns after certain time, upon gathering the sinful bones of my poor body, you will transfer them to the land of my people and lay them down in the church built by me, in the place called Studenica, in the monastery of the Most Holy Mother of God" (Teodosije). Probably in 1207, Simeon's last wish was fulfilled by St. Sava and his relics were taken to Studenica.

At that time, the conflict between Stefan the First-Crowned and his brother Vukan, who contested Stefan's right to the monarchical throne, had already been settled down. Actually, bringing of the Simeon's relics, especially the arrival of St. Sava to Serbia, made the brothers reconcile

with each other and ended this war. The reception of Simeon's relics was attended by both brothers: "And I came with the honourable relics to Hvosno. When the ruler, his son Stefan Nemanja, and prince Vukan, the brother of his, found out about that, they gathered all clergy and priests and priors and many monks and all of the soldiers, having been blissful and joyful" (St. Sava).

It is assumed that on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1207, St. Sava placed the Simeon's holy relics in Studenica "and with great honours, he was laid down in this holy church, into the grave which had already been chosen by the deceased" (St. Sava). The grave is located in the western aisle along the southern wall. It is a massive sarcophagus made of marble, but it is still unknown whether Simeon's relics were laid into the sarcophagus or whether there is a tomb under the sarcophagus in which the relics were buried.

Soon afterwards, the miracle of myrrh streaming occurred. "Not much time had passed from the day of his presentation to God, and we all gathered, marking the day of his death. And the most merciful God, who had taken care of him from his youth did not leave him even then, but showed his love for men to us, his servants, through the holy Sir. And his tomb produced the myrrh of a strange and pleasant smell, healing the sick and eliminating various sufferings, and, simply saying, chased angry spirits away. And it did not happen only once, but many a time was the unspoken and the most holy myrrh produced for the sake of his fatherland" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

According to Domentijan's saying, the myrrh streaming miracle had occurred already in Hilandar: "And springs were flowing not from moisture, but from dry bones and from hard marble stone, benevolent waters which supply hearts of the faithful with great faith and give health to the sick, the grave was filled with fine myrrh smelling with intensive smells, and it covered the whole church with God given benevolence" (Domentijan). At that time, according to Domentijan, Simeon was included in the list of saints: "And all of the honourable and just fathers, the holy synod of the most holy Mother of God of the Holy Mountain, having seen the glory of God and the miracles of the Saint, that God created with him, wrote him down in the list of the holy and honourable fathers and even miracle makers, and bowed down to him the same as to all other saints and those celebrating God in the heaven and on earth. And having completed the divine liturgy, they created the holiday dedicated to St. Simeon, the New Myrrh-Streamer, and joined him with the Holy Simeon God-Recipient, to be celebrated on a common day" (Domentijan).

Thus, Serbia got its Saint – Myrrh-Streaming: "they created the holiday dedicated to St. Simeon, the New Myrrh-Streamer, and joined him with the Holy Simeon God-Recipient, to be celebrated on a common day (Domentijan). This virtually means that Simeon was proclaimed the saint on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1200, but, today, it is considered that it was actually done later, i.e. after Sava came to Serbia and buried the Simeon's relics in Studenica.

# STEFAN THE FIRST-CROWNED

## Serbian King (St. Simon)

The great battle on the Morava river that started in the autumn of 1190 brought a complete turn of events in relations between Byzantium and Raška. Though the Raškans were defeated in this battle, they did not lose the war which was forthcoming because the majority of the forces with Grand Prince Stefan Nemanja retreated to the mountains. Apparently, Byzantium was totally exhausted with this victory and it did not have either sufficient power or a willingness to continue fighting the Serbs in the mountains. Therefore, their triumphant writings did not correspond to the actual situation: "What is to be suffered by the enemies of the empire, who have only recently seen how our emperor defeated Serbian force and arrogance, like a threshing-floor full of bundles and turned it into a small bunch of straw that spreads the same fear among them" (Eusthatus).

Therefore, Byzantine emperor, Isaac Angelos initiated negotiations with Grand Prince Stefan Nemanja that finally resulted in the peace with which no one had any reason to be dissatisfied. Byzantium got Niš and Ravno, but it had to give in other territories which tireless Stefan Nemanja had conquered in the recent years. This peace was actually the recognition of Raška as an independent state and it was the peak of Stefan Nemanja's Political activity. However, these negotiations also resulted in the arranged marriage between Byzantine Princess Eudocia and Stefan Nemanja's middle son called Stefan (the First-Crowned).



For Stefan, this wedding meant that he would be the successor to the throne since, apparently, one of the peace provisions had been that the one of Nemanja's sons who married Eudocia was to be Nemanja's successor. "The Emperor [Alexios III Angelos] also had a third daughter called Eudocia; even when her father escaped from Andronicus and won-

dered among the Mohhamedans and in Palestine, her uncle Isaac had her married to Stevan, one of Nemanja's sons" (Nikita Akominat).

Stefan's wedding caused the quarrel in the family of the Grand Prince, because Nemanja's eldest son, Vukan, by the line of succession should have succeeded the throne. However, Vukan was prevented to do so due to this marriage and he openly began demonstrating his dissatisfaction. The fact that Vukan was a Catholic and ruled Zeta, the area which was always ready to rebel, was something that could additionally impair the relations.

Yet, Vukan did not immediately show his dissatisfaction and the events inexorably flew. Soon, Eudocia's father Alexios I came to the throne of the former Byzantine Emperor, Isaac II Angelos, and, from that moment, pressures for Nemanja to renounce the throne in favour of his son Stefan, began. Soon afterwards, Nemanja renounced the throne (March 1196) and Stefan was proclaimed the new Prince. It was the matter of time when Vukan would start the rebellion. Yet, he did not dare do so as long as Nemanja was alive.

In 1187, Nemanja retreated to the Holy Mountain where, with his youngest son St. Sava, he was involved in the building of Hilandar and the Grand Prince Stefan the First-Crowned continuously sent high amounts of funds for the temple construction. "Afterwards, when the prior Metodije came from him, he sent sufficient and abundant gifts to establish and complete the temple of the Most Holy Mother of God, and it was not only once, but he was sending whatever was necessary to the holy master during all those years until the church of the Most Holy Mother of God was completed. Those were not only gifts, but he also provided funds allocated from his land to the holy master and the workers in that place" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

While Nemanja was building Hilandar, the Hungarians invaded Hum and conquered it (1198) and, came in touch with Vukan ruling in Zeta. Their contact was facilitated by the fact that the Hungarians, just like Vukan, were Catholics. With the Hungarian support, immediately after Nemanja's death (1200), offended because the principality throne was not given to him, Vukan rose up against his brother Prince Stefan and in 1202, he managed to overthrow him from the throne. Nevertheless, he failed to captivate Stefan himself, thus, the latter continued giving resistance.

At the same time, the marriage of Stefan the First-Crowned and Eudocia was falling apart. While Nemanja was alive, mutual intolerance of spouses was hushed up. Nevertheless, after Nemanja's death, it was turned into an open hatred.

The marriage itself brought two children: son Radoslav (latter king) and daughter Komnenija. Most of the details related to their common life were brought by the Greek writer Nikita. According to his writings, which he presented with an exquisite joy, Stefan was accusing his wife of being scabious when she came from Byzantium. However, she fought back by accusing him of constant infidelity and drunkenness. Such quarrels in their marriage lasted until Stefan got tired of them, thus, he decided to put an end to them. He made a move that could not serve an honour but it rather indicates a low level of mutual relations between the spouses. Namely, having failed to otherwise deal with her, Stefan accused Eudocia of

infidelity by claiming that he had caught her "in the act". As a revenge, he ordered to put off her clothes (to stay only in her underwear) and then he sent her away. Obviously, Stefan decided not only to get rid of unbearable Eudocia, but also to fully humiliate her both as a woman and as a Byzantine princess. We can only imagine the scene in which a proud Byzantine woman was expelled from Serbia only in her underwear. Thus, Stefan fully revenged his wife though in a completely indecent manner.

For quite some time, Raška was being devastated by the civil war. "In such hostility and persecution between brothers, the Serbian land was in a great trouble, as if in a kind of discomfort, it became barren due to much plunder and spilt blood, fully weakened by hunger due to the lack of tillage, thus, many scattered away to foreign land" Teodosije narrated.

Finally, the Bulgarians used an opportunity and during 1203, they plundered the east of Raška. Apparently, Stefan managed to turn their actions in his favour and around 1205 he regained the throne of the principality.

Stefan's first step to get closer to the West was his marriage with the granddaughter of the Venetian Doge Enrico Dandolo, the daughter of Ranieri Dandolo, Anna Dandolo. The intermediary in this marriage was apparently Dubrovnik Prince Giovanni Dandolo. It seems that this was Stefan's third marriage since it is assumed that during 1204–1207 Stefan had a wife about whom it is not known who she was and what happened to her. He married Anna Dandolo in 1217, and the motives of this marriage were of a political nature. It was a big thing for Stefan to marry the relative of powerful Venetian doge who managed to avert the Crusade campaign and defeat Byzantium. At that time (1207), the influence of Venice was at its peak therefore, the marriage was arranged at that time. If he was married at that time, Stefan had apparently been thinking about his orientation to the West even earlier, thus, his later shift in Politics was not so sudden.

However, the civil war was not finished and Stefan's position was not certain at all. At that time crucial for Raška, St. Sava announced his return from the Holy Mountain. "Therefore, he in-

formed the ruler, his brother, about his visit and the holy father's and myrrh-streaming relics, asking him to prepare a decent welcome for the relics" (Teodosije).

Vukan was not satisfied at all with the return of St. Sava. It was quite clear that Sava, who had, already at that time, enjoyed a great reputation, supported the ruler left on the throne by Stefan Nemanja, and it was Stefan the First-Crowned. In addition, St. Sava brought Simeon's relics, and since, according to Domentijan, Simeon had already, been declared the saint at that time, Vukan could not hope to get the throne.

During 1206 and 1207, St. Sava entered Serbia near Hvosno, and, first, he placed Simeon's relics in Studenica. According to the legend, right there, in front of the Simeon's relics, St. Sava managed to reconcile Stefan and Vukan. Nevertheless, one should have no delusions and think that it was something more than a Political agreement between two brothers. Yet, finally, the agreement turned out to be very effective. Vukan left the Political scene.

Upon the completion of the civil war with Vukan, Stefan increasingly dealt with foreign Politics. At the same time (1212. or 1214), Stefan settled issues with his unfaithful vassal Strez "And, he died in the middle of people with an evil death, strange death, and everyone wondered", (Stefan the First-Crowned), and St. Sava played a decisive role in the attempt to settle down the conflict.

At about the same time, Stefan managed to – repress the attack of united Latins and Bulgarians in a somewhat strange way: "And suddenly, there was shouting e at midnight. And the venerable dispersed invisibly our enemies who had risen up. And being overwhelmed with great fear upon the appearance of my holy master and an omen, they ran away defeated by him, cutting themselves, each other, and they won among themselves and were finally defeated" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

Soon, a danger threatened from Epirus by Despot Michael I. The Epirians were successful from the very beginning and seized Scutari. However, finally, it turned out that the Despot Michael I was not an opponent, because, he was, most probably in 1215, suddenly killed by his slaves.

"And, immediately, one of his slaves stood up, stubbed him with his sword in his bed, and he released his soul in an evil death at the shame of spectators and at the joy of all those who trusted in God and in his holy followers" (Stefan the First-Crowned).

Afterwards, the major threat was from the alliance between the Hungarians and Latins who intended to commonly attack Serbia. The meeting of the Latin emperor and the Hungarian king was scheduled in Niš during 1215/1216. Since the Hungarian King Andrew was first to come to the meeting, Stefan used the opportunity before the arrival of the Latin king and fully won the Hungarians over to his side. Finally, united Raškians and Hungarians put strong pressure onto the Latin Emperor Henry so that he barely got out alive: "But, he was not able to leave my fatherland, because I closed all of the paths with the help of my holy master. And, King Andrew asked me to let him go to his empire. And, obeying his requests, I left him" (Stefan the First-Crowned). King Henry did not endure the shame of this defeat for a long time and died on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1216.

After all above described events, one of the most significant Stefan's Political moves followed – in 1217, he married Anna Dandolo, i.e., he got married with the royal crown. Through Venice, Stefan got in touch with the Pope of that time, Honorius III, and asked for the crown from him. The Pope received Stefan's envoys courteously, accepted his request, and sent him the crown through his legacy. Thus, Serbia became the kingdom, and Stefan the King the First-Crowned. There were some outlooks of the war with the Hungarian king, Andrew, upon the coronation, but St. Sava forestalled such a possibility with his diplomatic activities.

