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TOWARDS FORMER BEAUTY

THREE YEARS SINCE THE FIRE



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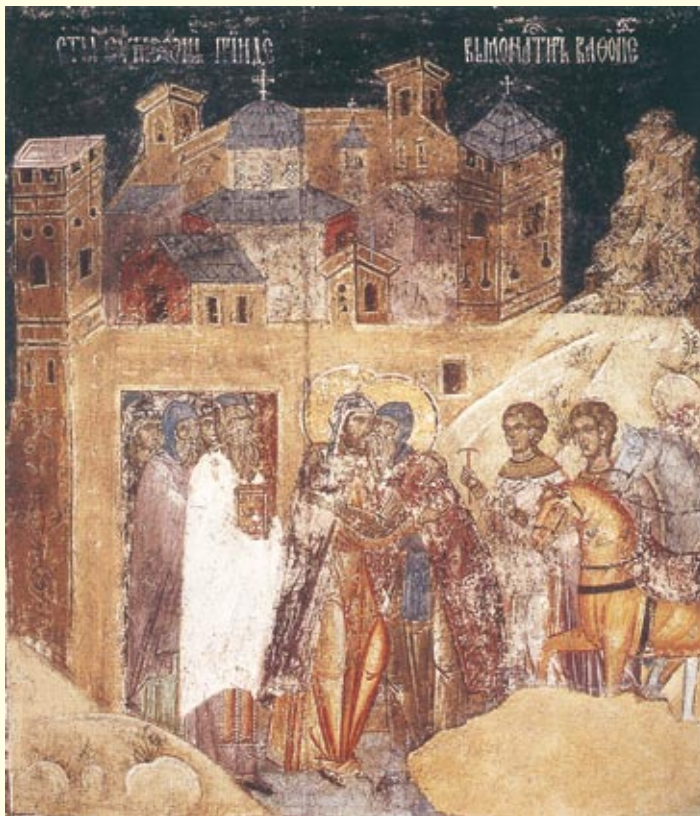
DEVASTATING FIRE IN 2004

In the night between March 3 and 4, 2004, Hilandar monastery was caught up in a great fire. Tongues of flame from one of the chimneys belonging to the northwestern Abbot's Lodge (Hegumenariya) swept through wooden beams under the stone-coated roof, spreading onto the entire northern half of the monastery complex. The devastating blaze inflicted grave damage on 54,5% of the complex, destroying 5897 out of 10813 square meters of usable space. Tiers of spiritual, architectural and artistic heritage laid down mostly between the end of the 16th and the mid-19th century, with certain, especially lower parts, built much earlier, perished in flames, one after another. As many as four chapels were severely damaged or completely destroyed, along with the oldest preserved monastic cells on Mount Athos dating back to the end of the 16th century.

The 2004 fire was the largest since 1722, when almost the entire southern wing of the monastery had been burnt to the ground.



HISTORY



Meeting of St Simeon and St Sava in the Holy Monastery of Vatopedi, fresco, 1621, the monastery's refectory



The founding charter of Stefan Nemanja written on parchment, 1198, photograph of the lost original

Hilandar is one of the 20 monasteries situated on the peninsula of Mount Athos in north-eastern Greece. Mount Athos, also known as the Holy Mountain, is a self-governed monastic state under the auspices of the Hellenic Republic. Even though monks began populating Mount Athos in the 6th century, the oldest monastery preserved, that of Megisti Lavra, was founded in 963. Mount Athos has always been a pan-Orthodox and a multinational community. All of the resident monks acquire citizenship of the Hellenic Republic. The ethnicity of monasteries founders and Athonite fraternities infer that 17 monasteries are deemed Greek and three Slavic, including the Serbian Holy Monastery of Hilandar.

Today's Hilandar was founded in 1198. After being ordained into monastic life by the name of Simeon, former Serbian Grand Zhupan Stefan Nemanja, founder of the Nemanjic dynasty,

ceded the throne to his son Stefan the First-Crowned. Nemanja decided to follow in his youngest son Rastko's footsteps, who had settled on Mount Athos under the monastic name of Sava. Soon after Nemanja joined his son on Mount Athos, they turned to Byzantine Emperor Alexios III Angelus for permission to found a monastery which would serve as a home to Serbian men who wished to commit themselves to the monastic life of Athonites. The Emperor granted their plea and passed a chrysobull in 1198, which stated that Simeon and Sava were given the ruins of deserted monastery Hilandar and the "holy place in Milea to be a gift to the Serbs in perpetuity".

