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*Special Issue*

*Dedicated to*

*Professor Dimitrije Djordjevic*

*on the Occasion of*

*His Eightieth Birthday*

*Edited by*

*Jelena Milojkovic-Djuric*



*Professor Dimitrije Djordjevic*

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## Foreword

This volume of Serbian Studies is dedicated to Professor Dimitrije Djordjevic on the occasion of his eightieth birthday. As a distinguished historian and teacher, Professor Djordjevic devoted most of his life to scholarly research into the histories of Serbia, Yugoslavia, the Balkans, and Europe.

During World War II and in its immediate aftermath, Djordjevic personally experienced the perils of fascist and communist dictatorial regimes, of foreign invasion and domestic revolution. As a witness and victim of these fateful events, he found that these ideologies shared a commitment to violence as an instrument of their tyrannical dicta.

His life's arduous journey brought him to the shores of the New World, where he soon established himself as an esteemed professor of history and head of the Balkan Graduate Program at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He continued to publish scholarly studies, aiming to bring in close accord the collaborative work of historians throughout Europe and the United States.

His wish to encourage the scholarly pursuit of Serbian and Balkan studies brought about the founding of the Mihailo Djordjevic Fund in 1991. This fund has established an award given yearly for the best scholarly monograph published in the United States. Professor Djordjevic served as the president of the North American Association for Serbian Studies from 1986 to 1988.

His achievements in the field of historical studies have been duly acknowledged by his election to the ranks of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences.

This collection of papers represents a token of gratitude for his support and encouragement for many scholars pursuing a related course of studies. It was no surprise that my call for papers was quickly answered, and within four months this special volume was completed. I am pleased to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Professor Vasa Mihailovich; Bogdan Rakić, Editor in Chief of Serbian Studies; and Vicki Polansky, Managing Editor of Slavica Publishers.

Many thanks to all contributors on this joyous occasion offering homage to our mentor and esteemed friend Professor Dimitrije Djordjevic.

*Jelena Milojkovic-Djuric*  
Texas A & M University

*Guest Editor, Special Issue in Honor of Professor Dimitrije Djordjevic*

### Three Poems

Vasa D. Mihailović  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

#### Vostani, Srbijo!

Vostani, Srbijo, duša te sinovljeva moli. Kao što si ustajala toliko puta.  
Vostani, da nam opet budeš čista i lepa, kao što si uvek bila u tvojim  
zvezdanim časovima.

Vostani za ljubav naraštaja koji su te stvarali i koji će ti služiti. Za njih ako ni  
za koga drugog.

*17. decembar 1992*

#### Rise, Serbia!

Rise, Serbia, your son is begging you from the bottom of his heart. As you  
have risen so many times before.

Rise, to be again pure and beautiful, as you have always been in your starry  
moments.

Rise, for the sake of generations who have created you and who will serve  
you. For them, if for no one else.

### Zemlji mojih predaka

Oprosti što provedoh dve trećine života u tudjini, umesto tebi da služim. Tako su valjda bogovi hteli ili nemilosrdna igra sudbine. Ali kad umuknu i poslednje reči, čućeš me kako ti ime izgovaram nemuštim jezikom. Nadam se samo da ćeš me bar onda razumeti, kad već nisi mogla ni htela za života. Jer u tami večnosti uzajamna ljubav majke i sina sjaji neumitno i zaumno, kao osunčani glečer.

7. februar 1993

### To the Land of My Ancestors

Forgive me, the land of my birth, for spending two thirds of my life in foreign lands, instead of serving you. That is the way the gods or the merciless play of fate have willed it. But when the last words grow silent, you will hear me as I speak your name in a mute language. I only hope that you will understand me then, since you could not, or would not, while I was alive. For, in eternity's darkness, the mutual love of a mother and a son shines inexorably and beyond comprehension, like a sun-lit glacier.

### Draž

Htedoh mnogo, ali zlokobna ratna oluja odnese i mene i moje hrabre borce. Kamo sreće da na vreme i do kraja poslušah svog sabrata Milana, umesto stranih "dobromislilaca". Gde bi nam sada bio kraj i koliko bi Srbalja sačuvalo svoje živote?

14. septembar 1999

### Draž

I wanted so much, but the ill-fated winds of war blew away me and my courageous fighters. If only I had listened in time to my brother Milan instead of foreign "well-meaning" advisors. Where would we be now and how many Serbian lives would have been saved!



## Scars and Warnings

George Vid Tomashevich  
State University of New York, Buffalo

**An appreciation of Dimitrije Djordjević, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of History, University of California, Santa Barbara and Member of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences**

The three volumes of these *Memoirs* of almost equal size represent, in my opinion, an outstanding contribution to both historiography and artistic literature. The first one is dedicated to the author's grandchildren Vladimir and Daniela and to the coming generations; the second, to his own generation "crucified in war and revolution, which does not claim to be right", but merely "wants to express its viewpoint and heal its scars"; and the third, to his father Vladimir and mother Jelena and all who have helped him in life.

Dr. Dimitrije Djordjević, or Mita (Meetah) to those of his relatives, friends and colleagues who are close enough to this esteemed gentleman and eminent scholar to be allowed such an informal and familiar expression of professional admiration and personal affection, is very considerably more than a widely recognized and invariably admired Serbian-American historian, patriot, one-time political prisoner and distinguished public figure.

This essay is meant to be a respectfully critical and critically respectful assessment of the eventful life and impressive accomplishments, intellectual, civic and moral, of an exceptionally brave, discreetly dignified and excessively modest authentic *hero of our time*, an active and daring fighter against both the Nazi-Fascist invaders of his Serbian and Yugoslav homeland and its subsequent Titoist usurpers and oppressors. For the first of these adventures in defiance, Mita was incarcerated in the notorious Banjica and Mauthausen concentration camps of Adolf Hitler, and for the second, in the grim Zabela and Mitrovica, prisons of Josip Broz Tito. Indeed, Dimitrije Djordjević is not just a warrior for liberty, democracy and freedom in general, but for equal human rights of every individual and for the integrity and dignity of truth, as well. That he managed to endure at all and rise above these scarring traumas

and tribulations of his youth and early maturity to become a superbly trained and internationally significant modern historian and an almost completely unembittered high intellectual of vast and varied learning and enviably profound erudition is a truly remarkable demonstration of the strength of human courage and character and the nobility and resilience of the unconquerable human spirit. A man of lesser mettle surely would have caved in long ago and under much less crushing pressure, Mita is alive and relatively well, still young at heart, intellectually creative and socially engaged. This is why I shall have to keep my complimentary remarks within the bounds of appropriately circumspect and comfortably acceptable praise. God knows, along with most of us, that this extraordinary man deserves, and will one day receive, a great deal more, as an admirable citizen-scholar and caring, compassionate, and generously forgiving fellow human being.

The more I read them and return to them, the more I realize that these *Memoirs* are not an *Apologia pro vita sua*, even in the best sense of these words, like those of the famous courtier and memoirist of the Age of Louis the XIV, the Duke of Saint-Simon, who, deeply disappointed in and hurt by some of his contemporaries, infused his otherwise insightful and largely truthful observations and comments about them, with obvious venom and regrettable prejudice. Mita's reminiscences remind me, rather, of the *Portraits contemporains* of the illustrious 19th century French literary historian and critic Charles Augustin de Sainte-Beuve (1804–69), who, while analyzing his characters in terms of their formative experiences objectively conditioned by the specific circumstances of their time and place, achieved his finest and most illuminating insights through an intuitive empathy with their inner life.

Mita's recollections are not just references to the subjective milestones of his personal, curriculum vitae full of interesting situations, perilous challenges and eventual escapes and triumphs, or of his purely academic career, full of arduous effort, unmerited and unfairly placed obstacles, discriminatory rejections and richly deserved, though long delayed, professional and personal tributes and accolades. They are also masterfully presented and fascinating pictures, reflections and echoes of significant scholarly conferences, important professional encounters, colorful and exciting journeys, fateful decisions, revealing conversations, consequential exchanges of letters and intriguingly interesting *dramatis personae*. These are, of course, various scholarly, political, and other public and private personalities who accompanied, crossed the path of, or merely touched upon Mita-the-narrator at this or that turn of the meandering curve of his amazing and richly meaningful life

For, whatever else they are, his life and career, his often improbable but always true adventures and experiences, have been strangely emblematic and instructively revealing movements through the fundamental developments,

epoch-making events, crucial dilemmas and problems and pervasive themes, of the hectically turbulent and ideologically convulsive 20th century.

Professor Djordjević's historical texts, in his *History of Serbia* and many other books and articles, but particularly in these *Memoirs*, testify to the germaneness of several well-known statements on the evanescent nature, complexity and almost inevitable fragmentariness of the so-called historical truth. This refers especially to the epistemological and logico-methodological difficulties inherent in the imperative need for a thorough and reliable criticism of the sources, the very perception and grasp of that truth, its factographic determination, intellectually and ethically defensible interpretation and ultimate amenability to a maximally objective reconstruction.

In all of these daunting and delicate tasks, Mita is an utter master. This is why his work reminds us of what Cicero wrote on this subject more than two millennia ago: "*Historia est testis temporum, lux veritatis vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis*" (History is the witness of times, the light of truth, the life of memory, the teacher of life, the messenger of ages.) In Mita's exquisite renditions of it, it is truly all of the above and much more, much more.

His narration is natural, engaging, smooth, vivid, lucid and persuasive. As terse and lapidary artistic prose, in the great tradition of Slobodan Jovanović, Dragisa Vasić, Aleksandar Belić, Bogdan Popović and other verbal virtuosi of the renowned Belgrade style, it is almost always lean, optimally and maximally expressive, quintessentially economical and eloquent, and, not infrequently, simply elegant. Mita has an uncanny talent for describing noteworthy personalities, pivotally important situations, decisive turning points, dramatic events and illuminating constellations of concomitant developments and intricately interrelated circumstances. Although, probably after long and painstaking preparation and polishing in the laboratory of his private workshop, the end result appears almost effortless in its final honing. His sense of immediacy and directness in the articulation of memorable details and topically relevant contexts and milieus is a rare gift of which every literary storyteller would be justly proud.

As though particularly under the influence of Kurosawa's memorable film *Rashomon*, a remarkable story of very different perceptions and descriptions of the same situation of rape and violence by several equally trustworthy and epistemologically equally reliable eyewitnesses and reporters, many postwar historians have been questioning the ostensibly simplistic and almost naive ideal of the great German Romantic historian Leopold von Ranke, who aimed at describing the past "*wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*" (as it actually happened). With all due critical alertness and methodological caution, one can say without hesitation that, if any historian of the cataclysmic conflicts, com-

plex juxtapositions, ambivalent preferences, ambiguous alliances, and shifting coalitions of changing interests among the ideological and military combatants of WWII and its dumbfoundingly long and intricate Cold War aftermath comes close to approximating Ranke's admittedly unrealistic level of aspiration, it is certainly Professor Dimitrije Djordjević.

I know of no other figure in Serbian, Yugoslav, Balkan, or world historiography who portrays maddeningly complicated and many-sided imbroglio's of contentious and controversial explicability with greater dexterity and ease and who treats even his opponents with greater fairness, more genuine empathy and understanding, human decency, tragic commiseration, old fashioned chivalry and honor. Aware of his own ancestors and their heroic ethos, Mita never forgets that *noblesse oblige!* This is especially evident in his even-handed, critically balanced, and ethically concerned treatment not only of his communist adversaries but also of the leaders and followers of the equally anti-communist and anti-liberal movement Zbor, whose founder, Dimitrije Ljotić, he describes as follows:

The followers of Dimitrije Ljotić and the pre-war movement Zbor, linked by ideas to fascism, entered a full ideologico-military collaboration with the German occupier, having seen in the German "New Europe" a simultaneous defeat of both communism and bourgeois democracy. Dimitrije Ljotić, a personally upright man, an integral Yugoslav, did not directly participate in power. As in every extreme political group, whether far right or far left, his followers included fanaticized idealists, disciplined and firmly organized.

In continuation of the same discussion of the complex and unusually tragic three-way fratricide among the occupied Serbs themselves, let alone the equally tragic and genocidal conflict between Serbs and Croats, aggravated by an underlying Orthodox-Catholic-Muslim nightmare, Mita writes: "As for the Communists, their anti-fascism was limited in action by orders received from Moscow, in harmony with the policy of the international Communist movement." After a concise but superb summary of the often zigzagging Communist opportunism, he quotes from the Communist Party's proclamation to the Yugoslav peoples exhorting them not to permit "the shedding of the precious blood of the heroic Soviet peoples without our participation" against "the Fascist hordes which, like mad dogs, are attacking the Soviet Union, our dear Socialist homeland." *Sapienti sat!* Enough for the wise!

Those of Tito's apologists, who still like to attach the label of "traitors and collaborators" to all individuals and movements opposed to his Trojan horse seizure of power disguised as a struggle for national liberation, should

carefully read the recently opened archival documentation of his 1943 offer of open collaboration with the Wehrmacht against the then apparent likelihood of an Allied landing somewhere along the Adriatic coast of Yugoslavia. If that offer is not an act of treason against his own country as well as the Allies, then the word should be withdrawn from circulation as a semantically desiccated scurf of dandruff.

At no point does Mita try to conceal the sad fact that members of his own resistance movement, Ravna Gora, led by the legendary and tragic general Draža Mihailović, engaged, alas, in reciprocal liquidations not only with the Communists, but also with the followers of Zbor, as in the case of Colonel Masalović.

Mita reveals that many Serbian intellectuals and public figures, including even such internationally acclaimed Serbian scholars as the linguist Aleksandar Belić, one-time President of the Serbian Academy, actually begged General Milan Nedić to accept the suicidally thankless and consciously sacrificial role of leading the so-called Government of National Salvation, without whose solicitous hospitality and care hundreds of thousands of Serbian refugees fleeing from the Ustashe-dominated Quisling Croatia and its genocidal ethnic cleansing of Serbs, Jews, Gypsies, and others, would almost certainly have perished. Remembering that catastrophe very vividly and precisely as a fourteen-year-old Serb refugee expelled from Pavelić's terrorist puppet state with five siblings and a widowed mother and grandmother, I testify, as a surviving witness, to the undeniable truth of Mita's account. After noting without comment that all of General Nedić's original encouragers and sponsors later renounced him (what else?!), he points out that Nedić's only objective was to save Serbia and the Serbs from both the Communists and biological extermination! The reality of that existential danger was documented by Dr. Veselin Djuretić in his work *The Allies and the Yugoslav War Drama*.

Mita also informs us that Nedić's government prevented the implementation of a German threat not only to destroy Serbia through devastating punitive expeditions, but even to dismember what remained of its torso through a division of its territory among the Croat Ustashe, the Bulgarian occupiers, and the Albanian Ballists.

Although a pro-Westerner by both family traditions and formal education, Professor Djordjević does not fail to note with understandable sadness and deep disappointment the Allies' glaringly different attitudes toward the human cost of anti-Nazi resistance even in the former Czechoslovakia, let alone France, Holland, or Denmark, on one hand, and Yugoslavia, on the other: "The burned-down Czech village of Lidice is mentioned today in world historiography, in which Kragujevac, Kraljevo and other Serbian cities, victims



of Nazi reprisals, are forgotten." The sadness and woe of this forgetfulness are increased by the fact that, however tragic and regrettable the violent termination of every innocent life in Lidice undoubtedly is, it is actually not comparable, as an abhorrent instance of Nazi-led mass killing, to the slaughter of several thousand Serbian hostages, including hundreds of high school pupils, in Kragujevac alone! Mita is by no means alone among Serbian intellectuals to note with pain that, despite the genocidally dangerous German quota of 100 Serb hostages executed for every dead German soldier and fifty for every injured one, *a quota not applied in occupied Western Europe*, our Western Allies did not demand a mass uprising from the French, the Dutch, or the Danes, but only from the Balkanites "because human life there was cheaper."

Even if Mita does not speak of that, I have heard many Serbs complain about the fact that, despite our defiance of Hitler, as Churchill puts it, "at the moment of his greatest power," the Serbian people have been 'rewarded' with the loss of their traditional monarchy; the dictatorship of Tito and other agents of the Comintern; the deliberate territorial dismemberment of the Serbian ethnic contiguity; the elevation of Tito's anti-Serbian internal boundaries to the status of international borders; the flagrantly one-sided and de-contextualized accusation of the Serbs of ethnic cleansing and genocide, and, recently, even the bombardment of what remains of their truncated country.

By contrast, countries like Hungary and others who sided with the Axis powers are either already in NATO or are being mentioned as candidates for imminent membership. You may disapprove of these reproaches, but please think about them.

As a highly sophisticated and civilized scholar of uncompromising probity, a citizen of the world and a morally responsible man, Mita clearly distinguishes between the often unbridled narcissism and chauvinism of plain nationalist self-centeredness and bias and tastefully restrained self-critical expressions of legitimate, non-aggressive and tactfully manifested patriotism. This important distinction is present in all his utterances about the so-called Serbian question, including his discussions of the emotionally charged and heart-rending conflicts of ethno-denominational, national or ideologico-political interests, claims and counterclaims. *Never does he deny to other peoples the rights he claims for his own.* At all times and places and in all situations and contexts he is a true practitioner of the well-known Latin adage: "Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica veritas!" (Plato is my friend, and so is Socrates, but truth is even more so).

Mita's personal and professional integrity, combined with the most scrupulous weighing of critically scrutinized evidence and cautiously derived and carefully formulated inference, supported by an enormous reservoir of

factual knowledge accumulated over several decades of meticulous and diligent scholarship, make for solid and reliable historical judgments whose frank preferential value expressions are open to his readers' and listeners' critical inspection.

I shall never forget, for instance, Mita's descriptions of his early contacts with Greek colleagues: his visits to Salonika and Hilandar; his participation in the programs of several international scholarly conferences; his work in the Vienna historical archives; his train ride references to a Turk returning from Germany; or his splendid essay read at Sidney's Macquarie University on the occasion of our joint visit to Australia in 1990 in connection with the tricentennial of the Great Migration of the Serbs from Kosovo to Pannonia under Patriarch Arsenije Čarnojević. Mita's contribution reminded us all of the fact that most of the population of Moravian Serbia on the eve of the Serbian Insurrections under Karageorge (1804) and Miloš (1815) was originally from beyond the borders of the Pashalik of Belgrade, and particularly from Montenegro, Herzegovina, and other Dinaric regions. He also informed his audience that the Karageorgeviches were originally from the Montenegrin Serbian tribe of the Vasojevići and the Obrenoviches from the Bratonožići. So much for the presently fashionable separatism in certain political circles!

In one paraphrase or another and variously ascribed to both Marx and Santayana, most of us have come across the reminder: "Those who do not learn from history are forced to repeat it, first as comedy, then as tragedy." Although Mita is much too serious, honest, intelligent, and learned to assume the posture of the now politically correct pseudo-relativistic (and actually nihilistic!) moral neutrality, his value position is always responsible to the facts and intellectually and ethically defensible. He never resorts to the opportunistically useful and evasive concealment of his preferences or an intellectual game of hide-and-seek. He clearly believes that history as a socio-cultural, intellectual, and political process of human events and developments in time, as well as a field of scholarship specializing in the study of that process, is not only an inexhaustible source of always new information, knowledge and understanding of the past, but also a source of potentially useful lessons for the future. This is undoubtedly so, despite the fact that history never repeats itself in specific terms, but only in more or less illuminating constellational analogies, and despite the great Mahatma Gandhi's delightfully witty and playfully naughty suggestion that the only thing we ever learn from history is that we learn absolutely nothing from it.

This is why the title of this trilogy *Ožiljci i opomene* (published in English as *Scars and Memory*) actually means "scars and warnings" or "scars and reminders." This title does not strike me as accidental, but as carefully chosen and deliberately meaningful.

In any event, with this crowning achievement, this truly major *opus* Dimitrije Djordjević joins the great tradition of European and World memoirs, side by side, despite profound differences in specific contents and cultural-historical contexts, with Boswell's writing about the London of Dr. Samuel Johnson and Goethe's *Conversations with Eckermann and Soret*.

In the words of the gifted and learned young historian, Dr. Dušan Bataković, Yugoslavia's current ambassador to Greece:

Written as a fulfillment of an obligation to his own generation, the reminiscences of Dimitrije Djordjević, published in the mature phase of his brilliant scholarly career and exciting life, remain a memorable testimony about our age ... in which the initial triumphs and great hopes of our people sank into the darkness of totalitarianism, which, in its sunset, produced the final breakdown of two-centuries long endeavors to resolve the Serbian question in a democratic manner."

The first volume of these *Memoirs* presents a convincing picture of traditional middle-class Serbia, its political commitment to the Royal Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, and its broadly based resistance movement, linked, through General Mihailović as its Minister of National Defense, to the Legitimate Royal Yugoslav Government in exile, based in London. That resistance movement was the first of its kind in all of Nazi-occupied Europe, established more than a month before the Communists entered the armed struggle against the Nazi-Fascists following Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941.

Mita shows clearly and convincingly that, far from being a corrupt and decadent social class of parasitic capitalist exploiters, as tendentiously caricatured by the Communists, most of the Serbian bourgeoisie, with all its human shortcomings, was actually a cultivated, democratically oriented, and predominantly pro-Western social layer of nationally conscious and deeply patriotic citizens ready to die in the defense of their country and democracy.

Mita describes the three-way civil war in occupied Serbia itself as a great tragedy in which Serbs engaged in killing fellow Serbs only to end up after the war under the tyrannical rule of a non-Serb. He shows the connections between the well-known Serbian Cultural Club (*Srpski kulturni klub*), an influential pre-war academic, literary and political organization of decidedly pro-Western, Franco-British orientation, labeled by Communists and Fascists alike as being in the pay of Western democracies, and the so-called Chetnik movement of General Mihailović. Many of the club's members were executed in various concentration camps or fell in armed struggle against the extreme forces of both the left and the right. In Mita's own words, "The Ravna Gora

Movement (the Chetniks) fought to defend, reform, and rejuvenate an already existing world; the Communists fought to destroy it, promising (in its place) their own imaginary cosmos." In his opinion, "the Chetnik intellectual leadership stemmed from the heritage of a middle class society, beset by incipient doubt and questioning; the Communists, from the black and white images of a fanaticized revolutionary intelligentsia, ready for a struggle of life and death."

The second volume is dedicated to the sufferings and persecutions of the pro-democratic youth in the early years of the Communist triumph and vengeance—the so-called *red terror*—about which contemporary Western media said next to nothing, because, as President Truman observed after Tito's expulsion from the Cominform in 1948, he was now "our" S.O.B. Similar horror stories came from the pens of those who survived the abominations of Tito's infamous Barren Island (*Goli Otok*) camp.

The third volume deals with the profound socio-political, institutional, and social-psychological transformations of post-war Serbian and broader Yugoslav society in the wake of all the Communist purges, with special emphasis on the notorious tendency of that quasi-Manichean millennialist and pseudo-eschatological movement to start from the proposition that history began with the day they came to power. Mita chronicles and analyzes the impact of the Marxist philosophy of history, viewed as the only scientifically correct one, on post-war Serbian (and wider East European) historiography, in his own struggle as a specialist in Serbian and Balkan history to establish scholarly contacts with foreign colleagues and institutions despite the stigma of being an "enemy of the people" which accompanied, followed, and hobbled him for decades.

It is particularly noteworthy, as an additional measure of the man, that Mita's portrayal of his colleagues, professors, researchers, archivists, and bureaucrats is never unfriendly, even when some of them clearly deserve strong expressions of disapproval. This applies especially to those who, at the University of Belgrade's Faculty of Philosophy, in the 1970s, blocked his appointment as a professor in his own hometown, only because of alleged ideological and political unfitness and in utter disregard of his amply demonstrated and internationally appreciated scholarly qualifications and achievements. Naturally, as in numerous other cases, Serbia's and Yugoslavia's loss became America's gain, to the benefit and joy of many students and colleagues in his adopted new homeland.

With fourteen scholarly books, which he either authored or co-authored, and more than 150 professional essays and articles, Mita has definitely triumphed over his thwarters and tormentors and, thank God, lived to see their back as they began to leave their arrogantly usurped positions of allegedly exclusive arbiters of ideologically monopolized truth.



I should like to conclude this presentation with an unsentimental but deeply felt touch of personal poignancy: It is a great pleasure and a uniquely high honor for me to note that this final essay of mine, this swan song of my own academic career, has been composed and is being offered as a collegial homage to an exceptionally brilliant and prolific scholar, a truly great gentleman, a *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*, and a dear and cherished friend of the intellectual stature and moral fiber of a Dimitrije Djordjević.

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## The Origin of the 1941 Revolution

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All upheavals in the history of a people, if it is agreed to declare them as revolutionary events, have such deep roots that the contemporaries of these events have neither the insight nor the desire to discern their origin. In 1966, Franco Venturi published his classic work about the preparation of the Russian revolution of 1917; he searched for its roots in events that had taken place some hundred years before. Some of these “revolutionary roots” are so insignificant for their time that even the word “socialism,” which guided the historical essence of the upheaval of 1917, was found in a dictionary of foreign words published in 1844.<sup>1</sup> The historical depth contains the basis of the creation of a new state or society, similar to an oak tree with its centuries-long taproot in the depths of the soil. The guerrilla uprisings in Herzegovina, very numerous even before the Berlin Congress in 1878, caused a British statesman to describe Herzegovina as a *possession damnosa*, an “accursed heritage.” The reason for these uprisings was not only feudal land holdings and high taxes but also the wish to include the Serbian ethnic space into the realm of Catholic Central Europe. All these facts determined the character of guerrilla warfare during the period 1815–1945, and have constituted the organic historical context of the civil war that has raged from 1991 to the present.

In addition to the great differences in the political proceedings of the uprising of 1941 that distinguished it from all other conflicts in the same region, one should strive to discern the underlying similarities. The war of 1914 contained within its global scope local guerrilla and religious confrontations, and thus presents similarities to the situation in 1941, some twenty-seven years later. This is the life-span of a generation. These historic processes were punctuated with long intervals of peace, but the participants identified always with the same people. The sons of 1941 continued from where their fathers

<sup>1</sup> Franco Venturi, *Roots of Revolution: A History of the Populist and Socialist Movements in Nineteenth Century Russia*, trans. Francis Haskell (New York: Knopf, 1960), 83.

had been in 1914, just as the latter did in relation to their grandfathers in 1882.

The guerrilla wars in the parts of the Balkans now inhabited by the Serbian people may be followed over the course of two millennia, although the local populations involved belonged to various ethnic groups. One German historian draws a parallel between Baton's uprising against the Roman legions and the partisan warfare of 1941. If one were to omit the causes of these uprisings, as well as their contradictory results, one would be obliged to consider the similarities dictated by terrain and cattle-breeding societies. In all these uprisings the economy of warfare was dictated by the availability of domestic animals and a dearth of grain. Sanctuaries in the far-away mountains were transformed into military bases that served as a substitute for borders and were considered the main factor in modern warfare.<sup>2</sup> Such refuges in the mountains were described by Dursun bey during the Turkish conquest of Bosnia in 1463. At the end of the eighteenth century the writer Vidaković described one such refuge he had witnessed. In all these wars the epic song served not only as the oral history of a people unschooled in the writing of history, but also as an ideological message about the reasons for the uprisings and the goals under consideration.

The uprisings that have taken place in Herzegovina over the last two centuries have been almost identical to one another due to underlying conditions determined by European Catholic ideologies that arose in the wake of the Serbian Revolution of 1815 and were forced upon a new generation of Serbians. The uprisings represent opposition to the form of society dictated by the Great Powers, a society ordered upon the traditions and values of Central Europe as opposed to the community of free peasants formed in the Belgrade region after 1815 as an ideal Balkan agrarian society. The resulting religious clash has been a factor in all uprisings in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

If observed from the vantage point of the present, there were two massive upheavals before the revolution of 1941: Vukalić's uprising, which has been falsely classified as two separate wars since it comprised several wars from 1852 to 1862, and the Great Eastern Question (1875–78). These upheavals were almost identical in terms both of the demographics of the combatants and of their motivations. Moreover, between the end of the Serbian Revolution of 1815 and 1914 there were fourteen smaller or larger uprisings by the Serbian people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Differences notwithstanding, the goals were always the same: the desire to create a national state of

<sup>2</sup> Milorad Ekmečić, "Istorijski značaj ustanka u Bosni i Hercegovini 1875–1878," in *Radovi iz istorije Bosne i Hercegovine XIX veka* (Belgrade: Beogradski izdavačko-grafički zavod, 1997), 254.

free peasants rather than a state in which the Muslim population would govern in accordance with the spiritual values of Central Europe. The agrarian revolt against Muslim feudalism was the main impetus in the two earlier uprisings. Feudalism could not be a factor in the uprising of 1941, but Central European powers persisted in inducing the Muslim elite to guide a society hostile to the Serbian people and its aspirations to create a national state.

The main impetus behind the uprising of 1941 was the effort of the Catholic Church to establish the river Drina as a boundary of its civilization. This was recognized as early as May–June 1941, when the Italian military authority cited religious intolerance against Orthodoxy as the real reason for the uprising. On 10 June 1941 the command of the Second Army declared that "Croatian ultra nationalism has lost all measure in regard to oppression, and terror is steadily increasing. The political struggle is inspired by the religious struggle and integrated into it.... This Croatian political-religious struggle has acquired a savage aspect, since the *ustashe* engage in revenge and repression that may be compared with the most obscure periods of the Middle Ages."<sup>3</sup>

The Croatian state was created in 1941 not by the Axis powers but rather by the Catholic Church through the agency of the Axis powers. The legal form of the Croatian state was Catholic dictatorship, but a dictatorship that differed from that prevailing in the two leading fascist states of Europe at the time. The political goals of this state originated not in the ethnic aspirations of the Croatian nation, but in the desire of the Catholic Church to buttress its borders on the rivers Lim and Drina. Luca Pietromarcki, a functionary in the Italian Office of Foreign Affairs, was informed during his official visit to Zagreb in October 1941 that the *ustashe* program was based on the annihilation of the Orthodox people, and the conversion of the ones who were spared. The Italian headquarters had been informed as early as 28 September that the Croatian goal was the extermination of the Serbian people once and for all.<sup>4</sup>

The Italian army was always kept informed about crimes committed against the Serbian population of Herzegovina. In September 1941, it was announced that the *ustashe*, Croats and Muslims, had killed 200 Orthodox civilians near Gacko. Moreover, they had killed around 860 people in the vicinity of Nevesinje, and about 1000 people in villages around Sarajevo. Apparently, even the German army was appalled by these barbarities. German military authorities were informed by the main *ustashe* office in Zagreb that between the end of August and 6 September, the Serbian population was to be totally

<sup>3</sup> General Ambrozio to the Headquarters, 10 June 1941, in Oddone Talpo, *Dalmazia: Una cronaca per la storia* (Rome: Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito, Ufficio Storico, 1985), 469.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 616.

liquidated, and its houses, livestock, and possessions “handed over to Croatian and Muslim families.”<sup>5</sup> This order referred to the planned extermination of the population under Italian occupation. This news was disclosed to the division *Marche* on 14 September, with the reminder that this information had already been released, on 7 September. Subsequently, Italian army headquarters had informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This information was delivered to “confidential sources” who transmitted it further to the Italian army. This information is very important since historical research, in spite of remarkable results obtained from the study of the available sources, has not yet reconstructed the chain of decision of such an enormous undertaking as the liquidation of a population comprising over two million people according to official data. These documents reveal that the *ustashe* headquarters in Zagreb conducted the planning of the genocide to be carried out between 31 August and 6 September 1941.

Regrettably, according to official publications, the information office of the Italian army did not know precisely which institution in the highest echelons of the Croatian state knew about the liquidation of the Serbian population of Herzegovina. The Italian army only recorded the data about who ordered the liquidation of the people by the week of 31 August–6 September. Earlier reports maintained that the goal was “the annihilation” of the Orthodox and Jewish populations and the mass conversion of some parts of the population which was spared to the Catholic faith. Although this order referred to the Italian zone of occupation, this fact is of general interest in regard to the methodology of genocide research. For other regions the date of the end of the genocide campaign very likely did not matter. All data depended on the Croat-Italian agreement of 26 August about the renewed occupation of the zone leading to the Ivan mountain which was finalized by 1 September.

It would be wrong to assume that the final annihilation of the Serbian population in the Croatian state was a consequence of accidental circumstances or actions of individual uncivilized Croats. The methods in 1941 differed from those used in the past, but the goal was sufficiently old that the uprising of 1941 may be considered a continuation of the tradition of Serbian uprisings on this territory. The historian may be mistaken about the true reason for the beginning of World War I (1914). The assassination in Sarajevo of the Austrian heir to the throne is often held to be the primary cause. Most importantly, however, the outbreak of war was connected with attempts to settle Catholic peasants on the free territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina in order to create the conditions for the annexation of Orthodox and Muslim Southeastern Europe to the West. The goal that Croatian nationalists sought to attain so

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 615–18.

barbarously in 1941 was only one of the methods employed since 1815. All the negotiations of the Great Powers were directed toward halting the process of joining Serbian-populated regions to the matrix of the already formed independent Serbian state

After the Vienna Congress of 1815, Britain reckoned that a stable Habsburg state would be its main ally in the Balkans. By that time the Cyrillic alphabet had ceased to be used by Bosnian and Dalmatian Catholics. The Catholic ideologist Cesare Balbo, in his work *Speranza d' Italia*, argued the necessity of stopping the expansion of Orthodox Russia to the Mediterranean coast with the help of the rising influence of Austria in the Balkans and Prussia in Poland. These two German states were supposed to take over the mission of civilizing the people of Eastern Europe by sponsoring a network of German agricultural settlements. Thus, the process of civilizing these parts of Europe would be at the same time the process of transforming their inhabitants into a Germanic people.<sup>6</sup> This theoretical plan became the strategic basis of Habsburg foreign policy after the military defeats in the war against France and Piedmont in 1859, as well as in the wars against Prussia and Italy. After 1866, the main goal became the conquest of Turkish regions in the Balkans, with the aim of preventing the further degeneration of a state that had no useful role in the Western world.

The efforts to strengthen Catholic strongholds in Bosnia-Herzegovina originated before the occupation of 1878. The Trappist monastery Maria Stern, founded in 1869 in Banja Luka, was the first to implement this idea. As early as 1872, the foreign minister Andrassy advised the general consul in Sarajevo to establish Catholic and Muslim villages in order to break up the Serbian ethnic space. Almost immediately after the fighting of 1878, on 22 October 1878, Georg Plakalb submitted a plan for settling the free territories in the occupied region. He estimated that almost half of the territory was unpopulated, and argued that it was an opportune moment to establish Catholic monasteries with a network of Catholic villages to be populated by settlers from the northern parts of the empire.<sup>7</sup> By 1904 a solid basis of Catholic colonization had been established. There were twenty German colonies and a couple of other ethnic settlements.<sup>8</sup> The approximately 8,000 German peas-

<sup>6</sup> Milorad Ekmečić, “Geografski neprijatelj Srbije,” in *Ogledi iz istorije* (Belgrade: Službeni list SRJ, 1999), 72.

<sup>7</sup> Georg Plakalb, “Ein Beitrag zum Kultivierungsprojekt für Bosnien und Hercegovina,” in Milorad Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790–1918* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1989), 87, and T. Kraljačić, *Kaljev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini 1882–1903* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1987), 115.

<sup>8</sup> J. Heimpfelsen, *Die deutschen Kolonien in Bosnien* (Sarajevo, 1911).



ants were producing six times more foodstuffs than the natives on a comparable tract of land. The reason for this superiority was neither the Germans' racial characteristics, nor the religious beliefs governing their behavior but rather the "German plow," as the old settlers named the imported plow, which worked better than the one used for millennia in Bosnia. The German settlers also improved the infrastructure through the building of brickyards and improvements in urban planning.

After the beginning of the occupation in 1878, the presbyter of the Trappist monastery published an invitation in the journal *Christlichen Pilger* stating that at last the time had come to explore the riches of the Vrbas valley. One entrepreneur from Baden took the challenge and walked some thirty-eight hours from the border to reach the valley. He saw the animosity of the Serbian peasants whose settlements he passed, but decided that it would be better "to be devoured by the wolves than to die from hunger." He bought a piece of land from the estate of Salihbey Irahimvić for 500 golden ducats and proceeded to settle it with peasants from the northern regions of Germany. They named the colony *Windhorst* in honor of the Catholic party leader in Germany. By 1880 they had established another colony and divided *Windhorst* into two separate settlements due to the large influx of new settlers. The colony served as a model of prosperity until 1887, when all the colonies suffered a recession. The settlers were the first to use artificial fertilizers, improved seeds, Berkshire pigs, and choice livestock; they opened a steam mill and three brickyards. The settlers had German priests and special schools where classes were taught in German. They received Lippica horses for breeding. Moreover, two Italian, two Czech, and two Ukrainian settlements were established, as well as several Polish colonies.

The colonization of Bosnia-Herzegovina was more a system of political aspirations than a demographic system. Until the end of Kallay's rule in 1903, the Habsburg state supported the German and Catholic colonization. Subsequently, it became apparent that the colonization was not being conducted in an organized fashion. It was conducted more by Catholic idealists than by the state. The priest who sponsored the Tirolian settlers in Mahovljina left the following inscription on his grave: "Pauper, pauperum pater."<sup>9</sup> After the end of Kallay's tenure, the state tried to germanize Bosnia by introducing additional German agricultural colonies, but this was not done well. The reason for the failure was the lack of a capitalistic market. The colonies were established by the government or created by private enthusiasts. The state-owned colonies were more numerous. The settler could purchase a piece of land at low prices, and the state would provide building material for a house

<sup>9</sup> Heimpfelsen, *Die deutschen Kolonien in Bosnien*, 61.

from state-owned forests. The rent for an acre of excellent land was a bargain at a mere crown. For the first three years the settlers were not required to pay taxes. The settlers did not have the right to leave the land at any time, or to sublet it. They were rewarded by the option of negotiating a favorable reduction of the fee to only half of the original amount. As early as 1893, Kallay stated "that the Serbian population should be enhanced by other elements." That the colonies achieved these goals is only partially due to the fact that more Protestants and Lutherans arrived than Catholics. They arrived from Russia and Hungary, where they were intimidated by Orthodox and Catholic neighborhoods. Some colonies received German names, such as *Rudolfstal*, known earlier as Maglaj na Vrbasu. The name was changed after the visit of the crown prince. The settlement *Dubrava* was changed after the Annexation of 1908 to *Königsfeld*. In Northern Podrinje the model colony was *Franz Josefsfeld*, formerly Novo selo at Bijeljina with its adjacent settlements Dugopolje and Branjevo. It was planned that these settlements would encompass the whole bank along the river Drina in order to fulfill Andrassy's plan of dividing Serbian ethnic continuity with a living wall of colonies. However, changes were creeping into these settlements, and the youth were singing more Slavic than German songs. The government had greater respect for German Catholics, although it did not bring a sufficient number of German teachers, as requested by the settlers. Prior to the war of 1914, there existed an effort in Catholic circles in Germany to develop a German spirit in the colonies. A ditty was published in a literary journal about a German boy who was blessed for his patriotic sentiments.<sup>10</sup>

In spite of unfavorable conditions, the German settlers performed well their assigned duties, as envisioned by the ideologists of 1844. This was particularly visible with regard to their military role in Bosnia-Herzegovina prior to 1914. Every region in the Habsburg monarchy had its auxiliary militia (*Landeswehr*). Moreover, a volunteer corpus (*Schutzkorps*) was formed in order to limit the spread of the Serbian language and the dominance of Serbian officers.<sup>11</sup> One part of the *Schutzkorps* was composed of German volunteers, whom the people dubbed "Lutheran brigands." During the annexation crises, three villages in Upper Podrinje were ordered to stand guard over three

<sup>10</sup> "Ich bin ein deutscher Knabe / und hab die Heimat lieb / Wo Gott in allen Gauen / Den Gnadenbrief uns schrieb." Published in *Literarisch-Deutsch-Osterreich*, no. 2 (1911), quoted in Heimpfelsen, *Die deutschen Kolonien in Bosnien*, 80.

<sup>11</sup> Milorad Ekmečić, *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1973), 474; Vladimir Ćorović, *Crna knjiga: Patnje Srba Bosne i Hercegovine za vreme Svetskog rata 1914–1918* (Belgrade: Izdanje I. Djurđevića, 1920), 59,74.

Serbian garrisons in Mačva. In due time the process of assimilation transformed these Catholics into Croatian nationalists.

The colonization of Bosnia-Herzegovina played a major role in the development of the World War of 1914. Those who doubt such a conclusion should pay attention to the current confrontations between the Arabs and the Jews, and the creation of new Jewish settlements in Palestine. The number of German settlers arriving in Bosnia-Herzegovina was greater than the number of local inhabitants emigrating. About 140,000 Muslims emigrated after the start of colonization, while about 90,000 Serbs left as unwilling economic emigrants. On the other hand, around 240,000 German or germanized settlers immigrated. Military strategists organized the first planned ethnic cleansing in the first years of the war in 1914. Some 5,000 Serbian families were purged following the forced retreat of the Serbian army over the river Drina. At the same time, 90,000 Muslims were expelled from the region of the Novopazarski Sandzak.

The first mass murder that can be considered an act of genocide in accordance with modern political thinking took place in Čelebić on the Drina, when members of the *Schutzkorps* shot eighty-four Serbian hostages. At the same time, in Avatovac in Herzegovina, thirty-six Serbian hostages were publicly hanged. In Pale, on 20/21 October 1914, fifty-two Serbian hostages were shot. The numbers are large enough to be considered mass executions. After the liberation, *Schutzkorps* commander Arifa Tanović was stoned by the people. In 1941, his son used this incident as a pretext to refuse the agreement proposed by the Orthodox and Muslims and seek revenge. The historic chain of killing began on the bridge in Foča on 9 August 1914 when three hostages were shot without any court proceedings.<sup>12</sup>

The creation of the Independent State of Croatia was a product of the historic energy of Central European Catholicism rather than the product of the efforts of the Croatian people, who could muster only a limited role in such an event. This state was created in accordance with the strategic principles of Catholic ideology in the period between the occupation of 1878 and the outbreak of war in 1914. Four main factors were involved in its formation: the Catholic Church, German Nazism, Italian fascism, and the Croatian Catholic movement. The latter was a form of European fascism that differed from the general fascist typology since it relied more on Catholic ideology than on fascist theories.<sup>13</sup> The real history of the Independent State of Croatia does not exist, since the key factor was the role of the Catholic Church. The Church

<sup>12</sup> Ćorović, *Crna knjiga*, 59, 74.

