

South Slavic Exiles and the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern Period

In several hagiographies and historical writings from the early modern period there are references to South Slavic churchmen moving away from the Ottoman territories in Southeastern Europe to distant areas governed by Orthodox Christian emperors or nobles. We know that Constantine of Kostenets (ca. 1380-1431), a well-known writer and a disciple of the head of the Orthodox Church of the Second Bulgarian Empire, Patriarch Evtimiy of Tarnovo, migrated to Stefan Lazarević's Serbian Despotate a decade after the 1393 Ottoman conquest of Tarnovo. Other clergymen writing between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries moved to the Danubian Principalities, Hungary or the Tsardom of Muscovy. This paper focuses on South Slavic narratives of exile and explores the ways in which they were used by the writers as a vehicle for articulating ideas on power and religious identity.