With the financial support of King Stefan the First-Crowned, the monastery was restored and the new church consecrated in 1198. At the same time, the foundations for latter enlargements were set, including those undertaken by King Milutin at the beginning of 14th century, and Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic in late 14th century. Generally speaking, Hilandar resembles a medieval fortress. Given that the restoration and reconstruction of different portions of the monastic complex spanned many epochs, the monastery itself represents an impressive mixture of various architectural styles. In course of its long history, Hilandar has suffered damage time and time again in consequence of conquering, plundering, earthquakes and fires, always to be restored to its perennial beauty.

HERITAGE

The Holy Monastery of Hilandar, like other monastic institutions on Mount Athos, represents an abundant treasury of sacral art. Alongside artistic and architectural masterpieces and other valuables that are being kept in Hilandar churches and lodges, the Treasury contains 1548 manuscripts, including 507 charters, 82 old printed books including 6 incunabula (books printed in 15th century), about 800 icons, and more than 300 various artifacts.

The miraculous icon of the Holy Mother of God "The Three-Handed" (Triheirousa), patron of Hilandar, is being cherished as the most sacred greatest monastery's possession and kept in the Main Church as such.

From the 13th century on, Hilandar grew to become one of the leading Orthodox monasteries owing to the ample donations made by both the Nemanjic dynasty rulers and Byzantine Emperors. After the Serbian state came under the Ottoman rule, Hilandar continued to receive support. It was Serbian princess Mara Brankovic, wife of Sultan Murat II, who bestowed considerable donations upon the Monastery. Following her death, Hilandar received patronage from Vlach, Moldavian and, subsequently, Russian rulers. During the centuries, Hilandar was aided by many religious followers and pilgrims from the whole Orthodox world.

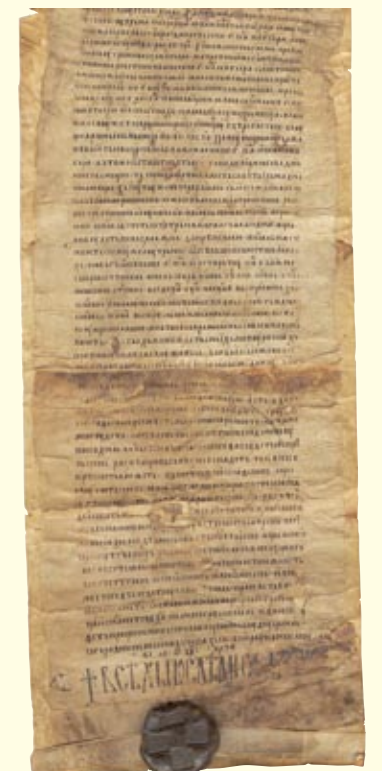
The role that Athonite Nemanjic's foundation played in the Orthodox Christianity, particularly with reference to Serbian Orthodox Church and Serbian culture, has been immense. The Holy Monastery of Hilandar is of an invaluable importance for the Serbian people. It represents a pillar of and a living testament to their spiritual, national, historic and cultural identity, embodying the wealthiest treasury of the centuries-old heritage.

Hilandar has also been closely connected with the spirituality and culture of other Orthodox Slavic peoples. Both Hilandar monks and multitude of preserved manuscripts exercised major influence on the Orthodox and especially Slavic culture over the centuries.

Mount Athos, along with all its monasteries including Hilandar, has entered the UNESCO's World Heritage List.



