

Membership in NASSS and Subscription to *Serbian Studies*

The North American Society was founded in 1978 and has published *Serbian Studies* since 1980. It publishes scholarly articles in all aspects of the Serbian cultural heritage, archival documents and source material related to the Serbian immigration to North America.

Serbian Studies is published twice a year and is sent to all members of the Society. Members also receive the *NASSS Newsletter*. Membership, including the subscription to *Serbian Studies* is US \$25.00 per year for regular members and US \$5.00 for students. Subscription without membership is US \$20.00 per year, postage included. Checks should be made payable to NASSS.

Manuscripts for consideration should be submitted on diskettes (IBM compatible, Word Perfect 5.1) with two hard copies included. Notes should be placed at the end of the articles. In general, articles should not exceed 20 double spaced pages, including endnotes and quoted passages. *The Chicago Manual of Style* and Library of Congress transliteration are to be followed. All manuscripts must be in English, properly edited.

Articles submitted, and all correspondence concerning editorial matters should be sent to: Jelisaveta S. Allen, Editor of *Serbian Studies*, Dumbarton Oaks, 1703 32nd Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20007.

Book reviews should be sent to the Book Review Editor, Vasa Mihailovich, 821 Emory Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

All communications regarding membership, subscriptions, back issues and advertising should be addressed to the Treasurer, Nikoleta Ilić, 5301 Westbard Circle, Apt. 416, Bethesda, MD 20816.

The opinions expressed in the articles and book reviews published in *Serbian Studies* are those of the authors and not necessarily of the editors or of the NASSS.

Serbian Studies accepts advertising that is of interest to the membership of the NASSS. Advertising information and rates are available from the Treasurer of the NASSS, Nikoleta Ilić.

Copyright © 1997 by *Serbian Studies*. ISSN 0742-3330

Permission is granted to reprint any article in this issue, provided appropriate credit is given and two copies of the reprinted material are sent to *Serbian Studies*

Composition by MBG Services
Silver Springs, Maryland

SERBIAN STUDIES

JOURNAL OF THE NORTH AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR SERBIAN STUDIES

Vol. 10

1996

No. 2

ARTICLES

History in the Making: Yugoslavia's Disintegration as Reflected in Recent Writings

Dragan Milivojević 107

The Serbian Warrior Myth and Serbia's Liberation, 1804-1815

David MacKenzie 133

Miloš Obilić and the Hero Myth

Thomas A. Emmert 149

Folk Songs and Their Transformations in the Serbian-American Diaspora 1900-1925

Krinka Vidaković-Petrov 164

"Gajret" and the Bosnian Muslim Intelligentsia

Anita Lekić 188

Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich: A Contemporary Orthodox Witness

Rev. Irinej Mirko Dobrijević 198

BOOK REVIEWS

Ratomir Rale Damjanović, Novo Tomić, and Sanja Ćosić, eds.
Serbia, srpski narod, srpska zemlja, srpska duhovnost u delima stranih autora.

Radmila Gorup 210

Miodrag Maticki, ed. *Istorijski roman: Zbornik radova.*

Vasa D. Mihailovich 211

E. D. Goy. *Excursions: Essays on Russian and Serbian Literature.*

Vasa D. Mihailovich 213

Zorka Milich. *A Stranger's Supper—An Oral History of Centenarian Women in Montenegro.*

Branko Mikasinovich 214

Meša Selimović. <i>Death and the Dervish</i> . Bogdan Rakić and Stephen M. Dickery, trans. Dragan Milivojević.	215
--	-----

REVIEWS IN BRIEF (Nadežda Obradović)

Milisa V. Savić. <i>Ujak naše varoši</i>	218
Todor Rosić. <i>Nekršteni dani</i>	218
Aleksandar Jerkov, ed. <i>Izabrane priče beogradske manufakture snova</i>	219

SOURCES AND DOCUMENTS

<i>Hearing on Political Turmoil In Serbia</i>	220
---	-----

HISTORY IN THE MAKING: YUGOSLAVIA'S DISINTEGRATION AS REFLECTED IN RECENT WRITINGS

Dragan Milivojević
University of Oklahoma

There has been a virtual avalanche of literature on Yugoslavia's disintegration from journalists who have covered the war, scholars who have attempted to investigate the causes behind the conflict, fiction writers who have mixed their imaginative interpretation with facts, and even an occasional cleric who has approached the Yugoslavian conflict from a religious viewpoint. It is understandable that their presentation and interpretation of crucial events in the period of 1990–1995 varies, depending not only on the professional stance and angle from which they view the situation on the ground but also on their educational and linguistic backgrounds. Scholars who have mastered Yugoslavian languages and who have done extensive research in the field interpret Yugoslavia's demise differently from journalists, assigned to Yugoslavia on a short notice, who had a crash course on Yugoslavia's history and languages. One of the scholars on Yugoslavia reports that he was called on a Friday afternoon at 5 p.m. by a journalist who was flying to Yugoslavia on Sunday to do a story and needed some background information. These so-called "parachute journalists" were a permanent feature of CNN news with their mispronunciation of Yugoslav names and their confusion of national identities. One of the examples which I witnessed on a CNN broadcast was a "Muslim" mother crying for her dead son in a "Christian" cemetery. Journalists are attracted by "hot" topics which are often conflict-ridden events, such as rape, violence, and murder. History and analysis are subordinate to the immediate present, and being a witness to gruesome events often generate moral outrage.

Peter Maass is a journalist from *The Washington Post* who covered the Bosnian war between 1992 and 1993. The comments made above about "parachute journalism" do not, however, apply to him. He is trying to explore in his book, *Love Thy Neighbor: A Story of War*, "a universal character to war and its companions, cowardice and heroism."¹ He is also

trying to answer "the maddening question 'Why.'" He quotes from Rebecca West's book *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*:

Only part of us is sane: only part of us loves pleasure and the longer day of happiness, wants to live to our nineties and die in peace, in a house that we built, that shall shelter those who come after us. The other half of us is nearly mad. It prefers the disagreeable to the agreeable, loves pain and its darker night despair, and wants to die in a catastrophe that will set back life to its beginnings and leave nothing of our house save its blackened foundations.

West's statement is universal, it applies to all human beings, that is to all nations and nationalities, Croats, Serbs, Montenegrins, Muslim Bosnians, Slovenes, Albanians, Macedonians, and Hungarians who live in what used to be called Yugoslavia. Maass's interpretation is different. He apportions and attributes the first half of this statement exclusively to Bosnian Muslims and the second half almost exclusively to Serbs (Bosnian and Serbian). In this way, he paints a black and white picture of the Bosnian war with hardly any shades. Serbs are violent predators; Muslim Bosnians passive victims. Maass makes a rare excursion into history to illustrate his point with the implication that his characterization of Bosnian Serbs and Muslims is also historically valid. He compares Gavrilo Princip's assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and his wife to the peaceful behavior of a Bosnian during Boutros-Ghali's visit to Sarajevo on December 31, 1992. During his visit Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary General of the United Nations, covered the same route in his car as did Archduke Ferdinand. Boutros-Ghali's car was stopped by a Bosnian demonstrator on the same bridge where the Archduke's assassination took place.

The most striking thing about Ismet (the Bosnian demonstrator) was not the violence of his outburst, but the lack of it. He screamed and jabbed his finger at the car but never touched it, never pounded on its hood or kicked one of its doors or broke a window, never threatened Boutros-Ghali or his generals. He called these men killers, holding them responsible for deaths that occurred while they held negotiations which handed the Serbs more time to finish cleansing Bosnia, but he did not say he would kill them.

The difference is notable. Ismet was Bosnia's Everyman, angry beyond articulation yet refraining from the mindless violence unleashed upon him and his people by the men in the hills. He was civilized, even if the world around him was not.²

One of the men from the hills eighty-two years ago was Gavrilo Princip and he did not behave in a civilized manner. Although Maass backs away from portraying all Serbs in a negative way—"the Serbs do not have a monopoly on moral insanity. It is humans who have failed once more³—an inordinate amount of space, however, practically the whole book, is allotted to Serbian ethnic cleansing and atrocities contrasted with the absence of the same on the part of other belligerents. The ethnic cleansing of Krajina received three lines only with the implication that the Serbs got what they deserved. Perhaps this bit of ethnic cleansing was not a part of his journalistic assignment.

There are several inaccuracies in the book. In his mini-history section on the history of Serbia, Maass mentions the bronze statue at Theater Square in Belgrade as being of Prince Miloš Obrenović; in reality it is of Prince Mihailo Obrenović.⁴ Maass also asserts that Boris is "a good Serb name"⁵ Actually it is a good Russian name while it is rare in Serbia. Izetbegović is described, when agitated, as slipping into Bosnian from English. Maass does not tell his readers that Bosnian is not a different language from Serbo-Croatian, unless Bosnian nationalists have proclaimed it so.⁶ Maass describes his interview with Radovan Karadžić and refers to Karadžić's spokesperson, Ljubica Raković, as "he."⁷ Ljubica is a female name.

Maass has witnessed untold brutalities and abominations, including the senseless bombardment of civilian targets in Sarajevo, and his moral outrage is justified. What we expected from his account was that he would hold true to the quotation from Rebecca West. Serbs do not have a monopoly on insanity. We wish he had balanced his book in the spirit of West's words.

Unlike many of the foreign journalists, who did not speak Serbo-Croatian and who had to rely on translators in their coverage of the war in Yugoslavia, Christopher Bennett spoke Slovenian, Serbian and Croatian which enabled him to be in direct contact with his informants. His chronological narrative about Yugoslavia's demise, *Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse: Causes, Course and Consequences*,⁸ starts in 1987, with

Milošević's ascent in Kosovo. It is readable, concise, balanced and persuasive if you accept his main premise that the cause of Yugoslavia's disintegration is Milošević's attempt to form a Greater Serbia. In the context of Bennett's presentation of events, "Greater Serbia" is a pejorative term promoted with the full force of Milošević's controlled media and implemented by Serb minorities in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. Although blame for the breakup of Yugoslavia is apportioned to other nationalities and politicians, it is Milošević and Serbia that take the lion's share. They are considered the initiators of actions and events while other republics and their representatives are passive and reactive. Bennett compares Milošević's political activization of Serbs in other republics to Hitler's tactics in the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia in the thirties.

Bennett does not allow or consider alternate explanations for the breakup of Yugoslavia. He feels that the grievances of the Serb minority in Kosovo were not justified and that the Kosovo affair in 1987 was just a pretext for Milošević's intervention. Bennett, consistent with his "Greater Serbia" argument, does not address the rights of Serbian minorities in the Diaspora 'per se' but only in their relation to Milošević's schemes. "Had the issue in Yugoslavia in 1991 been the conditions of Serbs in Croatia, Tudjman certainly gave Milošević the opportunity to resolve it at Karadjordjevo."⁹ Referring to numerous negotiations between national leaders Bennett writes: "irrespective of what was agreed at the negotiating table, Milošević's proxies had already begun to carve a Greater Serbia out of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina."¹⁰ To ascribe the complicated process of Yugoslavia's disintegration to one party, one person or one ideology is simplistic. There were several nationalistic and religious nationalistic ideologies present in addition to "Greater Serbia." "Greater Croatia," Albanian separatism, and the Muslim religious revival, all played their destructive part.

Bennett's book does not lack inaccuracies. He states: "Both devolution and, in particular, the emancipation of Yugoslavia's non-Slav populations went against the grain of the previous 150 years of Serbian state tradition."¹¹ Bennett's book was published in 1995. Bennett did not bother to check the history of "Serbian state tradition," for there was no non-Slav population in Serbia from 1845 to 1912.

Stjepan Meštrović's collection of articles, *Genocide After Emotion: The Postemotional Balkan War*,¹² has two theses: first, the genocide in the Yugoslav war has been exclusively committed by Serbs. Second, the past history of Serbo-Croatian relations should not be used to justify and

influence current behavior. To make it more concrete, the persecution (the author does not use the word "genocide" in this particular instance) of Serbs which took place in the Independent State of Croatia does not justify Serbian aggression against the newly independent Croatian State. "The implication seems to be that Belgrade-sponsored crimes in Bosnia in the 1990's are somehow understandable because of Zagreb-sponsored crimes in Croatia from World War II."¹³

"Genocide:" The etymology of the term consists of 'Genos'—race, nation or tribe (Greek) and 'cide'—killing (Latin). As it is formulated by the Military Tribunal at Nuremberg after World War II, "genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such:

- a) Killing members of the group.
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group.
- c) Deliberate inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Conspiracy, incitement, attempt, and complicity in genocide are also made punishable."¹⁴

None of the belligerents in the Yugoslav war can claim to be innocent of the charges listed above. In effect, each one has committed genocide. The argument which the editor and contributing authors make is that the Serbian genocide was quantitatively higher and qualitatively different from that of other belligerents. Philip J. Cohen writes, "as of June 1993, the U.S. Department of State had submitted to the United Nations eight reports on atrocities and war crimes in former Yugoslavia . . . (and) 88% were attributable to Serbs, 7% to Bosnian Muslims, and 5% to Croats."¹⁵ Cohen further writes that 100% of the genocidal acts were committed in accordance with Serbian policy. This statement is somewhat dated and so is the statement of April 4th, 1995, where the chairman of the CSCA hearing on Bosnia-Herzegovina placed the number of atrocities committed by Serb militants at 90%.

The ethnic cleansing of Krajina which took place later is left out of this account and so are other incidents in the Bosnian Muslim enclave in Srebrenica. In all probability the percentages will have to be readjusted. The sorry business of genocide arithmetic serves no purpose whatsoever except to fuel more resentment and the call for revenge. There were many

paramilitary groups on each side roaming the countryside and acting as the law unto themselves. In that atmosphere of chaos and lawlessness it is difficult to talk about a centrally planned policy of genocide or have reliable statistics.

In his lengthy introduction Meštrović defines and elaborates on his concept of 'postemotionalism.'

Postemotionalism shall be treated as a concept somewhat related to *postmodernism*, with the difference that it refers to the manipulation of *emotionally* charged collective representations of 'reality' on the part of the culture industry. Thus, a working definition of postemotionalism might be that it is a neo-Orwellian mechanism found in Western societies in which the culture industry markets and manipulates dead *emotions* from history that are selectively and synthetically attached to current events.¹⁶

Meštrović then, to cite an example of how this term applies to the Balkan war: "The postemotional aspect stems from Serbian rationalizations that their genocidal acts arise from fear based on what the Croats did to the Serbs in World War II, and what the Muslims did to them in 1389."¹⁷

Certainly these postemotional aspects and their rationalizations should be shunned and condemned but it should be admitted that the concept of postemotionalism does not apply to the Serbs only. If the author intended it to be a universal concept then it applies as well to other nations in the Balkan area. The postemotional concept of Croatia being a defender of Christian faith against Islam is still present in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnian Muslims have their own postemotionalism based on their privileged position in the Ottoman empire and their subsequent loss of prestige and status. The concept of postemotionalism as a barrier between nations and as a reason for squaring accounts and righting all the real and imagined wrongs by way of wars brings to mind the opposite—forgetting and forgiving past grievances and thereby creating peace between nations. It is a pity that Meštrović did not develop and elaborate this negative concept into its positive opposite. As it is, for him it is a selectively used method of proving the other side wrong.

C. G. Schoenfeld, another contributor to the collection, in his article "Psychoanalytic Dimensions of the West's Involvement in the Third Balkan War" uses a Freudian approach to analyze the entire Serbian nation:

As for the Serbians, they are a people whose self-esteem is obviously precarious. To this very day, they feel deeply aggrieved and humiliated by—and fantasize about reversing—their defeat by the Turks in the Battle of Kosovo back in 1389 (which occurred a hundred years before Columbus discovered America).¹⁸

That is, every Serbian, young and old, male and female, suffers from low self-esteem and in his/her waking hours fantasizes about the best way of getting back at the Turks and revenging the battle of Kosovo. However, according to the Serbian nationalists this defeat was avenged at the battle of Kumanovo in 1912—"Za Kosovo-Kumanovo." I would hazard to say that Serbs think about it as much as Americans do about their defeat at the Alamo. I have yet to meet an American who suffers from low esteem and thinks about revenge on this account.

After the defeat of Kosovo in 1389, another calamity befell the Serbs. According to Schoenfeld, the collapse of Yugoslavia in the 1990s caused Serbian self-esteem to sink even lower and made the Serbian population fall into a narcissistic rage and attack their neighbors: "If there was ever a self-destructive (if not suicidal) course of action, the narcissistic rage of the Serbians seems to have led them to it."¹⁹ This article appears to be a psychological application of Meštrović's concept of postemotionalism. Psycho-analyzing individuals is a challenging task for any psychiatrist (the author of the article is not a psychiatrist), let alone psychoanalyzing entire nations.

Igor Primoratz, in his article "Israel and Genocide in Croatia," laments the Israeli response to the genocide that was perpetrated in the war in Croatia. Primoratz argues that because of the genocide of Jews in World War II, Israel should have sympathy for victims of the genocide perpetrated by Serbians against the Croats. Here we are faced with Meštrović's concept of postemotionalism but this time of the Jewish/Israeli kind. The Israelis are faced in the 1990s with the appearance of a second independent State of Croatia whose leader, Franjo Tudjman, has written some controversial statements about Jewish losses in the Second World War and whose state symbol (the coat of arms) goes back to the Second World War. If the postemotional aspect were to be completely eliminated, then the Israeli public should consider the second Croatian state as though the first one never existed. There are still, however, Jewish survivors and their descendants from the Croatian concentration camps in the Second World

War and here we are not talking about Kosovo or Masada.

It is disappointing to find scholars and intellectuals who were active in the nationalistic propaganda which led to the Yugoslav blood-bath continue with their promotion of their nationalistic causes and their interpretation of history, using all the requisite scholarly apparatus to minimize their nation's guilt and maximize that of their opponents.

Paul Mojzes's book, *Yugoslavian Inferno: Ethnoreligious Warfare in the Balkans*,²⁰ adds a religious issue to the discussion of Yugoslavia's demise. According to him, if the members of two Christian churches and the believers in Islam had followed true Christianity and true Islam, the violence in Yugoslavia would have never happened. Unfortunately, as Mojzes points out, that was not the case. Religion became not only subordinate to nationalism but fostered and nourished it. Members of the Catholic clergy carried weapons and took part in the Yugoslav war and were not reprimanded by their religious superiors. The justification and excuse was that their participation in the war was their private matter and they did so without representing the Catholic Church. Mojzes quotes from *Veritas*, a popular Catholic magazine:

The Church is glad for the return of its people "from the twofold" slavery—Serbian and Communist. This is a great "*kairos*" of God's grace for the entire Croatian people. Here was not a battle for a piece of Croatian or Serbian land but a war between good and evil, Christianity and Communism, culture and barbarity, civilization and primitivism, democracy and dictatorship, love and hatred Thank God, it all ended well, due to the Pope and Croatian politics.²¹

This is a classic division of humanity into two opposing sides with one side embodying all the good attributes and the other all the bad. Serbs are dehumanized by being exclusively identified with evil, barbarity, primitivism, dictatorship and hatred.

Mojzes does not see any significant difference between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Croatian Catholic Church in the relationship of these two churches toward the nation they represent. A number of priests joined "Chetnik" forces wearing orthodox symbols on their uniforms and weapons. The Serbian Orthodox Church initially saw in Milošević a leader who would work for the salvation and liberation of the Serbian people and

later denied any responsibility for atrocities committed by the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, blaming them on the other side. Neither the Catholic Church nor the Orthodox Church has acknowledged the wrongdoing of their people.

Unlike their Croatian and Serbian neighbors, the Bosnian Muslims are considered Muslim both by religion and by nationality. Izetbegović's essay "Islamic Declaration" and his creation of the Party of Democratic Action which was solidly Muslim played a significant part in the ethno-religious division in Bosnia-Herzegovina. His later stance of propagating a tolerant multi-ethnic Bosnia has met opposition from his radicalized Islamic compatriots.

Unlike other authors reviewed here, Mojzes presents both reasons for Yugoslavia's demise and a way toward achieving the reconciliation of belligerents. He gives a prominent place to psychological reasons such as the "Destructive Use of Memory" and "Mytho-History." The concept of time is understood mythologically rather than chronologically. Events which took place long ago are relived and influence present actions as if they had happened recently. Past grievances and humiliations are resurrected to influence present actions. Revenge and spite are national character traits shared by Croats, Serbs and Muslims according to Mojzes:

Defiance of authority—all authority—has characterized the general behavior. In the past it was directed toward foreign invaders, and such non-cooperation was extolled as patriotic. But it was internalized as a cultural trait to such an extent that even when the foreigners were driven out and one's own government ruled, people disobeyed it and rather casually dismissed even reasonable rules.²²

Mojzes makes too much of the concept of *prkos* which he translates as obstinacy, spitefulness, and defiance. Even when one's own government ruled it was unworthy of being obeyed since it was often dictatorial (royal or communist) and unfair. It is also not certain how valid these broad generalizations are applied to nationalities and how important these national character traits were in initiating and perpetuating the Yugoslav war. Here and elsewhere (particularly in relation to crimes committed in the war) Mojzes tends to portray Balkan nationalities as alien and distinct from the rest of humanity in regard to their character traits. Commitment of crimes and atrocities is not a Balkan monopoly.

Mojzes is on surer footing when he discusses a way toward achieving the resolution of the Yugoslav conflict. On the level of morality and religion the author sees a monumental struggle between the forces of evil and the forces of good within the souls of individuals living through the Yugoslav war: "The conflict is between those of all nationalities who are bellicose and who fan the fires of war in order to spread it to territories not yet affected and those who resist mutual 'ethnic cleansing.'" ²³ Notice here that the author sees both the forces of good and the forces of evil operating within each individual. In contrast, the author of the article in *Veritas* sees only the forces of good operating within his compatriots and only the forces of evil operating within other nationalities. Maass does the same thing when he depicts Serbs as exemplifying violence and Muslims as exemplifying peace.

In the chapter "A Proposal for Action" written in 1995, Mojzes makes many political recommendations which were later realized in 1996 but not quite in the form and the spirit he envisaged. He favors coercive diplomacy on the side of the Western governments to achieve the Bosnian settlement and stop the war: "Peacekeeping is not enough, since there is no peace to keep! *Peacemaking by diplomacy, but if necessary, by military action against those unwilling to comply, yet not exclusively directed against one side only, is the only effective way to bring the butchery to an end.*" (Mojzes' italics) ²⁴ "A peace must be imposed from the outside and all three sides coerced to agree." ²⁵ These recommendations accurately foretell future events.

Mojzes presents a balanced and fair account of the fateful events in Yugoslavia's demise. He is motivated by a sincere sorrow and regret for the tragic events which befell his former country and by a readiness to explore and collaborate on the possibility of reconciliation and forgiveness. However, his attribution of collective responsibility for the civil/aggressive war to the whole of the Serbian people is inconsistent with his attitude of reconciliation and forgiveness. Mojzes states: "Yet they have not summoned the courage to throw out Milošević, despite the great suffering he has inflicted upon them. This renders the nation culpable, though not every person in the nation equally so." ²⁶ Mojzes's reasons for asserting collective responsibility of the Serbian nation are: a) they gave their consent and support for the destructive actions their leaders took; b) they allowed themselves to be duped and manipulated by the media "when there are alternate sources of information;" ²⁷ and c) they voted for the bellicose Serbian Socialist Party. The idea of collective responsibility has been

replaced in Western civilization by the concept of individual responsibility. A human being is to be judged by his own free choices and actions and not on his/her membership in a group which is determined by events over which he or she does not have control. This holds true in this war not only for Serbs but for Croats and Bosnian Muslims as well. In the second place, the support for Milošević was not unanimous as shown by the Belgrade demonstrations of March 9th, 1991, in which the leader of the opposition party, Vuk Drašković, was arrested. According to Gale Stokes, John Lampe and Dennison Rusinow with Julie Mostov in their article "Instant History: Understanding the Wars of Yugoslav Succession," "Crnobrnja and Magaš prove, if it needs proving, that not all Serbs were nationalistic supporters of Slobodan Milošević." ²⁸ Alternate sources of information were not available as only the governmental TV station reached the whole of Serbia. An assertion of collective national responsibility of any of the three belligerents in the Yugoslav war is not conducive to their hoped for future reconciliation and cooperation as the aggrieved parties will tend to revenge themselves on the party considered to be responsible.

Susan Woodward's book *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution After the Cold War* ²⁹ is different both in scope and depth from the books reviewed here. Woodward does not consider Yugoslavia's war in isolation but connects the politics and actions of Western powers as they relate to the conflict in Yugoslavia. Another important difference is that Woodward, unlike journalists and scholars who were observers of the Yugoslav war, was an active participant in the United Nations activity as an advisor to Yasushi Akashi, special representative of the UN Secretary General for former Yugoslavia. In this capacity she was privy to many documents which were unavailable to the general public and she had access to leaders of all three parties. Woodward writes: "The link between the Yugoslav crisis and the crisis that developed among major powers over the war in Bosnia is the underlying theme of this book." ³⁰ The tendency to take sides in the Yugoslav conflict, often without sufficient information and early in the conflict before the resolution of many issues, was a professional handicap of many foreign journalists reporting in the area. The difference here is between objectivity and subjectivity and between short-term judgment and long-term analysis. Woodward writes:

The most compelling emotion is to take sides in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and all who propose instead to analyze the conflict are accused of assigning moral

equivalence between victims and aggressors—or worse, of justifying the actions being explained. . . . Moreover, the story is far from over.³¹

Woodward does not have a chapter on who or what is to blame for the demise of Yugoslavia but a significant part of her book deals with the interplay of economics and international relations in the former Yugoslavia. In her scenario there is no single evil politician who can be considered responsible for the whole upheaval. All of them seem to be caught in the intricate interplay of forces over which they do not have full control and these forces are primarily economic. With the end of the cold war Yugoslavia's importance as a buffer between the Western powers and the Communist block declined and Western governments and banks cut their loans to Yugoslavia. The economic conditions in Yugoslavia worsened and that in turn was reflected in internal Yugoslav politics as a dispute over economic matters between republics and the federal government. The unemployment rate rose from 5% in 1960 to 15% in the early eighties. The republican differences in unemployment became very stark, from under 3% in Slovenia to over 30% in Kosovo. The International Monetary Fund or IMF tried to impose fiscal discipline on the federal government to reduce its debt but the reduction of the debt resulted in austerity measures which lowered the living standard of ordinary Yugoslavs and which were opposed by the better-off Western republics. The federal government was thus caught between two rather unattractive alternatives. Putting its financial affairs in order resulted in unemployment while employment could only be financed through more borrowing.

In spite of the inevitability of national tensions, the author believes that Yugoslavia's political and economic problems could have been resolved within the Yugoslavian federal framework and that the Western intervention of recognizing individual republics doomed these efforts:

By abandoning the Yugoslavian federal government, which depended on international support for its economic and political reforms; pre-judging the army as nationalist and its actions to restore order in the republics as illegitimate intervention; and ignoring the many citizens' groups working to foster countrywide cooperation, the West deprived Yugoslav citizens of the last of the protections for their individual rights and the last

alternatives to nationalist or treasonous loyalties within their republics of residence.³²

The statement is hypothetical; we don't know whether the Yugoslav federal government would have been able to restore order and guarantee individual citizens' rights had it been given enough time and international support to do so. Since we talk about the preservation of multi-ethnic Bosnia it is well worth remembering that there was a multi-ethnic Yugoslavia, which if it had been preserved, the subsequent disaster might have had been avoided.

Woodward's book with its extensive and thorough coverage of the Yugoslav conflict and its intellectual rigor is an important source for future historians of the Yugoslav conflict.

In *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, Laura Silber's and Allan Little's view on the reasons for Yugoslavia's disintegration is opposite to that of Woodward.³³ They consider that former Yugoslavia would have been, under proper conditions, an ideal solution but they maintain that these conditions did not exist since Milošević hijacked the Yugoslav army and later the pan-Yugoslav federal institution to the cause of the Serbs outside Serbia. They believe that the Serbian intellectuals with their nationalistic memorandum were the true secessionists in spite of the fact that Serbia never announced its secession from Yugoslavia. This interpretation of the term "secession" is contrary to the accepted secession chronology of Yugoslavia's breakup and it is rather vague. This is a classic "Greater Serbia" theory, very similar to the one presented by Bennett. The book is a detailed and minute chronicle of events starting with the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1986 to the Dayton Accord. Because of the book's presentation and its concentration on dramatic events and personalities it was made into a documentary film with the BBC Brian Lappin Associates. Silber and Little see Franjo Tudjman and his Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) party as a counterpart to Milošević and his Socialist party and they see the influx of imported arms to Croatia as fueling the crisis.

The authors consider Germany's recognition of Croatia premature insofar as it scuttled Lord Carrington's peace plan. Commenting on the destruction of the Mostar bridge, they make a symbolic comparison to the severance of the ties between nationalities in the war-torn Yugoslavia:

In a war in which multi-ethnicity was itself the enemy, the destruction of the bridge appeared to mirror that of the

multi-ethnic ideal of Bosnia—a place almost defined by bridge-building—between communities, between nationalities, between faiths. For Bosnians there was no stronger image of the country they were trying to build.³⁴

To destroy multi-ethnic Yugoslavia and replace it with national states, Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia, and then to try to resuscitate multi-ethnicism on a smaller scale in Bosnia-Herzegovina as if by magic is an unprecedented social experiment and more wishful thinking than reality. Time and again, experience has shown the futility of this attempt to foster "brotherhood and unity" (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*) which the events of the Yugoslav war have irretrievably shattered. Waxing idealistic about Bosnian multi-ethnicism—a common trait of Western journalists—in spite of all the evidence to the contrary is like trying to put Humpty Dumpty together again. Silber's and Little's journalistic narrative is of a higher order and quality than most or all of the narratives of the journalists who covered the Yugoslav war. This is a highly personalized and vivid narrative which puts the reader in the center of action. We are privy to the telephone conversation of the imprisoned president Izetbegović at the Sarajevo airport and we can hear and almost see the main characters in the Yugoslav drama negotiating, arguing and berating each other. What the authors lack as regional scholars they make up for with their directness and the chronological tightness of the events they describe.

Kaplan's book *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History*³⁵ achieved the unique distinction among the books reviewed here: it was read by President Clinton and his wife as well as by General Colin Powell, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They are reputed to have read parts of the book and to have been favorably impressed. To what extent President Clinton was guided in his deliberations and decisions in the Balkans and Yugoslavia by the book is difficult to estimate. The general tone and conclusion of *Balkan Ghosts* is that the people in the Balkans have been feuding since time immemorial and they continue to do so and that they will be doing so in the future. The ghosts from their conflict-ridden history are still with them. A foreign reader would probably conclude that the best way would be to keep away from a region which appears to be dangerous and unpredictable and for a while American foreign policy followed this course. Clinton is reputed to have said after reading the book: "They've been fighting each other for five hundred years. We need to stay out of there."

As the title of his book suggests, Kaplan takes the historical view. He believes that the present can be understood only through the past which consists of the most traumatic and shattering events in a national history: defeats and humiliations, victories and triumphs and the residue of these momentous events in peoples' consciousness and minds. He agrees with Milovan Djilas who, in conversation with the author, predicted the future by evoking the past: "The present for him was merely a stage of the past moving quickly into the future."³⁶

His chapter "Old Serbia and Albania: The Balkan 'West Bank'" evokes historical Serbian/Jewish parallels. Kosovo, the cradle of the medieval Serbian kingdom, is for the Serbs their Judea and Samaria and the Albanian resistance is "the Albanian *intifada*." Serbs in Kosovo and Jews on the West Bank are vastly outnumbered by Albanians and Palestinians respectively. As Kaplan points out, in both cases the living standard and the quality of life of the latter was improved by the former only to result in mass uprisings "fueled by demographic pressure and higher expectations."³⁷ The relativity of chronological time as a justification for the denial of Albanian autonomy is summed up in the Serbian nationalistic point of view: "Why should these Muslim foreigners, who came only 300 years ago to Old Serbia, the historic heartland of our nation, have autonomy there? Never!"³⁸

In Croatia the monuments of two prominent Catholic bishops, Stepinac and Strossmayer, remind the author of two competing traditions in the history of the Croatian Catholic Church. The Stepinac tradition is considered by the author to be that of the militant, exclusive frontier church facing Serbian Orthodox schismatics and Bosnian Muslims. The Strossmayer tradition was on the other hand founded on religious tolerance and acceptance. Kaplan bemoans the forgotten Strossmayer tradition and is critical of the Stepinac tradition which he believes is guided by the Vatican policy towards Yugoslavia. In the West Cardinal Stepinac (raised to this rank by the Vatican) is viewed as an anti-communist martyr while among the Serbs he is considered an advocate of the virulent Croatian nationalism of the 1940s. Kaplan comments:

And by refusing to set foot on Yugoslav territory unless he could publicly pray at the controversial and (to many) compromised symbol of Croatian devoutness, Stepinac's tomb, Pope John Paul II throughout the 1980's seemed insensitive to the collective memories of Orthodox

Serbs—as well as to those of Jews and Gypsies, for whom Stepinac did too little, too late.³⁹

Kaplan's book was criticized in academic circles for its dramatized and impressionistic presentation of the "mysterious and unfathomable Balkans" as well as for sweeping generalizations. Kaplan, himself, admits that his summary of the Serbian/Albanian conflict in Kosovo cannot be reduced to Albanian demographic pressures and higher expectations only. The Balkans that Kaplan writes about are closer to the Balkans of the end of the 19th century than the Balkans of today. His dating of Milošević's birth is not correct: "In the spring of 1937, when Dame Rebecca had come to these same hills, Milošević was a little boy at the time."⁴⁰ Milošević was born in 1941.

David Rieff's book *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*⁴¹ is that of a journalist with a cause and his cause is to save independent, multi-ethnic, multi-confessional and multi-cultural Bosnia by propagating the injustice and suffering of Bosnian Muslims at the hands of their Serbian and Croatian neighbors. According to Rieff, since the West cherishes and cultivates the same values it should have intervened on the side of Bosnia. By the West Rieff means the United States and the countries of Western Europe. He considers the Western reluctance to intervene on Bosnia's side as the failure of the West and of the abandonment of Western moral principles. It is questionable whether such a tolerant entity as the Bosnia he describes ever existed. The tradition of tolerant multi-ethnicity in an urban center such as Sarajevo should be attributed to the much maligned heritage of old Yugoslavia. This heritage of tolerance quickly evaporated under the stress of the war, and even before the war it was not prevalent in the countryside. This is not to say that the ideal of tolerant multi-ethnicity is not desirable, not only for Bosnia-Herzegovina but also for other new national states: Slovenia, Croatia, Yugoslavia and Macedonia. My point is that the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the subsequent separation of nationalities along new national states has doomed tolerant multi-ethnicity for years to come and it is unrealistic to hope that it will be resurrected in Bosnia-Herzegovina under the present conditions. To lump all the Western countries with their different political interests into one common denominator of "the West" simplifies the issue and it is naive of Rieff to expect that they will act in unison in relation to Bosnia. Referring to the Vance-Owen plan and the semi-autonomous cantons proposed there Rieff writes: "Three were to be

controlled by the Serbs, three by the Croats, and three by the Muslims. The tenth, which encompassed Greater Sarajevo, was to be governed by representatives of all three national groups in Bosnia."⁴² Actually the Vance-Owen division into cantons was the following: three for Serbs, two for Croats, three for Muslims, one mixed Croat/Muslim and one in Greater Sarajevo for all three.

