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Kristina Nikolovska  
| New Europe College

## From 'Son of Perdition' to 'Tsar': South Slavic representations of Ottoman Sultans in Church Slavonic paratextual writings (1350-1750)

A large corpus of paratextual writings that survive in Church Slavonic religious manuscripts provide unique records of the Ottoman wars in Europe and of the Ottomans' subsequent rule in Southeast Europe. These accounts took the form of prefaces, colophons and manuscript marginalia, and were considered significant historical sources during the nationalist movements in the Balkans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when a number of marginalia compilations were published. Previous scholarship has largely read these inscriptions as a literature which accurately and truthfully describes the difficult lives of Slavic subjects under Ottoman rule. According to this view, the relationship between the South Slavs and the Ottoman administration was always one of conflict, opposition and resistance. This paper aims to complicate such a monolithic understanding of these historical sources by bringing into focus a set of accounts in which South Slavic writers used neutral voice, or even legitimated the rule of the Ottoman Sultan. The political relations between the Ottoman state and the Orthodox Churches, I argue, were fundamental to the ways in which South Slavic writers represented Ottoman power in their paratextual literature.



**Kristina Nikolovska, PhD:** Since October 2015 Kristina Nikolovska has been an ENTE (Europe Next to Europe) research fellow at the New Europe College, Institute for Advanced Study in Bucharest. In March 2016 she was a visiting scholar of the Hilandar Research Library at the Ohio State University. Nikolovska received her joint doctoral degree from the University of Kent, Canterbury and Freie Universität Berlin in November 2015. Her doctoral thesis *'Let it be known': Interrogating Historical Writing in Church Slavonic paratexts of Southeastern Europe (1371-1711)* explores the relationship between marginal inscriptions left behind in religious manuscripts and the early modern historiographical traditions of the South Slavs. In 2010, Nikolovska received her MA degree in *Identity, Culture and Power* from UCL, the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies (SSEES). Before moving to London in 2008, she worked as a journalist in her hometown Skopje, where she also completed her undergraduate studies in *General and Comparative Literature* at the University of St. Cyril and Methodius University.

Thu

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17:30

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