Another significant event at the time of Stefan the First-Crowned, probably even more important than his coronation, was receiving the autocephaly for the Serbian Orthodox Church. The role of St. Sava was immeasurable in obtaining clerical independence since, in Nicaea, in 1219, he achieved that Nicaea Patriarch, Manuel Sarantenos, and Nicaea Emperor, Theodore Laskaris, raised the Serbian Orthodox Church at the rank of archdiocese, and ordained him as the first arch-

bishop. "And when a special day came, and when the Patriarch wore the clothes according to the rank of the grand ecumenical church with many Metropolitans and bishops and with priests and deacons, this reverend Master Sava was brought to be consecrated, and with the hand of the most reverend ecumenical Patriarch Germanus and with the commandment of the Constantinople Emperor, Sir Theodor Laskaris, he was appointed the Archbishop" (Domentijan).

Upon completed activity, St. Sava did not immediately go to Serbia but, he wended his way first to the Holy Mountain. After some time, he went to Serbia, but King Stefan the First-Crowned could not greet him since he was ill. "When the venerable Stefan heard about the arrival of his brother whom he desired and loved for a long time and that he was not in a simple visit, but that he had divine clerical power, he was happy and thankful to God. But being struck with great illness, and not being able to greet him, instead, he sent his sons to greet him, who were young like gold-winged eagles and who went to the Greek border with many noblemen" (Teodosije).

It is now difficult to say what Stefan's illness was, but, obviously it was a serious and permanent one. Not only that he was not capable of coming to welcome his brother Sava, but he also did not have strength to get up without somebody else's help. "And when the holy one came over to the bed of his ill brother who was the ruler, and raised by others, he could hardly kiss him, and they both and all of the nobles cried a lot, because it was a serious illness of the ruler and he could not hope to live" (Teodosije).

Yet, upon the arrival of St. Sava, King Stefan began to recover suddenly and it was, eventually, interpreted as one of Sava's miracles: "And with the prayer of the holy one, the diseased was saved, and he was suddenly healed" (Teodosije).

At that time, King Stefan spent most of his time providing support to St. Sava to rearrange the Serbian Orthodox Church in accordance with recently obtained autocephaly and in addition to two previous episcopacies eight new were also set up. Then, the Political course of King Stefan was changed. He was related to Epirus despotate as

the most powerful Orthodox country and had his son Radoslav married Epirus princess Anna.

Unfortunately, the speed of life imposed by King Stefan to himself began to take its toll. The illness which seemingly disappeared reappeared with all its intensity in 1228 and there was no hope of any healing of the King. Feeling that he would have no more strength to resist the most recent attack of illness, the King required his brother Sava to help him become a monk. "Afterwards, venerable King Stefan, struck by the illness, called after his brother, a praised one now, and begged him a lot to make him worthy of the holy, and seraphic, and family pride." (Teodosije).

For some reason, St. Sava did not think that the illness was so serious, and did not think that it was the time for the King to become a monk. "When the time comes for such a request, he said, I myself will serve you in these matters" (Teodosije).

Believing that King Stefan would be healed, St. Sava went on a journey. King Stefan, however, seemed to feel a kind of lethargy, and feeling that his end was near, he informed Sava by his herald that he was about to die: "Again, King Stefan got ill and wrote to the holy one crying and begging him to make him worthy of the holy, seraphic and family pride. In this life, he said, you will not see me anymore!" (Teodosije).

Now, even St. Sava knew that those were the last moments of the King's life, and hastily went back. Immediately upon his return, he came close to the body of King Stefan and "placing his holy right hand on his heart, in the name of the Holy Trinity, he drew the image of cross on his naked body, and his hands immediately felt that the King's body moved, and touching his breasts, he found them warm and alive..." (Teodosije). Coming back to life could not last for a long time, but it was quite sufficient for St. Sava to proclaim his brother a monk, and give him the name of Simon. "Afterwards, the holy archbishop adorned him with the holy and seraphic honour, and called him Simon instead of Stefan" (Teodosije).

After that, the biographers provided descriptions of the death of King Stefan's the First-Crowned that were very similar. "And, the monk

called Simon, held in the arms of the holy archbishop, felt joy and was thankful to God, and gave his spirit into His hands" (Teodosije). Domentijan did not state that Stefan died in St. Sava's arms, but it could be indirectly concluded that the event occurred in such a manner.

There is no doubt that King the First-Crowned was first buried in Studenica, and that the funeral service was performed by St. Sava: "thus, he laid down holy relics of St. Simeon, their father, in the home of the Holy Mother of God in Studenica" (Domentijan). Today, it is believed that the original grave was next to the northern wall of the western aisle, i.e. opposite the grave of Stefan Nemanja (Simeon). This opinion is supported with the remains of the former sarcophagus which may be seen even today. Previously, during digging, a built tomb was found, and according to the remains of the broken sarcophagus found in the trash, it seemed that those were the remains of a typical royal grave in Serbia of that time.

Nevertheless, the relics of King Stefan the First-Crowned did not lie in Studenica for a long time. They were transferred to Žiča Monastery. Opening of the grave and the transfer of the relics was again done by St. Sava. "Again, after a while,

he was transferred with great honours to the home of salvation, to the monastery built under his order, to the great archdiocese called Žiča..." (Domentijan). While digging in Studenica, St. Sava found "his holy relics complete and undestroyed, and everyone was happy because of fulfilled desires, and they were not overwhelmed with sorrow" (Teodosije). It was quite a sufficient sign that those were the relics of a saint.

The place where the relics of King Stefan were put in the Holy Salvation Church in Žiča is not exactly known. It can only be supposed that they were placed in the shrine at the altar. Here, in Žiča, Stefan the First-Crowned was painted as a very handsome man with a long black beard. On his head, he wore a cap decorated with pearls and purple clothes with yellow double-headed eagles and pearls. Next to him was his son Radoslav, the future King wearing similar clothes.

Yet, the relics of King Stefan were not destined to rest in peace. Many times the Serbs transferred them throughout Serbia to keep them from destruction. Only at the time of the Turks they were transferred as many as fifteen times. Today, the relics of Stefan the First-Crowned are placed in Studenica.

# SAINT SAVA

## Serbian Archbishop

**G**rand Prince Stefan Nemanja was born in 1114, and, at the time of Rastko's birth in 1175, he was more than sixty years old, which is fully in accordance with Teodosije's statements: "After a long time had passed since she ceased to give birth, the above-mentioned pious Anna, prevented by God the same as Jacob's Leah in ancient times, so that she, who had previously given birth, did not give any further birth in time, because of which her husband insulted and condemned her, and both of them were worried and sad because of this, and their souls craved a lot to have another child, and at night they prayed to the almighty God."

Since his early youth, Rastko showed exceptional characteristics and great inclination to monastic life, which made him, at the time when he was not even seventeen, ran away to the Holy Mountain: "Because he listened about the Holy Mount of Athos and about ascetics there, and about other places for hermits. Because they came to his father from many a place to receive what they needed, and on some other occasions he sent things to holy places to be distributed to those living in a sacred manner, for he was a good man who handed out alms and gave a lot. And, God, willing to fulfil prayers and desires of his servants, fulfilled his desire and prompted him to come to his parents from the place given to him" (Teodosije).

Yet, his leave was discovered soon and the chase went after him. It did not take much time to find him at the St. Panteleimon Monastery, but



Rastko, used a trick and managed to make people chasing him fall asleep and become a monk: "He asked the prior, and ordered to prepare grand feast, to treat himself and the duke and the noblemen, and to go home in the morning. He presented his idea to the prior and asked him to start singing morning songs at night and to make a grand feast in order for the prior to treat the duke and his noblemen, and the young man served them all with his own hands and was happy. Since they stayed long at dinner, he ordered the prior to hit his forehead and remind themselves that it was Sunday. The prior got up and the young man got up with him, and they went to the church for their prayer. The duke and the noblemen also got up in the church, because they did not dare losing him out of their sight. Since chanting was prolonged, and again, at the command, they were reading for a long time, all those sitting together and those fellows who were keeping him together with the duke, being tired after the trip and the festive feast, fell asleep deeply. And when he felt that they fell asleep, a divine young man, still awake, got up and bowed before the sacred altar and gave himself to the Lord after he had been blessed by the prior, and took an old man, honoured with the clerical order, and went to the big tower in the monastery. Closing the door, he said thanking God: Lord, I shall offer myself to you, because you have raised me. And, the priest has read the payer and cut his hair and dressed him in a cassock of angelic appearance, and changed his name Rastko into Sava" (Teodosije).

From that time, a stunning spiritual life of Rastko Nemanjić, monk Sava, began.

Rastko's arrival to the Holy Mountain aroused great interest among the monks and the anchorites. It is no wonder, he was the son of the ruler who abandoned his care-free life and replaced it with this, much harder one: "And they said: Since he had liked to live with us, he came" (Teodosije). During 1192, Sava moved to the Monastery of Vatopedi, which was, at that time, one of the largest and the most significant monasteries in the Holy Mountain. It was established in the period 972–980, during the life of St. Athanasios the Athonite who founded the first big monastery in the Holy Mountain, Great Lavra, in 963.

In late 1197, Stefan Nemanja, aware that his abdication did not cause any special commotions, decided to go to Athos (the Holy Mountain) and join his son Sava: "and he came to the Holy Mountain to the Holy Mother of God of Vatopedi, and brought 300 selected servants with him, among others" (Domentijan). Soon afterwards, the two of them founded the Monastery of Hilandar and had it built. Immediately upon the completion of the Monastery, Stefan Nemanja moved there: "And, when the monastery was completed, St. Simeon came to Hilandar from Vatopedi" (Domentijan). Already on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1200, the former Grand Prince of Raška, Stefan Nemanja, monk Simeon, died in his endowment.

During 1202, the conflict between Nemanja's sons, Stefan and Vukan, began. With the help of the Hungarian forces, Vukan managed to break Stefan's resistance very soon. This conflict between brothers regarding the throne caused huge damages to Serbia and a great scandal: "Here, I want to tell a story about the hatred between brothers, but I hesitate, because of shame" (Teodosije). Yet, until the end of 1205, Stefan managed to regain his throne, but the war between the brothers still raged.

Since he wanted to reconcile his brothers and stop the war, St. Sava returned to Serbia from the Holy Mountain a bit unexpectedly and brought the relics of Stefan Nemanja (St. Simeon). At that time, Sava was very young, he had only passed the age of thirty and he had already had the rank of an Archimandrite. Several monks escorted Sava.

In Hvosno, Sava with Nemanja's relics, according to Sava's narration, was solemnly welcomed, among others, both by Stefan and Vukan: "When the ruler, his son, Stefan Nemanja, and his brother, prince Vukan, found out about it, they gathered for the saint priests and priors, with many monks and boyars and they were all happy and joyful" (St. Sava). According to other biographers (Domentijan and Teodosije), the reception was attended only by Stefan and not by Vukan. It is not precisely known when Sava came to Serbia, but it was certainly in 1206 or 1207.

St. Sava buried Nemanja's relics in Studenica and it seems that Stefan and Vukan finally reconciled just there over their father's relics. We do not know details of this reconciliation, but it is certain that Vukan got some concessions from Stefan. That there were some concessions is seen in the fact that upon reconciliation, Vukan independently ruled in Zeta, and his successors were also independent. Likewise, Stefan and Sava were exceptionally committed to maintain Bar Archdiocese, thus, they supported it a lot, which may also be one of conditions under which Vukan accepted to reconcile with Stefan. After that, Vukan did not cause any troubles to Stefan anymore. Soon afterwards, he died, though it is not impossible that he was eliminated. The last time he was mentioned in documents was on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1207 in an agreement between Dubrovnik and Kotor. Vukan was succeeded by his son called Djordje (he had three sons), who held the royal title from 1208.

Djordje led quite an independent Politics in relation to King Stefan and this is seen in the fact that on 3rd July 1208, he gave the oath of loyalty to Venice and became its vassal. In any case, King Stefan did not have any threats from Zeta anymore after that.

Although Sava's stay in Serbia was certainly felt, he apparently did not have any intentions to stay there after he had reconciled Vukan and Stefan. His primary goal was to reconcile his brothers, and, afterwards, to return to Hilandar. However, at Stefan's request, he stayed in Serbia: "And, the holy one and those who came with him mentioned to the ruler their return to the Holy Mountain. After the latter had heard these words they struck his heart like a spear, he changed, fell apart, and, together with the noblemen, began

begging the Holy one, saying: Do not leave us at this hour, oh, the Holy Father, and do not fill my soul with sorrow before the time has come!" (Teodosije).

The situation in Serbia was not favourable and King Stefan still needed his brother's help, which made Sava stay in Serbia. As the centre of his activity, Sava selected the Studenica Monastery, which, thus, became the core of the Serbian spiritual and clerical life. Soon, thanks to his influence, Žiča, the endowment of Stefan the First-Crowned, dedicated to the Ascension Day, was built from 1208 to 1220: "Indeed, the episcopacy was foretold by God, out of which this Lover of God founded a great archdiocese, the Temple of Ascension, called Žiča, which he initiated and completed with his pious brother, Grand Prince Master Stefan" (Domentijan). The Žiča Monastery was erected on the north, next to the Western Morava River, with the intention of spreading the influence of Orthodoxy at the territories towards the Sava and the Danube and to repress the impact of Hungary which existed in these areas due to the vicinity of the border.