In the article "In Bosnia, Prelude to Partition" published in *The New York Times* in August 1996, Rieff's idealism about Bosnian multi-ethnicity is significantly eroded: "none of the belligerents take seriously the weak unitary Bosnian state envisaged by the Dayton agreement. It is the nationalistic Serb, Muslim and Croat parties that are likely to win overwhelmingly in their respective areas when the elections take place."⁴³ While realizing the situation on the ground in Bosnia with the powerful attraction of Bosnian Serbs to Yugoslavia and Bosnian Croats to Croatia, Rieff still believes in the possibility of Bosnian pluralism which has to be imposed from outside: "Bosnia will not become democratic unless the international community makes it clear that any other outcome will invite most severe sanctions."⁴⁴ This statement begs several questions:

- a) Should the results of the September election in Bosnia be annulled if the voting is along national lines?
- b) How do you introduce democracy into a region which does not have democratic traditions and which has been split along ethnic lines by hatred and intolerance?
- c) Against whom are these severe sanctions supposed to be directed?

According to Rieff, if pluralism does not exist in Bosnia, then it has to be imposed by force from outside. It is naive to expect that this forced kind of pluralism will take root in Bosnia now when it has not grown there spontaneously. Rieff deals here in generalities and he does not provide details of how this intervention from the international community will make Bosnia democratic. He also does not take into account the American and European anti-interventionist public opinion, not to mention the possible consequences of such an intervention on the ground in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Rieff and other journalists who belong to the so-called "save the Bosnia bunch" are not helping to solve the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis. Instead, they are doing their utmost to intensify the conflict, and they make it more violent by their intransigent propagandistic stance, making the possibility of future reconciliation more distant. To them the adage "the road to hell is paved with good intentions" may well apply.

Alex Dragnich presents the Serbian point of view in his collection of articles and Op Ed columns published under the title: *Yugoslavia's Disintegration and The Struggle for Truth*.⁴⁵ The truth about Yugoslavia's demise is for future historians to establish. Dragnich writes in his article "What Does Serbia Want?" written in 1991: "If Yugoslavia breaks up, however, the Serbs will want to have as many as possible of their compatriots, now outside the boundaries of the republic of Serbia, included in a Serbian state."⁴⁶ The idea of all Serbs living in one state appears attractive on the surface as it implies that they will not be a minority in any part of Yugoslavia. In practical terms such a state would infringe on the republican borders of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The argument made by the backers of the "Greater Serbia" idea and by other observers is that these republican borders were artificially set up by the Yugoslav communist government after the Second World War and that they are therefore not valid and will have to be redrawn in such a way as to leave the Serbs out. The issue of republican sovereignty vs. national self-determination is now largely academic after the ethnic cleansing in Krajina, as these Serbs are now united with their compatriots as refugees in Yugoslavia. This is an unintended and ironic end of the "Greater Serbia" idea. Dragnich, in his numerous letters to editors, pleads for fair treatment of the Serbian view of the conflict by the media. It is perceived not only by the Serbian community in the United States but also by many in the journalistic profession that the media coverage of the Yugoslav war was overly strident, emotional and often biased.

Misha Glenny in his book *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*⁴⁷ is an informed and insightful eyewitness of the Third Balkan War, as he refers to the war in Yugoslavia. He writes in an informal and chatty way about everything he sees: the interior of the Grand Hotel in Priština, the demonstrations in Belgrade on March the 9th, 1991 and his escape to the hotel Moskva from tear gas and the police, the physical and behavioral characteristics of the Serb Krajina leaders Babić, Martić and Rašković, not to mention the focal points in the war in Vukovar and Sarajevo. Unlike some of his fellow journalists, Glenny is not an unequivocal advocate of the "just" cause of any of the three nationalities involved in the war but finds them all culpable for different reasons: the Serbian paramilitary groups for the ethnic cleansing in East Bosnia; Milošević because "without question, it was Milošević, who had willfully allowed the genie out of the bottle, knowing that the consequences might be dramatic and even bloody,"⁴⁸ and also because of his obstruction of the

transformation of the Yugoslav federation into a loose association of sovereign states; and Tudjman for his provocative decision in relation to the Krajina region by introducing the *šahovnica*, the Croatian coat of arms, from the Second World War, for prohibiting the use of the Cyrillic script and for dismissing Serbs from government employment. Even the Bosnian Muslim leaders, who in most foreign journalistic accounts appear almost saintly, are not spared criticism. Glenny acknowledges the unenviable geographic position of Bosnian Muslims "trapped between these two sets of flesh ripping teeth."⁴⁹ But this fact:

does not exonerate Bosnia's Muslim leaders of their share of the responsibility. They coaxed their people into a war for which they were unprepared, and at times have both consciously and unconsciously allowed the mass slaughter of their own in the hope of receiving weapons from the West so that they might fulfill their political agenda.⁵⁰

This statement corroborates MacKenzie's accusation of staged massacres.

Contrary to other authors reviewed here who see in the recognition of individual states on the territory of former Yugoslavia a triumph of national self-determination and democracy, Glenny sees problems. He considers the central issue of the Yugoslav crisis to be Croatia: "the essential problem of a Croatian state lies in the numerical and political dominance of Croats over Serbs."⁵¹ And he thinks that Germany's recognition of Slovenia and Croatia was the death sentence for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

David Owen brings to his account of the Yugoslav war *Balkan Odyssey*⁵² an impressive credential: he was one of the principal actors alongside Cyrus Vance of the VOPP (Vance-Owen Peace Plan) as Co-Chairman of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY). In this capacity Owen was privy to the international negotiations, disputes, disagreements and bickering behind the scenes which he relates in his book. We learn from Owen's book that decisions made by Western powers regarding Yugoslavia were often more important than what went on between the three belligerents. Owen never tires of contrasting the reality of the day to day conflict in Yugoslavia with, on the one hand, the attitude of the various members of the international community and on the other hand the so-called CNN effect with its "instant emotions" which "distort or slant information."

For Owen the assumption of the co-chairmanship of the ICFY was a learning experience. His initial assumption—that there was only one victim in the Yugoslav war and that was the Bosnian Muslim side—quickly gave way to the conviction that there are no innocents in this war, especially when confronted with Ejup Ganić, the Vice-President of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992, whose central policy objective was to involve the US army as a combatant in the Bosnian fight to defeat the Serbs. To realize this aim, according to Owen, he was ready to use whatever means necessary even if these means were detrimental to the safety and welfare of his own Muslim compatriots, like blocking the agreement on the demilitarization of Sarajevo. Owen believes that "the Bosnian Serbs did their cause immense harm by their tactics over Sarajevo and would have been wiser to have pushed for UN administration from the outset."⁵³ At the same time his observers were witnesses to Bosnian Muslim mortar shooting close to the Sarajevo main hospital directed at the Serbian positions and intended to provoke retaliation. This is one of several incidents which Owen relates that dispelled his initial belief in the blamelessness of the Bosnian Muslim side.

Owen is emphatic in his conviction that the redrawing of the internal republic borders in Yugoslavia was necessary before these republics were recognized as independent states. The redrawing of the internal republic borders, which have never been intended to serve as state borders, would have, according to Owen, prevented much of the chaos and bloodshed which followed:

My view has always been that to have stuck unyieldingly to the internal boundaries of the six republics within the former Yugoslavia, namely Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia, before there was any question of recognition of these republics, as being the boundaries for independent states, was a folly far greater than that of premature recognition itself.⁵⁴

The reasons Owen cites are twofold. The republic borders were drawn arbitrarily and quickly without due consideration of minorities and their rights to self-determination. As Djilas related to the author they were made "during a march." Furthermore, the Serb-inhabited regions of northern Dalmatia, Lika, Kordun, Banija, Slavonija and Baranja made up the Austrian Military Frontier territory. Krajina was ruled from Vienna and not

from Zagreb. In view of these historical facts and the Serbs' relatively recent experience in the Second World War of the Croatian Ustasha terror, Owen's arguments for the redrawing of republic borders sound persuasive.

Owen does not accept the term "genocide," frequently applied by CNN commentators and journalists, to the wartime acts of Bosnian Serbs. He quotes George Kenney, who resigned from the State Department in 1992 in protest against the failure of US policy to do more for the Muslims. Kenney argues: "Bosnia is not the Holocaust or Rwanda; it's Lebanon But that does not mean the Bosnian Serbs' often brutal treatment of the Bosnian Muslims is a unique genocide."⁵⁵ Owen's thinking on the issue of war guilt is in line with Kenney's statement that the Serbian nation is not on trial and that it is a delusion to think in simplistic terms: "or portray the struggle as one between 'good guys' and 'bad guys.'"⁵⁶

The lifting of the arms embargo for the Bosnian Muslim army has been in the center of the discussions relating to the Yugoslav war issue. For Owen this is a non-issue, as the arms embargo has been grossly violated. The landlocked Bosnian government forces were dependent on the Croats and a selective lifting for the Bosnian Muslim side could have happened only with Zagreb's agreement which was not forthcoming:

Moreover, West European governments and the US tolerated and indeed in some cases condoned the Croatian government bringing arms and materials in, by road through Hungary and Slovenia and by plane and sea in the early stages of the conflict."⁵⁷

It should be pointed out that the current 1996 US governmental plans of arming the Croatian/Muslim federation will run the same risk of Croatian/Muslim competition and of Serbian antagonism and apprehension.

Owen admits that the Vance-Owen plan was not favorable to the Bosnian Serbs. They had to retreat from about 38.6% of the land they held and they will have ended up with 43% of the total territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, less than they got from the Dayton agreement. In addition Serbian cantons were not contiguous. That the Bosnian Serbs rejected the Vance-Owen plan was not surprising as was the rejection of the plan by Bosnian Muslims. Owen asks a rhetorical question: Why did Izetbegović not sign? Owen's explanation is that Izetbegović sensed that Karadžić might sign and he was also encouraged by US attitudes to hold out for a better deal. Owen writes in a personal telegram: "We have this Administration

(Clinton's new Administration) briefing the press in a way that could not but stiffen those Muslims who want to continue the war."⁵⁸

The effect of such US policy was in Owen's opinion the prolongation of the war of the Bosnian Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina: "The price of that prolongation paid in terms of human misery over more than two years, particularly in Sarajevo, Mostar, central Bosnia and Bihać, and more recently in Žepa, Srebrenica and the Krajina, has been very high."⁵⁹

One may argue with Owen's conclusions on the blame he assigns to the US government for prolonging the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina by pointing out that this prolongation was necessary insofar as it allowed the Bosnian army to build up its effectiveness and the Croat/Muslim Federation to grow. This brings up a larger question: Is arming the belligerents to the teeth really the best way of effecting peace in the region? The better armed belligerents have caused more death and havoc and are bound to do the same in the future. Readers may disagree with Owen's arguments and conclusions but there is no doubt that his book is a valuable historical document on the Yugoslav conflict from an author who was in the thick of the action in one of the most important administrative positions during the war.

Canadian Major General Lewis MacKenzie's book *Peacekeeper: The Road to Sarajevo*⁶⁰ comes from the unique experience of having been the head of the UN peacekeeping operation in Sarajevo after Bosnia-Herzegovina became an independent state. In his official duties he had to negotiate with both sides on a day to day basis and try to organize delivery of humanitarian aid wherever it was needed. In the emotionally heated atmosphere of the post-independence days in Bosnia-Herzegovina the idea of UN neutrality was unacceptable. Before long MacKenzie was accused of bias by both Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Serbs. He was there to feed people and not help them fight, and the Bosnian Muslim government preferred military aid to humanitarian. MacKenzie ended up being the whipping boy of the Bosnian Muslim government. He made a serious charge against the Bosnian government, that they bombed their own people in Sarajevo in order to blame these acts on the Serbian side and thereby elicit American and West European military aid. MacKenzie refers to the infamous "Breadline Massacre" of May 27, 1992:

Our people tell us there were a number of things that did not fit. The street had been blocked off just before the incident. Once the crowd was let in and had lined up, the

media appeared but kept their distance. The attack took place, and the media were immediately on the scene. The majority of people killed are alleged to be "tame Serbs."⁶¹

This is, of course, circumstantial evidence as is the case for another bombardment, which took place on the day of Foreign Secretary Hurd's visit, that Mac-Kenzie attributes to the Muslim side: "There was only circumstantial evidence, but everyone who witnessed the event had an uneasy feeling that it had been orchestrated by the Presidency to place the Serbs in a bad light."⁶² There is no certainty that "MacKenzie got it wrong," as Maass maintains in his book. To my knowledge nobody has convincingly proved or disproved these charges and nobody will ever know the truth. It is a terrible indictment of the cruelty and senselessness of the war and the unwillingness of the warring sides to find a peaceful compromise. MacKenzie's description of confusion and anarchy in Sarajevo following Bosnia's independence is vivid and gripping. So is the ordeal he had to endure, dodging bullets and having to mediate through endless meetings where everyone thought that his case was the most just. MacKenzie believes that there is more than enough blame to go around for all sides with some left over. Some of the journalists object to MacKenzie's apportioning the blame in equal terms, citing that the crime arithmetic favors the Bosnian Muslim side and the Croatian side. MacKenzie in his testimony before the House Committee on Armed Services is reputed to have said: "Dealing with Bosnia is a little bit like dealing with three serial killers. One has killed fifteen. One has killed ten. One has killed five. Do we help the one that has only killed five?"

There is a consensus among most of the authors writing about the breakup of Yugoslavia, unless they are unconditional nationalist advocates of the newly independent countries, that former Yugoslavia was a preferential political association for Yugoslav nationalities in spite of all its inadequacies. The relative political disorder of Yugoslavia in its waning days appears as superior to the ensuing chaos and disorder which followed. Mojzes writes: "The best option for all the South Slavic peoples and other minorities living among them was Yugoslavia—with all its flaws and blemishes."⁶³ Even Bennett who is sympathetic to the rights of the republics to secede from Yugoslavia admits that: "Indeed, the Yugoslav state had already emerged twice in the 20th century at the end of protracted wars as the best formula for national coexistence in that part of the world."⁶⁴ If the former citizens of Yugoslavia were to be polled whether they are now

economically better off in their newly independent states than they were before the breakup of Yugoslavia, the answer would be a resounding negative, even for Slovenia which now finds that competing in Western markets is not so easy. "The freedom to indulge in their respective nationalistic euphoria is quickly fading away against the backdrop of a dismal economic situation. If Yugoslavia reemerges for the third time as "the best formula for national co-existence," it will need a bond which will be "a respect for each other's beliefs, opinions and traditions."⁶⁵

¹ Peter Maass, *Love Thy Neighbor: A Story of War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996).

² *Ibid.*, p. 180. Rebecca West in Prologue to *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* (New York: The Viking Press, 1941) mocks "English persons . . . of humanitarian and reformist disposition" who went to the Balkans and returned "with a pet Balkan people established in their hearts as suffering and innocent, eternally the massacre and never the massacrer." Maass and Rieff are their American counterparts.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁸ Christopher Bennett, *Yugoslavia's Bloody Collapse: Causes, Course and Consequences* (New York: New York University Press, 1995).

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 244.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹² Stjepan G. Meštrović, ed., *Genocide After Emotion: The Postemotional Balkan War* (London: Routledge, 1996).

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁴ *Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia IV*, p. 469.

¹⁵ Philip J. Cohen, *Serbia at War With History* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), p. 174.

¹⁶ Stjepan Meštrović, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

²⁰ Paul Mojzes, *Yugoslavia Inferno: Ethnoreligious Warfare in the Balkans* (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1995).

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

²⁸ Gale Stokes, John Lampe and Dennison Rusinow with Julie Mostov, "Instant History: Understanding the Wars of Yugoslav Succession," *Slavic Review* 55, no. 1 (1996): 138. Also, Mihailo Crnobrnja, *The Yugoslav Drama* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); and Branka Magaš, *The Destruction of Yugoslavia: Tracking the Breakup 1980-1992* (London: Verso, 1993).

²⁹ Susan L. Woodward, *The Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 198.

³³ Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia, Death of a Nation* (New York: TV Books/Penguin USA, 1996).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 291.

³⁵ Robert Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39. It should be noted that Serbian settlers populated Krajina and the frontier between Austria Hungary and the Ottoman Empire at about the same time. Using this logic they should be denied autonomy in the newly independent Croatia.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁴¹ David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995).

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴³ David Rieff, *New York Times*, August 14, 1996.

⁴⁴ David Rieff, *New York Times*, August 14, 1996.

⁴⁵ Alex N. Dragnich, *Yugoslavia's Disintegration and the Struggle for Truth* (Boulder: Columbia University Press, East European Monographs, 1995).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

⁴⁷ Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War* (New York: Penguin, 3rd ed., 1996).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁵² David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1996).

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 366.

⁶⁰ Lewis MacKenzie, *Peacekeeper: The Road to Sarajevo* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1994).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 293. The expression "tame Serbs" refers to the Serbs who remained in Sarajevo during the siege.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 458.

⁶³ Paul Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

⁶⁴ Christopher Bennett, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁶⁵ Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *The Improbable Survivor: Yugoslavia and its Problems 1918-1988* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1988), p. 156.

THE SERBIAN WARRIOR MYTH AND SERBIA'S LIBERATION, 1804-1815*

David MacKenzie
University of North Carolina, Greensboro

Even now Serbs remain more conscious of their bloody history and national traditions than almost any other people, giving them a profound martyr complex. The legacy of the Battle of Kosovo (1389) and its depiction in Serbian epic poems remains a vital part of the Serbian consciousness. This paper will examine reflections of that legacy during the Serbian insurrections against Ottoman rule under Karadjordje Petrović and Miloš Obrenović, 1804-1815, providing examples derived from early 19th century Serbian epics.

Among the questions to be treated here are: were Karadjordje, Miloš Obrenović, and *Hajduk* Veljko truly Serbian heroes, as depicted in these epic poems, or were they idealized and given excessive credit like their 14th century Kosovo predecessors? How influential was the Kosovo legacy in the Serbian achievement of autonomy and eventual independence? Did that legacy influence only a few leaders or the Serbian masses as well? How are the insurrection leaders depicted in Serbian epic poems?

During more than four centuries under Ottoman rule, the Serbs retained their Orthodox faith, their own social organization and local self-government. The overwhelmingly illiterate Serbs lived in the countryside as hereditary tenants on state-owned lands while their Ottoman rulers, living in the towns, were headed by the governor (*pasha*) residing in Belgrade's Kalemegdan fortress.

Prelude to Insurrection

Both internal and external factors fostered the outbreak of the First Serbian Insurrection of 1804, inaugurating Balkan national and revolutionary movements of the 19th century. One element surely was the

* This paper has been presented at the 28th National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Boston, November 16, 1996.

declining effectiveness of Ottoman rule in coping with changing conditions produced partly by rising Western capitalism. Eighteenth century Austro-Turkish wars strongly impacted the province (*pashaluk*) of Belgrade, the core of present-day Serbia, where the First Insurrection would center. In some ways Austrian rule then established over Belgrade and northern Serbia proved more oppressive than the Ottoman, but Serbia developed its own separate administration and a militia under its own officers. Trade with Austria stimulated the rise of a Serbian merchantry. Regaining control of Serbia in 1739, the Turks, for the sake of maintaining law and order, allowed these gains to persist. In the late 18th century, unruly janissaries were seizing Serbian peasant lands eventually making Turkish rule in Belgrade *pashaluk* intolerable for its Serbian inhabitants. During the Austro-Turkish War of 1788–91, Vienna organized Serbian volunteers in a free corps, providing some Serbs, notably their subsequent leader, Karadjordje Petrović, with invaluable military experience, and convincing them that they could emancipate themselves.

The abolition in 1766 of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć by the Sultan, subordinating the Serbian church to the Greek patriarch of Constantinople, while depriving Serbs of their own religious organization, made Serbian orthodoxy even more of a people's church. A national mythology that idealized memories of a glorious medieval Serbia, culminating in the empire of Stevan Dušan, was spread among the Serbian people through oral epic poetry. Transmitted from generation to generation by Serbian bards, this poetry idealized Dušan's empire. Lamenting its destruction after the fateful Battle of Kosovo, the poems stressed the overriding need for Serbs to avenge Kosovo. Epic cycles of the 16th and 17th centuries dramatized the heroic resistance of *hajduci* (guerrillas), providing the Serbs with Robin Hood types to lead the coming struggle for freedom from Ottoman rule.

Remarkable in the First Insurrection was its leaders' success in organizing swiftly an effective military force to fight the Turks. This resulted primarily from Serbian military traditions. Serbian epics describe numerous earlier exploits by bands of *hajduci* and *uskoci* (guerrillas) against foreign oppressors. In 18th century wars, Serbs from Belgrade *pashaluk* had gained valuable experience, especially in *Freikorps* units in the Austro-Turkish War of 1787–91.¹ In the final years before the First Insurrection, the governor of Belgrade *pashaluk*, Mustafa Pasha, in order to maintain order against rebellious janissaries, fostered the creation of a Serbian national militia, estimated variously from 8,000 to 30,000 men, to

assist hard-pressed Turkish regulars. These Serbian recruits, required to possess a long rifle, two pistols, and a long knife (*jatagan*), early in 1804 melted into the Serbian forests with their leaders in the face of a reign of terror by the *dahijas*.²

From the 16th century onward individual *hajduci* and *hajduk* bands had led spontaneous rebellions throughout the Balkans. Intensifying in periods of war, their activities revealed the gradual decline of Ottoman central authority. *Hajduci* sprang from all elements of a Balkan society desirous of political and religious freedom. They included rebels seeking revenge against individuals or families in blood feuds and impoverished peasants induced by famine and war devastation to take up arms. *Hajduk* bands attacked caravans, rich merchants and tax collectors, fostering increasing chaos. Closely linked in Serbia with the peasantry, *hajduci* were glorified in epic poems as national heroes, although only a minority could truly qualify as such.³

Dimitrije Djordjević has distinguished three types of *hajduk* rebellions. One type, originating in mountain areas, was provoked by socio-economic distress, and took the form either of *hajduk* bands or individual actions. A second kind originated in tribal military organizations aiming to protect tribal property against neighbors and Turks. A third type developed in border regions, such as the Military Frontiers, featuring sudden raids for booty into Ottoman territory. Such guerrilla warfare caused increasing trouble for the weakening Ottoman central authorities. The First Insurrection stimulated this *hajduk* movement and was its beneficiary. Many of the Insurrection's leaders—such as Karadjordje and Stanoje Glavaš—were former *hajduci*. Utilizing guerrilla bands to foster chaos behind Turkish lines, the *hajduk* network spread news of the Serbian revolt throughout the Balkans.⁴

The tradition of Kraljević Marko, the famous Prince *hajduk* of the Kosovo era, passionately hating the Turkish conquerors, profoundly influenced *hajduci* of the First Insurrection. Wrote Cecil Stewart: "Serbian history is complicated by the influence of legends upon the actions of the people. Gods intermingle with humans in classical fashion."⁵ The English scholar, Harold Temperley, affirmed: "The Serbian peasant was a magnificent natural soldier . . . easily roused to moral enthusiasm by a reference to Marko Kraljević or Kosovo."⁶ Prince (Kraljević) Marko, points out Tatyana Popović, reflected key South Slavic traits. Depicted in folk songs and epics as often capricious, quarrelsome, sometimes cruel and ruthless, he was invariably benevolent and softhearted toward the suffering

and towards women and children. Reacting fiercely against injustice, Marko respected brave and noble adversaries.⁷ Sixteenth and 17th century Serbian epic cycles, dealing with Kosovo and its aftermath, depicted Kraljević Marko as a roguish but good-hearted champion of the oppressed, a supernaturally formidable warrior and bane of the Turks, although forced to become their ally. To the Serbs Karadjordje came to represent the same themes. These epics glorified *hajduci* and *uskoci* as freedom fighters, stressing their courage, manly pride, hatred of the Turks, and generosity toward the defeated. Although many of these warriors were actually pirates and robbers, epic poems extolled them as struggling valiantly against the Turks. They provided the Serbs with a gallery of heroes to direct their struggle for freedom.⁸

The First Insurrection and Karadjordje Petrović

Serbian victories over the Turks beginning in 1804 and the emergence of heroic leaders inspired epic singers to create forceful, original poems. The leading folk bard of this Serbian revolt, Filip Višnjić, stressed in the first lines of his poem, "The Beginning of the Revolt Against the Dahis" that local Serbian leaders (*knezevi*) mostly wished to avoid a fight, while poor peasants often welcomed revolt because they could no longer pay the tribute nor endure the evils of the Turks. Noted the grammarian Vuk S. Karadžić, an eyewitness: "It was those who had nothing who were most eager for an uprising, while those who had anything at all tried with all their might to avert and still the uprising."⁹

The Kosovo tradition in the Serbian consciousness, noted Dr. Gojko Desnica, was evident even before the general uprising began. Revolt in Serbia was foreshadowed, recalled Petar Jokić, subsequently Karadjordje's troop commander, by an agreement and oath taken in the village of Orašac on February 2, 1804. Declared Protá (priest) Atanasije:

Brothers, so many hundreds of years have passed since all our glory was buried in the grave on Kosovo. Since then our knives, sabres and rifles have been sheathed. . . . But brothers in the name of God the Creator and our savior, let us take up arms.¹⁰

Early in 1804, after some leading Serbs were arrested and murdered by the brutal *dahi* in revolt against Mustafa Pasha, hundreds of Serbs fled to the forests to join *hajduk* bands. Karadjordje, Stanoje Glavaš, Jakov

Nenadović and other leaders organized military detachments that first engaged the *dahi*, but not then the Ottoman authorities. When Protá Matija Nenadović learned that Karadjordje had taken up arms, he wrote urging other leaders to resist. By mid-February 1804 the uprising was spreading rapidly in Šumadija and Kolubara over most of Belgrade *pashaluk*.¹¹

In mid-February 1804 about 300 rebels gathered in Orašac village in central Šumadija to select an overall leader. Initially favored, according to several accounts, was Stanoje Glavaš, then perhaps the best-known *hajduk* leader, but he refused that honor. Karadjordje's secretary, an eyewitness, wrote that those present then turned to Karadjordje. Twice he refused, protesting that his violent nature would make him too severe and thus repel his followers. However, that merely increased support for him and he was finally chosen as overall leader. In several ways, notes Michael Petrovich, Karadjordje proved an ideal choice because he was a man of the people, not a member of the *knezevi* (local Serb authorities), rich merchants or clergy. Karadjordje was also a respected swine merchant and experienced in warfare. Old enough at age thirty-six to command respect, Karadjordje was also vigorous, talented, and brave.¹²

Karadjordje had been on the *dahis'* list for arrest and murder, but he had evaded a *dahi* posse and sought refuge with Glavaš's band of *hajduci*. Karadjordje confirmed that the Serbs had already begun the insurrection before he took over and led them forward. "On the first day there were four," he stated, "on the third day nine, the seventh day 300, and by the tenth day some 2,000 men had gathered urging action."¹³

In his somewhat romanticized biography of Karadjordje, Dušan Baranin noted that Karadjordje's father in his youth had been a restless and disobedient *hajduk*. His mother reputedly was hardworking, sensible, intelligent, a brave Šumadinka often acting like a man. From the marriage of this potent pair came their first born, Djordje, later called Karadjordje (Black George). Karadjordje's childhood was spent in wandering, constant moving around, and dire poverty but nonetheless filled with interest and excitement, frequent changes and surprise. His mother's severe training, claims Baranin, contributed to Karadjordje's courage, endurance, and self-confidence. As a youth he learned how to endure cold, hunger, and heat. From his mother he heard many fairy tales and *guslar* songs that aroused his national feelings and imagination. His father often took him into the forest to confront dangerous wild beasts. Serbian children frequently played war games, dividing into opposing Turks and *hajduci* with Karadjordje as their intrepid leader. People often told Karadjordje's father: "Your Djordje,

when he grows up will give the Turks 300 headaches (*trista jada će zadati Turcima*).¹⁴

To understand Karadjordje's abilities as revolutionary and insurgent leader one must view what he did and the difficulties he overcame before creating an effective army. Among the 300-400 men at the Orašac meeting of February 1804, *hajduci* comprised the fighting core of a force too small to conduct and win a regular war. Thus Karadjordje placed himself at the head of a people in revolt, energetically recruiting men and equipping them. Soon after the Orašac meeting, the insurgent force grew into an army of 20,000 to 30,000 men with artillery obtained from Austria. Karadjordje trained these troops vigorously to prepare them to meet Turkish regulars. Although a volunteer militia, his army in its organization, preparedness, and discipline came to excel the Turkish forces. That an organized insurgent army was built up so quickly was due chiefly to Karadjordje. He possessed all the qualities essential for a successful military leader: bravery, severity, composure, coolness, and fairness. Always ready to enter action, he constantly held the initiative. He remained in the front fighting ranks encouraging his troops; his courageous example greatly boosted morale. Able to bear the greatest strains, Karadjordje slept on the ground on a knapsack. He was moderate in eating and drinking, and he never asked for himself more than for his soldiers.

Karadjordje's initial victories in 1804-1805 raised Serbian morale, and the Turks suffered demoralizing losses. Realizing the need for dramatic initial results, he resolved to win control of the major towns quickly. Soon he developed the idea of liberating all of Serbia. A methodical, calculating commander, Karadjordje left nothing to chance in the siege of Belgrade. He never told lies, affirmed Baranin, and instead openly stated his views and intentions. At difficult moments he came to the aid of others, always kept his word, and in battle sought out the most dangerous places. By his bravery and military skills, concluded Baranin who managed to overlook the chief's shortcomings, Karadjordje inspired the respect of everyone.¹⁵

A contemporary leading Serbian scholar, Vladimir Stojančević, largely confirms this laudatory picture of Karadjordje. During the insurrection's initial year, emerging as undisputed leader of the Serbs, Karadjordje was recognized as such also by the Austrian and Russian governments and by both loyal and renegade Turks. He extended the revolt into other areas bringing local resistance groups into a single national liberation movement. The military and organizational successes of the insurrection's first months were largely attributable to Karadjordje's genius

and determination, affirms Stojančević. Few questioned his right to be supreme military commander after he conceived in April-May 1804 the brilliant maneuver of building a solid siege line around Belgrade leading soon to its capture. From then on in insurgent correspondence he was referred to as "supreme *vojvoda*," "commander of Serbia," and leader (*vožd*). Other leaders—the chief *vojvodas*—bore less exalted titles.¹⁶

Karadjordje did not suffer from any exaggerated self-importance. In 1807 he told Russia's Colonel Paulucci that his aim was to liberate his fatherland from the Turks, then return to the plow. Throughout the insurrection, he demonstrated much concern for the lives of the common people, shielding the peasantry from autocratic elders in disputes over property. Personifying the First Insurrection and its amazing successes, Karadjordje became synonymous with the Serbian struggle for freedom and the liberation of all Balkan Christians.¹⁷

Serbs ever since 1804 have regarded Karadjordje as a man of exceptional courage and leadership ability. Noted a contemporary observer: in all of Serbia there is no taller or more powerful man. He was celebrated by his countrymen as a great hero, although not given to spectacular, risky exploits like *Hajduk* Veljko. Wherever he appeared, Karadjordje exuded energy and dynamism and a confidence that enabled him to rally discouraged troops. Contemporary accounts confirmed that he always engaged the Turks in battle boldly and decisively, excelling personally in combat with sabre, rifle, and pistol. Until the Turks reached the mouth of the Morava River in 1813, his presence of mind never deserted him. His example inspired other leaders to give their best.¹⁸

Possessing all the essential military traits glorified by Serbian epic poetry, Karadjordje embodied the democratic values of Serbian militia and people during the First Insurrection, a leader who made history for the sake of his people. The insurrection fostered epic poetry describing Karadjordje's deeds and Serbian heroism and collective achievements. Epic poems describe in detail Karadjordje's battles with the Turks. The famous blind bard, Filip Višnjić, affirmed that the Turks considered a battle already lost if Karadjordje were present. Tolerating neither undue praise nor self-adulation, he remained loyal to family and ancestral traditions. Thus his great popularity among the Serbs was not just for personal bravery and military leadership. As "supreme leader" he conducted himself like the head of a Serbian patriarchal family where all members shared rights and obligations. Thus, in the *Sovjet* (Council), insurrectionary Serbia's supreme administrative and legislative body, Karadjordje abided by its rules. He did

when he grows up will give the Turks 300 headaches (*trista jada će zadati Turcima*).¹⁴

To understand Karadjordje's abilities as revolutionary and insurgent leader one must view what he did and the difficulties he overcame before creating an effective army. Among the 300-400 men at the Orašac meeting of February 1804, *hajduci* comprised the fighting core of a force too small to conduct and win a regular war. Thus Karadjordje placed himself at the head of a people in revolt, energetically recruiting men and equipping them. Soon after the Orašac meeting, the insurgent force grew into an army of 20,000 to 30,000 men with artillery obtained from Austria. Karadjordje trained these troops vigorously to prepare them to meet Turkish regulars. Although a volunteer militia, his army in its organization, preparedness, and discipline came to excel the Turkish forces. That an organized insurgent army was built up so quickly was due chiefly to Karadjordje. He possessed all the qualities essential for a successful military leader: bravery, severity, composure, coolness, and fairness. Always ready to enter action, he constantly held the initiative. He remained in the front fighting ranks encouraging his troops; his courageous example greatly boosted morale. Able to bear the greatest strains, Karadjordje slept on the ground on a knapsack. He was moderate in eating and drinking, and he never asked for himself more than for his soldiers.

Karadjordje's initial victories in 1804-1805 raised Serbian morale, and the Turks suffered demoralizing losses. Realizing the need for dramatic initial results, he resolved to win control of the major towns quickly. Soon he developed the idea of liberating all of Serbia. A methodical, calculating commander, Karadjordje left nothing to chance in the siege of Belgrade. He never told lies, affirmed Baranin, and instead openly stated his views and intentions. At difficult moments he came to the aid of others, always kept his word, and in battle sought out the most dangerous places. By his bravery and military skills, concluded Baranin who managed to overlook the chief's shortcomings, Karadjordje inspired the respect of everyone.¹⁵

A contemporary leading Serbian scholar, Vladimir Stojančević, largely confirms this laudatory picture of Karadjordje. During the insurrection's initial year, emerging as undisputed leader of the Serbs, Karadjordje was recognized as such also by the Austrian and Russian governments and by both loyal and renegade Turks. He extended the revolt into other areas bringing local resistance groups into a single national liberation movement. The military and organizational successes of the insurrection's first months were largely attributable to Karadjordje's genius

and determination, affirms Stojančević. Few questioned his right to be supreme military commander after he conceived in April-May 1804 the brilliant maneuver of building a solid siege line around Belgrade leading soon to its capture. From then on in insurgent correspondence he was referred to as "supreme *vojvoda*," "commander of Serbia," and leader (*vožd*). Other leaders—the chief *vojvodas*—bore less exalted titles.¹⁶

Karadjordje did not suffer from any exaggerated self-importance. In 1807 he told Russia's Colonel Paulucci that his aim was to liberate his fatherland from the Turks, then return to the plow. Throughout the insurrection, he demonstrated much concern for the lives of the common people, shielding the peasantry from autocratic elders in disputes over property. Personifying the First Insurrection and its amazing successes, Karadjordje became synonymous with the Serbian struggle for freedom and the liberation of all Balkan Christians.¹⁷

Serbs ever since 1804 have regarded Karadjordje as a man of exceptional courage and leadership ability. Noted a contemporary observer: in all of Serbia there is no taller or more powerful man. He was celebrated by his countrymen as a great hero, although not given to spectacular, risky exploits like *Hajduk* Veljko. Wherever he appeared, Karadjordje exuded energy and dynamism and a confidence that enabled him to rally discouraged troops. Contemporary accounts confirmed that he always engaged the Turks in battle boldly and decisively, excelling personally in combat with sabre, rifle, and pistol. Until the Turks reached the mouth of the Morava River in 1813, his presence of mind never deserted him. His example inspired other leaders to give their best.¹⁸

Possessing all the essential military traits glorified by Serbian epic poetry, Karadjordje embodied the democratic values of Serbian militia and people during the First Insurrection, a leader who made history for the sake of his people. The insurrection fostered epic poetry describing Karadjordje's deeds and Serbian heroism and collective achievements. Epic poems describe in detail Karadjordje's battles with the Turks. The famous blind bard, Filip Višnjić, affirmed that the Turks considered a battle already lost if Karadjordje were present. Tolerating neither undue praise nor self-adulation, he remained loyal to family and ancestral traditions. Thus his great popularity among the Serbs was not just for personal bravery and military leadership. As "supreme leader" he conducted himself like the head of a Serbian patriarchal family where all members shared rights and obligations. Thus, in the *Sovjet* (Council), insurrectionary Serbia's supreme administrative and legislative body, Karadjordje abided by its rules. He did

not seek to impose his will upon it arbitrarily like his successor, Miloš Obrenović.

