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The late fourteenth century. Most of the South Slavs were included in the Ottoman Empire. The fall of the Serbian Despotate (1459) indicated a certain decline and transfer of cultural activity to the exiled despotate in Sirmia ruled by the Branković Dynasty under Hungarian suzerainty (Bogdanović 1991, 236). The fall of the Bosnian Kingdom (1463) sealed the end of the local variety of Church Slavonic. The competition of Latin, vernacular in Latin script, and the gradual vernacularisation of the bookish language led to a step-by-step decline of Croatian Church Slavonic. The Bulgarian area suffered a crisis linked with the lack of a church hierarchy.

The difference in language use between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the remaining East Slavic territories, absorbed by Muscovy, was deepening. In Muscovy, standard Church Slavonic (hereafter CS) remained the most prestigious variety. The revision of the Southern CS influence until the first half of the sixteenth century led to a certain standardisation of the local CS variety. Within the Pol-