At that time, Sava acquired the name of the national teacher since he was tireless not only in holding Christian sermons but he also taught people how to perform certain works and the story was developed how Sava taught a peasant to plough the land, a woman to spin wool, etc. His influence was felt among rather neglected and ignorant Orthodox clergy. Sava brought a few disciples with him from Hilandar. At the same time, he was committed a lot to erecting Orthodox churches, especially in the areas where the impact of the Catholic church was strong: "And, other holy churches in other selected places were established and completed, and old ones were refurbished, and new ones were built and based on a good law, and he transferred good exemplar of the Holy Mountain to his fatherland..." (Domentijan).

His own life aroused awe since it was full of renunciation. He subjected himself to exhausting fasts and often secluded himself in hermitage in Studenica.

In addition to clerical activities, St. Sava also dealt with diplomacy during these years and his successful visit to Stefan's rebelled vassal, Strez, in 1212 or 1214 remained recorded.

During 1217, Serbia was upgraded to the rank of kingdom and Stefan became its first crowned ruler, therefore, he became the First-Crowned.

At the time of Stefan's coronation, St. Sava decided to return to the Holy Mountain. This decision resulted in controversies since it was assumed that Sava got angry with Stefan because the latter received his crown from the Roman Pope. Sava as an Orthodox monk could not accept that. Sava's leave is described in detail by Teodosije: "Having come to the ruler, his brother, he wanted to bid him farewell, because he was leaving, the former thought that his leaving was like leaving of a soul, and he cried a lot and begged him with all the noblemen to make him stay. Since he could not do that, he was very saddened." After Sava had seen that Stefan was sad because of his leave, he comforted him by saying: "I will come back again if this is God's will." (Teodosije).

That this was not a quarrel can be seen in the fact that Stefan gave gold to Sava as a gift and saw him off in person to the border of Serbia: "And Stefan, the ruler, gave the whole lot of gold for his purposes and to be distributed to monasteries in the Holy Mountain and to those living in solitude and to all those in need and he himself and the noblemen saw him off up to the borders of the country with Greece" (Teodosije).

The very coronation raised Serbia to the rank of kingdom and resulted greatly in its prestige but, in order to actually be out of the reach of foreign influences, it needed an independent church, as well. During 1219, Sava travelled to Nicaea since he wanted to visit the Nicaea Emperor, Theodore Laskaris, and Patriarch, Manuel Sarantenos, who were there: "Afterwards, the Holy wanted for monastic purposes or even better – God wanted so for him due to known reason, to go to the imperial city of Constantinople, where Theodore Laskaris was an Emperor" (Teodosije).

The Emperor received Sava in a respectable manner, "because the daughter of Theodore Laskaris was married to Radoslav, Stefan's son, the nephew of St. Sava. Because of that, the Emperor received him very kindly and with great honour as he himself wanted to see him" (Teodosije).

Having performed all of the monastic activities, Sava asked the Nicaea Emperor that Patriarch Manuel inaugurate a Serb to be an archbishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church: "I am worried and sorrowful, my Emperor, because my country does not have its own archbishop, and there are many lands around my fatherland, in the area of our country, which are not advanced in divine transformation. Yes, I would like that your grand empire orders the Patriarch to inaugurate as archbishop one of my brothers who are with me so that my fatherland gets its consecration, and that the state of your great empire is glorified with it" (Domentijan).

At the very beginning, Sava did not even want to accept to be inaugurated as the archbishop, nevertheless, later, having been convinced by the Emperor, he accepted it. Afterwards, Sava required the full autocephaly of the Serbian church, which, as it seems, was not acceptable to the Emperor: "Having heard that, the Emperor's face changed due to a huge request and neither the Patriarch nor all of the noblemen considered it to be appropriate. They wanted them to, through consecration and clerical authority, be submissive, obeying and provide bestowals. Since the Emperor loved the Holy One dearly, he was ashamed to let him go sorrowful without his request fulfilled and forcefully making quiet those who protested, he fulfilled the request to the Holy One" (Teodosije). Therefore, it was much more difficult to obtain the autocephaly of the church. Emperor Theodore Laskaris and Patriarch Manuel Sarantenos were not willing to provide autonomy to the Serbian Church. Yet, Sava successfully performed the venture and the Serbian Church separated from the Ohrid one into a single archdiocese, and Sava became its first archbishop.

Upon obtaining the church autocephaly, Sava returned to the Holy Mountain, to Hilandar, where he performed some activities related to its administration. In Hilandar, he wanted to select monks, the future bishops in Serbia. Actually, Sava immediately began preparing for the reorganisation of the Serbian Orthodox Church: "again, he came to his Monastery of Hilandar and talked to the prior privately telling him to provide an example to all those subordinate to him of his benevolence and that brethren obey the prior with

the fear of God. He wished them peace and gave them blessing and kissed them and left the monastery, taking with him those for whom he knew that they were appropriate to be bishops" (Teodosije).

On his way back to Serbia, Sava visited Thessaloniki and the Monastery of Philokalia, of which he was one of the founders. There, he consulted the Metropolitan of Thessaloniki Constantin Mesopotamit (Kostadije) and was given necessary books: "Afterwards, the Holy One collected everything worthy of having at great church, and took code books and was delightfully seen off by the Metropolitan, the administrator, and the city leaders, and went to the land of his people." (Teodosije). Actually, Sava took over *Nomocanon*, i.e. *Church Law Code*, the collection of the clerical laws necessary for the new archdiocese. The *Church Law Code* was written based on a series of Byzantine clerical codes, representing the best of the Byzantine legislation.

In the short period that Sava spent in Thessaloniki, the *Church Law Code* could not be written then. It is most probable that the work on it had been going on for a long time, and only then, in Thessaloniki, completed. It confirms the thesis that Sava had been preparing for obtaining the autocephaly of the Serbian Orthodox Church for some longer time, which he could certainly not do without the consent and support of his brother Stefan the First-Crowned. It further means that the relations between the brothers were not be tense at all otherwise such a venture performed by Sava could not be successfully completed. After all this, Sava went to Serbia, but he previously announced his arrival to King Stefan: "And he pre-advised his brother, the ruler Stefan, about his arrival" (Teodosije).

Upon Sava's return to Serbia, the clerical administration in Serbia was reorganised in accordance with the obtained autocephaly. Sava founded totally of eight episcopacies (Hum, Zeta, Hvosan, Budimljan Dabar, Moravica, Toplica, Lipljan) including already existing ones, Raška and Prizen and appointed eight bishops: "he gave them code books to teach people according to the tradition of the holy apostles and holy fathers, how to improve their faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ, and ordered them to address him with penitence as God." (Teodosije).

As many as five episcopacies were on the border with the Catholics and Bogomils. These episcopacies should, on the one hand, perform the missionary role towards such areas, whereas, on the other hand, they should prevent the expansion of Catholicism and Bogomilism in Serbia. The centre of new episcopacies was in monasteries, and Žiča was the centre of the archdiocese. With such arrangement, Sava did everything to maintain one faith in Serbia, the Orthodox one, which enabled him to unite the state and, at the same time, to unite people in one faith. This excluded any religious conflicts, especially because the memory of the civil war with Vukan, which in the end turned into the religious one, was still rather fresh.

At about that time, Serbia was threatened by Hungarian King Andrew, who could not overcome Stefan's coronation since Hungarian kings considered Serbia as their land. The deputation of the Hungarian King handed over a request to King Stefan, and the latter immediately sent Sava to Hungary. At the Hungarian court, Sava was nicely received and, upon negotiations, he managed to dissuade Andrew not to pursue his intentions. The biographers describe in detail Sava's stay in Hungary and mention miracles he made in front of the King. This, allegedly, scared Andrew and he gave up the campaign to Serbia.

Upon the appointment of bishops, Sava spent most of his time organising the Church, which was done by either writing letters, or travelling throughout the country. During these travels, in 1221, a great council was held in Žiča, the first general clerical and government council upon obtaining the autocephaly, where Orthodoxy was discussed.

Sava preached against heresy, probably against the Bogomils whom there were many throughout Serbia: "Because of that, I am afraid that there might be some evil and wrong learning of those. I want among you to revive the holy, true, and divine faith in the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit..." (Teodosije).

He treated the Bogomils very severely, thus, all those who did not want to renounce this heresy were expelled: "And those who prophesied heresy were kept at the church and he interrogated them face to face. He ordered to non-baptised ones, previously cursing heresy, to proclaim days

of preserving their purity, and thus to be baptised" (Teodosije). Teodosije's mention of the non-baptised testifies that, at that time, there were many Serbs who were not baptised either in Orthodox or Catholic Church, who belonged to some heretic faith. All of them were baptised then. Subsequently, he continued this activity among people: "And the Holy One himself passed through and visited the whole country of his people, glorifying and teaching the faith of orthodoxy, and demonstrating virtues and good customs, guiding them all to confession in order to repent" (Teodosije).

Special attention was paid to the clergy and nobility, among whom the heresy was especially widespread. If appeals and persuasion to take the route of Orthodoxy were not fruitful, very strict measures were taken: "And, the noblemen who were heretic, and many of whom were found, he begged and taught to return to the minster apostolic church, promising them great honours and gifts, and whoever obeyed him, was received by him with great love, and received many gifts from the ruling King, his brother. And whoever failed to abide, and further stood to God odious heresy, was cursed and expelled from the big country with great disgrace since he considered that it was not worthy to have blackberries with grapevine" (Teodosije).

Upon the burial of King Stefan the First-Crowned in Studenica, in Žiča, in 1228, Sava crowned the new Serbian king – the eldest son of Stefan the First-Crowned, Radoslav: "After the funeral of venerable Stefan and the first King, the Holy Archbishop crowned his eldest son Radoslav in the Grand Church, the above-mentioned Žiča, appointing him with prayers and blessing, and presented him to individually administer the fatherland and Serbian sceptre" (Teodosije).

During 1229, Sava decided to travel to the Holy Land to visit the holy places and get to know the monastic life in Palestine. Monastic life primarily and specifically attracted him, and for a while, he intended to fully dedicate to it. The moment for the visiting of the Holy land was favourable, because, right about that time, Emperor Friedrich II freed Jerusalem in the Fourth Crusade, i.e. received it in the negotiations from the Egyptian Sultan, and with it many other places in Palestine (Bethlehem, Nazareth). It was an ideal oppor-

tunity for Sava to find out about clerical life and the organisation of monasteries and monastic life. Therefore, he did not visit only Jerusalem, Zion, Galilee, Bethany and all other holy places, but he also visited Jerusalem Patriarch, Athanasios, who welcomed him very nicely.

This visit to the Holy Land was used by Sava to get a permit from the Patriarch to erect a monastery, thus, in Acre, where he disembarked when he arrived, he had the monastery of St. George built which was intended as a shelter for believers from Serbia. In Sinai, he had the Monastery of St. John the Theologian erected: "And he asked for the place to build the monastery and was given the place by the prior and by all of the brethren, and by honourable Patriarch Athanasios, and having received the blessing, he dedicated the church to holy and grand apostle and evangelist John the Theologian at the Zion..." (Domentijan). For several hundreds of years, this monastery was the Serbian sanctuary accommodating pilgrims from all of the Slavic countries. It used to be very rich and appreciated and today, it is, unfortunately, only a ruin.

Both these monasteries were under the control of the Monastery of St. Sabbas the Sanctified in Jerusalem, to which Sava provided abundant gifts. During XVI century the control over the monastery of St. Sabbas the Sanctified was taken over by Serbian monks. This monastery is three-hour walk away from Jerusalem and it is located in the rocky Judaic desert. The monastery was founded by St. Sabbas the Sanctified (439–531), the founder of Palestinian monasticism, and Rastko Nemanjić got his monastic name after him.

It is considered that the monastery was founded in 484. The grave of St. Sabbas the Sanctified is located in a cave, and above the grave, there is a fresco with his image. Domentijan describes how Sava visited this grave: "and he sweetly kissed the picture of the holy man drawn on his honourable grave". All monasteries that he had visited were provided with abundant gifts by Sava and he received various relics from them.

Further on his trip from the place of Acre, Sava went to Nicaea Emperor John Vatatzes (1222–1254). "The Emperor was pleased that he was coming and sent his cordial servants on their horses to escort the Holy One from the sea with

all honours. The Emperor received him with great love" (Teodosije). From the Emperor, he received the piece of the cross on which Jesus was crucified: "and gifted the Holy One the honourable wood of the cross and the holy relics..." (Teodosije). In addition, he also obtained a series of other relics. Today, the part of the cross brought by Sava is one of the major holy objects kept in Hilandar. After certain time spent with Emperor John Vatatzes, Sava decided to return to the Holy Mountain. For such a trip, he was given a ship and armed escort by the Emperor.