Jesus Christ, icon, third quarter of the 13th century, the monastery's treasury

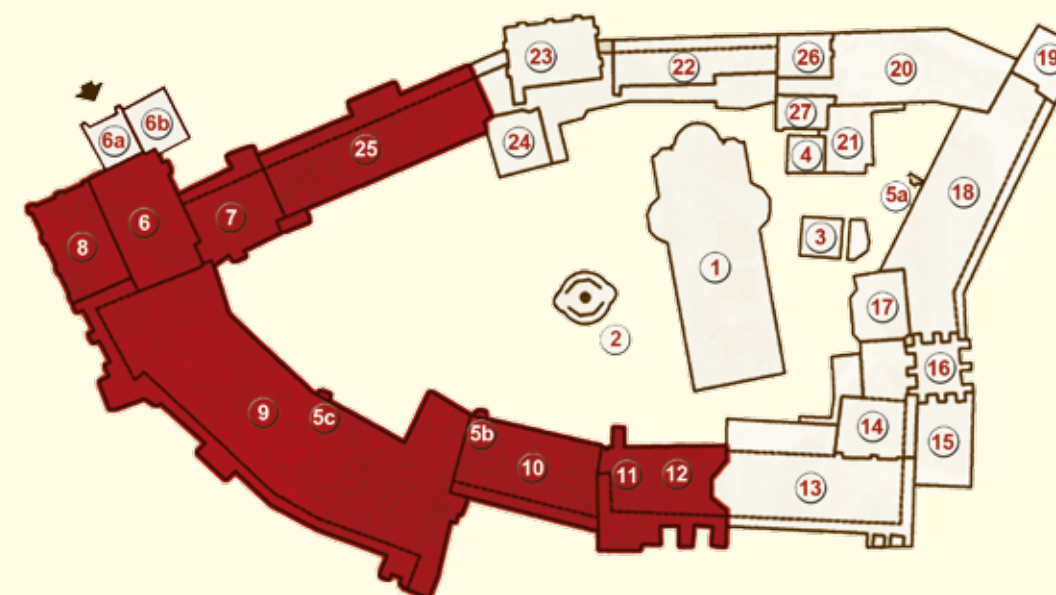


Typikon of Karyes, charter, beginning of the 13th century, the monastery's treasury