Karadjordje's role in the decisive battles of the liberation of Serbia established his reputation at home and abroad as a master strategist and military leader. Whereas most recognized these qualities as supreme commander, not everyone approved all his actions. Following military reverses in 1809 and the governmental crisis of 1810–1811, only Karadjordje could restrain the personal ambitions of regional leaders, maintain internal order, curb banditry, and prevent defeatism. Necessarily, by these policies Karadjordje injured the sensitivities of rivals. On occasion he exhibited brutality, vulgarity, and intolerance. As time passed, therefore, Karadjordje accumulated many enemies. In 1810 Metropolitan Leontije and Konstantin Rodofinikin, the Russian agent in Serbia, hatched a plot against Karadjordje. They accused him of self-adulation, excessive love of power, and of seeking to impose a tyrannical military monarchy. Some of these criticisms appear at least partially true, causing some to defend rival Jakov Nenadović's opposition to Karadjordje's preeminence. As man and leader, concludes Stojančević, Karadjordje may have been guilty of excesses, but he invariably sought to advance the cause of the Serbian people.¹⁹

The great Montenegrin ruler and poet, Petar Petrović Njegoš, knowing well Karadjordje's historical role and significance, dedicated his masterpiece, *The Mountain Wreath* (Vienna, 1847) to "the dust of the father of Serbia," comparing Karadjordje with great European military and political leaders like Napoleon, Wellington, and Suvorov:

In large nations the genius's nest is woven;
Here, especially, is the material for glorious deeds
And the illustrious wreath of triumph to adorn his bold head.
But for the hero from Topola, the immortal Karadjordje,
All obstacles were in the way, yet he reached his great goal:
He made the people rise up, christened the land, and crushed the
barbarians' chains,
He called the Serbs back from the dead,
He breathed life into the Serbian soul.
Here is the secret of that immortal man:
He gave the Serbs chests of steel,
He awoke in them their lion's hearts, grown away from chivalry.²⁰

In epic poems devoted to the First Insurrection appear repeated

references to Karadjordje's skill, heroism, and leadership and comparing him implicitly to the Serbian heroes of Kosovo. "The Beginning of the Revolt Against the Dahijas" contains this passage:

Straight went Kara-Djordje to his dwelling.
When he with his men beheld the raiders
To his swineherds thus spoke Kara-Djordje:
"Do ye hear, my twelve devoted swineherds:
Each of you take aim upon a raider,
Take good aim, but do not fire your muskets,
Fire not till my gun has spent a bullet.
I will point my gun at Uzun-Memed. . ."
These words uttered Petroviću Djordje,
To the ground he dropped, and fired his musket;
Swiftly, and not vainly, sped the bullet,
Hit the target Djordje had selected:
Dead fell Uzun-Memed from his saddle.
And when Djoka's swineherds had beheld this
Quickly they fired off their colored muskets:
To the ground there fell six Turkish corpses,
Six live Turks escaped upon their horses.

In "The Battle of Deligrad," a key battle for the liberation, the poet tells:

Now is Kara-Djordje speeding hither,
With his mighty army he approaches,
All on Arab steeds and in cuirasses.

Karadjordje's crucial leadership role is revealed in "Taking of Užice:"

In his turn, he (Petrović Djoka) drank to Kara-Djordje:
"Health to thee, O Djordje, head of Serbia!
May the good God and St. Sava grant us
That today we Užice may conquer,
Hew the heads from many Turkish tyrants,
That our glory may be far redounding."
Then was Užice by Djordje taken,
And 'tis to this day in Serbian keeping.

And finally the sadness of "Kara-Djordje's Farewell to Serbia" after defeat in 1813:

At his land he gazed, and thus addressed it:
 "God be with thee, fair land of Šumadija!
 If God grant it, and a hero's fortune,
 Ere a twelve-month shall have passed and vanished
 Once again will I return to see thee."²¹

Karadjordje returned to Serbia four years later only to be murdered by orders of his rival and successor Miloš Obrenović. This prose assessment of Karadjordje, the military leader, appeared in the classic work of the great German historian, Leopold von Ranke:

Early in August 1806 the two armies measured their strength Not until the Turks had come within range of the Servian fire did Karadjordje give the appointed signal. All the men in the front rank took aim. . . . Karadjordje sallied forth from the entrenchments and with his infantry broke through the hostile ranks. In an instant the disorder of the Turks was complete and their defeat decided.²²

A Serbian scholar, Miroslav Djordjević, provides an example of Karadjordje's inspirational leadership. Early in the First Insurrection, when his fighters began to retreat, Karadjordje, rallying them for a renewed attack, told them: "Be not afraid, they [the Turks] are fighting for domination (*gospodstvo*), but we fight for freedom so that we can breathe freely." On another occasion Karadjordje said: "While we were slaves of the Turks we suffered plenty, now let them suffer from us." During the ensuing battle, the Serbs "felt their strength" and proved able to hold out against the Turks.²³

Citing contemporary sources, Milan Milićević provides a mixed picture of a very human Karadjordje with both strengths and weaknesses. In dispensing justice he was "harsh and brutal." His military commanders, observed Prince Miloš, feared Karadjordje and trembled when they had to appear before him. His implacable sense of justice caused him to have his own brother hung for attempting to seduce peasant women whose husbands were off fighting the Turks. Karadjordje's strength of character (or ruthlessness) was revealed in 1809 when he shot his own commander (*buljubaša*),

Petar Jokić, for a mistaken military decision at Čuprija. Despite his Machiavellian views and methods, concludes Milićević, Karadjordje was both moral and honest. He was noted for personal integrity, governed according to the best interests of his people, and refused to exploit his powerful position to amass wealth (unlike his successor, Miloš Obrenović). These personal qualities of Karadjordje, concluded Milićević, were appreciated and recalled in the Serbian collective memory.²⁴

Most importantly, affirms Dimitrije Djordjević, Karadjordje appeared to Serbs as the avenger of the Kosovo defeat. In Topčider in 1804 he called upon the insurgents "to throw off, in the name of God, the yoke which the Serbs carry from Kosovo to this day." Praising his commanders, Karadjordje liked to compare them with Miloš Obilić, drawing upon the Serbs' reverence for the Kosovo legend. This clearly played a key role in shaping Serbian psychology and determining their destiny. The Kosovo legend and its message of achieving revenge for that defeat helped form the peasant conception of the new Serbian state emerging during the First Insurrection.²⁵

After 1809 the First Insurrection lost much of its dynamism. Karadjordje must bear a share of responsibility for this because of his power struggle with the *vojvode*, especially intense in 1810–1811, that damaged the Serbian cause. During the last two years of Karadjordje's leadership, noted Michael Petrovich, Serbia was a sorry picture of internal discord and corruption by local commanders.²⁶ Furthermore, during much of the disastrous campaign of 1813 Karadjordje lay ill. The campaign was largely directed by his war minister, Mladen Milovanović, a politician without military talent. Thus the Serbs, faced with greatly superior force, suffered repeated defeats. Nationalist historians usually attribute the collapse of Serbia in 1813 to "crudely established centralism." The "military monarchy," established in 1811, weakened the power of resistance by local organs of authority. Serbian leaders, unable then to agree on a unified plan or a unified command, remained wholly on the defensive.²⁷

Other Serbian Leaders; the *Hajduci*

Unquestionably, Karadjordje was the deserving primary hero of the First Insurrection, despite its unfortunate denouement, but other leaders embodying similar values emerged during the struggle against the Turks, notably *hajduci* in the tradition of Miloš Obilić. One of these was the *harambaša* (chief of a *hajduk* band) Kurta, immortalized in an epic poem, "Harambaša Kurta:"

There was never a more doughty *hajduk*
 Than the hero, Harambaša Kurta,
 He laid hands on Bosnia and Serbia,
 All the Turkish tyrants he laid hands on,
 With his wing his Serbian brothers shielded.
 Kurta led a company of heroes;
 In the band were two and thirty comrades,
 Each one of them stronger than the others,
 And the first was Bjelopolac Lodjo:
 Lodjo was of giant strength and stature,
 In him beat the heart of ancient heroes...
 Over all was cetobasa Kurta;
 In all things did he excel the others,
 So that they respected and obeyed him.²⁸

Perhaps the best-known *hajduk* of the First Insurrection and a key lieutenant of Karadjordje was *Hajduk* Veljko Petrović, whose turbulent life was recorded by Vuk Karadžić. Born about 1780 at Crna Rijeka, Veljko, after the Turks ravaged his native village, left his family and in 1803 joined a *hajduk* band, led by the famous Stanoje Glavaš. When the First Insurrection began, he served first under Glavaš, then under *Hajduk* Djusa Vuličević for two years. Once while drunk he robbed some Turks who had surrendered, but later he came out of hiding and surrendered to Karadjordje who forgave him. Appointed a *buljubaša* (captain), with some 100 men in Podgorac village he forced a Turkish bey to surrender.²⁹

Veljko became famous for leading charges against forward Turkish lines. At Ivankovac, and while clearing the Turks from Smederevo, *Hajduk* Veljko distinguished himself. His bold guerrilla style attacks, night raids and ambushes caused the Turks much grief. All valued him, notes biographer Dušan Baranin, as a hero (*junak*), although until 1813 he lacked a high military position. Unselfishly giving away any wealth he acquired, Veljko was happy to be given the opportunity to fight and destroy Turkish forces.³⁰

With his reckless courage, fierce determination, and wild behavior, Veljko appears to have been a typical *hajduk*. A true *hajduk*, notes Karadžić, would never kill someone who had done nothing to him. Whereas for a *hajduk* it was shameful to take anything from a poor person other than a weapon, it was no shame for him to attack a merchant on the highway or to plunder the homes of the rich.³¹ During the disastrous campaign of 1813, leading some 7,000 men as one of the chief Serbian commanders, *Hajduk*

Veljko stood out as an heroic Serbian leader in battles near Bukovac. "Then on the third day," relates Vuk Karadžić,

the whole Turkish force attacked. . . . He and those soldiers whom he could spare from the trenches went out again against the Turks, and with indescribable heroism he attacked and drove them back again; but what could he do with his 300 or 400 hundred cavalry. . . . against a Turkish army of 15-16,000?"³²

Karadžić described Veljko's heroic death later that fateful year.

He went from trench to trench, day and night, and he encouraged his men and arranged them so they could guard their positions well. Thus one morning he went out into a small trench and standing on a gun carriage he began to give orders . . . but a Turkish artillery man spotted him and fired his cannon. He hit him from the side, right through the shoulders . . . and blew him apart.³³

The death of *Hajduk* Veljko, the most renowned Serbian hero, discouraged Karadjordje and the Serbs, contributing to the defeat of the First Insurrection. "In heart and bodily heroism," concluded Karadžić, "he was first not just in Serbia but all of Europe."³⁴

Some other Serbian chieftains—but not Veljko—considered themselves at least the equals of Karadjordje. Thus Janko Katić and Jakov Nenadović took every opportunity to demonstrate to Karadjordje "that he was not only no greater than they, but that he was not even as great." Other renowned Serbian commanders included in north central Serbia the hero, Vasa Čarapić, and to the south Petar Teodorović, known as Dobrnjac. Dobrnjac intrigued against and defied Karadjordje until being exiled. They became leaders, notes Petrovich, rather spontaneously by personal initiative and their ability to attract a following. Their common passions were fine dress, beautiful weapons, and swift horses.³⁵

The Second Serbian Insurrection of 1815

After Karadjordje's flight into Austria and the crushing of Serbian resistance late in 1813, Turkish rule was apparently restored fully in battered Serbia. However, already in the following year *hajduci* filled the

forests and preyed on the Turks. In September 1814 a Serbian rebellion in Požega district was led by one of Karadjordje's former commanders, Hadži-Prodan Gligorijević. When no other leaders of the First Insurrection supported it, it was crushed and some 300 rebels were killed by the Turks. This Turkish reign of terror helped to provoke the Second Insurrection as rumors spread in Serbia of an imminent general massacre of Serbs. In April 1815, after returning home, thirty-two year old Miloš Obrenović from Užice district agreed to lead a Serbian insurrection at Takovo. That insurrection lasted only some six months during which the Turks were again expelled from Belgrade *pashaluk* by new, less famous, and far less heroic leaders after the chief leaders of the First Insurrection had died or been exiled. During the First Insurrection, Miloš had fought under Karadjordje, distinguishing himself in battle, notably during 1811, and being named commander of the entire southwestern front. Miloš was one of the last Serbian leaders to resist in 1813, but then he speedily surrendered. Miloš represented a rare combination of courage and practicality.

Suleyman, the Turkish military commander, unprepared for and surprised by this Second Insurrection, was soon defeated. Between May and July 1815 Miloš Obrenović won some ten major battles, expelling the roughly 20,000 Turkish troops from the *pashaluk* with minor losses. Miloš' heroism and decisive leadership infused the Serbs with confidence, as Karadjordje had done earlier. His fame spread along with reports of how he had turned a retreat at Požarevac into victory by shouting at fleeing soldiers: "Where are you off to, miserable sons? Where do you hope to flee? . . . Perhaps the women will hide you under their aprons."³⁶

When the Turks mobilized massive forces outside of Serbia, Miloš realized that without foreign aid his forces could not long resist the Ottoman army, so he wrote the Turkish commander, Hursid Pasha, pledging loyalty to the Sultan. Russian diplomatic pressure helped induce the Porte to negotiate. Through skillful diplomacy as much as war Miloš Obrenović thus succeeded in achieving an autonomous Serbia. However, this Second Insurrection failed to produce many heroic figures other than Miloš, nor was it immortalized in poetry.

Conclusions

Both Serbian insurrections had a major impact on Balkan history setting in motion national revolutionary movements that soon would be highlighted by the Greek struggle for independence. Despite its eventual

failure, the First Serbian Insurrection represented a decisive turning point in the historical development of the Serbian people as Karadjordje's ten-year struggle undermined the Turkish hold on Serbia. The liberational character of the insurrection revealed heroic efforts, of a Serbian peasantry that displayed exceptional steadfastness in battle. That factor enabled Serbian militia forces until 1813 to win amazing victories over the large Turkish regular army.³⁷

In responding finally to questions raised at the beginning of this paper, this reporter believes that he has amply demonstrated that at least the principal leaders in both insurrections —Karadjordje, Miloš Obrenović, and *Hajduk* Veljko—were true heroes, although unquestionably their fabled exploits were idealized and exaggerated by poets and bards. It has also been shown that the Kosovo legend played a highly significant role in the Serbian liberation movement. The Kosovo tradition and the roles of Kraljević Marko and Miloš Obilić inspired not only Serbian leaders but the peasant masses as well. Although the First Insurrection began as a desperate reaction to the impending massacre of leading Serbs and was not directed against Ottoman rule, later the Kosovo legend contributed greatly to the genuine nationalist movement led by Karadjordje and his successors.

¹ Gavro Škrivanić, "The Armed Forces in Karadjordje's Serbia," in Wayne Vucinich, ed. *The First Serbian Uprising* (New York, 1982), p. 303.

² *Ibid.*, p. 307.

³ *Ibid.*, Dimitrije Djordjević, "The Impact of the First Serbian Uprising on the Balkan Peoples," p. 306.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 366-367.

⁵ Cecil Stewart. *The Serbian Legacy* (New York, 1960), pp. 63-64.

⁶ Tatyana Popović. *Prince Marko: The Hero of South Slav Epics* (Syracuse, NY 1988), xvi-xvii, referring to Tempeperley's *History of Serbia* (New York, 1969, reprint), p. 305.

⁷ *Ibid.*, xvi.

⁸ Michael Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia 1804-1918* (2 vols., New York, 1976), I, p. 15.

⁹ Petrovich, I, 29.

¹⁰ Quoted in Gojko Desnica, *Stvaranje srpske države u revoluciji (1804-1813)* (Belgrade, 1977), p. 46.

¹¹ Škrivanić, "The Armed Forces," pp. 307-308.

¹² Petrovich, I, 29-30. Marxist scholars stressed that the Orašac meeting instead of choosing a *knez* selected Karadjordje, a merchant, *hajduk*, and decorated

veteran of the Austrian *Freikorps*, preferring a leader noted for his ability to fight the Turks. Non-Marxist historians assert that the First Insurrection was basically a peasant movement while Marxists argue that it was a middle-class movement led by a "thin stratum" of wealthy merchants and *knezy*. Vucinich, ed. "Genesis and Essence," pp. 6-7.

¹³ Miroslav Djordjević, *Oslobodilački rat srpskih ustanika 1804-1806* (Belgrade, 1967), p. 62.

¹⁴ Dušan Baranin, *Karadjordje* (Belgrade, 1957), pp. 203-208.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 260-267.

¹⁶ Vucinich, ed. Vladimir Stojančević, "Karadjordje and Serbia in His Time," p. 32.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

²⁰ "Posveta prahu oca Srbije," *Gorski vijenac* by Petar Njegoš, in *Monumenta Serbocroatica*, ed. Thomas Butler (Ann Arbor, MI 1980), p. 358.

²¹ From W. A. Morison, translator. *The Revolt of the Serbs Against the Turks* (Cambridge, England, 1942).

²² Ranke, "Servian War of Liberation, 1806-1807," in *The History of Servia and the Servian Revolution*. Trans. Alexander Herr (London, 1853), pp. 107-108.

²³ Djordjević, *Oslobodilački rat*, pp. 420-421.

²⁴ Vucinich, ed. Stojančević, "Karadjordje and Serbia," p. 39.

²⁵ Wayne Vucinich and Thomas Emmert, eds. *Kosovo: Legacy of a Medieval Battle* (Minneapolis, MN 1991), pp. 309-313.

²⁶ Petrovich, *A History*, I, 74.

²⁷ Vucinich, ed. "Genesis and Essence," pp. 11-12.

²⁸ Morison, *The Revolt*, pp. 1-2.

²⁹ Vuk Karadžić, "The Life of Hajduk Veljko Petrović," in *Monumenta Serbocroatica*, pp. 333-341.

³⁰ Baranin, *Hajduk Veljko* (Belgrade, 1966), pp. 150, 163.

³¹ Vuk Karadžić, *Srpska nacionalna revolucija u kazivanjima Vuka S. Karadžića* (Belgrade, 1987), p. 15.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 341.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³⁵ Petrovich, *A History*, I, 47.

³⁶ Petrovich, I, 94, 82-97.

³⁷ Djordjević, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

MILOŠ OBILIĆ AND THE HERO MYTH*

Thomas A. Emmert
Gustavus Adolphus College

O cursed Kosovo supper,
If only fortune had poisoned all those leaders
And wiped away their traces,
If only Miloš himself had remained in the center
With both his blood brothers,
Then today a Serb would be a Serb! . . .
O Miloš, who doesn't envy you?
You are the victim of a noble feeling,
An all powerful military genius,
A dreadful thunder that smashes crowns!
The greatness of your knightly soul
Surpasses the immortal feats
Of wonderful Sparta and great Rome;
All their brilliant chivalric deeds
Are overshadowed by your proud muscles.
What can Leonidas do, and Scaevola
When Obilić stands on the field of battle?
These muscles with one blow
Destroyed a throne and shook hell.¹

With these unforgettable words in his epic poem, "The Mountain Wreath," the nineteenth century Montenegrin poet-prince, Petar Petrović Njegoš, breathed new spirit into the heroic figure of Miloš Obilić and harnessed that spirit to guide new generations in the struggle for freedom and liberation. Njegoš's epic poem helped to give the final shape to the image of Obilić, the legendary assassin of the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, as the pure, Christian hero—the symbol of freedom. Njegoš's message was clear.

* This paper has been presented at the 28th National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Boston, November 16, 1996.

Encouraged by the long centuries of Ottoman rule and the spirit of the Kosovo heroes, Serbs were to understand that the noblest of acts was to kill the foreign tyrants. In Njegoš's hands the long legacy of the Kosovo martyrdom was transformed into a compelling, positive force determined to eliminate the foreigner from all South Slav lands.

Njegoš's mountain compatriots needed little coaxing. According to Jovan Cvijić, Dinaric Serbs always knew their history well and carried the epic tales of their national heroes' exploits from generation to generation.² Every Serb was uncompromising about one thing: he wanted freedom and independence for the poor peasantry in all those lands which were once part of his land. Cvijić observed that the Serbs did not expect help from the outside but understood their own obligation to "liberate their brothers with a constant heroism, a never-ending sacrifice, and with blood."³ The old epic was clear about this: "*Nada nema prava ni u koga, do u Boga i u svoje ruke.*"⁴ And more pointedly, in the words of the poet Njegoš:

*Što uteče ispod sablje Turske
Što na vjeru pravu ne pohuli
Što se ne šće u lance vezati
To se zbježa u ove planine,
Da ginemo i krv prolivamo—
Divno ime i svetu slobodu.*⁵

Those who escaped the Turkish sword
Who did not blaspheme against their faith
Those who refused to be chained
All of us have gathered high in these mountains
To give our lives, to spill our blood
To preserve our heroic heritage—
Our glorious name and sacred liberty.⁶

It was precisely in the central mountainous regions of the peninsula, the habitat of Cvijić's "Dinaric types," that the heroic tradition of Kosovo embodied in Miloš Obilić developed. This heroic image, although not absent entirely in the early cult writings dedicated to Lazar Prince, appeared to evolve after the cult of Lazar as martyr lost some of its initial strength and visibility. In his study of the origins of the cult of Lazar and the Kosovo tradition, the Serbian medievalist Rade Mihaljčić traces the

relative disappearance of the cult of Lazar which followed the demise of the short-lived Lazarević dynasty in 1427.⁷ After the death of Lazar's son, Stefan Lazarević, there was much less interest in Lazar's cult. To some extent the tensions between the Lazarević and Branković dynasties had some role in this, although there is evidence that even before this the cult was not celebrated in all parts of Serbia. It is clear that the cult, encouraged by the Church, lost much of its influence after the final collapse of the Serbian Despotate in 1459. The end of the autonomous state signaled a loss of power for the Church as well. By the third decade of the sixteenth century the Serbian patriarchate lost its independence, and the archbishopric of Ohrid assumed authority over those Serbian bishoprics which had been under the jurisdiction of the patriarchate. By the end of the sixteenth century most of the archbishops of Ohrid were Greeks who certainly had little interest in nurturing the cult of a fourteenth century Serbian prince.

As Mihaljčić observes, the cult of Lazar was increasingly localized so that eventually only the monastery of Ravanica continued a regular commemoration of the holy prince. The monks of Ravanica remained faithful to the cult of their founder until 1690 when the few surviving monks left the monastery with the remains of St. Lazar to join the great Serbian migration to southern Hungary. For three decades after the migration Ravanica was totally abandoned; and only in 1718 after the Treaty of Požarevac did life return to the monastery. But it never regained its former brilliance, and the cult of Lazar as saint and martyr was rekindled in its new, northern home.⁸

On the other hand, the more forceful image of the Kosovo hero survived the end of the Lazarević dynasty and the eventual collapse of the Serbian Despotate. That image found its expression in the evolving oral tradition of the Serbian people. This epic expression of selective historical memory accompanied the Serbs as they migrated out of the territory of the Despotate to the central mountainous regions of old Serbia, Montenegro, Herzegovina, and Bosnia. In the decade following the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 more than 300,000 Serbs began this nomadic trek. And it was in these regions of the peninsula that the image of the Kosovo hero was cultivated and preserved. The figure of Murad's assassin found a home in the culture of exile, where his courageous deed could inspire respect and enthusiasm for continued resistance to the Turks.

This was the Dinaric world of tribal communities described so famously by Cvijić. He found them to be powerful, often violent people

willing "to sacrifice everything in order to let a moral idea and an honorable movement succeed."⁹ His "Dinaric types" were inclined to act impulsively, to seek revenge for even small injustices, and to exhibit a pain and sadness that was rooted in history. In Cvijić's words:

Dinaric man burns from a desire to avenge Kosovo . . . where he lost his independence, and to restore the old Serbian empire, about which he constantly dreams, even in the most difficult times when anyone else would despair. . . . He considers himself chosen by God to carry out the national mission. He expresses these eternal thoughts in songs and sayings. . . . He returns to them at every opportunity. . . . Every Dinaric peasant considers the national heroes as his own ancestors. . . . in his thought he participates in their great deeds and in their immeasurable suffering. . . . He knows not only the names of the Kosovo heroes but also what kind of person each one was and what were his virtues and faults. There are even regions in which the people feel the wounds of the Kosovo heroes. For the Dinaric man to kill many Turks means not only to avenge his ancestors but also to ease their pains which he himself feels.¹⁰

In this culture—the patriarchal Serbian village—the epic tradition developed its own periodization of history. Everything revolved around great events which were seen to be important turning points in the life of a nation. In this tradition, Kosovo became critical in the popular consciousness and served as the dramatic watershed between independence and servitude.¹¹

Given the central role that Miloš Obilić and his defiant act on Kosovo played in the development of the Kosovo ethos, it is surprising that the Serbian cult sources in praise of Prince Lazar which emerged shortly after the battle of Kosovo do not mention Miloš Obilić and his assassination of Sultan Murad. While one might assume that the authors would speak of the assassin if they knew of him, it is probable that they believed that any reference to the assassin would detract from their main purpose which was to portray Prince Lazar's own selfless and courageous martyrdom.

Whatever the reason for this silence, other relatively contemporary

sources for the battle confirm that Murad was assassinated by a Serb warrior. The assassination is first reported in a Florentine letter to King Tvrtko of Bosnia, in an anonymous Florentine chronicle, in a life of Tamerlane by the Italian Beltram Minianelli, and in the earliest Ottoman sources. In the letter to King Tvrtko, the humanist Coluccio Salutati, chancellor of Florence, observed:

Fortunate, most fortunate are those hands of the twelve loyal lords who, having opened their way with the sword and having penetrated the enemy lines and the circle of chained camels, heroically reached the tent of Amurat [Murad] himself. Fortunate above all is that one who so forcefully killed such a strong vojvoda by stabbing him with a sword in the throat and belly.¹²

While this brief account offered very little information about the assassination, within a short time other sources provided much more detail which would become central to the legendary account of the Kosovo battle.

The first Serbian account of the assassination is from the fourth decade of the fifteenth century and is found in Constantine the Philosopher's *Life of Despot Stefan Lazarević*:

And there was a battle on a place called Kosovo which happened as follows. Among the soldiers who were fighting in the front lines was one of very noble birth who was slandered before his lord by certain jealous ones and marked as disloyal. In order to demonstrate his loyalty as well as his bravery, this one found the favorable time and rushed to the great leader himself as though he were a deserter, and they opened the way for him. And when he was near, he dashed forward at once and thrust a sword into that very haughty and terrible autocrat, and then he himself fell there at their hands.¹³

While the assassin is not named here, some of the most essential themes in the evolving tale of the assassination are clearly expressed by Constantine. The assassin is a nobleman who has been slandered before Prince Lazar by other jealous noblemen and is under suspicion of disloyalty. In order to clear his name and to show his knightly courage, he

flees to the sultan, feigns desertion, and stabs the Ottoman leader to death. In time this story would be embellished with detail, new characters, and vivid description; but the core of the Kosovo epic tradition is still that which is first found in this work by Constantine the Philosopher. It represents the heroic image in the developing ethos of Kosovo.

The first writer to give the name of Murad's assassin was Konstantin Mihailović from Ostrovica who wrote his *Memoirs of a Janissary or Turkish Chronicle* about 1497. His description of the Battle of Kosovo was intended as an example to his contemporaries of what happens when disloyalty rules the day. Lazar remains the most important figure in this description of the battle, but Mihailović identifies "Miloš Kobila" as the assassin of Murad and gives careful consideration to the "disloyalty of evil people." His account reveals some of the legendary motifs about Obilić, heroism, and treason in the very early stages of their development:

And then on Wednesday, the day of St. Vitus, there began a violent battle, and it lasted until Friday. Lords who supported Prince Lazar fought bravely, loyally, and honorably at his side; other, however, observed the battle looking through their fingers. Because of this disloyalty and dissension and the jealousies of evil and wicked people, the battle was lost on Friday at noon.

And here Miloš Kobila, Prince Lazar's knight, killed Emperor Murad. . . . And after those who were disloyal had watched the battle, they remained as traitors. That was not good for them later, because after a short time the emperor [Bayezid], leading them away one by one, ordered them all killed. He said, "Since you were so disloyal to your own lord in his misfortune, you would do the same to me."¹⁴

In 1530, three decades after Mihailović's Chronicle, Benedict Kuripešić wrote a travel description of the Balkan peninsula in which he also included a description of the assassination of Murad on Kosovo by one whom he identifies as Miloš Kobilović. Visiting the tomb of Murad on Kosovo Polje he writes:

On this place an old Serbian knight, Miloš

Kobilović, cut him [Murad] open with a knife when he and his army attacked the despot who was at that time prince or duke of Serbia. It is recorded in history how it happened. . . .

Kobilović was a well-known and celebrated knight. Every day on the border he did many heroic deeds, and even today many Croats and others in those regions sing about them. Nevertheless, many slandered him before his lord and claimed that he had plotted and made a pact with the enemy. . . . He fell into disfavor with his lord who showed no love or gratitude for his service as he always had earlier. Because of this the old knight suffered greatly.

In that time the prince gave a dinner in the camp. He seated many young nobles and courtiers around the table and showed them honor, but the old knight was only permitted to stand by the table. Then Kobilović, who was innocent, saw that the prince openly showed his disfavor toward him. . . . He decided to prove his innocence and to avenge the slander.

When dinner had ended he began with a heavy heart to speak to his lord, the duke: "Lord, have you forgotten how many times in your service I heroically pledged my life for you against your enemies? Have I not demonstrated my heroism in many ways? Have you forgotten this when you allow me, your old servant, to stand by the table and, to my disgrace, show much honor to the younger ones Therefore, lord, let God help you. I now go to prove my loyal service so that you will see how much more worthy of honor I am than are these who sit at your table. I will do that which the others will not do, and I will finish your war even though I will have to lose my life before that."

After that Miloš Kobilović went to the camp of the Turkish emperor. . . . And when the Turkish emperor heard that Kobilović was approaching, he rejoiced, thinking that he would be a friend. And they welcomed him. But he was pretending and allowed them to think this way. They received him warmly, acknowledging his heroic deeds, and announced him to the emperor who ordered

that they bring him to him. Then he requested to talk privately with the emperor about important things. The emperor agreed to this, thinking that he would explain how to defeat the duke. When they were alone and when the emperor offered him his right foot to kiss . . . the old knight said: "It is not appropriate for a Christian to kiss your foot; therefore you will now receive your reward."

When he bowed to kiss the foot, he drew a knife from his sleeve and ripped open the Turkish emperor from his stomach to his heart. And with a scream he gave up his spirit. A panic ensued and the knight ran to his horse and mounted him. But they killed him on the horse. When the Serbian army heard the scream and knew that Kobilović had cut down the emperor and then died himself, the prince realized that he had lost his loyal servant. And then the Turks, having lost their leader, fled. And so the duke, his army, land and people were saved this time from the Turks.

O, Kobilović . . . you got revenge in a Christian way and turned evil to good. You gave your life for your slanderers and saved your homeland from the enemy's hand. In this you remind us of two Romans: Gaius Mucius Scaevola . . . and Marcus Curtius.

From that time on not a single Turkish emperor allows anyone to kiss his foot, only his hand. Whomever the emperor receives and to whomever he offers his hand to kiss, that one is held by both arms by two pashas so that no one can do what Kobilović did. That is everything, O Kobilović, in memory of your heroism.¹⁵

Here we find some of the essential themes of the Kosovo legend: the slander against Miloš, Lazar's last supper where Miloš pledges to prove his innocence, and the assassination in the tent of Sultan Murad. Kuripešić recorded what he himself said he heard during his journey through the Balkans. Whatever his sources the account suggests that the popular tradition about Miloš was well established in the early decades of the sixteenth century and was widely disseminated. The tale of Miloš's courageous act in the Ottoman camp had become such a central theme in the evolving myth of Kosovo that Kuripešić includes little else but the

details of the assassination. And Kuripešić clearly delivered a message in his description. He interpreted the assassination as an example of true heroism: the unselfish sacrifice of oneself for a higher goal. In spite of the slander, Miloš died so that his people, including his own slanderers, could be free.

Miloš's heroic act found its way into early Ottoman and Greek sources as well. Since the Turks were profoundly affected by the death of their sultan in battle, it is understandable that all of the early sources would report the circumstances of his death; and, indeed, the assassination is the focus of each of these sources. While the Ottoman sources disagree over the exact time of the assassination (whether it occurred after or before the battle was over), they all interpret it as a sudden act of an anonymous Christian somewhere on the battlefield when Murad found himself alone. As the poet Ahmedi wrote in the early years of the fifteenth century, "Suddenly one of the Christians, who was covered in blood and apparently hidden among the enemy dead, got up, rushed to Murad and stabbed him with a dagger."¹⁶ Uruc, a historian from Edirne, reported that as Murad's soldiers pursued the enemy army, the sultan found himself completely alone on the field. Suddenly one of the Christian noblemen arose from among the corpses lying on the battlefield. He had promised himself as a sacrifice and approached Murad, who was sitting alone on his horse. Pretending he wished to kiss the sultan's hand, he stabbed the sultan with a sharp dagger.¹⁷

Murad's assassination also emerged as the primary focus in the few Greek sources for the battle from the late fifteenth century. Laonicus Chalcocondyles compared the circumstances of Murad's death as they were recorded by Ottoman and Greek sources. He told his readers that, according to the Greeks, a man of noble birth named Μηλονς (Miloes) voluntarily decided to accomplish the heroic act of assassination. He requested what he needed from Prince Lazar, and then rode off to Murad's camp with the intention of presenting himself as a deserter. Murad, who was standing in the midst of his troops before the battle, was eager to receive the deserter. Miloes reached the sultan and his bodyguards, turned his spear against Murad, and killed him.¹⁸

John Ducas, in the second half of the fifteenth century, observed:

There took place . . . an incredibly novel stratagem. A young Serb nobleman, who was more daring than any other man of his time, separated himself from the Christian

phalanx, as though he were deserting, and fell into the midst of the Turkish ranks. When the Turks immediately laid hands on him, he called out the ruler's name, saying, "I wish to see him and tell him something secretly so that he can win this battle; this is the reason I have deserted." They presented him to the ruler. As Murad motioned with his hand for the youth to approach, he rushed forward and, when near enough, mortally wounded Murad by plunging a sword into his heart.¹⁹

These Ottoman and Greek sources confirm again that the fact of Murad's assassination was recorded widely throughout the Balkans within decades of the conflict. It has even been suggested that the assassination theme may have found its way into the Serbian tradition from Ottoman sources.²⁰ This seems highly unlikely, however. By the beginning of the sixteenth century as more elements of the Kosovo tradition appear in extant sources, it appears more probable that the popular Serbian interpretation of Kosovo and the assassination was beginning to have an influence on the Turks themselves.

