

UDC 930.85(4-12)

ISSN 0350-7653

SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

BALCANICA

XLIV

ANNUAL OF THE INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES

Editor

DUŠAN T. BATAKOVIĆ

Director of the Institute for Balkan Studies SASA

Editorial Board

FRANCIS CONTE (Paris), DJORDJE S. KOSTIĆ, LJUBOMIR MAKSIMOVIĆ,
DANICA POPOVIĆ, GABRIELLA SCHUBERT (Jena), BILJANA SIKIMIĆ,
ANTHONY-EMIL TACHIAOS (Thessaloniki), NIKOLA TASIĆ,
SVETLANA M. TOLSTAJA (Moscow)

BELGRADE

2013



emissaries in July 1927.⁸ Hornyák does not add any new information on this clandestine military co-operation. Perhaps Hungarian records have not survived, if they existed at all.

There are some minor deficiencies that should also be pointed out. Serbian Colonel who negotiated armistice with the Hungarian delegation in early November 1918 was Danilo, and not Daniel, Kalafatović (p. 285, n. 5). The *Politika* and *Tribuna* were government-controlled newspapers and not parties (pp. 104 and 326, n. 16 respectively). VMRO stands for the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation and not Macedonian Liberation Organisation (p. 146). Miles Lampson was Head of the Central Department of the British Foreign Office, not a “deputy foreign minister” or an “un-

dersecretary of state” (pp. 220 and 240 respectively).

In conclusion, Hornyák has produced the most comprehensive study on the subject of Yugo-Hungarian relations in the first decade after the Great War which will serve as a sound foundation for international historians interested in the Danube region. It is rather unfortunate that his diligent work is seriously marred by poor English translation which often makes it difficult to follow the text.⁹ There are also a number of typographic errors (for instance, Vešnić instead of Vesnić). The worst example of an inadequate proof-reading is no doubt the disparity in a few chapters between the actual number of references in the main body of texts and the endnotes listed.

⁸ Vera Jelinek, “The Hungarian Factor in Italian Foreign Policy, 1918–1927” (unpublished PhD thesis, New York University, 1977), pp. 319–320.

⁹ Originally published as *Magyar-jugoszláv diplomáciai kapcsolatok 1918–1927* (Forum, 2004).

DEJAN DJOKIĆ, NIKOLA PAŠIĆ AND ANTE TRUMBIĆ: *THE KINGDOM OF SERBS, CROATS AND SLOVENES*. LONDON: HAUS PUBLISHING, 2010, pp. xxi + 227.

and

ELUSIVE COMPROMISE: A HISTORY OF INTERWAR YUGOSLAVIA. LONDON: HURST & COMPANY, 2007, pp. xvii + 311.

Reviewed by Dragan Bakić*

The first book forms part of the *Makers of the Modern World: The Peace Conferences of 1919–23 and Their Aftermath* series edited by Professor Alan Sharp, which brings new insights into the proceedings and legacy of the Paris Peace Conference through biographies of the most prominent participants. Dejan Djokić has contributed parallel biographies of two leading members of the Yugoslav delegation, Nikola Pašić and Ante Trumbić. The for-

mer was a long-serving Prime Minister of Serbia and the latter a distinguished Croat politician who vigorously campaigned for a Yugoslav union during the First World War as the head of the London-based Yugoslav committee, a body composed of Croat, Serb and Slovene exiles from the Habsburg Monarchy. In drawing attention to differences between the two men,

* Institute for Balkan Studies, Belgrade

Djokić has also provided a useful addition to the literature on the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (renamed Yugoslavia in 1929). His contribution lies in interpretation rather than in unearthing any new information. Indeed, his work is almost exclusively based on the existing literature and, in particular, draws heavily on the classic studies of Lederer and Mitrović.¹ This is all the more understandable as the author has catered for non-academic audiences and not just experts. The book is easily read thanks to Djokić's concise but clear elucidation of arguments.

Part I of the book overviews the history of Yugoslav lands, Serbia and Croatia in particular, prior to 1914, the origins of the Yugoslav idea and the political paths of Pašić and Trumbić. It is a pity that their views on a Yugoslav union before and during the war are not explored more fully, but Djokić nevertheless seems to suggest that, in the end, both men were somewhat overwhelmed by the dynamics of events. Pašić vacillated between a Yugoslavia and a Greater Serbia, "caught between the 19th-century ideals of a Serbian struggle for liberation and unification and the reality of the new, Yugoslav century" (p. 24). However, he might have easily not seen these two options as alternatives to be chosen from, as he had long perceived the bickering between Serbs and Croats as being over imposing leadership and tradition "during the unification of Serbo-Croats" (the author gives Pašić's quote on p. 20). As for Trumbić, Djokić concludes that he could see "no alternative to Yugoslavia" as Croatia alone, or rather what would be left of her, would found herself in a precarious position at the end of the

war in which she had fought on the side of the defeated (p. 52).