<sup>13</sup> Smilja Avramov, *Genocid u Jugoslaviji u svetlosti međunarodnog prava* (Belgrade: Politika, 1992), 301.

has been the least studied since researchers have focussed more on the responsibility of Pope Pius XII and Bishop Stepinac than on the role of the Church as such.

There is no evidence as to what Hitler and Mussolini thought about the borders they agreed upon prior to the declaration of Croatian independence on 10 April 1941, in particular whether such a state would consist only of Catholics and Muslims in accordance with the constitutional principle that the Orthodox and Jewish populations were to be eliminated in such a state. There is proof that Hitler changed his opinion about the eastern border of the Independent State of Croatia in the first days of war. The newly appointed commanding general in Croatia, Glaise von Horstenau, asked Hitler about the new borders of the Croatian state during his first visit with Hitler in southern Austria, from where Hitler was commanding the attack on Yugoslavia. He wrote in his notes: "The Führer did not object to the Croatian border extending to the river Drina. In reality, it was necessary to establish a unified front due to the existing Serbian majority in East Bosnia, and provide to the Croatian state a part of the river Bosna as in 1918. I noted this only so as not to damage the Croats." Hitler noted that Croatia would be under Italian supervision, and Slovakia under German supervision.<sup>14</sup> Even if one takes into account the lack of clarity with regard to the Croatian state's border on the river Bosna, according to Hitler, or Glaise von Horstenau, it is clear that at first Hitler did not allow for Croatian expansion to the river Drina. The German Führer offered all of Dalmatia, Kotor, and Montenegro to Italy. The delineation of Croatia in the east was left to Italy and its newly established protectorate governing the Croatian state.

The main thought that Hitler entertained in April 1941, during the first days of the attack on Yugoslavia, was to reduce the future Serbia to a minimum in order to limit the potential for its later growth. Hitler agreed that the Croats would arrange their eastern borders prior to 1943. Afterwards, Hitler became disillusioned with the Croats and claimed that Croatia had never had and would never have a state, as opposed to the Serbs, who always fought for their state and would continue to have it. Hitler agreed that the Croatian leaders should determine their eastern borders. The Italian government was informed that Serbia was incorrigible and that it should be returned to its pre-1912 borders. Thus, Serbia would have no opportunity to react and would have "to remain as small as possible by all means in order to prevent the

<sup>14</sup> Peter Broucek, ed., *Ein General im Zwielicht: Die Erinnerungen Edmund Glaise von Horstenau* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1988), 82–83; Zdravko Antonić, *Ustanak u istočnoj i centralnoj Bosni 1941* (Belgrade: 1973), 53.



newest betrayal."<sup>15</sup> In reality the question of borders was improvised by Hitler.<sup>16</sup> In later missions, Neubacher attempted to remedy the error and return the borders of Serbia to the river Bosna, since he believed that the Yugoslav state should be renewed as a federation with a Croatian general at its head.

On the basis of Hitler's decision, the Croats eventually established their eastern border on the river Drina. They created a *Vojna krajina* (Military Border), where the Muslim population and smaller Catholic groups were armed as they had been during the Habsburg military border of 1881.

The eastern borders of Croatia were finally established in negotiations between Mussolini and Pavelić in which both sides agreed to major concessions. In the end, these concessions were the reason these plans were never realized. The Croats expected their borders to encompass the Raska region of the Novopazarski sandžak. It seems that the petitions signed by Muslim leaders were in agreement in this respect. It is apparent that the new Croatian state was to assume some of the responsibilities of the former Habsburg empire that had failed in the Balkans. The assumption that the eastern border was set by the Catholic Church rather than by any Croatian political party, hampered further research into these problems. The difficulties associated with establishing the borders of the Croatian state and with its relations with the Orthodox and Jewish populations stemmed from the fact that the Catholic Church has remained a forbidden theme. The historian felt the obligation to remain silent not only due to the inherent difficulties but also out of self-censorship imposed by the fear of wading into hotly debated issues.

Mussolini did not expect that he would have to accept all the resolutions created by the Rome agreements when he was charged to disclose the position of the Croatian state. Croatia was supposed to be a monarchy, with a ruler from the Italian dynasty, connected with Italy in a personal union.<sup>17</sup> Hitler believed that he alone would decide the fate of the Croatian position and that Croatia would be connected to Hungary, as before 1918. The experts dealing with the Italian government first had to study the Croatian-Hungarian Ausgleich from 1868 in order to create their relation in regard to the new Croatian state. There was not a doubt that the Croatian state would be without a large Serbian minority. It was estimated that Croatia received a territory

<sup>15</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 833, 845, and 947n. (*I documenti diplomatici Italiani. Nona serie 1939-1943*, VI, Rome 1986, p. 845)

<sup>16</sup> *I documenti diplomatici Italiani. Nona serie 1939-1943*, 813, 903.

<sup>17</sup> Mussolini accepted the independence of the Croatian state on the condition that Italy and Germany would decide its borders (*I documenti diplomatici Italiani: Nona serie 1939-1943*, 848).

with 6,193,000 inhabitants, and that this number was increased to 6,600,000. The total included 3,250,000 Catholics, 2,000,000 Orthodox Serbs, 750,000 Muslims, and 500,000 other minorities.<sup>18</sup> Even allowing for a certain amount of misinformation, the fact remains that the Italian government very precisely defined the Croatian state as one where the native ethnic group comprised only one-half of the population. Later on, the Germans considerably increased the number of Serbs.<sup>19</sup> What is essential is that the Italians were mindful that such a large minority, regardless of how large it was in reality, could not be excluded from the future state and that it should find its place under the sun.

Mussolini thought that the fascist states would win the war and that new relations would arise. Several large nations would come into existence surrounded by a number of newly-founded satellite states. Italy was supposed to be one of these large states. In the Balkans, this plan would include Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Albania. Mussolini did not wish to annex the whole of Dalmatia, and he acted with great caution. In fact, he opposed the widespread belief to the contrary. He did not even allow the annexation of Split. He was guided by his main idea, which found no supporters among his followers occupying higher or lower positions in the government, since he believed that Italy should not be burdened by a large ethnic minority, as were Yugoslavia and Poland.<sup>20</sup> The designated Croatian king, the duke of Spoleto, was married to a Greek princess, Orthodox by religion. His mother identified herself as a Serbian from Montenegro. All this led to great contention with the Croatian diplomatic representative Kerubin Ševgić, who insisted that the Montenegrins were Croats since they belonged to Red Croatia. In Rome, the fascists could not stomach the Croatian medieval mythology. The duke of Spoleto was chosen precisely by virtue of the Orthodox identity of his mother and wife. Stepinac personally urged the accreditation of the Independent State of Croatia in the Vatican, but he did not succeed due to the influence of the government in London.

At Mussolini's meeting with Pavelić in Rome on 28 March of 1941, a day after the demonstration in Belgrade rejecting Yugoslav participation in the Tripartite Treaty, the process of creating the Croatian state was begun in the form of a personal union with Italy. Thus, the first Italian proposal for the Croatian state in the east was as a personal union in which the Italian gov-

<sup>18</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 353 n. 137, and 361 n. 254.

<sup>19</sup> Adolf Dresler, *Kroatien*, 2nd ed. (Essen, 1942). He quoted that 250,000 Serbs emigrated to Serbia. Of 6,800,000 Serbs in Croatia, only 30% remained, that is 2,300,000.

<sup>20</sup> Luziano Monzali, "La Questione della Dalmazia e la politica estera italiana nella primavera della 1941," *La rivista dalmatica* 69 (1998): 44; Giuseppe Bottai, *Diario, 1935-1944* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1982), 267.

ernment would have the informal right to participate in the definition of borders. In one project, entitled "*Progetto nuove delimitazione confinariae dell'Italia ad est*," a personal union with Croatia in which Dalmatia remained an administrative entity was anticipated. Slovenia was to be autonomous under Italy, except for southern Styria with Maribor, which Hitler understood as his only intrusion in the determination of Yugoslav borders. Montenegro, Kosovo, and Ulcinj, with a small addition towards Bojana, would join the Italian kingdom of Albania. For Croatia access to the Adriatic Sea was designated at Rijeka and Sušak, and for Serbia at Dubrovnik.<sup>21</sup> Although Mussolini did not write this project, he gave his consent in the end.

It was not clear in what manner Serbia would receive access at Dubrovnik, although it would depend on the delineation with autonomous Montenegro in the east. This policy of the Italian government was canceled after the uprising of 13 July. Subsequently, the military authority received gubernatorial status only after 3 October. For Dalmatia this was determined already on 18 May: "In the districts (*distretti*) of Dalmatia where the Serbs had the majority, the Italians granted the exercising authority to the Serbian element." Pavelić objected to the Italian consul general as early as 21 April 1941. After the repeated occupation of Herzegovina they tried the same. This was connected with some unspecified plans for the future delineation, and the region from Slana to the south of Kotor was reserved as a special zone to protect the maritime base in Kotor.

The foreign archives have not been explored until now in reference to the confusion about Italian plans for the delineation of the new Croatian state. The minister of the government, Giuseppe Botai, wrote in his diary on 10 April 1940, a year before the proclamation of the independent Croatian state, that Count Ciano had shown him a map where Pavelić had outlined the future Croatia. The Croatian uprising had been prepared, and the new Croatian government asked for Italian intervention. At the beginning of the war there existed a map prepared by the Italian army, where Serbia was granted access to the sea at Dubrovnik, as agreed by Mussolini. A month later, on 14 May 1941, Botai noted in his diary that at the meeting with Pavelić at the Monfalcone railway station Mussolini had agreed that Croatia should receive two exits to the sea below Rijeka and another beyond Split, including Dubrovnik. Boka Kotorska, presently in Montenegro, would be placed under the direct rule of Italy.

This was not the final solution. Due to the misunderstanding about the status of Split, the government decided to withdraw Italian troops from Croatian territory, but only to the border. There they would await the eventual

<sup>21</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 365.

intervention "if we were to be forced to abandon the present solution of equilibrium." The conclusion would be to leave the eastern border of Croatia open to be solved by future events. Hitler left to Italy the arrangement of the Mediterranean delineation "including the Balkans." He suggested that Italy should have input about the future of Serbia.

The Italian intervention was the topic of correspondence between Mussolini and Pavelić since they did not agree with Hitler's off-the-cuff promise that the Croats would determine their eastern border. Specific solutions were reached at meetings between Ciano and Pavelić in Ljubljana on 25 April. Nevertheless, the Croatian explanation that the Croatian borders would be in accordance with their historic bases remained unclear, and credible only to the inner circle. This would demolish Italian concepts about the historic borders of Montenegro, since the Croats asked for the Muslim space in Raška and the whole maritime region with Ulcinj.<sup>22</sup> Although Pavelić wrote a decree about the eastern border (as it was decided in 1918) on 7 June 1941, the disagreement about it continued in the correspondence between Pavelić and Mussolini. These were the only noticeable discords between them. In some places in Sandžak Croatian military outposts were established.

Ulcinj was already included in the Albanian kingdom, and Montenegro was in the making. Commissar Macolini urged a meeting of the People's Congress, which would proclaim independence. Although the term "Montenegrin nation" was not used, it was already in the air. Italian politicians had for the first time in history accepted it during the investigations of the Cetnje uprising in 1919. Beginning with his election in 1922, Mussolini immediately initiated correspondence with Prince Peter, a member of the Petrović dynasty, about the establishment of an independent state under his rule.<sup>23</sup> The gathering of the Montenegrin congress did not proceed as easily as anticipated. The problem stemmed from three members of the royal council that would govern until the king could take over. These members were the Orthodox *vladika* (bishop) in the first place, a general, and a politician. It was difficult to negotiate with the bishop, although he collaborated for a while, until it was announced that he was a Great Serb and he was placed under police supervision.<sup>24</sup> The assembly was called using coercion, since Macolini announced, on 11 July, that he would use force if necessary (*Per amore o per*

<sup>22</sup> Oddone Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 371.

<sup>23</sup> Antonella Vaccaro, "Un progetto di restaurazione dei Montenegro nella lettera di Pietro Petrovič Niegosh (1922–1923)," in *Storia contemporanea* 65 (February 1994). Ekmečić, *Svaranje Jugoslavije, 1790–1918*, 2: 825.

<sup>24</sup> Macolini to Pietromarcki, Cetinje 15 July 1941, *I documenti diplomatici Italiani. Nona serie 1939–1943*, 7: 361.



forza). He requested that immediately before the meeting the Montenegrin state borders be announced since the whole future depended on it.<sup>25</sup>

A candidate for king was discovered among the deportees from France somewhere close to Frankfurt. The local consul contacted Prince Mihailo and informed him about his new status. This was a young man about thirty-three years old who spoke several languages, but did not wish to engage in political affairs. He refused the throne proffered, using the excuse that he had sworn allegiance to the Serbian king and that "he felt like a Serb. He considered the Montenegrin people to be Serbs, just as the Veneti and Sicilians remained Italians."<sup>26</sup> In spite of Queen Jelena's intervention, he refused, since for him the Montenegrin nation did not exist and the people of Montenegro should remain Serbs as they had always been.<sup>27</sup> Very likely due to Gestapo intervention, he subsequently agreed to serve in the event of an Axis victory. He was saved by his aunt, Queen Jelena, and was transferred to France under guard.

One day after the announcement of the People's Assembly at Cetinje, on Petrvođan (12 July), a massive popular uprising began. Thus, plans for a Montenegrin kingdom became obsolete. Therefore, Mussolini conceded to Pavelić and finally accepted that the eastern Croatian border would follow the former border of Austria-Hungary in regard to Montenegro, as it had before 1918. If history could be forgotten, this might have been considered some kind of historic Croatian border.

Correspondence about the Raška region began before 13 July, after which the Italian army took over the governing of Montenegro. This was the topic of correspondence between Pavelić and Mussolini. In the letter of 23 June, Pavelić asked "permission that this border arrangement be quickly resolved, if possible in the same manner as it was already procured by the Germans for the eastern border."<sup>28</sup> The agreement between Ciano and Ribbentrop stipulated that Novi Pazar would remain in Serbia. Mussolini stressed that "from the geographical point of view, the border on Drina is the cleanest, and therefore would serve the best to avoid misunderstandings and incidents among the population, that would help on both sides and administer appeasement and control.... I hold that the ethnic criteria must have the absolute advantage in

regard to the religious criterion if one would aspire to constructive and lasting works.<sup>29</sup> The border was finalized on 27 October 1941.

With this reply Mussolini halted Croatian ambitions to include in its borders the Raška region (Novo Pazarski Sandžak). Mussolini stressed that the principle of historic borders referred also to Montenegro, and that if Montenegrin gains in the Balkan wars of 1912 were not respected, the state autonomy of Montenegro could not be supported. The Croatian border was formally pushed towards the west in accordance with the agreement of the Berlin Congress of 1878. However, it was not certain if it would remain so in the future, if Mussolini's belief in the absolute precedence of the ethnic principle over the religious principle would be respected. In other words, the two sides did not reach an agreement that the Croatian nation was constituted of Catholics and Muslims, and that this union was achieved as a political union, and not as an ethnic tradition of unity. In the letter to Pavelić it was stated that Hitler had allowed him the possibility of solving the eastern border alone. This was accomplished, but the presence of the Croatian state was felt only in towns with a Muslim majority, while the interior, populated by Serbs, remained in a state of rebellion against this solution from the very beginning of the Croatian state's existence. The Muslims from Sandzak were against the Montenegrin state and wrote petitions to Mussolini.

The new Croatian state was formed as an administrative improvisation that could offer only a temporary solution. From the beginning it was apparent that the Italian government held a viewpoint different from that of the German government, Catholic Church, and *ustashe* movement. Hitler hoped that after the victory of the Croatian state and with the help of long-standing policies of intolerance and "cleaning of the soil" (*Bodenreinigung*), the goals negotiated in regard to the delineation of the Serbs would be achieved. There were many signs of Croatian displeasure at the Italian proceedings and the Italians' collaboration with the Serbs. The Croatian Catholic Church was on the German side of the argument. During the celebration of Hitler's birthday, the cathedral in Split was filled with government representatives, clergy, and what could be described as the new Croatian army. The city was decorated with Croatian flags and only a few Italian flags, just enough to fulfill a needed formality.<sup>30</sup> Four days later, the *ustashe* youth organized a demonstration on the promenade in Split with Hitler's pictures and with crosses (*groce gammata*, *Hakenkreuz*), using the presence of members of the Hitler *Jugend* (Youth) as a pretext. All that was closer to the church was closer to Nazism

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 352. Pavelić to Mussolini, Zagreb, 23 June 1941, in Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 480–81.

<sup>26</sup> Mihailo Petrović-Njegos, *Iz mojih memoara* (Cetinje: Svetigora, 2001), 64.

<sup>27</sup> The report of the consul in Frankfurt, 23 May, 1941. *I documenti diplomatici Italiani. Nona serie 1939–1943*, 7: 186–87.

<sup>28</sup> Pavelić to Mussolini, Zagreb, 23 June 1941, in Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 480–81.

<sup>29</sup> Mussolini to Pavelić, Rome, 30 June 1941, 483.

<sup>30</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 268.

than to Italian fascism. At the same time, news reports pointed to the presence of the Yugoslav idea, and to the presence of Serbs as well as communists.

Although one should take with a grain of salt Italian claims that the greater part of the population of Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina sought alternatives to merging into the new Croatian state, this data should nevertheless not be dismissed entirely. These reports bear powerful witness to the historical state of consciousness in this region. On 26 April it was reported that eighty percent of the population in Dubrovnik would prefer the revival of the Republic of Dubrovnik to inclusion into the Croatian state, and that sixty percent of the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina was more inclined to accept the Italian protectorate than the new state.<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the Italian correspondence the belief that the newly formed Croatian state aimed to stabilize its position from the very beginning by pursuing the systematic annihilation of the Orthodox and Jews communities prevailed. Shortly after the declaration of war, armed confrontations between the Serbs and Croats, and what was in part armed resistance against the forces of occupation, took place. Therefore it is impossible to determine precisely the beginning of the uprising in Herzegovina in 1941. There were regions, including a number of villages, where occupation forces never came. There were people who went into the forests after the defeat of the Yugoslav army and never parted from their guns. The fact that the uprising in 1941 was prepared by events before the war in April presented a veritable paradox.

The Serbian uprising endangered not only the question of the arbitrary delineation of the borders of the Croatian state on the river Drina all the way to Kosovo. In the new relations between Croatia and Italy, the Italians had to renounce the idea of a personal union between Croatia and Italy, with a third of Serbian people rightfully represented in it. The solution dictated by the Catholic dictatorship was created not by Italian fascism nor German nazism, but by the Catholic ideology behind them.

It took Mussolini several months to accept the reality of a Croatian state founded on the principle of liquidating at least two million inhabitants. From the beginning of the revolution in April 1941, all indications showed that a situation had been created that would lead ultimately to a large-scale uprising of the Serbian people. Italian authorities could easily discern that behind all of the brutal killings, which began in the first days, stood religious intolerance. Italian fascism made a rule of not criticizing anything that went on "behind the bronze doors," referring to the Vatican. However, in reports pertaining to this situation, Catholic priests were mentioned by name, and religious institutions directly incriminated. Italian authorities were not informed about the

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 182–83.

evolution of the Croatian Catholic Action of 1936, which was prepared by Stepinac even before he was promoted to archbishop. To this day historical science is unable to reconstruct the evolution of the Croatian Catholic Action of 1936, which destroyed the political aspirations of the old Catholic movement. The Croatian Catholic Action of 1936 recalled the Pure Party of Rights of Josip Frank, a precursor of the modern *ustashe* movement. The Croatian Catholic Action rejected collaboration with the Croatian Peasant Party of Vlatko Maček and its efforts to reach appeasement with the Yugoslav government. The Croatian Catholic Action demanded the rejection of the Yugoslav idea and "the acceptance of the revolutionary movement" of Dr. Ante Pavelić. In other words, the Croatian Catholic Action of 1936 did what had happened earlier with the Italians: it accepted fascism as the political framework of its struggle. The foundation for this development was laid in the reformation of the Catholic action in 1931, when the movement of the Crusaders, including both men and women, (*križara* and *križarica*), was designated. This organization was founded by Johan Merc, a son of German settlers from the *Windhorst* colony.<sup>32</sup>

The church organization dubbed "Catholic Action" was more important for Catholic people in the twentieth-century than any other political action. A German scholar reconstructed the position of the "Catholic Action" of Split diocese. In 1937, the diocese contained 279,333 believers, and in 1939 the Catholic associations that together formed "Catholic Action" numbered 32,262 members. "Catholic Action" included ten crusaders' fraternities with 326 members, three crusaders' sororities with 243 members, eleven societies of Catholic husbands with 536 members, thirteen societies of Catholic women with 642 members, ten societies of Catholic peasant youth with 325 members, five societies of Catholic youth with 243 members, three student Catholic organizations with 215 members, eighteen different children's organizations with 215 members, eighteen children's organizations like "Young Heroes" with 1073 members, one society of Catholic workers' youth with 65 members, and three societies of Catholic female youth workers with 165 members. In addition, the network of "Catholic Action" included various religious societies that had a political agenda, although not as overtly as those mentioned above: a Society with 5,890 members, twenty-five societies of the Fraternity of Our Lady of Carmel with 6,301 members, seven Fraternities of the Lay of Ruzarije with 4,326 members, six Fraternities of Mary with 285 members, seven Congregations of Mary with 425 members, five Fraternities of the Holy

<sup>32</sup> While researching the material needed for my book *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914* (before 1973), I encountered the name of Johan Merc, son of a settler in Windhorst. Merc refused to testify against the student members of Mlada Bosna.



Cross with 283 members, fifteen Fraternities of Saint Anna with 1296 members, thirty-two Fraternities of Christian Science with 1066 members, 36 fraternities of various saints with 1,115 members, five Mission Fraternities with 180 members, ten Societies for religious propaganda with 628 members, eleven Fraternities of the Holy Family with 327 members, sixteen organizations of the Army of the Heart of Jesus with 855 members, and fifty-seven Societies for Girls with 2,473 members.<sup>33</sup>

In concluding it must be acknowledged that Catholic Action included the union of all these societies, fraternities, sororities, and organizations, and encompassed the majority of the believers of the dioceses. If we consider only the socially active population, Catholic Action encompassed almost all of the people. The governing body of Catholic Action comprised the higher and lower hierarchy. Although Catholic Action had its seat in Rome alongside a board with a general secretary, its head was the pope. In each diocese there was a bishop with auxiliary helpers; the chain included village priests. Bishop Stepinac managed to expand the foundation created by Johan Merc in 1936 and to unite both the Catholic organization *Domogoj*, led by the Franciscans, and the movement of the *Integrals* around the journals *Dan*, *Vrhbosna*, and *Hrvatski dnevnik (Croatian Diary)*, led by the Jesuits. The Crusaders Fraternities (*Križarska brastva*) began in 1929. Their organizations in villages were purely political and served as "the explicit political Catholic infrastructure in every village."<sup>34</sup>

The Crusaders Fraternities took the form of a paramilitary organization.<sup>35</sup> At the University of Zagreb their leader was Cardinal Sheper. His teaching was described by a former member of the Academic Sisterhood of the Crusaders (*Akademsko sestrinstvo križara*). She stated that they were not known as *ustashe* and that nobody identified them as such. They knew that the *ustashe* existed and that they were a secret organization that was led abroad by Ante Pavelić. The goal of the sisterhood was the fight for the Croatian nation and for Croatian statehood. At the university about ten percent of the students had a nationalistic orientation and participated in Catholic organizations; they opposed communism, atheism, and Masonic organizations.<sup>36</sup> It is interesting to note that the future cardinal Franje Sheper was against Masonic organizations but became the leader of a congregation that in

<sup>33</sup> Aleksandar Jakir, *Dalmatien zwischen den Weltkriegen: Agrarische und urbane Lebenswelt und das Scheitern der jugoslawischen Integration* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1999), 115–16.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 116. J. Horvat and Z. Štambuk, eds. *Dokumenti o protivnarodnom radu i zločinima jednog dijela katolickog klera* (Zagreb, 1946), 16.

1974 prepared the rapprochement of the Catholic church with Masonic organizations. From that time on, Catholic priests entered Masonic organizations. This was the case with American and German Masons, though not with the French.

In the years before the war of 1941, the Crusaders organizations were chiefly organized as paramilitary societies. The first *ustashe* units were made up of members of the pre-war Crusaders organizations. For this reason some *ustashe* wore black caps instead of caps modeled after those worn by an Italian corps of volunteers that fought in Ethiopia. The Croatian Peasants' Protection was reorganized into the Croatian Defenders on 19 April, and from them the *ustashe* were formed on 11 May. Slavko Kvaternik formed the first military corps in Zagreb on 11 April 1941.

Without an understanding of the history of Pure Catholic Action after 1936, it is impossible to comprehend the crises of the Croatian Peasant Party and the sudden takeover of political rule of the Croatian people by secret organizations led by the *ustashe* center in Italy. These were the organizations of Pure Catholic Action, and not some separate *ustashe* secret organizations. Without this knowledge it is impossible to understand why the *ustashe* movement had its deepest roots in the regions where the Catholic church had the greatest success in organizing its believers, such as West Herzegovina, Dalmatian Zagora, Central Bosnia, Lika, and parts of Slavonia. The genocide of 1941 was not committed by people in uniforms but by neighbors participating in religious organizations. Later these same individuals entered volunteer *ustashe* units.

Catholic Action was joined to the *ustashe* movement by Archbishop Stepinac in 1936, and played a very important role in the deterioration of the Yugoslav state and its army. Breakdown from within led to the paralysis of Yugoslav politics and sapped the country's military might. Historians are bent on depicting this inner front as a non-systematic resistance of the Peasant Defenders, as a paramilitary party's army of the Croatian Peasant Army, that was completed in an unorganized fashion. Nevertheless, this being the only completely Catholic military formation of Pure Catholic Action, it should not remain as a liability. Before the war there were no monographs about the Crusaders fraternities and sororities and their role in establishing *ustashe* formations, as well as about the renewal of the *ustashe* movement of 1944. exist before the outbreak of war. Until the Archives are researched and this factor reconstructed, all scholarly truth about our liberation war remains unsubstan-



tiated. The upheaval against the Yugoslav army on 6 April was led by the Catholic clergy.<sup>37</sup>

The attacks of armed Catholics against the Yugoslav army were numerous and widespread, although they did not have the strength to establish their rule without the participation of German and Italian formations. The confrontation with the Yugoslav army continued along with the confrontation with the Serbian people. The Italians could not establish civil authorities in the occupied territories since this depended on the antagonism between Serbs and Croats.<sup>38</sup>

This was particularly noticeable in Northern Dalmatia in the counties with a Serbian ethnic majority. Some of these confrontations began during the April war, when the Croatian peasants at some locations, led by their priests, aimed to meet the occupying army with armed resistance. This was later declared "the Croatian people's revolution," which was the goal of Pure Catholic Action.

Historians have not examined closely the insurrections of Croatian peasants behind the back of Yugoslav royal units. This organization was attributed without much validity to the Croatian Peasant Party and its armed forces, the so called "Peasant Defense." Existing political reasons demanded the discrediting of this party. Such a role undoubtedly existed and cannot be excluded in the final analysis. The basis for this resistance was the support provided by the leaders of the Pure Catholic Action, at whose head was Archbishop Stepinac and the subordinated bishops of the dioceses. In this respect a note of 6 April 1941 by the secretary of the Italian office of foreign affairs was addressed to "Senator Takoni whose permanent residence was in Split until his return home." The note contained the following communication from Senator Salata: 1) The Croatian population of Split and other islands and cities where the boat landed openly manifested its sympathy for the Italians, not hiding its wish to see them return, and expressing a willingness to facilitate their departure; 2) Shortly before the departure the general vicar of the diocese of Split, together with another canon priest, said to Senator Takoni that the bishop sent them hearty greetings, wished them a speedy return with the victorious Italian army, and asked that his wish be made known in Rome. After the recent difficulties with the Serbs, he wished that the Italians occupy

<sup>37</sup> Smilja Avramov, *Genocid u Jugoslaviji*, 305. Edmond Paris, *Genocide in Satellite Croatia, 1941–1945: A Record of Racial and Religious Persecutions and Massacres* (Chicago: American Institute for Balkan Affairs, 1961), 45. Edmond quotes the newspaper *Hrvatski narod* of 25 July 1944, stating that two Herzegovian priests, Ilija Tomas and Jure Vrdoljak, had declared the independence of Croatia as early as 8 April 1941.

<sup>38</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 165.

Dalmatia. He was assured that Italy could provide guidance (*pieno assegna-mento*) to the bishop and his clerics in the diocese for every eventuality and extend its influence on the inhabitants. Mussolini saw this document.<sup>39</sup>

Earlier in this article it was shown that there existed a strong paramilitary organization of the association Pure Catholic Action in the diocese in Split. This network was more important and numerous than the party of Peasant Defenders that had been swallowed by the crusaders and assimilated. Pure Catholic Action was strengthened by religious fervor. In all bishop's seats such as Split, Dubrovnik, Šibenik, and Mostar, the Italian army was met by armed Catholic peasants.

Although the Serbian people experienced the dissolution of the Yugoslav state embroiled in a total loss of political, social, and religious organizations, the new reality under the occupation soon induced individuals and small groups of former politicians and intellectuals to try to find among the Italian authorities protectors against annihilation, as well as political allies. Later it was easy to recognize them once they were organized, institutionalized, and setting up their work. In Split, a board was created that became known as the Split Board or Serbian Board (*Splitski odbor* or *Srpski odbor*).<sup>40</sup> In Gacko the Committee for Unification with Crna Gora was formed. It was easy to discern its existence, although it was hard to discern its roots.

In the effort to reconstruct the very beginning of the collaboration of Serbian representatives with Italian authorities one should delineate two centers that were negotiating it. In Boka Kotorska there existed a group of intellectuals who had settled there after their failed attempt to flee the country with the royal government. They came to Boka Kotorska in order to avoid imprisonment in Belgrade. Some well-known communists were among them. The other circle coalesced around Dr. Niko Novaković, a county official from Knin, together with the lawyer Bosko Desnica from Obrovac. Italian documents show that Dr. Novaković began corresponding with Italian authorities on 3 May 1941.<sup>41</sup> As early as 7 May he brought a petition with the signatures of 100,000 Serbs to the authorities in Split, asking that the region of Knin be annexed to Italy. He also recalled another personal document with the signatures of 60,000 inhabitants of the region between Dubrovnik and Kotor, out of a population numbering 120,000. In addition, these facts were also

<sup>39</sup> Secretary MIP Feraris to the chief Anfuso, Rome, 6 April 1941, *Documenti diplomatici Italiani* 6: 882.

<sup>40</sup> Dr. Rade Petrović, *Počeci saradnje Jevdjevica i Birčanina sa italijankim okupatorom 1941. godine: Prilozi Instituta za istoriju u Sarajevu*, XVIII, No. 19 (Sarajevo, 1982), 203.

<sup>41</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 80–82.

mentioned by a delegation from Bosnian Krajina.<sup>42</sup> These organizations must have existed before then, since Novaković mentioned a similar petition with 60,000 signatures. This would be easier to state than to prove. Another sentence in a document written by Jevdjević stated that he had come to Split "representing a *chetnik* organization."<sup>43</sup> This statement obviously referred not to various pre-war *chetnik* organizations, but rather to units that he classified as such after the occupation. In the beginning Dr. Novica Kraljević, a former professor at the Law College in Subotica, was the main person attempting to establish contact with the Italian authorities. First, he was interned in an Italian camp in Mamula. More important than Kraljević was Dobrosav Jevdjević, a former politician and people's representative.

Although it was mentioned that Jevdjević was active in this respect as early as July 1941, his activity became important only in September. On 19 August Novica Kraljević addressed a petition to the Pope asking for protection of the Serbian population from Croatian assassinations.<sup>44</sup> It is possible that he was in contact with two outstanding intellectuals such as Dr. Vasilije Popović and Dr. Vasa Cubrilović. These connections were later expanded and Muslims from Herzegovina were included. With the help of Jevdjević, a delegation was organized and sent to Rome.<sup>45</sup> These documents projected that around sixty percent of the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina would prefer the Italian protectorate to the Croatian state. The Italian army supported the establishment of Serbian rule in some regions like Knin and Gacko. One should consider the supposition that Italian nationalists in Dalmatian cities, as well as some officers of the Italian army, were dissatisfied with Mussolini's refusal to annex the whole of Dalmatia, and attempted indirectly to support the Serbian resistance.<sup>46</sup> Around the same time, "a group of distinguished Herzegovinians headed by Sava Ljubibratić espoused similar aspirations looking for collaboration in May 1941." They went to Cetinje to negotiate with Montenegrin separatists about the annexation of Herzegovina to

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Petrović, *Poceci saradnje Jevdjevica i Birčanina*, 208. Sefik Pašić, "Pripreme za borbu protiv okupatora," *Hercegovina u NOB* (Belgrade: Vojno delo, 1961), 172.

<sup>44</sup> Savo Skoko, *Krvavo kolo hercegovačko 1941–1942* (Pale: SKPD Prosvjeta RS; Belgrade: Planeta, 1999), 2: 126. N. Bajić, "Komunistička partija Jugoslavije u Hercegovini u ustanku 1941," *Godišnjak društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine* 27 (1969): 133.

<sup>45</sup> Petrović, *Poceci saradnje Jevdjevica i Birčanina*, 226; idem, "Razgovori muslimanske delegacije iz Mostara sa El Husejinom u Rimu okt. 1942," *Godišnjak društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine* 27 (1987).

<sup>46</sup> Petrović, *Poceci saradnje Jevdjevica i Birčanina*, 226.

Montenegro.<sup>47</sup> The response to this request was comprehensive, since it was mentioned that some units from the very beginning had talked about the expansion of Montenegrin rule up to Konjić.

The period between the outbreak of war on 6 April 1941 and the first contacts with the Italian authorities sometime after 3 May is too short a time for an organized action collecting signatures for the annexation of Serbian territories to the territory organized by the Italian army. That could be accepted under a supposition that the requests were interpreted as petitions and that the number 160,000 was put without checking and not recorded in writing. However, the requests to avoid the Croatian state and inclusion in it were general, and the numbers, although doubtful, were not unreal. The rounded numbers quoted in history have never been correct. There was no mention of politics, but rather about the dire reaction of politically non-organized people aiming to avoid the mass assassinations that were implied in the days before the outbreak of war and occupation.

Although the genocide campaign did not begin right after the establishment of the Croatian administration, the massive confrontations that were a precursor to the crimes existed from the very beginning. In Gospić, the *ustashe* were mobilized on 10 May and Serbian houses were burned. Two days later news of the murder of Serbian peasants in Tribanj under Velebit arrived, and some Serbs found refuge on territory ruled by the Italian army. The killing of Serbs increased to such a degree "from the first days of the fall of Yugoslavia," and the Serbs started then to organize their resistance.<sup>48</sup>

On the last two days of May, Italian authorities reported that it seemed as if "the Serbs were continuing to organize a revolution in the whole zone" against the increased number of mass killings. The Italian airport reported that during the last days of May the Serbian armed forces had been located in the hills around Nevesinje. An organized uprising began on 1 June when the *ustashe* shot 13 people in Trebinja and the Croatian authorities announced that for every Croat killed, 100 Serbs would be killed.<sup>49</sup> Two Serbian refugees arrived on 3 June in Sušak to report that the *ustashe* had imprisoned 475 people and killed 47 in Ogulin; in Plaško 42 were killed, in Veljun 600 were imprisoned and some of them were killed. In Slunj 122 people were imprisoned, of this number some were subsequently killed; in Jasenko 20 were imprisoned and half of them were shot; in Dreznica 217 were imprisoned and 10 were killed; in Brinj 300 were imprisoned and 22 shot; in

<sup>47</sup> Skoko, *Krvavo kolo hercegovačko 1941–1942*, 286.

<sup>48</sup> Italian Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, 13 May 1941. Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 288.

<sup>49</sup> Slobodan Šakota, "Prve ustaničke borbe," *Hercegovina u NOB*, 42.



Plitvice 77 were imprisoned and 9 were shot; in Primislju 198 were imprisoned and 4 were killed; and in Gomirje 20 were imprisoned and 7 were killed. In Bosnian Krupa a Serbian upheaval had begun; in Glina 650 were imprisoned and many were killed.<sup>50</sup>

Italian authorities noted from the beginning that the basis of the Croatian oppression was religion and that some of the Catholic clergy took part in nocturnal orgies of killing. In this respect, they warned the priest Vjekoslav Simić from Knin. The commander of the Second Army had filed a report in which he stated that the political-religious oppressions did not recognize limits, as in the darkest times of the medieval period. He warned that the *ustashe* terror must be stopped by all means, otherwise the Croatian state "would find itself in the vortex of a revolutionary movement that would further compromise and even put into question its very existence."<sup>51</sup> In several instances, the Italian media reported the murder of every Orthodox priest killed by the *ustashe*.

The citation of references about the organization of the uprising, used in Italian reports, must be used cautiously in the context of the uprisings in earlier centuries, since organizations that existed before 1941 did not then exist. One can learn about the nature of the first organizations by reading the statements of those who participated in the uprising near Nevesinje in 1941. These statements have been preserved for posterity by Obrad Samardžić to safeguard the historic truth establishing that the uprising did not start as late as July 27.<sup>52</sup> Obrad Samardžić collected the statements of 14 people who remembered the details of their lives immediately after the war of 6 April 1941. All 14 men were soldiers in the Yugoslav army serving in the littoral. After the collapse of the army the officers told the soldiers to take arms with them and go home.<sup>53</sup> On their way they were intercepted by Croatian policemen who demanded their weapons. Even then there was talk about the killing of Serbs. Therefore, the majority of the soldiers continued their movements outside their regular route. At one place the returning soldiers caught a group of *ustashe* who told them that "the Orthodox population would be deported or killed."<sup>54</sup> On their return home, the former soldiers decided, after some consultations, to bury their arms.<sup>55</sup> The *ustashe* authorities composed lists of

adult men to be killed.<sup>56</sup> They imprisoned all the better known men, the members of school organizations, and those who wore Serbian caps with escutcheons.<sup>57</sup> They killed males over the age of 12.<sup>58</sup> This is very important data for reconstructing the decision to commence the first series of killings. Conversion to Catholicism was permitted for children up to 12 years of age, though it was very seldom that this was done in a collective manner. Even where it was done it was not respected, and these converts were killed as a group. Orthodox churches were damaged, their priests deported, and icons slashed with bayonets. An order on the collecting of arms was announced on 1 June, and possibly even earlier, and the next day a group of 82 *ustashe* in the village of Udrežnje committed a mass killing of 27 people. The survivors thought wrongly that this was revenge in connection with an earlier conflict of 1938 in Nevesinje, in a restaurant whose owner had become one of the leading *ustashe* in 1941. Immediately after that, on 3 June, the feast day of Saints Constantine and Jelena, the commanders were elected in some villages. The buried weapons were dug up, and the officer Petar Samardžić asked that every village should elect its own commander. Although the Soviet Union had not yet entered the war, Petar Samardžić carried a red banner. "This was a red scarf tied on a tree."<sup>59</sup> In September of 1941, the communists formed from these people their own units.

These data show that the uprising in 1941 in Herzegovina was indeed organized, although true political organizations, in the present sense, did not exist at the time. Rather it was organized in the same traditional manner as the uprisings in 1852, 1875, and 1882. This was an elemental organization that had a national tradition but not an organized nation. One of Clausevits's rules of war was that the war did not end as long as the opponent showed a willingness to continue the fight. These were the hidden reasons behind the uprising of 1941. They represent the wish of the Serbian people to preserve their state in the Yugoslav form. The first armed confrontations represented the continuation of small skirmishes between the Serbian and Croatian groups and individuals in villages and townships before the end of war and final capitulation in 1941.

The later final disintegration of the national movement into national and communist factions, as well as the splitting of the national faction into sepa-

<sup>50</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 469–70.

<sup>51</sup> General Ambrosio to the Headquarters, 11 June 1945, in Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 471.

<sup>52</sup> Obrad Samardžić, "Izjave ustanika u Junskom ustanku u Hercegovini" 1941. *Zbornik Odbora SANU za istoriju Bosne i Hercegovine*, IV.

<sup>53</sup> The testimony of Ratko Campara, p. 47, manuscript.

<sup>54</sup> The testimony of Rade Zerajic, p. 53, manuscript.

<sup>55</sup> The testimony of Danilo Kljakić, p. 34, manuscript.

<sup>56</sup> The testimony of Danilo Silegović, p. 43, manuscript.

<sup>57</sup> The testimony of Uglješa Solda, p. 53, manuscript.

<sup>58</sup> The testimony of Danilo Klakić, p. 34, manuscript.

<sup>59</sup> The testimony of Vasa Ristić, p. 24, manuscript. The massacre in the village Udružnje occurred after the "first wave of *ustashe* genocide in Mostar" on the night of 31 May–1 June 1941.



rate entities, had their origin in the state of affairs prior to the war reflecting the Yugoslav ideology of the time. Leading intellectuals realized that the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918 had been a wrong decision for the Serbs, but believed strongly in preserving and renewing the Yugoslav state. Slobodan Jovanović thought, in February 1939, that "the Serbs should diminish their Serbian zone in Yugoslavia and fortify it in the manner of Prince Miloš when he reduced all Serbian action to the borders of the Belgrade paseluk. Otherwise we will waste ourselves in fights with Croats. I personally think that Macedonia is already lost."<sup>60</sup> Jovanović thought that the adoption of the Yugoslav name for the state instead of the Kingdom of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs had encouraged the modern autonomy seekers in Macedonia, who came to reject the name Southern Serbia. However, in his last lecture in the Serbian Club, Jovanović urged the preservation of the Yugoslav state with the Croats, and as the president of the refugee government in London he acted to renew this union.

The first national program about the uprising in 1941 began in the wake of mass *ustashe* killings, immediately after the capitulation of the Yugoslav state, while the resistance movement was not yet in view. This is the beginning of the later collaboration with the Italian army and government, though its roots go back to before the uprising. Those who were involved later joined the movement under the leadership of the colonel Draža Mihailović, who was backed by the government in exile. Collaboration with the Italians began before it was known that such a colonel existed at all somewhere in Serbia. Nor did the Serbian nationalists or communists organize the uprising; the uprising organized them. Its basic root was in the revolt against genocide based on religious grounds.