Sources in the sixteenth century demonstrate that the story of the assassination was being embellished by new elements as the legendary account of the noble deed began to assume its final shape. That process appears fairly complete by the time Mavro Orbini published his *Il regno degli Slavi* in 1601. We find in Orbini's work most of the main themes associated with Miloš and the assassination: a quarrel between Lazar's daughters which creates conflict between Vuk Branković and Miloš Obilić; Vuk's accusation of treason against Miloš; a banquet during which Lazar toasts Miloš and hopes to discover the truth of the accusation; Miloš's pledge to prove his loyalty; Miloš's flight to the Ottoman camp and his assassination of Murad. Orbini's account of the assassination would have an enormous influence on later chroniclers and historians. Most importantly, Orbini carefully develops the idea of heroic action against tyranny as the central message of the Kosovo story and one which Orbini wishes to present to all Slavs as an example of how they should live. Inspired by the heroic sacrifices of the Serbs on Kosovo, Orbini makes Lazar the spokesman for a philosophy of heroism, bravery, and defiance which Orbini aims at all Slavs. It is an interpretation of the Kosovo ethos which celebrates Lazar's heroism and does not consider a choice for the "heavenly kingdom" to be a sign of weakness or surrender. It suggests that

the heroic image of Kosovo belonged to Lazar as well. Dame Rebecca West might have understood the Kosovo ethos better had she read these words from Orbini:

After Miloš had left for the Ottoman camp, fear spread throughout the Serbian camp. They did not know yet what had happened with the Turk. Some attempted to persuade the others that it would be better to flee the war, lay down their arms, and surrender themselves to the enemy. When Prince Lazar saw this, he called his people to him and said the following to them: "Tenacity and daring with contempt only for death itself—these are virtues which raised you above the stars for the glory of all of Serbia. My brave comrades, what has happened to these rare virtues? What can we do? We can die, but only as common men. We can lose our lives, but only to our own credit and to the detriment of the enemy...Is it not better to die gloriously than to live in disgrace? Is it ever possible to die in a better way than to desire the death in advance? Tell me, if you refuse to be their slaves, why will you not die like the others, when all must die. You will certainly die some day, but not only will you suffer endless torment, disgrace, rebuke and shame, but so will your whole country. Since you must die sometime, is it not better to die armed and as a noble man rather than to die naked and in chains and slaughtered like animals? If you believe that everyone must die, what kind of naiveté is it to fear something which no one can escape? Death cannot be avoided by putting it off; but because of this, many lessen their glory when they try to escape. Is death anything different than the completion and end of all evil? Our mind tells us that death does not have to be difficult because it happens in a moment. It need not be bitter because with it ceases all pain and suffering. And surely it is neither boring nor pitiful because it only happens once. If death is like this, therefore, why do we fear it so? Why do we flee from a single death? Do we think we will die a thousand times in a moment? Let any thought to surrender and slavery escape your mind and escape your indomitable Slavic

blood. If we cannot live any longer, let us die among our enemies. We will die armed against the armed enemy. Other peoples die quietly, defeated by the years, enfeebled by time, tormented by fever and thousands of different ills. Only the Slavs die by the sword; yes, by the sword only the Slavs die. But we also destroy part of the enemy and retaliate so that that very enemy, even if they are the victors, always mourn their own death. And who knows, if we decide to be Slavs, which means to be glorious victors in battle for all the places upon which we tread and upon which our ancestors tread, or if we at least decide to be people who can handle a sword and know how to kill bravely and be killed—who knows, perhaps we will kill them just as well as they kill us? Fortune aids the brave, and it is not numbers which bring victory but rather the bravery of the soldier and the wisdom of the commander. On our side is all justice because the enemy came into our land and conquered many places. We are in great distress, and this usually makes even the greatest cowards courageous. We have so many weapons that if we used them bravely they would either open the road to us everywhere or create for us such a great society that the very enemy and others would mourn our death. Therefore, since we are completely in despair for our salvation, let us risk everything and bravely attack the enemy. You will see how despair always brings a person out of misfortune and leads most often to the highest level of satisfaction about which one could hardly dream."²¹

Orbini's history was translated by Sava Vladislavić and published in St. Petersburg on 20 August 1722. Recognizing the potential power of this work which celebrated Slavic consciousness and the courage to seek freedom by killing bravely, Austrian authorities tried to prevent the work from reaching the Serbian population in the Vojvodina. But generally they were not successful, and Orbini came to have an important influence on the further development of a national consciousness among the Serbs in the 18th century.

That Serbian historical consciousness was aided by yet another version of the Kosovo legend which was carried to the Vojvodina by

refugees from the South—Montenegro, Boka Kotorska, and the area around Dubrovnik—about the same time that Vladislavić's translation of Orbini arrived there. Eventually known as *Priča o boju kosovskom*, this was to be the final and most complete expression of the long evolving Kosovo legend. Certainly influenced by Orbini, the author of this tale was also very familiar with the popular oral tradition in the mountains and coastal regions of the South. Because of this the *Priča o boju kosovskom* contains scenes and personalities which are not found in Orbini. It attests to the presence of a vibrant epic tradition which celebrated the image of the national hero and demanded heroic sacrifice of all Serbs. In this version of the tale, for example, Princess Milica implored her husband, Lazar, not to take her nine Jugović brothers into battle lest the line of Jug Bogdanović die out. But Lazar could not honor her request because he believed that it would be disgraceful for even one to remain behind. As Lazar argued, "All the other soldiers would [then] say that that one was neither a hero nor a man born of heroic lineage."²²

While the evolving tale of Kosovo and the assassination still followed the basic outline of the event as it was recorded in the extant historical sources, over time Miloš also emerged as a completely mythical character in peasant society. For someone who was not even identified in the earliest Serbian sources for the Battle of Kosovo, Miloš eventually became Lazar's son-in-law, one of Serbia's greatest feudal lords, and finally a legendary figure with supernatural powers. Stories of Miloš and his supernatural origin and strength abound in Karadžić's collection of popular songs. Miloš was born to Janja, a Serbian shepherdess, who was impregnated by a dragon. Abandoned on Sargan mountain, Miloš was raised by Andjelija, a foster mother who was a mountain *vila* or wood nymph and whose milk, of course, contributed to his supernatural strength. In one story Tsar Stefan spied on Miloš in his rustic house and discovered him suckling at his mother's breast in a scene of certain superhuman proportions. His mother was kneading bread, and her right breast was flung over her left shoulder and her left breast over her right shoulder. Seeing this, Tsar Stefan exclaimed, "*Medjer obila majka, rodila obila junaka.*" (An extraordinary mother has borne an extraordinary hero).²³ Stefan then took Miloš to his court and named him Obilić. Miloš, of course, would never lose the supernatural qualities that his unusual lineage produced; and these attributes found their way into numerous folk tales. Nevertheless, given the importance of Miloš's heroic deed on the field of Kosovo and the reality of his tragic end there, even in myth his supernatural dimensions

could not save him from his ultimate mortal fate.

Only sainthood could provide Miloš with an element of immortality, and sometime during the First Serbian Uprising a portrait of Miloš as a saint was painted in Lazar's narthex in Hilandar Monastery on Mt. Athos. Rade Mihaljčić suggests that a cult of Miloš as saint and martyr probably began to develop spontaneously among the Serbs south of the Sava and Danube during the Ottoman period, especially where there were few churches and monasteries.²⁴ Any movement toward canonization would have been difficult if not impossible north of the Danube where well-educated monks knew the strict requirements for canonization. Miloš as the heroic and even mythic assassin of Murad was not a classic martyr. Such restraints, however, may have been of little concern to the popular imagination in Ottoman Serbia. By the beginning of the nineteenth century a popular cult around Miloš had arisen; and while the monks of Hilandar should have understood their canon law, it appears that the Serbian uprising must have presented an overwhelming inspiration. Bearing a halo and a sword, the Hilandar fresco is accompanied by these words, "Saint Miloš perished at Kosovo."²⁵ Within the course of the nineteenth century he would be remembered as a saint in several other churches in Serbia. But the saintly cult would never overshadow the cult of Miloš as hero. Petar Petrović Njegoš made sure of that.

¹ From Petar Njegoš, *The Mountain Wreath*, in Thomas Butler, *Monumenta Serbocroatica* (Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications), p. 367.

² Jovan Cvijić, *Balkansko poluostrvo i južnoslovenske zemlje* (Belgrade, 1966), p. 368.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

⁴ Quoted in *Ibid.*

⁵ Quoted in Rade Mihaljčić, *Junaci kosovske legende* (Belgrade, 1989), p. 202.

⁶ English translation in Mihaljčić, *The Battle of Kosovo* (Belgrade, 1989), p. 200.

⁷ Rade Mihaljčić, *Lazar Hrebeljanović: Istorija; Kult; Predanje* (Belgrade, 1984), pp. 177-184.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190.

⁹ Cvijić, *op. cit.*, p. 370.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 361, 368.

¹¹ Vasa Čubrilović, *Istorija političke misli u Srbiji XIX veka* (Belgrade, 1958), pp. 38-39.

¹² V.V. Makušev, "Prilozi k srpskoj istoriji XIV i XV veka," *Glasnik srpskog učenog društva*, XXXII (1871), 174-175.

¹³ V. Jagić, "Konstantin Filosof i njegov život Stefana Lazarevića despota srpskoga," *Glasnik srpskog učenog društva*, XLII (1875), 260-261.

¹⁴ Konstantin Mihailović iz Ostrovice, *Janičarove uspomene ili Turska hronika*, ed. Djordje Živanović (Belgrade, 1966), pp. 105-107.

¹⁵ Benedikt Kuripešić, *Putopis kroz Bosnu, Srbiju, Bugarsku i Rumeliju 1530* (from the German by Djordje Pejanović) (Sarajevo, 1950), pp. 33-35.

¹⁶ A. Olesnicki, "Turksi izvori o Kosovskom boju," *Glasnik skopskog naučnog društva*, XIV (1934), 61.

¹⁷ Fehim Bajraktarević, "Jedan odvojeni Turski prikaz kosovske bitke," *Politika*, XXXII, no. 9570 (January 6-9, 1935), 31.

¹⁸ Laonicus Chalcocondyles, *De rebus turcicis*, ed. Immanuel Bekkerus (Bonn, 1843), pp. 53-54.

¹⁹ Ducas, *Historia Byzantina*, ed. Immanuel Bekkerus (Bonn, 1834), pp. 15-17.

²⁰ See Miodrag Popović, *Vidovdan i časni krst* (Belgrade, 1976), pp. 22-31.

²¹ Mavro Orbin, *Kraljevstvo slovena*, eds. Franja Barišić et. al. (Belgrade, 1968), pp. 98-100.

²² Jelka Redjep, *Priča o boju Kosovskom* (Zrenjanin, 1976), p. 67.

²³ Rade Mihaljčić, *Junaci kosovske legende* (Belgrade, 1989), p. 42.

²⁴ For a discussion of the cult of Lazar see *Ibid.*, pp. 56-69.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

FOLK SONGS AND THEIR TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE SERBIAN-AMERICAN DIASPORA 1900-1925*

Krinka Vidaković-Petrov
University of Pittsburgh

The Serbian-American Diaspora

Major Serbian emigration took place from approximately 1880 to 1920. The geographic pattern of emigration is important since the vast majority of Serbs that settled in the U.S. came from regions dominated (until 1918) by Austria-Hungary (Vojvodina, Banja, Lika, Kordun, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Boka Kotorska); very few emigrants came from Serbia. The motives behind emigration were lack of political freedom, pressure to renounce Serbian Orthodoxy and poor economic conditions. The latter define the goals of emigration as well: freedom to organize politically, freedom of religion and economic opportunity.

Most immigrants believed their stay in America would be temporary and that they would soon return to their homeland. The notion of homeland was identified in several ways. One is *zavičaj* (native home area) and *stari kraj* (old country), both local and regional. Interestingly enough, by *domovina* (homeland) and *otadžbina* (fatherland) they did not mean Austria-Hungary, but a land most of them had never seen or set foot in—Serbia. Serbia, which was often referred to as *Majka Srbija* (Mother Serbia), implying that the Serbian nation, dispersed in lands dominated by two hostile states (Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman), perceived Serbia as a mother figure i.e. as the source of national identity.

In Austria-Hungary and Turkey, Serbs were living in their historic lands dominated by foreign powers. However, in America this was not so. Even the concept of "land" was different. Most immigrants had been farmers, while in America they became hired laborers living mostly in industrial centers (working in steel mills and slaughter houses), mining towns (in Montana, California and Nevada) or in the middle of nowhere

(where railroads were being built). They lived together in improvised houses or crammed and dirty boarding houses. America quickly became a *hladna tudjina* (a cold foreign land), which provided jobs and income, but hardly any relevance to the immigrants' spiritual, emotional and cultural needs. They distinguished *domoljublje* (love for the home, the land) from *rodoljublje* (love for the people, the nation). The latter implied national identification of the people regardless of the state in which they lived. In most cases their national identity (Serbian) did not coincide with their administrative identity (Austrian, Hungarian). The immigrants identified themselves as belonging to the Serbian nation, but being of variable regional provenance (*Vojvodjani*, *Banovci*, *Bokelji*) or citizenship (Austrian, Hungarian, American Serbs).

Living in small but compact communities isolated from the American environment, the immigrants quickly began organizing according to patterns established in the old country. Thus they formed several types of organizations: social and economic (cooperatives), religious and educational (church-school congregations), insurance organizations (fraternal associations), cultural associations (literary societies and choirs). They also published newspapers designed to provide a medium of local and regional public communication within the ethnic community.

Most immigrants were poor, uneducated, semiliterate or illiterate. Educated individuals were an exception rather than the rule. Their cultural heritage was a traditional system which had for centuries defined their identity, their perception of reality and history, their way of expressing the most profound human emotions, their definition of spiritual, ethic and aesthetic values. The elements of their national identity were: language, religion, customs and a long orally transmitted tradition.

Current events such as the Annexation Crisis (1908), the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and especially World War I (1914-1918), mobilized the American Serbian diaspora around the issue of national interests in accordance with the prevalent perception of their national identity. Thus they engaged in a propaganda effort involving three concepts of homeland: Serbia (the homeland of the nation), Austria-Hungary (a hostile official homeland) and the United States (a neutral economic homeland). The immigrants collected aid for Serbia and recruited volunteer soldiers for the Serbian army. In this context they used the still strong oral literary tradition as the source of an effective identity image but also as the means of generating new expressions of the latter as interpreted in current conditions.

In other words, it provided a literary code shared by all parts of the

* This paper has been presented at the 28th National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Boston, November 14, 1996.

nation (in Serbia, in other Serbian historic lands, in the diaspora) which could be used as a means of asserting their collective origins and aspirations.

There are three basic aspects to the question of folk songs and their transformations: 1) traditional folk songs (*narodne pesme*); 2) literary, non-literary and extra-literary interpretations of traditional folk songs; and, 3) poems based on traditional folk songs or imitations of the latter (*pesme na narodnu*).

1. Traditional Folk Songs

Folk songs from the oral tradition were the basic poetic heritage of Serbian immigrants in the U.S. This was a tradition which contained an already well established image of the Serbian national identity, especially transmitted by narrative heroic songs pertaining to two cycles: on Kosovo and on Kraljević Marko.

The Kosovo cycle deals with a crucial event in Serbian history. It displays a complex interpretation involving history as well as myth, secular as well as religious elements. The events and protagonists of the Kosovo historical drama were established as mythic archetypes built into the foundation of the identity image. Prince Lazar gained the status of saint due to the cult initiated by the Serbian Orthodox Church and further elaborated and transmitted by the oral poetic tradition. A different archetypal character, associated with the period following the fall of the Serbian state, was Kraljević Marko, who was established as an epic hero embodying the popular perception of the struggle for survival and dignity in precarious conditions of Ottoman rule.

American Serbian newspapers published these songs repeatedly. The *American Srbobran* began publishing folk songs from its very first issue and would continue doing so for decades. Kosovo and Marko folk songs (and others) were considered as part of the classical Serbian literary heritage which was transmitted by reproduction and repetition. This meant that the texts were not subject to changes, adaptations or revisions. It also meant that they were transmitted both through oral performance (memorization and singing) and through reading (from the printed media: books, newspapers, journals). In the context of modern culture, especially that of the urban environment (including that of the immigrants in America) defined by writing and printing, oral transmission still played a role, but the latter was different from the one it had played in historic periods of highly limited literacy, lack of educational facilities and patriarchal village life.

The appreciation of these folk songs is summed up well by Zmaj Jovan Jovanović's line: "Thanks to folk songs, we have endured." A good example illustrating this was the position of the *guslar* (performer of epic heroic songs, which are sung to the accompaniment of *gusle*, a traditional string instrument) in these new conditions. By this I mean the very interesting case of Petar Perunović, born in 1880, in Montenegro.

As a young man, Perunović had stayed with the family of Stanislav Vinaver (in Šabac), where he attended school, but also performed traditional heroic folk songs. Stevan Rota¹ writes how Perunović attended the demonstrations against the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Belgrade in 1908. While other participants delivered speeches, he performed an improvised *guslar* song, which indicates the functionality of the latter in public communication dealing with political issues of national significance. After participating in the liberation of Kumanovo in 1912 (as a soldier), Perunović dedicated himself to singing old and improvising new *guslar* songs, which he performed in Serbia as well as in the Serbian (and Croatian) communities he toured in the U.S. Altogether he spent ten years in America (performing and recording *guslar* songs, teaching in Serbian schools, recruiting volunteer soldiers for the Serbian army). He considered the *guslar* songs as "*najveće blago naše narodne književnosti i najdragoceniji nacionalni kapital* (the greatest treasure of our oral literature and the most valuable asset of our nation)." During his stay in the U.S. he had the opportunity of meeting Nikola Tesla, who admitted that he had not heard the *gusle* for over forty years, but that he had Karadžić's collection in his library and that he would read the songs from time to time "*da se osvežim narodnim duhom i ne zaboravim srpski jezik* (to refresh the popular spirit within me and maintain the Serbian language)." Here is how Perunović describes Tesla's response to his performance:

Već u početku pevanja pesme "Starac Vujadin," primetio sam da sam na Teslu učinio dobar utisak. U sredini pesme, Tesla se malo zanese, a niz obraze mu potekoše suze. Mene to još više oduševi, te sam sve snažnije pevao. Posle svršene pesme, Tesla ustade i snažno mi steže ruku, pa se okrete dr Radoslavljeviću i reče: "Gusle su najjača sila da osvoje dušu Srbinu!"²

(When I began performing the song "Old Man Vujadin," I noticed that Tesla was responding well. Somewhere in

the middle of the performance, Tesla became emotional, tears were running down his cheeks. This encouraged me so I sang the song with even more enthusiasm. When I was done, Tesla stood up, shook my hand firmly and then turned to Dr. Radosavljević, saying to him: "Nothing can move the soul of a Serb more than the *gusle*.)"

The case of Nikola Tesla shows the function of the collection of classical Serbian folk songs and the response to the performance of these songs. They provided a connection with the roots of his nation which absorbed the underground flow of a collective consciousness merging archetypal images, rhythmic and sound patterns as well as patterns of poetic organization which any Serb would recognize as being undoubtedly Serbian.

2. Interpretations

The *American Srbobran* followed the model of the original newspaper edited in Zagreb by Svetozar Pribićević. Both Pribićević and his newspaper were national heroes among the Krajina immigrants in America. The Serbian-American newspaper began publishing classical Serbian folk songs from its very first issue. Later on we also find a number of articles on this topic. We have chosen four of these texts as illustrations of the interpretation of traditional folk songs.

Two of them are articles authored by contributors i.e. editors of the *American Srbobran*, "Rat i naša narodna poezija (War and Our Folk Poetry)" by Budimir Grahovac (editor 1918-1920)³ and "O narodnoj pesmi (On Folk Songs)" by Branko Dajičić (editor 1920-1939).⁴ Both stress the importance of the oral tradition as a point of convergence of *religious, ethical, historical* and *poetic* values. Dajičić indicates that the two tenets of the national identity were the *narodna pesma* (traditional folk songs) and the *narodna crkva* (traditional folk-religion) while Grahovac compares oral folk songs to the *Evandjelje* (the Gospels). Both authors praise the power of epic folk songs to inspire resistance to oppression, courage and the will to sacrifice one's life for national ideals. This is the basis of a tragic conflict (the hero faced with an antagonist he cannot conquer) reflecting a preference given to the spirit (freedom, resurrection) over tangible reality (slavery, death). This is epitomized in Lazar's choice of the Heavenly Kingdom and Obilić's sacrifice. As Grahovac puts it, the oral tradition transformed passive slaves into active heroes. Dajičić indicates that there

are two histories of the Serbian people. One deals with facts as found in historical books which have been available to few. The other deals with poetic interpretations transmitted orally and available to many. The undoubtable poetic value of Serbian folk songs stresses the expressive function of the songs and their poetic organization.

Grahovac and Dajičić do not offer a new interpretation of Serbian folk songs. On the contrary, they stress the already established features of the latter. However, by perpetuating such an interpretation in a different context (among the American immigrants in the second decade of the 20th century), they seem to be confirming that the oral tradition was an "untouchable" guardian of the national identity in the literature of the diaspora. The priority of diaspora literature was to maintain its identity in view of the unavoidable process of assimilation, which mainstream Serbian literature did not have to deal with. At first, the stress on identity was a response to the isolation from the American environment, but once the Serbs were incorporated into American culture, it became a response to the pressure of the latter. Pressure was exerted through assimilation, which became apparent in the twenties. Those were the years when Serbian newspapers began introducing sections in English (translations designed to educate the young generation in the spirit of Serbian religion and culture).

The two following texts deal with the same topic and offer an identical interpretation. However, the latter is presented in a form which indicates a shift in discourse and function.

The first one is a prose text written by Lazo Popović and titled *Marko*. It was published as an introduction to a collection of folk songs of which Kraljević Marko was the protagonist. Popović's introduction is structured in a way which implies the link between the secular and sacral oral texts (explicitly indicated by the above-mentioned articles). He interprets the folk song character by addressing Marko in a collective monologue and establishing a pattern found in a religious oral genre: the prayer. In order to stress this link, he completes each paragraph with a quote/paraphrase from the prayer par excellence—the *Oče naš* (The Lord's Prayer). Popović expands the motifs found in the two above mentioned articles, introducing new ones as well (such as the mother motif, which is extremely important in Serbian folk songs). Thus Marko appears as a Serbian epic variant of a Christian archetype, representing social values (equality and justice for the poor) as well as individual values (respect for the mother figure). Popović's interpretation is not an article, but a prayer to the father figure of the secular poetic tradition:

Pomešao si u naše žile dve krvi, oče naš Marko, posejao si dva semena u zemlju našu, u jednu dušu našu spojio si dve duše, sljubio si, krv, duh i seme gospode i seljaka u decu tvoju, rodio si nas, neka je sveto ime tvoje. . .

Ti straha nisi znao, oče naš Marko, i bojao si se jedino tvoje majke, čist i neokaljan ženskom dušom, od čudnog začeca tvoga do velike smrti tvoje, voleo si i pokoravao si se samo majci, od nje si primao oproštenje i po njenim rečima govorio si kraljevima i carevima pravdu, išao si da oreš carske drumove, da nam daš hleb naš nasušni, koji nam i danas treba.⁵

(You have blended two types of blood in our veins, *our father* Marko, you have sown two seeds in our land, united two souls in our soul, you have united in love the blood, spirit and seed of lords and peasants in us, your children, you have given birth to us, *hallowed be Thy name*. . .)

You knew not fear, *our father* Marko, and you feared only your mother, being pure and unstained by the feminine soul, from your strange conception to your great death, you loved and obeyed only your mother, received absolution only from her and heeded her counsel when you imparted justice to kings and tzars, when you ploughed the royal roads, in order to *give us our daily bread*, which we need *this day*.)

The second text is the poem "Gusle" by Niko Musić.⁶ The poem comments on the same features highlighted by the above-mentioned texts (Grahovac, Dajičić, Popović). In this case the comment takes a poetic form. Like Popović, Musić uses a monologue (to the *gusle*) including a reference to the prayer (*Vaše ime, omiljeno, sveto/Your beloved, hallowed name*). Musić begins with a typically romantic invocation of the "harp" (*divna harfo otačastva moga/lovely harp of my fatherland*), but later uses the Serbian word *gusle*, whose grammatical form (plural/feminine) suggests two things: the collective character of the oral poetic tradition (*Vi ste sačuvali/ono čem se Srbin danas divi/You have preserved that which Serbs today admire*) and an identification *gusle/songs*. The musical instrument is also a cultural hero whose achievements (the songs) have remained unsurpassed in Serbian literature.

Musić uses the decasyllable line (in four-line stanzas rhymed *abab*), but his poem follows a model provided by 19th century literature. This is not an imitation of a model from the oral tradition, but a eulogy of the latter very much in keeping with the romantic poets' praise of folklife and folklore throughout Europe.

3. Imitation

Imitation involves various aspects of text and various levels of the latter: models of interpretation, generic conventions, elements of content, features of style, microtextual elements. Thematically, samples studied in the next section deal with current events and their protagonists. Most texts are signed, in some cases the author used a pseudonym, in others he is anonymous. These songs are defined as imitations of songs from the oral tradition (*pesme na narodnu*) and they mark the transition from *traditional* to *popular* literature. They illustrate the imitation of several genres, both high and low, ritual and non-ritual, narrative and lyrical (epic songs, laments, children's songs). Imitation involves elements of content (topoi, motifs, formulas), phraseology, metric patterns, features of style, lexic specifics, etc. Several examples point to mock imitation based on the discrepancy between form (high or low) and content (low or high).

a) Veljko Radojević: *Majka Crnogorka* (Montenegrin Mother)

Veljko Radojević was one of the most interesting Serbian intellectuals in the diaspora. He was from Boka and before emigrating to the U.S. he had been very active in collecting folk songs from that area. He had participated in the literary efforts of the *Gorski Vijenac* (The Mountain Wreath) society and its journal *Luča* (The Torch), which brought together men of letters such as Šantić, Dučić, Ćorović. He began publishing his poems in 1888, first in the "Glas Crnogorca (Voice of the Montenegrin)" edited by Laza Kostić. On his arrival to the U.S. in 1900 Radojević went to California, where he edited the newspaper *Sloboda* (Liberty). A few years later he founded *Srpska nezavisnost* (Serbian Independence), which he published in Oakland, California.

Radojević's poem "Majka Crnogorka" consists of two parts: the battle between the Montenegrins and Turks (led by Moustafa-Pasha) and a scene containing a dialogue between the Montenegrin leader and a mother who has lost several of her sons in the battle. The poem was published in the newspaper *Sloboda* (1903) where it was described as "a true historical representation." In a comment appearing forty years later, Smiljka

Radulović indicates that Radojević wrote the poem using a description of events provided by a wartime journalist.⁷

Although the battle was a current event, the description given in the first part of Radojević's poem is based on a pattern found in oral folk songs. In other words, on describing a real event, Radojević has used a model he knew from the oral tradition. To find the model we need not go far because it can be found in "Boj Crnogoraca s Mahmut-pašom (Battle of the Montenegrins with Mahmout-Pasha)," a folk song Radojević recorded in Herceg Novi and published in his book of Serbian traditional folk songs, where he comments on this and other versions of the song.⁸ The model description consists of the following motifs: advance of the Turkish army and their arrogant threat; comparison of the two armies (Montenegrin soldiers far outnumbered by Turkish, but Montenegrins braver and better soldiers); the clash; the Turks are defeated, initial arrogance turns to plea for mercy; the Turks retreat in panic, chased by the Montenegrins; comparison of the two armies (Montenegrin casualties far outnumbered by Turkish).

Another feature of this poem is the tendency to interpret contemporary events in terms of historical myth in which Kosovo is an archetypal model. Contemporary battles are interpreted as variants of the one given in the Kosovo songs: courage is compared to that of Obilić, glory to that of Lazar, the ideal to that of the "*krst časni*" (the Holy Cross). However, new battles are perceived as a reversal of the Kosovo defeat (currently, the liberation of Serbian lands, including Kosovo, in the Balkan Wars).

The second part of the poem, with the focusing on the mother of the heroes who died in the battle, suggests a comparison with the famous folk song "Smrt majke Jugovića (Death of the Mother Jugović)." However, Radojević's mother character is different in several respects. She is a real rather than symbolical character. The dialogue between her and the *gospodar* (ruler) is direct and literal (lacking the subtle imagery and lyrical power of the folk song model). Her suffering does not culminate in death, but continues in a life motivated by resistance and revenge. In other words, she is an epic variant of the mother figure.

b) Anonymous: *Srbija i Sv. Vasilije* (Serbia and St. Basil)

The protagonist of the anonymous "Srbija i Sv. Vasilije"⁹ is also a mother figure. However, here she is a personification of the homeland: Mother Serbia. She is described as a widowed mother whose home (churches, schools, books) has been destroyed and who is kept in a dungeon. The saint is introduced by a typical stylistic device of the oral

tradition: Slavic antithesis. The latter is incomplete, but it contains two additional elements of the oral tradition. One is the image of the swan (well-known from "The Death of the Mother Jugović"), suggesting a being from the other world (the swan as well as the *vila*, fairy). The supernatural being is first identified as the soul of her dead son Vojin (a name semantically associated with warfare: *vojna*, *vojska*, *vojniki*, war, army, soldier). It is also identified with his servant (frequently appearing in epic folk songs, such as "The Death of Smail Aga Čengić" by Ivan Mažuranić, where the Bishop's servant is called Milovan). The other is a stylistic element from the oral tradition—the use of the vocative in nominative positions (*progovara sluga Milovane*).

The main motif of the song—the encounter of an old mother with a saint—is found in oral folk songs.¹⁰ However, this specific elaboration—published in the midst of the war, when Serbia was in a desperate situation—is highly symbolical. By identifying the "old woman" as Serbia, the author refers to the wartime destruction of villages, churches and schools, the massacres of the civilian population by Austrian troops.

The occupation of Serbia is described by using another motif found in the oral tradition: the prisoner complaining of his inability to feel the passage of time. In one well-known song, Marko Kraljević narrates how during his long prison years he could not tell the passage of time (succession of summer and winter) if it were not for the young women who would throw into his cell "a sprig of basil" (summer) or "snowballs" (winter).¹¹ In the song published in the *American Srbobran* we have an analogous situation: occupied Serbia would not know a new year had begun if it were not for St. Basil, who has come from heaven to tell her this. St. Basil's day is January 1st—the New Year. And the song was published in the *American Srbobran* on January 15, 1917 (January 14 is the first day of the new year according to the "old" calendar). Therefore the song is a new year greeting to war-torn Serbia, expressing hope and salvation. It is one of the best examples of the use of conventions from the oral tradition in songs *na narodnu* dealing with current events:

*Bože mili i doba krvavo,
Ko to jezdi preko polja ravna,
Na labudu k'o na gorskoj vili,
Dal' je duša mog sina Vojina,
Il' je njegov sluga Milovane?
Dok Srbija u riječi bila,*

*Pred nju stade Sv. Vasilije
 I sa konja njojzi progovara:
 – O Srbijo, ucveljena majko,
 Na nebu smo čuli od andjela
 Da si danas tužna, ramohrana.
 Dušmani ti razorili crkve,
 Dušmani ti porušili škole,
 Dušmani ti knjige popalili,
 I ti ne znaš u ladnoj tavnici
 Kad je Božić kad li Djurdjev danak,
 Kad je slava ni kad je nedjelja,
 Pa se dragom Bogu ražalilo.
 On mi reče da na zemlju sidjem,
 Da ti javim novu godinicu.*

(O mighty God, what bloody times!
 What is flying across the flat field,
 Someone riding a swan or mountain fairy?
 Can it be the soul of my son Vojin
 Or his loyal servant Milovan?
 As Serbia was saying these words,
 A horseman appeared before her,
 It was none other than St. Basil:
 – O Serbia, bereaved mother,
 Angels have told us in heaven
 That you are helpless and in sorrow,
 Enemies have demolished your churches,
 Enemies have destroyed your schools,
 Enemies have burned your books,
 In this cold dungeon you cannot know
 When it is Christmas, when St. George's Day
 When it is *slava*, when it is Sunday.
 Dear God in heaven felt pity for you.
 So he told me to descend to earth
 To let you know a new year has begun.

c) Petar Perunović: Various Songs

Grahovac's ideas presented in his article "War and Our Folk Poetry" (1916) are illustrated by the songs performed and improvised by

Petar Perunović. Perunović toured Serbian (and Croatian) communities in the U.S. in 1916, singing about "recent battles, the suffering and the courage of our people and our liberation army." This was a time when most Serbian immigrants were still citizens of Austria-Hungary, which had organized a very strong anti-Serb campaign in the U.S. In 1916 Serbia and Montenegro were in a desperate war. Serbia did not have the funds or means to counter Austrian propaganda in the U.S., but it did send two individuals who would effectively mobilize the Serb and other pro-Yugoslav immigrants. One was Milan Pribićević, representative of the Serbian military mission in the U.S. (brother of Svetozar Pribićević, political leader of the Serbs in Austria-Hungary) who was hailed by the Krajina Serbs in America as "a new apostle of the people." The other was Petar Perunović, who participated in the campaign with his *gusle* and his *guslar* songs. The latter were an effective means of stimulating patriotic feelings among the immigrants who responded by organizing aid to Serbia and going there as volunteer soldiers. The effectiveness of his war propaganda relied on the response elicited by the songs he performed. Perunović sang many classical folk songs as well as new songs depicting current events, stressing the epic and heroic element of both.

One of the songs he improvised was an elegy for his friend and comrade in arms, Vasilije Vučković, who had died in battle. Perunović's improvisation follows a model from the oral tradition: the epic lament. The influence of the epic tradition on a lyrical genre such as the lament is reflected in various features of the song, but we will indicate only one:

*Ime ti se slavom spominjalo,
 U raju ti duša počinula,
 Dje Obilić nad sjenima vlada.*

(May your name be mentioned in glory
 May your soul rest peacefully in heaven
 Where Obilić is lord of the souls)

The fact that it is Obilić who reigns in paradise is a sign of the epic spirit of the lament as well as the above-mentioned analogy between the folk song and the folk-church (*narodna pesma/ narodna crkva*). The usual blessing concluding an obituary is adapted to the epic model according to which all heroes are depicted as joining the supreme hero of the epic songs—Miloš Obilić.

