

# CROATICA CHRISTIANA PERIODICA

ČASOPIS INSTITUTA ZA CRKVENU POVIJEST  
KATOLIČKOGA BOGOSLOVNOG FAKULTETA SVEUČILIŠTA U ZAGREBU

God. XXXIX

Zagreb, 2015.

Broj 75

## *rasprave i prilozi*

UDK 248.153.8-055.2(569.441Jeruzalem)

264-931(569.441Jeruzalem)(093)

Pregledni rad

Primljeno: 15. lipnja 2014.

Prihvaćeno za objavljivanje: 10. rujna 2014.

### THE ROLE AND IMAGE OF THE HOLY LAND IN ACCOUNTS OF MEDIEVAL FEMALE PILGRIMS

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*This article discusses the role of Jerusalem in medieval texts concerning the activity of female saints and pilgrims to the Holy Land. It is argued that during the period of Late Antiquity it was predominantly noble women who contributed to the shaping of the historical and symbolical sacral space of the Holy Land. Examining medieval vitae and pilgrimage descriptions it is possible to understand the importance of the Holy Land for gendered piety, and to discover the differences in Western and Byzantine pilgrimage traditions and religious and legal practices. The main focus is on selected texts of the East Slavic and the eastern portion of the South Slavic traditions which describe the sacral space of Jerusalem within the discourse of depicting female religiosity based on images from the New Testament: the Old Russian Vita of St. Eufrosinija of Polotsk, as well as the South Slavic miscellanies the Bđinski sbornik (Bulgarian) and the Gorički zbornik (Serbian).*

**KEY WORDS:** *Female pilgrimages, Jerusalem, relics, sacral space, St. Eufrosinija of Polotsk, Bđinski sbornik, Gorički zbornik, the Holy Land, monastic foundations, female monasticism, religiosity.*

Jerusalem as the most sacred place for the Judean tradition<sup>1</sup> has always played an incredibly important role as a symbol of the new Christian religion,<sup>2</sup> as the crossroad between

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<sup>1</sup> Old Testament pilgrimage expresses a strong attachment to place. It is based on Israel's memory of its deliverance from slavery in Egypt, its formation as the covenant people of Yahweh at Mt Sinai, Yahweh's gift of land to them by the dispossession of others, and his dwelling among them in the central sanctuary. (Gordon McCONVILLE, »Pilgrimage and 'Place': an Old Testament View«, in *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, ed. by Craig BARTHOLOMEW and Fred HUGHES (Burlington, Vermont, 2004), 17; *L'idea di Gerusalemme nella spiritualità Cristiana del Medioevo* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Craig BARTHOLOMEW and Fred HUGHES, eds., *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage* (Burlington, VT, 2004).

the Old and the New Testament, between death and resurrection, and between Earth and Heaven. In Christian medieval thought Jerusalem is not only the scene of the historical origin of the faith, it is also the location of the expected Second Coming of Christ.<sup>3</sup> The phenomenon of Jerusalem is, as with every sacred space or event, that its holiness extends beyond temporal or geographical boundaries. The historical context of the New Testament and its historicity as a special feature of the Christian religion made the real Palestine and travel to the Holy Land an important event in the life of a pious man – visiting sacred places, following in the path of Christ<sup>4</sup> and his apostles, and being a part of the »real« New Testament sacral landscape were the main goals of the medieval pilgrims. The motivation<sup>5</sup> of Christian pilgrims was connected not only with dogmatic points of the Christian faith; this motivation often received its own specific symbolic association and connotation in the religious travellers' minds. Imitating events of Christ's life (the famous medieval concept of *imitatio Christi*) became a motive for some to leave their own world and start a monastic or hermit life in the deserts of Palestine.<sup>6</sup> Others were looking to undertake real Christian activity implementing Christian virtues in the Holy Land – founding churches and monasteries; taking care of orphans, widows, and the poor; building hospices and hospitals for those in need;<sup>7</sup> and supporting clergy and monks in Palestine. One more aspect of the Holy Land cult is connected with some kind of a mystical notion, which is an archetypical model of behaviour.<sup>8</sup> This is the idea of travelling to the Holy Land in preparation for dying. In Eastern pilgrimage descriptions it is a very important motif – to meet death in Jerusalem. The physical geographical route to the Holy Land had been always accompanied by real dangers and the threat of death, but the desirable goal was to reach the sacral landscape of Palestine, which is so deeply associated with numerous ancient prophecies and the way of the Cross of the Christian Saviour on Earth.

The main goal of this research is to formulate the importance of female activity in shaping the historical and symbolical sacral space of the Holy Land. By examining medieval vitae and pilgrimage descriptions it is possible to understand the importance of the Holy Land

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<sup>3</sup> Edward David HUNT, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire A. D. 312 – 460* (Oxford, 1984), 2.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop Paulinus of Nola (d. 431), observed, »The principal motive which draws people to Jerusalem is the desire to see and touch the places where Christ was present in the body«, Paulinus of Nola, *Epistles*, 49. (J. Wilkinson, trans.), *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, rev.ed. (Warminster, UK, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> More about motives see in: Gary VIKAN, *Early Byzantine Pilgrimage Art* (rev.ed.) (Dumbarton Oaks, 2007), 8–9.

<sup>6</sup> Brouria BITTON-ASHKELONY and Aryeh KOFSKY, »Monasticism in the Holy Land«, in *Christians and Christianity in the Holy Land. From the Origins to the Latin Kingdoms*. ed. by Ora LIMOR and Guy G. STROUMSA (Turnhout, 2006), 257–293. The monks of Palestine fascinated many of their contemporaries in the Byzantine world. There were about three thousand of them occupying over sixty monasteries in a stretch of open country about ten miles square. John BINNS, *Ascetics and Ambassadors of Christ. The monasteries of Palestine 314 – 631* (Oxford, 1994), 23; Yizhar HIRSCHFELD, *The Judaean Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period* (New Haven, 1992), 78–90.

