Slavibor Breüer

Slavibor Breüer, known as **Sava Hilandarac** (1837–1912), was a Czech Orthodox monk, philanthropist, and writer. He came from a Czech-German entrepreneurial family from Kutná Hora and was raised and educated as a Catholic. Later in life, he left for Mount Athos (the Holy Mountain of Athos) with his three adopted sons. In 1881, he settled in the Slavic (Serbian) monastery of Hilandar, where he worked as a librarian and remained until the end of his life. He was one of the pioneers of vegetarianism and modern care for abandoned children – he established several family-style children's homes, which he funded from his own resources. He had studied at German schools, including in the field of agronomy, which informed his lifelong interest in modern agricultural trends, which he attempted to introduce on Athos. He also engaged in amateur botany. He converted to Orthodoxy at the monastery of Rudare near the Serbian town of Leskovac. On Palm Sunday in April 1883, Breüer was tonsured and received the monastic name Sava, adopting the byname Hilandarac after his monastery. During a visit by King Alexander I of Serbia to Hilandar in 1896, Sava was awarded the Order of St. Sava, 4th grade, in recognition of his reorganisation of the monastery library. He authored several publications on the history of Athonite monasteries: the Serbian-language works *Sveta Gora* (The Holy Mountain, 1898 and 1989) and *Istorija manastira Hilandara* (History of the Hilandar Monastery, 1997), the Czech-language catalogue *Rukopisy a starotisky chilandarské* (Manuscripts and Early Prints of Hilandar, 1896), and finally his monumental synthetic monograph *Kniha o Svaté Hoře Athonské* (*The Book of the Holy Mountain of Athos*, 1911) – arguably the most comprehensive work of its kind in the Czech language. As monk Sava, he met Jan Vochoč in person in 1899 during the painter's several-month stay on Athos, where Vochoč painted the monasteries and also created a portrait of Sava Hilandarac himself (1899; the painting is unfortunately now lost). Vochoč portrayed Sava once again when they met in Prague in the summer of 1907. Fragments of their mutual correspondence have also survived.