Perunović improvised on other topics as well. When he was invited to the Sorbonne in Paris, he performed classical Serbian folk songs and improvised a song dedicated to France ("Homeland of Light and Freedom"). Another interesting example is his improvisation on the topic of Yugoslavism. In the latter he uses two lines borrowed from the folk song in which Jevrosima advises Marko to uphold justice at all costs:

*Gusle moje, istorijo stara,
Pomoz'te mi da pjesmu zapjevam
Ni po babu ni po stričevima,
Već po pravdi Boga istinoga:
Za Srbina kao za Hrvata,
Za Hrvata kao za Slovenca,
Za radnika k'o za gospodina,
Za siraka k'o za bratstva jaka...*

(O *gusle*, wisdom of past generations,
Help me sing a song of justice,
Not to bear false witness
To the pleasure of my father and uncles,
But to speak according to the judgement of the true God:
For the Serb as for the Croat,
For the Croat as for the Slovene;
For the humble laborer as for the lordly rich man,
For the orphan as for the strong brotherhood.)¹²

It is not only the formula that has been borrowed, but the idea of justice, which is applied to a current topic—the newly created South Slav state (in which all its nations, the rich and the poor, the high and the low, should have the same rights).

d) Vuk Pavić: *Oslobodjenje Boke* (Liberation of Boka)

Once the war was over, there were a number of new songs dedicated to victory and victorious Serbian leaders, namely representatives of the ruling Karadjordjević dynasty—King Peter and King Alexander. The liberation of Serbian lands was hailed and the Karadjordjević family was praised. "Oslobodjenje Boke" (1920), written by Vuk Pavić,¹³ hails the liberation of Boka Kotorska and eulogizes King Peter I by utilizing several elements borrowed from the oral tradition. We will indicate only one of

them. As in the previous example, it is a blessing. However it is not the type found in dirges, but rather of the kind found in a genre called *počasnice* (blessings of guests attending a celebration). However, blessings and inverted blessings (curses) are found in many folk songs. A well-known curse is the one Prince Lazar addressed to those who failed to come to Kosovo. Another common blessing expresses lasting glory, gratitude and recognition by using two basic natural images—the sun and the moon—which are considered eternal and unchanging. It reads: *Dugo ti se ime spominjalo/Dokle traje sunca i mjeseca*. (May your name be remembered a long time/Whilst sun and moon endure). Pavić incorporates this element from oral tradition, but he also adapts it by employing parallelism and drawing an analogy between nature on the one hand and the Serbian nation and its historic land on the other:

*... Tvoje ime nikad ne zaspalo,
Koljeno ti uvek carevalo,
Divnom srpskom zemljom upravljalo,
Dokle traje sunca i mjeseca!
... Bog ti čuv'o carstvo i junaštvo
Sve od tvoje krvi i koljena
Dok trajalo Srba i Lovćena.*

(... May your name never fall asleep,
May your descendants forever rule
The lovely Serbian land,
So long as sun and moon endure!
... May God save your kingdom and your courage,
Your successors and your heirs,
So long as Serbs and Mount Lovćen endure.)

e) Uglješa Vojvoda: *Akron na rastanku s B. Grahovcem* (Akron Bids Farewell to B. Grahovac); and Mihailo Mrdjenović: *Pismo u stihovima* (An Epistle in Verse)

In a number of epic songs there are two forms of dialogue. One is presented as an oral dialogue conducted by two speakers present in the same place at the same time. The second type is a dialogue presented through letters, meaning that the speakers are not located at the same points in time and space. In other words, they are exchanging messages through mediators. There are two kinds of mediators: letters and messengers

(characters who are told by one speaker what to say to another person on his behalf). In another genre—the lament—we find a specific type of dialogue involving two groups: the living and the dead. Between them there is only one kind of mediator: the deceased, who is leaving the family in "this" world in order to join the family in the "other" world. The lament is a ritual genre and for ritual reasons death is never mentioned. The deceased is described as going away on a journey in order to meet with family members located in a far away place; the encounter is a happy one; on departure, the deceased is asked to be a mediator i.e. to relay a message from the family he has left behind. Here is an example from a lament sung at the moment of carrying the deceased out of the house:

*Ma li ti se s jedom molim,
Da se tamo ne zastojiš;
Da pozdraviš dosta dobra,
Što smo tamo otpravili:
Kazuj bane, po istini,
Da smo jadni i žalosni. . . .*

(In my pain I beg you
Be diligent in your tasks,
Pass on greetings to all our kin
Which we have seen off;
Tell them, master, the whole truth,
That we are bereft and full of sorrow. . . .¹⁴

This same set of relationships (roles) is found in epistolar songs, which effect a series of substitutions: the two worlds (living/dead) appear as two geographically separated areas; the two groups of kin (living/dead) appear as two groups of the same nation; the mediator (the deceased) appears as a live person. Although there is a departure and encounter all these substitutions reflect a shift from the symbolical meaning inherent to the lament to a literal meaning (traveler, departure, voyage, destination are taken in their literal meaning) typical of the epistolar song. However, the set of relationships is preserved as well as the phrases found in laments.

Here is an example: "Akron na rastanku s B. Grahovcem."¹⁵ This is an article describing a meeting of B. Grahovac (editor of the *American Srbobran*) with the Serbian community in Akron (Ohio) just before his trip to Belgrade in 1920. The article ends with a song in which Grahovac is told

what messages to take to fellow Serbs in Belgrade. The two groups involved in this song are members of the same nation (Serbs) on two sides of the ocean (Serbia and the U.S.). The mediator is Budimir Grahovac, departing for Serbia from Akron. The singer uses phrases typical of the model he is imitating:

*Kaži braći u sred Beograda,
Da i ovde čika Pero vlada.
Kaži pravo, al' nemoj lagati . . .
I još idi bijelom Beogradu
I pozdravi našu srpsku vladu,
Da koliko tamošnjih grobova,
Još je više ovdeka robova.
I kaži joj Bude, brate mili,
Da sa pravom svaki Srbin cvili.
Siroti smo, al' to neću reći:
Od Srbije nećemo uteći.*

(Tell our brothers in Belgrade
That Uncle Peter reigns here as well.
Tell the truth, do not lie . . .
And then go to white Belgrade,
Pass on our greetings to the Serb government,
Many are the graves over there
And as many slaves over here.
Tell them dear brother Bude,
That all Serbs have reasons for grief.
We are poor, but I won't say that:
Even so, we will not abandon Serbia

Another interesting element in the song is the explicit mention of the dead (those who have died in the war). So in effect, the "other" place (Serbia) is identified with death, but only in the sense of being a place where those who have died for freedom are buried. However, the parallelism *grobova-robova* (graves-slaves) implies a contrast between the two groups: those who have died in glory and those who live in a reality full of hardship.

Another example is the "Pismo u stihovima" by Mihailo Mrdjenović,¹⁶ addressed to a personified "Srbobran" asked to relay a

message from the Serbs in Serbia to those in the U.S. Both homelands are personified as mothers (one in the East, the other in the West: America, the diaspora, the new "mother," a second homeland). An interesting detail is the reference to America as Columbus' *vila* (the *vila* is a supernatural being similar to a fairy, appearing frequently in Serbian folk songs, especially narrative ones).

*Pozdravi nam putem Srbobrana
Našu braću preko Okeana,
I zapadnu našu majku milu,
Američku Kolumbovu vilu. . . .*

(Pass our greetings through The Srbobran,
To our brothers on the other side of the ocean,
And to our beloved mother in the West,
Columbus' American *vila*. . . .

f) Two Examples of Mockery

A witty example of imitation is the song "Dragutinu Kostiću-Čelešu. Plač vile Prosvetiteljke sa krova Ministarstva prosvete, prilikom Čelešovog napuštanja pravoslavlja i prelaska u islam (To Dragutin Kostić-Čeleš. Lament of the Education Fairy from the Roof of the Ministry of Education, on the Occasion of Čeleš' Abandonment of Orthodoxy and Conversion to Islam)." Once again, the generic model is the lament. However, in this example the singer uses a combination of elements. The following elements are from the lament: the line combination 8+4, the enumeration of questions addressed to the "deceased," the use of antonym neologisms (*nebraća*, *neuljudi*, *nestanje*; non-brothers, non-person, non-being), typical phrases (*kukaj*, *plači*; wail, grieve). The genre that is imitated is indicated in the title (*plač*, lament); indications of the intent to produce ironic effects are the identification of the mourner (*narikača*) as a fairy (*vila*) and the identification of the author as Nikac od Rovina (both are characters taken from epic folk songs; however, she is standing on the roof of the Ministry instead of on a mountain top; he is witnessing a mock heroic act of conversion).

The beginning of the song follows the model completely. The mocking effect relies on analogy of situation: in a lament, a man who has died initiates a passage to the other world; in the mock lament, a man who has converted is figuratively dead and leaving this world (Christianity) in

order to be greeted by his "brothers" in the other (Islam). An additional element of mockery is the fact that the protagonist keeps going from one world (religion) to the other all the time. The effect is achieved by preserving the structural and formal elements of the model and substituting certain semantic elements:

*Kuda si se opremio—crn ti oprem!
Od družine i od braće—kod nebraće!
Dal' te snovi naćeraše—zlo usnio!
Il' na pseći sugreb stade—uz poklade!
Dal' su vrači ili čini—šta učini!
Te pod starost čalmu zavi—joj na javi!
Oko glave ćelavuše—Ćebel-beže!
Što napusti pravoslavlje—crn ti vijek!
Što zagazi sred islama—kuku srama!
Zar od Srba, pa u Turke—jaoh bruke!
Ovo ti je sad četvrta—vjera nova!
Što je primaš i prevrćeš—prevrtljivče!
. . . Kukaj školo, plači knjigo—za dovijek!*

(Where are you heading in this outfit—black outfit!
Leaving friends and brothers—to join non-brothers!
Did your dreams make you do this—evil dreams!
Did you step on earth dug out by dogs—during the
carnival!

Is it the work of charms or spells—that made you do this!
Made you wrap a turban at old age—so everyone could
see!

Wrap it on a bald head and become a bey—Ćebel Bey!
Why did you leave Orthodoxy—may your days be black!
Why did you join Islam—what a disgrace!
You left the Serbs and joined the Turks—how shameful!
This is the fourth new religion—you have switched to!
Leaving one, taking another—you untrustworthy man!
. . . Woeful schools, doleful books, lament—forever!)¹⁷

Mock heroic songs such as this one usually dealt with events and personalities associated with current politics. Local politics was a field in which the players could hardly rise to the high ethical ground of epics.

Therefore its quasi-heroes were represented in mock heroic poems. This served as an instrument of political bickering as it undermined the credibility of individuals aspiring to become leaders of the Serbian community in the U.S. During all the war years and up to 1929 there was an explicit and implicit "battle" waged between several Serbian organizations (*Srbobran*, *The Serb Defender*, and *Sloga, Unity*, among others) and their partisan newspapers. Božidar Purić writes extensively about this in his book dedicated to Božidar Ranković. A central figure of this battle was Mihajlo Pupin, who attempted (unsuccessfully) to unite all Serbian organizations in the U.S. His unified *Sloga* was short-lived and both he and his closest associates were subjected to a strong discrediting campaign led by the *American Srbobran*. An editorial titled "Ko je vjera, a ko nevjera (The Loyal and the Treacherous)"¹⁸ suggested that Pupin had betrayed the Serbian national interest. This was untrue as much as it was unfair.

An interesting case is an imitation of a children's song dealing with Jošo Duletić, editor of *Srbadija* (Serbdom), a newspaper published in New York and associated with Pupin. Its title is simply "Poezija (Poetry)" and its author is indicated as "Žika elektrika (Žika Electric)."¹⁹ The model in this case is a children's song of the *brojalica* type (counting songs) used in games to choose a player from the group (whose members are holding hands in a sort of *kolo* dance). Here the form is that of a low genre, which inevitably "demeans" the "chosen person," in this case the editor of a respectable Serbian newspaper. The selection of this genre suggests the efforts of Mr. Duletić are like a children's game in which the zero resounds in repetition:

*Igra vilo kolo,
i u kolu Joša,
peva pesmu,
za neko!ko groša!
Pa kad plajvaz uzme
i sabere,
izadje mu nula:
nula, nula, nula,
ti si Jošo mula!*

(The fairy leads a kolo,
Jošo is in the kolo dancing,

Jošo is singing a song
For a few petty coins!
When he picks up a pencil;
And adds up all he's done,
He gets none other than a zero:
Zero, zero, zero,
Jošo is a donkey hero!

Interestingly enough, poetry was considered as a medium of public communication as well as polemics. The latter were conducted not only through articles printed in the newspapers, but also through parodic and satiric verse. Epistolar verse was also a popular medium of public discussion, but one which shifted attention from serious and rational discussion to mockery of character and personal aspects. The use of decasyllabic verse in many types of communication was quite common at a time when the *narodna pesma* was acting as a rich source of new forms of public communication.

In all the examples quoted above there is a transformation of models provided by the oral tradition (both high and low genres, epic as well as lyrical). Imitation is carried out at various levels of content and form. The discrepancy of content and form produces a mocking effect. Nonetheless, all the examples testify to the vitality of the oral tradition as a communication code.

However, by the end of the second decade, there was a change which would crucially affect this issue: the emergence of a new generation of youth who were bilingual or did not know Serbian at all. It was not simply a question of language, but of everything that was communicated through the language—including the folk songs of the oral tradition and the interpretation of national identity. We have an excellent description of this change in a story by Djordje Petrović,²⁰ which deals with the performance of the above mentioned *guslar* (several years after the war) from the point of view of those who knew little or no Serbian. Here is a dialogue that illustrates this:

- *Kako si volio pesme?*—*upita on mladog Toma.*
- *Vel, kume, bilo je najs. Ja sam mnogo lajka. Ali samo ne mogu da anderstendam.*
- *A šta to, kume?*
- *Aj dont no, kume, šta je to 'kravo i volove'*—*upita Tomo.*

- (– How did you like the folk songs?—he asked young Tomo.
- Well, my godfather, it was **nice**. I **liked** them a lot. But I could not quite **understand** them.
- What didn't you understand?
- **I don't know**, my godfather, what *kravo i volove* [cows and bulls] means—said Tomo [referring to the song "Ploughing of Kraljević Marko"]).

When George explained that Marko had raised the plough and oxen and beaten the Turks, young Tomo asked him if he really believed that.

- *Pa to je, Tomo, narodna poezija—poče Djordje da uvija, izbegavajući direktan odgovor. Naši su stari verovali, pa treba i mi da se divimo silnom junaštvu naših legendarnih junaka Miloša i Marka.*

Tomo se šeretski nasmeja i zavrte glavom. Vel dets najš, but kume, aj kent biliv det!

- (– You see, Tomo, these are folk songs—George began explaining, avoiding a direct answer. Our elders believed it, therefore we too should admire the great heroicism of our legendary heroes Miloš and Marko.

Tomo smiled in a joking manner, shaking his head. **Well, that's nice**, my godfather, **but, I cannot believe that!**)

The same story describes the reaction of the children to the *guslar*:

- **Dži, Stivi! Luk at det Indian vajolin!**—*viknu jedan mališan Banovac, pa se diže pokazujući gusle koje je Peko držao na krilu.*
- *Aj muč kobilu 'rvacka! Jezik pregriza da Bog da—viknu stari Pero Lalatović na dečka, koji se odmah umiri, a s njim i svi ostali.*

- (– **Gee, Steve! Look at that Indian violin!**—cried one of the youngsters, whose family was from Banija, as he stood up pointing to the *gusle* lying in Peko's lap.
- Shut your big mouth, you Croat mare!²¹ May you bite off your own tongue!—shouted old man Pero Lalatović. The boy calmed down right away and so did the other kids.)

The loss of the Serbian language implies a loss of much more than only language. Translating into English meant not only expressing Serbian concepts in a different language, but changing the concepts as well, adapting them to the culture of the target-language. Even when the folk song about Kraljević Marko is translated into English, the Serbian born in America and raised on American cultural patterns does not understand it. We are dealing here not only with a linguistic difference, but an even more important cultural difference.

This marks the beginning of a process of forming a new identity consisting of two elements: the primary American element and the secondary Serbian. The old Serbian identity had to be translated into different cultural terms, reinterpreted and adapted to the basically American identity of fourth and fifth generation Serbian Americans, for whom the traditional folk songs, the *gusle*, their performers and players were a part of the exotic heritage of their not less exotic ancestors.

¹ Stevan Rota, "Nikola Tesla i guslar Perunović," (Nikola Tesla and Perunović the Guslar), originally published in *Pravoslavljje* (March 1, 1973), reprinted in Sava N. Vujinović, *Nikola Tesla i njegovo vreme* (Nikola Tesla and his Times, (Toronto, 1993).

² *Ibid.*, p. 248.

³ Budimir Grahovac, "Rat i naša narodna poezija" (War and Our Folk Songs), *Amerikanski Srbobran* (Pittsburgh, November 9, 10, 11, and 13, 1916); an unsigned editorial.

⁴ Branko Dajičić, "O narodnoj pesmi" (On Folksongs), *Amerikanski Srbobran* (March 28, 1922); a lecture given by Dajičić at the Serbian club "Prosveta" in Pittsburgh.

⁵ Lazo Popović, "Srpska narodna poezija" (Serbian Folksongs), *Amerikanski Srbobran* (March 9, 1920). Dr. Popović wrote introductions to four collections of folksongs, one of them comprising the songs on Kraljević Marko. The editors of the *Amerikanski Srbobran* note that they received the books from Zagreb. Although Popović was not living in the U.S., the editor's choice to reprint this text is indicative of a shared position (in Yugoslavia and in the diaspora) as far as traditional folksongs were concerned, at least at this point in time.

⁶ The poem was first published in the newspaper *Sloboda* (San Francisco, December 1894). It was reprinted in Musić's book *Razne pjesme Nika Musića* (Various Poems by Niko Musić), volume I, published by Mitar Šaban (editor of *Srpski odjek*, The Serbian Echo) in Pueblo, Colorado, 1902. The second volume was published by Šaban a few years later in Pittsburgh. The poem was reprinted again in the *Amerika* (Chicago, 1945), 134-135.

⁷ Veljko Radojević, *Majka Crnogorka* was reprinted with a comment by Smiljka Radulović in *Amerika* (Chicago, 1943), 90-91.

⁸ Radojević's collection *Srpske narodne pjesme iz okoline hercegovačke i dubrovačke* (Serbian Folksongs from the Area around Herceg Novi and Dubrovnik) was published in Fresno in 1912. The song on the battle of the Montenegri with Mahmout-Pasha refers to the event of 1796. Radojević's version was given to him by a friend, who had found it among the papers of his grandfather. Radojević notes that Vuk Karadžić's collection includes one version of this song. Karadžić thought that the song was actually written by Petar I and later traditionalized through oral transmission. This is an interesting case of interaction between the two modes (oral and written), which we have elaborated in another paper submitted for publication.

⁹ *Amerikanski Srbobran* (January 15, 1917).

¹⁰ The motif is found in song no. 205 (*Neblagodarni sinovi*, Unthankful Sons) of Karadžić's collection (volume I). In the song, the *stara majka* (old mother) meets St. Demetrius in the mountains.

¹¹ In the song "Marko Kraljević i kći kralja arapskoga" (Marko Kraljević and the Daughter of the Arab King), in volume II of the Karadžić collection, Marko tells his mother:

<i>Ja tavnovah za sedam godina,</i>	(I spent seven years in the dungeon,
<i>Nit' ja znadoh kad mi ljeto dodje,</i>	Not knowing when it was summer,
<i>Nit' ja znadoh kad mi zima dodje,</i>	Not knowing when it was winter,
<i>Osim jedno, moja stara majko:</i>	Except for one thing my dear old mother:
<i>Zimi bi se grudale djevojke,</i>	In winter, young girls would play,
<i>Probace mi po grudu snijega,</i>	And throw a snowball into my cell,
<i>Po tom znadem da je došla zima;</i>	So I knew it was winter;
<i>Ljeti bace stručak bosioka,</i>	In summer they would throw a branch of basil
<i>Po tom znadem da je ljeto, majko.</i>	So I knew it was summer, my dear mother.)

¹² The lines are from the folk song "Uroš i Mrnjavčevići" (Uroš and the Mrnjavčevićs).

¹³ *Amerikanski Srbobran* (January 22, 1920).

¹⁴ From song no. 151, "Kad mrtvaca iznesu iz kuće" (When the Deceased is Taken Out of the House) in volume I of the Karadžić collection. The phrases such as *velja dobra* and *dosta dobra* refer to the dead (kin and ancestors). In another lament from the same area (Paštrovići), the deceased is described as being greeted in the other world by his kin, who serve him a special drink: "*Da im ljepše progovoriš, / Na pitanja odgovoriš*" (To speak to them in a nicer way, / to answer their questions better).

¹⁵ The article containing the song is signed as Uglješa Vojvoda, *Amerikanski Srbobran* ((February 13, 1920).

¹⁶ *Amerikanski Srbobran* (May 22, 1920). This is an example of epistolar verse. At the same time it attests to the ease with which even amateur "poets" could

improvise decasyllable texts on almost any topic.

¹⁷ *Amerikanski Srbobran* (April 13, 1922); "to step on earth dug out by an animal" is an ominous sign; "to wrap a turban" means to convert to Islam.

¹⁸ This was an editorial, most probably written by Grahovac, published in the *Amerikanski Srbobran* (May 8, 1920). Pupin is identified as a "traitor." Even today it is difficult to understand why this battle between the leaders of Serbian organizations (and the editors of Serbian newspapers) was waged, especially at a critical time when unity was so important.

¹⁹ This song was published in the column "Srbobranova osmatračnica" (Srbobran's Watchtower), which was usually written by the editor (probably Grahovac) and contained light and polemical verse; *Amerikanski Srbobran* (April 14, 1920).

²⁰ Djordje Petrović, "Guslarsko veče" (An Evening with the Guslar), *Amerikanski Srbobran, Kalendar* (Pittsburgh, 1942), 86-88.

²¹ The word "mare" is used in the pejorative meaning of "large woman" (analogous to "big mouth").

"GAJRET" AND THE BOSNIAN MUSLIM INTELLIGENTSIA

Anita Lekić

New York State University, Stony Brook

For Bosnia's Muslims, the beginning of the twentieth century marked the birth of what would become a broad reformist cultural movement, comparable to some extent to the nineteenth century revivals led by Vuk Karadžić among the Serbs and Ljudevit Gaj among the Croats. The origins of the Bosnian Muslim cultural renaissance can be traced back to the founding of the journal *Behar* (Blossom) in 1900, and the establishment, in 1903, of the "Gajret" (Aid) Cultural and Educational Society. Over a period of roughly four decades, from 1903 to 1941, "Gajret" made an immense contribution to facilitating the dramatic transition in the lives of Bosnian Muslims—the shift from a society based on Islamic law, tradition and culture to the vastly different social, political and cultural realities of twentieth-century Europe. As the most advanced and broadly based secular institution of its kind among the Bosnian Muslims, with its membership reaching 25,000 in the 1930s, the society had organized and financed, by 1941, the education of 6,000 students or two-thirds of all educated Muslims at the time.¹ The 1939 census lists the Bosnian Muslim population at 848,140.² Over a period of four decades, as it diversified its activities and extended its work beyond its original educational mission, "Gajret" outgrew its initial mandate, assuming the proportions of a major cultural movement.

In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the opportunities for Bosnian Muslims acquiring a university education under Austro-Hungarian rule were practically nonexistent. The first Bosnian Muslim students who pursued university studies in Vienna, Graz, and less frequently Zagreb, began to do so in the 1880s. At the turn of the century only ten Muslims in Bosnia held European university degrees—eight in law, one in philosophy, and one in veterinary sciences.³ The first six Muslims to attend universities were Ahmed-beg Ibrahimbeg Defterdarević from Trebinje, Ćamil Karamehmedović, Mehmed-beg Kulenović, Abduselam-beg and Halid-beg Hrasnica. From 1902 on, an average of 15

Bosnian Muslims were enrolled annually in universities in Vienna and Zagreb. From 1902 on, an average of 15 Bosnian Muslims were enrolled annually in universities in Vienna and Zagreb.⁴ Given the foreign policy ambitions of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans, the political activities of its Slav subjects—both students and their families—were an important factor in deciding whether financial aid was to be extended for educational purposes. Not unexpectedly, no scholarships were awarded for studies at Belgrade University, which only four Muslim students attended before World War I.⁵

This very narrow circle of young, European-educated Muslim intellectuals took the first steps towards introducing Bosnia's Muslims to European cultural developments. The group perceived Austrian rule as an inevitable and permanent state of affairs, requiring the Bosnian Muslims to forgo their long-standing ties to the Ottoman empire or to face the consequences of being cut off from the European mainstream. In 1900 they launched the journal *Behar* (Blossom), which provided the platform for the writings of the first generation of Bosnian Muslim writers schooled in the European tradition, including Safvet-beg Bašagić, the most famous Muslim poet and historian at the turn of the century. Bašagić graduated from the university in Vienna in 1899, and received a doctoral degree in Oriental languages and Islamic history in 1910. Published in the Latin alphabet by Muslim supporters of the Austrian regime who declared themselves nationally as Croats, *Behar* was entirely non-political in content. As it adopted an increasingly explicit pro-Croat orientation through the years, it lost its appeal to its Muslim readership and, by 1911, had ceased publication.

Behar may have been a modest undertaking, but it was followed by one of much more serious import and far-reaching consequences for the Bosnian Muslims. The same individuals who launched *Behar* next undertook the establishment of the Muslim benevolent society "Gajret." They were S. Bašagić, president, H. Hrasnica, vice-president, Riza-beg Kapetanović, Edhem Mulabdić and others "Gajret's" founding assembly was held in the Sarajevo *kiraethena* (reading rooms, traditional meeting places for cultural and political exchanges established in the closing years of Ottoman rule) on February 20, 1903, with 100 people attending, among them the supreme religious authority appointed by the Austrians, the Reisu-l-ulema Teufik Azabagić.⁶ The establishment of a Muslim society was not resisted by the occupation authorities since it suited their policy of keeping the Bosnian communities divided. With "Gajret" in existence, young

Muslims would be less likely to participate in the activities of the Serb "Prosvjeta" or Croat "Napredak" societies, also founded in the first decade of the twentieth century.

"Gajret's" lasting contribution to the modern-day development of the Bosnian Muslims was that it recognized its time for what it was—a radical historical turning point in the lives and fortunes of the community. In its first phase of work from 1903 until the outbreak of World War I, its main endeavor was to actively encourage Bosnian Muslims to accept modern, Western schooling. The society developed an extensive network of affiliates in Bosnia. During its first few years of existence, "Gajret's" membership grew steadily from 1,582 members in 1903 to 4,082 in 1907.⁷ The society's members were mostly drawn from the Bosnian Muslim urban middle classes who tended to be more liberal and receptive to new ideas than the rural population or the religious establishment. The income drawn from membership dues, gift contributions and fund-raising activities was primarily allocated by "Gajret" for scholarships, grants, and loans for secondary school students, with a smaller portion (roughly one-third) earmarked for those continuing their education at institutions of higher learning. "Gajret" also financed stipends for vocational schools, and organized a wide range of literacy courses throughout Bosnia.

Throughout Ottoman rule, prior to Austrian occupation in 1878, educational opportunities in Bosnia had been limited to a narrow range of confessional schools. Of these, the most widespread elementary religious schools, called *mektebs*, have been described as "among the most primitive in the world." In 1878 the so-called *sibjan mektebs* were the most common confessional schools in Bosnia, numbering 917 with a total of 40,770 pupils, 12,334 of whom were girls.⁸ *Mektebs* offered some religious instruction and the rudiments of literacy in Arabic and Turkish. Essentially pupils were forced to memorize texts in an unfamiliar language.⁹ Neither the Serbo-Croatian language nor the Latin and Cyrillic scripts were used or taught. Upon completion of a *mekteb*, pupils could proceed to *medreses*, secondary religious schools which also taught Islamic law, some Muslim history, and offered somewhat more extensive instruction in Arabic and Turkish languages and literatures.¹⁰ Finally, Ottoman reforms instituted in the second half of the 19th century resulted in the opening of approximately thirty special middle schools called *ruždias*, whose primary purpose was to provide basic training for administrative cadres. These schools marked a slight step forward with the introduction of a few secular subjects, although they were taught exclusively in Turkish.¹¹

The advent of European rule in Bosnia did not bring about a dramatic improvement in educational opportunities. The results achieved by the Austrian-instituted public school system were insignificant. Elementary school attendance was the lowest among the Bosnian Muslim population, which inevitably viewed the new, secular schools as foreign instruments intentionally designed to destroy the foundations of Islamic tradition and morality. Thus, at the turn of the century, in the 1899/1900 school year, only 4,886 Muslim children, including just 12 girls, were enrolled in 293 public elementary schools in Bosnia (the Bosnian Muslim population totalled 449,000, according to the Austrian census of 1879).¹² Ten years later, 81% of all Muslim children still did not attend public elementary schools.¹³ Bosnian Muslims were even worse off when it came to secondary schooling, with a single Muslim student graduating in 1888, from the State Gymnasium and another five graduating by 1893.¹⁴ All in all, by 1908, after thirty years of Austrian rule, practically the entire Muslim population (or 94.65%) in Bosnia was illiterate, as opposed to a 22.5% literacy rate for Croats and 10% for Serbs.¹⁵ The Bosnian Muslim population numbered 612,137 according to the 1910 Austrian census.¹⁶

It is against this rather depressing background that "Gajret's" eleven years of activity under Hapsburg rule (1903-1914) must be appraised. In this interval, "Gajret" schooled 545 students—30 at universities, 223 in gymnasiums and the rest in assorted secondary and technical schools.¹⁷ The numbers appear modest. If, however, the extreme suspicion and hostility of the Bosnian Muslim populace toward the Hapsburg-instituted secular school system is taken into account, it becomes clear that in these early years "Gajret" was laying the groundwork for the formation of a European-educated citizenry.

"Gajret" diversified its cultural activities in 1907 by launching its own monthly journal with an initial circulation of 2,000 issues. In 1909, when Osman Djikić,¹⁸ a well-known journalist and writer, assumed management of the journal. As editor in chief, he turned "Gajret" into a literary journal which offered a wide range of literary works, articles and essays on all aspects of contemporary Bosnian life, written in the Serbo-Croatian language. The pieces appeared in both the Latin and Cyrillic scripts, which were published in full side by side, along with the Arabic script, on the back cover.

With the advent of Djikić and his associates, the Executive Board of the society came to be dominated by pro-Serb Muslims, a trend that would continue in the interwar kingdom. The centers of the pro-Serb

movement since the 1880s had been located in Istanbul and Belgrade, with the Bosnian Muslim emigré population holding strong anti-Austrian and pro-Serb views. The most prominent figures in "Gajret" leadership, including Osman Djikić and Avdo Karabegović, had studied in Istanbul.¹⁹ For many of Bosnia's young Muslims, the oppositional character of the Serb national movement was particularly appealing. To declare oneself a Serb, as Ibrahim Kemura has pointed out, was to declare oneself an opponent of Austria-Hungary.²⁰ In addition to opposing Austrian rule, supporting the Serb national idea also implied support for broader Slavic unification, or the establishment of a south Slav state.²¹

In 1914, following the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, the Austrian authorities immediately disbanded "Gajret" because of its Serbian leanings, as they did its Serb counterpart, "Prosvjeta." Publication of the journal was discontinued. The most prominent Serb-oriented Muslim leaders and students, supporters of "Gajret," were arrested and imprisoned.

Disbanded in July 1914, "Gajret" was reconstituted, on February 24, 1919, in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.²² In its second phase, spanning the 23-year period of the Yugoslav kingdom's existence from 1918 to 1941, "Gajret's" prewar platform remained unchanged—to create the educational basis for the growth and development of a Muslim intellectual class.

