

Of farther-reaching good for Serbia than his territorial conquests was the *Zakonik* or Code of Laws, completed in 1354 under Dushan's direction. It contained not only the best of the old, but many new, laws resulting from Dushan's knowledge of his country's needs. It ranks high among medieval codes of law. After his death, his empire separated itself into its elements — a number of small states whose rulers were fighting one another while the Turks were subduing Thrace.

With the death of Dushan in 1355 the greatness of Serbia also passed away. His son, Urosh, could not hold what his father had gained, and little by little parts of his Empire fell off from the center, until but a small fragment remained. Yet there were still many stout-hearted Serbs — many who wished to do their utmost to throw off the Turks now pressing upon them. When Urosh died childless, the direct Nemanya dynasty came to an end, but in 1371