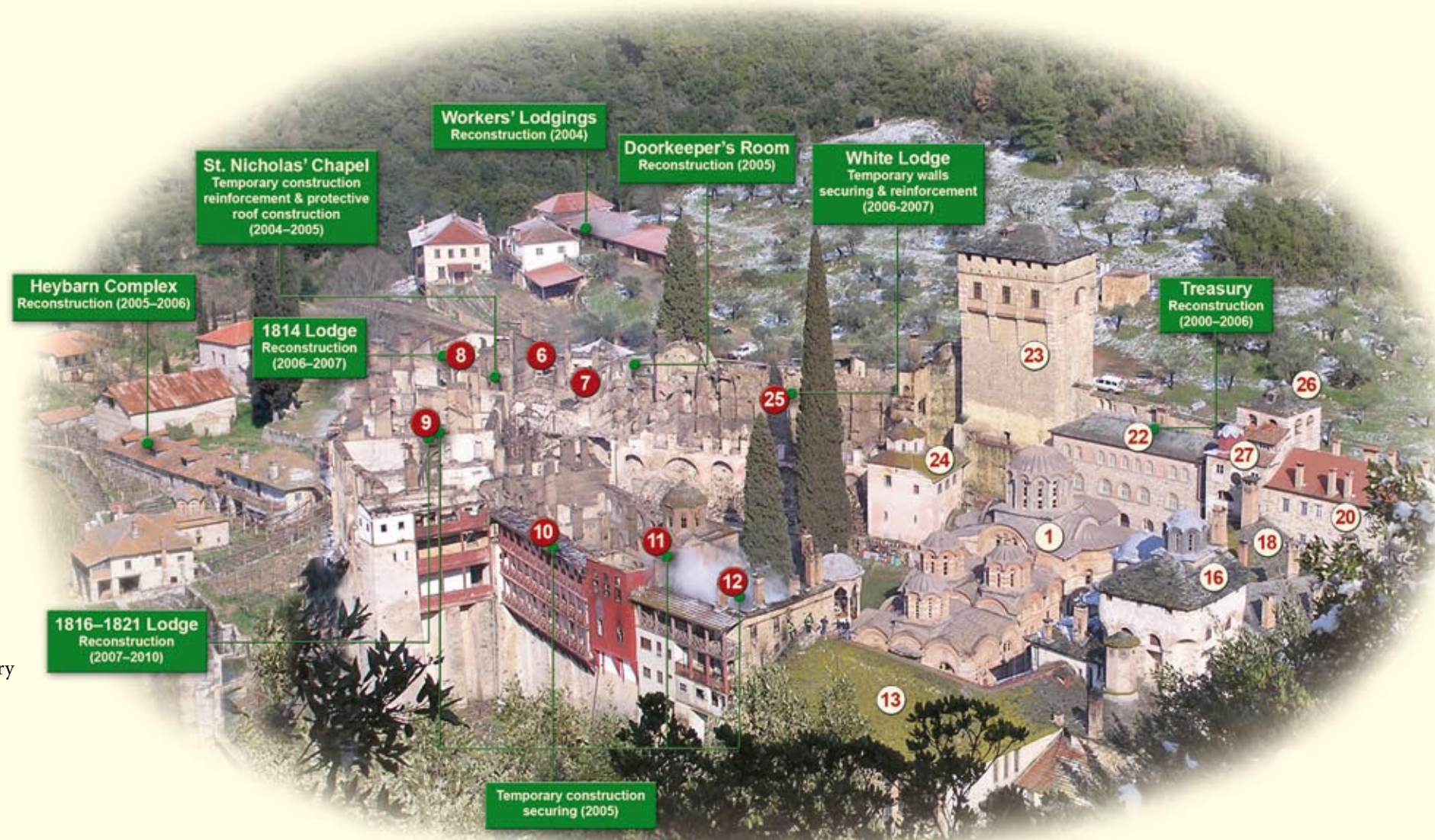
FIRE DAMAGE AND MAIN WORKS

The list of Hilandar's objects:

- 1 Main (Saint King Milutin's) church – beginning of the 14th century
- 2 Phiale – 1784, 1847
- 3 Cistern – 1682
- 4 Saint Sava's Well – probably from the time of the old monastery, floor before 1757
- 5a Drinking fountain in southern part
- 5b Drinking fountain near bakery – end of 18th century
- 5c Stone-clad drinking fountain – 1816
- 6 Entrance and gates – 1603, 1627/1628
- 6a Vestibule of the first gate – 1635
- 6b Doorkeeper's Room – probably after 1809
- 7 Old Lodge – beginning of the 14th century, 1816–1821
- 8 1814 Lodge
- 9 1816–1821 Lodge
- 10 1640 Lodge (Dohia)
- 11 St. Dimitrios' and St. Sava's of Serbia chapels – 1652, 1774
- 12 Abbot's Lodge – 1651/1652, 1779, 1891
- 13 Refectory – around 1310, around 1620
- 14 Structures by the Refectory – around 1652
- 15 Large kitchen – 17th century
- 16 St. George's Tower – around 1200, 1671
- 17 Holy Apostles and the Nativity of the Theotokos chapels – 1784 or 1792–1804
- 18 Southern Lodge – 17th century, 1784
- 19 Paisie's Cell – before 1643
- 20 Hospital – 1646, 1893
- 21 Ecclesiarch's House – 1646, 1810–1812
- 22 Treasury – 1970
- 23 Saint Sava's Tower – around 1200, beginning of the 14th century, around 1680
- 24 Holy Archangels' Church – probably endowment of emperor Dusan, 14th century
- 25 "White Lodge" – renewed 1598
- 26 Bell tower – 1757
- 27 Saint Simeon's Cell – around 1200



● damaged ○ undamaged ■ main works



RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS



Doorkeeper's Room, interior



Workers' Lodgings



Treasury, an exhibition setting



Treasury, an exhibition setting

Three years following the devastating fire, the progress in rebuilding the complex has become visible even to the eye of a common visitor. The first two years were spent in preparing ground for the reconstruction – clearing the ruins, restoring the basic infrastructure and creating conditions for additional construction work. The work done in 2006 and at the beginning of 2007 has produced vast results, as major architectural units and edifices are being gradually restored to the shape they had prior to the fire.

The numerous workshops and dormitories for accommodating workers to be engaged in the project were rebuilt and completed by the end of 2004. In the mid 2005, the Doorkeeper's Room (Portarnitsa) at the main entrance gate to the Monastery was reconstructed in order to serve temporarily as a reception area and a bookshop.

The Reconstruction of the Treasury

The part of the Hilandar Treasury has been put up for display in April 2006 following a detailed reconstruction of the building that started back in 2000. Owing to the poor quality of the material used in its construction in 1970 and unstable microclimate conditions inside the Treasury premises, showpieces were compromised due to increased levels of humidity and temperature fluctuations. The reconstruction entailed the draining of the soil, enhancing the thickness of the walls, installation of modern systems for keeping temperature and humidity at optimum levels, advanced fire-prevention and anti-burglary systems, as well as complete refurbishment of the interior.



Treasury, an outside view

The Heybarn Complex (Senara)

In April 2006, fully reconstructed the Heybarn Lodge (Senara) originating from the mid-eighteenth century, tucked under the northern Hilandarian walls - was put back to use. Once dilapidated and abandoned edifice built in stone, mud and wood, it grew into useful premises furnished with contemporary equipment, while still fully retaining its original and authentic ambient.