<sup>7</sup> Anton BAUMSTARK, *Abendländische Palästina-pilger des Ersten Jahrtausends und ihre Berichte*. (hg. von Helmhart Kanus-Crede) (Allendorf an der Eder, 2002), 28–29.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. about the specific attitude of medieval pilgrims towards shrines and relics associated with pagan times, see: G. VIKAN, *Early Byzantine Pilgrimage*, pp. 29–30, »The rituals and beliefs associated with early Byzantine loca sancta perpetuated those of pre-Christian healing shrines, most notably the shrines of Asclepius. These include the ritual of diagnosis and healing through incubation, the belief in sacred space, in the transferability of miraculous healing power through touch«

for gendered piety, and to discover the differences in Western and Byzantine pilgrimage traditions, as well as in their religious and legal practices. In the second part of the paper I will analyze three medieval Slavic sources, which are not widely known to the Western researchers. The first one is the Old Russian *Vita of St. Eufrosinija of Polotsk*: a princess from the 11th century who left her court to become a nun, Eufrosinija was the founder of several convents and monasteries in Polotsk and, shortly before her death, she undertook a pilgrimage to the holy city of Jerusalem where she died. The other sources to be examined are gender-oriented collections of sermons and vitae of women saints which also include descriptions of holy places in Jerusalem (Palestine): 1. the Bđinski sbornik, a Bulgarian collection of vitae (a so-called »materikon«)<sup>9</sup> dated 1360, which was written at the request of the Bulgarian empress Anna;<sup>10</sup> and 2. the Gorički zbornik, a Serbian manuscript dated 1442, which was written by Nikon of Jerusalem at the request of the Serbian princess Helena Balšić.<sup>11</sup> These texts will be viewed in the context of other East and South Slavic religious texts dealing with the legend of the discovery of the True Cross by Empress Helena and with the sacral geography of Jerusalem.

The history of female Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land has its start already in the first centuries after Christ's nativity. Some researchers point out the exceptional role of women in spread the pilgrimage tradition during the period of Late Antiquity.<sup>12</sup> The stories of female travelers to the Holy Land are obviously deeply connected with the discourse of the symbolic imitation of New Testament episodes in an attempt to implement a real historical »peregrinatio« of the gender roles in the Bible. Women approaching the tomb of Christ, a famous Resurrection motif in the Middle Ages, clearly becomes also a symbol of religious travel. It can be seen as a representation of women's experience of travel to the holy city.<sup>13</sup> Women, as the only followers of Christ searching for His tomb, became witnesses of the Resurrection<sup>14</sup> and played a particular role in the legitimization of both

<sup>9</sup> By analogy with the Byzantine collection written by abba Isaya for the daughter of emperor Isaak Angel (1185 – 1195, 1204 – 1205) nun Theodora. See: ISAIJA Monk, *Miterikon, Sobrabie nastavljenij vsechestnoj inokine*, Moscow, 1995.

<sup>10</sup> Bđinski Sbornik, Ghent Slavonic MS 408, A. D. 1360. Facsimile edition with representation by Ivan DUJCEV, London, 1972; *Bđinski Sbornik. An Old Slavonic Menologium of Women Saints* (Ghent University Library Ms. 408, A.D. 1360). Edited and annotated by J. L. SCHARPE and F. VYNCKE. With an introduction by E. VOORDECKERS (Bruges, 1973).

<sup>11</sup> Gorički zbornik – SANU 446, Dimitrije BOGDANOVIĆ, *Inventar ćirilskih rukopisa u Jugoslaviji (XI – XVII veka)* (Beograd, 1982), № 282, 34.

<sup>12</sup> The concept of Ora Limor is that female pilgrimage to the Holy Land as a gendered phenomenon appears and plays the most important role in the late antiquity. See: Ora LIMOR, »Holy Journey: Pilgrimage and Christian Sacred Landscape«, in *Christians and Christianity in the Holy Land. From the Origins to the Latin Kingdoms*, ed. by Ora LIMOR and Guy G. STROUMSA (Turnhout, 2006), 329–331. Maribel Dietz in her monograph stresses the special role of women in early Christian travel, as the ones »as travellers and patrons, emerged as a crucial element in the source material«: *Wandering monks, virgins, and pilgrims. Ascetic travel in the Mediterranean world. A. D. 300 – 800*. (Pennsylvania, 2005), 8; E. D. HUNT pays particular attention to the female pilgrims of this period in his book: *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire A. D. 312 – 460* (Oxford, 1984).

<sup>13</sup> M. DIETZ, *Wandering monks*, 107–153.

<sup>14</sup> Some points to the importance of image of Holy Women at the Tomb in Byzantine tradition, see: Robert OUSTERHOUT, »Sacred geographies and holy cities: Constantinople as Jerusalem«, in *Hierotopy. The creation of sacred spaces in Byzantium and medieval Russia*, ed. by Alexey LIDOV (Moscow, 2006), 107–8.

the pilgrimage concept in Christian history and the Christian theology of pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Numerous surveys deal with the history of female pilgrimages during the period of Late Antiquity. This is first of all connected with the number of literary and material sources about women pilgrims as well as the importance of such famous examples as the empress, St. Helena who influenced the whole Christian history of pilgrimages to the Holy Land. It is necessary to mention the most significant works, which include E.D. Hunt's study of the history of pilgrimages to the Holy Land in the Later Roman Empire which, in this context, gathered general information also about noble female travelers in the period 312 – 460.<sup>15</sup> Certainly the vast majority of papers and monographs deal with the pilgrimage of Saint Helena and the legend of the discovery of the True Cross.<sup>16</sup> The history of visits by noble Roman women to Palestine in the early Christian period are the most deeply researched. Interest in the Holy Land, in the course of the fourth century, was to be dominated by the pilgrimages of noble ladies, journeying certainly for their own edification and their own prayers for the salvation of their soul, but no less in the interests of families and congregations left behind. Empress Helena, the first and most distinguished of this line, expressed in her pilgrimage (326 – 327) the piety, not only of a family, but also of the Christian empire.<sup>17</sup> Others who fall into this category include: Paula with Eustochium (386),<sup>18</sup> an Iberian traveler to the Holy Land Egeria (in 38 – 384);<sup>19</sup> Byzantine empress Eudoxia, wife of the emperor Theodosius II – her first pilgrimage to Jerusalem was in 438; and after her banishment from the court in 443, she went to Jerusalem and stayed there till the end of her life in 460; the richest founders and donors in Jerusalem Melania the Elder and Melania the Younger (between 406 and 439); the visits of all these rich ladies were encouraged by political developments and caused generous donations to the Church.<sup>20</sup>

Examining the issue of the importance of Jerusalem in the period of Late Antiquity, it is also necessary to determine its place in imperial ideology. During the reign of Constantine the Great (272 – 337) the program of rebuilding and transforming Jerusalem into its new role as a Christian *locus sanctus* began. The famous mission of Constantine's mother Helena played the most important role here. According to scholarly opinion, the moti-

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<sup>15</sup> See: E. D. HUNT, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*.