Even before the uprising turned into a mass upheaval of the whole of the Serbian people on 23 June 1941, after the Soviet Union entered the war, there existed a basis for the future split between the communists and nationalists. Communism recalled a national Slavic disposition. The Italian army discovered some communists in Split before the uprising. In contrast with the Croatian nationalists, who aspired to separate themselves completely from the Serbs, the communists hoped "to establish a Soviet-type regime reminiscent of a loosely-felt Slavic solidarity."<sup>61</sup> In May 1941, they knew about a group of communists in Dubrovnik "that expected something that they called their moment."<sup>62</sup> Before the Serbian people rebelled in the Croatian state, the Italian army could not comprehend the senseless Croatian oppression of the

<sup>60</sup> Milan Jovanović-Stanimirović, *Dnevnik 1936–1941* (Novi Sad: 2000), 244.

<sup>61</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 155; it refers to 1939.

<sup>62</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 194. The news of 23 May 1941.

Serbian population. They feared that in one moment small groups of communists in the cities would become necessarily the leaders and produce a big revolution.

A similar situation existed in other Serbian regions before the upheaval of 1941. The Belgrade cultural elite aspired for a change in the old social peasant agricultural order. In 1936, a well informed observer noted that the Croatian question caused a catastrophe in Yugoslavia: "Belgrade reminded one of a person who feels the itching of his amputated limbs. Croatia had already amputated herself psychologically and politically, and the same was done by Slovenia." In Bosnia, the Muslims had been uniting themselves with Croatian separatists.<sup>63</sup> He saw "that everywhere the terrain was prepared for a new land, for a new society, for a new social content of Yugoslavia." In November 1939, it was noted that the "Belgrade communists have more sympathizers than members. Their strongholds are the young intelligentsia and high school students. The literature belongs to them as well as the young intelligentsia."<sup>64</sup> In May 1938, he noted in the diary that "next to Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, next to Orthodox, Catholics, and Muslims, next to the Balkanites and Middle Europeans, rich and poor, dumb and wise, our country is divided into fascists, democrats, and communists. The latter seem the strongest."<sup>65</sup> This state of affairs existed when it the *ustashe* killings began, followed by the uprising as a consequence. After the entry of the Soviet Union into the war, the communist star took the lead against the two other factions.

Besides the petitions of Dr. Novaković and Desnica, in addition to an unbelievable 100,000 signatures, Italian authorities received other Serbian representatives as well. Most of them asked individually for personal protection and shelter from the *ustashe* killings. In several places in Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and Krajina emissaries arrived with messages that the Serbs wanted peace with the Italians, provided that they guarantee their continuous presence in a Serbian state.<sup>66</sup> In this respect, the most important was the request of the former politician Dobrosav Jevdjević from Herzegovina, who addressed the Italian authorities on 23 September in Split.<sup>67</sup> He presented himself as a proponent of the Yugoslav idea that was "dead after the Croatian betrayal." He hoped for a renewal of the Serbian state that would avoid German control and rely on Italy. The vision of the future was the

<sup>63</sup> Stanimirović, *Dnevnik 1936–1941*, 36, 70.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 326.

<sup>65</sup> Stanimirović, *Dnevnik 1936–1941*, p. 181.

<sup>66</sup> Oddone Talpo, *op. cit.*, pp. 896–97.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

creating of a utopian anti-German block created by the union of the royal crowns “of Hungary, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Italy.” The unification of Serbia with Hungary and Italy would end with the “total unification of Croatia.”<sup>68</sup> Vojvoda Ilija Birčanin Trifunović found himself as an Italian hostage in Montenegro, and then as an ally in Split. It remained to be doubtful why this Italian collaborator was imprisoned at first. He had been the president of the former Narodna odbrana (Peoples Defenders), whose mouthpiece he was. Although he could not clearly define the goals he had wanted to accomplish, his framework was similar to that of Jevdjević—the gathering of Serbs with the hope of relying on Italy. Jevdjević pointed out that the Serbian uprising was the result of Croatian misdeeds of the Serbian people, and that the Serbs had been increasingly falling under communist leadership. The propaganda from London that was connected with the Yugoslav government in exile “fell on the deaf ears of Serbs from old Serbia. This propaganda was not influential in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who had no other aspirations after the current changes than peace and tranquillity in order to establish some normalcy for their lives.”<sup>69</sup>

A group of four rebels from Grahovo addressed the command of the division *Sassari*, and their requests were formulated in the report of 30 July in 15 points.

1. The goal of their movement was to liberate the Serbs from Croatian crimes and to achieve an annexation with Italy.
2. The movement was not completely communistic. By accepting that their companies marched with a red banner, they admitted that this was forbidden by their leaders and that they have accepted the Yugoslav flag. That does not mean that they wish to renew Yugoslavia, but only to demonstrate the union of Serbs and Croat dissidents. Besides, the red flag was used as a symbol of protest. They did not deny that among the rebels there were many communists, but assured repeatedly that the movement did not aspire to establish a communist state. They added that the Serbs had a special affinity with the related Russian people, but assuredly not with communism. Everybody who took part in the battle—men, women, children, old timers—would rather die than remain under the Croatian yoke. They wanted to join their representatives with Dr. Novaković, who would negotiate in Rome about annexation to Italy.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Jevdjević's declaration of 25 October 1941, in Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 989.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 578.

3. The assurances that the red banner carried during the uprising of 1941 represented only a sign of resistance seemed little believable, but it was not untrue. Beginning with the Russian revolution in 1905, the red flag had been used in Russia as a symbol of resistance against the old autocratic rule. Members of the imperial family decorated themselves with red insignia during the revolution of March 1917. For the first time, the red flag was hoisted as the Serbian national symbol when preparing the armed uprising against Austria-Hungary during the annexation crises. In Serbian Ljubovia, the hotel proprietor Lazić “unfurled the red flag in front of his café and commissioned volunteers” on 10 October 1908.<sup>71</sup> Until the introduction of the red terror in Drenovo on 7 December 1941, communism had been a Serbian national liberation movement.<sup>72</sup>

The Serbian national movement, constituted historically in May and June 1941, was not unified and was not ready to formulate clear national goals. A faction of the leadership under the banner of Colonel Mihailović, and formally of the Yugoslav government in exile, did not have confidence in such a government. The government in exile preserved an active Croatian opposition that the Croatian Peasant Party misused to the highest degree until its defeat in April 1941. The efforts of Serbian intellectuals from small townships, former students of Habsburg and Italian schools, such as Novaković in Zadar, had been directed toward compiling a Serbian national program for the future. The program adversely influenced this movement until its collapse in 1945 since it was not liberated of unreal utopian calculations. The program assumed that a Central European state, a Balkan or Yugoslav federation, would become a substitute for a united Serbian national state. The blind dependency of Colonel Mihailović's headquarters on the Yugoslav government in exile aggravated this tendency. The small-town lawyers and doctors judged prudently that the Serbian national movement had first to take care of its own house. It had to be tightened and fortified from within and to present itself as a factor to the Western allies in the final solution. This historic task was accomplished by the communists, rather than by the Serbian national movement.

The advances of some Serbian leaders of small townships to establish ties with the Italian army occurred in the wake of Serbian dissatisfaction with the Croatian state. Afterwards, the Serbian revolution became an additional and

<sup>71</sup> Ekmečić, *Svaranje Jugoslavije 1790–1918*, 2: 491.

<sup>72</sup> This decision took place during the conference of the regional committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Drenovo at Nova Varoš on 7 January 1942.

decisive factor in the relations between the governments of Italy, Croatia, Germany, and the Vatican. In the end, Mussolini had to concede and abandon dreams that Croatia would become an Italian satellite through a personal union. Italian army reports about the barbarous killings in Serbian villages, and the orgies of Catholic clergy had as a consequence that the Catholic church began to disband some priests that were connected with the crimes of the *ustashe*. The Italians reported that the whole church was engaged in the conversion of Orthodox and Jews to Catholicism, although it was clear that it was accomplished under duress. The archbishop from Sarajevo demanded that the tax for conversion be lowered from 500 to 50 kuna.<sup>73</sup> The local clergy continued to grant absolution of sins committed by criminals. The killers who threw women and children in hollows at Šurmanci were dispatched to the archbishop in Mostar for the absolution of sins, an absolution that was immediately granted. The simple folk, already poisoned by sermons, did not experience the crimes as a major transgression. All in all, it was assumed that the crimes would be quickly forgotten. The archbishop of Sarajevo published a paper claiming that politicians had assumed responsibility for the persecution of the Serbs and thus the Catholic conscience remained calm.

The historian cannot complete his task in a satisfactory manner since he faces Catholic witnesses who are indifferent to the killings. The Vatican asked Croatian authorities to change their methods, but the Orthodox church in Croatia pointed out that the goals had remained the same—only the methods had changed. This agreement of the Croatian and Italian authorities was finally settled at the meeting in Opatija on 15 November 1941. It is impossible to reconstruct the Vatican's position and arguments, however, the Vatican's presence has been established. The Croatian representative in Rome, Stjepo Perić, handed to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs a *Promemoria* against the interference of the Italian Second Army into Croatian policy towards the Serbs. After this protestation, Luca Pietromarcki, the chief of this office, went to Zagreb. His report contained an admission of earlier information that the Croatian state was not conducting the usual politics, but that the *ustashe* movement was a regime of open religious oppression. Pavelić told him that the conversion of the Orthodox presented "the fundamental point of his program and that he had instilled a blind faith in its success without comments or delay." Pietromarcki thought that already a quarter million Orthodox believers had become Catholics, and that these were people who had been terrorized by their neighbors and consented to the change to save their children.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 995.

<sup>74</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 907, 908; Also, Avramov, *Genocid u Jugoslaviji*, 387.

It could be argued that the cover-up of *ustashe* and Italian proceedings required a number of intermediaries from the German authorities and the Vatican. A visit by a lower-ranking functionary of the ministry could not put things in motion. The result was a complete change of the Italian position concerning the killing of Serbs. The strong development of the Serbian revolution was a contributing factor. As the German army was approaching Moscow, Rome became doubtful about Nazi victory. Before the meeting in Opatija between Croatian and Italian functionaries, the command of the Second Army had a meeting at Sušak on 31 October with the commanders of several divisions. This was part of the Italian-Croatian meeting in Opatija that followed fifteen days later. The conclusions of the military authorities included the following section dealing with Croatian religious policies:

a) Religious question

The Croatian government has decisively determined the following religious policy with the full support (*total appoggio*) of the Holy See:

To baptize the greatest possible number of Orthodox into the Catholic faith, Jews likewise.

It was suggested to the Croatian government that it leave the converted in the same place of habitation due to the small differences between the Orthodox and Catholics.

On our part:

We have to completely disengage from all that constitutes the Orthodox church and thus:

No openings of Orthodox churches, no contacts with priests, no searching (*richiesta*) for priests for Orthodox villages that remained without them.

In short, a total "indifference for religious questions."<sup>75</sup> The general who commanded the division Marche was reprimanded for sending soldiers to help with the exhuming of mass graves in Trebinje. The general even gave trucks for the transportation of bodies. In Knin a Serbian church was opened.

Before the meeting in Opatija on 2 November, Mussolini ordered that in mixed zones no appearance of protection for Serbs and Jews should be shown. Shortly thereafter, on 10 November, he ordered that all contacts estab-

<sup>75</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 599. Notes from the discussion on "Ruinione tenuta del capo di S.M. della 2a armata," testifying that the Holy Sea agreed in the conversion of the Orthodox population.



lished with Dobrosav Jevdjević and Ilija Trifunović Birčanin should be canceled. The Italian command decided not to support the Serbian authorities in Gacko or Knin. The Italian Fascists accepted the reality of the Croatian Catholic dictatorship, which was conducted disregarding the accepted limits of any civilization. The assertion of the personal union of the two countries was forgotten. The Serbian minority, comprising at least two-thirds of the total population of Croatia, was not considered as an equal factor, but as a force for the suppression of communism in the Balkans. The Vatican fired some priests and aimed to keep the Franciscans in check. The information service believed that the uprising in Bosnia-Herzegovina on 21 December 1941 was conducted in the following manner: in the region of the Kozara mountains there were about 1,000 rebels under a predominantly communist leadership. In the region of Teslić 2,000 were also under mostly communists; in the region of Jajac between 500 and 2,000 rebels under communists only; in Majeвица about 10,000–15,000 rebels under *chetnik* leadership; in Vares about 1,000 under *chetnik* rule; in the vicinity of Igman Mountain about 1,000 rebels under communists. Near Romanija Mountain 10,000 rebels were under *chetnik* rule, and in the region of Foca and Gorazde 4,000 were under the leadership of *chetniks*.<sup>76</sup>

I believe that at the end of this account it should not be necessary to emphasize that the role of the religious factor in the uprising of 1941 has not been studied out of fear that historical scholarship might reveal the truth—which is why history as a body of knowledge originated several millennia ago. It was even less motivated by a covert desire to harm the Christian church. In view of the experience of the new religious war, which lasted from 6 April 1992 to the Dayton agreement of 1995, we have to remind ourselves of the confrontations and human catastrophes of Orthodox and Catholic Christians on Balkan territory with equal consequences and equal causes. At some point in time, this tragic cause should be examined by true believers since the proverbial chain of Saint Ante has lasted too long and has always ended in disastrous human losses. It is impossible to overlook that all this presents the debacle of religion as well.

As in the earlier major upheavals leading to the liberation of the Serbian people, the revolution of 1941 faced a dichotomy of national politics and ideology. The dominant party saw the future in union with Russia. The weaker party, consisting of educated members of the middle class, aspired for a future in union with the European West. Both parties believed that they would decide their future alone. In both cases, as with the union with Russia

or with Western Europe, the future place of the Serbs was determined without listening to their final words. The uprising started as a movement for union with Russia, but with the introduction of the red terror in Drenovo of 7 December 1941, and in Ivančiči in January 1942, the Serbian national factor was subordinated to foreign leadership. The Western stream brought to the Serbian *chetnik* movement collaboration with the occupying forces even before the *chetnik* movement had been formed.

<sup>76</sup> Talpo, *Dalmazia*, 968; compare n. 376. The report of the Command of the Second Army—MIP, 21 December 1941.

## Some Thoughts on the Relationship between the French Revolution and Modernization in the Balkans

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Much has been written about the impact of the French Revolution of 1789 on the modernization of the Balkans. And most of it has been positive. In fact, it has become virtually axiomatic to assume that modernization of the Balkan Peninsula was, if not initiated by the Revolution, at least propelled by the ideas and democratic spirit of the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen." At a time in history when questions related to human rights and democratization are gaining ever greater resonance we may well try to reassess the actual impact of the French Revolution on modernization in Southeastern Europe.

What were the modernizing aspects of the French Revolution? Foremost was the destruction of feudalism and the ensuing centralization of the bureaucratic state. The much heralded ideological radicalism incorporated in the Declaration and popularized in the slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" is of secondary importance in that it was limited in application to "active" citizens and, as such, reflected the interests of the bourgeoisie and its intellectual friends and spokesmen. Nevertheless, the scope of the Declaration could be extended, as it was, to other social groups and its slogans were appropriated by various successors of the Girondists including, ultimately, Napoleon Bonaparte himself, whose enlightened despotism retained "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" while redefining its scope *inter alia* in the Napoleonic Code. Be this as it may, the collapse of feudalism, of the political power of the clergy and upper nobility, as well as that of the Jacobins and other radicals, and the corollary "making France safe for the interests of the bourgeoisie"—*grande, moyenne, or petite*—created a blueprint for emulation and adaptation by Europeans who sought changes in the oppressive political orders dominated by autocratic, even theocratic, rulers and masters.

This truism does not, however, necessarily mean that those who adapted the ideas and practices of the French Revolution to Balkan conditions were necessarily modernizers. That is not self-contradictory since the premise that

the French bourgeois society of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was, by definition, a modernizing society is debatable. In fact, it may be argued that that society, which sought ennoblement itself, emulated the conservative aristocracy which it displaced and, in essence, was no more liberal or modernizing than much of the Second Estate of the *Ancien Régime*. It certainly was anti-radical; but, then, the radicals were hardly modernizers themselves. Still, the reformist elements of the bourgeoisie and of the nobility, as well as most intellectuals of the revolutionary period and even certain *em-bourgeoisé* members of the French society which was consolidated under Napoleon—not to mention Bonaparte himself—were committed to modernization under the aegis of a state governed by laws protective and supportive of the citizens' rights to property and liberty and, as such, to the idea of progress and its implementation. It is probably fair to say, then, that the secular state, bourgeois or representative of the interests of the propertied classes, emerged as the instrument of modernization in the early nineteenth century, and that in that respect it was the child of the French Revolution. And it is also fair to say that opposition to the secular state and to the fundamental principles on which it rested, as enunciated in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen came, throughout the period of the French Revolution, and well beyond, from the forces irrevocably opposed to modernization—the First Estate and the reactionary aristocracy.

Whether the French Revolution was a “bourgeois” revolution is a debate which affects historians and polemicists. In any event, it bears little, if any, relevance to the presumed impact of the French Revolution on the modernization of the Balkans, and this, primarily, because of the essential absence of a bourgeoisie in that part of the European continent. In fact, even if one were to assume that the ideas of the Enlightenment were the moving force of the Revolution, it would be difficult to argue that those ideas could find fertile ground in the overwhelmingly illiterate Balkans of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. If, on the other hand, one were to assume that the French Revolution succeeded because of the participation of the masses—a view which cannot be taken lightly—there is no reason to believe that the French masses were a major factor in modernization or, for that matter, that the Balkan masses could learn anything from the French peasantry, workers, or *sans-culottes* that they did not know themselves. Opposition to feudalism and occasional revolts in Southeastern Europe antedate the events of the period 1789–1815 and, to be sure, the peasants of France and their leaders were just as ignorant of conditions in the Balkans as the Balkan masses were of France and its revolution. What mattered, in the last analysis, was the exportation of the Napoleonic synthesis by massive military actions.

It is our contention that Napoleon's military activities directed against the Ottoman, Habsburg, and Russian empires and, specifically, his early campaigns and victories, had a far greater impact on the transformation, perhaps even pre-modernization, of the Balkans than any other aspect of the French Revolution. Moreover, it is our belief that the ideological bases for seeking or legitimizing change in the political and socio-economic orders of Southeastern Europe were based on extrapolations from the experiences of the Habsburg and Russian empires and even, albeit to a lesser extent, from those of the Ottoman Empire itself. And this is only normal considering that fact that the advocates of change were concerned with political and socio-economic factors profoundly different from those of France since, clearly, the East European theocracies had little in common not only with the political and socio-economic order of revolutionary France but also with that of Napoleonic France and, to a large extent, even with that of the *Ancien Régime*.

It is thus important to ask just what changes occurred in the Balkans in the age of the French Revolution that led to eventual modernization, and, in what ways, if any, they were related to the French Revolution as such. Through “objective conditions” created primarily by French military actions involving the three Eastern theocratic empires, opportunities for alteration of the political order of the Balkans did indeed arise. The loosening of Ottoman controls over the Romanian provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia was expressly related to Ottoman military difficulties and the provisions of the Treaty of Bucharest (1812) that allowed the extension of Russian power and influence in those provinces. The political agitation among Greek Phanariots, both within and outside the Ottoman Empire, was connected less with the revolutionary ideas of Rhigas and Korais than with the growing power of Russia and Ottoman military engagements against Napoleon, Tsar Alexander, and the revolutionaries in Serbia. Likewise, the course of the first Serbian uprising—and even of the second, for that matter—was determined not by inspiration derived from the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen but by the perceived inability of the Porte to react as forcefully as it was prone to do had it not been at war with superior external enemies. This is not to say that the Romanian aristocracy, Serbian merchants and voevods, or Greek Phanariots, merchants, and intellectuals were unaware of the French Revolution and of the opportunities created by it for the attainment of their own political goals or, even, that some of these men failed to appreciate the significance of the ideological bases of the Revolution and their applicability, through extrapolation, for legitimizing proposed changes in the political order of the Balkans. It is to say, however, that they appropriated only those elements of the French Revolution that could further their own interests and that



those interests were quite different from those of the protagonists of the French Revolution.

The common denominator of all political activists in the Balkans in the period of the Revolution was exploitation of the weaknesses of a beleaguered Ottoman Empire first for their own benefit and, only by extension and as a function of those interests, for the benefit of their conationals or coreligionists. Within these parameters the impact of the French Revolution varied. Among the Greeks, for instance, the masses were generally aloof to the revolutionary entreaties for the restoration of Greek glory uttered by intellectuals. Neither did they respond to the calls for action from Greek agents of Napoleon, nor did they identify their goals with those of the Phanariots. Their desire for change was motivated primarily by their hostility toward the Muslim Turks and reflected a religious rather than a secular mentality. The merchants and Phanariots too were intrinsically conservative and generally tied their aspirations for removing the "Turkish yoke" to actions by the anti-revolutionary empire of the tsars, to the Greek Plan of Catherine the Great and her successors. And, of course, the Patriarchate shared the Russian view of Napoleon being anti-Christ and the French Revolution the work of the devil.

In the Romanian provinces the realization of the aristocracy's desire to restore its "historic" rights usurped and abused by the Greek Phanariot rulers and their friends and relatives since the early eighteenth century was to be achieved by cooperation with the Russians, not with the French. Only a few disgruntled members of the lesser aristocracy, who despised the Romanian boyars as much as the Phanariots, chose to legitimize their goal of breaking the power of the ruling elite by invoking the rights of man and citizen, constitutionalism, and other claims made by the Third Estate, however, substituting themselves for the bourgeoisie and intellectuals as the leaders of the process of political change. Still, the implementation of their goals did not entail the seeking of aid from Napoleon; on the contrary, Russia and particularly Alexander I were to provide the military support required for liberation from foreign domination. As for the enserfed peasantry nothing was said as the masses were, to them, the *Unmensch* deprived of any and all rights.

It would even be difficult to find a direct relationship between the French and Serbian revolutions. It would be well nigh impossible to suggest that Karageorge or Miloš Obrenović made their moves as a result of their appreciation of the applicability of the ideas of the French Revolution to the onerous position of the Serbs. The liberation from Ottoman rule was motivated by the pragmatic desire to stop the ravages committed by the *dahis* and the exploitation of the population by a bankrupt Porte. That goal became realizable because of the military problems of the Porte, aggravated by confrontation with

Napoleon and Russia. The Serbian leaders looked for assistance from either Russia or Austria, hardly from France. The political institutions of revolutionary Serbia bore only a superficial resemblance to those of revolutionary France; they certainly were not based on French prototypes. The fight for liberty was independent of that of the French protagonists.

Still, in the case of the Greeks, Romanians, and Serbs the political movements and actions did, in effect, pave the way to modernization even though modernization was not necessarily a prerequisite for attainment of the goals of the leadership. In fact, the very question of what was or could be regarded as "modernization" in the Balkans in the age of the French Revolution and to what extent that modernization is related to or compatible with modernization in France needs elucidation.

The concept of the nation—if not the national—state clearly emerged in the age of the French Revolution in Serbia, the Romanian provinces, and Greece. The corollary development of a state bureaucracy, while more restricted and gradual, was also characteristic of modernization. The formulation of constitutions and implementing legality were important steps toward modernization as well. The military establishments of the nascent nation-states adopted new strategies and equipment. Commercialism progressed and nationalism became a major factor in the political orientation of intellectuals and of secularly-minded members of the ruling elites. However, the legitimacy of the opponents of the theocratic Ottoman order was ultimately derived from the oppression of the Christian nations by the Moslem Infidel and its collaborationist Christians rather than through formulation of a political doctrine based on the principles of "bourgeois democracy" inherent in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. On the contrary, authoritarian, autocratic paternalism on the part of the state and the ruling elites, sanctified by the church, was common to all nascent nation-states that appeared in the Balkans in the early nineteenth century.

It may be argued that this evolution of the process of modernization does not represent a rejection of the principles of the French Revolution and that, in fact, it reflected adaptation of the slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" and its implementing of socio-political transformations to the objective conditions of East European theocracy as rendered by the slogan "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality." And it has been argued—particularly nowadays—that the principles of democracy, rooted in the French Revolution, could overcome those of theocracy and derivative autocratic paternalism as modernization takes its course. Such arguments, however, are contradicted by the historic evidence and are largely untenable with respect to the impact of the French Revolution on the modernization of the Balkans.

The nation-states that emerged in the Balkans in the early nineteenth century had very little in common with France or with the "satellites" established in Western Europe by French revolutionary or Napoleonic armies. The first such state, Greece, was the product of cynical compromises between reactionary Russia and conservative England—both sworn enemies of Napoleon and of the French Revolution—that were possible only because of common Russian and British concerns over French activities in the Ottoman Empire through the instrumentality of Mohammed Ali and Ibrahim Pasha. The power of the Greek state rested with an autocratic foreign prince and an authoritarian military establishment, both supported by Great Britain and blessed by the Orthodox church. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen was superseded by the traditional Ten Commandments. Nationalism, such as it was, was an expression of hatred toward the Porte and its armed forces that decimated, ruthlessly and without denunciation by democratic France, much of the Greek population during the Greek war of independence. As for the Greek bourgeoisie it generally accepted the restrictions imposed on political activity by the monarchy, army, and Great Britain as long as its economic interests were safeguarded. Finally, class conflicts evident during the "struggle for independence," involving merchants, Phanariots, clefts, armatoles, and the peasantry, were hardly resolved in the spirit of liberty, equality, fraternity, and respect for human rights.

It would also be difficult to find direct relationships between the limited modernization of Serbia and the French Revolution. The *skupština*, the constitutional attempts, the *čaršija* were all indigenous in fact and substance even though they bore resemblances in form with French equivalents. It is true, of course, that the gradual reliance of Miloš Obrenović on Serbian teachers, intellectuals, and bureaucrats from the Habsburg Empire linked Serbian developments to those of Western Europe; however, in its initial, revolutionary stages, autonomous Serbia, as recognized at Adrianople, owed little to France or to the French Revolution and its legacy.

While somewhat different, in view of the feudal nature of the socio-political order of the Romanian provinces, the initial modernization of Moldavia and Wallachia antedates the French Revolution. In fact, the reforms of Phanariot rulers such as Nicolae Movrocordat reflected, in their own ways, the ideas of the Enlightenment but, like the reforms of Joseph II, they were repudiated by the majority of the aristocracy. The essential elements of the French Revolution and its legacy were the abolition of serfdom and the curtailment of the power of the aristocracy, lay or clerical. None of these were to be found in the Romanian provinces and none were advocated even by the "progressive" lesser aristocracy. Moreover, Romanian nationalism, like that of the Greeks and Serbs, was largely xenophobic and bore no relationship to

the nationalist spirit of the French Revolution. As to constitutionalism, it would be difficult to suggest that the Organic Statutes were related to French revolutionary constitutionalism in anything but form.

These considerations pertaining to the relationship between the French Revolution and its legacy preceding and immediately following the accession in France of Louis Philippe would lead us to a few conclusions in the assessment of the impact of external changes, radical, revolutionary, and intrinsically modernizing, on the Balkans. The politically conscious and active elements in the Balkans were generally conservative and out of sympathy with most of the principles and practices of French democracy. The progressive, democratic ideas inherent in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen were used only when legitimizing actions and policies compatible with the interests of those who sought the substitution of one de facto conservative elite for another even more conservative. The forms of the French Revolution were in evidence but the substance was generally lacking in the "pre-modernization" of the Balkans of the early nineteenth century. However, without the opportunities created by the French Revolution the modernization of the Balkans would have been delayed for a long time at the very least.

## Madame Cherniaeva and the Cherniaev Legend

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Antonina Mikhailovna Cherniaeva (1868–1955), eldest daughter of General Mikhail G. Cherniaev (1828–98), the famed “Lion of Tashkent,” epitomized the beliefs and values of pre-revolutionary aristocratic Russia. This stubborn and determined woman dedicated her life to glorifying and popularizing the memory of her beloved father, renowned for his conquest of Tashkent in Central Asia in 1865. She sought persistently to perpetuate the Cherniaev legend in Russia and abroad. Independent-minded, opinionated, and introverted, she so revered her father that she never married. Antonina quarreled bitterly with her mother and three sisters while remaining utterly loyal to her family, striving to rescue its members from an unkind fate in Soviet Russia. This article will describe and analyze her efforts to foster the Cherniaev legend and rescue the general’s descendants.

Major General Cherniaev, at the head of a Russian force of about 2,000 men subject to the governor-general of Orenburg, captured Tashkent from a disorderly Kokanese defense force of almost 30,000 men, then conquered much of Russian Turkestan. He thus set Russian expansion in Central Asia on an irresistible course. In 1876 Cherniaev commanded the main Serbian army, bolstered by Russian volunteers, in the Serbo-Turkish War in an intended Pan-Slav crusade. Later, he served as governor-general of Russian Turkestan (1882–84). To Russian conservatives Cherniaev was an outstanding military hero, the shieldbearer of the gentry’s traditional patriarchal values. The symbol of a militant Pan-Slavism, he became for conservatives the valiant knight-errant of the Slav world. Twice removed from posts in Turkestan for insubordination, Cherniaev fought a long, abortive campaign against the Russian War Ministry for personal vindication.<sup>1</sup>

Cherniaev often reminisced to his eldest daughter about his military and political career and discussed his feuds with the Russian civil and military

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<sup>1</sup> See David MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent: The Career of General M. G. Cherniaev* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1974).



authorities. Believing that they had condemned her father to obscure retirement because of his independent views, Antonina Mikhailovna wrote articles on various aspects of his career for conservative Russian historical periodicals.<sup>2</sup> In 1906, under a pseudonym, she composed a brief biographical sketch of Cherniaev, attaching poems about him by his admirers. In the preface she declared:

Recognizing my inadequate ability to illuminate clearly and fully the life and activity of Mikhail Grigorevich [Cherniaev] but moved by the desire to take at least the first step on this path, I have undertaken to compose the first brief biography of him.

Citing numerous laudatory letters and appeals which had been sent to Cherniaev, Antonina Mikhailovna depicted him as a sounding board for the Russian people:

How carefully he listened to the beating of the national heart, how deeply he penetrated into its innermost bosom! His aspiration to unite Slavdom and remove the Turkish yoke from oppressed people brought a unanimous response from great and small in all of Holy Russia ... without distinction of class.<sup>3</sup>

In her sketch Antonina Mikhailovna outlined—often using her father's own words—the chief features of the Cherniaev legend which she elaborated throughout her life. She presented him as a stalwart and consistent patriot; the ideal Nicholaevan conservative and military hero:

Richly gifted with moral and mental qualities, he was a pure, strong, and very complex individual. Always and in every way independent and original, unshakably firm in his convictions, he adhered to them until his death, despite constantly changing tendencies and currents of social thought around him. Possessing to the highest degree a strong character and will, he fought throughout his life against the petty

<sup>2</sup> See A. N. Cherniaeva, "Gosudar' Aleksandr III i M. G. Cherniaev," *Istoricheskii vestnik* (October 1909): 152–57; idem, "M. G. Cherniaev v Kishineve," *Istoricheskii vestnik* (June 1913): 910–17; idem, "M. G. Cherniaev v Srednei Azii (1857–1859)," *Istoricheskii vestnik*, no. 6 (1915): 840–72; "M. G. Cherniaev vo vremia russko-turetskoi voiny, 1853–56," *Russkii arkhiv*, no. 1 (1906): 449–58.

<sup>3</sup> A. Mikhailova [A. N. Cherniaeva], *Mikhail Grigor'evich Cherniaev: Biograficheskii ocherk* (St. Petersburg, 1906).

envy and inertness of people in power unable or unwilling to understand or appreciate him.

Cherniaev, she affirmed, had inherited "those precepts of devotion to tsar and country for which he sacrificed himself throughout his life." Out of a sense of duty, he spoke frankly even to tsars and their ministers. His political views and judgments were characterized invariably by clarity, breadth, awareness of the national mood, and deep common sense. Accepting uncritically her father's efforts at self-justification and glorification, Antonina Mikhailovna depicted him as a brilliant general devoted to his soldiers' well-being; a capable, energetic, and incorruptible administrator obeying the tsar's instructions; and a self-sacrificing crusader for the Slav ideal who was either ignored by apathetic but envious superiors or removed and punished by them for his independence and success. Cherniaev emerges from his daughter's account as the victim of a conspiracy by the military and bureaucratic establishment, exemplified by all Russian war ministers beginning with his classmate at the Military Academy, D. A. Miliutin, and the governor-generals of Turkestan, starting with his immediate predecessor, K. P. fon-Kaufman.<sup>4</sup>

A few examples of Antonina Mikhailovna's glorification and defense of her father will suffice. Learning in 1909 that *Russkii arkhiv*, a conservative tsarist historical journal, had received an article denigrating Cherniaev's conquest of Russian Turkestan, she wrote the editor:

The conquest of that region on a pittance by a detachment of 2,000 men with wretched weapons is such an outstanding exploit in our national history that one can only refute the value of this episode out of personal spite, envy, and revenue.<sup>5</sup>

Echoing her esteemed father, Antonina Mikhailovna boasted: "Since Cortes conquered Mexico, there has not been an episode comparable to the conquest of Tashkent." But that magnificent victory had created for Cherniaev numerous enemies and "an insuperable obstacle in the form of several representatives of our military bureaucracy," who then had removed him and granted him only a miserable pension.<sup>6</sup> Antonina Mikhailovna then described Cherniaev in the Serbo-Turkish War of 1876:

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 7, 8, 18.

<sup>5</sup> "O M. G. Cherniaeve. Iz pis'ma ego docheri k izdateliu *Russkogo arkhiva*," *Russkii arkhiv*, no. 3 (1909): 524.

<sup>6</sup> A. Mikhailova, *Biograficheskii ocherk*, 18.

Heading the Serbian forces as the leading fighter for the great ideal of Slav liberation, he attracted after him Russian volunteers and for four months held back the pressure of numerous and excellent Turkish armies... [When] the Serbian troops, mostly simple peasants, had nothing to shoot with, Mikhail Grigorevich turned for aid to Prince Gorchakov [Russia's foreign minister], but that notorious diplomat ignored him.<sup>7</sup>

Actually, Gorchakov had promptly authorized the dispatch of an ultimatum which had saved Cherniaev's army and Serbia from destruction!

Later, continued Antonina Mikhailovna, Alexander III, appreciating Cherniaev's loyalty and energy, named him Turkestan governor-general in 1882 and instructed him to act "so that Turkestan will not be a burden to Russia but bring her benefits." Cherniaev carried out the tsar's instructions by abolishing "unnecessary" institutions created by his predecessor, fon-Kaufman, only to be recalled in sudden and humiliating fashion in 1884 because of "the intrigues of personal enemies" and disagreement with War Minister P. S. Vannovskii.<sup>8</sup> The British ambassador Sir Edward Thornton, however, heard that Cherniaev in a dispatch to St. Petersburg had advocated a Russian invasion of India, which was strongly opposed by Foreign Minister N. K. Girs and other top Russian leaders.<sup>9</sup>

Antonina Mikhailovna continued her father's running feud with the fon-Kaufman family. She objected vehemently to a proposal by Turkestan Governor-General N. I. Grodekov, who had served under K. P. fon-Kaufman, to erect a monument to him as "the builder and conqueror of the Turkestan region." Small busts of Cherniaev and General N. D. Skobelev, who had defeated the Turkmen, were to be placed at the foot of a huge bronze figure of fon-Kaufman. Wrote Antonina:

I could not sleep because of such a distortion of the truth. At my request, Prince V. P. Meshcherskii, partly utilizing my words, placed an article in [his reactionary newspaper] *Grazhdanin* protesting such a monument... Soon he received word that Emperor Alexander III

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 16; A. M. Cherniaeva, "Gosudar' Aleksandr III." For a different viewpoint, see Mackenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 214–26.

<sup>9</sup> Public Record Office (London), Foreign Office 65/1203, Thornton to Granville, No. 43, 24 February 1884; 65/1204, 17 March 1884.

had not approved the projected monument in the form proposed. Thus, names beloved by the Russian people avoided the humiliation of finding themselves at the feet of that representative of German mediocrity.<sup>10</sup>

General Cherniaev had corresponded until his death with members of the ruling Obrenović dynasty of Serbia. Afterwards, his family maintained these warm ties with Serbian leaders.<sup>11</sup> Thus, during the Balkan War of 1912, Madame Cherniaeva and her four daughters launched a fund drive in Russia to aid Serbian wounded. When it lagged, Madame Cherniaeva appealed to Count I. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov, the family's wealthy benefactor and a former minister of the court: "... I do not wish to see this work of Christian charity, bearing my husband's name, fail..."<sup>12</sup> Antonina Mikhailovna described the results of their combined efforts:

We sold postcards with portraits of our father. The collection produced 40,000 rubles (roughly \$20,000 in 1914). This sum was sent by us to the Serbian Red Cross in Belgrade. Patriarch Dmitrii, arriving in Petersburg at this time, visited our family ... to express thanks to our mother for this significant gift to wounded Serbian soldiers.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, Cherniaeva believed that her father's crusade of 1876 in Serbia and the family's efforts in 1912 entitled the Cherniaevs to eternal gratitude and financial compensation from the Serbs.

The Cherniaev family was caught in the maelstrom of the Russian Revolution of 1917. Madame Cherniaeva, Cherniaev's widow, almost eighty

<sup>10</sup> A. M. Cherniaeva, "O M. G. Cherniaev," 526. Cherniaeva believed that Cherniaev and Skobelev, rather than K. P. fon-Kaufman, should have been credited with the conquest of Turkestan. The latter was of German ancestry but had been born in Russia and was an ardent and loyal Russian patriot.

<sup>11</sup> Antonina Mikhailovna collected this correspondence and published it with an explanatory introduction as "Pis'ma vlastitelei Serbii k M. G. Cherniaevu," *Russkii arkhiv*, no. 1 (1914): 25–65, 182–96.

<sup>12</sup> Otdel rukopisei biblioteki imeni Lenina [Manuscript Division of Lenin Library], fond Vorontsov—Dashkovykh, 82/24, A. A. Cherniaeva to Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, 24 October 1912.

<sup>13</sup> Arkhiv Cherniaevykh, Internationaal Instituut voor sociale Geschiedenes. Amsterdam (IISG). This contains all the materials collected by Antonina Cherniaeva and originally sent to Paris, including some of M. G. Cherniaev's letters, family correspondence, and Antonina Mikhailovna's drafts of her father's biography. Unless otherwise indicated, subsequent references are to numbered packets of material in that archive in which the author worked in 1965. On the Serbian fund drive, see XX, "Serbiia" (notebook of Antonina's reminiscences).

years old and speaking little Russian, wrote from Moscow to her Antonina Mikhailovna in Petrograd in January 1918, two months after the Bolsheviks seized power:

Horrors occur on the trains coming from Vyborg, and then in Vyborg itself things are very upset. Unless it is very essential, I advise you not to go there... The butter ran out the day before yesterday and I eat potatoes etc. without butter with great resignation. Anna P. loaned me some sugar. I see nobody... With such a diet I feel weak... May God have pity on us.

In October 1918 the mother penned a final pathetic note to her eldest daughter:

My landlady must be very greedy since the food portions diminish day by day and are becoming less and less pleasant. As long as she continues to supply sugar, I shall be content... How will the great tragedy which is being played out in Russia end? Its fate is doubtless being decided up above.<sup>14</sup>

She died a few months later of malnutrition in hungry Moscow.

When Aleksandr N. Cherniaev, the General's only son, died on his estate in Tambov province in 1917, the direct male line of Cherniaev was extinguished, but the four daughters—Antonina, Nadezhda, Tatiana, and Vera—remained in wartorn, hungry Soviet Russia. During World War I Nadezhda and Tatiana had worked as volunteer nurses in Petrograd hospitals and cared for wounded soldiers on a hospital train. After the Bolshevik Revolution, to avoid starvation, they continued this work. Antonina Mikhailovna later described their struggle:

For four years after the Revolution, we fought for our existence ... performing physical labor in cold and hunger beyond our strength ... under conditions of forced labor. We served in offices, schools, hospitals, and dragged wood and heavy objects. Such is the fate of lonely women of our position in Sovdepiia,<sup>15</sup> where ... no matter how intensively one works, the ordinary laborer is literally not guaranteed

<sup>14</sup> IISG, Arkhiv Cherniaevykh, IX, A. A. to A. M. Cherniaeva, letters of 18 January and 17 October 1918.

<sup>15</sup> A derogatory term for Soviet Russia by its opponents, suggesting that it was a giant concentration camp.

his daily bread. Therefore, our labor was only a supplement, somewhat delaying the ruin of our father's nest [the Tubyshki estate] by the sale of our furniture and even our linen and clothing. Now [1922] this last resource for our existence is nearing exhaustion. Tortured mentally and physically, having lost hope of Russia's resurrection in the near future, we approach inexorably the abyss on whose bottom stands the terrible phantom of starvation.<sup>16</sup>

Their well-nigh hopeless position as persecuted ex-aristocrats in the "proletarian dictatorship" compelled the Cherniaev sisters to seek a way out. As the eldest and most determined, Antonina Mikhailovna resolved to blaze the trail and arrange succor for the others. Paying a guide, she fled by night in February 1922 across the frozen Gulf of Finland, "pursued by the fear of falling into one of the terrible Petrograd prisons." In newly independent Finland—her mother's birthplace—she spent almost a year seeking aid for herself and her sisters. She was assisted by her mother's relatives: her first cousin was Marshal Gustav Nannerheim, the hero of Finland's successful struggle for independence from Russia.

Antonina Mikhailovna looked expectantly toward Yugoslavia, Serbia's post-World I heir, which was welcoming Russian refugees from Communism:

Our dreams turned naturally to Serbia as to a bright star, an anchor of salvation, as our second dear fatherland... We firmly believe that the noble Serbian people will welcome hospitably the daughters and only grandson of Cherniaev.