At the Holy Mountain, Sava took some longer rest, and then went to Serbia. On that trip, he, once again, stopped to visit Emperor Theodore Angelos, where, as in case of the previous visit, he was nicely received: "And he showed him respect with big love and welcome and gifts" (Teodosije).

The next years Sava spent in clerical and pastoral activities. At that time, Stefan the First-Crowned (Simon) was canonised, and his relics were transferred from Studenica to Žiča: "He had called bishops and the prior and all church and honourable clerical persons and performed with them the holy and divine service in the memory of his brother, the First-Crowned King Stefan" (Teodosije). Further, Teodosije describes the conveyance of Stefan's relics: "and with all worthy honours, with psalms and songs, these were from Studenica placed in the great God's church built upon Stefan's request, in the Archdiocese called Žiča" (Teodosije).

At about that time, the conflict between King Radoslav and his brother Vladislav began. At the very beginning, King Radoslav resisted, but in the autumn of 1233, he was finally defeated. Afterwards, Radoslav had to escape with his wife Anna to Dubrovnik, where he was kindly received. Sava did not approve these conflicts and it is quite probable that the similar conflict between Stefan and Vukan, whom he somehow managed to reconcile, was still fresh in his memory. In the same way, he also tried to reconcile Radoslav and Vladislav, but failed: "The Holy One begged them a lot and put pressure on them to live in peace, and when he could not reconcile them, he said: If what you do is approved by God, let it be God's will" (Teodosije).

When he realised that Radoslav was defeated and that he would only prolong and kindle this conflict if he supported the former, Sava decided to crown Vladislav and ensure legitimacy to him in this manner: "and he took the throne of his father Master Stefan and he was blessed and crowned by the Reverend" (Domentijan). Sava did not have any affinity to Vladislav and this is shown by Teodosije: "And, the Holy Archbishop crowned and prayed for his nephew, the above-mentioned Vladislav, though the latter seized the power illegally and destructively but he believed it was God's will".

Suddenly in late 1233, Sava made decision to leave the archbishopric throne in favour of his disciple Arsenije. Hieromonk Arsenije was installed in the Žiča monastery at the assemble of clerical and secular magnates: "Having called to the great Archdiocese, the above-mentioned Žiča, the honourable King Vladislav and his noble magnates, he ordered them to keep many things relating to the holy churches. He selected one of his disciples, Arsenije the hieromonk, as he knew well that he was more than others a character without any malice and just..." and further: "Having placed him as the Archbishop at his blessed throne instead of himself, the Holy One appointed him and hosted in the Archdiocese the ruler and his magnates..." (Teodosije).

After he had left the Archbishop throne, St. Sava stayed in Serbia for some time and helped the new Archbishop Arsenije to perform his activities and strengthen his power. When he realised that his presence was not necessary anymore, Sava decided to go to the Holy Land again and visit Egypt and Asia Minor. In spring (or autumn) 1234, Sava notified King Vladislav thereof, "He informed King Vladislav in person" (Teodosije), and although the King resisted thereto, he set off to his journey.

There were many speculations about this journey of Sava. The question was raised why he, already in his sixties and ill, went to this journey. The most daring speculation is certainly the one finding Political motives in this journey. Namely, Bulgarian Emperor Asen, the father-in-law of King Vladislav, asked Sava to arrange with the Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria Patriarchs for Bulgarian Church to receive its autocephaly and

to become a patriarchate. This thesis is interesting and possible, but due to the lack of any historical evidence, it fully remains at the level of an assumption. Considerations that Sava set off to this journey exclusively because of religious motives are much closer to the truth, even more because he was not the Archbishop anymore, but rather a man who did not have any worldly worries and fully devoted to God.

On his journey, Sava visited Jerusalem, followed by the Patriarchate in Alexandria, hermits in Egypt and Sinai. He returned to Jerusalem, from where he went to Antioch Patriarchate, and, finally, after Constantinople, arrived in Tarnovo, Bulgaria, to visit Bulgarian Emperor Ivan Asen. When he arrived in the Holy Land in the city of Acre, Sava stayed in the St. George Monastery, the same one he bought during his first journey which served as a shelter to Serbian pilgrims.

The Bulgarian Emperor received Sava respectfully: "And the Emperor received him with great honour and a kind celebration was organised for him by devout Emperor Ivan" (Domentijan). It was not only bitter and severe winter that prevented Sava to get back to Serbia. At that time, he had already been tired and ill and intended to recover and regain strength in Bulgaria. However, his condition got much worse and he realised that his end was near: "After the Emperor had left, the Holy One was struck with an illness and realised that God was calling him" (Teodosije).

Aware of everything, Sava was, in these last days of wordily life, in a hurry to complete all of his activities, thus, as stated by the biographer, he gathered his disciples ordering them to write down the things he brought from the Holy Land and decided to "take some of them to the Archdiocese (Žiča), and others to Studenica" (Teodosije). Also, he sent a letter to King Vladislav and Archbishop Arsenije: "In his letter, he wished peace and gave blessing to King Vladislav and to the appointee to his throne, pious Arsenije, the Archbishop, and to the whole country of his people and he sent his disciples to the Serbian country, and he stayed with few of them" (Teodosije).

After all this, he sent the majority of his disciples to Serbia, and thanked to the Bulgarians for a nice welcome and gave valuable gifts to the Bulgarian Patriarchate. The last one who visited

him was Bulgarian Patriarch Joachim. Soon afterwards, on Sunday after the communion, Sava handed over his soul into the hands of the Lord: "And, at midnight, when the resurrection Sunday was dawning, the Holy One, took the communion with the holy and life-giving secrets of Christ, as he always used to say: Glory to the Lord for everything! And immediately, as if he was visited by some of his dear friends from old times, he was in cheerful spirits and this cheerfulness confirmed the arrival of God's angels to him and he turned inexpressibly bright in his face, proving the purity of his soul. Thus, thanking God until his own end, he handed his soul into his hands" (Teodosije).

The day of Sava's death remained unclear in the historiography: 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, or 15<sup>th</sup> January 1236. The church accepted 14<sup>th</sup> January according to the Old Calendar as the day of Sava's death. This saint is celebrated on this day.

The death of St. Sava was quite sudden for the Bulgarian Emperor, because, though he had visited St. Sava a couple of days before, he did not notice that he was weak to such an extent. He ordered to bury Sava in the church of Forty Martyrs in Tarnovo: "After hearing for the Holy One's death, the Emperor complained against the Patriarch because he concealed his illness from him, and he promptly ordered to place the Holy One in the monastery he had built in the church of great and holy Forty Martyrs, and to give enough gold to the poor at his funeral. The Emperor loved the Holy One a lot and this is why he showed so much love for him after his death" (Teodosije).

In the biography, Teodosije says that Bulgarian Emperor, Ivan Asen III, personally participated in the burial ceremony. This description also gives approximate depiction of the grave in which St. Sava's body was buried. The grave was in the narthex of the Forty Martyrs Church, it was dug in the soil (built tomb), and stone sarcophagus was put above and covered with imperial tunic. In addition, numerous icon lamps and candlesticks were put on the sarcophagus: "And without any delay, he ordered to build his tomb, and place the holy stone above his grave and cover it with the imperial tunic and put candlesticks and gold-wrought icon lamps over the grave in honour of the Holy One to light up his grave" (Teodosije).

After Sava's death and his burial in Tarnovo, Serbian King Vladislav, highly pressured by Archbishop Arsenije, endeavoured to ask for Sava's relics from the Bulgarian Emperor in order to bring them to Serbia. The Bulgarian Emperor was not willing to fulfil Vladislav's request and rejected several deputations from Serbia. Therefore, Vladislav had to go to Bulgaria in person: "And the Emperor was confused what to do because he believed that he would lose his empire if he lost the Holy One, also, because he was buried in his monastery. He invited the Patriarch and his advisors and asked them whether he was to hand him over. And they told him not to do that because, they said, landowners and the whole town were greatly opposed to that" (Teodosije).

In Tarnovo, the negotiations between Vladislav and the Emperor were very difficult: "And, there was a big discussion and much uproar because of this..." (Domentijan). Finally, the Emperor gave in and Vladislav took Sava's relics and brought them to Serbia. According to biographers, the Emperor did not intend to fulfil Vladislav's request, however, at night, God's angel showed up and ordered him to hand over Sava's relics to Vladislav. Though unwillingly, the Bulgarian Emperor in his fear finally gave in.

When the grave was opened, they found Sava's body unharmed. It seemed as if he was sleeping: "Afterwards, King Vladislav, having prepared the imperial tunic and everything necessary for raising up the holy body from the ground, ordered to perform the service for the Holy One and his memory and he himself with his bishops, while the service was completing, opened the grave of the Holy One, and, in the name of the holy Spirit, he saw him, indeed, and his whole body was unharmed, and the hairs on his head and his beard were bright and whole as if he was sleeping. The smell as if it were a balmy myrrh rejoiced those who stood around they did not feel any sorrow as not only the holy body of the venerable, but also the wood around it and the dust of the grave were blessed by God and they had a healing effect" (Teodosije).

Sava's grave in Tarnovo, though empty, remained a great sanctuary which brought healing and where miracles happened. Therefore, Bulgarian Emperor Ivan Asen II ordered: "that boards

holding the body of the Holy One and fragrant and miraculous dust in the grave of the Holy One to be put back in the grave and the first stone to be placed on the top of the grave and covered with the imperial tunic as before, and said to put candlesticks and gold wrought icon lamps in the honour of the Holy One to light his holy grave the same as now this grave stands decorated in the honour of the Holy One in the Emperor's monastery, in the Forty Martyrs Church" (Teodosije).

After they have been transported to Serbia, Sava's relics were buried by King Vladislav in Mileševa Monastery: "And all of his offspring kissed the Most Reverend with awe and faith and sang God praising songs for the sake of his peace, and honourably transferred him to the big Laura of Accession in the place called Mileševa in the monastery built at the order of the very God lover and saint lover, grand King Vladislav" (Domentijan). This monastery is the endowment of King Vladislav. It was erected on the right tributary of the Lim River according to the claim of Lazar Trifunović in 1218/19, i.e. around 1220 according to other art historians.

As it was the case in Tarnovo, in Mileševa, as well, Sava's body was placed in the tomb. Today, we do not know for certain where exactly the grave of St. Sava in the Mileševa Monastery was located. Nowadays, the north east corner of exterior narthex is shown as his tomb and as the confirmation thereof the inscription scratched in the wall in which the name Sava and the date 12<sup>th</sup> January are mentioned is indicated. The tomb built of cavern with a skeleton was actually discovered during the excavations on this location. Of course, it was not the skeleton of St. Sava, but probably the one of Mileševa prior Atan-

asije, who participated in the transfer of St. Sava's relics who was subsequently buried in this tomb. The above mentioned inscription above the tomb mentioning the ecclesiarch Sava is confusing. The title ecclesiarch was given to the monk whose obligation was to take care of the proper liturgical order during divine service. It is hard to believe that St. Sava could have been addressed as the ecclesiarch. In addition, the inscription over the tomb is more than modest, only scratched in the wall. The person such as St. Sava certainly would get far more representative inscription above the tomb. In any case, the issue of the place of St. Sava's tomb in Mileševa Monastery remains open.

However, Sava's relics were not in Mileševa Monastery for long, because "after a while, the Holy One appeared in the dream of one of reverend, god-fearing, and pious old man in the Monastery telling him that his holy relics should not be in the ground but outside the grave in the church" (Teodosije). This was done. St. Sava's relics were again dug out of the ground "in the wooden coffin, he was placed in the middle of the holy grand church, and it has been shining so far like a sun, filling the hearts with odours and piety of all pious people who celebrate the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit now and for centuries, amen" (Domentijan).

It is known, quite reliably, that the relics were displayed in the wooden reliquary wrought in silver and golden plates on which motifs from the Bible were inscribed. Apparently, the reliquary was located in the old narthex below the portrait of Sava on the eastern wall. This lasted until 27<sup>th</sup> April (10<sup>th</sup> May) 1594 when St. Sava's relics were burned at Vračar in Belgrade by the Turks.

# DOMENTIJAN

Nothing is known about the origin and the life of Domentijan. It is only certain that he was St. Sava's disciple and that he followed him on his journeys in the Holy Land. Then, he had an opportunity to learn a lot. Being well educated, he soon got the task from King Uroš I Nemanjić to write the biography of St. Sava and St. Simeon (Nemanja) the Myrrh-Streaming: "It seems that his inner life was not less abundant than his external life and his will was not weaker than his knowledge. Domentijan must have stood out not only by his talent and character but also by his culture since he was selected by Hilandar brethren to be their priest, and King Uroš I ordered from him biographies of St. Sava and St. Simeon Nemanja" (Milan Kašanin).