To facilitate the schooling of Muslim students at Belgrade University in greater numbers, "Gajret" decided to open in 1923 a Belgrade branch, named after Osman Djikić, with its own dormitory facilities. Three years later (1926), "Gajret" opened dormitory facilities for female students in Belgrade, making it possible for the first Muslim women to be schooled at Belgrade University.²³ From 1932 on, when the society opened a new building in the center of Belgrade, the "Osman Djikić," "Gajret" schooled an average of 150 Muslim male and female students annually.²⁴ By 1938, 300 Muslim students, including 25 female students, or three-fourths of the total number of 400 Muslim students nationwide, pursued higher education at Belgrade University. In the final year (1939-1940) before the war, their numbers at Belgrade University had increased to 419, not an insignificant achievement considering only four had studied there before "Osman Djikić" opened in 1923.²⁵ (The total number of university-educated Muslims in the Yugoslav kingdom just before the war was 732.)²⁶ For comparison purposes, thirty years later, according to the 1971 census, 8,376 Bosnian Muslims held university degrees in the SFR of Yugoslavia.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, educational

opportunities for Muslim girls and women were entirely inadequate and almost impossible for "Gajret" to adequately address. On the eve of World War I, 99.68% of all Muslim women were illiterate.²⁷ Not a single Muslim female student attended secondary school in Bosnia in the 1910/1911 academic year.²⁸ Although that very same year, the Bosnian parliament passed a law on compulsory primary education, Muslim girls were excepted, with no educational provision whatsoever made for them, at the determined insistence of Muslim religious representatives. In 1912 there were only 137 Muslim girls in all the schools.²⁹ The Bosnian Muslim population numbered 488,137 according to the Yugoslav census of 1921.³⁰

Plainly "Gajret" could not singlehandedly reverse the ultra-conservative attitudes on women deeply ingrained within the Muslim religious community. It was only in July of 1928, seven years after the South Slav Kingdom was founded, that the highest Muslim religious institution in Sarajevo (the Curia of Khojas or *Hodžinska Kurija*) yielded somewhat, declaring that Muslim women could, if circumstances warranted such action, expose their faces, attend public schools, and seek employment. Several months later, in September of 1928, "Gajret" organized the Muslim Congress in Sarajevo, gathering Bosnia's most prominent religious and lay Muslims, to commemorate its 25th anniversary. Thanks to "Gajret," "the woman's question" was finally addressed at this gathering. Reis-ul-ulema Čaušević (1870-1938), who for two decades had unsuccessfully advocated a more liberal attitude toward women, gave the opening address on the religious and educational situation of Muslims in Bosnia. Čaušević pointed out that the reason there were no elementary schools in most Bosnian Muslim villages was that the Muslims themselves opposed them; once the government opened a school, the Muslim community boycotted it. The Congress urged Muslim girls to attend public schools and called upon the government to provide public schools for both sexes in areas with a Muslim populace.³¹ As far as higher education was concerned, in 1930 just seven Bosnian Muslim women pursued university studies in the kingdom. With "Gajret's" efforts their numbers gradually increased; by 1938, the Belgrade "Gajret" was financing the education of 28 women out of 36 attending Belgrade University.³²

As had been the case in the latter part of the Austrian period, Muslims who held a Serb national orientation continued to run "Gajret." Several Muslim intellectuals who had attained officer rank in World War I in the first Serbian Volunteer Division formed in Odessa in 1916, my grandfather Hamid Kukić, among them, assumed top posts in "Gajret's"

Executive Board and continued to hold them throughout the interwar period.³³ The newly-created Yugoslav Muslim Organization or JMO (Sarajevo, 1919), determined to be the sole institution representing all Muslims in the newly-founded country, made several attempts to bring the society under its control. To this end the JMO continually misrepresented, for purely political reasons, the pro-Serb orientation nurtured by "Gajret's" leaders. To woo members away from the society and dilute its influence among Muslims, the JMO found it necessary to grossly distort the views of "Gajret's" Executive Board, accusing its members of pursuing a nationalizing mission on behalf of the Serbian regime. Although they did, in fact, declare themselves nationally as Serbs, the most prominent figures in "Gajret" were neither nationalists nor assimilationists as the JMO consistently claimed but, in the final analysis, Yugoslavs, or individuals committed to the survival and prosperity of a united nation. If they did not regard the Bosnian Muslims as a separate national group, it is because they regarded the community as an integral part of a broader Slav nation.³⁴ In the words of "Gajret" activist and editor Šukrija Kurtović, the Muslims constitute "an inseparable part of the Yugoslav people which in its majority does not consider itself either Serb or Croat, but in ethnic and ethnographic terms is absolutely Yugoslav."³⁵

"Gajret's" political platform was essentially aimed at strengthening amongst the Bosnian Muslims the ideal of a Slav people, sharing a sense of common purpose and a common destiny. With this ideal in mind, it viewed the YMO, dominated by individuals schooled in Zagreb, as a "conservative and reactionary [party], fatal for the people and for Muslims." The JMO's promotion of the Muslims as a separate group distinguished by religious identity was largely at odds with "Gajret's" concept of nationhood as a more comprehensive identity which transcended divisions resulting from religious affiliation. "Gajret's" work was aimed at overcoming the division and mistrust among the Serb and Muslim communities, all in the interests of advancing national unity. As the society's president, Hajdar Čerko, said in 1927, "we want this land to be dearer to the Muslims than any other on earth."³⁶

Not surprisingly, relations between the JMO and "Gajret" were rarely harmonious and on occasion extremely tense. In 1923, the JMO, having failed to wrest control from "Gajret's" leadership, decided to found its own, all-Muslim cultural and educational society, "Narodna uzdanica."³⁷ "Narodna uzdanica" granted its first scholarships in the 1925-1926 academic year—a total of 20 for elementary schools and 10 for universities,

awarding an average of 30 scholarships in subsequent years. Its activities could never match those pursued by "Gajret," which had justly earned through great effort, commitment and hard work, quite extensive prestige and influence among the Bosnian Muslim populace. In 1923, the royal house of Karadjordjević assumed sponsorship of "Gajret," and King Alexander's son Peter became the society's patron. This ultimate honor naturally entailed considerable political and financial support. "Narodna uzdanica," whose establishment was prompted by sheer political calculations, had neither the popular support nor the establishment's backing to compete successfully.³⁸ In fact, its very first president, Asim Dugalić, resigned in 1927, citing the indolent attitude of the JMO leaders towards the cultural organization they themselves had created only to further the party's political and propaganda goals.³⁹ The fact is that "nationalizing" charges levelled by the JMO never truly impeded the society's work or detracted from its popularity. With its wide range of activities, including lectures, gatherings, vocational courses, and the construction of boarding schools and dormitories, the society proved the full seriousness of its commitment to the cultural and economic advancement of the Muslim population.⁴⁰

From its inception, "Gajret's" principal cultural mission, its *raison d'être*, had been to enable the Bosnian Muslim population to overcome a legacy of conservatism, illiteracy and backwardness by deemphasizing religion and promoting secular education. Step by step, it developed the structures of transition from an Oriental, Islamic civilization, to a secular European one. Its principal political goal, which it worked to accomplish throughout its duration, was to eradicate, rather than perpetuate the differences among the South Slav population.

Following the defeat of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941 and the formation of the Independent State of Croatia which also encompassed Bosnia, one of the first measures taken by the Ustaša authorities was to ban all further activities by "Gajret." Just as they had been persecuted by the Austrian authorities in World War I, "Gajret's" most prominent activists were now persecuted by the Ustaša authorities. Dr. Avdo Hasanbegović, "Gajret's" president for over twenty years, was placed under arrest, and the society's second in command, secretary Hamid Kukić, was formally dismissed, although he was already interned in a prisoner of war camp in Germany where he would remain until 1945.⁴¹ As the country emerged from war in 1945, the society was reestablished under the communists. Within a few months, however, the society's long and

productive existence came to an end as both "Gajret" and "Narodna uzdanica" were merged by the communist authorities into a new society, "Preporod," which in 1949 was subsumed within the Association of Cultural and Educational Societies of Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁴²

¹ Ibrahim Kemura, *Uloga "Gajreta" u društvenom životu Muslimana Bosne i Hercegovine (1903-1941)* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1986).

² Francine Friedman, *The Bosnian Muslims. Denial of a Nation* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996).

³ I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁴ Hajrudin Ćurić, *Muslimansko školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini do 1918 godine* (Sarajevo: V. Masleša, 1983), p. 301.

⁵ I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁸ H. Ćurić, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

⁹ I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

¹⁰ Muhamed Hadžijahić et al., *Islam i Muslimani u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1977), p. 69.

¹¹ H. Ćurić, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

¹² I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

¹³ Salim Ćerić, *Muslimani srpskohrvatskog jezika* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1968), p. 170.

¹⁴ H. Ćurić, *op. cit.*, p. 296; I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

¹⁵ Mitar Papić, *Školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini (1818-1941)* (Sarajevo: V. Masleša, 1984), p. 15.

¹⁶ F. Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

¹⁷ I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

¹⁸ Osman Djikić was born in Mostar in 1879. He was schooled in Belgrade Istanbul and Vienna, and died in 1912.

¹⁹ I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

²⁵ Hamid Kukić, ed., *Gajretov kalendar, 1923-1941* (Sarajevo: Bosanska posla for the year 1939). Abdulah Hadžić, *Muslimani u Beogradu*, pp. 338-340. Željko Ilić, "Izuzetna tradicija," *Politika* (Belgrade), January 10, 1991.

²⁶ Husejn Alić, "Muslimani s fakulteskom spremom," (Narodna uzdanica. Kalendar za 1941 godinu, Sarajevo), pp. 154-156. Cited by M. Hadžijahić, *Islam u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo, 1977), p. 131.

²⁷ Wayne S. Vuchinich, "Yugoslavs of the Muslim Faith," in: *Yugoslavia*, ed. by Robert J. Kerner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), pp. 261-275.

²⁸ S. Ćerić, *op. cit.*, p. 171; M. Hadžijahić, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

²⁹ Duraković, *Moslems in Yugoslavia*, p. 16.

³⁰ F. Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

³¹ I. Kemura, *ibid.*, p. 179 and 375; F. Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

³² I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

³³ They were: Avdo Hasanbegović, Šukrija Kurtović, Ibrahim Hadžiomerović, Fehim Musakadić, Aziz Sarić, Hamid Kukić (who held the rank of lieutenant; the rest were second lieutenants), Alija Džemidžić, Rešid Kurtagić, and Asim Šeremet.

³⁴ I. Kemura, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 276.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 372.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 361.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 362.

BISHOP NICHOLAI VELIMIROVICH:
A CONTEMPORARY ORTHODOX WITNESS

Rev. Irinej Mirko Dobrijevic
Loyola University, Chicago

Given the unique proportions of a life, as one lived by Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, a truly Renaissance individual, it is difficult to encompass the vast expanse of his witness to Orthodoxy, within the given limitations of a paper.¹ Therefore, I have chosen an aspect of his life, which is singularly particular to him: his socio-political and religious witness to America, frameworked by the response of his American contemporaries, institutions and media to him, the person, and to his message. The focal point of this presentation will be Nikolai's three distinct American missions: 1915, 1921 and 1927.

Bishop Nikolai's background is scholarly and distinguished. He was a prolific writer and an eloquent orator; a prophet and a visionary; a mystic and an apologist; an effective archpastor and intellectual; a diplomat and a statesman. He was, without a doubt, the harmonious embodiment of faith and culture, religion and patriotism. The testimony of this unique individual has been the subject of many writings. In the Serbian Orthodox Church, he is regarded as the "New Chrysostom." To his American contemporaries, he was known as a "Second Isaiah."

Nikola Velimirovich was born on 23 December 1880 in Lelić, Serbia. There he completed his elementary education and it was there that he acquired the wellsprings of his spiritual depths from his childhood priest, Fr. Andreja and the monastics of the Ćelije Monastery. From Lelić, Nikola was to travel to Belgrade, where he completed graduate studies at the Theological Faculty of the University of Belgrade.

From there his quest for knowledge was to take him to the University of Bern, Switzerland, where he obtained the first of his numerous doctorates in 1908, with his dissertation, "Faith in the Resurrection of Christ as the Foundation of the Dogmas of the Apostolic Church." His remaining doctorates spanned many and varied fields and academic institutions, the likes of King's College at Oxford in 1909, on a

thesis "The Philosophy of Berkeley;" Halle, Germany in 1911, on the basis of his dissertation, "Nietzsche and Dostoevski;" Cambridge University *honoris causa* 1915-6; Glasgow in Scotland *honoris causa*, in 1919; and finally, Columbia University in New York City *honoris causa*, in 1946.

Tonsured a monk, he was to receive the name Nikolai, after his family's patronal saint. He was ordained a priest and elevated to the rank of archimandrite, all by the age of 29. In his 39th year, Nikolai was consecrated Bishop of Žiča, a successor to the throne of St. Sava. He also assumed for a time the Diocese of Ohrid and was the first administrator of the fledgling Serbian Orthodox Diocese of America and Canada, which he helped create, in 1921.

Bishop Nikolai's collective works have been assembled into an encyclopedic set of volumes, spanning the various languages and traditions he had come to master. Nikolai was fluent in seven languages. His works always evoke the eternal and never the temporary. Each work is universal, including within itself various elements and covering numerous aspects and concerns. Nikolai was himself the patristic embodiment of an Orthodox intellectual, philanthropist and hierarch, freely lecturing in the halls of the world's most preeminent universities, and as comfortably addressing royalty as the simplest of his faithful flock. As Nikolai himself so often chose to note, his was a diocese without geographic boundaries.

1915—America

With the outbreak of World War I, in the summer of 1914, the Balkan peninsula was hurled into complete and utter turmoil. The Serbian nation was in dire need of a charismatic leader to help it bridge this international crisis. For this purpose, the young Archimandrite Nikolai was commissioned on an official diplomatic mission to England and the United States to recruit support, for the suffering Serbian people. He was received with full honor and dignity. Nikolai effectively displayed his keen political astuteness in not only addressing the issue of the Serbs, but also directing his attention to the cause of world peace and methodologies given to political ideals. At his influence, in 1919 the British Parliament voted to accept the emerging South Slav State into the League of Nations.

By late summer of 1915, Archimandrite Nikolai arrived in America. His express purpose was to gather the emigre Serbs, Croats and Slovenes against the Austro-Hungarian government, from which the vast majority of South Slavs had fled to America. On 29 August 1915, Nikolai together with Professor Michael Pupin of Columbia University and the

Serbian Consul General, spoke at a convocation in the Amsterdam Opera House in New York City. The thrust of this meeting was to evoke sympathy for the Serbian nation in view of her plight during the current war. Nicholai again suggested the possibility of uniting all of the South Slavs into a common federation. From this gathering, a resolution was drafted and forwarded to President Woodrow Wilson confirming their support for the Allies.

His mission was overwhelmingly successful. America sent over 20,000 freedom-loving Slavic volunteers, most of whom fought heroically on the Salonica Front, and eventually became known as "The Third Army of Bishop Nicholai." Additionally, hundreds of thousands of dollars in aid was sent to their suffering brethren in the fatherland.

Nicholai took advantage of this initial American visit to travel extensively throughout the country. At every major city which he visited, Nicholai delivered outstanding homilies and speeches that captivated his American audiences. The Serbs of Chicago were recorded as having been emotionally roused to the point of giving him a standing ovation, noting: "For those were flaming words interwoven with the Gospel, the Way of Saint Sava and Serbian nationalism."

In a dream, during the course of this trip, he received a message from an Angel of the Lord, revealing to him that he would someday return to America in order to organize the growing Serbian Orthodox communities. Following his visit, Nicholai became convinced that the Serbs in America rightfully deserved to be united with their Mother Church in Belgrade. It was his firm conviction that a Serbian bishop should be elected to form a new diocese in America and Canada. Due to the war, at that time, this plan was never realized, as the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church was unable to convene in session.

According to Canon Edward N. West, prior to the 1915 arrival of Archimandrite Nicholai, the Anglican communion viewed with remoteness the "exotic Eastern Orthodox Faith." In his "Recollections of Bishop Nicholai," he writes how it was Nicholai who was uniquely responsible for the unveiling of Orthodoxy to the various Christian denominations, both in Britain, where he electrified the Church of England, and in the United States:

The First World War brought a sudden and profound concern for the imperially throttled Serbs . . . The Archimandrite Nicholai Velimirovic[h] came, and in three

months left an impression that continues to this day. His vision of the Church as God's family, as over against God's empire, simply shattered the West's notion of what it had regarded as the Caesaro-Papism of Eastern Orthodoxy.²

1921—America

Given the background of his 1915 visit to the United States, and his gained reputation as a powerful and eloquent orator, the now Right Reverend Bishop Nicholai of Žiča was invited by various universities in the United States, the likes of Columbia University in New York City, and the Episcopal Church to visit America. He was to present a lecture tour to the universities and deliver homilies in the various churches. At the personal invitation of his life-long friend Dr. William Manning, whom he befriended in 1915, Nicholai was invited to attend his consecration as the tenth Episcopal Bishop of New York.

Known for his love of children, his indefatigable and fatherly concern for the poor of his diocese, Nicholai was also extended an invitation by the Council of Serbian Child Welfare to travel to America. It was anticipated, given the success of his first visit, that he would be of major assistance to them in collecting funds for Serbia and possibly in establishing orphanages for the unfortunate war orphans, both in the United States and in Yugoslavia. Over 600 children would eventually be the recipients of his manifested love of Christ, as Nicholai managed, again, to secure thousands of dollars for the care of the "little ones." To the poor children of Yugoslavia, he became an endeared figure, affectionately called *Deda Vladika* (Grandfather Bishop).

With the backing of the Royal Yugoslav Government and the Holy Synod of Bishops, Nicholai was commissioned to travel to the United States and given the additional missionary task of gathering the scattered Serbian communities into an organized Serbian Orthodox Church in America. As the Serbian parishes were under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Mission of North America, a letter of introduction was sent to the said ecclesiastical authorities to explain the nature of Bishop Nicholai's visit, requesting that they receive him and that he not be inhibited in the execution of his work.

On 24 January 1921, Bishop Nicholai arrived in the United States of America, where he was to remain for the following six months. During the course of his stay, he delivered approximately 140 lectures and homilies in America's finest universities and cathedrals, as well as in smaller parish

churches and missionary congregations. Wherever he travelled, Nicholai was fondly and warmly received, never intimidating anyone with the wellspring of his vast knowledge. As Veselin Kesich once wrote of him:

Bishop Nicholai knew that men are afraid of the heights and the depths of thought and therefore wanted to simplify everything and equalize all things. [However,] he fights the reduction of religion to a common denominator. . . . There is the awareness of God's presence, there is the touch of the divine in his works.³

On 8 February 1921, Bishop Nicholai, on behalf of the Council of Serbian Child Welfare, addressed the student assembly at Columbia University in New York City. As recorded in the *New York Times*, Bishop Nicholai blamed the "methodologies" of the European universities for the past World War. His claims were based on the fact that a specific thought system was developed throughout the nineteenth century in which European universities created an artificial intellectual class. This artificially created class could only relate to material possessions. It was then this very same class which led Europe into the First World War and is today preparing Europe for yet another war. Serbia, he noted, is in such a state that it cannot entirely recover, for all of Europe is sick. In a concluding message, Nicholai speaking as a prophet in their midst, reading the signs of his times, warned Columbia University that their educational methods were also in the process of leading to another war.

In response to Bishop Nicholai's lecture, a fierce debate raged on the pages of the New York press. In a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, dated 9 February 1921, L. Duguit, Dean of the Faculty of Law at Bordeaux University in France, who at the time was a visiting professor at Columbia University, strongly protested the Bishop's remarks. Duguit felt it his obligation to make this protest in the name of French universities and particularly the faculties of law in France, asserting that they have always promoted right over might and that the greatness of a nation lies in the moral values which it spreads in the world. On the contrary, he insisted that the French universities have done everything to prevent the past war.

In defense of the Bishop, an author identified only by initials "J.A.," wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, on 15 February 1921, dismissing the attacks on Nicholai's Columbia statement as simply a "dead issue." He insisted that the issue raised by the Bishop was indeed

a "very live issue," in that precisely, "no one has yet finished the war." He finds Nicholai's thesis to be both interesting and logical. Concluding his letter to the editor, the writer notes that despite the terrible state in which his native people are, Nicholai did not once seek American aid for Serbia. Rather, his plea was for the assistance of all humanity — America included. An interesting historical footnote to this debate is that the same Columbia University, in 1946, after the close of the Second World War, was to grant Bishop Nicholai a Doctorate of Sacred Theology, with the following citation:

The Right Reverend Nicholai Velimirovich, Bishop of Ohrid and Žiča of the Serbian Orthodox Church, known and revered for his saintliness and charity; thinking first always of the poor and the unfortunate in a country which has suffered much; a great scholar, a great preacher, and, above all, a great moral force. Degree awarded *Honoris Causa*.⁴

Prior to the conclusion of his lecture tour, Bishop Nicholai, who had roused the curious eye of the American media, was requested to publish his personal, socio-political interpretations of America: past, present and future. Titled: "A Serbian's View of America," these perspective writings were published in the *New York Evening Post* and *The Living Church* on 4 and 25 June 1921. The burden of these articles was to compare post World War I Europe, with its intrigues, to a dawning young and potentially superior America:

America is more than a nation. Technically speaking, it is pan-humanity, for all races and nations have a larger or smaller representation of their own blood and soul in this new organism. The Anglo-Saxon powerful will and stern morality are directing it. Yet America is not Anglo-Saxon. It is pan-human. After battling with each other at home, nations, embittered and exhausted, come to America, there to become friends and take up constructive work. That is why the world has been saying that America now is going to surprise them with some great new scheme, something more democratic and constructive than anything they have ever known, something more helpful, something more

American. But the eyes of humanity are getting tired and dim looking for the coming of the good messenger from America.⁵

The world, in Bishop Nikolai's socio-political view, has become small, yet still waits to be proclaimed a united being. Europe has discovered the world. Can America organize it, asks the Bishop? According to him, organization continues to be the "watchword of our time." However, he warns that "the organization of anything must begin at the beginning—with the organization of my own soul and yours."

According to the Bishop, the "old definition" of America was that of a "money-making" country. This, in his opinion, was far superior to being a "money-saving" country. War has discovered America in a new light. America has earned for herself a "new definition" as "a pan-human society of men intoxicated with the constructive and charitable spirit."

I think those words are the two words that America loves, Charity and Constructiveness—to do, to construct, to organize, to put in order, to give."⁶

Visionary that he was, Nikolai predicted the formation of a "World Construction Committee" in which America would take the lead, together with England and Japan. Based on his prophetic views, a 1921 editorial of *The Living Church* called Bishop Nikolai a "Second Isaiah."

America is defined by Nikolai as the "Third International," for it is in America alone that Christian principles have been proclaimed. His vision for the future of America is different. He feels that the "First International" was the Roman, which was a system of subjugation and exploitation. The "Second" being Europe was quasi-Christian. According to Nikolai, "Its words are the words of Christ, but its acts follow the law of Rome." America will succeed if it does not repeat the past historical mistakes of Europe. Being neither East nor West, America will become in unity—a harmony of elevated emotion, intellect and will power:

The light of the East and the light of the West will rest at their noon on the continent which lies between East and West The last-born child of History, like Joseph, is going to save all its brethren from starvation and despair. Therein lies America's glory and own salvation.⁷

Practicing what he preached, and truly a witness to Orthodoxy, Nikolai accepted to pay an unusual pastoral visit to an African-American Congregation, St. Philip's Church in Harlem. On Paschal Monday of 1921, he was greeted by 1,400 parishioners and 40 outside students. The community proudly displayed both the American and Serbian flags. Following his delivery on love towards one's neighbor, which unites all nations and manifests itself in the equality of all races, the entire congregation rose and sang the Serbian national anthem. The far-reaching consequences of this visit were evident twenty-five years later. Greyed and fatigued by the German concentration camp of Dachau, the well-remembered Nikolai, would enjoy strolling freely down the streets of Harlem as the eager young African-American children ran to kiss his hands and receive candy from him.

Nikolai was also invited to address the clergy of America on many and varied occasions. A luncheon was held in his honor by the Clergy Club of New York on 12 April 1921 at the Pennsylvania Hotel. One of the featured speakers was Archbishop Melitus of Athens. Whether addressing gatherings of this sort, or writing articles to the American clergy, Nikolai's message was always consistently the same:

Can the Churches in America, speaking with one voice, as strong as many waters, inspire with conviction the leaders of the Christian nations? To be able to do this all Church leaders must awaken to apocalyptic earnestness of the present time, and must feel like soldiers in different uniforms, but all of the same army, marching toward the same goal. . . . All power is in Christ. The world today stands powerless. Why does it not organize itself? What is it waiting for? Well, the organization of the world depends on the revival and organization of the Church. The Church organization depends on the hearts of Church leaders. There is the key. A superhuman effort is necessary for all Church leaders to overcome themselves for Christ's sake and thereby for humanity's sake. Is not America already used to superhuman effort.⁸

Finally, concerning the formation of a Serbian Orthodox Church in the United States of America and Canada, Bishop Nikolai, as the first Serbian hierarch to visit America wrote a 1921 *Paschal Epistle* to all

Serbian parishes in the United States. In this historically important document, he conveys the greetings of Patriarch Dimitrije to the faithful Serbian flock in the dispersion. Having already visited most of the Serbian parishes and investigated their pastoral needs, he stressed the importance of uniting the scattered Serbian flock under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Patriarchate.

In his *Report*, given before the Holy Assembly of Bishops, on 26 June 1921, Nicholai outlined the conditions of the Serbian communities in America, noting that their problems were indeed numerous: a number of the parishes were pastored by Russian clerics who could not speak their language and showed indifference to their needs; the Serbs had no monasteries to lead the faithful in spiritual growth; there was no seminary to educate their future clerics; mixed marriages were creating confusion among the faithful; there were schisms in the leadership of all the Orthodox in America; and heterodox practices, as well as secularism, were threatening to destroy the life of the churches. On 21 September 1921, Bishop Nicholai was appointed as the first Serbian Bishop of America. He remained in this capacity until 1923, when Archimandrite Mardarije Uskovich was consecrated as the first resident bishop in America.

1927—America

At the invitation of the American Yugoslav Society, the Institute of Politics in Williamstown, Massachusetts, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Bishop Nicholai was again invited to travel to America. The purpose of this trip was to deliver a series of lectures on world peace at the Institute of Politics at Williams College. In addition, during his two months here, he was scheduled to deliver sermons in both Episcopalian and Orthodox churches; lecture at Princeton University; and speak before the Federal Council of Churches in New York City.

Dr. James T. Shotwell of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace announced the anticipated arrival of Bishop Nicholai to America on Sunday, 5 August 1927, by describing him as:

One of the most interesting and picturesque public figures in the political life of the Balkan States. . . . By temperament a mystic, but by proved capacity a trained diplomat and statesman, Bishop Nic[h]olai presents a combination that would make him an outstanding figure in any country.⁹

Speaking before a group of New York City businessmen and professionals, representatives of the Institute of Politics, and reporters for the *New York Times*, Bishop Nicholai stated that this was his third visit to America: "The first time he studied its prosperity, the second visit was to observe its charities and this time he has come to study its possibilities."

At the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, 7 August 1927, Nicholai delivered a sermon on the problem of "East and West." He maintained that one of the greatest world problems today is the relationship between East and West. He likened the division to two twins, separated from and suspicious of each other:

The East says it represents wisdom and the West says it represents power. . . . What we need today most of all is that Christ's revealed wisdom should rectify and vivify the Wisdom of the East, and that His divine inspiration should spiritualize the power of the West.¹⁰

Bishop Nicholai's involvement with the Serbian Church was extremely limited during this visit. This was done to prevent dissension among the Serbs, since there were factions continually seeking him, to take up permanent residence in America. Perhaps Bishop Nicholai's three American missions are most aptly summarized in his own words, written in retrospect, towards the close of his own life:

I have come from an Old to this New World. Which is the better; the Old or the New? I could not know. But the Revealer of all truths has said to me and to you, that a wise householder brings forth equally new and old things out of his treasury. Not only the new, and not only the old, but both. Our Lord Jesus respected the Old Testament, but at the same time He revealed the New one. Now we, His followers, are keeping both as one Holy Book. The highest wisdom consists in keeping both old and new treasures. The separation of the two brings poverty, instability and confusion.¹¹

During the outbreak of World War II, Bishop Nicholai was incarcerated in the infamous Dachau Nazi Concentration Camp. From there he emigrated to the United States, unable to return to his beloved Serbia,

for the then-communist government had declared him *persona non grata*. Nikolai, as Saint Sava before him, was to die in exile, as the rector of St. Tikhon's Seminary, on 18 March 1956.

Bishop Nikolai was buried at the Monastery of St. Sava in Libertyville, Illinois on 27 March, 1956. He was truly mourned by Orthodoxy throughout the world, as well as by his good friends, the members of the Anglican communion. In compliance with his final wishes, Bishop Nikolai was disinterred on 24 April 1991, so that his earthly remains could be transferred to his native village. Part of his remains, together with the original coffin were reinterred in their original grave, so that in reality his grave also continues to exist at the Monastery of St. Sava.

The saintly Bishop's body was transferred to a then relatively free Yugoslavia and after being carried in state throughout Serbia, in the presence of the entire assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church and 30,000 faithful, his holy relics were placed in a newly-erected chapel, together with the remains of his parents and his nephew, Bishop Jovan Velimirovich, in Lelić, Serbia on 12 May 1991. Subsequently, the relics of Bishop Nikolai were prepared and washed on 16-17 October 1991 in preparation for canonization.

For many years now, Bishop Nikolai has been venerated among the saints. In the Diocese of Šabac-Valjevo, from where he heralds his birth, on 18 March 1987, the first liturgy honoring Bishop Nikolai was celebrated. Following the Divine Liturgy, wherein his troparion and kontakion were chanted, the Rite of a Patronal Feast was also observed in his honor. Several iconic portraits have already been written and his troparion has been translated into many languages awaiting formal canonization.

⁸ *The Living Church*, 14 May 1921, p. 1.

⁹ "Yugoslav Bishop Coming to America," *New York Times*, 4 July 1927.

¹⁰ *The Living Church*, 20 August 1927, pp. 539-40.

¹¹ "New and Old Treasures," *Orthodoxy: Herald of the Serbian Orthodox Church*, October-December 1960, pp. 41-42.

¹ This paper was delivered at the Annual Conference of the Orthodox Theological Society of America, St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, South Canaan, Pennsylvania, 15 June 1994.

² *1979 Calendar of the Serbian Orthodox Church*, p. 84.

³ "In Memoriam Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich," *The Russian Orthodox Journal*, May, 1957, p. 5.

⁴ Columbian Collection, Columbia University, New York.

⁵ *The Living Church*, 25 June 1921, p. 247.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

⁷ *Ibid.*

BOOK REVIEWS

Ratomir Rale Damjanović, Novo Tomić, and Sanja Ćosić, eds. *Serbia, srpski narod, srpska zemlja, srpska duhovnost u delima stranih autora*. Belgrade: Itaka, 1996, 514 pages.

Serbia, Serbian People, Serbian Land, Serbian Spirituality in the Works of Foreign Authors, edited by Ratomir Rale Damjanović, Novo Tomić and Sanja Ćosić is a new, enlarged edition of the volume under the same name which was published in Belgrade by VMG in 1994. It contains 280 entries written by 250 foreigners about Serbs throughout written history, from the earliest sources to the present day.

The authors are philosophers, historians, journalists, poets, novelists, diplomats, and travelers; and they come from England, China, France, Norway, Russia, Italy, and so forth. The book offers either excerpts or entries from a variety of genres, poems, essays, travelogues, novels, memoirs, etc. In their choice the editors were guided by the artistic quality of the text, the authenticity and the quality to entertain. The texts speak of the Serbian people, their history and culture, their literature and art, their language and their historical aspirations.

The collection is divided into two parts, with the beginning of the nineteenth century as the dividing line—the period when Serbs reappeared on the historical scene after several centuries of Ottoman domination. It was also when Western Europe discovered Serbian heroic folk songs and when Serbian reputation soared due to their heroism and love of freedom.

The book begins with the ode Gabriele d'Annunzio wrote to the Serbs in the fall of 1915, perhaps the most beautiful poem any poet ever wrote to praise a foreign nation. The poet himself sent several copies of the ode to Peter Karadjordjević I, the King Liberator. The ode, first published in the *Corriere della Sera*, was translated by the Serbian poet Milutin Bojić and published in the *Serbian Newspaper* on Corfu in 1916. The book has nine chapters. Each chapter has an extended title which summarizes the content of the chapter. The first chapter entitled "The Time of Vuk Karadžić. Vuk the Leader. Epic Serbia—Lyric Serbia. Europe discovers Serbian Poetry. In the Enchanted Circle of Serbian People. People's

Memory" contains the text linked to the work of the language reformer Vuk Stefanović Karadžić who fought to standardize the language of the Serbs. Karadžić also acquainted Western Europe with Serbian folk literature, the great epic hero Marko the Prince, Serbian lyric and Serbian epic poetry.

In the second chapter, the editors return to the first historical sources about the Serbs, the ascent of the Nemanjić dynasty, and the creation of the first Serbian state. They follow with the golden era of medieval Serbia, and end with the Battle of Kosovo and the Kosovo myth.

The first part of the book ends with the third chapter which is dedicated to medieval monasteries and accounts of what travelers saw in their journey through medieval Serbia. The second part contains accounts of the liberation struggle against the Ottomans and the creation of the modern Serbian state. Two of the chapters contain only a small portion of what foreigners have written about the Serbs during World War I and World War II. They contain testimonies to the martyrdom of a small nation against which genocide was perpetrated twice in the first half of the twentieth century, first by the Austrians during WW I and second by the Ustashi regime in WW II.

The eighth chapter contains travelogues about Serbia written by various foreign authors. The theme of the last chapter is still unfolding. In it, the editors include a number of contributions by contemporary public figures and journalists who had enough courage to speak up in defense of the Serbs during the relentless media blitz of the 1990s.

In the words of critic Mile Nedeljković, "This book is a defense of dignity of a small nation, which like only a handful of other nations, has been exposed, throughout history as well as today, to the ruthless tyranny of the world's empires and re-peatedly condemned to annihilation and extermination."

Radmila Gorup
Columbia University

Miodrag Maticki, ed. *Istorijski roman: Zbornik radova*. Belgrade/Sarajevo: Institut za književnost i umetnost/Institut za književnost, 1992-1996, 500 pages.

This ambitious compendium of forty-five articles deals with a theme that has always fascinated Serbian writers, especially the novelists—history. One of the conclusions culled from this book is that the historical

novel has been present in Serbian literature, in various forms, from the beginnings. It is, therefore, quite understandable that the authors discuss history in a novelistic form even when there are no novels to speak of as, for example, in epic poetry or in the old Serbian biographies. The long, turbulent history of the Serbs has predisposed them toward historical fiction. Indeed, some of their best novels are based on history.

Most articles deal with contemporary Serbian literature, examining either historical novels *per se* or fictional novels based on historical events and characters. About one-fourth of the articles examine one or more novels by prominent writers such as Ivo Andrić, Miloš Crnjanski, Dobrica Ćosić, Slobodan Selenić, and Milorad Pavić. Other essays treat various phases of the development of the genre, tracing the history of the historical novel, so to speak. A good number of articles examine the theoretical aspects of the genre. For those interested in the theory of literature, such articles are specially enlightening.

It is impossible to do justice to all the worthy contributions in the limited space here. Dobrica Ćosić's musings about historicity in a novel throw fascinating light on his own treatment of history in *Vreme smrti*. Aleksandar Petrov, in his article "Istorijski roman kao roman-bajka: O Drugoj knjizi Seoba Miloša Crnjanskog" (one of the five articles devoted to Crnjanski), sees this novel as a fairy tale, using the ideas of V. Propp and Roman Jakobson, thus throwing a refreshing new light on this work. David A. Norris, one of the two non-native contributors, examines history and discourse in the novels of Ivo Andrić and Crnjanski. Three authors, Enver Kazaz, Zdenka Petković, and Davor Miličević, deal with the novels of Slobodan Selenić, especially with *Timor mortis*. Jasmina Mihajlović's "Neki istorijski izvori o Hazarima i njihova transpozicija u Hazarski rečnik Milorada Pavića" offers a pithy treatment of this important aspect of Pavić's complex novel. All other articles have their own merits as well.

Ironically, the basic theme of this book has found its echo in the strange history of the book itself. It was originally planned as a publication of the proceedings of an international meeting on the historical novel held in Sarajevo in November 1990. The ensuing fateful events prevented the actual publication of the book, although the manuscript was preserved and later published in Belgrade. Sarajevo's Institute for literature is no more, yet it lives on through this book as a fitting reminder of the unpredictability of human affairs and of all history.

Vasa D. Mihailovich
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

E. D. Goy. *Excursions: Essays on Russian and Serbian Literature*. Nottingham: Astra Press, 1996, 110 pages.

This slender book of literary essays attests to the prodigious output of E. D. Goy, one of the leading Slavists who has devoted a great deal of his work to Serbian and Croatian literatures. A critic, literary historian, and translator, he has spent most of his long scholarly career examining various aspects of Serbian and Croatian literatures from the beginnings to the present. In addition to numerous articles and reviews and one monograph about Njegoš, *The Sabre and the Song—Njegoš: The Mountain Wreath* (see *Serbian Studies* 9 [1995]), Goy has translated works by Ivan Gundulić, Dragutin Tadijanović, Miodrag Bulatović, poems and stories by others, and a book of love poems from the oral poetry of the Balkan peoples.

Excursions is almost equally devoted to two literatures, Russian and Serbian. Two articles deal with Pushkin ("Pushkin's 'Little Tragedies'," and "Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman*") and one with Turgenev ("The Epilogue in Turgenev's Novels"). As was his custom in other literary critiques, Goy's essays here are distinguished by originality and perspicacity. He takes to heart the unwritten law that if one does not have something new to say, there is no reason to speak. Consequently, he approaches both Pushkin and Turgenev from new angles and makes valuable observations.

In his essays on Serbian writers, Goy displays another characteristic typical of his scholarly approach: he is not reluctant to tread paths not often traveled. The essay "The Play *Tašana* by Borisav Stanković" is a good point in question. Most critics prefer to deal with Stanković's novels and short stories, and with his play *Koštana*, whereas Goy chooses the play languishing in the shadow of *Koštana*. Lamenting the fact that *Tašana* is seen by many as a failure, Goy proceeds to analyze the play to show that it represents a new development in Stanković's art giving a clear insight into all his earlier works. After tracing interesting similarities between Chekhov's plays and *Tašana*, Goy also examines the play not as a mirror of Vranje of that time, as almost everyone who deals with Stanković's opus does, but as a symbol and an embodiment of existence. Such intriguing conclusions make Goy's essays worth reading, in addition to other reasons.