From a dormitory for refugees in Terioki village in Finland, Antonina Mikhailovna appealed to the leaders of Serbian-dominated Yugoslavia,

where my father by his activities in 1876 had seemingly erected for himself an indestructible monument in the hearts of Serbian patriots, who in numerous petitions had assured their commander of ... their eternal gratitude, promising that these feelings would be shared by their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.<sup>17</sup>

To the ruling King Aleksandar Karadjordjevic she offered the Kazan' icon presented by former Russian volunteers in Serbia to her father in 1882. She appealed to Premier Nikola Pašić, in 1876 a young nationalist Serbian politician, and now the venerable elder statesman of Yugoslavia. However, Pašić

<sup>16</sup> XII, "Moi chernoviki," Antonina Cherniaeva to Nikola Pašić, 22 March 1922.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



failed to respond at all, and the Yugoslav royal family offered only slight indirect assistance.<sup>18</sup> “My letter remained a voice crying in the wilderness,” commented Antonina Mikhailovna bitterly. She recalled her father’s misleading words: “I never received a single mark of recognition from Serbia.” Actually, Prince Milan Obrenović had bequeathed to him the distinguished Order of Takovo in 1876. Cherniaeva continued in a manner reminiscent of her father:

But then the Serbian shepherds were simple and naive. Now Serbia, transformed into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, responded with deathly silence to the family of a man who so nobly sacrificed all personal interests to save the Serbian people.<sup>19</sup>

General Cherniaev’s “salvation” of Serbia had included seeking to turn it into a Russian province and an ill-conceived proclamation of Prince Milan as King of Serbia, and had ended with his disastrous defeat at Djunis! Earlier in Russia, continued Antonina Mikhailovna, it had been considered a noble deed to ransom a captive from the Mongols. “Can it be that a united Slav state cannot find sufficient means to remove from slavery ... the three daughters and sole grandson of Cherniaev?”

After Cherniaeva obtained aid from S. N. Smirnov, a Russian émigré architect at the Yugoslav royal court, her efforts on behalf of her sisters were partially successful. Smirnov conducted tedious and lengthy negotiations with the Yugoslav State Commission for Handling Russian Refugees for money to bring the Cherniaevs out of Soviet Russia. “Here one must walk from office to office; only then does one obtain anything.”<sup>20</sup> Eventually, Smirnov secured 3,000 dinars (about 270 Swiss francs) per sister, most of which Antonina forwarded to them in Soviet Russia. In the meantime Tania had died in Tiumen’, Siberia, whence she had been deported without trial. The money, though insufficient to obtain their release, helped the surviving sisters greatly. “We received the money at the most critical time,” wrote Nadia, “when there wasn’t a penny in the house to buy bread for the next day.” Writing Smirnov, Antonina Mikhailovna noted how bad conditions were in Soviet Russia after the Civil War and the disastrous policies of War Communism:

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., and Antonina Cherniaeva to Pašić, 11 August 1922; Antonina Mikhailovna to “Votré Majesté Impériale” (to King Aleksandar Karadjordjević of Yugoslavia), draft, no date.

<sup>19</sup> XX, “Serbiia.”

<sup>20</sup> XX, “Serbiia.” Correspondence between Antonina Cherniaeva and Smirnov.

Prices are still rising there; salaries are not being paid for entire months. Both sisters receive one state meal without bread. Despite sick kidneys, she and Nadia must haul wood to the third-floor apartment where they occupy two rooms emptied by the sale of our furniture.

This was the terrible price the Russian people had paid for World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, civil war, foreign intervention, and Soviet policies. Continued Cherniaeva:

It is sad to recall all this [suffering], and it is even more difficult to beg and beg. The spirit thirsts for peace and forgetfulness, but life makes its harsh demands, compelling one to struggle and seek to save one’s loved ones. Hopes for the homeland’s resurrection also are almost nil. The political horizon is obscured with the dark clouds of competitive egoism of the great and small powers, and wherever one looks, everything causes the most dismal disappointment.<sup>21</sup>

After Smirnov wrote “I am convinced that all of you will be supported here, but at least one of you must be seen here...,”<sup>22</sup> Antonina Mikhailovna traveled to Yugoslavia late in 1923. Her notebook, written in Belgrade, began: “These reminiscences constitute the final chord in my father’s noble self-sacrificing activity in Serbia in defense of the fate of the Serbian people.”<sup>23</sup> At Hotel Wilson, near the railway station, she was awakened by bloodcurdling cries: a huge pig was being slaughtered for the evening meal. Escaping this “savagely atmosphere,” she crossed the Danube to the suburb of Zemun, where she found General N. I. Shtegelman, a World War I veteran, running a

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., XII, Antonina Cherniaeva to the Queen of Yugoslavia, 19 October 1922; XIII, Pis’mo o Tane” by Vera N. Cherniaeva, 14 November 1922.

<sup>22</sup> XII, Smirnov to Antonina, 2 October 1923.

<sup>23</sup> Actually, General Cherniaev aimed to turn Serbia into a Russian province with himself as its dictator. That he sought mainly personal glory is indicated by his statement to A. N. Khvostov during the campaign: “If the [Slav] cause wins, I shall go down in history as a Slav Washington.” A. N. Khvostov, *Russkie i Serby v voynu 1876 g.* (St. Petersburg, 1877), 27. To fellow Pan Slavist Aksakov, Cherniaev described how Serbia would benefit from a military coup which he would lead: “The influence of Russia upon Serbia would be real and rest on firm foundations. The chief of state and the entire people sympathize with Russia. The ministers gradually could be named from Russians. Hostile parties would disappear, and one of the Slav states would become *de facto* a Russian province.”—TsGADA, No. 90, p. 235, undated war telegram, cited in S. A. Nikitin, “Russkoe obshchestvo i voprosy balkanskoi politiki Rossii, 1853–1876 gg.” (Doctoral dissertation, Moscow State University, 1906), 1025). This testified to Cherniaev’s blatant pan-Russianism.

newspaper stand. Knowing most White Russians in Belgrade,<sup>24</sup> he advised her to turn to V. N. Shtrandtman, who represented Russian émigrés in Yugoslavia. He interceded for her with Serbian Patriarch Dmitri. However, when Shtrandtman suggested that she give language lessons to the Belgrade elite, the proud Antonina retorted: "This means that my father's activities have been completely blotted out of hearts and memories. In such case, I should definitely not have come to Serbia."<sup>25</sup>

At the Russian émigré mission she met A. V. Vasiliev, an idealistic Russian Panslavist, who had known her family in St. Petersburg. In traditional Russian dress and a long beard, Vasiliev took her to a Russian émigré restaurant:

The extremely modest decor and the diners' appearance created the impression of something ephemeral. In one corner stood a battered piano where an elderly lady was playing a strange potpourri—she wore an icon on her breast. I was told that this was Baroness Andersen earning her daily bread. After eating borsch and meat cutlets, I returned to the hotel. On the street I asked a Russian nurse where I could get lodgings. She pointed to a dingy place where I might obtain a bed for ten dinars a night. "But I am looking for a decent room!" I objected. "What are you, a millionaire?", she retorted angrily.

Dismayed by the Russian émigrés' poverty and aimlessness and by the Serbs' lack of concern for them, Cherniaeva found her dream of a hero's welcome for the Cherniaev family shattered. Taking up residence in quiet Zemun, she sought vainly to extricate her sisters from Soviet Russia as she worked sporadically on a full-length biography of her father.

While in Yugoslavia Antonina maintained contact with the Mannerheims. In Finland she had become a close friend of Mrs. Sophia Mannerheim, who died of cancer in 1928.<sup>26</sup> Marshal Mannerheim wrote her in January 1931:

<sup>24</sup> After their evacuation from the Crimea in 1920–21, many survivors of the White armies of General A. I. Denikin and Baron P. Vrangl settled in Yugoslavia.

<sup>25</sup> XX, "Serbiia." Cherniaeva's reminiscences broke off once she was settled in Zemun. According to Baron B. N. fon-Grevenitz, the executor of Antonina's estate, whom the author interviewed in Helsinki in February 1966, Antonina lived rather comfortably in Zemun once the Yugoslav government belatedly recognized her father's rather dubious services to Serbia.

<sup>26</sup> XXIV, "Sophie Mannerheim. Esquisse."

After so many years and so many deceived hopes, one hesitates before expressing aloud the hope to see in the course of this year the end of the bloody [Soviet] regime which tortures your nation, but it is nonetheless the wish which I and all my Russian friends and army comrades make on the eve of every new year.<sup>27</sup>

At that time Soviet Russia, under Stalin's brutal dictatorship, had plunged into the forced collectivization of agriculture and the First Five Year Plan. Millions of Russian and Ukrainian peasants would perish in "Stalin's famine."

In September 1942, with Yugoslavia suffering under Italian Fascist and German Nazi occupation and engaged in a bitter civil war between General Draža Mihailović's Chetniks and Marshal Tito's Communist-controlled Partisans, Cherniaeva received this telegram: "Marshal Mannerheim has taken steps to arrange your trip to Finland." Providing for her needs through the Finnish Red Cross, Mannerheim wrote her early in 1943: "I was very glad to hear that you were satisfied with your trip [to Finland] and hope that your stay in our northern land will not bring you hardships."<sup>28</sup> However, Antonina Mikhailovna soon lost most of her funds in an unfortunate investment and had to reside in an old people's home in Helsinki.

At the end of World War II two elderly spinsters—Antonina and Nadia—were the sole survivors of the once numerous and prominent Cherniaev family. The other sister and Cherniaev's grandson had perished during the 900 day siege of Leningrad (formerly St. Petersburg, then Petrograd):

My widowed sister [Vera], her married son, and daughter succumbed to terrible privations in the German blockade. The unfortunate Nadia cared for her three dear patients without hope of curing them. Left all alone, she alludes indirectly in her letter to the question of joining me. I ardently wish to have her near me to share the generous subsidy from the ladies' committee of the Red Cross.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> XXI, "Pis'ma kuzena." In XXIII is a photograph of Marshal Mannerheim from 1934 inscribed: "A ma cousine, Nina Tcherniaeff, avec amities sinceres."

<sup>28</sup> XIII, Antonina Cherniaeva to "Chère Madame," 18 January 1947.

<sup>29</sup> XIX, A. N. Cherniaeva to "Vozrozhdenie," 21 August 1948; IV, Sergei V. Gladkin (New York) to A. N. Cherniaeva, 25 October 1951. 30 VI, pp. 50–51, Antonina Cherniaeva to "Vashe Vysokopreosviashhenstvo" (Metropolitan Evlogii), draft, no date.

Cherniaeva wrote its president that Nadia had nursed Russian villagers and soldiers for many years, but her efforts to arrange her sister's emigration to Finland failed. Nadia resided in Leningrad until her death.

Still anxious to erect a lasting monument to Cherniaev's memory, Antonina Mikhailovna worked persistently in Helsinki on his biography. She still feared that his alleged achievements would be ignored by history or disparaged by the Soviet or émigré Russian military establishments. Having completed her research at Helsinki University Library and written a draft, she approached several Russian émigré publishing houses with her panegyric biography. None of them would publish it in full, and she rejected offers to print excerpts. Then over eighty years old, Antonina Mikhailovna fought her last campaign against Russian émigré military leaders. To perpetuate General Cherniaev's role in the South Slav liberation, in 1948 she presented the Kazan icon to the Russian cathedral on the Rue Daru in Paris. She explained to Metropolitan Evlogii there that

The names of Mikhail Grigorevich Cherniaev and his associates have been relegated in Serbia to complete oblivion. The monument they erected on the brotherly grave of the Russian volunteers [above Aleksina] is largely destroyed and only a few old men remember their fathers' tales about their Russian commander-in-chief. The reason for this should be sought in the falsely assimilated and excessively inflated feeling of nationality among the Serbs.<sup>30</sup>

But the funds required to frame the icon were provided by the Russian Military Alliance (Russkii obshchevoinskii soiuz), directed by ex-Imperial Russian army generals. Cherniaeva considered that organization to be the offshoot of the hated (by Cherniaev) War Ministry which had allegedly ignored her father's work. The Alliance placed its own inscription on the icon case that obscured the original one, and a letter by Major General A. A. Lampe intimated that the icon was the Alliance's gift for the cathedral's twenty-fifth anniversary.<sup>31</sup>

The fabled Cherniaev anger welled up in the lonely old Antonina Mikhailovna. The icon was hers, she wrote Lampe indignantly, bequeathed to her by her illustrious father. The White generals were "utilizing émigré idleness and my defenselessness and presence in Finland to take possession of my historic icon." She sought aid from Archimandrite Savva of the Rue Daru cathedral against the heirs of Russian War Minister Miliutin. "By masking the

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., Antonina Mikhailovna to Lomako, 8 February 1952.

<sup>31</sup> IV, A. A. Lampe to Antonina, 6 October 1950; XIX, Antonina to Lampe, 10 October 1950.

icon with their inscription, they have gone to the limit of disrespect toward the leaders of the glorious epoch of Slav emancipation."<sup>32</sup> The Russian émigré generals and Orthodox clergy of Paris assured Cherniaeva that her icon was in good hands, but right to her death she continued to fight this imaginary conspiracy. The Military Alliance, she wrote Metropolitan Vladimir, was turning an icon "symbolizing a Christian and patriotic ideal into self-glorification. The White movement has not scored any successes," she continued pointedly, "its bosses (*vozhdy*) have been dispersed over the face of the globe, just like ordinary refugees."<sup>33</sup> In February 1952 Antonina Mikhailovna wrote to the priest Grigorii Lomako, insisting on the removal from the icon case of the Alliance's inscription which revealed "the sick and distorted vanity of its inventors. Who puts up a monument to himself, to twenty-five years as refugees, to a humdrum existence outside the fatherland!!"<sup>34</sup>

As her death approached, Cherniaeva acted to preserve the small archive of Cherniaev materials and her correspondence which she had brought from Russia and carefully arranged and annotated in exile. Especially precious to her were the manuscript and drafts for the unpublished biography of her father.

Early in 1952, approaching a prominent Russian émigré, B. K. Zaitsev, she related the genesis of her biographical study of her father:

About two years before his death I would come in the evenings into his quiet study [at his Tubyshki estate] and listen to his stories about Sevastopol, Central Asia, the Serbo-Turkish War, and many of the events of his life. Subsequently, P. I. Bartenev began to publish my articles—individual episodes from my father's life... Fate took me to Yugoslavia where I obtained some information in the library of the Serbian [General] Staff about the events of 1876. The German occupation induced me, to avoid starving in the streets of Belgrade, to move to Finland ... where I undertook a detailed biography of Mikhail Grigorevich. The biography, according to official documents, is merely a skeleton lacking body and soul... My work is almost an autobiography. I have portraits of my father, mother, our country estate, his grave. Can it be that all this will disappear without a trace? I am eighty-five years old, alone, and live in a Finnish dormitory, so

<sup>32</sup> XIX, Antonina Mikhailovna to Archimandrite Savva, 8 May 1951; IV, Antonina Mikhailovna to Protoirei (Archpriest) O. Lomako, 2 February 1951, draft.

<sup>33</sup> XIX, Antonina Mikhailovna to Metropolitan Vladimir, 22 April 1951.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., Antonina Mikhailovna to Lomako, 8 February 1952.



that after my death my little archive, very valuable historically, will go into the stove.<sup>35</sup>

Zaitsev recommended to Cherniaeva the Society for the Preservation of Cultural Valuables in Paris, directed by Professor Dmitrii Riabushinskii, who agreed to receive the documents at any time her adviser and executor, Baron N. fon-Grevenitz, arranged this with the Society.<sup>36</sup> Relieved at last, Cherniaeva died peacefully on 24 August 1955 in Helsinki. The Cherniaev family had died out, but Antonina Mikhailovna's archive, which the author has utilized, and the Cherniaev legend were preserved for posterity in Amsterdam.

<sup>35</sup> IV, Antonina Mikhailovna to B. K. Zaitsev, 18 January 1952.

<sup>36</sup> XIX, Riabushinskii to Antonina Mikhailovna, 4 April 1952.

## Cousin Krsto—the Bookman

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### Cousin Krsto

Over the years I have gathered interesting details on the life of my cousin Krsto (Krle), probably because we were of about the same age and background. In most instances, it came from discourses I had with him on numerous occasions. The story is founded on the written materials, and interviews, and it mirrors the times through which his family has lived in the years following the First and Second World Wars, the Communist Revolution, and its aftermath. The Vućinić clan (*bratstvo*) lived in two adjacent villages, Orah and Panik, and they comprised the largest clans in both villages. After the harnessing of the river Trebišnjica in 1968, the family moved out from Orah and Panik, and the buried relatives were transferred to other burial sites.

Like all good fathers, Gajun, Krsto's father had an assignment for each of his children. The two daughters would be married off, hopefully into families with means. Some of the male children would stay home and manage the family patrimony. Others were wage earners and brought some of their income home. Gajun decided that the eldest son, Vlado, and the youngest son, Danilo, would remain at home to manage the land, but the remaining three sons should go into the world to learn a trade. Learning a craft was the most a peasant child could reasonably aspire to achieve. Mastery of a craft would offer him a sure, but marginal existence. General education beyond elementary schooling was unthinkable. The priesthood was the only possibility, but the family would get little more than pride from this progression.

Father Gajun had also decided that Krsto, the oldest of his sons, should learn some kind of a trade and felt that for this purpose he should entrust him to a merchant in Belgrade. I knew of Krsto's plans, but did not know what kind of trade his father had chosen for him. This I learned many years later, in 1954, when Krsto and I met in Belgrade. We became close friends and our friendship grew stronger until his death twenty years later. During our many

subsequent meetings, I asked him how he traveled from Panik to Belgrade, and how he found an appropriate merchant who would take him into his family. It was of special interest to me how Krsto chose books and stationery as his future profession. In great detail, during several meetings, Krsto told me about his apprenticeship before and during the war. After he completed his training, he became an accomplished store manager and a book merchant. He told me about his wartime experience and life in Belgrade during the war; how the troops of Joseph Broz Tito and the Soviet Red Army entered Belgrade to "liberate" it on 20 October 1944.

Krsto's biography is fascinating. Upon completion of elementary school in 1926, his father wasted no time in taking him to Belgrade in search of opportunities. Something had to be done for Krsto; he needed guidance. Trade school was closed to Krsto because of its cost, but he was denied a stipend from the "Economist" (Privrednik), because it was alleged that his family was not "without means." The "Economist" was an association for the promotion of learning and the trade and craft skills urgently needed in a country with an underdeveloped economy. Though his family was not starving, it was not able to pay for his education. Nor was the "Economist" willing to contribute toward his education. The line between those who were "better off" and those "without means" was very thin. While Krsto's family was not poor according to the official yardstick, the cost of trade school was beyond the family's means. Krsto had no choice but to start his professional life as an apprentice, learning the trade through work. The employer would provide him with shelter, board, and basic clothing.

After Krsto completed the prescribed three years of trade learning, he established himself in Belgrade where he met people from all parts of Yugoslavia and of all social backgrounds. He worked hard and lived frugally. High on his agenda was to bring his brothers, Dušan, Djordjo, and Danilo to Belgrade to emulate him by learning a trade. He accomplished his goal. Others from the family followed in his footsteps. No one knew then, that the impending war and the Communist Revolution would heavily influence the future lives of Krsto and his brothers. The brothers that Krsto brought to Belgrade were as ambitious as he; each of them economically secure. The outbreak of the Second World War forestalled Gajun's plan to send his youngest son, Danilo, to Belgrade. He spent the war at home under harsh conditions, taking care of the family and its animals, and working the land to keep the family alive. After the war ended, he left the village and found a wage-earning job in nearby Montenegro.

### Krsto's Odyssey

On 26 August 1926, Krsto and his father Gajun departed for Belgrade as planned. They took with them enough food to sustain them during the trip. Mother Milica had prepared the typical meal for the region in which they lived: corn bread called *kukuruznica* or *kukuruza* (from German *kukuruz*), hard-baked, maize flour bread, which was accompanied by special local cream cheese, called *kajmak* (Turkish *kaymak*); a piece of smoked goat leg; and a cut of bacon, which the natives call *slanina*. Bacon and cream cheese made the corn bread easier to swallow. Gajun had prepared for the journey his native costume, while Krsto gathered his meager possessions and traveled in his everyday dress, the only clothing he owned. Father and son walked about twenty kilometers on the dusty macadam road that passed by their house and would take them to the railway station in Trebinje. There they boarded a narrow-gauge train, which connected poverty-stricken Herzegovina with the more prosperous parts of Yugoslavia. Father and son purchased two of what were popularly dubbed "fourth-class" tickets. The tickets would assure them a standing place in a railway wagon used for transporting freight and animals. But since there were no seats in the wagon, Gajun, his son Krsto, and other passengers were obliged to sit on the floor. The tiny and worn-out ancient engine belched thick smoke that collected in the compartment, making it difficult to breathe. From time to time the train stopped to discharge someone or to fetch water from the station's pump.

After a long day's travel, son and father reached Sarajevo, a large city with drinking water and toilets, unkempt and crowded. The passengers were able to stretch their legs, fill their bottles with water, and had an opportunity to go to the bathroom. After Gajun and Krsto boarded the train and pulled out of the station, within a short time the train made two stops. It took a long time before the train made its third stop. It was here that Krsto learned a lesson he would never forget. Father sent him to fill their two one-liter bottles with water. But it appeared as if everyone else had the same idea. Krsto followed the crowd that was pouring out of the railway cars and advancing toward the water pump.

Unable to break through the crowd, Krsto patiently inched his way to the pump. Fascinated by the many varieties of bottles and gourds he saw, Krsto eventually reached the pump, drank his fill of water, and then filled his two bottles and hastened back to the train. He never for a moment thought that the train would not be there when he returned. But he discovered that the train was gone. Frightened and confused, Krsto began to howl. To miss the train was bad enough, but to face his father would be a horror. Krsto told me that when in anger, his father became terribly agitated. Krsto's cries drew the at-

tention of the stationmaster, whom Krsto recognized by the special cap he wore. The stationmaster took him inside his office and attempted to console him.

There was still another problem: the last train for Belgrade had departed. The stationmaster told Krsto that all would be well and explained the arrangement to him. He would phone ahead to request that the train carrying Krsto's father be stopped. Gajun would be advised to take another train and come back to the station to meet Krsto. After a while, father and son met. Father controlled his temper; they both kept silence. The curious peasant who was standing nearby, and had overheard their mishap, graciously invited them to spend the night at his home. It was late in the afternoon, and they accepted the invitation with gratitude. In the morning they had breakfast with the family and later boarded the train to Belgrade. In the years that followed, Krsto often told the story about the train incident, and continued to express astonishment at how his father, a traveled man (he was twice in America), could have sent a twelve-year-old child to fetch water without telling him how long the train would stop at the station.

When Krsto and father reached Belgrade, they gathered their belongings, got off the train and began to ascend the uphill road that would take them to the heart of the city. Gajun decided that they should first call on his long-time friend, Gojko Kijac, a wine merchant, whose shop was located on Pop Lukina street, which led from the cathedral to the Sava River bridge. As Gajun and Krsto approached Kijac's place, Gajun straightened his large mustache in preparation for the customary greeting, the exchange of three kisses. The reception was cordial, and the host and his guest lost no time before hitting the bottle. As they reminisced and drank, darkness set in and Kijac prepared to close the shop. He checked the cash register, counted the daily earnings, and put the accumulation of paper money into his pocketbook, and the small change into a little bag, which he tied with a string and hid somewhere on the premises. Kijac invited Gajun to his home to have dinner and to spend the night. Dismissing Krsto as a mere child, Kijac did not ask him to come along. By now, Kijac and Gajun had become tipsy, yet Gajun was coherent enough to ask what they should do with Krsto. Kijac's response was that Krsto could spend the night in the shop and sleep on top of one of the extra-large barrels. He then proceeded to close the wooden shutters, lock the windows and the store, and the two men walked away. Left without dinner and bedding, Krsto explored the shop and found a large sack (*džak*). He climbed on top of a barrel, pulled himself into the sack and, feeling totally exhausted, he quickly fell asleep.

Early in the morning Kijac and Gajun returned to the store and found Krsto sleeping. He was in such a deep slumber, that they could not awake him

no matter how hard they shook him. His father doused him with cold water and slapped his face, finally succeeding to get Krsto on his feet. The store was located between the ground floor and the basement, a space the natives called a half-cellar (*polupodrum*). To get to the half-cellar, one had to enter the store from the sidewalk and descend two to three steps from the sidewalk before reaching the floor of the half-cellar. The barrels of wine and the containers of slivovitz (*šljivovica*) emitted overpowering alcohol fumes. Through the night Krsto had inhaled so much of these fumes that he had become "intoxicated." This apparently was the reason why his father found it so difficult to awaken him. While Krsto was sobering up, Kijac looked through the pages of *Politika*, the leading Belgrade journal, and discovered that the firm "Božo O. Dačić," one of the largest book and stationery stores in the city, was looking for an apprentice "from a good home." He directed Gajun to King Alexander Street, No. 9, now located across the street from *Borba*, the communist official news organ in Nikola Pašić Square.

Gajun felt it was important for him to make a good impression on all potential employers of his son; he rightly believed that Krsto would be judged by the kind of father he had. With this in mind, he prepared for the Belgrade journey by wearing the native costume of eastern Herzegovina. Gajun did not, as in the earlier days, carry a pistol behind the cummerbund, but instead wore a knife in a decorated scabbard (*korice*). For headgear he wore the native cap (*zavrata*) with the Serbian patriotic symbol of four "S" on a cross, which stood for "Only Unity will Save the Serbs" (*Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava*), a logo particularly popular among the Serbs in times of crisis, as in recent years. Gajun wore baggy knee-length blue pants, a red felt vest (Turkish *fermen*), and a short jacket (*džemadan*, from Turkish *camadan*). He donned white linen socks, leggings (*tozluke*, from Turkish *tozluk*) with red trim, and 12 to 15 fastener hooks (*kopče*) to keep them together. In place of the traditional *moccasins*—of which the bottom half was made of a cow hide and the upper from strips (*oputa*) of sheep or goat skin—Gajun wore ankle boots.

Gajun was a typical representative of what some imagine *homo dinaricus* to be—the inhabitants of the Karst and Dinara mountains, extending from Istria into the Greek Epirus. Gajun was tall, sturdy, broad-shouldered, and handsome. As he approached the owner of the shop, Gajun greeted him in eastern Herzegovinian style by saying "May God grant!" (*Pomaže Bog!*), and the owner responded with an infrequently heard salutation, "And all the saints, my dear Montenegrin!" Gajun quickly corrected him by saying, in a light sort of way, "I am not a Montenegrin, but a Herzegovinian." After exchanging these greetings, Gajun told Mr. Dačić that he had read in the paper that the Dačić store was looking for an apprentice, adding that he had brought



his son to be considered for such a position and that he had nine children and was concerned about their future.

Dačić was not totally oblivious to Krsto; he patted him on the head, and asked him what kind of grades he earned in school. Krsto responded that his grades in school were "good," comparable to a "C" in our American grading system. When asked how old he was, Krsto proudly replied that he was twelve, just like his father had instructed him to say. His father believed that age would be a factor in the employment chances. In reality, Krsto was then only eleven years and seven months old. Then, Dačić asked him if he would like to be a bookstore apprentice. Before answering the question, Krsto inquired what would be expected of him. After Dačić explained the duties of apprentice in a bookstore, Krsto responded firmly that he would indeed like to be a bookstore apprentice. Krsto's frankness and quickness of mind impressed Dačić. He said that he would accept Krsto and asked for his baggage. Father Gajun stepped in, saying that Krsto had no baggage, and in clothing he possessed only that which he was wearing: heavy shoes with thick black soles for better wear, with heavy iron nails that had large heads, knee-high pants, a woolen jacket and socks, and a shirt made of broadcloth. Like his father, he too wore a cap called *zavrata*, particular to the region from which he came.

Krsto and Gajun passed the test and Dačić accepted them both. He promised Gajun that he would take Krsto under his wing, provide him with food, lodging and clothing for the winter, including two sets of underwear, and a winter coat. Dačić explained that during the first two years of apprenticeship, Krsto would receive no wages. Gajun thanked Dačić for accepting his son and authorized him to discipline Krsto should he lie, steal, or be disobedient. In a symbolic gesture, Gajun offered his knife to Dačić to use it if necessary to cut Krsto's throat should he misbehave. Dačić smiled and said: "I am sure there will be no need for that." After thanking Dačić for accepting Krsto, Gajun and Krsto exchanged three kisses and parted with tears in their eyes.

The winter of 1927–28 was a particularly cold one, so cold in fact, that the Sava and Danube rivers froze over. When the father of Dačić's wife died during these days he left behind a heavy winter coat. Dačić and his wife decided to pass the coat on to Krsto after making some minor alterations. But the coat was not altered adequately and remained too large. This fact caused other apprentices and journeymen to laugh at Krsto's attire. But with the coat in his possession, Krsto had no fear of the cold and, in fact, he claimed that it actually saved his life that terrible winter.

Krsto was the first of Gajun's sons to leave home and start a new life as an apprentice. His older brother, Vlado, had by this time found employment with the narrow-gauge railway operating from Trebinje to Bileća and was

able to help his family. Most importantly, he was living at home and in his spare time, as the head of the family, he could manage the patrimony. Krsto learned the book-stationery trade in Belgrade and secured a job there, sustaining himself. From time to time, he sent a paltry sum of money to his family left behind, but not forgotten, in the village. As for his other three sons, Gajun planned to send two of them "into the world" and make them self-reliant. Thus, Krsto was followed to Belgrade by his brother Djordjo in 1928 and brother Dušan in 1932. Krsto's loyalty and excellence as an apprentice impressed Dačić and consequently he was more than happy to accept as apprentices two of Krsto's brothers.

Over the years, Krsto lost some of his rural roughness and adopted the urban dress. Yet it was also to his credit, that he never forgot his background, nor the Serbo-Croat idiom spoken in eastern Herzegovina.

After four years with Dačić in Belgrade—two years as an apprentice, and two years as a journeyman (*kalfa*, Turkish) with the firm "Rajković and Čuković," a large publishing house—Krsto decided to visit his family in Panik. He prepared for days for the trip. He bought gifts for his parents, siblings, and closest of kin, and acquired new clothing for the occasion. Upon leaving the city he took the same narrow-gauge railway by which he had traveled to Belgrade in 1926. During his absence the railroad had been extended from Trebinje to Bileća and somewhat later to Nikšič. Krsto detrained at a small station not far from his home. Relatives and friends were waiting for his arrival. It was at that moment that Krsto experienced the most traumatic event of his life. His mother and some other members of the family were on the way to meet him. Krsto spotted a woman in the crowd he thought was his mother. The two met on a hill above the Skulić home, not far from Krsto's family home. But he could not recognize his mother, she looked foreign to him. It was an incident that embarrassed and hurt Krsto. Not having seen her son for four years, now a grown-up in urban clothing, Krsto's mother could not recognize him either. Krsto left home as a child in peasant garb and returned as a young urbanite. Just as the mother sheep cannot recognize its shorn lamb, it took Krsto's mother some time to feel comfortable in the presence of her grown and urbanized son. After spending a few joyous days at his family's home, Krsto returned to Belgrade and his job.

Krsto remained with the same employer throughout the thirties and the Second World War. Soon after the Communists came to power in October 1944, the firm "Rajković and Čuković" was taken over by the state. I was told that Krsto was offered the opportunity to serve as a director of the store. He refused the offer and instead agreed to serve as the highest paid clerk in the store, where he was needed, being the only one with a considerable amount of knowledge of publishing and the book business.

### Krsto and His Politics

When I saw Krsto again in 1954, after not having seen him for 28 years, since 1926, he was the associate director of Jugoslovenska knjiga (Yugoslav Book), the largest bookstore in Belgrade, located in the so-called Terazije area, on the main street of Belgrade. The bookstore, which occupied the first two floors of a multi-story building, was a flourishing business. It sold books and stationery supplies to a broad range of Belgrade's population, and it also shipped books abroad. The store also handled office supplies, music records, and gifts. I was told that Krsto could have been the director of the store, but he steadfastly turned down jobs that might entail political commitments. He did not want to participate in Communist Party meetings or to be accountable to Communist planners and supervisors. Everyone in the bookstore was aware that Krsto knew more about the business of books than any one else. In fact, the director of the store consulted with Krsto on important questions. Knowing this, the subordinates respected him, and sought his help when needed. They felt safe and protected by his presence, even the Communist workers, especially at the time when knowledge of business management had little to do with Communist ideology.

The reader may be interested to know that after the bookstore was nationalized and a director had been selected, the first order issued was to decorate the premises with pictures of Tito and Stalin. Krsto refused to participate in the assignment. The staff, which regarded Krsto as indispensable to the bookstore, exerted no pressure on him. When in June 1948, Yugoslavia was expelled from the *Cominform* and relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union were severed, a directive was issued to remove Stalin's pictures from the store's walls. This time, Krsto, now stronger and more politically secure than he was in 1944, refused even more vigorously to participate.

In my academic work, Krsto was a valuable contact. Over the years he had acquired an impressive knowledge of bibliography and met personally many of the country's leading scholars and writers, especially those of Serbian background. He mingled with people of learning; knew what was being published or censored. Moreover, he could help locate and obtain the books and journals I needed, gave me hints on good buys, and informed me of titles that were removed from the shelves. Krsto packaged books for me to America, a time consuming task.

Krsto was also helpful to persons who came from Bileća Rudine to Belgrade for whatever reason. Jefto Lazarov Vućinić, a young Communist and student at the University, told me that of all the Vućinićs in Belgrade, and there were several, Krsto was most helpful to him despite the fact that Krsto was a "Nationalist" and Jefto a "Communist." He highly esteemed his

late brother Vlado, a Communist, not because of his ideas, but because he was his brother. For Krsto, blood ties were thicker than ideology.

Krsto was a Serbian traditionalist, and he had no respect for Tito, the Communists in general, or their atheistic program. After all, he had spent his life learning to become a "capitalist," the owner of his own book business.

Three of Krsto's brothers were in Tito's National Liberation Movement, whose armed forces were known as the Partisans. Krsto's brother Vladimir (Vlado) joined the Communist Youth shortly before the war and was killed in 1942, not far from his home, in battle with the Chetniks and Italians. After the Second World War, he was proclaimed a national hero, and his name was inscribed on the monument erected in the center of Bileća which was dedicated to the fallen heroes. Brother Djordje, who had also joined the National Liberation Movement, became a member of the Communist Party and after the war found a position with the *Borba (The Struggle)*, the principal Yugoslav Communist newspaper.

Brother Dušan (Duško) was a complex personality. He fought with Tito's Partisans during the war and, in recognition of his wartime service, he received an important position in Belgrade. He married and was able to procure an apartment in a desirable section of the city. The future looked bright for him had it not been for the Tito-Stalin split and Yugoslavia's expulsion from the *Cominform*, in June 1948, to which I have already alluded. Duško was a pronounced Stalinist, and when it came to choosing between Tito and Stalin, Duško chose the latter. The Yugoslav Communists who could not turn against Stalin, dubbed "cominformists" (*informbirovcî*), were rounded up and sent to internment camps. Some managed to escape from Yugoslavia and organized a Yugoslav Communist Party in exile. Duško attempted to flee the country three times. He was an intelligent person and a compulsive talker, pouring out fact after fact, interpreting domestic and world events from a convinced communist perspective. Until his death, Duško remained a sharp critic of Tito and criticized him so loudly in public that I feared for my own safety. He referred to Tito as "Tsar," and accused him of working for the CIA.

Although Krsto disagreed with the politics of his brothers, he never allowed political discord to influence fraternal relations. However, he suffered deeply over his two brothers' choice of politics, particularly during Duško's attempts to escape from the country. On one occasion, Duško was apprehended at the border by the police and was again incarcerated. Two years later, he was released. This, however, did not change his politics. He simply could not accept Tito's regime, though he had been "rehabilitated" and given a job (although not one commensurate with his qualifications and skills). Duško once more attempted to flee the country. Proceedings were initiated against him and Duško faced serious punishment. Though a strong anti-



Communist, Krsto once again came to his Stalinist brother's defense. The trial lasted several days and Krsto spent a large sum of money and called on a number of his influential friends to help save his brother. This time the court was astonishingly lenient and allowed Duško to go without punishment. The only explanation I was able to come up with for this was that at that moment, in 1955, because of the Tito-Krushchev *rapprochement*, relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union had improved and the treatment of the Yugoslav Stalinists had eased. Duško was once again given a job, which he held until his death from cancer in 1986.

Thus, Krsto sacrificed materially for his brother. He loved his family and until his death he made annual pilgrimages to visit them, touching all the places at which his siblings and other close relatives lived. Krsto also paid his respects to those who had passed on, visiting the graves of his parents and others who were close of kin. When at home, in Belgrade, he regularly attended services in Belgrade's cathedral, lit candles for the souls of the dead and living members of his family, and contributed generously to the cathedral and other Orthodox shrines. Whenever I came to Belgrade he expected me to accompany him to the cathedral, and would always say, "I just wanted to see if you had forgotten to cross yourself in the Orthodox style." He never missed celebrating his family's patron saint, St. George, even if the homage had to be brief. Krsto had a good deal of knowledge about the lives of the saints and would relate their good and miraculous deeds. Krsto lived in a modest little room, and for many years lunched at his *kum's* (Krsto had been his best man) with whom he had an eating arrangement. Once, after lunch, the *kum*, his wife (*kuma*), Krsto, and I took a customary siesta before returning to work for the second half of the day, between four and seven p.m.

From 1954 on I saw Krsto almost every summer, for two or three days, and never once was I able to persuade him to be my guest at a lunch or dinner. He was a frugal man, saved most of what he earned, and probably converted his savings into hard currency, often a practice of artisans, craftsmen, and merchants. Through the enterprise with which he was affiliated, Krsto, like other co-workers, had contributed part of his income toward an apartment. Finally, after many years, he got his apartment. He was then more than sixty years old, and ready for marriage.

I was at home, in California, at the time of his marriage, which was apparently celebrated without fanfare. Only Duško and a few relatives and friends witnessed the wedding. The bride was a widow with grown children. Thus, Krsto, like some other close kin, married late in life, while his sisters, who were left at home in Herzegovina, married early into peasant families and had children. Like Krsto, his brothers, Duško and Djordjo, were married,

but had no children. Brother Vlado died during the war and the youngest brother married soon after the war ended, and made his home in Montenegro.

Krsto had favorites among his relatives, too. He was closer to some of them than to others, but did harm to none. I must again stress that with minor exceptions, Krsto did not allow politics to affect the family ties. When dealing with relatives, who were Communists, he avoided topics that could lead to friction. As Yugoslav Communism became more liberal after 1953, Party membership increasingly became of lesser consequence in relations between Communists and non-Communists.

I recall that early in the 1970s, at the time of the Croatian nationalist movement, Serbian nationalism began to show signs. The people were saying that the outburst of Croat nationalism was ominous, but that if Serb nationalism should ever become inflamed, the country would explode. One evening Krsto and I joined four other Vućinićes, most of them Communists, at a prominent Belgrade coffeehouse. What particularly interested me was to see the reaction of the crowd when the orchestra began to play "March on the Drina," a Serbian patriotic song from the First World War. Once the female vocalist started singing there was pandemonium in the large hall. Communists and non-Communists alike found themselves of one and the same mind and mood, repeatedly demanding an encore and placing money on the plate for the singer. The display of patriotism pleased Krsto and he relished seeing his Communist brethren returning to Serbian nationalism.

Krsto was a pious man. He was fairly well-versed about the history of Christianity, the church schism, and especially about St. Sava's Serbian Orthodox Church. Krsto could recite a few prayers, list a number of church hymns, could recall the dates of major holidays and fasts. He was familiar with religious customs and he knew a great deal about the rites of passage. Whenever he wrote to me, he would begin his letters with "On this day of St. Elias, August 2, I wish you to know that I am well and healthy, and I hope that you are the same." This introductory statement was followed by a detailed report about himself, his kin, and friends. Krsto rarely requested anything from me, neither money, goods, nor favors. One time, however, he did ask me to send him a typewriter in the Cyrillic alphabet, and offered to pay for it. I sent the typewriter as a gift. When sometime later I asked him if he enjoyed my gift, he responded that he did, but had given it to the Patriarchate, which was at the time in dire need of almost everything.

When in 1971 I first started to participate in the twenty-one-day Danube summer excursions, sponsored by the Stanford Alumni Travel Study Program, Krsto would wait for me at the Sava port in Belgrade. As soon as I could pass through customs the two of us would exchange greetings and begin a slow walk over the cobblestone road, up the steep and badly neglected



stairs, in the direction of the Belgrade cathedral, whose tower was clearly visible in the distance. When at last we arrived at the cathedral, Krsto turned to me and asked me to enter the cathedral with him so that he could light some candles to relatives and kiss the icon of the patron saint of the church. Candles for deceased family members were installed at the lower part of the candle stand, while those for the living were placed at the top of the stand. Krsto knew the procedure intimately. From time to time, he would glance at me to see how I behaved in the church, whether I crossed myself and prayed. Occasionally there was an early service and we would remain in the church longer than usual to take part in it. As we walked out I would stop at the entrance to the cathedral to buy books on church history and to admire the beauty of the altar and the iconostasis. After leaving the church Krsto said, "My God, you have even forgotten how to cross yourself!" and added jokingly, "You've crossed yourself in the Latin manner!" This was said, however, in jest, for I could not forget how to properly cross myself. He was genuinely pleased that I had not been lost to Orthodoxy.

A few steps down from the cathedral is a small coffee shop that one most visits. It is famous particularly for its name, which is "Upitnik" ("Question Mark"). Another must was the restaurant "Dušanov Grad" ("Dušan's Town") just a few steps beyond. If you are looking for anyone, you're sure to find them in one of these places to which I often accompanied my friends for good food and location.

While walking to the center of the town, Krsto invariably reported on the latest developments, pointing out new landmarks and regaling me with tales of the erosion of Communist power. When we reached Prince Mihajlo's street, we separated. I went to the Serbian Academy of Sciences to visit friends in the Historical Institute; to the Institute for Balkan Studies; then to the Philosophy Faculty; and, finally, to the Byzantine Institute. This had been my itinerary for years, and for years I visited the same friends. After I entered the Academy building Krsto continued on to *Jugoslovenska knjiga*, and we would meet again later in the day.

Krsto appreciated my bringing the Stanford Alumni group into his bookstore so that he could show it off, including the locked room on the second floor filled with pornographic material. He showed us the American books on sale and was proud that of all the Communist countries, his was the most tolerant and open. This was not enough, however. Krsto wanted an unrestricted market economy. Yet, the availability of published material that contradicted Communist views was indicative of the more liberal nature of the Yugoslav Communist regime compared to other Communist regimes. There was laxity of censorship and thought control. This was an important difference between Soviet and Yugoslav Communism, and a sign of the direction in which the country was moving to.