He wrote his first book *The Life of St. Sava*, in Karyes, in the hermitage of St. Sava in the Holy Mountain. He described the place as "very bright and delightful, decorated to resemble heaven with beautiful things". It was actually such. It was built on the slope and had an exceptional view on forest surrounding, high sky, and endless sea. This was not a hermitage as we usually imagine, dark, small, uncomfortable. On the contrary, it was a comfortable place with two-three units, connected with the church. Only two or three monks could be there. While one was reading the Book of Psalms, Domentijan was writing his Biographies: "Here, in the light



and serenity, in the small house surrounded by trees and plants, among walnuts and olives and the currents of the sea, one of the most brilliant literary works that has ever been written by a Serbian writer was created" (Milan Kašanin).

In the monastic spirit, Domentijan did not consider his work as fulfilling of a task and/or an order given by the king but rather as the fulfilment of the task given by God himself: "A sinful hieromonk Domentijan was proposed by God to understand the life of the reverent Master Sava" he said in the Epilogue. In the act of literary creation, Politics and theology became the same.

It is believed that *The Life of St. Sava* was created in 1242 (somewhere, 1253 is given). This biography is very voluminous, it covers almost 200 pages. While St. Sava left the biography of his father like a short story and Stefan the First-Crowned as a series of autobiographical data and chronicle-like notes, Domentijan wrote an extensive hagiography, a very documentary one, abundant in both ideas and spirit. It is not just a sequence of events from the life of St. Sava, it is a complete national and ecclesiastic ideology. As stated: "It surpasses all Serbian medieval biographies with its variety and abundance of theological thoughts, depth of ethic reflections, religious enthusiasm, extent of glorification of Serbian saints, apotheosis of spiritual life and rhetorical zest of narration" (Milan Kašanin).

Domentijan calls St. Sava the perfect archbishop, church helmsman, new legislator who "on his spiritual wings, flew the areas of the whole universe". He describes him as "truth quester and the eye-witness of the works in the world", as "the trumpet of the whole world", he equalises him with prophet Moses from the Old Testament and considers him even greater than the latter: "And, the Reverend One did not receive anything on stone plates or written in ink, but with new apostolic blessing he received the plates with spiritual messages inspired by the Holy Spirit and filled the law with them and educated his fatherland". All this is given on six pages abundant with metaphors of unequalled beauty and musicality of rhetorical repetitions.

*The Life of St. Sava* was written by an educated man for educated nobility at the court. Because of that, the monks of later centuries did not like Domentijan much and rarely copied his work. For the same reasons, he was not liked by later civilian historians from two past centuries.

Domentijan wrote his second book, *The Life of St. Simeon*, also at the Holy Mountain, in the Metamorphosis Tower, above the Hilandar. Now, this was a different place, bare, cells were without windows or doors, walls were worn-out without any people. Yet, at that time, Teodor Gramatik was with Domentijan, who copied John Exarch's *Six Days*. In his writings, Teodor called Domentijan his protector, intellectual hieromonk, holy book lover. According to some, this Teodor will perhaps be a famous Teodosije who subsequently wrote famous biographies *Life of St. Sava* and *Life of St. Petar Koriški*.

*The Life of St. Simeon* was written by Domentijan in 1264. However, it is not as good as the previous book. Obviously, Domentijan was not so impressed by St. Simeon as much as he was by St. Sava. St. Sava and Stefan the First-Crowned had already written about Simeon. From already written works, Domentijan took over a lot without presenting any new historical data.

It is believed that the most exciting part is the one describing hunger arising after the conflict between brothers, Vukan and Stefan. Also, almost a quarter of the book is dedicated to the miracles of St. Simeon. Domentijan glorifies Simeon not because of his military victories but because he

consolidated Orthodoxy in the Serbian lands and was a role model of a pious life. Therefore, he called him "a perfect father of this fatherland".

In the whole ancient Serbian literary, Domentijan's work provides the most specific picture and gives the most data about the Serbian medieval understanding of secular rule and the ruler. The origin and legitimacy of the royal rule, blessing given by a father to his heir, meaning of the cross in battles, relation of a ruler to the church and clergymen, gifts and mercy, meaning of miracles by saints, etc. can be found in it. In brief, Domentijan provides the ideology of the state and power of that time.

There is no banality in Domentijan's work as he is not interested in profane life. Therefore, he does not mention any woman, apart from Nemanja's spouse Anna, the mother of St. Sava, and her as a nun. He mostly writes about St. Simeon and St. Sava as monks and the lines describing them as secular persons are rare. From all of the events he describes, he endeavours to draw their moral meaning, and the event itself is not important to Domentijan unless there is a moral lesson in it. Therefore, he extensively explains events rather than presenting them.

There is an interesting remark that Domentijan's biographies should be read aloud. Perhaps, his basic virtue is – diction, nowhere it is "so majestic and musical as in him. In Domentijan's speech, there is wideness and richness of ancient rhetors associated with the passion of Christian orators. There is no so much sensitivity, enthusiasm, faith, such depth of thought and power of emotions, such splendid eloquence in any of our ancient biographers" (Milan Kašanin). These are real masterpieces in word orchestration and the rhythm of Domentijan's phrase is dignified, "the cadence of his voice, the profusion of his metaphors, the beauty of his compounds, the sonority, and quite often, pathos of his speech, twists and contrasts in his thoughts classify him among the highest quality Serbian narrators and rise him at the level of a world writer" (Milan Kašanin).

The following can also be added: "Domentijan is a splendid rhetor, subtle poet, deep thinker and farsighted historian who had created a monumental fresco picture of the Serbian life of his time" (Radmila Marinković).

# ARSENIJE I SREMAC

## Serbian Archbishop, Saint

**F**rom 1219 when the Serbian Orthodox Church got its autocephaly (raised at the level or archdiocese) up to 1346 (until the declaration of the Serbian patriarchate), totally 12 archbishops changed at the head of the church. The first and certainly the most significant Archbishop was St. Sava who, at the time from 1219 to 1234, when he withdrew, headed the Serbian Orthodox Church: "After him, another one became the Archbishop at his throne, St. Arsenije" (Danilo II).

Although information about Arsenije's life is scarce, it is known that "he was born in the land of Srem as the son of religious and pious parents..." (Danilo II). There are some historians who believe that in the Middle Ages the "Land of Srem" was thought to be between the rivers Drina and Sava (Mačva) but such an opinion is unreliable. It seems that Arsenije was from a well off family but this was not enough to deter him from the spiritual life he was striving to. Therefore, "leaving all the beauty of this life, home, wealth, and also, father and mother, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends..." (Danilo II), Arsenije became a monk. At that time, St. Sava had already become the Archbishop and Arsenije listened a lot about him thus, "he went to the Most Reverend Master Sava, who was, at that time, at his archdiocese in the place called Žiča" (Danilo II).

Having heard about a young monk who came to Žiča, St. Sava was interested and wanted to meet him. The first impression when he met Arsenije was for Saint Sava so powerful that "a God - pleasing thought came to his heart, to receive him with love and to teach him in reason-

able words of his lessons..." (Danilo II). From that moment, Arsenije always stayed near Saint. Sava "and in any part of monastic activities, he was more successful than others and he was advanced in prayers, so that he never failed in day and night church duties and was never late for any reason" (Danilo II). Due to Arsenije's life dedicated to spiritual work, everybody heard about him very quickly "and after a while, everybody heard of him that he exceeded all of the people engaged at that place" (Danilo II).

St. Sava was monitoring Arsenije's advancement in faith and, since he had some other plans for him, he additionally challenged him to see Arsenije's reactions. Thus, the biographer states that Arsenije "was given by his father instead of a good drink a poorly prepared meal since he was tempting him to see if he would have any objections" (Danilo II). However, Arsenije had never shown any dissatisfaction, on the contrary "he wanted more of a hot or hard meal, so that his throat is never feasted with a sweet meal..." (Danilo II). He was soon rewarded for such patience. St. Sava invited Arsenije to his cell and became his teacher "to stand in front of him and to get used to higher perfection, and to be subjected to good accomplishments" (Danilo II).

After that, Arsenije's rise began mostly contributed by Saint Sava who distinguished him from other monks in Žiča. He was given obligations and duties which were supposed to show whether Arsenije was capable of administering the church. Everything was carefully monitored by Saint Sava who "continuously watched him

from his catechumen room, which was such a place where he stood to be able to see everything that was done inside the divine church" (Danilo II). Soon, he was promoted to "an ecclesiarch of a big minster church of the archdiocese, i.e. Žiča, giving him the perfect power over those who were at that monastery..." (Danilo II). Since then, Arsenije was responsible for proper performance of the liturgy, diptych reading, and maintaining order at church and candle lighting ... It was a duty requiring a very good knowledge of the Typicon and all other church books, thus, Arsenije spent a lot of time studying them. In addition, he also kept written documents which were at the church. So, it was a very sensitive duty which required much knowledge, patience and commitment.

In time, Arsenije was heard of outside Žiča, too, and since he was going with Saint Sava regarding many clerical activities, he was also known at the Serbian royal court. It was obvious that Saint Sava was preparing him for his successor at the position of the Archbishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Saint Sava withdrew in the course of 1234, and in the same year at the ecclesiastical assembly, Arsenije was elected as the Archbishop. "Selecting one of his disciples, the hieromonk Arsenije for whom he exactly knew that he was more than others without any malice and fair..." (Teodosije). It was the assembly which was, in addition to ecclesiastical dignitary attended by King Vladislav and grand noblemen. The most significant names of the Serbian ecclesiastical and secular life were at the assembly. Since the assembly was convoked by Saint Sava, hardly could anyone of the participants be absent. "And, he gathered his holy assembly, God chosen saints of his fatherland and honourable priors and God-bearing and Christ loving people and pious offspring of his fatherland" (Domentijan).

It is not usual to appoint for the archbishop somebody who is only a hieromonk rather than some of bishops. In addition, until that time, Arsenije had never been to Hilandar which could also hamper his election. We do not know which motives impelled Sava to choose Arsenije. However, the election of Arsenije for the Archbishop was not accidental but the fruit of Sava's deep thoughts as testified by the biographer: "He began

to think a lot especially about whom he could find as such a worthy man, who would be placed instead of him at his throne, who might be a shepherd and guide to the children of his Serbian fatherland..." (Danilo II).

Not only the question why Arsenije was elected the Archbishop but also the reason of Sava's withdrawal from the Archbishop throne remains open. Probably, Sava wanted while he was still alive to appoint the man at the head of the Church whom he had confidence in and for whom he was certain that he would not succumb to the influence of the Ohrid Archdiocese. Namely, the Ohrid Archdiocese strongly opposed to the promotion of the Serbian Orthodox Church at the level of the Archdiocese and Sava's appointment as its archbishop because, until that time, the Ohrid Archdiocese held the Serbian church under its aegis. Even while Sava was still alive, the Ohrid Archdiocese endeavoured to return the Serbian Orthodox Church under their protection and contested the legality of the Serbian Orthodox Church autocephaly. Due to Sava's exceptional personality, such attempts failed, but there was a question what would happen after his death. While he was alive, Sava wanted to choose his replacement, as well to be present in the first few years of his administration, to provide him assistance with his advice in case of any difficulties. "And this most reverend Arsenija was continuingly taught by him about the divine rules of the law and its benefits for the soul in the home of salvation in the place called Žiča, during all of his remaining days..." (Danilo II).

Arsenije headed the Serbian Orthodox Church for a long period, from 1234 to 1263, for almost thirty years. At that time, Arsenije was the contemporary of the replacement at the Serbian royal throne when King Vladislav (1234–1243) was succeeded by Stefan Uroš I the Great (1243–1276), as well as of numerous other events in this very tumultuous period of the Serbian history. However, his contribution to all these events, as well as whether he participated therein at all, is unknown. Arsenije's biographer, Danilo II, never mentions any Arsenije's contribution in the secular life of the state thus, an impression is gained that he was fully dedicated to the religion. How-

ever, it would be an exaggeration to expect that the top church dignitary did not interfere in state activities. Even if he had wanted to avoid such interference, he could not do so. Logically, considering that Saint Sava was one of the major participants in all of Political events during his life, it could be expected that, Sava's successor, Arsenije, would act likewise especially because Arsenije was Sava's disciple and the latter was personally preparing the former for the duty of the archbishop.

It is certain, however, that Arsenije initiated two important events from the ecclesiastical history. He managed to convince King Vladislav to go and get the relics of Saint Sava from Tarnovo in Bulgaria where the latter died in 1236. "After a year had passed since the body of the Holy One was kept in the town of Tarnovo in the depth of the earth, the honourable and the most blessed Archbishop Arsenije, the Holy One's appointee at the throne, feeling the pain for the Holy One who was his father and teacher, he went to the pious and state ruler, King Vladislav, and said..." (Teodosije). Also, during the time of Arsenije, the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church was transferred from Žiča to Peć.

From the Archbishop throne, Arsenije withdrew during 1263 due to an illness: "The reverend got a severe disease and began to be very ill,

not at once, but for three years or longer before his death, his body was overtaken by the severe disease, thus, he could not serve divine services or go alone to the divine church, but was carried in the arms of his Christ loving children" (Danilo II). He had been ill for around three years, and on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1266 he died in the place Črnča. He was buried in Peć where, while still alive, he prepared himself a grave: "...and, after he had been brought to the home of the holy apostle with all of the usual things done there, chanting psalms and spiritual songs for the rest of the Holy One, he was laid down honourably in the tomb of stone, which he had prepared for himself" (Danilo II).