The other two essays—"Five Inverted Stories by Veljko Petrović" and "Realization and Idea in the Stories by Veljko Petrović"—again concern a writer who was somewhat eclipsed even before his death in 1962, most likely because Petrović was only a short story writer, as has happened

to many such writers. Analyzing the stories "Perica je nesrećan," "Zemlja," "Iskušanje," "Sarina Lenka," and "Čubura-Kalemegdan," Goy refuses to accept the traditional view of Petrović as only a social realist, character-writer and the portrayer of the Vojvodina. Again finding similarities with Chekhov and some other Serbian writers, Goy reveals in Petrović's short story telling a propensity to take a familiar theme, invert it and give it a new twist. Another propensity of Petrović Goy sees is in implicitly giving his stories a psychological, and even philosophical bent involving questions of universal conditions of existence. In this sense, Goy sees Petrović's best stories as equal to those of Ivo Andrić, in a statement that will surprise some but remains valid nevertheless.

E. D. Goy's breadth of vision, knack for comparison, and courage of conviction make him one of the few foreign scholars who have examined Serbian literature with passion and in the process brought new and refreshing insights.

Vasa D. Mihailovich
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Zorka Milich. *A Stranger's Supper—An Oral History of Centenarian Women in Montenegro*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995, 160 pages.

"Oral history may well be the twentieth century's substitute for the written memoir," suggests Prof. Zorka Milich in her work, *A Stranger's Supper—An Oral History of Centenarian Women in Montenegro*. The author undertook a challenging task of recording interviews of 30 illiterate tribal women of Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Muslim heritage in Montenegro between the ages of 101 and 115. Most of the women, as Milich pointed out, were lucid and articulate and most were intrigued that a foreigner, an American at that, expressed an interest in their simple life. Generally speaking, says Milich, whose undertaking might have been motivated by Prof. Albert Bates Lord's *The Singer of Tales* (1960), "it would be hard to find a woman prouder than a Montenegrin. She is pride incarnate. It would not be surprising to learn that the word was created specifically with her in mind. Here is a woman married to a man she did not know, bearing his many children under harrowing conditions burying many of them in their early years. She would invariably lose husband, sons and brothers through wars, starvation, and blood feuds. Resigned to a life of

incessant hardship, she accepted, without protest or inquiry, the fate bequeathed to her." In the chapter "Montenegro: The Women Behind the Warriors," the author offers a summary of the history and social structure of Montenegro, with an emphasis on traditional concerns of women in that region, such as submission to males, carrying water, active participation in warfare and feuding and tough living conditions. The amazing Montenegrin centenarians speak for themselves with minimal editing as presented in four subsequent parts of the book: "Sons and Brothers: Death in the Midst of Death," "The Honeymoon Must Wait," "The Friend of my Enemy is my Enemy," and "We are Sisters All." In most of these interviews, Milich indicates that "after four centuries of warfare, raiding and feuding, the vocabulary of suffering, sorrow and hardship is rich and well developed, often using hyperbole. Montenegrin women also wax poetic when they speak of valor of sons. Heroism, continuation of the male line, and suffering are important themes in the Montenegrin culture." In the Epilogue, speaking about a new generation of Montenegrin women, making a distinction between past and present is education of women. Milich says that the modern women are more than literate, many earning the highest degrees in their fields. Among its neighbors, Montenegro has been the forefront of the movement to educate its people, male and female alike, stressing the importance of learning. Although, as the author points out, technology makes the modern Montenegrin woman's life physically easier than her grandmother's, patriarchal conditions are still present. The modern Montenegrin women continue to take a secondary role to men but enjoy the respect and protection of the entire society. In the words of the Pulitzer Prize winner, an American poet of Serbian origin, Charles Simic, "this is an astonishing book. Anybody interested in what life was like for women in the past—not just in Montenegro but everywhere else in the world—should read these interviews. These women are heroic figures of the highest order."

Branko Mikasinovich
Washington, D.C.

Meša Selimović. *Death and the Dervish*. Translated by Bogdan Rakić and Stephen M. Dickery. Introduction by Henry R. Cooper, Jr. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1996, 473 pages.

This is the first English translation of the well-received and widely acclaimed novel of the Bosnian author. It is a long, meandering work of

fiction with many plots and subplots, a first person narrative of a *dervish* whose name is Ahmed Nurrudin which translates as "Light of Faith." He is the religious head of a small Islamic retreat of *dervishes* in a town in 18th or 19th century Bosnia under Ottoman rule. The core plot is his unsuccessful attempt to free his brother from prison and from an impending death sentence. The charge against the *dervish's* brother was never spelled out and his fate is in the hands of an omnipotent and ruthless government. In defending and protecting his brother Ahmed compromises his ethical standards by betraying his best friend and by eventually ruining his life. Interspersed in the narrative are broad philosophical questions about the meaning and the purpose of life.

There are three main themes which permeate this novel: The description of social, political and religious life in 18th and 19th century Bosnia. This is the broad canvas on which two other themes are superimposed; that of an individual struggling against an oppressive government and that of an individual confronted by merciless fate. Both the time and the place of the narrative are left vague. The time is indicated by bits and pieces of the narrative. Bosnia is under Ottoman rule which is in its last stages of decline and decadence; local religious and political leaders make their own rules far removed from the central government in the capital. This is Ottoman Empire as the "Sick Man in Europe" of the 19th century. There are only a few random references to geography. Sarajevo is mentioned and so is the Sava river, and the Krajina region. This vagueness of time and place enables universal reading. The conditions and circumstances described in the novel could pertain to any time and any place, the past, the present and the future.

The theme of the powerless individual pitted against an oppressive and arbitrary government is an important one in the novel and something which resonates with the experiences of ordinary Yugoslavs. The symbol of oppression is the prison and its cells of complete darkness where Ahmed's brother is executed and where Ahmed himself is incarcerated. The fate of a person facing the all-powerful, arbitrary and evil government is hopeless. Selimović describes it in the following way: "Nothing depends on you. It doesn't help to be either brave or cowardly, neither to curse nor to weep; nothing can help you . . . if you are guilty, then it's your mistake, if you're not guilty, then it's their mistake" (p. 231). This statement has universal validity and may apply to Ottoman Turkey, the Soviet Union, Tito's Yugoslavia or any dictatorial regime in the world. It would, however, be wrong to characterize this theme as an overriding one and to consider

Selimović's novel as only belonging to the literature of protest.

Ahmed is a *dervish*. *Dervishes* belong to the fringes of Islam and they are a link between the sensible and the spiritual world; they counsel ordinary mortals on all aspects and problems of their lives because of their insight into the hidden recesses of the human soul. The irony of Ahmed, the *dervish*, is that in spite of his name, "Light Faith," he is the one who is in need of counseling and advice. He is completely overwhelmed by life's problems and choices. Religion is no help to Ahmed. He is confronted with an existentialist situation in which he is alone and without any religious or social support. Selimović does not find any anchor for his protagonist in an alien and unfeeling universe and the numerous citations from the Koran and *Death and the Dervish* do not lend comfort to Ahmed's quandary. The last words of the novel sum up the hopelessness of it all: "The living know nothing. Teach me, dead ones, how to die without fear, or at least without horror. Because death is senseless, as is life" (p. 455). The novel speaks to contemporary readers with all the force of their 20th century sufferings and travails and that is its valuable message.

The translators had a difficult task of finding adequate equivalents for numerous Bosnian idiomatic expressions and Turkisms in American English. They solved it in a reasonable and effective way by leaving the religious Islamic terminology in the original with a glossary explaining their meaning. The Koranic citations which Selimović uses are translated from the novel and are not restored from the Koranic standard English translation. Selimović's citations are often inaccurate since he quotes the Koran from memory.

Meša Selimović would have a difficult time in his native Bosnia if he were still alive because he was the opposite of a narrow nationalist. He was a writer with a broad tolerant orientation both in his life (he was married outside his religion) and in his writing. If there is any alternative to the bleak despair which permeates his novel it could be found in the solidarity and love between members of a family and friends. This simple message is timely and badly needed in Bosnia now.

Dragan Milivojević
University of Oklahoma

REVIEWS IN BRIEF

Nadežda Obradović
University of Belgrade

Milislav Savić. *Ujak naše varoši*. Belgrade: BIGZ, 1995, 249 pages.

The collection of stories *The Uncle of Our Town* consists of fourteen stories divided into two parts: "The Animals" and "The Player." The stories of the first part entitled "The Horse," "The Wolf," "The Cock," "The Bear," "The Dog" and "The Pigeon," stand for the protagonists of the stories and blend imagination and a rough reality. The stories of the second part are based on the everyday life of a hamlet in the south of Serbia. The narrator, the Uncle, is the main character in all the stories. With this collection, Savić reaffirms himself as a good connoisseur of provincial life. The stories are filled with gossip, misfortunes and ordinary events, and almost never have a happy ending. Savić's stories teem with a variety of peculiar types.

Milislav Savić (b.1945) has written seven books of prose and edited four anthologies. He is an editor at the Prosveta Publishing House in Belgrade.

Tiodor Rosić. *Nekršteni dani*. Belgrade: Srpka Književna Zadruga, 1995, 143 pages.

The eight stories of the collection *The Twelfth Tide* vary in genre: some are phantasmagoric, others realistic. The background of the latter is WW II and the post-war period, the time of the fierce conflict between the royalist Chetnicks and the communists. From among the phantasmagoric stories "Plantaža duša" (The Farm of Souls) deserves special attention because of its peculiar plot and suspense. With these stories, the author stresses that the consequences of wars are felt much longer after the battles have ended.

Rosić (b.1950) is a poet, novelist, essayist and the writer of short stories and fairy tales.

Aleksandar Jerkov, ed. *Izabrane priče beogradske manufakture snova*, 2nd edition. Belgrade: Dental, 1996, 150 pages.

The Selected Stories of the Belgrade Manufacture of Dreams contains twenty-three stories. The Belgrade Manufacture of Dreams was an informal group of young men who gathered in the 1970s and who all had a mutual passion: they were all in love with words and they thought that literature was the primary thing in the world. Almost all the members of that group grew to become serious writers. The editor, one of the group, subdivided the stories into entries entitled: "Illusion, History, Dream;" "Literature, Nightmare, Dream;" "Reality, Fantasy, Dream;" "Program, Documents, Dream." Several writers contributed more than one story. The famous Serbian novelist, Milorad Pavić, even though belonging to an older generation, was included in the collection, because his "portics" is close to that of the members of the Manufacture.

HEARING ON POLITICAL TURMOIL IN SERBIA

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe,
Thursday, December 12, 1996
Washington, D.C.

[Verbatim transcript from the U. S. House of Representatives (Editor).]

The commission met, pursuant to adjournment, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, The Honorable Chris Smith [Chairman of the Commission] presiding.

Mr. Smith. The Helsinki Commission will come to order. Good morning.

This morning's hearing focuses on the recent developments in Serbia and what the opposition forces in Serbia have to say about the republic's future. As we all know from the press daily, the streets of Belgrade have been filled with tenacious and courageous protesters, sometimes numbering over 100,000. Other Serbian cities have also experienced the protests. Milosevic and his government are unwilling to accept the results of the November municipal election in which the ruling Socialist Party and its allies lost major city governments to a coalition of opposition parties known as Zajedno.

Press coverage may give the wrong impression, and our panelists may want to comment on this, but it seems as if these demonstrations are more than just about the municipal election results. The mass protests show the frustration among the population as a whole, about the poor economic situation, about the restrictions on their human rights, and about the lack of confidence they have that their children will have a democratic and a prosperous future. The blame rests on the regime in Belgrade led by President Milosevic that has claimed to represent the interests of Serbs everywhere, but really is interested in nothing more than maintaining and building the reins of power.

Beyond the popular protest, the ability of the opposition coalition to win in municipal elections has sparked hope that alternatives to the current regime can garner support. Attempts since 1990 to change political power through the ballot box has failed. The opposition's unity, though, is

fragile. The unity has been forged by necessity between genuine democrats on the one hand and nationalists on the other.

I want to stress my view that being an anti-communist does not automatically make one a democrat. Those opposed to Milosevic and his regime are not champions of a democratic Serbia if they criticize his failure to carve out a greater Serbia, if they associate with persons indicted for war crimes, and if they express intolerance and prejudice against non-Serbs rather than proposed solutions to differences regarding regional and ethnic questions in Serbia.

The Helsinki Commission, therefore, has a new sense of optimism but some lingering doubts about Serbia's political future. It also has a real concern that the current regime will at some point impose a major crackdown if it feels its power is threatened. If force and increasing repression is used against those struggling to bring change to Serbia, this commission, and I am sure other members of Congress do more than merely condemn it. Beyond opposing such a possibility, the United States needs to build policies that will encourage democratic development in Serbia.

As was indicated in a commission staff report earlier this year, there are questions regarding the wisdom of relying so heavily on Milosevic to implement the Dayton accords. There are also questions regarding how best to support independent media, nongovernmental organizations, and other democratic forces in the country.

Three witnesses have recently arrived from Serbia. Each is personally engaged in different components of the opposition.

We have Miodrag Perisic, a co-founder and vice president of the Democratic Party, the first political opposition party in Serbia. Mr. Perisic has been a visiting scholar at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and has lectured at universities throughout the United States.

Branislav Canak is president of Independents, a confederation of independent trade unions which have sought to organize workers throughout Serbia. Formerly a broadcast journalist, Mr. Canak is also founder and chairman of the Independent Union of Journalists. He received the 1995 George Meany Award for Human Rights from the AFL-CIO.

Veran Matic is editor-in-chief and of the independent radio station in Belgrade, B-92. Despite several general limits and recent threats to his broadcasting ability, B-92 has been one of the few channels that has been known for its expression of independent views. And it has, quite frankly, been effective in its work.

And finally, we have an analyst, Obrad Kesic, a program specialist for the Professional Media Program at the International Research and Exchanges Board. He is responsible for programs in Balkan countries and serves as an adviser on Balkan affairs at various U.S. and international organizations. Mr. Kesic will put the comments of the others in a broader context of Serbia's potential political development and suggest U.S. and international policy responses.

I'd like to thank our very distinguished panel for taking the time out of their very busy schedules, especially with events being so active in Serbia. And I look forward, and the commission looks forward to hearing their testimony.

Mr. Perisic, if you could begin.

Statements of Veran Matic, Editor-in-chief of Radio B-92; Miodrag Perisic, Co-founder and Vice President, Democratic Party [Dp]; Branislav Canak, President Nezavisnost [Independents]; Obrad Kesic, Program Specialist, Professional Media Program, International Research and Exchanges Board [Irex]

STATEMENT OF MIODRAG PERISIC

Mr. Perisic. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, let me express my gratitude for having the opportunity to address such a distinguished audience. As an elected representative back in my country, I am honored to speak in the House of Representatives of the U.S., Unites States of America, hoping that my nation in the future will achieve high standards of democracy.

I'm coming from a proud, small nation, which has played an important role in the history of Europe at great sacrifice for itself. I belong to a people which has a long-standing friendship with the United States of America, which fought on the same side of America in two world wars and has more than 110 years' diplomatic relationship with your country. We are still honoring our parents and our grandparents who risked and lost their lives in saving more than 500 American aviators from the Nazis.

Almost half of the century my nation suffered under communist rule. As a tragic legacy of the communist rule, we had the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia and tragic civil war in Bosnia and Croatia. This butchery and bloody theater, if I may express myself like that, put former Yugoslavia on the front pages of the international press and on the top

headlines of TV networks. The outcome of this war is more or less known. There were no winners in that war, but only the tragic consequences. I think there came a time for healing the wounds and there came a time for organizing on each side reconciliation committees which can recognize its own war criminals and deliver them to justice.

But here I am and here I speak on a completely different issue. There are issues of democracy and freedom of the media in Serbia.

As you know, we had elections on the 3rd and 17th of November in Serbia. And these elections we considered as a key political test showing whether peaceful and lawful change of power in Serbia is possible. It was the lower test task because municipal governments by themselves do not have a great deal of authority. But by refusing to recognize defeat at the local elections in all major cities in Serbia, including Belgrade, Milosevic's regime has sent a clear as possible message both to the citizens of Serbia and to the international community.

At that time and just a few days before that, as you remember, there were some discussions in Brussels discussing whether Serbia and Montenegro are coming back to the international community, and they were talking about trade preferences for Serbia. Since Mr. Milosevic made frauds and manipulations and a power game during his elections, these discussions were frozen for half a year. So it was a clear choice that Mr. Milosevic had to make. It was the choice between Europe and the socialist rule in Belgrade and in other Serbian cities. And he has chosen to keep, to preserve, the socialist rule in the local cities.

Coalition Together, which was formed first from the five parties—two small parties and three major parties in Serbia—now is consisted of three political parties, comprised by Serbian Renewal Movement, Democratic Party and Civic Alliance of Serbia. The idea to bring the people out on the streets was the idea to defend the constitutional rights of the citizens and their free will. It was the idea to defend the institution of the elections itself.

As you all know, we are now protesting almost 25 days. It's four weeks of the protest and the regime of Mr. Milosevic is still deaf. And we have a complete blockade of the political communications, and by that we have—there were tries to close the last remaining two free media: One was Radio Index [sp], which is small media, and the famous B-92, which became the hero of the citizens of Belgrade.

Political objections of the Coalition Together are economic, social and political reforms which will secure the rule of law, privatization,

uncorrupted and inexpensive government and full integration into the world of economy and international institutions. So far we didn't reach our concrete goals. Our concrete goals were to recognize the real outcome of the elections of the 17th of November; secondly, to secure the full cooperation of Mr. Milosevic's Serbian government with a newly elected city government in so-called free cities, as we call them; and third, the freedom of the media.

We have now a regime which doesn't care for the warnings of the international community and which doesn't care for the voices of its citizens. So we came here to say that we are fully aware of the fact that if we do not have enough strength to persist and to oppose Mr. Milosevic, there will be no support from the international community. But I have to admit we cannot do that alone. We have very strong pressure of the international community on the Milosevic regime. But I also think that the citizens of Belgrade deserve not to reconsider imposing the sanctions against the people anymore. What we were suggesting is to consider personal sanctions against Mr. Milosevic and the very narrow circle of his supporters.

And if I may comment on what is said in your introducing statement, Mr. Chairman, I have to say I'm completely convinced that I'm right: On the streets of Belgrade and among the opposition leaders and among the opposition parties, the primary issues are democracy, very lofty values of the Western civilization, and economic reforms. There are no more nationalists on the streets of Belgrade. Of course, the political scene of Serbia is now very clean. From the left we have neo-communists and neo-Titoists, as we say; we have a political center in which is Coalition Together, consisting of three parties; and on the extreme right we have exclusive nationalists, which is Serbian Radical Party. Now we have more or less clean political single Serbia which was blurred during the war. Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith. Thank you very much for your fine testimony. I'd like Mr. Canak, if he would present his testimony at this point.

STATEMENT OF BRANISLAV CANAK

Mr. Canak. Thank you very much, Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, this is not the first time that I am here in this House, and I was always pleased to help present adequate information so that it is possible people in the House and in the administration of the United States of America could use in helping us to solve our problems.

Many people do forget how Milosevic has come to the power. And there, right there, lies the key why all of that we have had in recent years have happened to us, both with this, what we are going through the last weeks. Milosevic has come to the power of organizing the party putsch in 1987, forced to do it, as he said, to stop liberal faction in the legal communists of Serbia and announcing the showdown with what he has called anti-Yugoslav faction in the federal party organization. That is his style of ruling ever after. Sorting that under the label "communist paradigm," the opposition parties have thought that their anti-communist contempt would be left open the way for the democratization of Serbia.

The second strategic mistake made by the Serbian opposition was that they have accepted the competition with Milosevic when he had, in ideological despair, stolen from the opposition their depots, the power based on national chauvinism and populism. It has brought us to the kind of paradoxical situation. The communist captain has taken in his hands the rudder of the nationalistic ship and the opposition has fallen into the trap to challenge the captain. Who knows better the dark waters and head winds, him or the sailors?

So in the shadow of that competition, many important things have faded away, like for example the process of transformation of the society towards democratic state organization and market economy. Who cared for that, when the Serbian nation is surrounded by enemies from all sides?

Milosevic has used that, and thanks to all major media, he has propagated that what he was doing is democracy and that we have had a market economy in Tito's time already, and all he, Milosevic, had to do was only to adjust it to the new circumstances. Then, from that tiny, democratic market-economy-oriented shop has come the first product, the war, one of the dirtiest wars in the history of war for the territories and against human beings, even those who had thought that they would have been saved because they were Serbs.

That explains why this war was marked with genocide, ethnic cleansing, why most of the victims were the civilians. In some cases people were forced to leave their homes with an acknowledgment or even direct involvement of their own national centers. The tiny shop continued to produce, always with the trademark of the extreme use of force, complete lack of humanity and highest possible level of Machiavellianism. The tiny shop's foreman was ready to advertise everything, even the products his shop never knew before—peace, for example. But that was only when he has lost the market for his major product, the war.

Signing the Dayton peace agreement, Milosevic gave up engagement in Bosnia, but his shop is still based on the production of force. We in Serbia did not feel anything that Dayton peace agreement could have brought to Serbia as to one of the pact's signatories, except that Milosevic has exploited that fact to present himself as a saint who always was a peacemaker, only that nationalist Serbian opposition has pushed him into the war adventure. Of course, men get sick listening to someone shouting out peace as a battle cry.

Bearing the title of the key peace factor in the region is probably something that Milosevic couldn't expect, and he has the most optimistic dreams. But it didn't make him dreaming of Serbia. If he was forced in Dayton to leave the principles of force in Bosnia as the only way to solve the national interest, nobody has asked so far and so seriously to do same at home. But who could he be relying for implementing the peace in Bosnia if he is not willing to do it in Serbia?

I do not think that peace in Bosnia has a chance without a fundamental democratization of all state parties to the agreement. Non-democratic regimes could always reach for the revival of the Bosnian crisis if they feel that they are facing problems at home. Of course, that imposes immediately one of the possible conclusions, that it is not good to disturb such regimes, especially not from inside. But I don't think that the Serbian opposition is disturbing largely because of the Dayton. Maybe they would have done earlier, but not after November 17th, after the second round of municipal elections. One could even say that some of the major opposition parties would have never made nationalistic if Milosevic had let them play the role that every opposition party more or less had in most of the societies created on the political ruins of the Berlin Wall.

Same goes for workers. The workers of Serbia have said they have lost their basic role of measuring social threshold; that is, to limit all state aspirations exceeding democratic, economic and social capacities. Captured ultimately before the war by enormous, well-planned and extremely well-executed nationalistic propaganda campaign, workers didn't have a minute to wake up from the 50 years' long sleep. They have not been educated to recognize their interest as workers and citizens, and that is why they have become so easy prey for nationalistic preachers, especially one of the preachers who was head of the state and the communist party and that meant he was supposed to be always right. They had consciously traded their membership in the world of labor for the role of a simple subject of the fascist regime.

In this conversion of the workers to the servants and executors of the nationalist dreams, the major role has played as state-controlled trade union. They keep silent even today, as they do not belong to Serbia but to Milosevic himself, sharing the same silent distance from another Serbia coming its way.

The united branch trade union Nezavisnost, Independents, have been founded five years ago to search not only for industrial democracy, but for the civil society in general. We were for the peace before anyone mentioned war, because we have already then seen happy faces of future warriors. We have lost almost two-thirds of our initial membership as a price that we were happy to pay, struggling for peace, bread and democracy.

There are more people waiting for a job than those working in Serbia. One employed earns an average \$158, and seven others are afraid if he loses the job because their scholarships, pensions and social benefits depend on him. We have more employed in the gray economy and on the black markets than in the factories. That is why we say no to the war, to terror in Kosovo, to the violation of human rights and the trade union rights and freedoms, to the destruction of the major human civilization's achievement, a possibility to live together.

We say yes to changes, and that was our slogan on the eve of the first round of the elections. We asked our members, their families and friends, to cast their votes, whoever they think might bring us the change. They did it, and now for the second round it was clear that it could be only Coalition Zajedno and Coalition Liberty Now. Now we are together with students every day on the streets of the major cities of Serbia, not supporting these two coalitions, but doing something that we think we do together with them—creating a new Serbia.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith. Mr. Canak, thank you for your fine testimony. Mr. Matic.

STATEMENT OF VERAN MATIC

Ms. Tatiana Levi, State Department Interpreter. My dear sirs, Mr. Matic prepared the testimony in English, which I will read to you. And later he will answer questions and I'll interpret for him. Thank you.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] "Free media in Serbia—the past and the

future." It is not well-known that during the last five years there was a strong democratic and anti-war movement in Serbia. Despite its existence, and potential importance, it was often ignored by the West. It is sufficient to recall the number of people who refused to serve in the army and fight in the war. Several hundred thousand young people left the country rather than having to participate in a war in which they did not approve. There were dozens of independent media that operated without any international support. There were also numerous pro-democracy and anti-war demonstrations in 1991, 1992, and 1993. All these movements and the media provided a minimal or even without any support from the West. Then at the end of 1995, the Dayton peace agreement was signed. It is often said that truth is the first victim of the war. This was the case in the wars of the Yugoslav succession as well. But, in addition, the truth was, as it were, killed by the peace too.

Soon after the Dayton agreements were signed, Milosevic decided to suppress further the independent media. Three local radio stations were taken over by the government in Serbia and Montenegro. The only independent TV was taken over as well. Western reaction was practically non-existent. Television transmission of parliamentary proceeding, in existence since 1991, was discontinued. The opposition parties, deprived of the media or unable to have their views known through the TV transmission of parliamentary proceedings, were deprived of all means of communication with the public. They decided to leave the parliament. The parliamentary life practically ceased to exist.

Then the federal and local elections took place in conditions where the main role of the media was to vilify the opposition, and when the opposition and independent sector had to resort to an almost 19th century type of door-to-door campaigning. Milosevic's party won the federal election. Barely any foreign observers were present. And then unexpectedly, both by the regime and the international community, the opposition succeeded in the most uneven of conditions to win the local elections in key cities that account for three-quarters of the Serbian population, including Belgrade. Faced with such defeat, the regime reacted nervously and openly falsified the results.

This led to popular anger across Serbia, regardless of social class, age, education etc. And again there was no reaction of the Western media and government during the first week of the demonstrations. Only when it became clear how broadly based the demonstrations were and that they would not end quickly and when Milosevic resorted to open threats of

violent suppression and banning of the remaining free media, including B-92, foreign public opinion took notice. It then became clear that Western policy until then had no concern for democracy as such but cared only for the apparent stability in the Balkans. But the autocrats who were responsible for the war in the first place can guarantee stability only in the very short run, never a real stability. Only democratic societies can guarantee stability and ensure peace in the long run. Only democratic societies can strive for compromise and fit into the international scene. Such societies cannot be developed within authoritarian regimes without strong support by the democratic world, by the nongovernmental and international organization whose role is to help democracy.

No democratic process can be realized without independent professional media. The media represent the oxygen needed for normal political discourse and life. Some of them, like B-92, have wider influence and importance because they represent almost social movements. We at the B-92 have a wide array of activities: publishing, production of movies and theater pieces, exhibitions. B-92 is particularly active in the development of the new forms of communications, like the Internet, that allows for an almost instantaneous transmission of information and for contacts between various people who might not have ever heard of each other.

It is only thanks to the Internet that the news that our radio was banned could be spread far beyond the borders of Yugoslavia and that the international public opinion could speedily influence the authorities to change their decision. Information spread by the Internet regarding the demonstrations also increased world awareness of what was going on. And I remember about a year ago when we asked for support to develop our access to Internet, we were told that the technology was too sophisticated for our radio.

For a number of years already, the United States has no programs to help the development of free media in Serbia. In 1996 we received no support at all from the European Union either. Our development depends on the actions undertaken from time to time by various institutions. There's no stable support at all. More stable forms of cooperation and support are indispensable for the entire nongovernmental sector, and particularly for the free media. Such stable programs of support can be more easily and sometimes only provided by the democratic governments and international organizations which anyway have similar programs in a number of other countries.

Currently, when the desire for democratic changes in Serbia is

obvious, the priorities of the media support, in my opinion, are: First, to support the development of independent electronic media, particularly at the local level where the opposition has won the elections and formed its own city councils. Two, to support the printed media for the development of their own print facilities. Three, to have the spread of the Internet by allowing for greater communication capacity. Four, to develop programs of journalists training in the country and abroad. Five, to have the creation of an independent TV.

What is the rationale for such priorities? The local media have shown themselves extremely important in the recent elections. They have contributed to the better knowledge of the candidates, the views and the alternatives. They allowed the most efficient form of change, from within. Among them, local radio stations have been the most important. It turned out that the local elections were often the battle of the control of the local media.

Now, we have the opportunity to use the opposition, both in the cities where it was accepted by the government, and where it was overturned, to found and reinforce the role of the free radio stations. The printing capacity and thus the reach of the printed media is often controlled by the government through their control of the print shops, paper, unequal taxation etc. The most efficient help would be to enable the free print media to have their own printing facilities.

The current Internet communication with the rest of the world is of low capacity and does not allow the entire independent sector to have full access. By increasing the Internet's capacity, it will become possible to exchange radio programs between the radio stations within Serbia and Montenegro and between them and the world. The Internet circumvents the state limit and control on the number and power of the transmitters.

Training must not be confined to narrow specialization of the journalists. The courses must be the means for a direct exchange of ideas, ways of learning how free journalism is practiced in democratic countries, what are the relations between journalists and various institutions, including the government.

The need for an independent TV is the most obvious. It is impossible to overestimate the role that a television has in forming public opinion. Since it's an expensive project, the most that can be expected now is to support the project and to help bring together commercial producers. The proposals, the possible projects seem to exist. The budgets, hopefully, do exist too. What is needed is the goodwill to help. And I hope your very

presence here is an indication of such a goodwill, of which I am very grateful. Thank you.

Mr. Smith. Thank you for reading that statement by Mr. Matic. And that does give us some very tangible things to follow up on, so I do thank you for those suggestions.

I'd like to ask our final speaker, before we go to questions, Mr. Kesic, if you could make your presentation.

STATEMENT OF OBRAD KESIC

Mr. Kesic. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, members of the commission, thank you for the opportunity to address you regarding the growing crisis in Serbia. Before beginning, please allow me to state that the views that I express today are purely my own and in no way reflect the views of the International Research and Exchanges Board.

The blatant theft of the municipal elections in several of Serbia's cities, most notably in Belgrade and Nis, has shown to the world the true nature of Serbia's government, its President Slobodan Milosevic and his ruling socialist party. Despite Mr. Milosevic's best attempt to portray himself as a forward-looking statesman and political leader, his actions since November 17 instead reveal him as an authoritarian leader unwilling to heed the will of his people.

The popular daily demonstrations in Belgrade and several other cities throughout Serbia signal that the patience of the Serbian people for a government that is unaccountable and arrogant in its actions is quickly drawing to an end. In order to understand the situation now unfolding in Serbia, it is important to understand the nature of these popular demonstrations and the political developments within Serbia itself. These demonstrations should not be seen as popular support for the Zajedno Coalition, or any of its individual members. Instead they should be seen as an expression of deep frustration and hostility against the Milosevic regime. The theft of the elections and the arrogant behavior of the Socialist Party have served as the focal point for people who are fed up with the corruption, incompetence and arrogance of a government whose policies have reduced their incomes to less than one-tenth of what they were in 1989. But that has also created a new class of wealthy ministers and government officials.

The depth of this popular discontent ensures that regardless of how this current crisis is resolved, Mr. Milosevic's absolute hold on power has been broken. Unless Milosevic makes a dramatic turnaround, recognizes the legitimate results of the November elections, allows the development of an independent media, punishes those officials responsible for the grossest abuse of the law and human rights of his citizens, and begins to move toward a free market economy based on privatization, then it will only be a question of time before his rule comes to an end. This end is sure to come because of several main reasons. Number one, a growing and bitter rift within his own party that will lead to purges and defections of his own party members. Unlike in previous crises where Milosevic has been able to play one wing off of the other—the moderates against the leftists, the nationalists against the anti-war movement—this time he has fully positioned himself with the radical left of the Socialist Party of Serbia, the SPS. In doing so, he is increasingly alienating the bedrock of his political support in the party center. It was this support and his ability to portray the SPS as a centrist party, a moderate choice between two extremes of left and right as represented by the opposition, that helped him maintain his support among some of the Serbian people. His alliance with the Yugoslav United Left, YUL, the neo-communist party of his wife, Mira Markovic, and the erosion of the center within his own party, have firmly pushed him to the extreme left, where he has ideologically really been the entire time of his rule.

This, coupled with the success of Zajedno in representing itself as the new center, has succeeded in realigning Serbia's political landscape. And, I should add, from this point on things will never be the same in respect to that landscape.

Secondly, the promised economic boom following the lifting of international sanctions has failed to materialize, leaving many Serbs who were willing to support Milosevic a year ago with a sense of deep frustration and anger over their own worsening economic conditions.

Without the international sanctions, the socialists' mismanagement of the economy, the government's refusal to privatize and the corruption of its leadership are the main causes of Serbia's economic stagnation and are now obvious to even the simplest peasant. Serbia's workers and peasants have tolerated many hardships over the past five years and have given the socialist regime a free pass up until recently. The November municipal elections' actual results show that the socialist regime will never again be able to pass the buck for their mismanagement of the economy.

Thirdly, regardless of what happens in Belgrade and Nis, the loss of other municipal councils will undermine Milosevic's political machine. New, private broadcast and print media will spring up in these municipalities, breaking the regime's control over the flow of information. The independent municipalities will be able to form a strong association and develop a joint approach in their battle against the socialist-run central government.

The key to the success of the opposition is how well they can organize at the grassroots level and how well they can develop successful economic and social recovery programs at the local level. Even small improvements in everyday life such as the paving of roads and repair of schools or hospitals will go a long way in cementing support for the new governments. In order to be able to afford these services, the new governments must be creative in their dealings with the local and international business communities in order to generate much needed revenue at the local level.

Fourthly, Milosevic's certainty in the loyalty of his security forces has been shaken. The Yugoslav army, the VJ, has openly stated that it will not become involved in the crisis and will remain in its barracks. And privately, many of the officers of the high command of the Yugoslav army have expressed support for the demonstrations and sympathy for the democratic transition of Serbian society. His enormous police force, over 100,000 strong, remains his only hope. However, at the local level the police in many cities and towns have shown sympathy, and in a few cases open support, of the demonstrators. His special police has become his only useable enforcer and has been responsible for the brutal beatings of several students and demonstrators.

The United States and Europe must realize that the corner has been turned in Serbia. There is an unstoppable movement for democracy gripping the country, and Milosevic can no longer be counted on to deliver the compromises the international community seeks. The long-term interest of the United States and Europe is for a peaceful, stable and economically prosperous Balkans. This can only be achieved with a democratic Serbia, and the events over the past month have shown that a democratic Serbia cannot emerge under the rule of Milosevic.

In order to encourage the peaceful resolution of the present crisis and ensure the democratic development of Serbia, the United States should, among other things, consider the following options. Number one, continue to pressure Mr. Milosevic and his regime by maintaining their diplomatic

isolation by recalling our representative, Mr. Miles, for consultations, and encouraging our European allies to do the same with their ambassadors. We should continue to block Yugoslavia's participation in regional and international economic and political meetings until the government indicates a willingness to compromise with the opposition. Furthermore, we should look into the possibility of introducing targeted economic sanctions against Serbia's ruling elite and their families.