In the meantime, the Stanford Alumni Danube excursions had become so popular that the Stanford Alumni Travel Study, first headed by Prof. Rixford Snyder, decided to do two such excursions every summer back to back. This meant that I would be able to visit Krsto twice a year. In 1986, our Austrian boat, the *Theodor Körner*, arrived in Belgrade as always early in the morning and docked at the Sava port. I hurried through customs, expecting to find Krsto waiting for me. Krsto was not there, though I had informed him of the time of my arrival. His absence spoiled my day. There would be no briefing, no candle lighting in the church, no intimate discussion or visit to Krsto's bookstore, no purchases and the shipments of books. I concluded that he must have had an important meeting he could not miss. The Alumni visits to Belgrade were of short duration and I had no time to search for Krsto on the first trip but hoped to see him during the next visit to Belgrade, two weeks later. When the *Theodor Körner* arrived in Belgrade for the second time, Krsto again failed to meet the boat. This made my summer empty and I was troubled by Krsto's absence. I wondered whether I had offended him in some way. He was a very sensitive person and became hurt at times by small and seemingly trivial things. The possibility that the Communist authorities had prevented him from meeting me entered my mind. After all, the Communist authorities had questioned me on more than a dozen occasions.

Late that evening, after a folk program aboard the ship, and before beginning the last leg of the voyage, I purchased some reading material at a kiosk on the Sava port. I selected a couple of issues of the newspaper *Politika* and a copy of the weekly magazine *NIN*. After the boat sailed, I went to my cabin, prepared for the night, crawled into the bunk, and began to read that day's *Politika*, the best paper in Belgrade, page by page. At last, I came to the obituaries, a subject that fascinates me because I am interested to know the origin of the deceased, the nature of their death, their age, ethnic, religious, and professional backgrounds, and the etymological derivation of their family names. As I read the obituaries, I suddenly came upon Krsto's; he had died two days earlier from complications resulting from stomach surgery. I was stunned, saddened, and deeply hurt. I became angry that no one had informed me of his illness. Had I known, I might have been able to see him at the hospital or to attend the funeral. That night, and the following day, I was depressed and could not deliver two of my lectures, so I talked about what had happened. I lost a very close friend and relative whom I admired. Krsto was close and loyal friend, a person of peasant background who worked hard to acquire a special skill and to achieve economic security. With limited formal education he greatly broadened his *weltanschauung*. Yesterday's peasant, Krsto became an urbanite, but most important and impressive is that he never forgot his roots—his family, his people, his village, and his tradition.

## Some Memories from Our Youth

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Dear Mituška (as your brother Mihailo—Miša—used to refer to you!), I want to dedicate the following lines to you as they contain some experiences we shared in some way during the war years, which interrupted what had seemed a blissful youth.

As you well know, I was a classmate of your younger brother in what we used to call the “famous” classroom—the “drugo odeljenje” of my generation in the Third Boys’ Gymnasium (Treća Muška Gimnazija na Cvetnom trgu) in Belgrade. We completed our high school education in the infamous year 1941, when, after the bombardment of Belgrade by Hitler’s air force on April 6, the Germans defeated Yugoslav forces and Belgrade became an occupied city. At least four of my classmates fell during the war years as members of the youth group of the armed forces under the command of General Draža Mihailović: Laza Maksimović, Aleksandar Stanojević—Stanča, Momčilo Milovanović—Moma, and Miodrag Penčić, lost in the final days. As it happens, by sheer accident, I was in all likelihood the last person to see and talk with Moma and Penčić before they perished. I shall try to describe, however briefly, my own experiences during the last year or so of the war.

After my father’s death on 9 November 1941, much as I intended to join the guerillas, I felt that I needed to stay home and support to whatever extent possible my mother and younger sister, who was still studying at the gymnasium. I went to visit Laza Maksimović in his apartment at the corner of Njegoševa and Prote Mateje streets and discussed with him my desires and my family situation. He told me that not everyone was expected to go “into the forest”—as we used to refer to joining the guerilla forces—and agreed with me that at least for the time being I should stay in Belgrade and maintain contacts with the youth organization. Having played violin for some twelve years before the war, and having had a few years of piano classes as well, I enrolled in the Music Academy in the fall of 1941. But when the bombing of Belgrade by American bombers began on Easter Sunday (18 May) of 1944,

most of the Belgrade population sought refuge in neighboring villages. During the years of the German occupation my immediate contact with the Mihailović organization was Djordje Radovanović—"Gogi"—the son of Dr. Milorad Radovanović, chief of the Press-Bureau in the Simović government. Gogi's father was captured during the government's retreat in Montenegro and spent the war years in internment in Italy. Besides being close neighbors Gogi and I were distantly related on our maternal sides and he jokingly used to call me "Čika Miško," though I was less than a year older than he.

After the bombardment of 18 May our families found themselves in Kumodraž and decided that the time had come to go "on the terrain." Thanks to Stanča's older brother "Baja," Gogi and I received special "passes," and on 4 June 1944 we said farewell to our families. Early the next morning we were escorted to the Avalska Korpus. That day we made it to Vrčin, where we were met by Boba Petrović and his younger brother. It was there I saw for the first time a bulletin mentioning the tragic death of Laza and Stanča in the preceding year. The next morning another escort took us via Ripanj (where we could observe the bombing of Belgrade on June 6!) to Barajevo, where, as I recall, the headquarters of the Avala Corps was located. Gogi parted company with me and joined the group of Staff 501 with Miško Todorović, while the chief operating officer, Captain Steva, asked me what I could do. I inquired if they had any duty for someone who spoke several foreign languages. On hearing this Captain Steva told me to go to the Posavska Brigade in the village of Leskovec, to its commander, Air Force Lieutenant Kosta Marinković, who had at his disposal a superb battery-operated radio-receiver. I was to listen to all broadcasts in all languages that I could follow and prepare a daily bulletin of news since on that very day—as is well known—the D-Day "invasion" of Europe had begun, and it was important to be informed and "up to date" about events. I was immediately escorted to that village, introduced to Kosta Marinković, who placed at my disposal the radio as well as a typewriter (at the time I had never before typed anything!), and began my task of preparing daily bulletins of the news of the developing war situation. You can well imagine how good that radio was—I was able to listen daily to Svetislav Petrović news broadcasts direct from Boston (via radio WRUL), which always began with a recording of Sofka singing "Oj kolika je Jahorina planina!" WRUL was the ONLY station at the time that had more or less daily reports from General Mihailović's headquarters. Copies of my bulletins were sent daily to the Avala Corps' headquarters to be duplicated and distributed to surrounding villages. Shortly after I began this task we received the tragic news of the death of the two brothers Boranijašević, the eldest and the youngest; the middle brother, Miodrag—Miša (another classmate of ours)—survived. On several occasions I was also visited by the commander of the

"flying" brigade (*leteća brigada*), a Captain Čeda (I no longer recall his last name), who stopped to meet with Kosta and to listen to the newscasts. Occasionally, I was taken along for brief trips to neighboring villages, and I do recall a visit to Draževac, where someone showed me the photograph of King Peter at his wedding. Another person I distinctly remember stopping by and talking with me about the news was Major Saša; I was told that he was the "commander of Belgrade" in the Mihailović forces. In August I was moved to Mala Moštanica, near Umka; I was to serve as a liaison for couriers for the proposed operation in Srem. This operation did not work out—the troops retreated after barely ten days—and as September progressed, battles near Valjevo seemed to indicate that a general retreat was about to take place. This became especially clear one day when a number of soldiers came and complained that while they were resisting partisan troops, allied airplanes were dropping military supplies to Tito's forces. Meanwhile, our units remained insufficiently equipped. Although we had heard that the Americans had sent a Col. McDowell to Draža's headquarters, it did not seem that additional help and support was forthcoming. We were all deeply disappointed to listen to King Peter II's speech on his birthday—September 6—when he urged all citizens to join Tito's army! Around that time the underground radio station, with some major (I think that the name of the station was "Ravna Gora"), spent a few days near us. We were all in hiding when German panzer-trains passed by on the nearby railroad tracks. The exact sequence of events escapes me, but I seem to remember that by early October we were all getting ready to move away, and after a brief stopover by Umka—where I saw Stanča's sister Seka (the only person who remembered seeing me with my long hair falling on my shoulders!)—we proceeded to Rajka, where we embarked on a train to take us southward to Kraljevo.

I was at the time marching with other units of the Avala Corps, but always close to Lt. Kosta. In Kraljevo we disembarked from the train and marched on to Čačak. I remember that on the morning of 13 October we were about to enter Uzička Požega when the scouts found out that some Germans were there and refusing to surrender. After a rather brief exchange of gunfire, the Germans surrendered and our units confiscated their automatic weapons, locked the German soldiers inside a school, and settled down to spend the night in town. I was assigned to a household with an elderly lady and her niece, and that was the last time I had a warm bath in a bath-tub as we were preparing to begin our long march.

The following day we continued to Arilje, with another overnight stay. During the night partisan troops bombarded us with small rockets. On we went to Ivanjica. I was lodged with some officers in a mine outside of town, and it was there we heard on the radio the news of the "liberation of



Belgrade” on 20 October. Needless to say that while I was very carefully guarding the radio entrusted to me and listening daily to news reports, it was no longer possible for me to type bulletins on a bulky typewriter that had disappeared somewhere along the way. I was still trying to listen, as I had done all along, to newscasts in Serbian, English, French, German, and Russian. If I were to miss something in one language, I would pick it up in another, as most of the bulletins were repeated in various languages. I was thus fairly well informed and served as a source of information for Lt. Kosta, who kept an eye on me during our retreat. By that time it had become clear that we were on our way out of Serbia, and rumors suggested that Draža was going to assemble his troops and attempt to meet the American and British forces who, we expected, were to disembark on the Adriatic Coast to “stop” the Russians—and with them Tito’s forces—from taking over the whole country. So we were headed toward the southwest!!! While we were heading toward Sandžak, we also heard that a considerable number of Mihailović forces had crossed the river Drina into Bosnia directly from Mačva and that all together more than 36,000 troops had left Serbia...!

From Ivanjica we were to march over Javor Mountain and go to Sjenica in Sandžak! That march lasted for several days at least. I remember that on one stopover, on a sunny morning, I discovered that for the first time in my life I had lice on my body! The crossing over Javor was memorable for a few other encounters—for one thing I recall seeing one of our former teachers from the gymnasium, Dr. Ivanković, who taught hygiene and who was there on the road in his convertible car with his two daughters! I also saw Nikola Djorić from the “Druga Muška,” who if I remember correctly, was also a close friend of Milorad Ilić. I also glanced at my classmate Penčić, with his long beard, who was walking in Serbian “*opanci*” in this massive movement of people. I saw for a few minutes a “famous” name, Palošević, as he stopped by to ask me about the news on my radio! Throughout our passage, from time to time we would hear in the distance the rumbling cannonade from some distant battle, and we were lucky not to have been attacked in this less and less pleasant procession. We could not delay our travel, and so I recall that it was very late one evening that we eventually reached Sjenica, after having gone through a cold drizzle on the highest point of the road as we were leaving Serbia to start our descent to Sandžak and the town of Sjenica.

One thing that I had to “swallow” in Sjenica was that there were in town quite a few German troops who were retreating from Greece via Kosovo and Sandžak. So we were exposed to being “side by side” with our “enemies.” It must have been in the early days of November 1944 that we came to Sjenica, and we stayed there for about a week. I recall rather distinctly that we arrived during the night and were distributed around some rooms of a “school,” with

fires burning in the hallways. and that I sat next to one to try to get dry after being soaked by the rain day and night. I must have fallen asleep, as when I woke up and became aware of where I was, a small part of my sleeve was steaming and burning and I had a blister on one of my fingers.

Almost immediately, the next day I believe, as people were milling around, I saw Mr. Stevan Stanković, the rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade, who by then was also the president of the Central National Committee at the meeting in the village of Ba near Valjevo. I had known Mr. Stanković for a number of years as his sons were my friends from the “*sokolana*” Beograd-Matica, where a few years earlier Mr. Stanković had been the “host” of the festivities marking the dedication of the building. In addition, from 1942 on, my sister had been studying painting at that school. He immediately recognized me and asked what I was doing, and when I explained my duties to him, he saw to it that I was immediately transferred from the Avala corps to a small group of the members of the Central National Committee who were also retreating and were accompanied by a small unit of soldiers (*prateća četa*) of no more than about twenty men. Thus, I became a “member of the General Headquarters,” which must have been split into several groups. With Mr. Stanković were two of his older sons, Mihailo and the middle son (I am not sure any longer, but I think his name may have been Zoran), while the youngest brother, Slavoljub, called “Vava,” remained with their mother in Belgrade.

Before we left Sjenica to continue our retreat, there were two incredibly terrifying days during which we experienced bombing by American and British airplanes. We escaped early enough into the surrounding fields full of haystacks, and on the first day watched the so-called “carpet-bombing” aimed at the German troops, yet as might have been expected, there were some casualties among our units also. Yet the second day was much more terrifying, as instead of squadrons of B-17 bombers flying in formation, this time the airplanes were flying individually and in circles; while some of them were coming from the right-hand side, others were circling from the opposite side so that no matter where we tried to run as we ran around the haystacks, we were constantly exposed to machine-gun fire. I know that I was running in circles now to the left, now to the right, hiding behind a haystack, probably for almost an hour, as British “Liberator”-bombers strafed as mercilessly as the Americans. There was no way of indicating to them that we were not the “enemy” since all they could see was people running in circles hiding from their approaches. Miraculously, there were no casualties in our group except for frayed nerves and fear of the unknown future.

I believe that it was about that day or a day later that I was told that a few American fliers from the crew of a bomber were rescued as their plane was

shot down. I made my way to try to see them and there were 3 young men—the only survivors of a somewhat larger crew. I addressed them in English and all three wrote down on a piece of paper their names and home-addresses. Regrettably, that bit of information was subsequently lost. However, it turned out that there was still another American rescued from his fighter-plane. He was somewhat older, I would guess in his thirties, and his plane caught fire and he was pulled out from a burning plane and his face was obviously in pain having been exposed to flames. When I approached him and told him that he was one of the first Americans I had had the pleasure of meeting, he brusquely turned away, but he did write his name for me, and that one I remember to this day—Captain Charles King from R.F.D.#2 in Clovis, New Mexico. I regret that at no time did I make an effort to find out whether he was still alive in the years afterwards when I made it to the USA. All these pilots were eventually escorted by a small group of our soldiers to the Adriatic Sea to be picked up by submarines, either British or American.

Having survived these air-attacks on about 9 November (the anniversary of my father's death!), I believe that we did not stay more than a day or two in Sjenica, as the time had come to start moving again. The direction of our march was known only for relatively short distances, but we did believe that we were headed toward the Adriatic?

Our basic route was leading us first to Prijepolje. As we (that is the group from the Central National Committee with its accompanying unit) walked on the left-hand side of the road, we had to witness on the right-hand side of the road some German military unit marching. Neither of us were looking at the other, nor were we talking; we ignored one another. The remnants of the Avala Corps were on their way also, as were a few other groups of Mihailović's followers. Having become a member of a different entity, I no longer kept track of former associations. The weather was more or less typical for the middle of November, cloudy with occasional drizzle. But toward the end of one of the days on this segment we ran into a snowstorm, and I recall that my hands felt as if they were about to freeze. Marching as we did, at times for hours on end, I distinctly recall that the road was descending, curving to the right, and starting an uphill climb when I felt as if I were having hallucinations! Blinded by the snow and trying to look ahead of me, I believed I saw up on the top of the hill a house with an enormous number of lights; through its windows I glimpsed platters of food as my hunger began to assert itself. And it was that vision that made me force myself to keep going, as I expected to satisfy my need for a warm meal. At the same time I was rubbing my eyes and trying to keep them free of the snow that kept falling and accumulating on my face and jacket and hanging over my eyebrows. But when we reached the upper part of the hill, instead of a well-lit house I saw

only the ruin of a burned-out house and trees with branches covered with snow. I have no recollection of where and how long we stopped for a rest and/or overnight sleep. All I recall is—we had to keep going and on we went!

I can no longer place chronologically one overnight stay when I arrived at our designated lodging and I had a fever, shaking rather strongly, and the wife of the peasant in whose home we were to stay overnight gave me to drink a glass of hot red wine cooked with honey. I was bundled into a bed with loads of comforters and blankets, and I sweated profusely. By the next morning I remember distinctly that I was feeling like a newborn child, no longer feverish, and was ready to start marching. It was probably on the second or third day in the afternoon that we were trudging on the road and someone pointed out that on the right-hand side in the valley we could see the medieval monastery Mileševo, which we greeted in our minds, recalling what we had learned long ago in school, that it was there that the Serbian saint Sava, the founder of the independence of the Serbian Orthodox Church, was buried after his death in 1235. Not far from Mileševo was the town of Prijepolje, and there the Germans went to the right—northward toward Priboj and wherever they were headed—while our units turned left, a short distance along the river Lim, and crossed it to head toward Plevlja in Montenegro. I am almost certain that we stopped along the road in some village and that only the next day we continued to Plevlja. Even then we had to make a brief stopover since we were told that a Bulgarian airplane was trying to drop bombs on Plevlja. So we waited until that airplane flew away and we eventually arrived in the town. My memories of that town are rather vague, but one thing that left a strong impression was the presence of numerous water-fountains in the streets, a feature that, as I learned later, was rather frequently encountered in Moslem settlements. I have no idea who was making arrangements for our overnight stay, but with a few other members of the unit I was lodged in a house where we had to go to the upper story where some sort of mattresses were arranged on the floor—at least we had a roof over our heads and were not exposed to the elements! Our route the next day led us to Boljanići and Metaljka, and passed by Čajniče. I am sure that we must have made overnight stops along the way, yet the image imprinted very strongly in my memory is only that of burned-out settlements and ruins. In particular, the town of Čajniče seemed devastated. I don't recall seeing any inhabitants after Plevlja until we descended into Goražde on the river Drina. We stayed in the neighboring settlements until 1 December 1944. We had been walking at least two weeks, if not longer, since our departure from Sjenica in Sandžak, and yet we were following well-established roads, not some paths known to shepherds only.



It was there outside Goražde that some soldiers celebrated their “*slava*,” their family’s patron saint Archangel Michael, and the feast for the occasion consisted of baked beans that everyone was delighted to eat. A large pot was placed on a table in the yard of one house and all neighbors were invited to partake of the meal. By that time I was beginning to become acquainted with the members of the Central National Committee, besides Mr. Stanković and his two sons. So I had better start naming them. Because of my “possession” of a radio I was attached to the director of the Press Bureau, Mr. Gavra Velikić, pre-war long-time correspondent from Paris who after 27 March 1941 was appointed director of the official Yugoslav News Agency AVALA. He was also the first Yugoslav news correspondent from Moscow after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Yugoslavia and USSR in 1940. Almost inseparable from him was Moma Marković, son of the well-known politician and minister in the government, Boža Marković. I don’t remember clearly the first names of all persons, but I do remember the last names of several of them—Stevan Moljević, Mr. Predavec, Mr. Čulafić (was his first name Mustafa?), and at least 4 or 5 other persons whose names I no longer remember. I believe that two of them were from Vukovar and Osijek; another one was full of memories from the 1920s, when he travelled to a communist congress in Moscow. This time he was in our group with two of his sons, who were in charge of a mule they had to carry their possessions. Still another man with gray hair and deeply set eyes and a tall fur-cap (*šubara*) left a strong image in my memory, yet his name has evaporated from my recollections.

As I recall it was on 1 December that after obtaining the necessary radio contacts we were told that our small group with accompanying ‘security’ was to start on its way toward the vicinity of Sarajevo, where we were to join General Mihailović in the village named Srednje! We departed from the right-hand shore of the Drina river, crossed onto the left shore, and proceeded northward. At the very edge of town we encountered a small unit of Germans on their bicycles who were surrendering to anyone, begging for a loaf of bread. We ignored them and kept going northward. We were headed toward the Mesići area on the river Prača. As we descended to the river we found that the railroad bridge that we had been counting on had been destroyed, but the railroad tracks were still standing solid and across the tracks were placed planks and boards that shifted as we stepped on them. I have no recollections of how the mules crossed that area and whether they were forced to ford the rather speedy flow of the river. I do know that I was stepping slowly on each plank and making it across, not truly believing that I made it! I felt at times as if I had been doped, and kept moving without necessarily being aware of where and how long I had been marching or walking. It must have taken a few days to reach our destination, the village Srednje north of Sarajevo, but I

no longer have any remembrance of the route. By now we were no longer on well traveled routes but on narrow shepherds’ paths. I do recall that we had to go across the legendary Romanija mountain and that our passage was at one time slowed down as we seemed to be passing through an area in which there must have been some units of Tito’s partisans. There was a clearing between some forested areas and we were instructed that we had to run one by one across that clearing on which we were presumed to be targets, since from time to time one did hear the whistling of bullets shot in our direction. Again, miraculously, we made it without any loss of persons and continued on. I believe that we must have reached Srednje in approximately 4–5 days. Somewhere, at an undetermined time, the elder son of Mr. Stanković, Mihailo, separated from us to join another group, as we shall see shortly. We were to stay in this general area until close to the end of January 1945. Somehow—my memory is a bit garbled on this point—we did stay in Srednje and we were also sent out of that village to a nearby village of Čevljanovići, but the exact sequence of these movements escapes me at the moment. As I am trying to reconstruct the events, it appears to me that for a while we did stay in Srednje, in a school building, in a medium-sized room that had a fairly good stove to heat us in ever colder, even freezing temperatures. I went through a stage of neglecting my own hygiene, feeling “sorry for myself” as I spent my twenty-second birthday away from my family, which had no idea where I was, nor whether I was even alive! Our food was getting scarcer and less regular. This was especially the case when we moved to Čevljanovići, where we were snowbound for at least ten days; we were lodged in a relatively large room where all of us were lined up on piles of straw spread on the floor. Somehow the memory of that room is still quite clear in my mind. I see Moljević in his place by the window, next to him Stanković, while on the other side of the room, along the wall, was Moma Marković next to Velikić and the men from Vukovar and Osijek, then Predavec in the corner, then Čulafić and myself and a few orderlies who were in charge of heating the room and finding wood for the fire. Those were the days of recollections, of memories of days gone by. I specifically remember Velikić telling us of his experiences in Moscow, where the Russians thought he looked as if he were from the Caucasus and his Serbian accent while speaking Russian was viewed as “attractive.” He also told us that on the basis of his experience in Paris, future correspondents would be told NOT to write extensive reports covering a page or so in the daily newspaper, but to get condensed statements and that the future of news reporting was to be geared toward headlines rather than story telling. On a few occasions Velikić composed brief “reports” that he passed to the super-telegraphist, a Slovenian by the name of Kos who had an incredible ability to both “read” and send Morse code signals, almost compet-



ing with the speed of a machine. He was attached to Mihailović for communication with Western contacts. But the most important thing in that “exile” was a growing lack of food. We were reduced to a canteen of hot water with 2–3 beans in it and half a fist of corn bread (*proja*) that were distributed once daily for a period of almost twenty days, if not longer. My store of batteries for the radio was also depleted, and we were left for days on end without access to news from the rest of the world. After a while we returned to Srednje, and this time I was lodged with only a couple of younger persons in a smaller house. It was about that time that we learned that the temperature had fallen to minus forty degrees and that even the nearby brook was frozen. We had to break ice with an axe to get water for washing.

It was about that time that, as I walked around the village, I saw Major Saša (who remembered me from the Avala Corps days!). On seeing me and realizing that I had been hungry for days, he gave me a 1000-dinar banknote (if I remember it?) and told me to go to the “center” of the village by a sort of a square, where a peasant had just killed a cow and was selling the meat. Without losing a moment I went there and though there were a number of other customers, I was able to get about 3 lbs. of raw meat for all the cash on hand, wrapped in a piece of paper. As I stepped outside and started walking toward my lodging, I could not wait and began to tear the raw meat with my teeth and eat it. I must have eaten half of the meat. Unbelievably, no ill effects befell me from this experience. On these days, towards the end of January, I also recall one day that a group of at least twenty young men appeared, all dressed in black uniforms. They were Serbian volunteer ‘commandos’ who—if my memory is right—were trained by the Germans in Graz (Austria). Their aim was to penetrate into Belgrade and try to disrupt the workings of Tito’s regime. I did hear that Mihailo Stanković was in that group, but I do not remember seeing him there (Dimitrije Djordjević in his memoirs described the last days of this hero in Belgrade). I do recall, however, seeing one young man whom I knew as Gaja from the Avala Corps and wishing him luck in their enterprise. One point that I was told about that group is that after whatever training they received, before starting on their trip, they attended a funeral service for themselves, each one holding a candle as he offered himself as a sacrifice for the ideals we all believed in.

One final point before departing from Srednje that concerned me was that in the last few days, I had developed a subcutaneous infection on my right arm and had a rather large, almost apricot-sized swelling close to the right elbow. I found out that there was a sort of ambulance nearby and went there to seek help. The doctor took a scalpel, made a deep cut, cleared the pus, and put on a dressing, telling me to be sure to change the dressing within 48 hours. The next day we were starting another long march of several days and, to

make a long story short, I did not change any dressing for at least 14 days, and the wound healed, leaving me with a scar I carry to this day. I believe that we left Srednje on about 28 January 1945.

I am again unable to state how many days we walked, but the general direction of our march was to cross some mountains and get to the river Krivaja, bypassing the town of Olovo and heading toward the river Bosna. At about that time we were being assured that once we reached the area of Trebava, beyond Doboj on the right-hand shore of the river Bosna, we would be in an area with much more food than where we had been so far and that we would no longer suffer from hunger. That rumor gave us the strength to keep going, and we marched to see Zavidovići on the other side of the river, to go on without stopping toward Maglaj, bypassing it and going on toward Trebava. I recall seeing Doboj as we went on. Somehow it seemed that nature itself was more hospitable there, as we arrived in the early days of February. We must have had a stopover the night before since I recall that as we were marching into Trebava that morning in a not very orderly column, quite a few of us, myself included, simply stepped out of the column when we came to a house in the settlement. I walked toward the house, which I believe to have been a Moslem household. As I came to the door and saw the family in the room, I simply said: “Can you, please, give me something to eat, I am hungry!” There may have been 4 or 5 persons in the kitchen, and without a single objection they placed me at the table and I was given a dish with milk and corn meal mush (*kačamak*). As I thanked them as profusely and meekly as I could, and was getting ready to go, they stuffed my pockets with dried fruit. On I went, keeping an eye out for whether I could reconnect with whatever unit I knew. By that time it almost seemed like “every man for himself.”

It was not difficult to recognize my fellow travelers, and sooner than I had expected I found my “unit” of members of the Central National Committee and we were reunited and “settled” in the village of Kožuhe, where we must have stayed for about one month. Whoever did it, I do not know, but I was supplied with new batteries for my radio set and was thus again able to follow the news and transmit it orally, as I no longer had a typewriter. More than one person would crowd into the small area where I was lodged to listen to some of the news broadcasts, and we listened to whatever was coming from Belgrade as well. It may have been there or the next month while on the left-hand shore of the river Bosna that one day I saw—for the first and only time—General Mihailović as he walked by in the distance in the neighboring orchard. He looked exactly as he did in photos that I had seen earlier, with his military cap and beard. By that time the omens were getting less and less hopeful for us as Belgrade already had the British and American ambassadors present and we had been abandoned even by the remaining American military

representative, Col. McDowell. And the Yalta conference had already taken place, bringing no hope or relief to our sufferings.

I was located in a house overlooking the road so that I could observe the passing columns of people as a more or less steady stream of soldiers and even families were walking on the road. This was particularly painful to watch when a sizable group of Montenegrin units arrived; rumors had it that there were some 2000 of them, with quite a few women as well as children walking, appearing rather dejected and yet continuing the retreat away from Tito's forces. In that, what looked like a never-ending column, one day I seem to recall having again seen Nikola Djorić from Belgrade, my classmate and friend, and I also spotted again Penčić from my classroom in the gymnasium in his "*opanci*." Our exchanges of words were far too brief except to express pleasure that each one of us had survived and endured the long march of more than three months of Bosnian winter. Some of the older people, recalling the World War I comments of Serbs who crossed the Albanian mountains—"Ko ne zna šta su muke teške, neka prodje Albaniju peške" (i.e., Who does not know what are difficult sufferings let him cross Albania on foot!)—now said "Ko ne zna šta su muke teške, neka prodje Sandžak, Bosnu peške" (i.e., Who does not know what are difficult sufferings, let him pass through Sandžak, Bosnia on foot!).

From time to time we heard rumors as well as actual stories of military encounters not very far from us, to the east in the vicinity of Tuzla on the Majevica mountain. By staying on the right-hand side of the river Bosna we were exposed to being overrun some day by partisan forces. So by the end of February or early days of March we were told to move to the left-hand shore of the river, and we were located for a while in the village of Dugo Polje. It was there again that I had an opportunity to hear about some "important" figures of Mihailović's staff coming and going, though by now all names have evaporated from my memory. I do recall that there were a few high-ranking officers accompanied by their wives; I also recall a relatively small unit of Montenegrins passing by and talking of negotiations with Croatian army units to get "free passage" on trains headed towards the West. But we stayed in place and I listened to the daily broadcasts, often surrounded by several local inhabitants, peasants, who appeared never to have moved out of their villages throughout the war. The fact that I had a radio and let anyone come to listen to the news, made me "well-known" in the village and when I stepped out for a walk I was often greeted warmly by the neighbors. By that time rumors were circulating about our numerical "strength"—recalling that it was believed that some 36,000 had left Serbia in October. It was shocking to realize that apparently no fewer than 2,000 had succumbed to typhoid fever, especially in Bosnia alongside the rivers. A considerable number of villagers

from Serbia also appear to have deserted and surrendered to Tito's partisans. While exact figures were not available, the estimate was that what remained at that time, in March 1945, was probably no more than 10,000 people, if that many, as some had tried to escape to the West individually and without any large group.

I stayed faithfully in the group, realizing the futility of even thinking of an attempt at a single "sneaky" passage to the West, much as I had hoped for that outcome. In the very beginning of April, I met one day an officer who asked me who I was, and when I told him my name and family, he recognized that I was the nephew of a friend of his—of my father's youngest brother. I no longer remember that captain's name who hailed from Topola [I believe?]. To express his pleasure at meeting me he gave me a gift—a bar of soap. Since due to the circumstances I had had no bath at all since that last one in Uzička Požega, and it happened to be a rather balmy day—I believe it was on April 6—that I went to the shore of the river Bosna, undressed myself, stepped into the river using that bar of soap, and felt quite regenerated by the experience of a thorough washing. What followed was totally unexpected—I must have caught a strong cold and got high fever within the next few days. Since in those days and in our specific circumstances, high fever was a "clear symptom" of typhoid fever, whoever observed me decided without further ado to move me away from my "unit" and place me in a house in which there were those who were unquestionably clear-cut cases of that illness. That must have occurred by approximately April 10 or 11.

As the situation seems to have worsened and a general movement was planned, by 12 April, as I recall, we were to start moving away from the river Bosna area and head toward the West through the area south of the river Sava. I had no clear idea of where and how we were to get there, as I was in the "hospital." All the sick, and that included me, were loaded onto carts pulled by oxen or horses, and the Big Move began. We were moving in a long column and I was lying ill, looking from time to time at the surroundings. Although I was officially sick and treated as such, I truly did not feel that I had anything akin to typhoid fever. Rumors from troops ahead of us were filtering back, and we were told that the flames and smoke we could see far ahead were from advance troops led by Keserović trying to clear the passage through villages. The movement was rather slow as we were going through an area called Vučjak, and the sun was slowly descending. It looked as if a sizable part of the column had made its way across some hills and roads. And then there was a bunker some distance in front of us, and all the units, rumors had it about 8,000 men, that had gone ahead had passed by it without any problem, ignoring it as there was no sign of life in it. By that time it was twilight. There were still close to 2,000 people left with the ambulances and sick



soldiers moving slowly when all of a sudden, in that dusk, machine gun fire started coming from the bunker with tracer bullets. It appeared that inside the bunker there were some Croatian soldiers. I have no idea whether they were “*ustашe*” or the “regular army”—“*domobrans*.” Be that as it may, they cut our column and I found myself in the small group that seemed to be surrounded. I jumped off the cart, bending low, and started running back between carts and horses and oxen. All the time tracer bullets were flying through the air and I have no idea how long I was running until I threw myself into a ditch on the side of the road, deep enough that my body seemed to be level with the surface of the road. I was crouching and had no idea of the passage of time. I was aware of the fact that horses were jumping over me and that some carts also passed over me but luckily nothing touched me or my body. It was a long night that seemed not to end for a long time. After a certain amount of time, at least an hour or two, the shooting ceased on all sides and I waited for a while until it seemed safe for me to stand up and then walk more or less gingerly back and back, toward the area from which we had departed the preceding afternoon. By sunrise I began to recognize the houses and the neighborhood in which I had been during the preceding week. There were a number of people from various units and someone had already prepared a kettle with some food to distribute. Within an hour or two I ran into a Captain Kobas (I think that was his name) from the Avala corps, who recognized me and told me that some of the leaders of the remaining group were making plans for a “breakthrough” for the following day. To make things worse we also heard that the American president Roosevelt had died. He was the one person we had believed to be “on our side.” The feeling of total disaster and abandonment permeated the mood of whatever was left of once proud soldiers. In the next hour or so as I was roaming from house to house and looking to see whether there was anyone else I knew, I spotted Moma Milovanović, one of my classmates who was together with me through kindergarten, then in four years of grade school and the remaining schooling in the gymnasium. He was in a gloomy mood, holding his gun, but jumped up to hug me when he saw me. After a brief encounter we parted, never to meet again!

For some reason I have a feeling it must have been a Friday, and shortly after the noon hour, I was approached by one of the local peasants who used to come to listen to the newscasts when I had a radio with me. He recognized me and as he came close he asked me, “Do you want to live?” “Of course I want to live,” I replied. Thereupon he told me to follow him to his house, and as we arrived, he told me to climb up into the attic and stay there without making any noise. I followed his order, and as I climbed up, there was another soldier, a peasant from somewhere in Serbia. We did not communicate except for wondering what was in store for us. By the evening our “host” brought us

some food and told us to be patient. We remained hidden for two days, fed each day. Then, on what I believe to have been a Sunday night, with fine moonlight, our “host” told us to come down, and he led us to the river to his small boat and told us to get in as he started to row slowly. When we were about half way across he started whistling some signals and when he got a reply from the other shore, he continued and there was a small patrol of some 3 soldiers of Tito’s “People’s Liberation Army” to whom he gave us as his “catch.”

Since I had been, together with some other persons, part of “headquarters,” I was presented as a “big fish,” and the two of us were marched about half a mile to a house to stay overnight. I do remember falling asleep in no time and must have had a pleasant dream that was rudely interrupted when I was kicked in my butt and told to take off my shoes and give them to one of my captors. I was no longer a member of Mihailović’s forces; I was a prisoner of war on the morning of either April 15 or 16, whichever was a Monday.

P.S. Subsequent events as a prisoner and a member of the Yugoslav Army, including service in the Disciplinary Battalion (a euphemism for forced labor!), will constitute another chapter of my memoirs. I also wish to add that this is the first time I have written down these recollections, which I have told a few times to some of my close friends.



## Belgrade in the Nineteenth Century: A Historical Survey

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For Dimitrije "Uncle Mita" Djordjević

### The Serbian Revolution: Nation-Building and Modernization

After the long centuries of Ottoman rule, interrupted but temporarily by the Habsburgs, it was only in the age of nationalism that Belgrade eventually came under the control of the Serbs.<sup>1</sup> The peasant revolt of 1804, widely known as the First Serbian Uprising, was turned, within two years, from a modest rebellion against local Ottoman janissaries into a Balkan-size national and social revolution which the eminent German historian Leopold von Ranke described, in comparison to the French example, as the *Serbian Revolution*.<sup>2</sup>

Terrorized by the local janissaries, Serbian peasants of the twelve districts of the *pashalik* of Belgrade (formally *sandžak* of Smederevo), led by local elders (*knezovi*), mostly merchants enriched by livestock trade with the neighboring Habsburg Empire, rose to rebellion after the slaying of dozens of local leaders (*seča knezova*). Formally fighting to restore their own privileges within the Ottoman system, the insurgents—tacitly supported by the wealthy Serbian community from southern Hungary (present-day Vojvodina) and Serb officers from the Austrian Military Border—offered to place themselves under the protection of Austria, Russia, and France respectively, entering, as a new political factor, into the converging aspirations of the Great Powers during the Napoleonic wars in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Among several histories of Belgrade, the most recent is: Nikola Tasić, ed., *Istorija Beograda* (Beograd: Balkanološki institut, 1995), which is a revised and abbreviated version of the older three-volume *Istorija Beograda*, ed. Vasa Čubrilović, *Istorija Beograda* (Beograd: Balkanološki institut and Prosveta, 1974).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Wayne S. Vucinich, ed., *The First Serbian Uprising, War and Society in East Central Europe*, no. 8 (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1982, distributed by Columbia University Press).

The demands for self-government within the Ottoman Empire in 1804 turned into a war for independence in 1807, encouraged by Imperial Russia. Combining patriarchal peasant democracy with modern national goals, the Serbian Revolution attracted thousands of volunteers among the Serbs of Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Dalmatia, and southern Hungary. The Serbian Revolution soon became a symbol of the coming nation-building in the Balkans, provoking peasant unrests among the Christians in both Greece and Bulgaria.

Seized by the 25,000-man strong rebel forces led by the charismatic leader (*vožd*) Karageorge (Karadjordje Petrović) on 8 January 1807, Belgrade became the capital of insurgent Serbia, until its final defeat in 1813. The Governing Council (*Praviteljstvujušči Sovjet*), High School (*Velika škola*), Theological School (*Bogoslovija*), and other administrative bodies were established in the city, which had been abandoned by the majority of the Ottoman population. Karageorge and other leaders of the insurrection sent their children to Belgrade High School, which also had among its students Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864), the famous reformer of the Serbian alphabet. Belgrade was repopulated by local military leaders, merchants, and craftsmen but also by an important group of enlightened Serbs from the Habsburg Empire who gave a new cultural and political framework to the egalitarian peasant society of Serbia. Dositej Obradović, a prominent figure of the Balkan Enlightenment and the founder of the High School (1808), became the first minister of Public Instruction of Serbia (1811).<sup>3</sup>

The further development of Belgrade depended on circumstances dictated by the Napoleonic wars in Europe. After Napoleon invaded Russia, the Bucharest Treaty between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was concluded in 1812, granting local government for Serbia within the Ottoman realm. The Serbs rejected any solution but independence, and faced Ottoman invasion. Threatened by complete defeat, Karageorge and most of the insurgent leadership left Belgrade, passing through Austria and eventually finding asylum in Russia. Recaptured by the Ottomans in October 1813, Belgrade became the scene of a brutal revenge, with hundreds of its citizens slaughtered and thousands (including men, women, and children) sold as slaves on Ottoman markets. Serbia went back to direct Ottoman rule, while the Muslim population returned to Belgrade and other cities of Serbia.

After a short series of clashes with the Ottomans during the Second Serbian Insurrection in 1815—the second phase of the Serbian Revolution—the struggle for autonomy within the Ottoman Empire led by Prince Miloš

<sup>3</sup> Dušan Popović, "Beograd za vreme Karadjordjeva ustanka," in *Posebna izdanja Srpskog geografskog društva* (Belgrade: *Srpsko geografsko društvo*, 1954), 90–102.

Obrenović, a notable of Karageorge who stayed in Serbia after the 1813 catastrophe, entered a new phase. Miloš made an agreement with local Ottoman officials on maintaining peace and order in Serbia, while in return he obtained concessions in governing Serbia himself and collecting taxes for the Ottoman treasury. The use of political and diplomatic means in negotiations between the Serbian prince and the Porte, instead of permanent armed rebellion, coincided with the political rules within the framework of Metternich's Europe. In 1817 Prince Miloš Obrenović, an astute politician and able diplomat, intent on confirming his hard-won loyalty to the Porte, ordered the assassination of Karageorge shortly after the insurgent returned to Serbia to start a new Balkan-wide uprising.

The new political strategy of step-by-step enlargement of self-government for Serbia proved successful after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1828–29. By special *berat* Prince Miloš became the hereditary prince of Serbia, while the autonomy of the autonomous Principality within the Ottoman Empire was guaranteed by Russia, referring to the stipulations of the 1812 Treaty of Bucharest. The imperial decree (*hatt-i-sharif*) from Constantinople that granted autonomy to Serbia was solemnly read in Belgrade in 1830. Serbia obtained full autonomy after the *hatt-i-sharifs* of 1830 and 1833 which ended Ottoman feudalism in Serbia. As stipulated in the 1833 *hatt-i-sharif*, the withdrawal of Muslims, apart from those who remained in the fortresses of the autonomous Principality of Serbia, was to be completed in five years with compensation for their properties. Muslims, however, remained in Belgrade, but most of them, except for the garrison, weakened by Serbian self-government and control of the economy, gradually moved towards other provinces of the empire. In 1834, out of 15,000 Muslims living in Serbia, 6,000 of them still lived in Belgrade, but in 1837, out of 20,000 inhabitants, only 3,000 were Muslims. In 1838 the French traveller Boisilecomte described the position of the Muslim/Turkish population thus: "At a first glance it would seem that they dominate the land inasmuch as they hold the country's fortresses, but because of the Porte's neglect they are nothing more than hostages of prisoners, and in order to live, they are forced to depend on the mercy of the populace they had supposedly remained to keep in check."<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, Prince Miloš was tacitly repopulating Belgrade with peasant immigrants coming from inner Serbia, but also with Austrian Serbs, establishing major state institutions before he eventually moved his court to the vicinity of the city—in the Topčider district. Apart from Serbs and Muslims (mostly Islamized Slavs and some Turks and Albanians), Belgrade was also

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in: Michael Boro Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia 1804–1918* (New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), 1: 171.

inhabited by Greeks and “Tzintzars” (Hellenized Vlachs), who, for several decades, before being absorbed by the Serbian population, controlled some of the local trade and export business with neighboring Austria and other parts of the Ottoman empire. In the first decades after the establishment of Serbian autonomy, Belgrade still had a strong Ottoman and Levantine air. Western travellers in the 1830s and 1840s were still underlining the sparkling difference between the European and Ottoman ways of life by simply crossing the Sava and Danube from Zemun to Belgrade. In the 1870s, a Serbian writer Milan Dj. Milićević, recalled that “several decades ago, the chief city of Serbia was part Turkish, part Greek, part cosmopolitan, but least of all Serbian. Turkish and bad Serbian was spoken on the street, largely Greek in the stores, and in church and school more Greek than Serbian. The houses, stores, shops, dress, mode of life and all the customs were oriental.”<sup>5</sup>

Until the early 1830s Serbian cultural life was still dominated by the local Greek community: Serbian merchants sent their children to Greek schools in Belgrade to learn Greek as the *lingua franca* of Balkan commerce. The church in Serbia, after the abolishment of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1766, was dominated by Greek prelates until 1831, when the last Greek metropolitan, Antim, left Belgrade. The Belgrade metropolitan, appointed from the ranks of the Serbian prelates, became integrated into the domestic order by autonomy granted by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1832.<sup>6</sup>

Becoming increasingly Serbian, Belgrade gradually developed, after Novi Sad in the southern part of the Habsburg Empire (capital of today’s Autonomous Province of Vojvodina), into the most important cultural center of the nation: the first Serbian book in Cyrillic script, after 1552, was printed in Belgrade in 1832, along with the first issue of the official *Serbian Gazette* (*Novine Srbske*), while the first almanac was published in 1833. Among the ninety books printed in Belgrade from 1832 to 1839, the most important project was volumes of the collected works of Dositej Obradović, “the Serbian Voltaire,” as he was called for being the main promoter of the ideas of the Enlightenment. The Belgrade grammar school established in 1839 had five classes by 1842–43, while the High School (*Licej*) was moved from Kragujevac to Belgrade as early as 1841.<sup>7</sup>

Belgrade, as the newly-established capital of Serbia, was soon recognized by the Great Powers. The first foreign representative appointed in Belgrade was an Austrian consul (1836). The British consulate was established in 1837,

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia 1804–1918*, 1: 173.