Arsenije's relics were buried in Peć until the first half of XVIII century, when they were removed. It is known that they were in the monasteries of Dovolja Morača and Medun in Dobrićevo, Ždrebaonik and Kosijerevo and from 1920 until today, they have been in Ždrebaonik, near Danilovgrad. Today, there are several churches that claim to have particles of Arsenije's relics, but, probably, the majority of them are at the monastery of Ždrebaonik. Several years after the death of Arsenije I the Syrmium, the church proclaimed him a saint, and the date in memory of him was determined: "the memory of his death is commemorated on 28<sup>th</sup> October" (Danilo II).

# STEFAN RADOSLAV

## Serbian King

**A**fter the burial of King Stefan the First-Crowned in Studenica in 1228, Saint Sava crowned Radoslav as the Serbian King in Žiča: "After the death of pious Stefan and the first King, the holy Archbishop crowned his eldest son, Radoslav, as the king in the great church, in above-mentioned Žiča, appointing him with prayers and blessing, and by giving him the power to rule with the Serbian fatherland's sceptre" (Teodosije).

King Radoslav (1228–1233) was married to the Epirus Princess, the daughter of Despot Theodore Angelos who, after the coronation in Thessaloniki in 1224, became Epirus (Byzantine) Emperor. Radoslav's mother Eudocia was also the Byzantine Princess, which had an influence on his upbringing. Therefore, it is no wonder that the Greeks had a strong influence on him. At first, his relations with Emperor Theodore seemed to be an advantage, however, the time was bringing great changes, and Radoslav was not able to adjust to current Political turbulences.

From the very beginning of his rule, Radoslav exclusively relied on his father-in-law, Emperor Theodore, which is attributed to the great influence of his wife Anna. Such Radoslav's Politics made Serbia susceptible to Greek influence, however, on the other hand, it brought peace since no one dared attacking Serbia because of Emperor Theodore. The extent of the Greek impact onto Radoslav is seen in the fact that he reluctantly emphasised that he was from the Nemanjić ancestry since he took over the imperial surname of his mother – Doukas. Also, in charters, he signed in Greek, whereas money he forged bore Greek in-

scriptions. Obviously, he was more proud of his Greek rather than Serbian origin. Historians and biographers put most of the blame for such Radoslav's attitude towards his origin onto his Greek wife Anna for whom they say that she had a decisive influence on him.

When the Latin Emperor Robert of Courtenay died in 1228, he was succeeded by his son Baldwin II. Since he was the minor, the Latins offered the regency until his age of majority to the Bulgarian King Ivan Asen. This, immediately, confronted the Bulgarians and the Epirians and the epilogue of this was a terrible battle between them at the Klokočnica, the tributary of the Marica River, in 1230. The Bulgarians smashed the army of Emperor Theodore and captured and later blinded him. The throne in Epirus was taken by Theodore's brother Manuel. The Epirian Empire was not considered to be a serious force anymore.

The battle at the Klokočnica and the downfall of the Emperor Theodore played a big role in the following events in Serbia. King Radoslav fully relied on his father-in-law, Epirus Emperor Theodore, and, thanks to the latter, he maintained his rule. After Theodore's downfall, Radoslav was also in a dangerous situation since his powerful protector was gone. Obviously, Radoslav could not cope with such a situation; his whole Politics was based on only one thing – the support of the Epirus Empire. He could not or was not able to get closer to the Bulgarians, who, again, considered themselves to be the successors of the Epirus Empire and, accordingly, considered Serbia their vassal state. Actually, the Bulgarians wanted to

achieve such an influence in Serbia which Epirus used to have, but while Radoslav was the King, it was hardly feasible. In the famous inscription in the Forty Martyrs Church in Tarnovo, it is written that the Bulgarian Emperor Asen II conquered all countries from Edirne to Durres, and, in addition to these countries, Serbian land and Albania were listed as those under the rule of the Bulgarians.

In Serbia, there was dissatisfaction with Radoslav's rule and special hatred was aimed at his wife "Because Pious King Radoslav, who was initially worth of praise and excellence became submissive to his wife, who made him almost insane" (Teodosije). It is hard to believe that his wife aroused dissatisfaction of the aristocracy; simply, the reason was the ruler who was insufficiently flexible and who led unilateral Politics. Such strong relations with Epirus would have certainly not been allowed by Radoslav's father, Stefan the First-Crowned. Stefan was always willing to support the side where his interests were, which Radoslav did not know how to do. Therefore, it is no wonder that the aristocracy soon rebelled against Radoslav and opposing him supported Vladislav, justifying that with Radoslav's insanity: "The aristocracy complained of his insanity and departed from him supporting his younger brother Vladislav. Thus, hatred arose among brothers due to bitter glory of the kingdom" (Teodosije). It is quite possible that the Bulgarians had a big impact in this rebellion and supported Vladislav. In fact, this was a scandalous struggle of two Nemanjić brothers about power which was not unusual among members of this dynasty.

King Radoslav did not lack power as it often used to be presented since he resisted until the autumn of 1233 when his was defeated. Afterwards, he had to flee to Dubrovnik with his wife, where he was kindly welcomed. There are some indications that he managed some actions from Dubrovnik against Vladislav hoping to regain the throne. He was certain in his return to Serbia and that can be seen from the fact that in early 1234 in Dubrovnik, he issued the merchant charter promising the merchants from Dubrovnik some privileges when he returned to Serbia. Due to all this, Vladislav began to jeopardise Dubrovnik, which, for that purpose addressed the

Bosnian Ban Ninoslav for help. Since the action against Vladislav failed, Radoslav travelled to Durres where he wanted to address Epirus ruler Manuel to provide support.

In Durres, Radoslav experienced a very difficult episode in his life and as culprit his wife Anna is specified. According to Teodosije's statements, in Durres, she had an affair with the city commander, a certain Frug, and ran away with him. When Radoslav tried to get her back, Frug almost killed him and therefore, the unfortunate Radoslav had to flee from Durres: "And, immediately, King Radoslav was expelled and ran away to Durres. But, because of the beauty of his wife, he was envied, and after a while, he lost that ill-minded woman, because she was another Delilah as the first one to Samson, and she was found guilty by her admirable master because, she was taken from him at her own will by a grand Frug who ruled the city and who wanted to finally kill him" (Teodosije).

Afterwards, Radoslav fled to Serbia, where he was received by Sava and where he soon became a monk under the name of Jovan: "The above-mentioned Radoslav, after he had fled from the deadly sword expelled from the kingdom and deprived of his wife and since he had doubts about his position everywhere, immediately got to the holy Archbishop as his father, and the Holy One gladly received and sufficiently comforted him with sweet words regarding his destiny, which befell him because of the affairs with his brother and cunning wife" (Teodosije). According to Teodosije, the very act of his becoming the monk was executed because Sava wanted to protect Radoslav from the revenge of his brother Vladislav: "And since he wanted to stop the brothers' animosity against each other he provided him with the angelic and monk rank, having called him Jovan the monk instead of Radoslav" (Teodosije).

Radoslav lived for a few more years and died in Serbia (the year is unknown, but it was certainly after 1235). Almost nothing is known about his death, and, today, it is believed that he was buried in Studenica. This is confirmed by Danilo II: "This Radoslav was the King in his fatherland for six years and gave his spirit to the Lord

and his body was buried in the home of St. Mother of God, in the place called Studenica, and he has lied there until today and has been mentioned because of his virtue and faithful life" (Danilo II). Nevertheless, quite an open issue remains of the location of his grave.

It is known that the monumental exterior narthex of Studenica was built in accordance with the Radoslav's order. Next to the narthex was a large arcosolium (with the span of 1.98 m, arch height of 1.78 m and depth of 0.66 m), thus, it is assumed that his grave is right there, and such conclusion is drawn based on the frescos in it. The frescos are much damaged, but the scene of the funeral rite by a monk whose soul is accepted by an angel, which is all blessed from one segment of the sky by the Christ, is quite clearly discerned. These scenes should present the death of King Radoslav – monk Jovan. On the side of the arcosolium Saint Sava and Saint Simeon (both as protectors) are drawn, and God's Hand with the souls of the just is in the end point.

During 1931, in front of the arcosolium, the workers dug up the tomb for the Žiča bishop of that time, Jefrem. During digging, at the depth of 1.5 m, they suddenly found a mummy with the

relics in it. The relics were covered with the terracotta or gypsum coat. The coat was fully covered with mosaic decorations. The workers negligently damaged the coat, i.e. made an opening in it, and they were stunned with what they saw. There were human remains dressed in rich medieval royal clothes. However, since the air penetrated inside the coat, the remains turned into dust.

A Studenica prior managed the situation in the best way and ordered immediate burying of the mummy to prevent its total decay. Since then, the mummy has probably never been re-dug, thus, there is a quite reasonable assumption that it still lies next to the southern side of the tomb of the Žiča bishop.

During the archaeological excavations in 1985, another built tomb was found beneath the arch which made a unit with previously described one in such manner that both grave chambers were connected with a small rectangular opening. It remains a question who was buried there. Finally, it cannot be said with certainty whether King Radoslav was actually buried in Studenica and, if he was, whether it is at the place (arcosolium) which has been shown as such for quite some time.

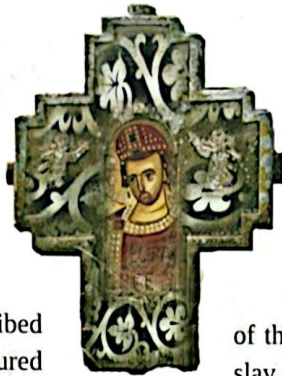
# STEFAN VLADISLAV I

## Serbian King, Saint

Since he had overtaken the rule, the new Serbian King Vladislav got closer to the Bulgarian Emperor by marrying the Bulgarian Princess Beloslava (the daughter of Emperor Asen). The biggest merits for this marriage were ascribed to St. Sava, who, obviously, endeavoured to tie Serbia to the most powerful force on the Balkans: "And he brought him a bride, the daughter of the Zagora Emperor called Asen, and married them with blessing" (Teodosije).

The extent of the Bulgarian Emperor's influence to Vladislav is not known, but there are no doubts that it existed. There are even some opinions that Vladislav recognised the supreme power of the Bulgarian Emperor and brought Serbia into the vassal position in relation to Bulgaria, however, those are mostly unfounded assumptions. Though the Bulgarian Emperor in the inscription in the church of Forty Martyrs praised that the Serbian land was also under his power, it was most probably not the case. There is no doubt that Asen managed to put some Serbian lands under his control, but there is not a single piece of evidence in historical sources indicating that Vladislav recognised Bulgarian supremacy.

From the very beginning, King Vladislav was faced with numerous problems. First, in late 1233, St. Sava withdrew from the Archbishop throne, and travelled to the Holy Land next year. Soon afterwards, he died and was buried at Tarnovo in 1236. After arduous negotiations, King Vladislav managed to get Sava's relics from the



Bulgarian Emperor Ivan II Asen and to transfer them to Mileševa.

After the relics of St. Sava were transferred to Serbia, Vladislav dealt with the state matters. Previous conflicts with Dubrovnik because of this town's support of his brother Radoslav faded away in time, thus, in the period 1234–1235, the agreement was entered into

by which the people of Dubrovnik got some trade benefits, and, in turn, they accepted not to allow preparation of any actions against Serbia at their territory. Nevertheless, animosity was continually present.

The event significant for the Balkans, especially Serbia, was the death of Bulgarian Emperor Ivan II Asen in June 1241. Namely, thanks to the powerful support received from Bulgaria, Vladislav managed to remove his brother Radoslav from power. To a high extent, thanks to the Bulgarian support, he was sustaining his power. Although relations between them were not very harmonious, the Bulgarian support was far too significant, thus, after the Emperor's death, Vladislav was faced with internal unrests in Serbia. It is quite possible that he would have settled such unrests, since he was the ruler with significant abilities, unless another threat occurred, which was like the most terrible nightmare for the whole Europe. Somewhere from the depth of Asia, the Mongolians appeared united by Temujin, called Genghis Khan. From 1206 to 1227, he conquered the territory which no one before him had managed to do.

In the winter of 1241, the Mongolians crossed the frozen Danube and invaded western Hungary. Bela IV failed to organise any resistance. The whole Croatia was now burning. Batu Khan organised a special chase after Bela, who was first in Split and soon moved to Trogir for security reasons. The Mongolians did not stay in front of Split for a long time but attacked Klis believing that Bela was there. Their siege failed and they had to retreat, and, in the meantime, Batu Khan heard that Ogedei Khan died (December 1241). Yet, he decided to try to attack Trogir, because he had heard that Bela was there. The attack failed, and Bela had already fled from Trogir to the island of Rab. The Mongolians even tried to conquer this island, but since they lacked the skills for fighting at sea, they failed. There were no further attempts for they were in a haste to return home, because a new Khan was to be elected after the Ogedei's death.