Part II deals with the activities of the Yugoslav delegates in Paris. The delegation was headed by 74-years old Pašić who was not Prime Minister at the time due to King Alexander's veto. In fact, it was the only major delegation not led by a prime minister or a president, which, along with the poor system of communication with the government in Belgrade, seriously hindered the capacity of the delegation to make important decisions on the spot. Having been appointed Foreign Minister, and also being a leading Croat, Trumbić was the second most important figure. Besides Serbs and Croats, the delegation, or rather the Political Section of it, included Slovene representatives so as to reflect the composition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes founded on 1 December 1918 on the premise that they constituted a single – though three-named – South Slav nation. The newly-formed state was, however, not recognised by the Principal Allies and the Yugoslav delegation was officially regarded as that of the Kingdom of Serbia. Consequently, the foremost task facing the delegates was to secure the recognition of their country and also to contend with the competing territorial claims of six out of seven neighbouring countries, allies and enemies alike. The main opponent of Yugoslavia was allied Italy which coveted the Slovene- and Croat-populated provinces of Istria and Dalmatia which had been promised to her under the terms of the secret Treaty of London in 1915 in exchange for her entry into war. As signatories of that treaty, Britain and France were bound to support Italian claims on the Yugoslav territories – in what is known as the Adriatic question – whereas the American President, Woodrow Wilson, the champion of the right to national self-determination, sided with the Yugoslavs. The peacemakers were not capable of settling this problem, which even caused the

¹ Ivo Lederer, *Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study in Frontiersmaking* (Yale University Press, 1963); Andrej Mitrović, *Jugoslavija na Konferenciji mira 1919–1920* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 1969).

Italian delegation's temporary withdrawal from Paris. It was finally settled directly by the two rivals concluding the Treaty of Rapallo in November 1920.

Tensions between Pašić and Trumbić put additional strain on the work of the delegation. The main difficulty stemmed from their different approaches to advocating the Yugoslav cause before the Allies. Trumbić insisted that the Yugoslavs should strictly adhere to national self-determination as the basis of their territorial demands in keeping with the Wilsonian doctrine. Always an archrealist, Pašić was not too impressed with professions of a new era in international relations, nor did he believe that the world had just liquidated "the war to end all wars". In his view, the nationality principle should be fully exploited in Dalmatia and the Banat (the region eventually divided with Romania), where it clearly justified Yugoslav claims, but in other cases he was prepared to advance geostrategic reasons in order to obtain rectification of borders in Yugoslavia's favour. Djokić goes so far as to state that differences between Pašić and Trumbić emerged, at least partly, due to their conflicting ideologies, "the nationality principle vs *Realpolitik*" (p. 151). This appears to be a simplification of what in reality hardly was a clear-cut line of division. Pašić was mainly concerned with territorial acquisitions that would directly benefit pre-war Serbia and secure strategically more viable borders regardless of the nationality principle and of whether that would be at the expense of a former ally or enemy. In that, he was a true practitioner of *Realpolitik*. Trumbić's exclusive motivation by the Wilsonian principles is highly doubtful, however. He did expound the nationality principle with a view to settling the Adriatic question, but, in doing so, he was, just like Pašić, led by more narrow "tribal" interests – border delineation with Italy was an exclusively Croat affair. A native of Split, the largest town

in Dalmatia, Trumbić feared, along with another resident of Split and Croat delegate, Josip Smodlaka, that Pašić's strategic requirements concerning Bulgarian or Hungarian border might undermine the Yugoslav superior moral position in the Adriatic and lend justification to excessive Italian claims. Conveniently for him, Trumbić could defend all Croat interests under the popular banner of national self-determination. After all, it was hardly surprising that Serb, Croat and Slovene delegates alike were more willing to make concessions when such losses were to be suffered by a "tribe" other than their own. On the other hand, Djokić rightly argues that differences between them should not be overstated since "they maintained a remarkable show of unity when communicating with other delegations" (p. 67).