<sup>16</sup> Hans A. POHLSANDER, *Helena: Empress and Saint*, Chicago (Illinois, 1995), 84–139; Jan Willem DRIJVERS, *Helena Augusta. The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden, 1992), 79–181; Alja PAYER, *Kaiserinnen machten Kirchengeschichte* (Thaur, 2002), 24–34; M. DIETZ, *Wandering monks*, 109–120.

<sup>17</sup> E.D. HUNT, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*, 35.

<sup>18</sup> See »The Letter of Paula and Eustochium to Marcella, About the Holy Places. 386 AD« Transl. By Aubrey Stuart (London, 1894), <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/paula/letter/letter.html>

<sup>19</sup> Ora LIMOR, »Reading Sacred Space: Egeria, Paula and the Christian Holy Land«, in *De Sion exhibit lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem. Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy, and Literature*, ed. by Yitzhak HEN (Turnhout, 2001), v. 1, 1–17.

<sup>20</sup> Sandra Ann FORTNER, Andrea ROTTLOFF, *Auf den Spuren der Kaiserin Helena. Römische Aristokratinnen pilgern ins Heilige Land* (Erfurt, 2000); J. BINNS, *Ascetics and Ambassadors*, 85–86; Carolyn L. CONNOR, chapter 2, *Pilgrimage: Egeria*, in: *Women of Byzantium*, (New Haven, London, 2004), 29–45; A. BAUMSTARK, *Abendländische Palästina-pilger*; M. DIETZ, *Wandering monks*.

vation for Helena's pilgrimage was not only deeply private and religious.<sup>21</sup> In the *Vita Constantini* by the Church historian Eusebius of Caesarea, Helena's prayers at the holy places were presented as an act of thanks-giving for the triumph of the Christian empire, more particularly »for so great a son, the emperor, and for his most pious sons, the Caesars (Constantine II and Constantius).« The other important point is that Helena undertook her mission as an imperial action, as a completely public event. It was surely just this situation which prompted Helena's journey: acting in concert with Constantine's own building activities in Jerusalem she was by her prayers at Christendom's most holy place, to reaffirm God's sanction for the new order. While Constantine built the »new Jerusalem«, Helena prayed for the builder. Helena's pilgrimage was at the same time an »act of reparation« for a purely domestic upheaval. Even more emphatically imperial were her donations to the soldiers *en route*, to whom she came as a reigning empress, distributing the resources of the state treasury. But besides the traditionally imperial characteristics, her journey is also presented by Eusebius as, of course, a catalogue of classic Christian beneficence: relief for the poor in the provision of money and shelter, the release of prisoners and those condemned to the mines, freedom for the oppressed, and the restoration of exiles.<sup>22</sup>

The importance of Helena's mission has also been presented as highlighting the difference between the new Christian religion and the old imperial pagan traditions. The Christianization of the Holy Land is a spiritual and human work. Women martyrs and noble pious women are the ones to bring Christian faith and Christian values to Palestine, which is opposite to the concept of the politics of a Roman emperor, i.e., sending a huge army to destroy the city and temple, to fight against monotheistic Jewish traditions, and to build massive pagan sanctuaries on the places, sacred in Jewish religion. The image of »weak« women overcoming the powerful pagan emperors (forcing the rulers to venerate idols which to them are pagan) by the strength of their faith is the main topos of medieval *Vitae*. Ascetic Christianity in the Holy Land would differ from the new imperial Christianity that became the official state religion under Constantine the Great in Constantinople.<sup>23</sup> And with the reign of Con-

<sup>21</sup> Many historians consider that such a long and dangerous travel to Palestine in 326 that had been undertaken by 80 years old empress Helena was connected first of all with familiar drama in the court – the execution of her favourite grandson Caesar Crispus and murder of the empress Fausta. St. Ambrose would carry a hint of the same explanation, in describing Helena's pilgrimage as that of the emperor's »anxious mother« (after palace scandal)... E. D. HUNT, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*, 32–33; M. DIETZ, *Wandering monks*, 112.

<sup>22</sup> E. D. HUNT, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*, 33. E. D. Hunt stresses also that is quite impossible to make the difference between Constantine's building program and Helena's foundation activity: The most public aspect of Helena's journey is represented by her buildings at the holy places ... at the time Helena did not have an independent role to play, but rather that of her son's partner in empire, supervising on the spot the imperial edifices of the new Christian Jerusalem (Hunt, 37) There is no sharp division between churches ascribed to Constantine and those attributed to Helena; the three principal churches – at Golgotha; Bethlehem, and on the Mount of Olives – were seen as part of a unified scheme of things, essentially Constantinian in inspiration, and a traditional display of munificence to mark the new direction of imperial interest (Hunt, 37).

<sup>23</sup> Klaus M. GIRARDET, *Der Kaiser und sein Gott. Das Christentum im Denken und in der Religionspolitik Konstantins des Grossen* (Berlin, 2010), 147–150; Idem, *Kaisertum, Religionspolitik und das Recht von Staat und Kirche in der Spätantike* (Bonn, 2009), 129–131; Walter ULLMANN, »The Constitutional Significance of Constantine the Great's Settlement«, *JEH* 27 (1976): 6; Johannes KARAYANNOPOULOS, »Konstantin der Große und der Kaiserkult« *Historia* 5 (1956): 341–357; Elisabeth HERRMANN, *Ecclesia in RePublica* (Frankfurt am Main, 1980); Hanns C. BRENNECKE, *Ecclesia est in republica. Studien zur Kirchen- und Theologiegeschichte im Kontext des Imperium Romanum* (Berlin, 2007), 88-90; Kunibert BERING, »Das

stantine the Great begins the history of pilgrimage to the Holy Land as a mass phenomenon. The discovery of the so-called True Cross became proof of the legitimacy of a Christian rule in Jerusalem, and for its conversion from a Jewish city to a Christian one – to a Holy one.<sup>24</sup>