During the retreat, the Mongolians, on their way towards the lower Danube crossed Serbia, Bosnia, and Bulgaria, and were devastating them on their way. Though it had been raided, Serbia was not affected much with this Mongolian attack since the population hid in impassable woods, and the Mongolians were not willing to search for them there. The Serbian towns of Kotor, Drivast and Svač were raided. The whole campaign was plunder oriented and could be compared to a high tide destroying everything in front of it but quickly withdrawing. The whole Mongolian penetration to Serbia resulted in alarm, caused some shocks but no deeper changes. The real shock was caused by the above-mentioned death of Bulgarian Emperor Asen (1241) leaving King Vladislav without significant support.

The rebelled noblemen supported Uroš (1243–1276), the third son of the Serbian King, Stefan the First Crowned. From 1242 to 1243, there were struggles for supremacy. Finally, in the spring of 1243, Vladislav was forced to set back and renounce the crown in favour of Uroš. It seems that Uroš very soon managed to catch Vladislav and keep him closed somewhere, thus, Vladislav's wife, Beloslava, is mentioned as the main resistance holder. For a while, she was in Dubrovnik in exile. In a Dubrovnik charter from

the summer of 1243, it is seen that she, indeed, administered the resistance towards Uroš from Dubrovnik. It is seen from it that there was the resistance and that it was administered by Queen Consort Beloslava. Since Vladislav is not mentioned anywhere, it could mean that he was imprisoned somewhere.

Luckily, this situation did not last for a long time, brothers reconciled very soon. Uroš turned out to be very affable towards Vladislav giving him Zeta to administer and royal title. Basically, very little is known about the conflict between the brothers, as it is also the case with the actual reason for the dissatisfaction with Vladislav's rule. Therefore, historians assume since immediately before Vladislav's fall, the Bulgarian Emperor died and the Mongolian conquest occurred that such events are related to this rebellion. However, if the death of Bulgarian Emperor may be the cause of Vladislav's weakness due to the lost Bulgarian support, it is unclear why the Mongolian invasions onto Serbia would harm Vladislav and be helpful to Uroš?

Some subsequent sources very rarely mentioned King Vladislav. If he is mentioned at all, it concerns his friendly relation with Uroš, indicating that Vladislav fully lost ambitions of a ruler and that he did not try to regain the throne. After he had been ousted, he ruled in his coastal areas.

Vladislav had two sons, Stefan and Desa, and a daughter, married to Omiš Prince, Djura Kačić (1239–1274). Vladislav's children, as well as their descendants, did not have any roles in the subsequent Political life of Serbia and are not mentioned in the sources.

Very little is known about the death of King Vladislav. He died on 11<sup>th</sup> November between 1264 and 1277 and was buried in his endowment Mileševa: "Having lived in a pious manner and after he had been the King in his fatherland for seven years, he crossed into the endless ages rejoicing the Lord, and his pious body was put to rest with grand praises into the monastery built at his order, in the home of the salvation in the place called Mileševa, and he has lied there ever since honourably remembered by the Lord" (Danilo II).

King Vladislav's grave is located along the south wall of the western aisle. For a long time,

it was believed that his grave was below the marble sarcophagus. Later, it was found out that the grave was not below the sarcophagus but, immediately in front of it. During the recent archaeological excavations, it has been found that this is a built non-arched tomb. Disturbed remains of the King's skeleton were found, meaning that it had previously been opened. In the debris covering the tomb, the remains of two or even three marble sarcophagus were found.

Above the grave, the ktetor's composition was painted showing Jesus on the throne, and the Mother of God bringing King Vladislav towards

him with a model of the temple in his hand. It should be known that this fresco was made while Vladislav was not the King yet, and his crown was subsequently painted. That it is the case is confirmed by the fresco on the northern wall of the narthex presenting Stefan the First-Crowned as the ruling King, followed by Radoslav as the successor to the throne, and Vladislav. They are represented by Simeon and Sava painted on the eastern wall. These presentations are quite understandable since the monastery was built around 1219 and it was painted in 1222 or 1228, i.e., at the time when Stefan the First-Crowned still ruled.

## SAVA II

### Serbian Archbishop, Saint

**I**n the historiography, it is more or less accepted, that the fourth son of Stefan the First-Crowned, Predislav, in monkhood Sava II, was born not later than in 1201. King Stefan the First-Crowned had sons Radoslav, Vladislav, and Uroš and all three of them changed at the throne, and the fourth one – Predislav, who had no ruling ambitions, thus, his name is not mentioned in the conflicts among brothers relating to the priority to the royal throne. According to the biographer, since his earliest youth, Predislav, chose spiritual life: “From early youth, he did not go in for any earthly glory since he was encouraged by God to the true road of salvation, to love the Lord with all his heart and soul, and to obey, with all of his senses, the commandments of his Bishop” (Danilo’s successors).

It is not certain that he was the youngest son of King the First-Crowned, but starting from the fact that his uncle Rastko – St. Sava, as the youngest Nemanja’s son became the monk, similar could also be assumed for Predislav. As the youngest, he could not count on the royal throne with three elder brothers, which could also be one of the reasons to choose the monastic life. In addition, St. Sava’s influence onto his orientation must not be neglected.

Anyway, Predislav considered his monastic occupation in a very serious manner: “And striving to the life of reverend fathers, he became a monk, oriented to good deeds, cleaned in his soul, he showed his progress for the better day after day, because he was guided by the divine spirit, he accomplished many things to make his body numb” (Danilo’s successors).

It would be very interesting to know what kind of relation Predislav had with his uncle St. Sava. If 1201 is accepted as the year of his birth, then, it is quite certain that St. Sava had a decisive influence on him. At the time of Sava’s death in 1236, Predislav was over 30 years old, so, he was a rather experienced man with clearly set ideas. There should be no doubts that he was certainly fascinated with everything that his uncle had done and, probably, for that reason got his uncle’s monastic name – Sava.

It is assumed that Sava II spent the majority of his life in Hilandar where he had the best conditions to advance in his spiritual knowledge. Since he was the member of the Nemanjić family, he could have only the most supreme clerical duties. Nevertheless, nothing happened very suddenly. First, he travelled to Jerusalem, where he visited all holy places. Most probably, it was also the part of his preparations to take the position of the highest dignity in the Serbian Orthodox Church. According to biographers’ statements, Sava II spent quite some time in Palestine: “He went to Jerusalem to pay tribute to God’s grave and to see all places of his suffering” (Danilo’s successors). It is quite possible that the journey was also the idea of Saint Sava and that he consciously prepared him for the supreme positions in the Church.

After he had seen and learned many things, Sava II returned to Hilandar: “After he had spent a lot of time there, he returned again to and lived at the Holy Mountain” (Danilo’s successors). After his return from Jerusalem, he was ordained as the Hilandar abbot. Yet, it is hard to believe that he

only dealt with the monastery. Unfortunately, it is not known whether at the time when his brothers – Radoslav (1228–1234), Vladislav (1234–1243), and Uroš I (1243–1276) – conflicted about the throne, Sava II had any connections with them, and if he had, what his position was in relation to the brothers and their conflicts.

The first reliable trace of Sava II dates back from 1254 when he is mentioned as the bishop of Hum, which means that he was in Serbia in that year at the latest. Having in mind his later very good co-operation with King Uroš I who began to rule in 1243, it is quite reasonable to believe that it was King Uroš I who invited him to return to Serbia.

At the time when Sava administered the Serbian Orthodox Church, it played a very significant role in state activities of Serbia. Also, Saint Sava was the best associate of King Stefan the First Crowned. It seems that his successor, Arsenije I Sremac, did not have any Political ambitions or, he just was not ready to respond to challenges that the Politics imposed before him. Thus, the vacancy that Saint Sava left could not be filled by anyone. When in 1243, Uroš I came to the Serbian throne – in a violent manner, overthrowing his brother Vladislav, who had, before him, overthrown their brother Radoslav – it is quite certain that the situation in the country was not good at all. King Uroš I needed definite support of the Church that could hardly be provided to him by the Archbishop Arsenije I Sremac. Therefore, it is logical to assume that King Uroš I entrusted a very sensitive Hum diocese to his brother Sava II from Hilandar. Serbia was threatened right from that side not only by the Bogomils and Catholics, but by a much more realistic military threat, by the Hungarians and the bans of Bosnia.

Since Sava II was from the Nemanjić family, and his brother Uroš I, whom he understood well, was at the royal throne, it was quite certain that actually Sava II would succeed Arsenije I

Sremac at the archbishop throne. Therefore, it is quite probable that Sava II was, after his arrival, very close to Archbishop Arsenije I Sremac.

In relation to the previous periods, it was a rather peaceful period for Serbia, thus, Sava II had enough time to dedicate himself to his Hum diocese. Certainly the major event of that time was the restoration of Byzantium in 1261, forcing out the Latins not only from Greece, but also from the Holy Mountain. It is quite probable that

at that time, Sava II was already the first man of the Serbian Orthodox Church, yet, still unofficially, because, Archbishop Arsenije, though very ill since 1260, was still alive: “the most reverend became very ill, and suffered a lot of serious disease not at once but for three years or longer before his death. His body was affected by serious dis-

ease, thus, he could not serve any divine services, or go to the divine church, but was carried in the arms of his Christ loving children” (Danilo II).

Since 1263, when Archbishop Arsenije I passed away, Sava II became the official Archbishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church: “until the time he became worthy of such glory with the mercy of the most generous God and with the consecration of the holy Spirit, so he took God given throne of the holy master and teacher Sava” (Danilo’s successors). He administered the church for only seven years and passed away on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1271 at the ripe old age: “And after this, he passed from this life into blissful and eternal rest, and his body was placed in the home of the Holy Apostles, where he is even now mentioned in a nice and solemn manner” (Danilo’s successors).

The biographer talks about the work of Sava II generally: “And following in his efforts and accomplishments the saints who had lived before him as each of them did at his time and since he was aware that everyone would be responsible for the given talent, thus, he vigorously cared for God given congregation of Christ’s, living in reverence and chastity and taking care of the divine



church, which he filled and adorned with beautiful and magnificent ornaments as required by the church" (Danilo's successor). The biographer did not deal with details at all, thus, his text does not make it possible to get an impression what Serbia was faced with at that time and what problems Archbishop Sava II had.

In 1268, King Uroš I headed with his army towards Mačva Banovina and, after some short lasting success, he was defeated and took as a prisoner of war. These were very difficult days for the state and the activity of Sava II was very

important at that time. It is not known whether Sava II lived to see the release of Uroš I from the captivity in 1271, because he had already passed away at that time. He was buried in the church of the Holy Apostles in Peć. The burial monument is leaned on the southern wall of the aisle (the sarcophagus of the Archbishop Arsenije I Sremac is in the west, and that of Patriarch Joanikije is in the east).

Today, the face of Sava II can be seen on the frescos of the Monasteries of Sopoćani, Dečani, and Gračanica and in Peć Patriarchate.

# STEFAN UROŠ I

## Serbian King, Saint

In Serbia in 1243, Uroš I (1243-1276), the youngest son of King Stefan the First Crowned, acceded to the throne. He was the third son of Stefan the First Crowned who was on the Serbian throne. At that time, Serbia had a period of peace of almost thirty years without any major internal shocks, and it was not externally threatened, either.



The manner in which Uroš got to power remained unknown thus, it is assumed that he used the fuss in Serbia after the death of the Bulgarian Emperor. Uroš I, called the Great, is not a popular character in Serbian historiography. He did not stand out in war actions and in surrounding countries he was considered peaceful. Nevertheless, such an assumption should not be understood as final. Uroš waged wars but those were certainly not such spectacular battles as his father used to fight. Uroš' Politics was rather cautious and careful, probably, with the highest extent of fickleness shown by the Nemanjićs through their history. Stefan the First-Crowned demonstrated great flexibility when selecting Political directions, however, Uroš was not only "flexible", he was actually "fickle". Yet, his contemporaries had respect for him since he got the nickname "Great". In addition to this nickname, Uroš was called with another, much less pleasant nickname. Whether because of his voice tone or rough face, yet, he was also called "Rugged".

The first serious problem Uroš faced was the conflict with Dubrovnik relating to the issue of

the Catholic Church clerical hierarchy between Dubrovnik and Bar Archdioceses. After a long procrastination, the dispute relating to this issue finally began in Rome in 1252. At that time, the relations between King Uroš and Dubrovnik were terribly spoilt. After the death of Ban Ninoslav, Dubrovnik was left without any protection,

which was seen by King Uroš as a convenient opportunity for the attack. In 1252, he actually appeared under the walls of Dubrovnik with a well-equipped army. The town remained undestroyed, and in the resulting negotiations, Uroš was satisfied with the received indemnification.