Secondly, we should include Serbia's media and non-government organizations in all programs of assistance currently being funded by the U.S. government in the region.

Thirdly, we should further our contacts with the democratic opposition within Serbia. Fourthly and finally, we should increase humanitarian assistance to Serbian refugees from Bosnia and Croatia. This would reduce an additional burden on the municipal governments and would assist them in building constituencies at the local level.

The United States should not seek to reinstate economic sanctions, as this would only assist the Milosevic regime in once again painting the international community and the opposition as the causes of all of Serbia's problems.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Smith. Thank you very much, Mr. Kesic. Let me—both Mr. Perisic and Mr. Kesic, both of you talked about targeted sanctions on personal assets of Milosevic and other members of the regime. What specifically do you have in mind in terms of those sanctions specifically?

Mr. Perisic. Should I go first?

Mr. Kesic. Yeah.

Mr. Perisic. It's well-known in Serbia, and Belgrade specifically, that there are many assets, private assets, of certain families on Cyprus, in Cyprus banks. Also it's well-known that Mr. Milosevic bought a yacht, Lear jet, and rented a villa in Athens and on Cyprus. It was not possible to do with his average salary of the president of Serbia, so it can be the object of the investigation. And also I think that what is to be done to investigate and interrogate the business and financial operations of Beobanka on Cyprus. It's very concrete.

Mr. Kesic. Mr. Chairman, you may be familiar that during the time of the international sanctions, there was a list published of individuals from Serbia and Montenegro who were being targeted for individual sanctions. I believe strongly that this list should be once again reexamined, looking at Mr. Milosevic, his family, the ruling elite within Serbia, to amend the list and then to continue the legislation that was in effect during the time of this international sanction.

One of the things that could be done is to look at the ministers around Mr. Milosevic. Most of those ministers also are the heads of businesses, and then to target those businesses, because the accounts of those businesses more or less have become personal accounts for his ministers.

Mr. Smith. I think that's an excellent idea and needs to be followed up on rather than an overlay of additional sanctions, which, as you pointed out, could end up actually benefiting Milosevic and swinging the pendulum away from the democratic parties back to his socialist party. Since the elections were concurrent, and at the federal level his party did well, how do you account for that? Was this a surprise to everyone that at the municipal level the opposition was able to win so decisively when, as you pointed out—Mr. Matic, I think you made this point—that there was very little help coming from the outside? How can you explain it, the same day, same election, people splitting their ticket in such a way?

Mr. Perisic. I am member of federal parliament. If you will allow me, I'll answer you.

Mr. Smith. Please do.

Mr. Perisic. If we are talking in figures, Mr. Milosevic for the last four years is ruling on the basis of 28 or 30 percent of the votes. I was leading the Coalition Together in the region of new Belgrade, which is one of the biggest municipal communities in Serbia. And I had to get more than 100,000 votes to get two seats in the parliament. But Mr. Milosevic's party, by the distribution of the electoral districts, could win, for example, five seats in Kosovo region in patch electoral unit by 2,000 votes.

So it was also manipulation with the electoral districts, and that's how he won this election. Also, since Mr. Milosevic is violating Yugoslav constitution, which is supposed that prime minister has to take care about the foreign policy, nobody really cares in Yugoslavia about the federal

parliament and federal state. There was real interest to vote where the real life is, where the real problems are, communal problems, corruption of the local city councils. So that's why the broad dissatisfaction with Mr. Milosevic rule in the major Serbian cities gave—it was the decisive factor to gain victory for the Coalition Together.

Mr. Kesic. If I could add just one thing. In late September, I was in Serbia and I traveled among the cities and towns that I visited. I also traveled to several villages. And in two villages in particular, in Lipe, which is near Smederevo and Osipaonica, one of the things that struck me at that time was that there was popular discontent brewing even amongst the peasants, who had been a pillar of Milosevic's support. At that time the peasants that I spoke with raised an issue that I think still remains to be answered, and that was they didn't feel that the opposition parties could represent their interests effectively. However, they did like the local individuals associated with those parties much more than the socialists who had been ruling those local communities.

And so in many ways this was a vote of protest, a vote against the ruling local governments and the corrupt individuals. and they are very corrupt at the local levels. And so that partially helps to answer why there were two different types of votes, one on the federal level, where the voters didn't think that the opposition really could do anything effectively, or even if they could win a majority, if it would make any difference at all, and then on the local level, where people began to vote their personal feelings.

Mr. Smith. Let me ask—we've seen press reports that Dejan Bulatovic, a student, and Gojko Baletic, an actor, were detained and beaten by police for their involvement in a protest. Could any of the panelists shed light on what has happened to those two individuals and whether or not others have been mistreated by Milosevic's police?

Mr. Perisic. Well, I'm familiar with the case of young student Bulatovic. The students of the department of arts made a puppet of Mr. Milosevic and they showed the puppets on the demonstrations, and young Bulatovic student was carrying this puppet of Mr. Milosevic, the caricature puppet. And after the people were going home, dismissing of the protest, he was taken by the special forces of the police, taken to municipal jail in Padinska Skala, where he was beaten by the special forces police. He was really terribly beaten. His—he was taken naked and he was beaten on the head.

His nose was broken and he was refused to get medical examination. The day after, when the students surrounded the city jail and city police headquarters, they allowed him to go to the hospital.

The case of the actor, Baletic, I heard this morning by the phone from Belgrade. He was terribly beaten but he was released after two hours in detention, and he came immediately to the party headquarters, where he showed his bruises. And he didn't know to explain, so far as I know, what happened to him. He was just taken from the marching rally.

Mr. Smith. Is Mr. Bulatovic still under detention even though . . .

Mr. Perisic. He's in the hospital.

Mr. Smith. He's in the hospital. But still under guard?

Mr. Perisic. Yes, he's still under guard. He was sentenced for 30 days to jail.

Mr. Smith. Have there been any others that we know of?

Mr. Kesic. There have been several cases reported in Nis, in the first days of the demonstration, before the demonstrations began. And I'm not—at this point I don't remember the name of the individual, but there was a serious beating and arrest of a union leader, Stocic [sp].

Mr. Perisic. It was before the elections.

Mr. Kesic. That was before the elections. So there's been a series of beatings. And to the best of my own ability, based on the information obtained through telephone conversations, what I've been able to tell is that these have been random and they've been designed to at least instill fear in the demonstrators, to try to get them to think about what could happen to them individually. And so this is more of a warning at this point, but it is something that should be definitely noted in the international community.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] We should add to this list Radio Boom-93, which is in Pozarevac, which is the native city of Mr. Milosevic. They're still not allowed to work, and their transmission has been cut off still.

Mr. Smith. Let me ask you a general question. Many of us were troubled when the administration, in crafting the Dayton accords, put so much reliance on Milosevic, one of the last remaining Stalinist dictators in Europe. And the feeling among many of us was, "How trustworthy can he be?"

I'll never forget my first encounter with him when the war first broke out against Croatia. I had just been with another member of Congress to Vukovar, which was then under siege. MiGs were flying overhead. Tanks encircle Vukovar. And when we met the next day in Belgrade with Milosevic, he denied that there was any kind of federal involvement. No MiGs were flying. And I saw them with my own eyes, so he lied really, frankly, right to our faces, which you've probably become accustomed to.

But now we have the United States government and the western allies putting their eggs in the basket of he upholding his word on the Dayton accords. Do you believe, in terms of peace, if the alliance, all those who believe in peace, would be better off if the Dayton accords and the peace process were in the hands of the opposition, or Milosevic, who again has a very tarnished track record?

Mr. Kesic. I think that when we talk about the responsibility and the obligations under any peace agreement, including the Dayton agreement, it's important the primary responsibility and obligation rest with the parties who are involved primarily in the conflict. This includes a core of the three communities within Bosnia and then as well as Serbia and Croatia. Serbia and Croatia have to be pressured to honor their obligations under the Dayton agreement.

However, the United States, in relying on Mr. Milosevic to deliver the Bosnian Serbs, has made a terrible mistake. His influence on the Bosnian Serbs is questionable. Mrs. Klocic [sp] [Plavisc?] just yesterday, in a statement, indicated her support for the demonstrations in Belgrade and indicated that if the international community thinks that it is going to obtain any concessions from the Bosnian Serbs by continuing its support for Mr. Milosevic, it is mistaken; that the Bosnian Serbs have elected their representatives, for better or for worse, that those representatives have been recognized by the international community, and they will decide or make any decisions that need to be made in negotiations with that community.

She herself and the other Bosnian Serb leadership have indicated that they accept the responsibility under the Dayton accords and that there is no longer a role for Mr. Milosevic to play. Added to that is Milosevic's own desire to rid himself of the Bosnian problem and question. This has

been a series of headaches for him. And after the elections, in which he tried to manipulate by funneling in money and support to the socialists within the Republika Srpska, it was clear that he had lost his patience and that he had tried to distance himself from all questions concerning Bosnia and the future of Bosnia.

Mr. Perisic. Sir, if I may add, after the elections in Bosnia, I think that there is constituency and legitimacy on the side of the Bosnian Serbs who were elected when that election was monitored by the international community. So I think that the international community has to talk to them. And also, we are stressing—our coalition and the new political forces in Serbia are stressing the close link between the implementation of Dayton agreement, stabilization on the whole region in Balkans, and its views in democracy on all sides.

We do think that there is no real implementation of Dayton agreement, including the respect of human rights and democracy and the freedom of the media, without new faces on the political scene, which means we have to see the back of the people who started the war, and then that they are trying now to implement without respecting a real part of the accord, which is legitimate part of the Dayton accord and concerning human rights, democracy, and freedom of the media and expression of the will and speech. So it's of crucial importance to understand that the only persons who really understand the new language of democracy and the language of the respecting of human rights, they can implement the Dayton agreement.

Mr. Smith. Let me ask a question regarding—you said earlier that one-tenth of the salary going back to 1989 is basically what many workers are receiving. And I was wondering, Mr. Canak, whether or not you're having more success nowadays in inviting people to be unionized than previously. Is Milosevic's ability to provide goodies and salary increases perhaps or other kinds of helps, is there a kind of—is there more of a trend toward people being organized in labor?

Mr. Canak. Well, I can tell you that the motivation is highest ever, but we still face the problem that we were having on the very first day. That's the collapse of Serbian economy started before the war and before the international sanctions. And we have, as I said in this paper, we have more people on the streets smuggling gasoline, smuggling cigarettes, than

working in the factories. So you cannot get in touch with these people because they're not in the factories. They're not in a group. And another thing is that they make more money than they would usually make in the factory. So I'll give you one example of how serious is the problem. When we tried to organize a seminar for them, it was in 1993 when there was hyperinflation. And each of them, they were asking us to pay them 100 German marks a day for the seminar because they said that much they would lose for each day of the seminar not smuggling the cigarettes from Macedonia. And they had to make it for the survival of their families, you know.

Once we have economy starting back to work in normal conditions—and that will never happen until Milosevic is in the seat, the presidency—then we can develop that dimensions totally, trade unionist dimensions. Now we have a more civic dimension in our trade union. I think we maintain only 15 percent of normal trade union activities. The rest is education of not only our members but even their families about what is democracy, what nationalism could cause, like the war we were witnessing all these years.

So we're trying to wake up the people, not only to recognize who is Milosevic and what he has brought to the nation, but also to wake up them to look back what the communist regime made—how the communist regime made them become victims of ignorance of major achievements of civilization. So this is a long, long trip. That's why we depend a lot on you as a nation with a brilliant tradition of democracy, and on Western Europe. That's why I'm again pleased to be here and to have the pleasure and opportunity to talk to you.

Mr. Smith. Thank you very much. Mr. Matic, could you tell us what kind of range, what kind of broadcasting range B-92 has? and during the height of the war, what was the reaction and the support level of the average Serb for the War? Because obviously they were being fed propaganda day in and day out. It was mentioned earlier in testimony that hundreds of thousands of people refused to serve in the military because they felt it was an unjust aggression. And I wonder if you can shed light on the knowledge level of the average Serb.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] It covers, it could be said, 80 percent of Belgrade territory, Radio B-92. However, there is an association of local independent radio stations, and there were six before Dayton and now there

are only three. In the meantime, the other three were taken over by the state. Therefore, they're transmitting parts of our program.

In the last few months, we're using Internet widely to widen the territory where we could be transmitted. One of my colleagues, who is a journalist for the weekly *Vreme*, says that a monument should be raised in Belgrade, monument for deserters. The time when you were visiting Vukovar, many units were coming back, not willing to participate in the war. Three hundred to four hundred thousand young people left Yugoslavia, not wanting to participate in the war.

We now have many problems because of that, because we need those people in the process of reconstruction of democracy. But that helped regime in '91 and '92 feel insecure about their policy. Independent media have a lot of merit in this situation. That's why local media is so important, looking at the results of the local elections.

We have to provide democracy, to recreate democracy from within. People in small communities have to feel the need for democracy to provide democracy. The same thing with the peace; peace has to be the wish of everybody. Young people have no future perspective in Serbia nowadays. The only perspective is going abroad, leaving Yugoslavia. The whole independent sector in Yugoslavia works on that, in Serbia works on that, to provide the conditions for those people to stay in Serbia, and to become real creators of democracy, of democratic future.

Mr. Smith. Just let me ask you a follow-up. Of the 300,000 to 400,000 people that have fled, and maybe others, if they were to come back, what would be their fate—some all? Would they be—how would Milosevic's regime treat them? And where would they go?

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] At this point, it's no danger that they be persecuted by the regime although there's no law about amnesty. What discourages people is the extremely bad economic situation. In any case, their presence would contribute greatly to the reconstruction of Serbia. The majority of them are not nationalists, and they are in contact with the emigres from Bosnia and Croatia. They will be the ones to establish new contacts between new states. The fact that they spend several years in foreign countries and they have the flavor of democracy could also help. That's why Milosevic is trying to discourage them from coming back.

Mr. Smith. Before he left—as a matter of fact, it might have been right as

he was leaving—Lawrence Eagleburger, the former secretary of state, branded some of the people in the Balkans, including Milosevic, as war criminals or suspected war criminals. Thus far, there seems to be absolutely no move by the international tribunal to focus on Milosevic for his part in conceiving and prosecuting this war or slaughter. I wonder if you could give us, the Congress, some feedback as to how the Serb people feel when they see the United States, not just in Serbia but also in other parts of the world, working side by side with dictatorships.

It probably has not escaped your notice that this week General Chi, who is the Beijing butcher, the butcher of Beijing, who cracked down on the Tiananmen Square dissidents and those whose only hope was for democracy, and like the person who carried that effigy of Milosevic in prison garb, people who carried around the Statue of Liberty were beaten and hurt, and in some cases killed, he has gotten the red-carpet treatment by the Clinton administration, a 19-gun salute, which I think is shameful.

This is the man who is directly responsible for thousands of people dying and for putting and being part of a dictatorship that has put thousands of true democrats, small 'd', people who believe in democracy and human rights like you do, into the laogai or the prison camps in the People's Republic of China. And he is being feted now by the Clinton Administration.

When the people of Serbia see that and see, as we saw when Warren Christopher visited Serbia and for whatever reason did not meet with the opposition to find out what was on their mind and to show some solidarity with the democratic process, what kind of message does that send to the people who are putting their lives literally on the line for their beliefs, like that student, like that actor and like you, who are out there fighting for democracy and freedom?

Mr. Canak. I can tell you that we feel betrayed. We feel we have wasted our lives for something that somebody tells us that he or she recognizes, but that fact, the scene that you have presented to us, shows that actually they really don't recognize, they don't see our deeds as that important as some other interest are important for the country. I think that both interests could be fulfilled.

I think in return, you should never trade with democratic principles. It doesn't matter how much you need something. We felt all back in Serbia as betrayed. We have seen Milosevic in London, in Geneva and Paris, very welcome by everyone from the United States and West European leaders.

We understand that there's interest of Europe and United States to stop the war at that time in Croatia, and after that in Bosnia. But we never understood why there's such readiness to pay that price.

If you give something which is very valuable to stop something which is also valuable, so you're zero actually, you sacrifice democracy to stop the war, which means you will never stop the war; you sacrifice the democracy. And that's why we always expect that too many preconditions given to Mr. Milosevic and other dictators around the world. But they were all in the function of what someone was putting the preconditions on the table was interested for, but never the people who are ruled by that dictator.

Why you never put in your basket of preconditions something like, for example, human rights in Serbia, which includes trade union rights and freedoms, and free media—just two things, very important things—and ask Mr. Milosevic, could he give you exact and immediate answers to that? Because he can do that if he wants. It's not that he has to convene the parliament, to convene the government, to adopt new laws. He can do that next morning if he wants. So you can see immediately what partnership you can expect from that man. It's simple—human rights and freedom of media, nothing else. Thank you.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] As different as possible, we saw 10 days ago with our radio station. We just needed to organize several hours of very broad media campaign, and Deutsche Welag, Voice of America took part in that—a number of smaller media and journalists as well. After them, politicians came by. The radio was cut off only for 51 hours. So if we all keep the universal principles and if we all come along together, we can very easily win.

Mr. Kesic. Mr. Chairman, as an American, I'm deeply concerned about the message that we sent to the international community. And to give you an example, this summer I was in Albania on an official visit and meeting—this was after the elections in Albania—meeting with one of the new members of the parliament from the democratic party there. And we were talking about, as you know, the accusations that election was not free and fair.

And the new parliamentarian looked at me and said, "Why are you Americans so concerned about this? Because whenever you have a choice between democracy and stability, you choose stability." And I think that's a message that we've been sending out for many, many years. And somewhere along the line we have to change that and to show that we're

fully behind democracy, because only in doing so will we have that stability that we seek.

Mr. Perisic. If I may, Mr. Chairman, there is strong issue also concerning that you started. We can see from time to time the difference between the pragmatic administration policy and reaching short-term goals like it was peace on the Balkans. But there is also strong issue, as you said, of the war criminals and regarding the standards of the prosecutor of the Hague war tribunal. That means that there is no possibility to put a standard to reward somebody if he cooperates, for example, during the Dayton agreement and to punish somebody who was not cooperative during the Dayton agreement. That means that if somebody was a real war criminal, he must face justice. This is one issue. And the second is if we are talking about the lofty principles of democracy in Serbia, in the Balkans, in this region there is always a very close link between stability and democracy. And the implementation of democracy means that there will be an open dialogue to decrease the tensions of the ethnic groups there; that means to organize the network of democratic institutions which will help to mediate every open question there are now. If we are talking through the dictators and tribal chiefs, we can reach maybe short-term stability, but we cannot reach long-term stability and democracy in the region. Thank you.

Mr. Smith. Thank you. Mr. Matic, let me ask you, what has been the impact, if any, of the freedom broadcasts coming from the United States and also the informational broadcasts like the BBC? And anyone else who would like to answer that.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] Are you referring to Serbian stations?

Mr. Smith. No, I'm talking about like Voice of America, Radio Free Europe.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] It's still very significant. But they will be fully efficient only if they're done in cooperation with the local independent media. The majority of the listeners are listening to the FM station. So our radio station is re-emitting programs of Radio Free Europe and Voice of America and BBC. That gives those programs a chance to have much larger audience, in other words. The Radio Boom-93 that I referred to before from Pozarevac has also done the same thing when they were broadcasting. That

was one of the major reasons for it to be cut off. So my message is that it's very important that these programs should be done in cooperation with the local independent media.

Mr. Smith. Let me ask you, if Milosevic were to crack down further, over and above some of the beatings that he's initiated through his secret police, what should be the response of the international community? Because I know within the Congress there would be no division whatsoever among democrats, republicans, liberals, conservatives or moderates. It would be one of outrage. We would be demanding, I know, that the international community take swift and decisive action, perhaps along the lines of what was mentioned earlier with targeted sanctions against individuals and further isolation for this regime. Perhaps the international tribunal could open a case, finally, against Mr. Milosevic, now having probably right in front of the TV cameras more evidence of violence. What message should we be sending? I mean zero tolerance? Have we sent that message so far, us? And when I say us, the United States, Britain, France, other nations. Have we sent that?

Yes, please?

Mr. Perisic. As far as I know, Mr. Milosevic was warned in London, during the London conference, through his foreign minister, Mr. Milutinovic, that the United States would not judge him according to the promises but according to the actions. So he got the warning. What he's trying now to do, he will not commit major crackdown as you say, but he's trying to bite the group of demonstrations by taking individuals, trying through the individuals to frighten the group, which he did not succeed so far. And as we can see, the people are determined to fight for their rights.

But the main message so far can be, and I am pointing that out, that the United States administration can publicly say that they are not recognizing the third round of the elections in which Mr. Milosevic tried to gain the results of his fraudulent actions in the second round as the United States administration did in Belarus, saying that they are not recognizing the referendum. So it is a very strong message not to recognize the third round of the elections organized by Mr. Milosevic so he can see that there is not any more dialogue, any more talk to him.

Mr. Canak. I would say that most people think that Mr. Milosevic was always something what's happening back home, you know. He could play

the games with the United States and Europe. He could play the games with Bosnians and Croats, Serbs and Tudjman and the rest of the people. But he was never able to play the games with his own people, his own nation. He was afraid always the most from what we democratic forces in Serbia are able to do. So, if so far you support of democratic forces in Serbia, that much you can send him a very exact warning what side you are on. And I think that he started to lose his final battle. He was not expecting the result as it happened; that is, serious turmoil within the ranks of his party, and that will finish up. I don't know when; probably next year, maybe the first half of the year. But as any wounded beast, he might be very dangerous. At that time you must find a way to be present and help us directly. Thank you.

Mr. Kesic. I'd like to add that so far the administration has been very consistent in its message that it's sending that violence will not be tolerated. Just yesterday we saw that Secretary of State Christopher, as well as several other members of the administration, sent messages along these lines. I think that the administration was slow to get started, but since it has diverted its attention to what's happening within Serbia, has portrayed a consistent message, one that Mr. Milosevic is taking heed of. And I think that the Europeans are very consistent in the message that they've been sending.

One of the things that should be done, and unfortunately has so far only been done in a token fashion, is that the president, as the leader in the international community, who is looked to establish leadership, should make a statement concerning the situation in Serbia. He mentioned it the other night in a press conference in response to a question that a reporter asked, but he has to also get involved personally and make a statement.

Mr. Perisic. Well, let me add for the sake of justice, Mr. Chairman, that the United States of America, both the administration and the Congress and the representatives in Congress, did the best comparing to Western Europe and European Union. First of all, during the journey of President Clinton, there was a very clear message from the spokesperson from the State Department. And then we had—it was private visit, but we had four members of Congress. And when they showed up on the fourth floor window, where we take our speeches in addressing the demonstrators, everybody was shouting "USA." It was a very clear message given by your colleagues from the Congress and also a very consistent and continuing messages from the administration.

Mr. Smith. That underscores—and I think this is important to say—the solidarity that we feel with the Serbian people and their aspirations for democracy, but not with the current dictatorship that is in power. So I'm glad those four members were there. And when I saw that, I was very much heartened, as were other members too, as to the response to them, because our fight and argument has not been with the Serbian people but with the government.

Let me ask just two final questions, and I'll yield to Mr. Hand. How long do you think the protest will go on? If the elections were to be recognized, would that be sufficient to end the protest and then move to the next level of activism? Or do you think these will go on indefinitely?

Mr. Canak. Let me say first, since I started on this republic in Belgrade. Today, the Coalition Together, the leaders of Coalition Together, have the last chance. I think it's the last opportunity. They are meeting the Italian foreign minister, Mr. Dini, who is in Belgrade, and he's bringing European Union messages both to Milosevic and to the opposition. And if it fails, well, I think we have to think and to redesign and redefine our process. We have to spare the energy again of the Serbian people, because this moment will not repeat itself in the close future if we do not gain the momentum and if we do not use this energy. So what we can do is to form, which we did, the Association of the Free Cities in which opposition wants to establish an independent media there and to move some activities there, organizing parallel organs, parallel forums and discussion forums, and even maybe parallel parliament in the free city of Kragujevac, for example, or Uzice.

Secondly, what we can do is to choose one day in a week to gather together to show that we are continuing to protest. And third, we have to organize all people in Serbia. We have to travel around, and we have to start to overthrow this dictator, because the only force that we can use, besides the pressure of the international community, is our own democratic forces. And I'm looking forward to go back on Sunday to inform what we heard here and to talk to my colleagues and to talk what we have to do to reach achievable goals and to take reasonable actions against Mr. Milosevic.

Mr. Canak. I called yesterday my office, and it seems the students are—their headquarters are in our offices. They were expelled from the university almost the first week of the protest, and anyone who is expelled

from anywhere comes to us. We have room for everyone who is for democracy. And I called them yesterday, and both my members and members of the student movement, they said, "We are just warming up for the next year." But, of course, it's just a motivation. I'm sure that they will not go against rationality. We have announced a couple of strikes. Some of them could be strategic. One will be in 10 days, starting in a public transportation company in Belgrade. We started five strikes yesterday in five metal-workers, metal-working companies, the only five big companies working in Belgrade at the moment. That is message from outside. Of course, we do follow what Coalition Zajedno is going to do, because we are also not ready to waste our force and to keep it for days to come, and we expect that might be sooner or later next year, maybe in the springtime. So that's the plan for now.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] We have still to reestablish the work of Boom-93 programming in Pozarevac. Although it might look as a small radio station and comparatively insignificant, it is extremely significant as a symbol, because it operates from the native city of Mr. Milosevic. I also want to stress while I am here, and that's what I'm doing, too, that it's extremely important to have monitors from foreign countries, including the U.S., that will be there to monitor the freedom of the media, constantly, not just from time to time. Mrs. Carrie Martin [sp] came immediately to Belgrade. She's from the Committee for the Protection of Journalists. She came immediately. It meant a lot to us and meant pressure to Milosevic. The reason we need monitors—and I know that you believe us when we come and report on the freedom, on the human rights, on the breaches of human rights, but the reason we have to have monitors is we cannot continually report what's going on. That's the reason why we need to have monitors.

Mr. Smith. One final question. Is there any possibility that Milosevic will attempt to create a crisis, for example, in Kosovo to divert attention away from what's going on in Belgrade and elsewhere and try to shift the national focus somewhere else?

Mr. Perisic. No, he's from Kosovo. He's in Belgrade mostly, so he will not do that. He will not do that. He's now concentrated to take revenge steps against his own people because they didn't work for him.

Mr. Canak. And another reason, he's quite aware that he would not control Kosovo if he starts anything. He knows that.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] Yeah, I don't think it should be good to now divert the attention that this creates pressure on Milosevic created to resolve other issues, such as Brcko or Kosovo, I think that we should first achieve democracy in Serbia and then go on resolving these other issues.

Mr. Kesic. I would just add one thing, and that is that Milosevic, in forming the coalition with YUL, has more or less thrown away the nationalist card, because if now he was to try to regain the position of the symbol of populist nationalist politics in Serbia, I don't think it would work for him, simply because he has already alienated the nationalist wing and has purged the nationalist wing from his own party. He has alienated those nationalist leaders within other political parties to the point where there's no way that at this point he can regain the legitimacy in their eyes that he had in 1991.

Mr. Canak. Excuse me. If you will allow me, I would ask you for a favor. We have a serious problem which is not normally in other countries in the world, but in Serbia it is a serious problem. We have a lot of friends in the United States. Some of them are sitting behind me. They are not getting visas to get into the country, so they cannot be with us. They cannot monitor what we are doing. They cannot help us on the spot. That is a serious problem. I'm asking you if you can find a way to ask the Yugoslav government to do it as is normal under the Vienna Convention and other international rules concerning diplomatic exchanges and renewing visas. This is a complete privatization of foreign policy of Yugoslavia, because all people rejected for visas were rejected without any explanation. Actually, they were not rejected. They have been waiting at the embassy in Washington DC, were waiting until they wasted the time planned for the visa to Serbia. And then they would offer the visas; they could not travel because they had other obligations. So this is a very serious problem.

Mr. Smith. Thank you. And the commission will look into that. I appreciate that. Mr. Hand?

Mr. Bob Hand, Helsinki Commission Staff. At about the same time that the demonstrations in Belgrade and Nis and elsewhere were really first

taking off in late November, there were also massive demonstrations in Zagreb against the government because of the re-assigning of the frequency for Radio 101. It seemed in many ways to be a coincidence of events. But I'm wondering if the panelists could comment on any relationship that exists politically between Zagreb and Belgrade, both in terms of the governments as well as in terms of the opposition. Does the political opposition in Serbia try to make contacts with that in Croatia or trade unions or media? Or was this purely a coincidental effect?

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] I can say for B-92 we had a long cooperation with Radio 101 in Zagreb before. That was before the telephone lines were cut off. Now, since that happened, since that has been reestablished, we have started our cooperation again. Very soon we found ourselves under similar circumstances, where we were repressed severely by the regime. The two regimes are counterparts. They're very similar. At a factual level that's obvious as well. You have the similar treatment upon the media and you have very similar treatment of the local elections. Namely a year ago, opposition won in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. Tudjman has not let the local government get established. However, Croatia has been let into EU. That's what worries us, the Council of EU. That's what worries us. Because a similar thing might happen to Serbia as well. Is this peril going to continue?

Mr. Perisic. There is not a connection between the opposition in Croatia and Serbia, but if we are judging according to the behavior and gestures of two presidents, they are twin brothers, Milosevic and Tudjman, and there are fragmented contacts like B-92, Radio 101. And there are, of course, individual contacts, but the war really damaged the global communication between countries. And we do hope that healing the wounds, as I earlier said, and organizing a nongovernmental reconciliation committee will start the communication from the beginning, since we are suffering the same consequences of the autocratic regimes. But I still think that there are also some differences. There is broad dissatisfaction with Mr. Milosevic in Serbia, meaning in provinces and in the capital city. And there is only dissatisfaction with Mr. Tudjman only in Zagreb. So we do hope that there will be some communication in the future.

Mr. Canak. We had communications and a very good relationship with all three trade unions in Croatia and one in Bosnia. And what is most

important, we have established communications and relationship right in the middle of the war. We insisted on that because we wanted to have at least one bright spot in the tunnel, the dark tunnel. We succeeded. It was a hard job to do because at the first meeting our Croatian colleagues didn't want to shake hands with us. But now we are very, very close. We have a very close relationship, that close that we're going to start to establish a series of seminars in Bosnia, together with the Bosnian colleagues, and, which is the most important for them and for us, they asked us if can become mediators to establish relationship between trade unions of Republika Srpska and in the Bosnian federation, because the wall between those entities is still too high for people starting to talk to each other, not to cooperate. We don't have very much friends because we are the traitors of the Serbian cause, as we were labeled at the beginning of the war. We don't have very much friends in Republika Srpska, but we'll try to find some reasonable people who will be ready to cooperate with the Bosnian federation.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] It's important to say that a number of nongovernment organizations have connection and are cooperating with nongovernmental organizations in Croatia. It is also important to state that some of the opposition leaders of Kosovo Albanians gave open support to the demonstrations, which shows that in the future, if the opposition wins, if there's democracy established, there will be much more intensive contacts between the representatives of the Serbian and Albanian ethnic groups.

Mr. Hand. It was sort of predicted back here, I don't know how accurately, that before these demonstrations took place, that prior to the elections next year, Mr. Milosevic might move to become the president of Yugoslavia at the federal level, because he apparently can't run for re-election as Serbian president. Assuming he stays in power for that long, which might be quite an assumption, but where do you see him going from here in terms of his position and his power base in 1997, leading to the republic elections?

Mr. Perisic. Mr. Milosevic now is a deserted dictator. He is supported by a narrow group in Serbia. And if you know that the Montenegrin president and prime minister and the speaker of the parliament said very clearly that they are not supporting Mr. Milosevic in this electoral fraud, it's very clear that Montenegro will not vote for Mr. Milosevic to become the Yugoslavian president. So Milosevic also does not have a legal and

constitutional opportunity to re-run for the presidency of Serbia. So I think that the best solution is exile somewhere.

Mr. Smith. Just let me ask just one final question. With regard to refugees who have returned to Serbia, how have they been assimilated back into society? Do they tend to join up with the opposition parties? Are they outcasts, ostracized? Are they living from hand to mouth, so to speak? Are they impoverished?

Mr. Perisic. They are very impoverished. They have had very bitter experience with Mr. Milosevic. and if I give you the fact that they were allowed to vote during the '93 elections and they were deprived of the same rights during these elections, it is very clear that Mr. Milosevic counted very precisely that they will vote against him. So what we have to do is, as Mr. Kesic said through the international relief agencies, to try to strengthen their economic position, and then they can reintegrate back where they belong.

Mr. Canak. You know that the problem of our experience with them is that in Vojvodina, because most of them are settling in Vojvodina, is that they have been left alone the first months, you know. And most of the humanitarian organizations, they didn't care for that part of the country because it was Bosnia as priority, which was normal. And that made these people feel completely alone, and that made them very aggressive. And as I said earlier, that we are doing 15 percent of trade union activities and the rest is civic activity. We spent most of these months trying to protect local Slovak population, Hungarian and Croats from these angry people, from Serbs from Croatia who were searching to find a roof because there was winter coming, you know.

So that is the very serious situation. And I'm afraid that another wave of refugees that could come soon if the situation would not be controlled is from a region of eastern Slovenia. And that part of the country, of Croatia, should be carefully taken because of another wave of refugees to Yugoslavia. And another wave of refugees to Yugoslavia could cause serious problems, and added to these problems could make another crisis spot in that part of the world.

Mr. Matic. [Through interpreter.] I think that the situation might be used also to help the refugees in Serbia establish legal rights that are guaranteed

by international organizations. We think it's extremely important at this point, because those people feel abandoned, utterly abandoned, and they have no rights. And their economic situation is even worse than what's standard in Serbia, which is already very bad.

Mr. Kesic. I also concur with what was just said. When I mentioned traveling to the villages, one of the things that I did notice was that there was a number of refugees who were being hired by the local farmers to go out and to do some of their field work. And one of the intentional policies of the Milosevic government has been to try to keep these people away from the cities, away from the potential for adding to the unrest, especially in Belgrade.

There's been kind of a corridor built not to allow them to come into the cities. There's been a small handful, a trickle into Belgrade. If you remember the tragic scene of the Serbs leaving Krajina, the column that stretched for hundreds of miles, when that column was passing through Serbia, they closed on the highway the exits to Belgrade so that those refugees could not go to Belgrade. Instead they funneled them into centers where Milosevic has tried to absorb them, to try to build on their poverty, to totally dispirit them so that they wouldn't play any political role in what was happening within the country.

Mr. Smith. I want to thank you very, very much for your excellent testimony. And hopefully the message goes out to Belgrade and to Milosevic that, Democrats and Republicans, the Congress is united. The administration hopefully is sending all of the right messages that a crackdown will have zero tolerance in this town and that there will be repercussions if people are beaten, if the democratic opposition is attacked in any way. And, you know, there have already been a few, and I think the message is being sent that it just will not be tolerated.

And there are tools, and you've provided us some additional insights on what we might do in crafting policy. And I know I'm very appreciative of that. And we're going to stay at this. I'm deeply appreciative for the work you're doing, and I know I speak for the entire commission that we have a great deal of admiration for the risks all of you have taken. And you've put your very lives and all that you are on the line for freedom and democracy and human rights, and I want to thank you for doing that.

Without any further ado, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the commission adjourned.]