### **Women as architects of the sacral landscape in the Holy Land**

The Christian sacral geography of the Holy Land was formed in the period of Late Antiquity with the huge participation and influence of the noble women. The idea of forming a *locus sanctus* was strongly connected with repeating and implementing episodes of the New Testament,<sup>25</sup> and it also had a gendered oriented discourse. The main objectives of the building program in the Holy Land are connected with the three following the tomb of Christ, forming the complex and cult of Holy Sepulchre that would be the main goal and first point of all Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land. The building program at Golgotha in Jerusalem was initiated by Constantine the Great in 325.<sup>26</sup> During her pilgrimage of 325 – 326 Empress Helena visited Golgotha and participated in the excavation of the tomb. The idea of visiting the Holy Sepulchre had been symbolically connected with the motive of women searching for the tomb of Jesus and the women as the first witnesses of the Resurrection. The cave held the symbolical meaning of the altar, a sacred space where women were also allowed in Jerusalem. The True Cross and the veneration of Golgotha as a way from death to Resurrection was an important motive of medieval pilgrimages. Participating in the procession from the place of execution to the Holy Sepulchre was associated with the events of the passion of Christ, and also had the symbolical meaning as a liturgy. The possibility to pray in sacral places made the pilgrims in some sense similar to the priests in their liturgical activity. The historical legend of search and discovery of the True Cross has its origins in Jerusalem. The story of Helena's discovery of the True Cross was initiated by Western historians Ambrose and Rufinus. E. D. Hunt writes: »There is nothing in history to link Helena with the discovery of the true cross. The story of her 'invention'... is a legend which makes a sudden appearance some sixty years after her death.... But such was the significance attached to the relics of the *lignum crucis* and to the 'invention' tradition in the devotion of pilgrims and the worship of the holy places that it is, almost exclusively, the Helena of legend who has been remembered, obscuring from the record the traces of the historical pilgrim.«<sup>27</sup> The discovery of the True Cross and venerating the Cross as central motifs in in the Western and Eastern traditions of Christianity will be always connected with St. Helena's mission.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, the symbol of the

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Kirchenbauprogramm Kaiser Konstantins der Große«, in *Konstantin der Große. Kaiser einer Epochenwende*, F. SCHULLER, H. WOLFF (Hg.) (Lindeberg, 2007), 176–199.

<sup>24</sup> O. LIMOR, *Holy Journey*, 329.

<sup>25</sup> Only the travel of Paula with Eustochium was related to the search of Old Testament motives.

<sup>26</sup> According to Eusebius, the place where the new basilica was built, had been earlier the site of pagan temple of Aphrodite, it was possibly constructed on initiative of emperor Adrian rebuilding Jerusalem after the Jewish revolts as a Roman city – Aelia Capitalina.

<sup>27</sup> E. D. HUNT, *Holy Land Pilgrimage*, 28

<sup>28</sup> The episode with finding the True Cross has become a part of Byzantine as well as Western tradition. Helena is always represented holding the Cross. The same motive was represented in medieval images of prophet Ilia and widow holding the big cross.

cross has been also associated with Christian martyrdom (pilgrimage to the relics of St. Thekla on the way to Jerusalem, the cult of the martyress St. Maria of Egypt, St. Paraskeva et al.). The third sacral space to be venerated and become a part of building program is Bethlehem as the place of Christ's nativity and the centre of the cult of the Mother of God. All three motives are also connected with gendered initiatives and cults in the Middle Ages. In founding the Church in Bethlehem, Helena also took care of celebrating the role of the Mother of God as well as remembering important events of her life.<sup>29</sup> The idea of venerating the place of nativity has also a symbolical role for the importance of pilgrimage – repeating the way of the wise men from the Orient<sup>30</sup> who brought gifts to Christ as a token/sign of adoration. The noble Roman pilgrim Paula, who after being widowed went with Jerome to the Holy Land, also built several monasteries in Bethlehem.<sup>31</sup>

The way to the Holy Land had its particular meaning, like travelling from the ordinary world to another, sacral one. I have already mentioned the idea of travelling to Jerusalem before death, which has its symbolical connotations. Jerusalem as Christ's world, as the place of His passions and death, is very important for the medieval Christian pilgrims. But leaving the secular world to take monastic vows in Palestine is also a common topos in medieval practice. The Mount of Olives in Jerusalem becomes a special place of female interest and becomes the new centre of Eastern female monasticism and patronage. Melania the Younger founded a convent on the Mount of Olives in the eastern part of Jerusalem, but declined the office of hegoumene (abbess) for herself.<sup>32</sup> In her activity she was trying to imitate the patterns of sanctity demonstrated a century earlier by Helena, attending to the needs of the sisters and helping poor.<sup>33</sup> The monastic foundations established by Melania the Younger and other noble women, especially those on the Mount of Olives, might best be seen as monastic hostels, temporary dwellings for the women, like Mary or Martha, who came to the city as part of their ascetic practice. These women travelers helped to shape Jerusalem as a holy Christian City. Patronage by Western women travelers would not only change the urban fabric of Jerusalem, but also the meaning of and perception of Jerusalem in the West.<sup>34</sup>

The monastic communities in the Holy Land played a huge role in the history of monasticism and pilgrim traditions. For women, monasticism offered an alternative to marriage or remarriage, as well as a way of fulfilling a religious vocation in a world where they were increasingly barred from leadership positions in the church. With regards to the peculiarities of the sacral landscape in Palestine, for Palestinian monks the City was as important as the Desert. The City was Jerusalem, where Jesus Christ died and rose again and where,

<sup>29</sup> In Scythopolis there was built a monastery of the Lady Mary that according to the inscription shows was founded by the »Christ-loving Lady (kyria) Mary and her son Maximus«. The excavations are described in Gerald M. FITZGERALD, *A Sixth Century Monastery in Beth Shean (Scythopolis)* (Philadelphia, 1939). The texts of the inscriptions are on p. 13.

<sup>30</sup> In the Matthew's Gospel is used the term Magi (Matthew 2:1-12), in the Catholic tradition they were called Three kings from Orient, that is also consistent with Old Testament prophecies.

<sup>31</sup> O. LIMOR, *Holy Journey*, 330.

<sup>32</sup> John Philip THOMAS, *Private religious foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C., 1987), 18.

<sup>33</sup> V. Mel. 47 (HUNT, 44)

<sup>34</sup> M. DIETZ, *Wandering monks*, 109.

as a result, the Holy Places contained the power of God in a tangible form. The intractable centrality of the Holy City forced a paradox on the monks. The City was both to be avoided and to be welcomed. It was a place where monastic vocation was both threatened and nurtured.... For inhabitants of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Scythopolis the desert is very close. It is a desert which offers many opportunities for the establishment of growing communities. The monk lived between Desert and City.<sup>35</sup>

For Byzantine and Western women pilgrims, living in monastic communities of the Holy Land made real the exile from the secular world and the politically influenced urban space for a life in the footsteps of Christ, the Mother of God, the apostles, and the Christian martyrs and hermits.

