Book reviews

Theology of the battle of Kosovo, p. 167–196] is an interesting study of the birth and development of the Kosovan myth, perhaps the most important repercussion of the battle of Kosovo, strongly present in the consciousness of the contemporaries.

The work is supplemented by maps (p. 197–200), illustrations (p. 201–214), bibliography (p. 215–228), index of geographical (p. 229–234) and personal (p. 235–243) names, and a table of contents (p. 245–246). The book was prepared on the basis of the complete body of sources, with the use of vast secondary literature. It is an original work that gives a full, multi-faceted picture of both the battle itself, and its significance. It was written in a clear and concise manner, in a way that is going to attract both professionals and a wider circle of readers.

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DOI: 10.18778/2084-140X.05.18

The book by Predrag Komatina, a Serbian scholar of the young generation, is devoted to the Byzantine religious policy during the time between its final departure from iconoclasm (843) and the death of Emperor Basil I (886). This period of over forty years is characterised by many interesting and significant phenomena in both the internal life of the Byzantine Church, and its relations with the outside world. It is worth reminding here that this is the time when the mission of Constantine and Methodius to the Great Moravia happened, and the time when Bulgaria was Christianised.

The book is divided into three main parts. In the first one: Поново устоличено православље [Orthodoxy Re-enthroned] (843–856), p. 27–102 the author describes the situation of the Byzantine Church during a difficult period of resolving the situation with iconoclasm, and bringing stability to the new, Orthodox order. Part two: Експанзија византијске цркве [The Expansion of the Byzantine Church] (856–867), p. 103–224, is devoted to the functioning of the Byzantine Church during the reign of Emperor Michael III. Throughout the most of this period a considerable role in ecclesiastical affairs was played by the patriarch of Constantinople, Photius. It was Michael III and Photius who were behind sending the mission to the Great Moravia and the beginning of Christianisation of Bulgaria. In the third part of the book: Царева црква [The Emperor’s Church] (867–886), p. 225–354, the author presents the Byzantine ecclesiastical policy during the reign of Basil I. The patriarchs at the time were first Photius, followed by Ignatius, and...
finally Photius again after Ignatius’ death. The clash between Constantinople and Rome (won by the former) over the affiliation of the Bulgarian Church was one of the events that occurred during this period. The book is supplemented by: a list of abbreviations (p. 9–21), foreword (pp. 22–26), summary in English (p. 355–366) and an index (p. 367–382).

The author presented the changes that occurred in the Byzantine Church during 843–886 in a competent and comprehensive manner, much like the relations between the Emperor and the Constantinopolitan patriarch, and Byzantine missionary activity. He grounded his work in the full source base that he keenly studied. Some doubts may be raised by the use of secondary literature, however. Among the works listed by Predrag Komatina I could not find, for example, works by Tadeusz Wasilewski, Daniel Zimm or Ivan Božilov, most important when considering the matter of Christianisation of Bulgaria.


DOI: 10.18778/2084-140X.05.19