The Heybarn Lodge, with its 55 beds, is designated to accommodate visitors to the monastery. The remaining two buildings within the Heybarn complex were also renovated. In April 2007, the Mule-drivers' House (Hatlarnica), meant to provide accommodation for visitors as well as members of ever-growing Hilandarian monastic community, received its finishing touches. The restoration of the Barn edifice (Shtala), which currently serves as a temporary storage space for building material, machinery and tools, had taken place beforehand. It will be turned into yet another guest house with approximately 50 beds after the full reconstruction of the monastery.



Heybarn Lodge after reconstruction



Heybarn Complex before reconstruction



Heybarn Complex after reconstruction



Heybarn Lodge after reconstruction, interior



Heybarn Complex after reconstruction



Mulekeepers' House, interior



The 1814 Lodge after reconstruction

The 1814 Lodge

New phase of restoration of Hilandar begun in late December of 2005, with the launching of preparatory work on the reconstruction of the 1814 Lodge, the first sizeable building within the monastery complex itself which has been slated for reconstruction.

The reconstruction work has been carried out by experts and workers employed by the monastery with the support of Belgrade-based Foundation of the Holy



Gallery of the bookstore, the base floor

Monastery Hilandar. This action has brought about a reduction of reconstruction costs, at the same time securing harmony between extensive construction work and centuries-old order of the monastery. Therefore, the preservation of the architectural heritage has been secured, given that the entire project is now in safe hands of experienced architect-conservationists, close associates of Hilandar, under the watchful eye of the specialists from the Greek Protection Services. Expert team of the monastery has been aided by Serbia's best architect-conservationists.



The cell for special guests, the first floor

The restoration of the Lodge resumed in May 2006, after additional consultations with experts of the Greek Centre for the Preservation of Mount Athos Heritage (KeDAK) regarding the construction arrangements. The base floor now hosts a bookshop and the exhibition gallery, while the two upper decks, just as before, contain cells for special guests and the assembly hall for the Monastery Synod (Synodik). The work on this portion of the monastery is finished and the consecration ceremony held on June 28th 2007, in the presence of team of specialists from KEDAK.



The cell for special guests, the first floor

Restoration and reconstruction of 538,37 square meters of the 1814 Lodge exemplifies the manner in which reconstruction of other damaged buildings will take place. In every stage, close attention is being paid to fully retaining the authentic and recognizable Hilandarian ambient of premises whose reconstruction features combined traditional and contemporary architectural solutions. Thanks to the excellently preserved plans, drawings, photographs and other documentation, all the materials, colors and details shall be put together to make sure that the restored objects bear the closest possible resemblance to those before the fire.

The 1816-21 Lodge

Not only June 2007 saw the end of the reconstruction of the 1814 Lodge, but the monastery will at the same time be granted the official permit to reconstruct the largest edifice gravely damaged in the 2004 fire – the 1816–1821 Lodge, also known as the Great Lodge.

The works are set to begin on September 3rd 2007. Complete reconstruction and refurbishment is expected to take place over the next 3 years. Once the Great Lodge is restored, the Monastery shall regain much of its previous looks and distinctive features. The Great Lodge will yet again hold monastery administration, reception area, conservation workshops, and great number of cells for the monks and visitors alike.

Provided the 1816–1821 Lodge restoration project receives sufficient funds, full renovation of its entrance, including the Saint Nicholas' Chapel and a so-called Old Lodge, should immediately follow as the next stage of the reconstruction.



The 1816–1821 Lodge before the fire, view from the inner courtyard



The 1816–1821 Lodge before the fire, view from the north



The 1816-1821 Lodge after the fire with the temporary shielding structure



Interior of the 1816–1821 Lodge before the fire



The 1816–1821 Lodge after the fire, view from the north



Reception room in the 1816-1821 Lodge before the fire

GENERAL RECONSTRUCTION PLAN

The KeDAK adopted a General Reconstruction Plan in March 2007, drafted by the Expert Council of the Hilandar Monastery. The document has covered an entire reconstruction area supplying comprehensive and detailed description of all necessary project units. Even though it took less than two years to put the plan together, it represents the result of a decade of research conducted by Serbian experts, combined with the unique vision of contemporary Hilandarian monastic community guided by their experience. The General Reconstruction Plan provides basis for reconstruction, conservation and development of monastery complex and property. It is worth noting that such a plan, of all Athonian monasteries, exists only in Vatopedi.



Other Projects

Alongside major projects, multitude of conservation, restoration, minor architectural and artisan works have been put in motion. Hilandarian masons are also working in the beautiful old monastery of Saint Basil near the Hilandar “arsanas”, the XVII century cell of Saint Stefan on Samarija hill west from the Monastery (these works are now fully completed), cell of Saint Sava and the great lodge in Karyes, as well as on metoch Milo Arsenitsa outside Mount Athos (7 km. from the town of Ierissos) and its wood-processing facility.