The other important aspect of female activity in the Holy Land was building hospices for pilgrims in the most visited places. Hospitality toward pilgrims was one of the features of Holy Land monasticism, and many monasteries, even some of those in secluded locations, had hospices for pilgrims (Greek *xenodochia*). Famous among them were the hospices built on the Mount of Olives by Melania and in Bethlehem by Paula.<sup>36</sup> Also significant was the pilgrimage of the Byzantine Empress Eudoxia, wife of Theodosius II, who followed in the footsteps of Empress Helena to Jerusalem and invested in the construction of Jerusalem and its environs. She arrived for her second visit to Jerusalem in 441 or 442 after she had fallen into disgrace in Constantinople, and never returned to the Byzantine capital. Empress Eudoxia built numerous churches, monasteries, hospices and hospitals for pilgrims and monks.<sup>37</sup> The idea of hospitality in the Holy Land played a very significant role in medieval pilgrimages, thanks to the generous building and social activities of women.

Female pilgrimage and their activity in Palestine in the period of Late Antiquity were significant for the whole history of pious pilgrimages, for the image of the Holy Land in medieval literature and religiosity, which was associated with the New Testament traditions of leaving everything behind and following Christ, as well as the specific Palestinian traditions of monasticism and hospitality. After the Arab occupation of the Holy Land, the tradition of pious pilgrimages was interrupted and remained only in religious texts. The new era of pilgrimages to Jerusalem started with the Crusades, but it never had such a gendered character as it had in the period of Late Antiquity. For the Byzantine pilgrimage culture, the Holy Land partly lost its significance with the new theological concepts of sacral space.<sup>38</sup> But the concept of symbolic sacral space of the Holy Land and the idea of

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<sup>35</sup> J. BINNS, *Ascetics and Ambassadors*, 79.

<sup>36</sup> O. LIMOR, *Holy Journey*, 332.

<sup>37</sup> She wanted her new home of Jerusalem to rival Constantinople in the grandeur of its monuments, and for her prestige to grow in spite of her political misfortunes. (BINNS, 88; HUNT, 237) Between 431 and 438 she founded also a Church of St. Stephan in Jerusalem (BINNS, 134).

<sup>38</sup> As Gary Vikan emphasizes, after the Arab conquest – in a much-depleted Byzantine empire – the volume, imagery, and piety of portable pilgrimage art changed profoundly. Moreover, the Byzantine church was itself coming to be mystically understood as sacred topography. As the eighth-century patriarch Germanos I wrote, »The church is heaven on earth where the heavenly God “dwells and walks”... The conch is after the manner of the cave of Bethlehem... the holy table is the place where Christ was buried.... Under these circumstances, was pilgrimage, as it was once understood and practiced, really so important anymore?« G. VIKAN, *Early Byzantine Pilgrimage Art*, 87.



Christian pilgrimage had its peculiar influence on the medieval Slavic traditions of religiosity and popular literature genres (Russian хождение *khozhdenie*). In the second part of this article examples of the perception and description of Jerusalem and the Holy Land in medieval Slavic texts from the 12th – 15th centuries will be examined.

### The case study of the pilgrimage by Eufrosinija of Polotsk

Information about the pilgrimage of the Old Russian saint Eufrosinija of Polotsk<sup>39</sup> in the 1170s is included in her *Vita*, little known to Western researchers.<sup>40</sup> Eufrosinija was a princess, the granddaughter of the prince of Polotsk Vseslav, born in 1101 (1105). According to her *Vita*, at 12 years of age she decided to escape her parents' intentions to find her a husband and she left her home, choosing instead to take monastic vows in a convent. During her life as a nun she founded one monastery and one convent in Polotsk, she became the abbess at her convent and strongly respected and venerated cause of her pious life and religious and social activity. Due to her efforts there was brought to Polotsk the famous icon of the Mother of God, which, according to tradition, had been painted by the Evangelist Luke. The pilgrimage to the Holy Land via Constantinople was undertaken by Eufrosinija when she was already old and she was aiming to »reach the Holy City Jerusalem and to venerate the Holy Sepulchre and all saint places, to see and kiss them and there to end the life.« She died in Jerusalem in 1173, and later her body was taken from the Holy Land back to Rus' – to the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra in 1187, and back to Polotsk only in 1910.<sup>41</sup> The story of her pilgrimage might be partly legendary,<sup>42</sup> but it seems to implement the medieval concepts of the perception of Jerusalem.

According to the opinion of specialists on Church history and the literature of medieval Russia, the *Vita of Eufrosinija* is a monument of Old Russian hagiography from the pre-Mongol period.<sup>43</sup> There are at least four versions of her *Vita* and more than 130 copies

<sup>39</sup> Polotsk is a historical city in modern Belarus, situated on the Dvina river.

<sup>40</sup> George P. Majeska shortly mentions the episode with the pilgrimage of »Princess Evfrosinija of Polotsk, a pious matron of princely blood and later a nun, whose lifelong wish to venerate the relics of Constantinople and the holy places of Palestine was finally fulfilled« in the introduction to his study, *Russian travellers to Constantinople in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries* (Dumbarton Oaks, 1994), 3. In Russian the most important articles about life of Eufrosinija were written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, here I could mention some of them: Konstantin S. SERBINOVICH, *Istoricheskiye svedenija o zhizni prepodobnoj Evfrosinii, kniazhni polotskoj* (*Historical data about the life of rev. Evfrosinija, princess of Polotsk*) (St-Petersburg, 1841); Dmitry DMITRIEV, *Sviataja knjaginja Evfrosinija* (*Saint princess Evfrosinija*) (Sergeev Posad, 1907); Evgeniy POSELJANIN, *Prepodobnaja Evfrosinija, knjaginja Polotskaja* (*Reverend Evfrosinija, princess of Polotsk*) (St-Petersburg, 1910); Mihail D. PRISELKOV, *Očerki po tserkovno-politicheskoj istorii Kievskoj Rusi X – XII vv.* (*Essays on church-state history of Kievan Rus' 10 – 12th cc.*) (St-Petersburg, 1913), 315–316 etc. The newest works on this subject: Aleksej A. MEL'NIKOV, *Prepodobnaja Evfrosinija Polockaja*, (Minsk, 1997). Publications of Her *Vita*: *Pamiatniki starinnoj russkoj literaturi*, ed. By G. KUSHELEVA-BEZBORODKO (St-Petersburg, 1862), vol. 4, 172–179. Mihail DUBROVSKIJ, *Zhitie prepodobnoj Evfrosinii Polotskoj* (Polotsk, 1877); Alexey SAPUNOV, *Zhitie Evfrosinii Polotskoj* (Vitebsk, 1888).

<sup>41</sup> *Perenesenije sviatih moshej prepodobnoj Evfrosinii iz Kijeva v Polotsk* (*Transition of saint relics of Ven. Evfrosinija from Kiev to Polotsk*) (Vilnius, 1910).