<sup>6</sup> On religious affairs, cf. Jean Mousset, *La Serbie et son Eglise (1830–1904)* (Paris: Librerie Droz, 1938).

<sup>7</sup> Mihailo S. Petrović, *Borbe starog Beograda*, (Beograd: n.p., 1951), 129.

French and Russian consulates followed in 1838 and in 1839.<sup>8</sup> Dynamic political activities marked by the growing conflict between the autocratic Prince Miloš and an influential group of oligarchs among the notables ended in a change of dynasty. Prince Miloš, unwilling—according to the 1838 Constitution—to accept power-sharing with the notables of the seventeen-member Council, decided to leave the Serbian throne in 1839, while his successor, Prince Mihailo, after clashes with insurgents led by notables, eventually abdicated in 1842. The new ruler of Serbia, elected by the National Assembly, was a son of Karageorge, Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević, who, far from being as charismatic as his father, was under the strong influence of the oligarchs of the Council known as the Defenders of the Constitution (*Ustavobranitelji*), or Constitutionals. The change of dynasty, recognized by the Sublime Porte and Russia after a series of difficult negotiations, started a half-century-long political struggle among the two most distinguished families and their followers in Serbia.<sup>9</sup>

### The Constitutionals: The Europeanization of Serbia

The leading figure among the Constitutionals was Ilija Garašanin, the first modern statesman of Serbia, author of a famous memorandum on foreign policy, called the *Načertanije* (*Draft*). In cooperation with Paris-based Polish émigrés led by Prince Adam Czartoryski, who were looking for an ally in the Balkans to continue their struggle against the Habsburgs and Russians, Ilija Garašanin in 1844 elaborated a detailed plan that would make Serbia the center of a movement for unifying Serbs and other South Slavs into a large state under the Karadjordjević realm. Belgrade became the center of a pan-Slavic agitation, attracting patriots from Bosnia and Croatia. Ilija Garašanin (1813–74), however, was suspicious that the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy was imminent, as foreseen by Polish émigrés, and limited the initial revolutionary plan for a larger South Slav state to the more realistic project of Serbian unification within the Ottoman Empire, comprising the kindred population of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and a coastal part of Northern Albania. This goal, as Garašanin saw it, was achievable if Serbia were to be supported by the Western Powers, France and Great Britain in particular.

<sup>8</sup> Georges Castellan, “Aux origines de l’établissement des relations diplomatiques entre la France et la Serbie,” *Receuil dex travaux*, no. 10 (1990): 67–74.

<sup>9</sup> More details in: Slobodan Jovanović, *Ustavobranitelji i njihova vlada 1838–1858* (Belgrade: Izdavačka knjižarnica Napredak, 1925).



Although the plan remained secret for several decades, the *Načertanije* was the confirmation of the long-term political aspirations of Serbia.<sup>10</sup>

For the next ten years, until Ilija Garašanin was in office, a network of secret agents in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Old Serbia, and other parts of Turkey-in-Europe was set, responsible to the political committee in Belgrade. The Montenegrin Prince-Bishop Petar II Petrović Njegoš (1813–51), the greatest Serbian poet of all times, was closely collaborating with Garašanin in drafting his ambitious foreign policy plans. As stressed by the French consul in Belgrade in 1853: “Belgrade is the political, moral, and almost the religious center of the South Slavs of Turkey.”<sup>11</sup>

The first counsellor of Garašanin was the poet and playwright Matija Ban from Dubrovnik (Ragusa), a professor of French at Belgrade High School. As a leading intellectual of the era of Constitutionalist rule, Matija Ban, a Roman Catholic Serb who gave his name to a large district in present-day Belgrade (Banovo brdo), was trying to instill in modern Serbian literature a classical spirit, one which would soon be forgotten in the face of the romantic poetry of younger generations.<sup>12</sup>

In order to modernize Serbia, the Constitutionlists (1842–58) employed hundreds of educated Austrian Serbs, adepts of cameralist methods of government, to serve in the previously very modest state apparatus. They wanted to remove the Ottoman-style rule established by Prince Miloš and impose a Central European model of centralized administration. In 1844, the Civil Code (*Gradjanski Zakonik*) of Serbia, a combination of Austrian law and the Napoleonic Code elaborated by Austrian Serbs, was promulgated. The Civil Code made all citizens equal before the law, while private property was guaranteed.<sup>13</sup> Additional efforts were made by the Constitutionlists to establish a stable legal system (courts) and to promote the education of the Serbian peasantry. As early as 1839, a dozen young students chosen by the government were given scholarships and sent to study abroad, in Austria, Saxony, and France. They were to become a new class of native Serbian bureaucrats.

<sup>10</sup> Dušan T. Bataković, “Ilija Garašanin’s *Načertanije*—A Reassessment”, *Balkanica* 25: 1 (1994): 157–83. For a biography of Garašanin, see David MacKenzie, *Ilija Garašanin: Balkan Bismarck* (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1985, distributed by Columbia University Press).

<sup>11</sup> Arhiv Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti, Doc.no 14233.

<sup>12</sup> Radmila Popović-Petković, “Zaostavština Matije Bana,” *Arhivski almanah*, no 1 (Belgrade, 1958): 191–201.

<sup>13</sup> Djurica Krstić, “Influence française dans la législation civile de la Serbie,” *Receuil des travaux*, no. 10 (1990): 91–93.

The Constitutionlists also helped provided facilities for students from the tiny Serbian principality of Montenegro to study at Belgrade High School.<sup>14</sup>

Constitutionlists, comprising both reformists and conservatives, made an important contribution to the gradual transformation of Serbia from an egalitarian to a modern society. However, the bureaucratization that they imposed turned into a burden that further separated the peasant masses from the civil servants, who became a highly privileged social group. The Constitutionlists considered the Serbian peasantry too immature to interfere in the governing system, and imposed harsh punishments for any kind of public disobedience.

The challenge to the Constitutionlist regime came from the first generation of Western-educated native Serbian youth. Young liberals (Jevrem Grujić, Vladimir Jovanović, Milovan Janković, Jovan Ilić) brought to Serbia the romantic ideas of the nation, the French notion of popular sovereignty, and the British example of parliamentarism. The early Liberals, called “Parisians,” brought to Belgrade not only the manners and habits of Western Europe and a cult of science, but also a passion for political debates. Belgrade became the center of political discussions on national policy and political freedoms among the youth association (*Družina mladeži srbske*), liberal-minded professors (Dimitrije Matić and Kosta Cukić), and their students in the high school. They criticized the Constitutionlists for their “draconian legislation and a hollow and corrupt system of administration.”<sup>15</sup>

The Belgrade Liberals combined national romanticism with general liberal ideas. They considered the peasant society of Serbia, deprived of aristocracy, as naturally destined for democracy, and the extended family (*zadruga*), as the nucleus of democratic order with the *pater familias* as its constitutional ruler. The nation was the only authentic source of legitimate power. Therefore, the highest expression of national sovereignty and self-government was to be the National Assembly (*Narodna Skupština*), seen as a genuine Serbian democratic institution. In contrast to the oligarchic rule of the Constitutionlists, the National Assembly, as a vehicle of the French Revolution, was to become the highest legislative and executive body.<sup>16</sup>

The demands for political freedoms, already voiced at the National Assembly during the 1848 Revolution, when the youth of Belgrade were protesting against the official neutrality of Serbia in the face of the revolution in Hungary and the Serbian movement within the self-proclaimed Serbian

<sup>14</sup> Jovan Milošević, “Prva grupa srbijanskih studenata, državnih pitomaca školovanih u inostranstvu (1839–1842),” *Istorijski časopis* 9–10 (1959): 363–74.

<sup>15</sup> Jovanović, *Ustavobranitelji i njihova vlada 1838–1858*, 211–13.

<sup>16</sup> Dušan T. Bataković, “Francuski uticaji u Srbiji 1835–1914: Četiri generacije ‘parizlija,’” in *Zbornik za istoriju Matice srpske* (Novi Sad: Matica, 1997), 77–82.

Vojvodina (*Vojvodstvo Srbije*). The Hungarian revolution of 1848 accelerated the gradual transformation of the city from an Oriental to a modern European-like capital. Many citizens of Belgrade rushed over the Sava and Danube to support the armed struggle for autonomy of their brethren in Vojvodina. After Novi Sad was burned to the ground during the fierce fighting between Serbs and Hungarians, many Serbian families from Novi Sad, at that time the most European Serbian city in the Habsburg Monarchy, crossed over to Serbia and settled in Belgrade. Their way of living was gradually accepted as a model, replacing Oriental habits of dressing and housing. The suburbs, however, remained Oriental.<sup>17</sup>

After the Crimean War (1853–56), the international position of Serbia improved: the guarantees for its autonomy passed from Russia to a concert of powers. In 1858, after a series of internal crises the Great National Assembly, composed of 439 deputies, was convened in Belgrade on St. Andrew's Day (12 December). Led by young Liberals, who served as its secretaries, the St. Andrew Assembly turned into a Serbian version of the July Revolution of 1830 in France: Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević was overthrown and the exiled Miloš Obrenović re-elected as prince, while the National Assembly was proclaimed the bearer of national sovereignty and the highest legislative body.<sup>18</sup> Although Prince Miloš quickly revoked all the major liberal laws voted by the Assembly, the Liberals had made an important step in spreading the ideas of constitutional government, civil liberties, and popular sovereignty.<sup>19</sup>

The successor of Prince Miloš, Prince Mihailo (1860–68) declared at the beginning of his second reign that “the law should be the highest authority in Serbia,” but failed to meet the demands of the Liberals, limiting the powers of the National Assembly to those of a consultative body. Prince Mihailo was convinced that apart from a handful of Liberals, Serbian society was not mature enough for Western-type political freedoms. However the reforms introduced by Prince Mihailo marked the end of the patriarchal era in Serbia. His conservative government (1861–67), led by Ilija Garašanin, was more oriented towards legislative reforms, organizing a standing army out of the national militia, building a Balkan alliance system (with Montenegro, Greece, and Romania) and making preparations for a Balkan-scale insurrection against the Ottomans. Belgrade once again became a center of émigrés

<sup>17</sup> Dimitrije Marinković, *Uspomene i doživljaji Dimitrija Marinkovića 1846–1869*, ed. Dragoslav Stranjaković (Belgrade: Srpska Kraljevska Akademija, 1939).

<sup>18</sup> Andrija Radeniš, *Svetoandrejska skupština* (Belgrade: SANU, 1964).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Jovan Milošević, *Jevrem Grujić: Istorijat Svetoandrejskog liberalizma* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1964).

coming from Bosnia and Bulgaria, and in 1866 even from Croatia, when various plans for the creation of the future South Slav state were discussed. Prince Mihailo launched a political slogan, “Balkans to the Balkan nations,” hoping that Serbia would assume the role of the Balkan Piedmont. Focussed on foreign policy, Prince Mihailo suppressed the liberal movement and its followers, the United Serbian Youth (*Ujedinjena omladina srpska*), who demanded internal freedom as a precondition for the coming struggle for national unification.<sup>20</sup>

The main achievement of Prince Mihailo in foreign policy, after abortive plans for a large-scale Balkan insurrection, was the final withdrawal of Ottoman garrisons from Serbia. The 1862 incident, in which Ottoman troops bombed downtown Belgrade from the fortress and killed a child at *Čukur-česma*, triggered a popular demand for the immediate withdrawal of all Ottoman garrisons from Serbia. A conference of the ambassadors of the great powers was convened in Constantinople to prevent a Serbo-Turkish war, but the final results only partially met Serbian demands. After internal turmoils in Greek lands (the Cretan uprising in 1866) and constant fears that Serbia might trigger a far-reaching revolt of Balkan Christians, the final withdrawal of Ottoman garrisons from Belgrade and other cities in Serbia finally took place in April 1867 through the sophisticated mediation of the guaranteeing powers.<sup>21</sup> The old fortifications and all four heavy entrance-towers were leveled in order to unify the fortress with the city. The Ottoman flag on the Belgrade citadel remained as the only sign of the sovereignty of the Sublime Porte in Serbia.

Prince Mihailo ruled in a manner that combined the practice of enlightened Prussian kings and Napoleon III. Having spent several decades in exile, mostly in Vienna and Pest, the Oriental Balkan prince grew up to become a sophisticated European gentleman, eager to apply Western standards of living in Belgrade. In the Palace (*Konak*) the Prince occasionally organized balls and social gatherings, while his generous donations for Belgrade cultural institutions gave a more European outlook to the city. Assassinated in the Topčider park on 11 June 1868, in a conspiracy the motivation of which remains obscure, Prince Mihailo did not live to see the National Theater on the main square of Belgrade completed.<sup>22</sup> The first show at the new theater was a

<sup>20</sup> Grgur Jakšić and Vojislav J. Vučković, *Spoljna politika Srbije za vlade kneza Mihaila. Prvi balkanski savez* (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 1963).

<sup>21</sup> Dimitrije Djordjević, “The Echo of the 1866 Cretan Uprising in Serbia” (Athens, 1975), 94–109.

<sup>22</sup> Ilija Djukanović, *Ubistvo kneza Mihaila i događaji o kojima se nije smelo govoriti*, 2 vols. (Belgrade: Geca Kon, 1935–36).



play dedicated to his tragic end. In front of the National Theater the equestrian statue of Prince Mihailo was erected in 1882, with the prince pointing his finger towards the south—symbolizing his unachieved plans for the liberation of Serbs in other parts of Turkey-in-Europe. The memory of Prince Mihailo in Belgrade was very strong among Belgraders. According to travel writers, many shops and even private houses displayed his picture in their windows for years after his death.

### The Urban Elite

The second richest man in the mid-nineteenth century was Captain Miša Anastasijević, a business partner of the richest one, Prince Miloš himself. Anastasijević was called the “Prince of the Danube” or the “Danube Rothschild” for his wealth and business skills. He was the first public benefactor in Serbia and organizer of various balls for the Belgrade bourgeoisie. Anastasijević married his daughter to a prince from the ruling Karadjordjević family and built the most impressive building in the city (*Kapetan Mišino zdanje*), destined to be a new court, but when this political plan failed, the building turned into an endowment for the Fatherland, sheltering the high school and the National Museum. The Belgrade urban elite in the nineteenth century emerged through marriage arrangements. Two powerful families, Babadudić and Hadžitomić, who had made their riches during the 1860s, married their daughters to promising young ministers, politicians, and leading intellectuals educated abroad, combining fortune with political power. Three daughters of the rich merchant Hadži Toma were married: one to Jovan Ristić, a disciple of Leopold von Ranke, a prominent statesman, diplomat, and leader of the Liberal party; a second one to Prime Minister Radivoje Milojković; a third one for minister and diplomat Filip Hristić, the first Serb to hold a Ph.D. from the Sorbonne.<sup>23</sup> The Babadudić family, led by Živko Karabiberović, the banker and the mayor of Belgrade, boasted among their sons-in-law General Jovan Belimarković, war minister; Jovan Avakumović, minister and university professor; and Alimpije Vasiljević, liberal leader and professor. Within this influential group forming the core of the urban elite of Belgrade an important place was reserved for the relatives of both dynasties. Under the reign of the house of Obrenović their relatives from the Nikolajević family were most important, while under the reign of the dynasty of Karadjordjević the prominence went to the family of Nenadović, distin-

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Filip Hristić, *Pisma Filipa Hristića Jovanu Ristiću 1868–1880*, ed. Grgur Jakšić, (Belgrade: Posebna izdanja 206, Srpska akademija nauka, 1953); Jovan Ristić, *Pisma Jovana Ristića Filipu Hristiću* (Belgrade: Srpska Kraljevska Akademija, 1931).

guished already during the First Serbian Uprising in 1804. The family ties with ruling dynasties and cabinet ministers fostered nepotism and all kinds of lucrative business for the state.

The Belgrade elite of the 1870s and 1880s was leaving behind the Oriental way of life, imitating the latest fashions from Paris, Vienna, and Budapest. As stressed by M. B. Petrovich, “the interiors of homes took on a pronounced European bourgeois look as the more affluent society in Belgrade, and even of the provincial towns, copied the furniture styles of Central and Western Europe, often in helter-skelter *mélange*. There was a notable increase in the importation of luxury items such as porcelain, small furniture, glassware, and silver. To live in “the European manner” became such a compulsion that Belgrade society in the 1870s quickly lost its since Ottoman and Serbian patriarchal way of life.”<sup>24</sup> The Belgrade elite was sending its children to acquire higher education in France—where as early as the 1880s the Paris Law School was seen “as a school for Serbian ministers”—but also in Austria, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, and Russia. Around 200 Paris-educated Serbs, the so-called “Parisians” of the end of the nineteenth century, exerted a predominant influence on the political and cultural scene of Serbia.<sup>25</sup>

The rich urban elites spent its weekends in the beautiful Topčider park, where they rode in carriages, whereas the intelligentsia, of modest means, comprising poets, writers, literary critics, and actors, gathered in the old quarter of *Skadarlija*, which stretched from the National Theater to the slopes on the Danube side of the city. With many coffee shops and restaurants and local orchestras from inner Serbia and southern Hungary, including some Gypsy bands, the cheap restaurants of *Skadarlija*, open until early morning, were the privileged meeting point of urban intellectuals discussing politics, contemporary literature, and recent theatrical performances.

### The Ascendancy of the Liberals

After the assassination of the childless Prince Mihailo, the new ruler of Serbia, elected by the National Assembly, was his distant cousin, fourteen-year-old Prince Milan Obrenović, born in Wallachia, a student of the lycée Louis Le Grand in Paris. During Prince Milan’s minority, Serbia was ruled by the Regency Council, which in 1869 introduced a new Constitution, drafted by the Liberals and approved by the Regency Council. Serbia was defined as

<sup>24</sup> Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia 1804–1918*, 2: 523.

<sup>25</sup> Dušan T. Bataković, “L’influence française sur la formation de la démocratie parlementaire en Serbie,” *Revue d’Europe Centrale* 7: 1 (1999): 17–44.



“a hereditary constitutional monarchy with national representation.” The one-chamber National Assembly was more than an advisory body, but with no control over budget and legislation. Two-thirds of the Assembly was elected by all-male taxpayers (introducing, apart from army personnel and a limited number of landless peasants, almost full suffrage), while the prince was to nominate one-third of its deputies from among citizens “distinguished by their learning or experience of public affairs.” The ministers were responsible not to the National Assembly but to the Prince. The “Regency Constitution” fostered a dynamic political life dominated by the Liberals and young Conservatives (led mostly by the Western-educated sons of Constitutionalists), marking the beginning of the parliamentary system, while the Prince accepted the practice of cabinet government. The expansion of freedom of the press was followed by a series of important finance reforms (the silver currency unit, credits, incentives) and the introduction of the metric system.<sup>26</sup>

Urban development in the 1870s was somewhat chaotic, but accelerated. As witnessed by various travel writers, great efforts were made to widen and pave the streets and put a European imprint on the city. Jan Neruda of Bohemia, visiting Belgrade in the early 1870s, emphasized that Belgrade was called *The Rose of the Danube*, “riveted with golden nails.” Neruda also noticed that “everywhere there’s digging, regulation, and building. Shingle roofs are being replaced. Streets are being redrawn. At present only one has been completely put in order—the one passing by the Prince’s palace..... Appealing private houses are being built one after the other, and even taverns, not of the worst kind, are multiplying.” The Prussian travel-writer Gustav Rasch, in 1873, stressed that six years earlier he had had “nowhere to ‘spend the evening in Belgrade’ unless Prince Mihailo’s court manager” invited him to “his private quarters at the Konak,” where he could meet “the Belgrade high society, eat fruit preserves (*slatko*) and smoke the *čibuk*. Now I could choose to spend my evening in any of several very beautiful gardens, with good music, outstanding food, and pleasant company. Six years ago, the court manager and I had to settle for some very pitiful inn found in the deserted Turkish quarter. In today’s Belgrade, during the summer season, an opera company performs in one of the new parks giving a pretty good interpretation of Offenbach’s operetta’s and comedies.” Rasch also praised new and comfortable hotels, such as “The Serbian Crown,” “The Serbian King,” and “Hotel Paris,” but also *Kasina*, an English-style club for gentlemen: “The Casino occupies the entire first floor of a nice, fashionable building. Along

<sup>26</sup> Jovan Milošević, “Prilog poznavanju porekla srbijanskog parlamentarizma,” *Zbornik filozofskog fakulteta* 11: 1 (1970): 609–26.

with a large reading room where there were numerous French, English, and Slav political and illustrated magazines one finds: a wonderfully furnished room for conversations, a billiard room, a room for cards, and an entertainment hall. On the ground floor of the same building, there is the National Bookstore, opened during the Regency period.”<sup>27</sup>

During the first years of the reign of Milan Obrenović, Serbia went through a difficult period marked by the Eastern Crisis (1875–78). After the Serbian peasants in Herzegovina rose up against Ottoman rule in 1875, demanding unification with Montenegro, the revolt quickly spread to Bosnia. Serbian insurgents in Bosnia, encouraged by military successes, proclaimed unification with Serbia. Public opinion in Belgrade held that the moment had come for a final confrontation with the decaying Ottoman Empire. Thousands of enthusiastic volunteers crossed into Bosnia to join the Serbian insurgents, while Serbia and Montenegro, militarily poorly prepared, entered the war in 1876. The Serbian campaign on several fronts, including Bosnia, proved unsuccessful, and through the mediation of Russia Serbia managed to negotiate a peace treaty on the basis of *status quo ante bellum*. The second war against the Ottomans (1877–78), who were already weakened by the large-scale struggle with the Russians, extended Serbian frontiers to the south, encompassing the former Ottoman *sandžak* of Niš.<sup>28</sup>

### Belgrade: A Royal Capital

At the Congress of Berlin in 1878, Serbia and Montenegro, both territorially enlarged, were recognized as independent states, but Bosnia and Herzegovina, contrary to Serbian expectations, went under Austro-Hungarian occupation. Abandoned by the Russians, who favored Bulgaria as their main Balkan client, Prince Milan turned to Vienna, signing a series of bilateral treaties, including a Secret Convention (1881), a secret political treaty that authorized the Dual Monarchy to control the foreign policy of Serbia. In return for becoming an obedient satellite of Austria-Hungary, Prince Milan was supported by Vienna to proclaim Serbia a Kingdom in March 1882, with Belgrade as its capital.<sup>29</sup>

Foreign consulates in Belgrade were elevated into legations, while Serbia, as an independent state, became attractive for foreign investments. The

<sup>27</sup> Ratimir Damjanović, Novo Tomić, and Sanja Dosić, eds., *Serbia in the Works of Foreign Authors* (Belgrade: Itaka, 2000), 147–50.

<sup>28</sup> Čedomir Popov, *Srbija na putu oslobodjenja 1868–1878* (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1980).

<sup>29</sup> For more details on the Secret Convention, see Grgur Jakšić, *Iz nove srpske istorije: Abdikacija kralja Milana i druge rasprav*, (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1956).

National Bank (1883) and other state institutions were established, while the railway connecting Belgrade with Central Europe on the north and the city of Niš in the south was completed in 1884, as well as an impressive railway station in the capital. The first telephone wires were installed in 1883, to be used only by the army until 1889. During the 1895 visit of Nikola Tesla, the Serbian-American inventor, the *Serbian Post* "caused a sensation by connecting a simultaneous concert in Belgrade and Niš by telephone..."<sup>30</sup> Electric lights were installed in 1892, while streetcars started to run as early as 1893. Involved in various business arrangements, the Belgrade political and entrepreneurial elite built new and attractive villas and mansions that contributed to the more European image of the city. However, Serbia's economic dependence on Austria-Hungary until the early twentieth century made the general progress of Belgrade and Serbia much slower than expected.

Political life, despite internal turmoil during the Eastern Crisis, gradually progressed. Apart from the Liberals and the Young Conservatives (regrouped into the Progressive Party), a Radical party emerged as a new and important factor of Serbian politics. Led by Nikola Pašić (1859–1926), Radical leaders were a group of Western-educated intellectuals mixing Socialist, French radical, and Slavophile ideas with the popular demands of the Serbian peasantry for lower taxes, self-government, and political freedoms. Under the progressive cabinet of Milan Piroćanac (1880–83), supported by the Radicals, the Serbian parliament introduced a series of French-inspired liberal laws on freedom of the press, public meetings, and association that gave impetus to the Radicals, who became the strongest political party, challenging the authority of the prince.<sup>31</sup> After the Radical-led peasant revolt (Timok Rebellion) in 1883, the leadership of the Radical party was imprisoned or exiled. Prince Milan, supported by the Progressives, who were disappointed by the effects of their previous legislation on political freedoms, imposed autocratic rule.<sup>32</sup>

Austrophile in foreign policy and authoritarian in domestic affairs, excessive in spending state funds for private purposes, involved in a family feud with his wife Queen Nathalie, Prince Milan, especially after a humiliating defeat in a war in Bulgaria (1885), became increasingly unpopular, confronting the majority of his subjects who were loyal to the Radicals. In 1888, after negotiations with all three political parties, King Milan engineered the Liberal Constitution, solemnly acclaimed by an overwhelming majority of

<sup>30</sup> Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia 1804–1918*, 2: 523–24.

<sup>31</sup> Slobodan Jovanović and Milan Piroćanac, *Političke i pravne rasprave* (Belgrade: Geca Kon, 1932), 221–302.

<sup>32</sup> Gale Stokes, *Politics as Development. The Emergence of Political Parties in Nineteenth-Century Serbia* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1990).

600 deputies of the Grand National Assembly convened in Belgrade. The 1888 Constitution introduced almost universal male suffrage, ministerial responsibility, and an independent judiciary, and strengthened civil liberties and budget control.<sup>33</sup> King Milan, after installing his confidants as members of the Regency Council—on 6 March 1889, the day of the seventh anniversary of Serbian independence—abdicated in favor of his thirteen-year-old son Aleksandar Obrenović. King Milan was convinced that under such a liberal Constitution the Radicals would lead Serbia into political and economic disaster.<sup>34</sup>

However, for several years—until the young King organized a coup against the Regency Council in April 1893 and assumed his royal powers—Radical cabinets (1889–92) managed to improve the crippled Serbian economy and stabilize the political situation. Until the mid-1880s, elections in the Belgrade constituency yielded deputies for the National Assembly mostly from the ruling parties (Liberals or Progressives). It was only in 1886 that Belgrade chose representatives of the radical opposition. Under the 1888 Constitution, the mayors of Belgrade were chosen from the party that won the elections in the city. One of the most able mayors was the radical leader Nikola Pašić (mayor 1895–97). During the next decades, until the First World War, when elections were not held under police pressure, Belgrade chose mostly radical and independent radical deputies.

In 1894, King Aleksandar, as advised by his father, suspended the 1888 Constitution and reinstated the 1869 Constitution, entering a new phase of struggle against the Radicals. A series of political and family scandals marked the decade of the reign of King Aleksandar Obrenović. His efforts—encouraged by ex-King Milan, who returned to Belgrade in 1894 to become a commander-in-chief of the Serbian Army in 1897—were calculated to divide and eventually destroy the Radical party. The sudden marriage in 1900 of King Aleksandar to a much older widow, Draga Mašin, former *dame d'honneur* of Queen Nathalie, drew strong disapproval, not only from his father and the political elite, but from Serbian public opinion as well. Weakened by a series of family scandals and alienated from the army—a main stronghold of the dynasty—King Aleksandar had become as unpopular as his father had been prior to his abdication. In 1901, the King imposed a new constitution, introducing a bicameral legislature in order to prevent the control of the Radicals. The older generation of Radicals, exhausted by constant struggle with the house of Obrenović, entered a coalition government with the Progressives and accepted the 1901 Constitution, while the younger

<sup>33</sup> Mihailo Popović, *Poreklo i postanak Ustava od 1888. godine* (Belgrade: Geca Kon, 1938).

<sup>34</sup> For a detailed analysis, see Jakšić, *Iz nove srpske istorije*,



fraction of the future Independent Radicals, firmly rejected the deal with the Crown. Growing dissatisfaction with the frequent change of cabinets, three royal coups, and the abrogation and suspension of constitutions within the autocratic rule of King Aleksandar Obrenović, however, was additionally enhanced by dissent within the army, dissatisfied with deteriorating financial conditions and the favoritism introduced by the queen after the royal marriage.<sup>35</sup>

### The 1903 Coup d'Etat

On 11 June (29 May, Old Style) 1903, Belgrade became the theater of a genuine royal tragedy. A group of civil conspirators, mostly Liberals (former ministers Djordje Genčić and Jovan Avakumović, General Jovan Atanacković, and merchant Nikola Hadži Toma), senior army officers (colonels Damnjan Popović, Aleksandar Mašin, Petar Mišić), and an ambitious group of junior officers (Lieutenants Dragutin Dimitrijević Apis, Velimir Vemić, and Antonije Antić) recruited hundreds of dissatisfied army officers during 1902 and early 1903. They executed a *coup d'etat* that ended with the assassination of the royal couple. King Aleksandar and Queen Draga were killed in the Belgrade Palace and their mutilated bodies thrown from the balcony to the garden. The two brothers of the late Queen Draga, together with several cabinet ministers and high-ranking officers loyal to the dynasty of Obrenović, were executed the same night. Ex-King Milan had died in Vienna in 1901, two years before the tragic end of his son. That was the end of the House of Obrenović. As previously agreed by the conspirators, the exiled Prince Peter Karadjordjević (the third son of Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjević and a grandson of Karageorge) was proclaimed king. The "revolutionary government" formed from all the main political parties, including the leading conspirators, assumed power until the new king's arrival from Geneva. It was one of the rare military coups that restored democracy and transferred power to the political parties enjoying popular support.

The brutal regicide provoked outrage in Europe, while Belgrade, after the first shock, reacted with joy, celebrating "the death of the tyrant." The Western press, especially in Britain, depicted Belgrade as a "white city of death," while reports of the brutal regicide became the main cover story on the front pages of newspapers in Europe and United States. Serbia, having already attracted the attention of the Western press in previous decades by the

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Wayne S. Vucinich, *Serbia Between East and West: The Events of 1903–1908* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1954), 46–59.

series of scandals within the Obrenović family, was once again depicted as a hotbed of dark Oriental-type conspiracies.<sup>36</sup>

The new king of Serbia, Petar Karadjordjević (1842–1921), after his father lost the Serbian throne in 1858, was trained in Geneva and at the Saint-Cyr military academy in Paris. He was considered to be a liberal and a devoted patriot. In 1868, Prince Peter translated into Serbian John Stuart Mill's essay *On Liberty*; in 1870–71, he joined the French army during the Franco-Prussian War and earned a medal for his military merits. In 1875, the pretender to the Serbian throne joined the Serbian insurgents in Bosnia and, operating under the *nom de guerre* of Petar Mrkonjić, formed his own combat unit. He was married to the oldest daughter of the Montenegrin Prince Nikola Petrović Njegoš, and lived in Cetinje until the death of his wife Princess Zorka. Prior to the 1903 *coup d'etat*, Prince Petar Karadjordjević had been living quietly in Geneva, while his two sons, Djordje and Aleksandar, were in the pages corps in St. Petersburg. Prince Petar accepted the plan of the conspirators for a coup, but there is no evidence that he consented to the assassination of the royal couple.<sup>37</sup> After his arrival in Belgrade, both chambers of parliament proclaimed him King, under the previously introduced 1903 Constitution, a slightly revised version of the 1888 Constitution. "The real novelty"—as stressed by R. W. Seton-Watson—"was the appearance for the first time in Serbian history of a sovereign who was constitutional by instinct, not merely by necessity, and whose habits of personal effacement threw into sharp relief the theatrical vagaries of his predecessors."<sup>38</sup>

The new elections produced, as expected, a sound majority for the Radicals. Old and Young Radicals divided into two separate parties after 1905, and alternated in the government until the outbreak of World War I. The main problem of the new regime remained the question of regicides. The new King, lacking political support in the country, was relying on the army, while the National Assembly paid tribute to the conspirators who freed Serbia from the autocratic rule of the last Obrenović. The British government, however, refused to recognize the new order in Serbia, demanding that the main perpetrators of the regicide be punished. Until June 1906, when the six leading members of the conspiracy in the army were retired, Belgrade was under a diplomatic boycott. The main event in Belgrade, the coronation ceremony of

<sup>36</sup> Slobodan G. Markovich, *British Perceptions of Serbia and the Balkans 1903–1906* (Paris: Dialogue, 2000), 63–74.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Dragoljub R. Zivojinović's three-volume biography of Petar I, *Kralj Petar I Karadjordjević: U otadžbini 1903–1914*, vol. 2 (Beograd: BIGZ 1990).

<sup>38</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *German, Slav and Magyar: A Study in the Origins of the Great War* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1916), 78.



King Peter I in 1904—on the centenary of the First Serbian Uprising, led by his grandfather Karageorge—apart from several foreign diplomats, was attended only by the official delegations sent from Montenegro and Bulgaria.<sup>39</sup>

### “The Golden Age of Serbia”

The reign of King Petar I Karadjordjević (1903–14, formally until 1921) was praised as the “golden age of Serbia.” The decades-long economic dependency on Austria-Hungary was eventually terminated during the 1906–11 Tariff War (*Carinski rat*), when Serbia managed to find new markets for its cereals and livestock. The independent course in foreign policy—as demanded by public opinion—was relying on the political and financial support of Russia and France. Although Serbia was compelled to accept the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a *fait accompli* in 1908, its military victories in the Balkan Wars (1912–13) produced not only an overall self-confidence in the pursuit of national policy, but turned it, within a decade, into a prestigious political center of the South Slavic population.<sup>40</sup>

Despite the internal difficulties of the new regime, the high level of political freedoms, the constitutional government within democratic parliamentary procedures, low franchise and freedom of the press, coupled with a dynamic cultural and economic development was seen by Serbs and South Slavs in the neighboring Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires as an inspiring model of a modern political system. In the early twentieth century, apart from roughly three million inhabitants of Serbia, almost two million more Serbs were living within Austria-Hungary, while another million were under Ottoman rule.<sup>41</sup> Belgrade was not only the center of Serbdom but also a promising center of South Slav unity, embracing the Yugoslav idea as one of the possible political solutions to the rising crisis in the relations with Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. The coronation of King Petar I attracted many unofficial delegations from the South Slavic provinces of the Dual Monarchy and the

<sup>39</sup> Frances Radovich, “The British Court and Relations with Serbia,” *East European Quarterly* 14 (Winter 1980): 461–68; David MacKenzie, “The May Conspiracy and the European Powers: The Diplomatic Boycott Against Serbia 1903–1906,” *South East European Monitor* 2: 2 (1995): 3–19.

<sup>40</sup> Dimitrije Djordjević, *Carinski rat Austro-Ugarske i Srbije 1906–1911* (Belgrad: Istorijski institut, 1960).

<sup>41</sup> Dimitrije Djordjević, “The Serbs as an Integrating and Disintegrating Factor,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 3: 2 (1967): 48–82; idem, “Srbija i Habsburška Monarhija—uzroci sukoba,” *Istorijski glasnik* 1 (1969): 31–39.

Ottoman Empire, who saw Belgrade and Serbia as the gathering point of Yugoslav political aspirations.

A Yugoslav arts exhibit, held in Belgrade in 1904, on the occasion of the king’s coronation, was the first signal that Serbia was to become a leading center of the Yugoslav movement. A society called Slovenski jug (The Slavic South) was established as early as 1904, organizing public conferences and editing a journal that advocated the unity of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. All kinds of Yugoslav-inspired conferences in Belgrade during this period were attended by the associations of teachers, medical doctors, writers, journalists, and youth coming from Croatia, Bosnia, Vojvodina, Montenegro, or even Bulgaria, marking the growing political significance of the Serbian capital. Various political meetings, against the Albanian atrocities in Old Serbia (Vilayet of Kosovo), the Ottoman oppression against Christians in Macedonia, or perhaps the largest one, attracting several thousand protesters—against the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908—marked the growing political awareness of Belgraders.

During the early twentieth century Belgrade was not seen, as it had been several decades before, as a sharp frontier separating the European West from the Balkan-Oriental East. French journalists and travel writers (André Cheradame, Pierre de Lanux, Henry Barby) were delighted with the predominantly French influence on Belgrade society, stressing that most of the university students, army officers, and intellectuals spoke French and stressed the important role of the *Société littéraire française*, counting among the hundreds of its highly active members King Petar I himself.<sup>42</sup> British travel writers (Herbert Vivian, John Foster Fraser, Harry de Windt), far less enthusiastic, insisting as usual on the peasant virtues and democratic values of Serbian society, however, noticed that “means, education and leisure have called an upper class into existence. Their manner and habits are those of European society everywhere else, and they have no social dealings with the bourgeois or peasantry. The [Belgrade] bourgeoisie is filled with American notion of equality...”<sup>43</sup> but also that “men and women usually dress in the European style. At the fall of the sun all Belgrade comes to promenade the streets, the ladies dressed as prettily and much in the same way as the ladies at an English watering place.”<sup>44</sup> The main city square (*Terazije*) and grand

<sup>42</sup> Pierre de Lanux, *La Yougoslavie. La France et les Serbes* (Paris: Payot, 1916), 67–70.

<sup>43</sup> Herbert Vivian, *The Servian Tragedy with Some Impressions of Macedonia* (London: Grant Richards, 1904), 171.

<sup>44</sup> John Foster Fraser, *Pictures from the Balkans* (London, Paris, and New York: Cassel & Co., 1906), 34.

boulevards were reconstructed in 1910 by the French architects Leger and Cambon, inspired by Parisian-style boulevards.

The population of Belgrade grew continuously throughout the nineteenth century. From 7,033 in 1834, it grew to 24,768 in 1866 and to 54,249 in 1890. With a population of 69,769 in 1900, the city was still behind other Balkan metropolises such as Athens (122,000) or Bucharest (287,000). Although predominantly Serbian, in 1910 out of 89,876 inhabitants, Belgrade had about 19,000 inhabitants originating from other parts of South Slavic regions and another 3,000 from different European countries, comprising Germans, Greeks, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, and Jews; there were 5,443 Roman Catholics, 4,192 Jews, 586 Protestants, and 362 Muslims. The religious diversity was confirmed by six Serbian Orthodox churches, three synagogues, two Roman Catholic churches, and two mosques.<sup>45</sup>

The cultural life of Belgrade was considered to be the most dynamic among the South Slavic provinces in the Balkans. In order to highlight the cultural independence of Serbia and the rise of the Serbian cultural impact among the South Slavs, the Grand School (Velika škola) was officially elevated to university status in 1905, having prestigious, mostly French and German-educated scholars among its professors, including the geographer Jovan Cvijić, Jovan Skerlić, Pavle Popović, and Bogdan Popović, who held the chairs in Serbian and European literature, law school history professor Slobodan Jovanović, the mathematician Mihailo Petrović "Alas," philosopher Branislav Petronijević, the geologist Jovan Žujović, and dozens of others, recognized as scholars of international standing.<sup>46</sup>

The first rector of Belgrade University, Sima Lozanić, a renowned chemist, in his inaugural address stated the following: "It is known that the German and Italian universities, by promoting national consciousness and contributing to the national wealth, were the chief agents in preparing the way for the unification of their nations. Thus I believe that a Serbian university will perform the same service for the Serbian people."<sup>47</sup> The liberal orientation of Belgrade University was additionally underlined by the provisions of its charter: "University instruction is free. Professors shall be free in the presentation of their subjects. Students shall choose the lecture they shall at-

<sup>45</sup> Dimitrije Djordjević, "Serbian Society 1903–1914," in Bela A. Kiraly and Dimitrije Djordjević, *East Central European Society in the Balkan Wars* (Boulder, CO and New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 227–39.

<sup>46</sup> Dušan T. Bataković, ed., *Nova istorija srpskog naroda* (Belgrade: Naš Dom, 2000), 195–200.

<sup>47</sup> Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia 1804–1918*, 2: 579.

tend."<sup>48</sup> In 1913, in five colleges (law, medicine, philosophy, theology, and technical sciences), there were eighty professors and 1,600 students at Belgrade University. Although relatively modest in terms of the number of students, Belgrade University was prominent as the flag-bearer of the idea of Serbian and Yugoslav unity.

Since 1886 Belgrade had been the seat of the Royal Serbian Academy, the leading academic institution, which had among its members many distinguished scholars from all the South Slavic regions. The flourishing of a free press under the constitutional democracy of the Kingdom of Serbia was unprecedented in the Balkans. Out of ninety dailies in 1904, seventy-two were published in Belgrade, while the leading widely read dailies, like the independent *Politika*, and party newspapers *Odjek* (*Echo*) of the Independent Radicals, *Samouprava* (*Self-Government*) of the Old Radicals, *Pravda* (*Justice*), and *Videlo* (*Dawn*) of the Progressives, or *Srpska zastava* (*Serbian Standard*) of the Liberals (Nationals) were considered to be the visible sign of a high level of political freedom. As stressed by the British envoy, "one of best written and widely read daily papers is *Politika*, which is neutral in party politics and criticizes or supports the Government on the merits of each question."<sup>49</sup> In 1912, out of 302 Serbian-language newspapers and journals published, 199, with an annual circulation of 50 million copies, were published in Serbia, among them 126 in Belgrade alone.