The cell of St Stefan on Samaria hill before reconstruction



The cell of St Stefan on Samaria hill after reconstruction

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF HOLY MONASTERY HILANDAR:

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Hieromonk Metodije Hilandarac, Head of the Reconstruction
- Ex Officio Member
Prof. PhD Mirko Kovacevic, Chief Architect
- Ex Officio Member
Milivoj Randjic, Foundation of Holy monastery Hilandar CEO
- Member
Athanasios Vikas, Technical Adviser of the Holy Monastery

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NEWSLETTER OF RECONSTRUCTION OF HILANDAR

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Front cover: The 1814 Lodge, view from the Heybarn Complex
Back cover: The Abbot's Lodge with St. Dimitrios' and St. Sava's chapels after the fire, view from the Saint Sava's Tower

CONCERN AND SUPPORT

Concern for Hilandar Monastery well-being and its priceless heritage enticed many to aid its restoration and preservation. The main patron of the reconstruction venture is the Serbian government, whose Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica has made sure that the state of Serbia contributes one million euros per annum for the first ten years following the fire and the payouts ever since 2004 have been regular and prompt.

The Serbian Orthodox Church has so far raised around 2 million euros. Numerous institutions, companies and individuals from Serbia as well as from the Serbian diaspora have also made considerable donations towards the renovation of Hilandar.

What is particularly encouraging is that many friends and admirers of Hilandar from all over the world have shown genuine affection and support through organizing frequent actions aimed at raising funds and awareness in their local communities regarding the endangered heritage of an eight centuries old monastery.

In the period that lies ahead, the scope of works and their respective costs are expected to grow. According to the financial analysis, it will take 25 million euros to bring the reconstruction of the complex to an end. Projected deadline for the completion of reconstruction work on the fire-damaged portion of the monastery is the year of 2013. Other projects envisaged in the General Reconstruction Plan will parallel the major ones, exceeding the 2013 deadline. With the blessing of the Monastery, this work has brought together certain professional institutions: first and foremost the Greek KeDAK, followed by the Serbian Ministry of Culture, Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, the National Library, The Archive of Serbia, Belgrade-based faculties of Architecture, Agriculture and Forestry, which in their respective fields of expertise add to the multidisciplinary nature of the enterprise.



Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica tours construction sites in the monastery



KeDAK engineers at the construction site



His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I visits Hilandar



Crown Prince Aleksandar II Karadjordjevic in Hilandar after the fire

This summer, in the 2007th Year of Our Lord, the Holy Monastery of Hilandar is one big construction site. It is being rebuilt with stone, mortar and wood, but we put our hearts in it as well. As the buildings grow bigger, the monastic community becomes larger, as each new stone built into the monastery strengthens its fraternity. As he makes his way toward the Holy Monastery of Hilandar, every believer becomes overwhelmed with the myriad of sounds, hues and scents of the divine Garden of the Mother of God, as Mount Athos is also called. These impressions, mixed with the noise of building sites and workshops, the fumbling of busy workers and spectacle of large cranes towering over monastery walls, never seem to disturb the underlying harmony, sheltered by sanctity and the blessing of the Great Serbian Imperial Lavra, whose massive edifices, despite the damage they suffered in the fire, still mesmerize with their eternal beauty.

HELP HILANDAR

THE 12TH CENTURY MONASTERY ON MOUNT ATHOS



We express our gratitude to all people of good will who have so far selflessly and kindly aided the reconstruction of Hilandar. You can contribute your donations to the following bank accounts:

Account of the Holy Monastery Hilandar in Hellenic Republic:

Beneficiary customer: Holy Monastery Hilandar, Mount Athos, Hellenic Republic

Account (IBAN) number: **GR64 0110 8220 0000 8225 1600 068**

With: National Bank of Greece S.A., Athens, Greece

SWIFT (BIC): ETHNGRAA

Account of the Foundation of Holy Monastery Hilandar, Belgrade, Serbia

Beneficiary: Zaduzbina Svetog manastira Hilandara

Beneficiary's address: Bulevar Vojvode Misica 71, 11040 Belgrade, Serbia

Beneficiary's acc no.: **54280-4117462466**

Bank of Beneficiary: Eurobank EFG Stedionica a.d., Kolarceva 3, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia

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