<sup>42</sup> G. P. MAJESKA, *Russian travellers*, 3.

<sup>43</sup> Evgenij E. GOLUBINSKIJ, *Istorija russkoj cerkvi* (*History of Russian Church*) (Moscow, 1880), Vol. 1, 771; Alexey I. SOBOLEVSKIJ, *Istorija russkogo literaturnogo jazika* (*History of Russian literary language*) (Leningrad, 1980), 57.

extant. To the first version of belong two manuscripts from the middle and the end of the 15th century.<sup>44</sup> For this study I am using the published edition of the oldest of the first versions of the Vita.<sup>45</sup>

The episodes in the Vita of the 12th century saint Eufrosinija have many common elements with the image of holy women, implemented by Empress Helena in the 4th century. She was the one who founded monasteries and churches, contributed to development of female monasticism in Old Russia, and she commissioned a large cross (edged with gold and silver, with little particles of relics from the True Cross, from the tomb of the Mother of God, etc.) for her religious foundation in the Spas Monastery in Polotsk in 1161 with an important inscription of the master who had made this cross.<sup>46</sup> This action can be associated with the gendered role in the transition of Cross, initiated by the legend of Helena, which has many examples in both the Eastern and Western traditions.<sup>47</sup> Also, Eufrosinija donated icons, took care of orphans and the poor, and undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land at an advanced age.

The story of Eufrosinija's travels started with the idea to end her life in Jerusalem, so her departure for Jerusalem was represented as a way to another world. All of the people were crying and asking her not to leave them alone, which was similar to the procedure of farewell with dying persons. She travelled to Jerusalem together with her brother David and sister Eupraxia. The author emphasized the fact that it seemed to him miraculous or even mysterious, that Eufrosinija, who had never left her city before, now started her way to Constantinople and Jerusalem, having taken »male strength.« In Constantinople she visited Agia Sophia and venerated other churches, asked for the blessing of patriarch and bought some kind of incense and a golden censer and then went to Jerusalem. Having approached Jerusalem, she sent her servant Michael to the patriarch saying, »Your Holiness! Have mercy on me, order that the gates of Christ be open for me!« And he so ordered, fulfilling her request. Having arrived to the gates, she fell on the earth saying »Lord Jesus Christ! Let it not to be a sin, that I have dared to walk in thy footsteps and come into this Holy City!« This episode represents the notion of pilgrims to imitate Christ's way (*imitatio Christi*).

Eufrosinija and her companions kissed the gates and came into the city and went to the Holy Sepulchre. And having arrived, she bowed down and kissed the Tomb of the Lord,

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<sup>44</sup> Scientific Library of Moscow State University, NB MGU, 1311; National Library of Russia, GPB, col. OLD-PB, F CLXXXV.

<sup>45</sup> A. A. MELNIKOV, *Kniga zhitij i hozhdenij* (Minsk, 1994), 25–41 (he used original The manuscript collection of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Russian State Library (RGB im. Lenina), Moscow, F. 113 № 632, 206–225), there is also a web-version of the publication: [http://krotov.info/acts/12/3/evfrosinia\\_polozk.htm](http://krotov.info/acts/12/3/evfrosinia_polozk.htm).

<sup>46</sup> Dmitry I. DOVGIHALLO, *Krest prepodobnoj Evfrosinii, kniazhni Polotskoj* (*The cross of blessed Evfrosinija, the princess of Polotsk*) (Vitebsk, 1895). <http://spas-monastery.by/library/books.php?id=1226>.

<sup>47</sup> There are a lot of historical examples of female initiative in ordering and donating crosses to the convents and monasteries, e.g. Byzantine empresses Theodora (540 – 548) and Sophia (530 – 601), see: Lynda GARLAND, *Byzantine empresses. Women and power in Byzantium A. D. 527 – 1204* (N. Y., 1999), 45, 48. On request of the Serbian queen Helen of Anjou (1236 – 1314) there was made the big cross for the monastery Sopoćani, founded by the king Uroš I (1243 – 1276) with five particles from the True Cross inside. It is interesting that inscription on this cross is in some way similar to the Eufrosinija's one, at least the part »sanctio«, supposing the penalty for the ones who would try to encroach it. Franz MIKLOSICH, *Monumenta serbica* (Vienna, 1858), 70.

and so did her companions. And she burned the incense and some frankincense in the golden censer and, having gone out she stayed in the Russian monastery of the Holy Mother of God. And on the second day Eufrosinija went for the second time to the Holy Sepulchre and did the same: she bowed down and venerated, and burned the incense and then left. And on the third day she did the same and having given much gold and having placed the golden censer on the Tomb with various kinds of incense, she turned her eyes, and with her arms raised up to the sky, and sighed with tears from the depths of her heart, saying: »Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, born by the Virgin Mary for our salvation! Thou said: ‘Ask and you shall receive.’ ... So I am asking from Thou, O merciful one, to finish the place of my request: take the spirit from me in Your Holy City Jerusalem and resettle me to Your highest (heavenly) city of Jerusalem and let me die in the bosom of the patriarch Abraham with all saints. Amen.«

The idea of »dying in Jerusalem« has a deep symbolical or even mystical meaning to repeat the episodes of the Saviour’s life, his way of the cross, the way to the passion and death on the one hand and the way to Resurrection into the eternal, heavenly life on the other hand. The last fragment of the Vita represents this concept very bitterly. Eufrosinija spent three days at the Holy Sepulchre (the three days that Christ had been lying dead in the tomb), which now brought her closer to the goal of Christian life – the salvation of the soul in the »heavenly Jerusalem.«

After praying in the Holy Sepulchre, Eufrosinija very soon became sick and could just lie in the convent of Mother of God awaiting death. And soon her prayers about death in Jerusalem were heard by God, who sent her an angel, saying the words of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary: »Blessed art thou among women«, and also, »and blessed be thy work! And the gates have been opened already, and all angels together gathered, holding candles, waiting to meet thou. And the gift that you’re praying for by God, you will achieve.« The fact of salvation preached by the angel here was motivated by the pious work Eufrosinija had been doing during her life (asceticism, monasticism, religious foundations, social work). And meeting death in Jerusalem (the closest way to the heavenly Jerusalem) is a particular gift for her devotional life.