After 1903, Belgrade chose mostly deputies from the Radical party, more often from its younger faction—Independent Radicals. In the 1906 elections in Belgrade, the Independent Radicals received 2,455 votes, the Old Radicals of Nikola Pašić 1,932, the Socialists 1,002, the Progressives 647, and the Liberals (renamed the National Party) only 273 votes. Among the mayors the most popular one was Dr. Kosta Glavinic.<sup>50</sup>

The shadow on the overall picture of "the golden age of Serbia" was the influence of the 1903 conspirators, who had for years acted as a privileged military clique in control of the army and who exerted strong political influence in the Royal Palace. In contrast to the late King Aleksandar Obrenović, King Petar I Karadjordjević considered the army to be the pillar of his dynasty, unwilling to enter in conflict with the officers who had brought him to the Serbian throne. After the main conspirators retired in 1906, a group of younger conspirators in the army ranks, led by the charismatic Captain Dragutin Dimitrijević "Apis," dissatisfied with internal strife and the slow

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Public Record Office, Foreign Office, 371/328, Serbia, Annual Report, 1907, No 20. Confidential, Belgrade, 2 April 1908.

<sup>50</sup> Public Record Office, FO, 371/734, No 31, Belgrade, 13 April 1910.



evolution in the pursuit of the ambitious plans for Serbian unification, were involved in supporting Serbian guerrilla activities in Ottoman Macedonia while demanding from the Palace a more active foreign policy, considerably restrained after in March 1909 Serbia was obliged to accept the October 1908 annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary. The activities of the nationwide patriotic organization Narodna odbrana (National Defense), formed in Belgrade to prevent the unilateral act of annexation of occupied provinces in 1908 and fight to Austria-Hungary, were restricted by the Serbian government to mostly cultural activities.

In 1911, supported by a group of civilian political activists, the officers formed in Belgrade a secret organization called "Unification or Death," a.k.a the "Black Hand," in order to foster the unification of Serbs under foreign rule into the Kingdom of Serbia as a national Piedmont. Their basic plan was to revolutionarize the Serbs in the Ottoman-held provinces of Old Serbia and Macedonia, while at the same time they were recruiting members also from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and Croatia. Apart from several hundred army officers, the "Black Hand" admitted few young nationalists of other South Slav nations. Serbian unification as a primary political goal and Yugoslav unification as a long-term objective were deemed compatible during the first years of the secret organization activities. Their newspaper *Pijemont (Piedmont)* criticized the Old Radical cabinet for corruption, the abuse of power and the lack of patriotism while demanding a broader political consent, surpassing the immediate party interests, on a more active foreign policy.<sup>51</sup>

The First Balkan War was the most popular war in Serbian history. A Balkan alliance, comprising Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria, launched a war against the Ottomans in October 1912 in order to liberate Balkan Christians in Ottoman possessions in Southeastern Europe. Belgrade, like the rest of Serbia, was ecstatic after the victories of the Serbian army in Kosovo and Macedonia. The victory that enlarged Serbia in the south from 48,330 to 87,300 square kilometers was considered the ultimate revenge on the Ottomans for the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. Generations of Serbs, educated to become the "the avengers of Kosovo," had lived to see their national dream realized. After Serbian troops entered Albania and reached the Adriatic Sea at Durazzo in November 1912, Austria-Hungary intervened in favor of the newly-proclaimed Albanian state and threatened Serbia with war if its troops did not evacuate occupied regions of northern and central Albania. The

<sup>51</sup> Dušan T. Bataković, "La 'Main noire' (1911–1917): L'armée serbe entre démocratie et autoritarisme," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 2 (1998): 95–144.

Belgrade government and state institutions were evacuated from Belgrade to Niš, until the crisis with Vienna was solved.<sup>52</sup>

The second Balkan war, against former ally Bulgaria, in 1913 confirmed the new Serbian possessions in the disputed regions of Slavic Macedonia, strengthening the prestige of the army and the dynasty. The Serbian victories, including the victories of the tiny Serbian Kingdom of Montenegro, were received in Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Vojvodina, but also among the Yugoslav-oriented political elite of Dalmatia and Croatia, as the beginning of a new era in which Serbia was destined to bring about the unification of the Serbs and the Yugoslavs under the realm of the Karadjordjević dynasty. Belgrade, as the leading South Slav hub in culture, science, and democracy, gained prestige as the most important political center in the region. After returning from Kosovo and Macedonia in August 1913, Serbian troops headed by Crown Prince Aleksandar, the commander of the First Serbian Army, were greeted in Belgrade as true national heroes, during a magnificent parade in their honor. The French journalist who attended the parade noted the statement of a Jewish officer in the Serbian troops: "We gave 1300 soldiers to the army, while 20 of them died in fighting. But we are all devoted to the liberal government in a state where there is no difference between us and other citizens."<sup>53</sup>

However, the conflict between the "Black Hand," whose officers excelled during the Balkan Wars, and the civilian authorities was deepening over the control of the New Territories (*Nove Oblasti*) in the south. The conflict between Prime Minister Nikola Pašić, supported by Russia and France, and the Black Handers, backed by the army, ended in the silent withdrawal of old King Petar I on 24 June 1914, reluctant to take action against the army. The old King announced that due to ill-health, he had decided to entrust his royal prerogatives to his second son, Crown Prince Aleksandar.<sup>54</sup>

### The 1914 July Crisis

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914 found Serbia unprepared for another political crisis. Relations with Austria-Hungary had worsened considerably after 1903, when Vienna saw all Serbian aspirations as a threat to its interests in the Balkans, while a pro-Yugoslav

<sup>52</sup> Dimitrije Djordjević, *Izlazak Srbije na jadransko more i konferencija ambasadora velikih sila u Londonu 1912* (Belgrade: by author 1956).

<sup>53</sup> De Lanux, *Yougoslavie*, 76.

<sup>54</sup> Dušan T. Bataković, "Sukob vojnih i civilnih vlasti u Srbiji u proleće 1914," *Istorijski časopis* 29–30 (1982–1983): 477–91.



movement within the borders of the Dual Monarchy was perceived as a menace to its very existence. Serbia was exhausted by the Balkan Wars while its politicians were in the midst of campaigning for the new elections scheduled for the following September. Belgraders were initially surprised by the news from Sarajevo, which was followed by a large-scale anti-Serb press campaign—the slogan “Serbia must die” (*Serbien muss sterben*) appeared—and violent demonstrations harassing ethnic Serbs throughout the territory of the Dual Monarchy, including large-scale pogroms against Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and were worried of the possible consequences of this fateful event. The reports that came from Vienna blamed not only the Black Hand as the instigator of the assassination—which was perpetrated by the members of Mlada Bosna (Young Bosnia)—but also the Serbian government for alleged complicity. The government, however, was not aware that several members of the Black Hand, including Lieutenant Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijević “Apis,” the Chief of Military Intelligence, had supported the Bosnian nationalists in their assassination plans, and that a group of Bosnian students had been trained and supplied with arms in Belgrade before being secretly sent back to Bosnia.<sup>55</sup> This was confirmed by Dr. Wiesner, a legal counselor of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry who conducted an independent investigation: “[T]here is nothing to prove, or even to cause suspicion of the Serbian Government’s cognizance of the steps leading to the crime, or of its supplying the weapons. On the contrary there are indications that this is to be regarded as out of the question.”<sup>56</sup>

Within a month the crisis led to war after Austria-Hungary presented an ultimatum to the Serbian government in Belgrade on 23 July demanding the arrest of all suspects, including several Black Hand members, suppression of Narodna Odbrana and all anti-Austrian propaganda in the Serbian press and school curricula, and, finally, authorization to investigate the Sarajevo crime within Serbian territory. The ultimatum, presented after Austria-Hungary had obtained the support of Germany for a long-awaited war against Serbia, was deliberately calculated to be unacceptable. One of the Serbian ministers, after reading the list of demands expressed the prevailing feelings in the cabinet: “Nothing else remains but to die fighting.” The Serbian reply, delivered forty-eight hours later, was highly conciliatory. The Serbian cabinet accepted all but the last demand (investigation by Austro-Hungarian officials within

Serbian territory), offering to bring this question before the International Court in the Hague.

Although the European Powers, including the German Emperor, were impressed by the diplomatic tact and moderation of the Serbian reply, the Austrian-Hungarian envoy, Baron Giesel von Gieslingen, left Belgrade on 25 July, dissatisfied by the response to the Vienna ultimatum. A general mobilization was ordered in Serbia, while the government and other state institutions were quickly moved from Belgrade southward to Niš. After the war declaration came in the early afternoon of July 28 to Niš, the war began the same night with large-scale bombing of Belgrade from Austrian military positions across the Sava River.

Belgrade, a city on the immediate border with Austria-Hungary, was the first European capital to be bombed in World War I. The long nineteenth century, which turned Belgrade from a decaying Ottoman fortress to a modern European city, a century extending from 1804 to July 1914, was over.

<sup>55</sup> For more details, see Vladimir Dedijer, *The Road to Sarajevo* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1967).

<sup>56</sup> Quoted in Sidney B. Fay, *The Origins of the World War* (New York: The Free Press 1966), 2: 237.

## **Nineteenth-Century Serbian Painting: A Confluence of Nationalism and Secularism**

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Nineteenth-century Serbia experienced dramatic transformations, politically, economically, culturally, and artistically. It was no longer oriented to the East and bound to the religious art of its partly Byzantine past. Its attention now focused on the rapidly modernizing European nation states with long-established schools of secular art.

Although Serbia lacked a comparable foundation for the progressive ideas of Western European eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thinkers, it did have a certain predisposition to them. A system of rural self-governance encouraged both egalitarianism and independence. These values were accompanied by an increasingly fervent nationalism, in part sustained by the Serbian Orthodox Church.<sup>1</sup> Serbian nationalism was also nurtured by the folk song tradition. Didactic and inspirational, these epic poems recounted and celebrated past and recent history, defeats, victories and heroes. Modern concepts of individual liberty and national independence were met with receptivity.

Beginning with the first decade of the nineteenth century and the revolt of 1804, challenges to Turkish rule were increasingly successful. They were also fueled by external revolutions, revolts, and demands for reform. Each event reinforced a singularly Serbian understanding of the link between freedom and nationalism, as expressed by the Serbian philologist Daničić:

Nationality without liberty can exist upon the earth, but freedom without nationality is unthinkable.... The Serbian nation is in the world for no other purpose than to be the Serbian nation.<sup>2</sup>

Serbian painting echoes the aspirations and changes as well as the complexities of nineteenth-century Serbian society. It was partly imitative, rapidly

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<sup>1</sup> Robin Okey, *Eastern Europe 1740–1895* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 30–31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

absorbing Western artistic vocabularies and techniques. Yet it inevitably retained approaches and features uniquely its own.

A change in subject matter is most immediately evident. When the Christianized Serbs embraced the Eastern Orthodox faith they also accepted the artistic themes and style of Byzantium. They developed a powerful school of fresco and panel painting, rivaling their Western counterparts. While Western Europe experienced the transforming styles and expanded subject-matter of the Renaissance, Mannerism, and the Baroque, religious art reigned supreme in Serbia almost until the end of the eighteenth century. It was only then, via Central Europe, that the Baroque style of the seventeenth-century made its initial impact. Reinterpreted, it was incorporated into Serbian religious paintings. Similarly, Baroque paintings of secular subjects likely had a bearing on Serbian interest in portraiture as an independent genre. Although they and their patrons were increasingly alert to the West, Serbian artists still retained their own explorations and identity.<sup>3</sup>

The nineteenth century marked a profound shift to a distinctly Serbian secular art. To attain a level of artistic achievement comparable to their foreign counterparts, Serbian artists required modern professional training. It was most immediately available in Central European academies. Especially during the first half of the century, Vienna, with its community of Serbian intellectuals,<sup>4</sup> became their educational mecca.<sup>5</sup> Toward the last quarter of the century the more progressive academies in Munich and Düsseldorf, serving as vehicles of exposure to the latest developments in avant garde Paris, proved increasingly attractive. In both traditional and modern ateliers, beginning students were provided with a basic academic course of study as well as exposure to contemporary styles. In turn, they transmitted their interpretations to their compatriots.

Not surprisingly, interest in Serbian culture and art, past and present, intensified following the 1815 uprising. There was a growing focus on contemporary art. As the century progressed, interest in the arts was evidenced in periodical literature, newsletters of learned organizations, and the founding of archaeological and ethnographic societies focused on Serbian antiquities.<sup>6</sup> Such ethnocentrism appears to have been reinforced by a development that began in the 1840s, escalating by the 1870s, foreign fascination with the

<sup>3</sup> Dejan Medaković, *Srpska umetnost u XIX veku* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1981), 66.

<sup>4</sup> The circle included Vuk Karadžić, Petar Njegoš, and Dositej Obradović.

<sup>5</sup> Geraldine Norman, *Biedermeier Painting, 1815–1848: Reality Observed in Genre, Portrait, and Landscape* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 26.

<sup>6</sup> Medaković, 5–8.

Balkans. Both home and abroad Serbian art was beginning to elicit interest and recognition.<sup>7</sup> The importance of national identity and the need for its full expression is an integral part of Romanticism with its focus on national uniqueness and the acceptance of the premise that “the best guarantee for the future of a nation is knowing and valuing its past.”<sup>8</sup>

Dated from 1848–78, Romanticism, like Classicism before it and Realism after it, occurred later in Serbia than in Western Europe, where it was already being upstaged by Realism. Serbian artists followed three different models of Romanticism. One was strongly informed by German Nazarene painting, another incorporated both prosaic and sentimental elements of Biedermeier culture, and a third looked to French Romanticism. The latter’s dramatic qualities of movement, color, and light were well suited to both Serbian spirit and needs. Romanticism was further encouraged by an abundance of appealing themes, readily available in the popular oral tradition of epic poetry. The 1814 publication of Vuk Karadžić’s compilation of these verses further elevated their significance.

That historical events provided inspiration for Romantic painters is evident in Katarina Ivanović’s (1811–82) painting of 1844–45, *The Conquest of Belgrade*. Trained in Pest and Munich, she maintained a strong allegiance to her Serbian heritage. That is apparent in this painting of a defining battle of the first Serbian insurrection. Writing in 1873, Ivanović explained its genesis.

While studying at the Munich Academy, I started to read the *History of the Serb People*. I wanted to paint the brave battle of Mirko on my canvas. With seven of his comrades he succeeded in entering the city at night, when the Turks were celebrating Bajram and didn’t even think about any danger. Mirko and his comrades killed the guards at the town gate. Their rifle shots were the signal for the others.<sup>9</sup>

A visit to Belgrade provided Ivanović with the opportunity to study the battle site, hear accounts from some of the participants, and to examine authentic costumes and weaponry used during the battle.<sup>10</sup> Yet, her depiction is no more a documentary than Théodore Géricault’s 1819 rendering of the anguished survivors of a contemporary shipwreck in his painting, *The Raft of*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 16–18.

<sup>8</sup> Grimm Brothers, quoted in Miodrag Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba romantizma 1848–1878* (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 1976), 19.

<sup>9</sup> Radmila Mihailović and Nikola Kusovac, *Katarina Ivanović* (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1984), 33.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.



*the Medusa*, which was also preceded by careful gathering of data. As in the case of Géricault, Ivanović's presentation is highly theatrical, emotional, and stridently Romantic. In its complexity, deliberate confusion, slashing diagonals, tenebrism, and intense coloration, it most resembles the paintings of her French Romantic predecessors Géricault and Antoine-Jean Gros, as well as the more contemporary Eugène Delacroix. For young Serbian artists such stylistic quotations were unavoidable. Ivanović had been introduced to French art through Belgian artists working in Munich and Vienna, as well as through a visit to France. As both an aspiring artist and a Romantic, she was quite naturally drawn to these internationally renowned painters. Expectedly, she also looked to the emotion-charged paintings of the earlier Baroque and Mannerist masters, whose work was known to her as a student and later through first-hand study of Italian collections.

Serbian painters incorporated the Romantic style in varied ways, especially in depicting historical themes. No single approach was possible for there was no existing tradition of or national stylistic approach to secular painting. The paintings of Pavle Simić, Novak Radonić, and Djura Jakšić illustrate this diversity.

Although he had spent some ten years in Pest, Vienna, and Munich, the formal artistic studies of Djura Jakšić (1832–78), writer, poet, and painter, were brief. Jakšić's inherent Romanticism was fueled by the climate of nationalist expression, protest, and violent revolt sweeping through Europe in the late 1840s. His immense love of country, exemplified in his poetry and painting, was framed by these events. Often drawn from his own experiences, both national bravery and anguish are reflected in his paintings.<sup>11</sup>

Jakšić's Romantic depictions of the heroic struggles of his countrymen, such as his *Battle of the Montenegro People* (1862) and *The Torchlight Procession through Stambol Gate* (1859), are dramatic reflections of his time. In the latter, he celebrates Serbian defiance and bravery. Reminiscent of the triumphant French revolutionaries bearing the tricolored flag in François Rude's 1836 relief, *La Marseillaise*, citizens and their leaders carry a symbol of their declaration of independence, a picture of Czar Milos, through Belgrade's famous gate. Like his Baroque predecessors Rembrandt and Rubens and more recent French Romantics, Jakšić intensifies the mood through bright moonlight and shifting smoke-filled torchlight. With curved strokes of bright color and flickering light he obscures the details and conveys a mood of

<sup>11</sup> Miodrag Popović, *Djura Jakšić* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1961), 27–28. See also, Miodrag Jovanović, *Medju javom i med snom: Srpsko slikarstvo 1830–1870* (Belgrade: Narodni Muzej, 1992), 181.

determination and urgency. Painting deftly with swift strokes of a loaded brush, Jakšić seems to echo both the rhythm and sentiment of his own poetry:

Come brothers, spill your blood  
Abandon your villages, let them burn  
Throw your children into the fire  
Free yourselves from captivity and shame.<sup>12</sup>

The last three decades of the nineteenth century coincided with the dominance of Realism in Serbian art. In Western Europe painters were concurrently carrying Realism to its conclusion through Impressionism and then abandoning reality in the new styles, Post-Impressionism and Symbolism.

Realism found ready pupils and a supportive audience in Serbia. Whether history, genre, or portrait, the subjects were familiar and easy to understand. They had a special appeal to an increasingly intellectual and aesthetically engaged middle class. Through expanded exhibition venues, publications, and dissemination of criticism, appreciation of the arts increased significantly.<sup>13</sup> There were two main approaches to Realism. One, usually associated with the more avant-garde Munich Academy, favored a painterly technique, greater coloristic experimentation, and less concern with linear definition and precise detail. It was in Munich that the Serbs were initially introduced to French-influenced Belgian art in 1843, and in 1869 to Gustave Courbet's paintings.<sup>14</sup> By 1870 Serbian painters at the Munich Academy working with artists such as Wilhelm Leibl embraced what seemed to them Courbet's radical Realism.<sup>15</sup> The more traditional Viennese Academy provided a different type of Realist style. Here, the insistence was on clarity of line and form and controlled tone.<sup>16</sup>

Regardless of their differences, both Viennese and Munich Realists accepted Courbet's insistence on veracity.<sup>17</sup> However, in one very important

<sup>12</sup> Djura Jakšić, *Pesme Jelisaveta Proza* (Novi Sad: Matica Srpska, 1970), 47.

<sup>13</sup> Vera Ristić, *Djordje Krstić, Uros Predić, Paja Jovanović* (Belgrade: Narodni Muzej, 1966), 3.

<sup>14</sup> Between 1853 and 1918, 150 Serbs studied architecture, sculpture, printmaking, and painting in Munich. At least 60 had enrolled at the Academy. Jovanović, *Srpsko slikarstvo u doba romantizma*, 47.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>16</sup> By the end of the century, 100 Serbs had received their training at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts. Jovanović, 42.

<sup>17</sup> For discussion of Courbet's theories and the Realist movement, see Linda Nochlin, *Realism* (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1972).

respect both diverged from his Realism. They refused to be limited to contemporary subjects. Instead, they sustained the tradition of history painting.

Serbian Realists, whether stylistically traditional or adventurous, linear or painterly, explored a variety of subjects. Portraiture was an inevitable and essential component of their portfolios. Increasingly, they were attracted to landscapes of their native countryside. Enjoying a remarkable continuity throughout the century, subjects from national history, past and present, were especially favored by the Realists. Whether depicting significant events or ordinary scenes, these painters were selective, adapting, and transforming European Realism to fulfill their own visions.

A painter of religious, allegorical, historical, landscape, and genre subjects, Djordje Krstić (1851–1907) was a product of the Munich School of Realism. With paintings such as *Under the Apple Tree* (1883), Krstić achieved international recognition.<sup>18</sup> Here, he provides a positive slice of Balkan life, familiar to his countrymen, yet, one that held a special exotic appeal for Western European audiences. Echoing his familiarity with rural life, it is spontaneously painted. Characteristically, the composition is informal, and Krstić effectively captures the richness of the native costume and the luminescent beauty of the landscape. Urban audiences in Serbia and abroad, caught up in the often troubling realities of industrialization, were especially receptive to these sentimental images of simple peasant life.

Trained in the more traditional Realism of the Viennese Academy, Uroš Predić (1857–1953), whose stated goal was to paint the life of ordinary people truthfully, was best known for his genre scenes, many of which are marked by gentle, often, moralizing humor.<sup>19</sup> In his Academic Realist painting of 1887, *The Happy Brothers* (plate 1), Predić demonstrates two salient characteristics especially favored by critics and the public. He combines technical prowess in the handling of the expanded landscape of muddy road, leafy trees, and modest peasant cottages with an instructive narrative. The inebriated brothers walk in a quartet of carefree abandon while their mother wearily observes the unsteady procession. To local audiences, in particular, such lighthearted didacticism entwined within a familiar and beloved world was immensely satisfying.

Internationally acclaimed, recipient of gold and silver medals in Paris, Vienna, Munich, Buenos Aires, and St. Louis, Paja Jovanović (1859–1957) was a prolific painter. His work can be divided into three discernable thematic phases: Orientalist genre subjects, major events in Serbian history, and por-

<sup>18</sup> Six of his paintings were included in the Parisian World Exposition in 1889. Miodrag Kolarić, *Djordje Krstić* (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1977), 22.

<sup>19</sup> Ristić, 14.

traiture. Jovanović enrolled at the Academy in Vienna because of its reputation for rigorous technical training. That pedagogical expectation was fulfilled by his first teacher Christian Griepenkerl. His second teacher, Leopold Karl Müller, introduced Jovanović to regular sketching trips as well as the work of the French Orientalist painter Eugène Fromentin. Most importantly, Müller urged him to record the life and people of Serbia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, and Albania. The paintings derived from these portfolios provided him with recognition and a contract with London's French Gallery for additional Orientalist genre scenes.<sup>20</sup> In his *Fencing Lesson* (1885), *The Preparation of the Bride* (c.1888), and *The Cock Fight* (1897) Jovanović presents intimate vignettes of an exotic "Oriental" Balkan world, unknown to most western Europeans, at once fascinating and mysterious.

Although the clarity and detail reflect his Viennese training, Jovanović was also influenced by French Academic Realists such as Thomas Couture and, especially, Jean Léon Gérôme's Orientalist paintings. Jovanović's method is additive; his details abundant. Rather than the polished tonalities of his Austrian and French counterparts, Jovanović indulges in rich color and intense light that actually bring him closer to the naturalistic spontaneity of Impressionist painting. While he incorporates some of their technical innovations and methodology, Jovanović profits primarily from his own direct scrutiny of reality, especially light and color, during his sketching trips in the Balkans, Western Europe, and North Africa.

Throughout his career Jovanović chronicled events in Serbian history. In 1900 he presented his monumental painting *The Proclamation of Czar Dušan's Code of Laws*<sup>21</sup> to widespread critical acclaim at the World Exposition in Paris. Characteristically, its preparation included intensive research, gathering of documentation with respect to the event, the setting and the costumes, and an abundance of preliminary studies. This large-scale, highly ambitious, and technically challenging work incorporates many figures, precisely individualized, into a complex compositional format, contained in a clearly articulated and archaeologically correct architectural setting.

The canvas reflects his familiarity with the paintings of the great masters of the past, the lessons absorbed from his Viennese mentors, as well as the Realists of the French School. The bright natural light and broad application of pigment intimate his cognizance and understanding of the experimentation of more recent, progressive French painters. Unexpectedly but effectively, Jovanović applies the characteristic minute detailing of his Orientalist genre

<sup>20</sup> Radmila Antić, *Paja Jovanović* (Belgrade: Muzej Grada, 1970), 10.

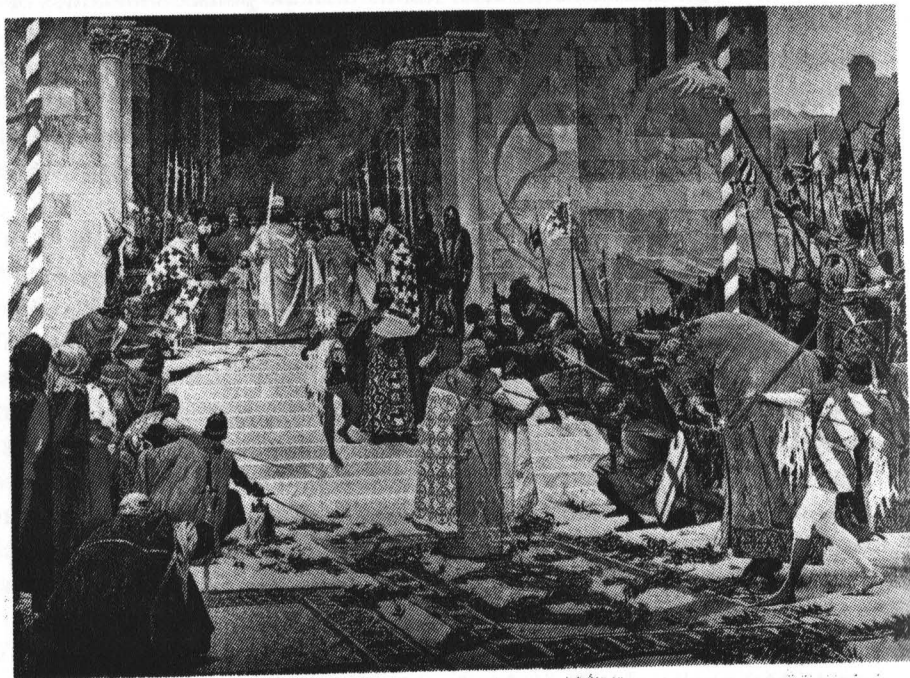
<sup>21</sup> The subject has also been identified as the coronation of Czar Dušan.



scenes without diverting the viewer from the historical significance of the subject.

On one level it is a vivid record of history. Yet it is also a patriotic declaration. Jovanović was both reminding his countrymen of this momentous event of the fourteenth century and alerting foreign audiences to its meaning, the presentation of a code of laws for the conduct of a civilized, orderly society, unsurpassed in its comprehensiveness until the issuance of the Napoleonic Code in the nineteenth century. For Serbian audiences it was additional testimony to the past greatness and promise of the future success of a free and modern Serbia.

With the paintings of Jovanović at the end of the nineteenth-century, Serbian art came full circle, achieving technical equality with its western counterparts, while providing a singular and powerful national expression.



Paja Jovanović. *The Proclamation of Czar Dušan's Code of Laws*, 1900

## The Silencing of the Muse: The World War I Exodus and Its Legacy in Serbian Cultural History

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In the summer of 1914, shortly after the declaration of World War I, a general evacuation of all important Serbian military and governmental institutions took place. Nearly all editorial offices of the official press, daily newspapers, and professional publications followed the exodus, and by the end of July most of these institutions were centered in Niš. This evacuation was followed by the migration to Niš of large portions of the population of Belgrade and other Serbian regions.<sup>1</sup>

During the first two years of World War I, around twenty different journals and dailies were published in Niš. Niš was not without a literary and publishing tradition. At the beginning of 1900, the journal *Gradina* had started to appear in Niš. The journal was produced by an editorial board consisting mostly of high school teachers. Soon *Gradina* managed to attract a number of prominent contributors such as the writers Aleksa Šantić, Svetozar Ćorović, Jelena Dimitrijević, and Borisav Stanković, among others. Stanković published the first version of his well-known novel *Nečista krv* (*Tainted Blood*) in *Gradina*.<sup>2</sup>

The journal *Delo* was among the periodicals whose editorial office was moved to Niš. *Delo* was described in its masthead as the *Journal for Science, Literature, and Social Life*. The editors were Dr. Dragoljub Pavlović and Dr. Lazar Marković, and the journal was printed by the State Press of the Kingdom of Serbia. The State Press was also relocated from Belgrade to Niš. In May of 1915, the journal published a letter written by M. Jorge, a professor at the University of Bucharest. Jorge confirmed that he had received two issues of the journal *Delo* and that he was impressed by the content and lay-out of the journal, particularly since it was published under difficult circumstances:

<sup>1</sup> Vera Cenić, *Časopisi u Južnoj Srbiji na raskršnici XIX i XX stoleća* (Vranje: Narodni Muzej, Posebna izdanja No. 7, 1982), 213.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.



I have received two issues of your beautiful journal. The journal appeared regularly with a carefully selected content, and thus provided further evidence of the quiet energy that you Serbs bring in all aspects of your political life: to fight well and to publish good journals. In the meantime you are facing new battles, in which you are again going to fight with remarkable valor.<sup>3</sup>

The official daily paper of the Royal Kingdom *Srpske novine* (Serbian Newspaper) was also published in Niš. The editor of the paper was Professor Vlada T. Spasojević. In February 1915, *Srpske novine* published the Serbian government's decree on the dismissal of all school classes while the schools were adapted to serve as shelters and hospitals. The teachers were asked to remain at the same location and "administer Samaritan's duties," if not already drafted by the military establishment. Soon enough, the paper started printing long lists of soldiers killed in action.<sup>4</sup>

After the difficult retreat of the Serbian army and parts of the Serbian population over the mountains of Albania, a number of new publishing centers were established in Greece. In Thessalonika several printing companies sprang up, including *Srpska knjižara*, *Velika Srbija*, and *Mlada Srbija*. The island of Corfu became the seat of the State Press of the Kingdom of Serbia. In February 1916, the newspaper *Napred* (Forward) was founded in Bizerte in northern Africa. *Napred* continued to publish its valuable reports during the war years.

One of the important events of cultural life in exile was the renewed publication of *Srpske novine*. The first issue appeared on 7 April 1916 at Corfu, and the second issue introduced a weekly supplement, *Zabavnik* (Magazine). Branko Lazarević, the literary critic and former disciple of Bogdan Popović, was called to serve as the editor in chief. In his first editorial, Lazarević reminded the readers that more than 100 years ago, in 1813, the daily paper *Novine serbske* had its illustrious beginning in Vienna. Then, too, the publication of this exceptional paper took place in a foreign city, far from the borders of Serbia; in 1815, the editors introduced a weekly magazine—*Zabavnik*.

It seemed as if history were repeating itself, and in 1916 the renewed edition of *Srpske novine* appeared again far away from Serbia, this time on the island of Corfu. The editorial office soon became the meeting place of writers and artists. Lazarević stressed that the editors strove to open the pages of their newspaper to all wishing to contribute. He further noted, in the same editorial, that a relatively small number of writers were present on Corfu. The majority

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 257.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 219.

of the Serbian intelligentsia, politicians, scholars, educators, scientists, and journalists had found refuge in France or Sweden. Many well known personalities became staunch supporters of vital national issues, such as the geographer Jovan Cvijić, literary historian Pavle Popović, Slavacist Aleksandar Belić, ethnographer Tihomir Djordjević, and literary historian Miodrag Ibrovac, among others.

In spite of the difficulties of life in exile, the writers and poets struggled to continue their literary and artistic endeavors. *Srpske novine* and its literary supplement *Zabavnik* published some of their contributions and served as a chronicle of political and social events as well. Lazarević commented upon this situation in his review of a recently published collection of poems by the young poet Milutin Bojić, entitled *Pesme bola i ponosa* (Poems of Suffering and Pride):

Our art is where we are at present. We have lost our territories, but we have not lost our souls... We have been tossed about in a manner that nobody has endured before... We have been dispersed throughout Europe, America, Africa yet we express boldly our artistic thoughts.<sup>5</sup>

Bojić's collection was published in Thessalonika as a unique testimony to the great hardships endured by the Serbian people as a consequence of the invasion of enemy forces and the destruction of the entire land of Serbia. The subsequent retreat over high, snow-covered mountains to Albania and Greece imposed additional hardship.

Recuperating in Thessalonika after the physical and emotional ardors of the retreat, Bojić felt that there was hope of reversing the momentary defeat. With the keen observation of a poet, he proceeded to complete the poems of *Pesme bola i ponosa*. Bojić recorded his reflections on the adversity of the exodus that exacted tremendous sacrifices from the whole nation.

The epic and majestic poem "Plava Grobnica" ("The Blue Grave") became the best known of this collection as a profound homage and a telling requiem for the fallen soldiers. In the aftermath of the retreat, in Greece, Bojić had witnessed the death of many soldiers. Still others died while convalescing on the islands of Corfu and Vido, which unfortunately became known as the "islands of death." The blue waters of the Mediterranean became the eternal resting place for many a young soldier.

With great dignity and empathy for the numerous lost lives, Bojić's poem honored the memory of the brave young men. He decried the many losses by celebrating an imagined requiem in the dead of night at sea. Bojić's verses

<sup>5</sup> Branko Lazarević, "M. Bojić, *Pesme bola i ponosa*," *Zabavnik*, no. 4 (1917): 12.

projected the solemnity of a parting that should not be forgotten by the survivors and the generations to come.

“Plava grobnica”

Stojte galije carske! Spustajte krme moćne,  
gazite tihim hodom!  
Opelo gordo dzim u doba jeze nocne  
nad ovom svetom vodom.

Tu, na dnu gde školjke san umoran hvata  
i na mrtve alge tresetnica pada,  
lezi groblje hrabrih, lezi brat do brata,  
Prometeji nade, apostoli jada.

Zar ne osećate kako more mili  
da ne rusi večni pokoj palih četa? ...

Jer tamo daleko, poprište se žari  
ovom istom krvlju sto ovde pociva:  
ovde iznad oca pokoj gospodari;  
tamo iznad sina povesnica biva.

Zato hoću mira da opelo služim  
bez reči, bez suza i uzdaha mekih,  
da miris tamjana i dah praha združim  
uz tutnjavu muklu doboša dalekih.

Stojte galije carske! U ime svesne pošte  
klizite tihim hodom.  
Opelo držim kakvo ne vide nebo jošte  
nad ovom svetom vodom...<sup>6</sup>

“The Sea Grave”

Hold Imperial galleons! Stay your oars,  
Proceed with calm,  
In these holy waters, I say a proud mass  
In midnight horror.

<sup>6</sup> Vladimir Jovičić, *Srpsko rodoljubivo peništvo* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1976), 449–50.



Dragin Inkiostri. *Remembrance of the Fallen Soldiers in World War I*

Beneath the sea, on sleeping shells  
And weeds which gently fall,  
Lies a grave of heroes, brother next to brother,  
Prometheuses of hope, apostles of tragedy.

Don't you feel how gently the sea swells  
Not to disturb their eternal rest?...

...  
There, far away, the battlefields are flooded  
With the same blood that is at rest here:  
Here peace reigns over the fathers,  
While sons there make history.

That is why I crave peace for this requiem,  
 Without words, tears, or weak sighs,  
 To unite the clouds of incense and gunpowder  
 With the muted rumbling of drums.  
 Hold Imperial galleons! In the name of respect  
 Glide without a sound.  
 I say a requiem like the heavens have yet to hear  
 Over these holy waters.<sup>7</sup>

Bojić's poetry, as well as his earlier dramatic works, left a deep impression on the young composer Miloje Milojević. Milojević, who served as an officer during World War I, had also retreated with the Serbian army, and eventually reached Corfu. While on Corfu, Milojević made sketches for incidental music for Bojić's drama *Kraljeva jesem* (*King's Autumn*). He also finished the symphonic prologue *Danilo i Simonida*, based on the same work by Bojić.

Moreover, Milojević helped to form choral groups and composed appropriate choral compositions such as *Na Vidov dan* (*On Saint Vitus' Day*), *Poruke* (*Messages*), and *Molitva izganjanika* (*The Prayer of Expatriates*).<sup>8</sup> During the same period, Milojević composed the much lauded *Prva Liturgija* (*First Liturgy*). The *First Liturgy* attracted the attention of conductors and singers as well as authorities in the field of church music. Thus, Damaskin Grdanički wrote a review of this work that was published in *Zabavnik* in 1918. Grdanički noted that the *First Liturgy* was published during the war years, in 1916, in a modest lithographic edition of only twenty copies. Grdanički thought that the *First Liturgy* was of great importance for the musical repertoire of the church since it was composed in a new musical style. Milojević introduced in his work secular folk motives transformed to serve a liturgical purpose. Grdanički noted that a similar approach was cultivated in Russian church music by A. G. Grechaninov and S. B. Panchenko:

The *Liturgy* of Mr. Milojević ... is the first serious effort to introduce our secular motifs into religious usage... The psalms *Skaži mi Gospodi* (*Tell me, Lord*) for tenor solo and choir, as well as *Tebe*

<sup>7</sup> Translation by Mihailo Djordjević. Cf.: Mihailo Djordjević, *Serbian Poetry and Milutin Bojić* (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, 1977; distributed by Columbia University Press), 49–51.

<sup>8</sup> Jelena Milojković-Djurić, *Tradition and Avant-Garde: Literature and Art in Serbian Culture, 1900–1918* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1988; distributed by Columbia University Press), 174.

*pojem* (*I Sing Unto You*) were written with an abundance of melodic and harmonic colors. Both songs, especially the first one, with the fugue in the second half, serve as a novel effort to create music for our church. At the same time, the *First Liturgy* was modeled with the musical culture of the West in mind.<sup>9</sup>

Another important musical work made its debut during the same year; the composer Kosta P. Manojlović finished his *Liturgija za muški hor* (*Liturgy for Male Choir*) in the military hospital in Fier, Albania in 1916, while recovering from typhoid fever. He had begun the *Liturgy* soon after the outbreak of World War I, in Kragujevac, where he was assigned to nursing duty. Shortly thereafter, while serving in the hospital in Kragujevac, Manojlović organized a choir with his fellow nurses. The members of the choir took part in funerals, singing beside the freshly dug graves of young men killed in action during the autumn months of 1914. In Kragujevac Manojlović composed the larger part of his *Liturgy*. It is remarkable that Manojlović's *Liturgy*, one of his most accomplished works, was composed during the difficult war years. Manojlović frequently used the polyphonic principle throughout this composition, highlighting a limpid melodic line of individual voices. He also introduced the reading of the scripture by the priest as a new feature that connects the movements of the *Liturgy*.<sup>10</sup>

Manojlović's *Liturgy* was soon recognized as an outstanding work of spiritual music due to the intensity and eloquence of its artistic content. This opinion was corroborated by Miloje Milojević, who stated that it would be hard to find in Serbian church music similar examples of well written polyphonic movements: "The voices have individuality, their own motion, and melodic inflection while merging into a rich and powerful sound."<sup>11</sup>

Manojlović also formed a military choir on the island of Corfu. He was compelled to reconstruct some choral scores from memory, since there was a dearth of musical compositions available. The choir became very proficient and excelled under Manojlović's guidance. Due to its popularity, the choir and its conductor were eventually transferred to Thessalonika in order to entertain larger audiences.

In April 1917, Manojlović was relieved of his military duties and sent to England to complete his musical education. He enrolled at the University of Oxford but decided not to put down his baton. He soon organized a choir con-

<sup>9</sup> Damaskin Grdanički, "Miloje Milojević, Liturgija Sv. Jovana Zlatoustog," *Zabavnik*, no. 9 (1918).

<sup>10</sup> Milojković-Djurić, *Tradition and Avant-Garde*, 175.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 175–76.



sisting of Serbian students who were pursuing their studies in England. The young students and their conductor arranged concerts as a sign of appreciation for the generous help extended to them and their native country. Manojlović gave concerts with his choir in Oxford, London, Reading, and Birmingham.

In order to satisfy the growing demand for the repertoire of choral music, Manojlović prepared a collection of choral compositions entitled *Jugoslovenske narodne pesme (Yugoslav Folk Songs)*. The English musicologist Rosa Newmarch collaborated in the preparation and supplied the English translation of the selected songs. The collection contained forty-three folk songs.<sup>12</sup>

Veselin Čajkanović wrote about the literary and thespian activities that took place in northern Africa, where part of the evacuated Serbian army was stationed. Čajkanović traced the founding of the newspaper *Napred (Forward)*, which appeared in February 1916 in Bizerte. *Napred* was one of the outstanding journalistic efforts begun during the war. It was successful, and by September of 1917, 500 issues had already been published. In order to mark this occasion, the printing house of the *Štamparija Srpski invalidi (Press of Serbian Invalids)* published a keepsake edition titled *Srpstvo u Africi (The Serbs in Africa)*.

Čajkanović noted that literary life in Africa was closely associated with the paper *Napred* and the printing house of Serbian Invalids. Works of prose and poetry written by Serbian writers and poets living in exile had been published in *Napred*. Many war stories, such as "S puškom u ruci" ("With Gun in Hand") by Milorad B. Nedić, and the patriotic poems of Milosav Jelić, Zivojin Devčerski, and Mijusković, had appeared in this newspaper.

In the camp Lasuaz, in the vicinity of Bizerte, the theater Srpsko vojnicko logorasko pozoriste (Serbian Military Camp Theater) was established. It was an open-air theater, modeled after ancient structures, with a seating capacity of 3,000 people. Čajkanović praised the stage curtain as a masterpiece of sorts. The curtain was the work of the painter Josif Car. Car conceived the curtain as a triptych, with the middle panel representing King Peter in Albania in the midst of a winter landscape, the left panel depicting a feeble soldier, and the right panel portraying a recuperating and proud soldier with a flag. Čajkanović thought that this was one of the best military theaters.<sup>13</sup>

Bizerte was also the seat of the newly founded Military Academy, which provided education for the young soldiers recuperating in Africa. The judge

<sup>12</sup> Jelena Milojković-Djurić, "Kosta P. Manojlović u medjurnatnom razvoju muzicke kulture," *U spomen Koste P. Manojlovica* (Belgrade: Fakultet muzicke umetnosti, 1990), 39–43.