Since they did not want to waive the jurisdiction over the Bar Archdiocese, soon, the Dubrovnikians were engaged in grander undertakings. In June 1253, they made an alliance with the Bulgarians directly focused against King Uroš, and the allies wanted to expel him and all his family from Serbia once and for good. Soon after the alliance, the Bulgarians attacked Serbia with their army mostly comprised of the Cumans and penetrated deeply. It is assumed that they managed to reach as far as the Lim River and to plunder St. Peter's Monastery. It was all. In 1254, the agreement between Serbia and Dubrovnik was renewed, but, this time, the Dubrovnikians did not cheaply get away with it. In addition to high war reparations that they had to pay to Serbia, the Dubrovnikians had to waive the litigation with the Bar church and to recognise the authority of Bar over the catholic population in Serbia.

King Uroš was married to Helen of Anjou. It is not known where she came from but most probably she was from the family of Charles I of Anjou, the King of Sicily and Naples. Charles himself was from the royal family in France and, accordingly, Helen would be from the French royal family. It is assumed that Uroš and Helen were married around 1250. As far as it is known, they had five children, however, only for the sons Dragutin and Milutin there are some certain data. There are some assumptions that they had two more sons, as well as a daughter Brnča (Brnjača).

In 1268, King Uroš attacked Mačva Banovina which had posed problems to him for years. At that time, the Banovina was ruled by Rastislav's son, Herzeg Bela. The attack was sudden and it was quite successful at the beginning. At that time, the Banovina heavily suffered the plunder of the Serbian army, indicating that Uroš did not intend to expand Serbia territorially but the action was supposed to be only military demonstration, in order to make Bela release Uroš from his vassal obligations. When King Bela IV sent the support, the situation basically changed. The Serbian army was heavily defeated and ashamed since the Hungarians captured King Uroš, and also his flag and golden cross luxuriously decorated with precious stones. After this battle, King Uroš was as a war trophy given to Bela IV. In addition to Uroš, numerous reputable Serbian aristocrats were mentioned among the prisoners, as well as Uroš' son-in-law, unknown to history. Not only that Uroš had to pay the ransom and recognise again his vassal obligations, he had to swallow another bitter pill. He had to recognise his son Dragutin as a "Junior King", actually, he had to give him a share in ruling. Besides, it seems that right at that time Dragutin and Bela's granddaughter Catherina (Katalina), the daughter of Bela's son Stephen, were married: "When certain time had passed, and when this blessed one grew up until the age of a young man, his parents wanted him to be married according to the law, and he took the daughter of imperial birth of the Hungarian people, he was engaged to devout wife, called Catherina. And his father, King Uroš vowed to give him the kingdom, and with this great promise he said that he would not break the promise but make him the King in his father-

land, in Serbian land, and that he would, during his life, give him the throne. Also, he made the promise to the co-father-in-law, the Hungarian King, by saying: I want you to give your daughter to my son, because she will in great honour and glory go towards the imperial throne and the priceless pearl. And, I will make my son the ruling King of the whole of Serbian and coastal lands" (Danilo II).

Upon his return from Hungary, King Uroš was supposed to execute provisions from the peace treaty and let Dragutin the art of the royal authority. However, he did not have the slightest idea to do that, thus, he continually held off what he had promised. On the other hand, Dragutin showed great signs of impatience and reminded his father of the given promise: "When his parent failed to fulfil what he had said, this pious one was very sad and sorrowful because he did not get any part of his fatherland, where he would separately stay and, also listening to importune critical words from his father-in-law, the Hungarian King, who had seen that his parent did not give him what he had promised, falling to his knees, began to beg his parent..." (Danilo II).

Uroš did not pay much attention to Dragutin's requests and was continually rejecting to divide the state. "And his parent, at the persuasion of the cunning enemy, did not pay attention to his words, and his heart did not change to give in love what he had promised to his son, his throne or any part of his state" (Danilo II).

Dragutin was constantly urged by the Hungarians "listening to critical words on many occasions, by his father-in-law, the Hungarian King...", to take what he had been promised. Finally, he decided to take by force what he had been promised: "he gathered some of his people and went to his father-in-law, the King of Hungary, and informed him on his sorrow, which befell him, because of his parent. And his father-in-law got very sad, because of this, and wholeheartedly stood up for him..." (Danilo II). Obviously, there was a division in Serbia onto Uroš and Dragutin's followers and, in this internal conflict, Dragutin's side was weaker. Therefore, they all had to move away to Hungary and ask for help there.

At the end, Dragutin got his throne. Leading the strong army, he headed off to Serbia to demand

his crown: "Thus, leading the powerful force of Hungarian and Cuman people, he hastened into great victory" (Danilo II). The armed conflict occurred between the father and the son. The decisive battles were fought at Gatačko Polje in Herzegovina, where Uroš was defeated (1276): "Since there was a great battle between them in the land called Gacko, the son resisted his father, and took his throne by force. And when he took the throne of his father in Serbian lands, this pious, Christ loving and independent one called himself Stefan the king of the whole Serbian and coastal and Danubian and Srem lands" (Danilo II).

The easiness and speed by which King Uroš succumbed were surprising. His defeat was complete. He did not pose any threats anymore. Immediately after the defeat, he fled to Zahumlje, where he became a monk under the name of Simon: "When this pious King Uroš saw that he had been deprived of the royal throne, he rose up and went to the area of the land of Hum where he continued to live until the end of his life" (Danilo II). Soon, he died almost completely forgotten by all, and 1<sup>st</sup> May 1277 is mentioned as the probable date of his death. There are some opinions that he died in 1280. He was buried in his endowment, the monastery of Sopoćani that was built around 1260 (it was painted 1263–1268): "The parent of this pious King went to a land where he lived until the end of his life, and his body was honourably transferred, and put to rest in the monastery made by his hands, in the home of the Holy Trinity, in the place called Sopoćani, and he has been laying there ever since" (Danilo II).

The circumstances under which King Uroš died have remained unknown, but, in turn, his tomb has been well investigated. The sarcophagus is located in the southwest corner laterally moved

up towards the western wall. The tomb itself was not located below the sarcophagus, which surprised historians during the works in 1982. A bit unexpectedly, King Uroš I tomb was found in the zone parallel to the southern wall. The tomb is around one metre away from the wall, whereas, with its narrower side, it is leaned on the western wall.

The tomb itself was built with stone blocks and partly arched. It seems that it has been dug several times, because the remains of three skeletons with completely dislocated bones were found. In the debris covering the tomb, the remains of the debris from the church wall were found, as well as the piece of money from the first decade of the XX century. Probably, the robbers were trying to find some treasure. This is not surprising since the monastery has been barren from 1689 when it was destroyed by the Turks and was not refurbished. The church was gradually deteriorating until XX century, when repairs began. Today, both the church and the monastery have been refurbished.

According to the custom already established at that time, the ktetor's fresco portrait was put above the grave, as it is the case in Studenica and Mileševa, but it was subsequently destroyed and the current composition was painted instead in late XIII century. The new painting presents Christ on the throne, and the Mother of God brings him Simeon Nemanja, Stefan the First-Crowned (as monk Simeon), and King Uroš I, who holds the model of Sopoćani in his hand. He is presented as already an old man with long grey beard and hair and the crown on his head. This crown especially draws attention since the closed crown was painted for the first time. Until then, rulers were presented with a Sebastocrat wreath on a head (in Studenica and Mileševa).

# TEODOSIJE

**M**onk Teodosije lived in the second half of XIII century in Hilandar. He was called Teodor Gramatik or Teodor Span (Ćosa), because he had no beard. Because of that, he was expelled from the Holy Mountain, out of which he lived for six months, and then, upon Domentijan's invitation, he returned to the Mount Athos. For some time, he worked zealously with Domentijan, and even under his guidance he copied *Six Days* (Hexameron - *Shestodnev*) by John Exarch in 1263. Then, he was reported again and expelled once more. The question remains whether Teodor Gramatik is the Teodosije who wrote *The Life of Saint Sava*. Today, it is more or less accepted that it is the one and the same person.

Teodosije remained famous by *The Life of Saint Sava*. It was written at the time of King Milutin, in 1292 at the latest. The oldest biography of Saint Sava was prepared by Domentijan and it was thoroughly revised by Teodosije: both books present the life of Saint Sava, the same events are told in the same sequence, and it is explained by Teodosije himself: "as told by reverend Domentijan, the hieromonk of the Monastery called Hilandar, and written by Teodosije, the monk of the same monastery". Yet, the works differ from each other greatly.

*The Life of Saint Sava* was written by Teodosije in a somewhat livelier style, but also in a more skilful narration method. It is distinguished by fluent, vivid, almost constantly dramatically intoned narrations: "Teodosije demonstrates the sense not only for masterly narrative strokes, when in one sentence he sets up a story or introduces a new event or a person into his narration but also for

gradual, dramatic narration as the one found in a modern short story or a novel" (J. Deretić).

Whereas Domentijan observes his heroes timelessly, trying to detach them from the time in which they were active and wishing to enlighten their destiny from the perspective of general, timeless, divine essences, Teodosije narrates everything as it actually happened, only sometimes emphasising some of the events, always intentionally providing the rhythm of passing time to a reader: "His Sava has lost something of unearthly radiance with which Domentijan adorned him, and, despite being idealised, he has become a much more realistic person" (J. Deretić). Therefore, his biography was more favourable reading material than Domentijan's: "It quickly replaced older, difficultly written text by Domentijan and it has been read and copied a lot, not only in Serbian but also throughout Russian lands" (V. Ćorović).

In addition, which is especially important, Teodosije introduced many new factual data about Saint Sava. He says that he also used certain written sources of Saint Sava's disciples: "left by them in writing". Those were Sava's "honourable students", "fellow sufferers", "fellow travellers abroad", "travelling companions". At the same time, the text includes traditional stories that Teodosije had heard in Hilandar and throughout Serbia and even remind more of legends. Indeed, it is felt that Teodosije is not in fact the contemporary of events he writes about, it is the story retold on the basis of stories told by others.

There were many uncertainties relating to Teodosije's biography. For a while, it was even considered that his text was created during XVIII

century, however, such speculation was rejected in time.

Overall, Teodosije has seven poetic and rhetoric texts, six liturgical texts and one rhetoric text: *The Life of Saint Sava* and *The Life of Saint Petar of Koriš* are hagiographic texts, hymnographic texts include *The Service to Petar of Koriš*, *The Service to Saint Simeon*, *The Service to Saint Sava*, *Octoechoes Canon* (eight canons, for each tone separately), *In Canon to Simeon and Sava*; the rhetoric text is *The Encomium to Saint Simeon and Saint Sava*.

The greatest Teodosije's achievement is *The Life of Saint Petar of Koriš*. It was written around 1310. This work is quite different in relation to *The Life of Saint Sava*. Namely, Teodosije wrote about Saint Sava based on written sources (of Domentijan), and he wrote about Saint Petar of Koriš based on oral tradition. He went to the place where Saint Petar of Koriš lived, he spoke there with eyewitnesses and those who had known this saint: "and I have enquired among the villagers and many people from surrounding areas about what I wanted to know about his life, and about what they have heard from the monks who buried the reverend and who were with him, and they told me those things about him so that the generation pass this to the generation after them as the history, thus, I have written and created this so that everyone can read it in order for the good life of the reverend not to be narrated as a dream and legend and so deprived of the benefit and advantage".

He himself says that the purpose of this writing is that the life worth of remembering is kept from oblivion and that, with exemplary models it provides, such a life has beneficial effects onto readers: "To leave to the last generations the biographies of the saints and their exceptional and well-intended deeds is good and very useful". Yet,

he immediately states that his intention is not to write a hymn to a saint "when the reverend did not want during his life on earth any commendations by humans, he would even less want one in the haven now".

Petar of Koriš was a hermit, thus, Teodosije, unconstrained with historical facts, unleashed his narrative gift and created "a work which, by its dramatic events, vivid authenticity, and psychological depth, is unparalleled to any other in our old literature. The main character is presented in some continuing dramatic relations towards his closest one, his mother and sister, towards himself, and towards God. His whole life passes in the struggle with natural and supernatural temptations" (J. Deretić). Although this is the life of a hermit, it is not boring and copied note, but "an exciting, dramatic narration about a grandiose struggle, narrated by a man who himself is familiar with and aware of it" (Dimitrije Bogdanović).

Teodosije's experience of nature surrounding Petar of Koriš is interesting. It is, indeed, the landscape of Prizren landslides and hills, not imagined and abstract, but seen and, above all, experienced landscape. The polemic dialogues that Petar of Koriš has with the devil or with himself, as well as his prayer monologues are exciting. After his death, Saint Petar of Koriš is not found, like Saint Simeon or Saint Sava, among angels, and he does not represent his people before God. He lived modestly and he remained lying in his cave church. His relics, distributed throughout churches, heal the ill: "His holy head and other limbs, while they at first had lain in the desert were taken by the Christ loving people with great love and faith to the Constantine's city while some parts others grabbed and took them, each in his own fatherland and distributed them to serve as ornaments and to the beauty of churches".