The next episode is much more historical and real in its description. Now being sure about dying in Jerusalem, the blessed Eufrosinija began to look for a place to be buried. Very soon she sent her people to the Holy Lavra of Saint Sabbas saying: »The time is near when God makes me repose. Would you allow me to be buried in the Church of Saint Sabbas?« And the monks from the monastery answered so: »It is forbidden by St Sabbas to admit any women. But there is the monastery of the Holy Mother of God of Theodosius the mutual one, where holy women repose: the mother of Saint Sabbas, the mother of Saint Theodosius, and the mother of saints Kosma and Damian named Pheodotia, and also many other saints; there you should lie.«<sup>48</sup> This episode seems to be historically reliable. The Lavra of St. Sabbas had very strict rules against eunuchs, youths, and women. The Typikon of the monastery denied women access to the main

<sup>48</sup> This monastery is mentioned also in gendered description of Jerusalem in Bđinski sbornik, *Ghent Slavonic Ms 408*, ff. 240.

monastery and to its principal dependency, even for prayer. Moreover, it was forbidden to the monks to visit convents for any purpose, or else carry on correspondence with a woman, or have any relationship with women (even spiritual ones, e.g., to hear their confessions) under threat of expulsion from the brotherhood.<sup>49</sup> The necessity of being buried in the sacral space of monastery is characteristic for the Middle Ages. The right to be buried in monasteries or churches according to Byzantine practice was given only to patriarchs and bishops, Christian rulers, venerated clerics and founders (*ktitoroi*).<sup>50</sup> The location of the coffin inside the sacral space of monastery had a special honourable significance, and the presence of the coffin promoted numerous prayers by the monks for the salvation of the soul of those buried there.<sup>51</sup>

Saint Eufrosinija died in the Russian monastery of the Mother of God and probably was buried in the monastery of St. Theodosius. Several years later her relics were taken back to Rus'.

### **The description of holy places in Jerusalem from the *Bdinski sbornik***

The collection of vitae of female saints called the *Bdinski sbornik*<sup>52</sup> was written in Bulgaria in 1360 at the request of Anna, the wife of the Bulgarian tsar Ivan Stracimir, possibly as a gift for Theodora, the tsar's mother and the first wife of Ivan's father Stracimir. Theodora took monastic vows after Stracimir's second marriage under the name of Theophano.<sup>53</sup> The *Bdinski sbornik* consists mainly of vitae of women-martyrs and hermits, most of which are characteristically apocryphal. Among them are the vitae of saints Theodora, Thekla, Petka, Barbara, Juliana, Marina, Taisiya, Theothano, Eufrosinija, Ekaterina, Juliana, Maria of Egypt, and Eupraksia. The last part of *sbornik* consists of a description of the holy places in the Holy Land.<sup>54</sup> This last part was of particular interest to researcher Maria Petrova. She noticed that there are eighteen women mentioned in the description, the most important of course is the Mother of God. The composition of the text indicates the significance of the female presence in sacral topography. If the Vitae show the place of women saints in the Church calendar, or more precisely in sacral time, the last part of the

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<sup>49</sup> *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, ed. by John THOMAS and Angela CONSTANTINIDES HERO (Dumbarton Oaks, 2000). № 42, 1314, 1316. The prohibition to bury women in monasteries was formulated already by Justinian (Just. Nov. 123).

<sup>50</sup> See: Johannes von ZHISMANN, *Das Stifterrecht in der morgenländischen Kirche* (Wien, 1888), 61–63.

<sup>51</sup> Danica POPOVIĆ, *Srpski vladarski grob u srednjem veku (Serbian rulers' coffin in the Middle Ages)* (Belgrade, 1992).

<sup>52</sup> The manuscript *Bdinski Sbornik* is at University Library of Gent (Belgium), codex gandavensis slavicus 408. The facsimile edition of the manuscript is represented at the web-site: <http://adore.ugent.be/OpenURL/app?id=archive.ugent.be:973E9242-B062-11E1-9EF1-99BDAAF23FF7&type=carousel&scrollto=1>. The manuscript was published for the first time in 1973 by Ivan Dujčev, see: Ivan DUJČEV, *Bdinski sbornik. Ghent Slavonic Ms 408, A.D. 1360*. (London, 1972) (facsimile edition); Jan L. SCHARPE, Frans VYNCKE, *Bdinski Sbornik. An Old-Slavonic menologium of women saints (Ghent University Library Ms. 408, A. D. 1360)* (Brugge, 1973) (edition). Bibliography to the edition and manuscript see here: <http://bdinski.obdurodon.org/>.

<sup>53</sup> It could explain the fact that vitae of Theodora and empress Theophano are included in *Bdinski sbornik*.

<sup>54</sup> It is called »Slovo o mesteh sviatih izhe v Ierusalime grade«, *Ghent Slavonic Ms 408*, ff. 234–245.

text can be understood as the perception of the female role and their participation *in loco sancto*, in sacral space.<sup>55</sup>

The Holy Sepulchre represents the first and central place of the »description«, as it does for the real pilgrimages in the Middle Ages. And here are mentioned the legend of Saint Maria of Egypt, who was not allowed by the angel to approach to the tomb of Jesus, and the place where Maria Magdalena saw Christ for the first time after the Resurrection (f. 235). The episode with discovery of the True Cross is recounted for some reason without the participation of Empress Helena, although there is mention of the episode with the resurrection of the dead girl on the »right« cross<sup>56</sup> and St. Cyriacus (f 236).

Numerous places in the description of the landscape in the *Bdinski Sbornik* are connected with the Mother of God, her place of birth, her mourning for Christ, her assumption, her illness, her tomb. The order of the places corresponds to the directions of the symbolical pilgrimage in the geographical landscape of the Holy Land – there is no attempt to follow the chronological order of the events.<sup>57</sup>

Obviously the text is connected with the main idea of the book – the stories of »spiritual and passionate women.« At the same time it seems clear that the author did not set himself the task of describing a real historical image of the city of Jerusalem, which had barely survived the Arab occupation and the Crusaders' invasion. As the vitae of saint women, the text is also an apocryphal description of a Holy City, almost entirely within the framework of New Testament episodes. The author avoids any historical connotations: such a famous historical figure and Christian saint as Empress Helena is not mentioned here even in the context of stories about the Holy Sepulchre or the Holy Cross. Mention of famous monasteries and churches and their founders also rests beyond the symbolical image of the Holy City. The sacral geography of the Holy Land in the description is most detailed in connection with the life and death of the Mother of God. Besides focusing on several female figures from the Bible, the author also mentions some of the episodes connected with the subject of his vitae collection, especially with the lives of female martyrs, ascetic nuns, and female hermits (e.g., St. Mary of Egypt in the context of Jesus' tomb, the grave of St. Pelagiya, etc.).