<sup>13</sup> Veselin Čajkanović, "Iz Bizerte," *Zabavnik*, no. 15 (1918): 3.

Borislav A. Milojković, who also served during World War I as an officer in the Serbian army, was an instructor at this school.<sup>14</sup>

The growing interest in Serbian culture was reflected not only in the publications of Serbian writers and politicians. Foreign statesmen, historians, writers, and artists started to write about Serbia, and Serbian national and cultural identity.

Thus, the French historian Gabriel Millet published an excellent study, *La Serbie glorieuse*, dealing with old Serbian art. Millet's study was published in the prestigious French art magazine *L'Art et les Artistes*. The writer Todor Manojlović reviewed Millet's study in the journal *Zabavnik*; Manojlović thought that Millet's study was written with high regard for the history of Serbian pictorial art and architecture. Millet started his exposé with the first rulers of the Nemanjić dynasty and their ecclesiastic architectural legacy. In addition, Millet elucidated the building of exceptional churches and monasteries ending with the monuments erected by the last descendants of the royal Hrebljanović family.<sup>15</sup>

In 1916, R. W. Seton-Watson, a professor of history at the University of London, wrote an informative brochure about the plight of the Serbian people during the war. This publication was distributed to 12,000 schools in England. The humanitarian message of this brochure produced great concern, and the English people felt compelled to help the needy in devastated Serbia. Soon enough, the Serbian Relief Fund was started with Professor Seton-Watson at its head. In 1917, Seton-Watson published his book *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans*.<sup>16</sup>

During the war years a number of elementary and high school students were evacuated to France in order to continue their education, which had been interrupted by the outbreak of war. They attended several high schools which had been founded in Bordeaux, Nice, and Bolieux. The composer and folklorist Vladimir R. Djordjević, who had also emigrated to France, was assigned to conduct the newly formed choirs and provide musical instruction to the students. While in France, Djordjević managed to compose a number of musical pieces that were primarily intended as a supplement for concerts given by pupils under his care. Published in France, these compositions must have found popular appeal since several editions appeared in swift succession,

<sup>14</sup> A calling card identified the judge "Borislav A. Miloykovitch" as: *Juge au Trib. 1 Inst. de Schabatz. Instituteur de L'Ecole de Sous-Officiers, Bizerte*. Borislav A. Milojković was my father and his calling card, issued while he was teaching at the Military Academy, is in my possession.

<sup>15</sup> Todor Manojlović, "Naša stara i nova umetnost," *Zabavnik*, no. 15 (1918): 13.

<sup>16</sup> Stanoje Stanojević, *Narodna Enciklopedija* (Belgrade, 1937).

containing some of his previously published musical works. These collections of Djordjević's compositions included: *Trente-cinq Chanson Populaires Serbes pour Piano avec Chant ad Libitum*, *Deux Marches Serbes pour Piano*, and *Trente Dance Serbe pour Piano*. As their titles indicated, these compositions were based on the folk music idiom. The French public evidently appreciated the melodic appeal and beauty of these compositions.<sup>17</sup>

A unique achievement was the comprehensive *Anthology* in two volumes, which was published in Nice in 1917. This superb collection contained selected poems as well as prose works by Serbian poets and writers. Both volumes of the *Anthology* were compiled by Milivoje Pavlović, who taught Serbian students in France. Pavlović was faced with the necessity of supplying the students with textbooks and reading material for the work in Serbian literature. This presented a veritable challenge due to the scarcity of Serbian books abroad. Nevertheless, Pavlović compiled the necessary material and even wrote some of the poems from memory with few or no omissions. In the introduction to the second edition of this *Anthology*, some ten years later, Jaša Prodanović reminded his readers about this exceptional accomplishment:

Both *Anthologies* would have deserved praise even if they were composed in our country in peaceful times, with an abundance of material available to the compiler. And how much greater is their value and usefulness since they were compiled at a time of dreadful uncertainty and foreboding. All this demanded the suppression of fear, the restraint of sorrow and awful thoughts... For such work one needs moral courage, without which it could not have been accomplished.<sup>18</sup>

As the war dragged on, and the days and months became years, some of the poets living in foreign lands turned to the ethos of classical poetry in order to reaffirm the continuity of human life by connecting the past with the present. These poets were searching for the forsaken dignity of human existence, and for an inner harmony that seemed to have been lost.

Todor Manojlović described in his poem "Apolinski odbles" ("Apollonian Reflection") his reasons for directing his attention to the past. The poem was published in the second issue of *Zabavnik* in 1917 in France.

<sup>17</sup> Vladimir R. Djordjević, *Prilozi biografskom recniku srpskih muzicara* (Belgrade: SAN, 1950), 169: 11–12.

<sup>18</sup> Jaša Prodanović, "Pregovor," in *Antologija*, 2nd ed. (Belgrade: Geca Kon, 1927), vii.

### *Apolinski odbles*

U trenutnom zatišju  
 Divljeg urnebes  
 Slušaj, uhvati  
 Mudrim i oštrim  
 Sluhom daleki i tanki glas  
 Minule carobno-slatke radosti  
 Što ljupko i sumorno  
 Kao zalutala  
 Ptica selica  
 Starom gnezdu hoće da se vrati  
 Srcu tvom...  
 Usled mahnite rike  
 Svirepih truba  
 Slušaj—i sećaj se da nekad pevasko  
 Te zanose, ta prividjenja  
 U snažnim, zvonkim, svetlim ritmovima  
 Da obnoviš taj sjaj:  
 Da nasilno presečeš  
 Današnju mutnu žalopojku  
 Da glomazni crni oblak jada  
 Munjevito prorešetaš  
 Zaslepljivo sjajnim  
 Sunčanim zracima  
 Jedne drevne i nove  
 Neslućene pesme.

### *Apollonian Reflection*

In the momentary calm  
 Of the wild uproar  
 Listen, and capture  
 Within the wise and keen  
 Hearing the distant little voice  
 Of the enchanting past—sweet joy  
 That gracefully and melancholy  
 As a lost  
 Migrating bird  
 Wants to return to the old nest  
 Your heart...

Listen and remember that we sang  
 These raptures, these visions  
 In strong and bright rhythms  
 To renew this radiance  
 And forcefully to cut off  
 The present day's gloomy lament  
 To riddle like a lightning  
 The heavy black cloud of sorrow  
 With the dazzling bright  
 Sun rays  
 Of an ancient and new  
 Never heard song.<sup>19</sup>

The poet tried to forget the chaos raging around him. He believed that a recollection of the past and the tranquility of the envisioned moment would invoke the dignity and serenity of the Apollonian cult of Ancient Greece.

Ancient Greece reappeared as a source of inspiration to the poet Milos Crnjanski, who was drafted to serve as an officer in the Austrian army. In the turmoil of war, Crnjanski started to write poems that he perceived as commentaries on the ancient Greek *Odyssey*. Crnjanski published his poems in the journal *Savremenik* (*The Contemporary*) under his full name, displaying thus a resolute and fearless disposition. According to his testimony, the innermost creed that guided the writing and publication of these poems was patriotic, political, and anarchic.

Crnjanski considered the *Odyssey* to be the greatest poem of mankind. He retained this high opinion of the *Odyssey* all of his life. Equally interesting is the fact that Crnjanski's poems, inspired by the *Odyssey*, were read not only during World War I but have continued to attract new readership throughout the years. Crnjanski contemplated the fact that these poems became current and were read often during World War II:

The Trojan and Mycenaean allusions in these verses were intentional. The poet considered the *Odyssey* the greatest poem of mankind, and the return from war as the saddest experience of any man. Although his own songs lag behind these monumental creations in verse, this feeling was their main content. During the war, with the limited number of readers around the journal *Savremenik*, these poems remained a literary episode. After the war in Belgrade, they resounded as a bomb. However, these poems became dreadfully up-to-date only after the

<sup>19</sup> Translated by Jelena Milojković-Djurić.

last war, without any merit of the poet. There lies their mysterious fate.<sup>20</sup>

The "mysterious fate" of the lasting appeal of Crnjanski's verses was most definitely the merit of the poet. The reading public felt his keen ability to understand and project human emotions with great truthfulness. Crnjanski's poetic legacy remained alive and timely. In retrospect, some eight years after the end of World War I, Crnjanski mentioned, in a conversation with Branimir Ćosić, that his maturing as a poet occurred shortly before and during the war:

I was formed during the last year before the war and during the war. In the prison, and on the battlefield, as a simple Austrian soldier, I suffered, became sick, ran away and attacked... Thus, I cannot and do not want to forget the war. During those five years, I wrote the *Mask*, the *Diary about Čarnojević*, and my poems... In the great chaos of World War I, I became firm in my sorrows, melancholy, and gloomy feeling of solitude. Not even the joy after the war could change me.<sup>21</sup>

In Geneva, during World War I, the Cultural Society *Prosveta*, under the tutelage of Pero Slepcević, started a series of books bearing the same title. In addition, the Society published its *Almanah* (*Almanac*) and arranged about ten conferences dedicated to the Yugoslav question. Slepcević had already worked before the War for a number of years fostering the many worthwhile activities of *Prosveta*, which had been founded in Sarajevo in 1902. He also established cultural ties with emigrants in America. He was instrumental in the foundation of an endowment for the support of refugees from Bosnia and Hercegovina.

In Geneva, an interesting exhibit took place sponsored by the prestigious L'Ecole des Beaux Arts and a group of prominent writers. Todor Manojlović reported that this exhibit was arranged in order to present up-and-coming artists and general artistic development among the South Slavs. Similar exhibits had previously been held in London, Rome, and Lyons. Manojlović listed the artists who participated in the exhibit in Geneva in June 1918: Nikola Bešević, Milan Milovanović, Joza Kljaković, Branimir Petrović, Petar Poček, and Mirko Rački. Manojlović singled out the paintings by Rački since he believed that Rački's paintings depicted "the aspirations for stylistic simplicity and harmony, the suppression of decorative qualities for a stronger and

<sup>20</sup> Miloš Crnjanski, *Itaka i komentari* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1959), 9–10.

<sup>21</sup> Branko Ćosić, *Deset pisaca, deset razgovora* (Belgrade: Geca Kon, 1931), 87.



truthful expression of feeling and spirituality." Racki exhibited *Sejaci* (*Men Sowing*), *Majka Jugovica* (*The Jugović's Mother*), and *Devojčica* (*Little Girl*). From his monumental compositions Rački presented *Kneževa večera* (*The Prince's Supper*). The paintings of Jozo Kljaković left an uneven impression on Manojlović. Kljaković presented a *Portrait of Karadjordje, Vila Ravijojla* (*The Fairy Ravijojla*) and some illustrations and drawings prepared for the Almanac of the Prosveta Society in Geneva. The paintings of Nikola Besević were marked by clarity and freshness, while Branimir Petrović presented himself as a lucid impressionist with his painting of *Pastirče* (*The Little Shepherd*).

In 1918, the French Academy published Petar Petrović-Njegoš's translation of *Gorski vijenac* (*Mountain Wreath*). The translator was Divna Veković and the preface was written by the French poet and novelist Henri de Regnier. This book was duly reviewed by Dragomir Kostić, and his review was published in *Zabavnik*. The review presented a very detailed comparison of the French translation with the original Serbian text. Kostić mentioned that an English translation of this outstanding work by Njegoš was under preparation.<sup>22</sup>

The poet Todor Manojlović wrote verses that were often published in *Zabavnik*; he also reviewed, as a well-versed critic, fine arts exhibits. In addition, Manojlović wrote an excellent study about the composer Claude Debussy, revealing himself to be a connoisseur of musical art and in particular the musical contribution of Claude Debussy. This fact was even more remarkable considering that Debussy opened a new page in the development of French, and equally European music.<sup>23</sup>

The occasion for the writing of this study was the news of the death of Claude Debussy. Within a few weeks, the Swiss painter Ferdinand Hodler died as well. Manojlović recorded the passing away of these two artists as a loss for the whole of humankind.

Manojlović quoted the following words of Arthur Rimbaud to sum up the essence of Debussy's music: "Je notais l'inexprimable, je fixais des vertiges" (I recorded the inexpressible, defined the vertigo). As a man of his time, Debussy appreciated the novel beauty of the verses of Charles Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine and Stéphane Mallarmé. Debussy disputed the authority of German and Italian music and found his own stronghold in the seemingly forgotten music of Rameau.

<sup>22</sup> *Zabavnik*, nos.13–14 (1918): 17–18.

<sup>23</sup> Todor Manojlović, "Klod Debisi, 1862–1918; Ferdinand Hodler, 1853–1918," *Zabavnik*, no.14 (1918): 19–21.

Debussy's travel to Moscow and his acquaintance with the music of Musorgsky was also very important in the shaping of his own musical language. Debussy started composing at a very young age and his compositions astonished and even overwhelmed his teachers. Manojlović noted that this was why Debussy soon became known as a "revolutionary" and a "destroyer of the most basic laws of music." Occasionally, Debussy's music found approval, although there were more critics with negative comments:

The conservative majority attacked him with fanatic vehemence and bitterness, calling him "barbarian" and "decadent" ... these are the usual titles that ... the "intelligent" public bestowed upon future idols.<sup>24</sup>

Debussy often found inspiration in French poetry; he composed Verlaine's *Ariettes Oubliées* and *Fêtes Galantes*. He also composed *Five Poems* by Baudelaire. The musical expression of these songs Manojlović described freely, in a poetic manner, yet truthfully, as much as it was possible to explain the music verbally. Manojlović depicted Debussy's music as "translucent like mother of pearl, seemingly very lightly sketched ... sounds as conceived in a dream." Furthermore, Manojlović evaluated Debussy's piano pieces *Preludes*, *Images*, *Estampes*, *Arabesques*, *Dance* as examples of inspired lyrical music. In Debussy's orchestral compositions, Manojlović pointed out the delicacy of the orchestration and the clever use of distinctive instrumental timbre. All these qualities were present in Debussy's *Prelude pour l'Après-Midi d'un Faune*.

Debussy had great difficulties in finding an appropriate libretto since he wanted to avoid any artificiality of theatrical effects. Finally, he chose the drama *Pelleas et Melisande* by Maurice Maeterlinck for the libretto of his opera. The opera, bearing the same name, was completed in 1902. Manojlović rightly discerned that the musical language of this opera greatly differed from the German or Italian style: there was no trace of declamation or *bell canto*:

*Pelleas et Melisande* (1902) is the first French opera that differs from German or Italian styl ... The dramatization is reduced to a simple, naive expression, to -portraying the finest spiritual emotions, with the means of almost whispering sonorities that tenderly and softly, like a silken veil, follow the action and the words of the singers.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

Manojlović mentioned the symphony *La Mer* among Debussy's last works. This work once again showed the freshness of his invention and richness of orchestration. *Sonata et Trio* contained classical clarity of expression and was the last larger work of this distinguished French master. *Sonata et Trio* became his proverbial swan song.<sup>26</sup>

In the musicological literature about Debussy it would be difficult to find a study as well written and with as great a command of knowledge of Debussy's contribution. Manojlović presented Debussy within the tradition of French music while pointing to the new qualities of his musical language. Debussy's innovations left a mark on the general development of contemporary music.

Among many remarkable studies pointing to the erudition and talent of the collaborators of *Zabavnik*, the editor Branko Lazarević's study on Serbian folk poetry should be singled out. Lazarević examined the influence of Serbian folk poetry on literary works. It was Lazarević's opinion that Serbian folk poetry transcended the limitations of national boundaries in the manner akin to Homeric legacy. Serbian poetry pertained to the essence of human experience although associated in time and space with indigenous names, places, and events.

Our folk poetry escapes the confinement of a limited circle. It is, generally speaking, universally human... It has succeeded in producing universal and true belief, universal and true love, the universal and true hero.<sup>27</sup>

These were the reasons why Serbian folk poetry was translated into many foreign languages. Serbian folk poetry was translated by the English writers Walter Scott and Robert Browning, and by the French writers Charles Nodier and Prosper Merimee. Merimee even attempted to imitate some Serbian poems. The Polish writer Adam Mickiewicz introduced a course on Serbian poetry at the College de France in Paris. In Germany, Therese von Jakob and Johann Wolfgang Goethe translated a selection of Serbian folk epics.<sup>28</sup>

Lazarević stated that folk poetry influenced many Serbian writers. It would suffice to remember the poetic works starting with Petar Petrović-Njegoš, Branko Radičević, Jovan Jovanović-Zmaj, Jovan Dučić, and Milan Rakić, among others.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>27</sup> Branko Lazarević, "O nacionalnom tlu u umetnosti," *Zabavnik*, no. 10 (1918): 14.

<sup>28</sup> Jelena Milojković-Djurić, *Tradition and Avant-Garde*, 188–89.

<sup>29</sup> Lazarević, "O nacionalnom tlu u umetnosti," 14.

Radičević, and especially Njegoš, came close to the universally understood humanity expressed in folk epics. Ivo Vojnović grasped altogether the spiritualism of Jugović's mother. Many other writers and poets thought that it would be enough to quote the verses, proverbs, and metaphors in order for their work to achieve a recognizable national flavor. At the time of great popularity of folk poetry numerous writers tried to imitate it in a superficial manner. Skerlić criticized the new works that emulated folk poetry, and he even assumed a negative attitude about folk poetry in general. In time, Skerlić changed his opinion about folk poetry and realized its true value.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, Ducić and Rakić succeeded in producing splendid sonnets that were permeated with a new feeling of refinement and misgiving that were part of the spirit of the time. Their poetry, according to Lazarević, was removed from the aura of the folk epics. The Kosovo Field in Rakić's poem *Na Gazi Mestanu* (*At Gazi Mestan*) was not similar to the one described in the folk epics as both earthy and celestial.<sup>31</sup>

Another frequent contributor to *Zabavnik* was the poet Jovan Dučić. During the war years, Dučić continued to write the poems for the cycle *Carski soneti* (*Tsar's Sonnets*) and *Plave legende* (*The Blue Legends*). Dučić felt compelled to evoke the once glorious past, and thus also to reaffirm the continuity of an established society on the native ground.

The poetic offerings published in *Zabavnik* included the poems by Svetislav Stefanović. Stefanović was a great admirer of Ducić and his poetic output showed similarity with Dučić's style. The poets Dragoljub Filipović and Milosav Jelić continued writing poems that presented the reaffirmation of the patriotic poetry. The frequent source of inspiration for both poets were the lyric and epic folk poems.

The last issue of *Zabavnik* appeared on 18 October 1918; the editor Branko Lazarević and his collaborators left a unique testimony of human creativity, dignity and perseverance during the turmoil of World War I. In the midst of exile, on foreign soil, the pages of *Zabavnik* vividly preserved the days of uncertainty and suffering. Most importantly, the contributions written for *Zabavnik* pointed to the efforts of the resistance of spiritual annihilation.

The war and the exodus from Serbia of the army and civilians brought a seeming standstill to creative thought. And yet, in exile, or even on the battlefield, reading and, occasionally, writing did not stop altogether. It was recorded that the *Anthology of the Newer Serbian Lyrics* by Bogdan Popović was the most widely read book during the War.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

It is noteworthy that the poetry became the preferred genre of reading and writing. Poets, in soldier's uniforms, and their readers, soldiers themselves, found solace and strength in poetic verses. Poetry, generally regarded as an esoteric art form, seemed powerful enough to deflect the cruelty of everyday sufferings into bearable experiences. Milos Crnjanski knew the depth of despair. He felt lost, "pale and alone" without friends. In his poem *Prolog (Prologue)* he reassured his fellow soldiers that the acceptance of sorrow would set them free.

Ja pevam tužnima:  
da tuga od svega oslobodjava.<sup>32</sup>

I sing to the sad:  
that grief liberates from it all.

As the war years continued to drain the life blood of the Serbian nation and take a tremendous toll in human sacrifices, numerous testimonies of un-failing resolve were witnessed. The ensuing literary, musical, and pictorial works stimulated the will to overcome suffering, and ultimate annihilation. These difficult years, described by the young poet Milutin Bojić as the years of *Suffering and Pride*, have prompted manifold and noble responses. The writers and poets have left a record of humanistic concerns for the preservation of life, dignity, and historic consciousness upholding the unceasing belief in a better tomorrow.

<sup>32</sup> Crnjanski, *Itaka i komentari*, 9–10.

## Four Short Pieces on Time and Love

Kosara M. Gavrilovich

### I

In the beginning there was love.  
In the beginning there was only love.  
We did not know, we only recognized  
each other, understood, accepted and cherished  
each other.

Then we wrote letters of love,  
and we sang songs of love,  
and we made love,  
and we were rich.

Then followed a lifetime of words,  
Twelve months of words,  
of wing'd, glorious words,  
probing, exploring words,  
revealing, all-giving words.  
And then we knew.  
We were in such a rush to know  
that we threw  
open the windows of our souls  
and out of them flew  
acceptance and understanding,  
like a brace of birds released from their cage,  
in a flash, without a trace,  
flying, or dying, I do not know which.  
We no longer understood.  
Not immediately, not all at once  
of course. After all  
we spoke the same language.  
When you said 'I'



I knew it meant you.  
I was you. And you?

Then we wrote love letters,  
and sang love songs  
which was not the same.

Then came the moment  
When we knew that we spoke in tongues  
And needed interpreters  
To tell us not only what we heard  
But also what we said,  
For **all** understanding had fled  
In the torrent of the words,  
and the words themselves were washed clean  
of all meaning.

## II

I need an interpreter now.  
I read your letters now  
And must know how soon is 'soon'  
And when is 'often'.  
In the glossary of lovers, what does 'in time' mean?  
And where are you in the meantime?  
And what do I do in the meantime?  
And what is 'time'?

What does time do? What does it do to us?  
Does time crawl, or stall, or fly?  
Does it stand still, or lie heavy on us?  
Does it lie to us?  
Does it ooze? Like glue,  
binding minute to minute and hour to hour  
like bricks cemented to more bricks,  
measured by the ticks and tocks  
of the clocks of our hearts,  
till they have built us a prison tower?  
Does time rush like blood from a severed artery,  
gushing and spurting in one splendid arc,  
not hurting, just amazing till it becomes

a glazed pool, oozing again, dark,  
darkening still,  
like flocks of tiny blackbirds  
settled on a sage-covered hill,  
like a handful of senseless words  
scattered at random on a page  
by a wanton scribe's hand,  
daring one to understand?

Was that 'time'?

## III

Old lovers, young lovers, no lovers have time.  
We have no time. Or better still,  
We do. Time is ours to have and to hold  
As we hold the gold of the daffodil  
In our eye, or the water in our cupped hands,  
The wind in our hair, the word in our ear,  
The warmth of the sun and the chill of the shade  
On our skin, the thinness of a blade  
Of grass between our lips,  
A kiss on our fingertips,  
The fragrance of thyme, the cadence of the sea,  
And the breeze.  
All these and many, many more are ours  
Like the sands in the hour-glass,  
Like all things that pass, and flee, and fade.  
Like time...

*Time, my fair lady, time doth run apace.  
Alack, not time, 'tis we are in the race  
And soon shall fall beneath the falling blade  
And the very love which we have made famous  
Will leave not a trace when Death comes to claim us.*

## IV

Their blade fell a long time ago.  
Their blade of grass is now dust.  
It is our turn to go now, and go we must.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Miro Vuksanović. *Semolj gora*. Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 2001, 430 pages.**

Reviewed by *Vasa D. Mihailovich*

Subtitled "Azbučni roman u 878 priča o riječima" (Alphabet Novel in 878 Stories about Words), this highly interesting novel is composed of brief passages, each titled with vernacular expressions that move the plot along. The author claims to have heard these expressions among the people in his native Montenegro. Arranged alphabetically, they resemble a dictionary. In order to give the flavor of the book, it suffices to list only the entries under the letter A: "avaš, avertiti se, avetinja, avijest, avrik, aka, aluga, antrešelj, arlak, asulan, atula, ačiti se, ačkati, adžgam." (I must admit that I have heard of and know the meaning of only two of these words.) Some letters are represented by nearly eighty expressions. Sometimes descriptive, sometimes in dialogue form, sometimes veritable poems in prose, they are skillfully interwoven into the plot of the novel. Perhaps the greatest merit of this novel lies in its lexical wealth. It is amazing that such wealth exists among seemingly uneducated people, in whom natural intelligence and life experience make up for the lack of formal education. The compilers of the *Serbian Dictionary*, a work in progress since the 1880s, will have a field day with this work. This experimental work is considered by many critics to be a novel, but there are also those who do not agree. Be that as it may, the attraction of the book lies in the power of words coined by common folk in an area that is famous for word-makers, from Njegoš (and before) to Matija Bećković (and after). Thus, the word becomes the protagonist of the novel, carrying the load on its powerful shoulders, and the mythical *Semolj gora* epitomizes that creative power.

Born in Krnja Jela, Montenegro, in 1944, Miro Vuksanović attended schools in his hometown, Nikšić, and Belgrade, where he graduated from the university in literature. He is now the director of the Library of Matica srpska in Novi Sad. His books (several novels, poetry and story collections) have received many awards. Coming from a province ("iz unutrašnjosti"), he is proud of his achievements, affirming the fact that the "provincial" (not a derogatory term) writer can compete with those in the capital Belgrade. More-

over, being a Montenegrin, Vuksanović affirms that he, Njegoš, and Bećković all write in the same language, as embodied in *Semolj gora* as an inexhaustible source of the Serbian lexicon. However, a patient and curious reader will find in *Semolj gora* much beyond the unusual words; with careful attention, a wealth of life experience that can be expressed only by a true artist will reveal itself.

University of North Carolina

**Dorđe Nikolić. *Srpska glava*. Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 2000, 145 pages; *Dopis*. Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 2001, 114 pages; *Nebeski vrt: Haiku i tanka*. Belgrade: Prosveta, 2001, 111 pages.**

Reviewed by Vasa D. Mihailovich

Dorđe Nikolić published two books of poetry many years ago, along with a book of his poems translated by Charles Simic, and is now reappearing with three more books published in his native land practically in one year. This belated homecoming is fully deserved, for he is one of the best Serbian poets in the Diaspora and deserves to be heard in his homeland. The three books under review contain old and new poems that now form new entities. *Srpska glava* (*Serbian Head*) is an interesting attempt to summarize the traits of the Serbian character in one poetry collection—admittedly a difficult task worthy of the comprehensive studies of anthropologists, historians, and political scientists. Nikolić succeeds in boiling down the famous and, more often, infamous Serbian characteristics. He praises Serbs for their perseverance in defending their home and land, their hospitality, and the sincerity of their emotions. However, in no uncertain poetic terms, he also castigates their disunity, distrust, envy of one another, lack of rationality in fateful hours, and their predilection for acting first and thinking later, among other things. Nikolić sounds sometimes too critical of his countrymen; after all, there are Serbs who do not display such destructive traits. Yet, considering the tragic turns of Serbian history on many occasions, it is hard not to agree with his criticism. These poems are not likely to be found in anthologies because of their pessimistic bend, but they will compel many a Serb to think about his lot throughout history.

*Dopis* (*Added Writing*) represents a selection of previously published poems in combination with new ones. There is a robust, hard-shelled, almost defiant quality in these poems, yet they are free of ostentatiousness. In his usually short poems, Nikolić sings of woodcutting (“We were greeted by frozen birds / And by a sun smaller than a nest / An ax next to a fallen sapling / Like

an awakened / Snake”), or of a street sweeper (“They are carrying him for the last time / Through the street / Covered with fallen leaves”), or of a distant past (“Bloody tender mothers-battles / Gave birth to dead soldiers / History wanted to give birth / To the homeland in a lump of ashes / O even the dawns were bearing / The dead days then”). There is an inseparable bond between the poet and nature. There are touching testimonials of respect for his ancestors and love for his beloved Serbia, as well as poems dedicated to other great poets: Jovan Dučić, Marina Tsvetaeva, Boris Pasternak, and Andrei Voznesenskii. Above all, Nikolić’s poems express deep existential concerns and a unique approach to life and destiny (“O how we passed by each other / You and I, I and this world / We not only never met / We have been parting forever”). Nikolić also uses syntactic bravados and boldly coined words that are sometimes well-nigh untranslatable, such as *ročd*, *lut*, *vrtlar*, *zablačje*, *ruj*, *srm*... In this sense, there are echoes of Momčilo Nastasijević, Vasko Popa and other great magicians of the poetic word.

*Nebeski vrt: Haiku i tanka* (*Heavenly Garden: Haiku and Tanka*) is altogether a different kind of poetry. As the title states, here are poems in Japanese style, haiku and tanka. These two poetic forms were first published in Serbian with Miloš Crnjanski’s translations of Japanese poems in the twenties. It has become a popular genre in contemporary Serbian literature; many poets are writing haiku and publishing their work in several exclusively haiku periodicals. Nikolić wrote haiku poems in the seventies and has added some recently. His haiku poems faithfully follow the traditional prosody of three verses containing five-seven-five syllables. However, he shuns other haiku regulations such as no reflexiveness, irony, allusions, metaphors—only a direct reaction to nature stimuli, in a highly artistic manner, to be sure. Above all, no rhyming. All these unequivocally taboo features are present in Nikolić’s poems, to their noticeable benefit. It is as though Nikolić is making an effort to form and contribute the Serbian brand of haiku, in which he succeeds handsomely. One can cite many of these poems, but several suffice: “Even when it goes down / The sun goes toward / Some other light.” “A house is abloom / When honey is extracted / Scents of the summer.” “Swallows migrate / To bring a little of the south / Upon returning.” “There is light, / Which I see only / In your eyes.” “From the darkness of the shrubs / Fly out night fireflies / The starry silver.” Nikolić has written some of the best haiku poems in Serbian literature, even if digressing somewhat from the haiku tradition.

Let us hope that he will not wait several decades for his new books of poetry.

University of North Carolina



**Nenad Teofilović. *Klopka*. Belgrade: Author, 2002, 195 pages.**

Reviewed by *Nadežda Obradović*

If the title "Crime and Punishment" were not worldwide known, it would be suitable for Nenad Teofilović's novel *Klopka* (*The Trap*). The action takes place in Belgrade in 1993, the year when the war was going on in Bosnia, foreign sanctions were imposed upon Serbia, inflation was so enormous that one's monthly salary, collected in the morning, would not buy anything the same afternoon, and stores were empty anyway. In such hard times the protagonist Milan, a civil engineer, is troubled by the fact that his five-year-old son is very ill and must travel abroad in order to undergo an operation, for an inconceivable sum of money. Desperate, he puts an ad in the newspaper in the form of a plea, expecting without hope that some sensitive rich person would help him. He gets a strange offer: to kill an unknown man for ten thousand marks, i.e., to exchange his son's life for the man's life. Though hesitantly, Milan accepts and commits the murder. Afterwards his life becomes a nightmare. Hallucinations, doubts, self-accusations, rationalization, and suspicions haunt him day and night despite his state, drunken or sober, and all the more so since the remaining money of the offer is not paid. Milan manages to trace the man who ordered the murder and, although the man is willing to pay the rest of the money, the protagonist kills him. But it is too late. His son dies, his wife leaves him. Without hope and disoriented, Milan goes to the police and confesses both crimes, seeing a kind of salvation in spending the rest of his life in jail. But he is not believed. It turns out that the corrupt police are testing his abilities and, since he has committed two crimes in a most efficient manner, they want him to work for them. But, as Milan says, "I am not interested in money, I say to him. He is confused. What are you interested in? Nothing. At long last, I too feel powerful over somebody. But the price is too high. I had to lose everything, to forego any desire, even existence itself, in order to gain power over those who till yesterday held me in their hands."

Most of the text is about the protagonist's musings, inner monologues, his fears, remorse, blame, well-founded suspicion that he is being followed. For days, weeks, months, Milan does not do anything (he was jobless anyway); he only thinks, reacts in his imagination to his deeds, wonders whether he has really committed such abominable, unreasonable crimes. During his sleepless nights he recalls his entire life, from childhood to adulthood, including his married life and the happiness he experienced with his then-healthy son and his beloved wife. He thinks that he would gladly give all his useless money, now worthless paper, for one second of that former bliss. In the insane asylum where he ends up, he keeps quiet, without communicating with anybody.

Teofilović shows himself to be an excellent stylist. An electrical engineer now working in Finland, he has published a collection of short stories, *Snovi i senke* (*Dreams and Shadows*, 1998), for which he was awarded the *Isidorijana* prize in 2000.

*University of Belgrade*

**Budimir Potočan. *Azbučnik u kamenu. Svedočenje sa vukovarskog fronta o ratu u Slavoniji 1991. godine*. Zemun: Miroslav, 1993, 96 pages.**

Reviewed by *Mirjana N. Matarić*

Budimir Potočan was born in 1952 in Bela Crkva, Vojvodina. He lives and works in Belgrade as a writer and a journalist. He has taught literature and journalism, published poetry, stories, and documentary reports. Among other things, there is one particular reason why lovers of literature should feel grateful to Potočan. In the international weekly issue of the Belgrade daily, *Politika* (June 1991), he wrote about the heroic death of the young Russian colonel Nikolai Raevskii in the Serbo-Turkish war of 1876. His grandfather was the famous general Raevskii who stopped Napoleon at Borodino in 1812. Rayevsky's heroic death moved Lev Tolstói to model Vronskii, Anna Karenina's young and passionate lover, after him. After Anna's tragic suicide, Vronskii volunteered to fight for the freedom of the Serbs, moved by the Pan-Slavic idea. "I am happy to have something to give up my life for, as I am tired of it," says Tolstói's Vronskii-Raevskii. At the spot where Raevskii was killed now stands the Church of the Holy Trinity, built by his aunt, Countess Maria.

Potočan's book, *Azbučnik u kamenu* (*Alphabet in Stone*), is also about life, death, and war. It was written as a testimony from the Vukovar front in Slavonia in 1991. The content lists 182 images of war: short, revealing scenes and testimonies. They are written on two parallel planes: factual, often tragic and gory (that is the journalist reporter) and lyrical, exulting in the beauty of nature and life (that is the poet, humanist, and artist). This is a testimony of the people who turned into the names on stone, villages and towns devastated to the ground, sometimes bare stones.

This book, however, is not only about a war in a particular region; it is also a cry for peace in the name of preservation of humanity, moral values, and dignity of human life, civilization as well as nature. As in Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, the opening tones are dark and foreboding. It starts with Christmas service in the demolished, roofless Vukovar church, "a hatless

place of worship” as the author calls it, which itself is a victim of war, devastated and ravaged, full of civilians and soldiers: “Christmas carols, hymns, chanters, candles, incense and myrrh, everything is here for the Holy Day, but the church itself.” At a time when people all around the world celebrate peace, love, and brotherhood, here “the ground is hard, the sky is high; good and evil are irreconcilably separated by a mere rifle range.”

There are descriptions of soldiers, officers, domestic and foreign reporters; survivors, witnesses, and prisoners. There are documents in the form of diaries found in the pockets of enemy soldiers, proofs of senseless cruelty; bereaved mothers dressed in black, who offer their meager food and ample support to foreign reporters otherwise suspected of espionage. They have no fear; having lost their dearest in this war, what else should they fear?

Through short, poignant passages and impressions, the author notices all and absorbs the whole panorama of human suffering. The cold rain, the leaden skies, houses without roofs, doors or windows, empty and devastated; a kindergarten with the mutilated bodies of eight children, and a white dog left behind barking in anguish. The unharvested fields and vineyards turned into mine fields, sniper fire, shelling. Along the roads carcasses of domestic animals swollen and rotting. In the village of Divoš, a man’s corpse seated next to the wall in bloody grass, mutilated, three fingers cut off, so he could not cross himself in prayer. An axe lying next to his cut-off head.

Unexpectedly, in the midst of devastation, a white stallion, like a symbol of continuity of life and beauty, a reminder of the eternal. During lulls in fighting, young men talk about women, joke, and share a cigarette. Peace and war, life and death, love and hate, courage and cowardice, all intertwined in the lesson history teaches: whatever is not learned the first time will be repeated.

**Jasmina Mihajlović. *Privatna kolekcija*. Belgrade: Dereta, 2000, 257 pages.**

Reviewed by *Nadežda Obradović*

What characterizes the eight stories of *Privatna kolekcija* (*The Private Collection*) is the fact that they are all based on personal experience and written in the first-person singular. The stories are permeated by the author’s deep belief in premonitions, dreams, forebodings, apprehensions. She is, in her own opinion, a clairvoyant. The person with whom she shares these experi-

ences is her husband, the famous Serbian writer Milorad Pavić, referred to in the book as M.

The book opens with the story “The Autobiography of Smells.” Smells are for the author the key to memories and reminiscences. She remembers the odors and fragrances of her childhood, her adult life, her motherhood. They are related to the events which she lived through. Often a haphazard smell or stench triggers a series of remembrances.

The story “The Unbaptized Place” describes the writer’s search for Lenka Dunderski’s place of residence. Dunderski’s frustrated love and unhappy relationship with the prominent Serbian poet Laza Kostić inspired Kostić to write one of the most beautiful Serbian love poems, “Santa Maria della Salute.” The narrator identifies with Lenka, seeing a parallel between their lives; both are in love with a much older man, but whereas in Lenka’s case this was a divisive fact leading to her premature death, in the author’s case it is a connecting link. The search for Lenka’s dwelling place is more difficult than expected, with many misleading paths, as if nowadays nobody cares about the fate of these unhappy lovers.

“The Breakfast at ‘Cituras’” is a description of a dramatic day the author and her husband spent on the famous Greek island of Thera. What should have been a peaceful seven-day holiday turned into a nightmare of destructive tremors and earthquakes, forcing them to leave the island less than a day after their arrival.

The longest story, “Russian in Windword,” is written in the form of a letter to a friend. Every step of the author and her husband on a trip to Russia is described: the impressions of Moscow, the city’s huge boulevards, fine restaurants, museums, their search for Bulgakov’s unmarked museum, a visit to Tolstoi’s small Moscow abode, luxurious foreign goods shops, literary evenings, and their journey to Iasnaia Poliana, Tolstoi’s estate, the visits to Chekhov’s museum, and, finally, their main goal—the meeting with all of Tolstoi’s living descendants. They all live in a huge place, visited daily by a multitude of admirers of the world-famous novelist. But at his unmarked grave the same premonition and anxiety overtakes Mihajlović. After a week, the oldest Tolstoi dies, very much like his famous ancestor, while M. is rushed to the hospital.

“Paris, a Deodorant for the Soul” and “L’ete en France” deal with the couple’s visits to various places in France and their long car trip from Switzerland to Paris, with frequent stops. Remarks about museums, restaurants, strange food and a lot of impressions fill the pages of these two stories.

Most of these stories take place in 1997. The latest story, “Where Do We Come from? Who Are We? Where Do We Go?” is set in 1999, on March 24, when the NATO bombardment of Yugoslavia started. Mihajlović describes

her personal feelings, anxieties, consternation, dismay, horror, panic, dread, all of the emotions experienced also by the millions of Serbs and Montenegrins, when depleted uranium bombs were thrown on innocent people: "It is unnecessary to say that I will NEVER forget the deathly fear in the eyes of my ten-year-old son. It is the most terrible thing to see. Not the deathly fear in your own eyes; it cannot be seen there, but it can in the eyes of your child."

The reader is convinced of, and does not doubt for a moment, the book's sincerity and truthfulness, so authentically presented.

*University of Belgrade*

**Vasa D. Mihailović. *Šesta rukovet: pesme u prozi*. Ruma: Srpska knjiga, 2002, 82 pages.**

Reviewed by *Ružica Popovitch*

Of all until now published poems in prose written by Vasa Mihailović, *Šesta rukovet* seems to me the most intimate, and filled with the smallest and the most personal feelings felt by a poet who tells his readers the story of his life. We learn where he came from, where he was forced to live, and where he chose to live; how he fell in love (Ljubavnici / Dva su bora naporedo rasla. / Pre mnogo godina zagrlili su se prvi put / A onda su se pripijali sve tešnje, dok se nisu sasvim izukršitali). We also learn how he arrived in this country; how he was told to start anew (Stvori nešto, reče mu neko, što će razumeti i oni koji ti ne razumeju jezik); how he writes—a whole book of poems in two hours (Napisao je celu knjigu pesama za dva sata); how he sees his friends; how he experiences illness; how he awaits old age (Sedam desetleća otploviše rekomb suđenicom kao kakav šarnobojni san); how he loves his home and his garden, etc. But the poet pours his strongest emotions towards the place where he comes from, which he loves with a love which is different from his love for his wife, friends, or family. In the poem "Svakom svoje," he says: "...Glava i telo su mi ovde, a srce mi je tamo..." In his poem "Putešestvije" he alludes to the famous poem "Sveti Sava" by Vojislav Ilić Mlađi. St. Sava ran away from the court of his father and found his vocation and peace of mind in a monastery. Only here, according to Mihailović, could St. Sava feel fully at home: "Legao je lomnih kostiju na počinak, umirene savesti da je prevaljeni put urodio plodom i da je našao poslednje utočište među svojim."

In earlier poems, Mihailović called this particular place "vilajet."

Mihailović experiences an internal conflict over that place which attracts him more and more; at the same time, he fights a never ending battle with the world to either help his homeland or to leave it alone, and not to bomb "the white city" (Beograd): "...Opet te razaraju, Beli Grade / Rušili su te stari i novi Huni, Otomani i saveznici, i to na dan Vaskresenja Gospodnjeg."

*Šesta rukovet* is a collection of very powerful poetry. We, the poet's compatriots, feel with him his "Žile korena"; however, readers in general will admire the openness and frankness with which he expresses his most intimate feelings. "Šesta rukovet" is the name of a lovely love poem; "Oluje" is another poem full of deeply felt emotions and love.

Mihailović's language is masterfully used in depicting landscapes, autumn leaves, and his friends, among other things ("Beli grad," "Resavska pećina," "Na obali Atlantskog okeana"). It is balanced and imaginative, and fully in tune with the subject matter. One rarely comes across such refined linguistic medium.

As one of many devoted readers of Mihailović's poetry, I believe that in this collection he fully focused on his own life, and revealed a lot about his person. It is this human quality and the poet's visible presence in his poems that make them enduring.

We will have to wait and see how the poet will surprise us in his next collection of poems in prose. As Mihailović says in his poem "Svođenje računa": "Pitaš me gde sam bio i šta sam radio toliko desetleća / Bio sam svugde i nigde, radio svašta i ništa, a na leđima mi veliki džak pun svakojakih drangulija..."

There is no doubt that something will again come out of this "huge sack full of all kinds of things."

*Mount Saint Mary's College*