### **Episodes and description of the Holy Land in the Gorički zbornik**

As with the previous collection of vitae, the Gorički zbornik was written at the request of a woman – Princess Helena Balšić (ruler of Zeta, contemporary Montenegro) in 1442 by

<sup>55</sup> See: Maja PETROVA, »The Bdinski sbornik: A Fourteenth-Century Legendary of Women Saints: a Case Study«, *Otium: časopis za povjest svakodnevnice* 4, 1-2/ (1996): 8–9.

<sup>56</sup> In some versions of the legend it is not strongly defined if it was a youth (*Acts of Judas Cyriacus*) or a woman (*Rufinus*) who was resurrected by touching the »true« cross. The same episode with a dead girl is contained e.g. in one other South Slav manuscript (the Serbian, 15<sup>th</sup> century) but together with describing of discovery of St. Cross by Helena: Russian State Library, RGB f. 178, № 10272, ff. 46–47.

<sup>57</sup> In Slavic practice exist also the collections devoted to the feasts and miracles of Mother of God that have similar context. E.g. there is a Serbian manuscript from 1425, so called »Bogorodichnik«, e.g. devoted to Mother of God, that was ordered also by a woman – noble lady Maria Lesheva – for the church of Mother of God that she had founded on the island Kom, Montenegro), it is stored in Moscow, State History Museum, Muz 3483.

her spiritual father Nikon of Jerusalem. The manuscript, which has not yet been published, is in the Library of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SANU 446).<sup>58</sup>

The third part of the manuscript contains a commentary by Nikon about the foundation of the church of St. George by Helena, situated on Lake Skadar. The first episode consists of the story of the discovery of the True Cross by Empress Helena in Jerusalem.<sup>59</sup> This part of Helena's vita including the discovery of the cross and the foundation of a church was also incorporated into another Slavic manuscript, Chud.21, that also has a gender oriented character.<sup>60</sup> Possibly, the necessity of including this episode in this second manuscript is connected with the main subject of both of the manuscripts – religious foundations by pious women: in manuscript Chud.21 there is a fragment of the Vita of the Byzantine Empress Irena (Piroska) and her foundation monastery Pantocrator in Constantinople.

The Gorički zbornik includes also a narrative about the churches of Jerusalem in the third part of the third epistle by Nikon with cosmographical/topographical commentary on the sacral landscape of Jerusalem.<sup>61</sup> An analysis of the description of holy places in Jerusalem found in different South Slavonic collections has already been published by Maja Petrova,<sup>62</sup> so there is no need to repeat it here.

During the period of Latin rule in Jerusalem the notion of pilgrimage to the Holy Land did not attract as many travelers from Byzantine Empire as it did from the medieval Slavic world, which remained fascinated by the texts and symbols glorifying the Holy City. The role of female pilgrims from the first centuries of the new era was very important for forming the sacral Christian geography in Palestine and its specific gendered discourse.

Discussing the issue of the role and image of Jerusalem in Christian female pilgrimages as a sacral landscape for pilgrims seems to indicate that the Holy City itself had been formed with participation of numerous women. Medieval Slavic miscellanies often included the vitae of female martyrs and their connection to Jerusalem. The importance of pilgrimage to Jerusalem for medieval pious women, especially nuns, made also the hagiographers pay special attention to the real and sacral geography of Jerusalem. Medieval Slavic manuscripts as well as spiritual letters written at the request of pious women, usually for their own convents, glorified the holy women, who as martyrs or founders contributed to formation of Jerusalem as a center of real and spiritual pilgrimages.

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<sup>58</sup> The description of the manuscript see in: Dimitry BOGDANOVIĆ, *Inventar ćirilskih rukopisa u Jugoslaviji (XI – XVII veka)* (Beograd, 1982), № 282, 34. The facsimile edition till the very last moment could have been found on the web site: [http://stari.mitropolija.me/duhovnost/goricki/default\\_1.html](http://stari.mitropolija.me/duhovnost/goricki/default_1.html)

<sup>59</sup> The episode consists as well the legend of Constantine and pope Silvester, the story of the first Council in Nicaea, etc. SANU 446, ff. 88–101.

<sup>60</sup> State Historical Museum (GIM), Moscow, Chud. 21, f. 227.

<sup>61</sup> According to the opinion of the Serbian researcher N. Radošević, this description of Jerusalem is a translation of the compilation of Byzantine historical texts that had been written for Byzantine empress Maria of Alania (1053 – 1103), see: Ninoslava RADOŠEVIĆ, »Kozmografski i geografski odlomci Goričkog zbornika (Cosmographic and geographic fragments of Gorički zbornik)«, *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 20 (1981): 172–173.

<sup>62</sup> Maja PETROVA, »An Unknown Copy of the Description of Jerusalem by Constantine of Kosteneč«, *Byzantinoslavica* 59 (1998): 225–270.

## Sažetak

ULOGA I SLIKA SVETE ZEMLJE U SREDNJOVJEKOVNIM TEKSTOVIMA  
O ŽENSKIM HODOČAŠĆIMA

*U članku se raspravlja o doprinosu žena pri formiranju lika kasnoantičkog i srednjovjekovnog Jeruzalema – kršćanskog svetog grada – zahvaljujući ulozi žena kao utemeljiteljica samostana, crkava i socijalnih ustanova u Svetoj Zemlji. Povijest Jeruzalema se u kršćanskom kontekstu temelji na sakralizaciji mjesta i objekata, povezanih s pričama iz Novog zavjeta. Srednjovjekovna su hodočašća u Svetu Zemlju vezana uz koncept o pridržavanju puta Krista i »imitatio Christi«. Sakralna geografija formira se u ovoj regiji pod utjecajem sakralnih tekstova uz djelatnost pobožnih žena, počevši sa svetom Jelenom – majkom cara Konstantina. Najviše pažnje posvećeno je ulozi i slici Jeruzalema u srednjovjekovnim slavenskim hagiografskim tekstovima o ženskim hodočašćima (život ruske princeze i redovnice Evfrosinije) i opisima sakralnog područja grada u rukopisima, naručenim za južnoslavenske vladarice, vjerojatno za ženske samostane u kontekstu formiranja modela ženske svetosti i ženskog pobožnog ponašanja.*

**KLJUČNE RIJEČI:** *ženska hodočašća, Jeruzalem, relikvije, sakralni prostor, sv. Evfrosinija Polotskaja, Bdinski sbornik, Gorički zbornik, Sveta Zemlja, monaške ustanove, pobožnost.*