The author briefly recounts the claims, expectations, and results of the Yugoslav delegation, dealing separately with each contested border, as well as the Yugoslav attitude towards war crimes and war guilt. The Treaty of Versailles did not concern the territorial scope of the new state which did not border on Germany, but the delegation's signature in the form of "Serbie-Croatie-Slavonie [*sic*]" constituted a *de facto* recognition of the Yugoslav Kingdom. Territorial disputes – with the noted exception of the Adriatic question – were settled by the provisions of the (Austrian) Treaty of St. Germaine, the (Bulgarian) Treaty of Neuilly and the (Hungarian) Treaty of Trianon. Overall, the Yugoslavs could claim to have had much success under difficult circumstances. Djokić's account of these events makes an excellent reading but contains two minor distortions. When the Allies asked Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs to join Romanians in military intervention against the Bolshevik regime of Béla Kun in Hungary, the latter did not jump at "an opportunity to secure their claims in the north". Pašić may have been in that frame

of mind, unlike Trumbić, but it was the government in Belgrade that made decisions and it was unenthusiastic about any such venture (pp. 137–138). Discussing Yugoslavia's internal instability, Djokić speaks of "alienation among many Montenegrins and Croats because of the way Yugoslavia had been united" (p. 150). This implies the similarity in the causes and levels of dissatisfaction in Montenegro and Croatia while, in fact, any such comparison is wide of the mark.

Part III looks at the legacy of the Peace Conference as seen from the Yugoslav experience. It is noted that differences between Pašić and Trumbić were "symptomatic of the wider Serb-Croat dynamics in Yugoslavia". In this connection, Djokić seems to overemphasise "their mutually competing visions of a united Yugoslavia" (p. 151); this difference was very real and had manifested itself during the war, but it was not on the agenda of the conference and thus caused no dissent among the delegates. Pašić's and Trumbić's careers after the conference, however, reflected the rift between Serbs and Croats centred on the dilemma of centralism versus decentralised state. Despite his advanced age, Pašić remained a pivotal figure in Yugoslavia's political life until his death in late 1926, whereas Trumbić soon resigned as Foreign Minister and became a staunch opponent of centralism and even abandoned his earlier Yugoslavism, but he never again played an as important role as at the time of the conference. Finally, the author draws an interesting parallel between the Versailles settlement and the settlement of the South Slav question which took the form of the Yugoslav state. He does away with the often repeated blunder of labelling Yugoslavia a Versailles creation. Indeed, the facts speak for themselves: Yugoslavia was formed prior to the gathering in Paris and the Peace Conference can be said at most to have sanctioned its existence (pp. 63–64, 163–164). As for the claim that Yugosla-

via was an artificial state bound to disintegrate, as it eventually did in the 1990s, Djokić soundly dismisses it as a product of daily politics rather than historical analysis. He points out that Yugoslavia's durability throughout most of the violent twentieth century is a proof that it was not a miscarriage from the start. His hint at the possibility that "it may yet return one day in another guise within the EU framework" (p. 166), on the other hand, is, to this reviewer's mind, unrealistic altogether. It would certainly be interesting to find out what the author's views are as to the connection between the break-up of Yugoslavia and the at least partial reconfiguration of the Versailles settlement that took place at the end of the twentieth century. He presumably remains silent on this matter in keeping with his refutation of the notion that Yugoslavia was a Versailles creation. Moreover, his sympathy for Yugoslavia, although not explicitly stated, is apparent while he describes the terms of the Versailles Treaty as "infamously harsh" (p. 131). In doing so, he comes down on the side of those who continue to decry the peace settlement of 1919 as the source of all ills that were to follow and culminate in the Second World War despite the nearly unanimous view of international historians offering a much more balanced account.²

In conclusion, Djokić has provided a very readable, useful and thought-provoking work for those interested not just in the Yugoslav delegation at the Paris Peace Conference but also in the lives of Pašić and Trumbić, and, more widely, in the fate of Yugoslavia.

Djokić's other book, his expanded doctoral dissertation (University College

² For the most recent and excellent discussion see Sally Marks, "Mistakes and Myths: The Allies, Germany, and the Versailles Treaty, 1918–1921", *Journal of Modern History* 85:3 (September 2013), 632–659.

of London, 2004), closely looks at the tortuous attempts to find a Serb-Croat compromise on the administrative form of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) throughout its interwar existence. Choosing a quest for an agreement rather than reasons behind the conflict as a central topic is revealing of the author's argument. He claims that the internal instability of Yugoslavia cannot and should not be reduced to confrontation between Serbs and Croats; in doing so, he challenges the ossified assumption from Banac's classic study that the national ideologues of the two largest Yugoslav nations grew so irreconcilable in the early and formative years that the Kingdom established on the basis of the 1921 *Vidovdan* Constitution was in fact still-born.³ According to Djokić, there were many developments in political contest that cut across the purely ethnic divide and therefore required a different paradigm through which to be scrutinised. Moreover, he considers "political events as they developed after the unification as equally if not more important for an understanding of the period" (p. 10). His great contribution is in that he offers us a fresh perspective which might yield interesting findings.

It must be said though that the subtitles are unsuitable and misleading. This book is certainly not comprehensive enough to be considered "a history of interwar Yugoslavia". Perhaps, the author is not to be solely blamed for such an error at a time when catchy titles – and subtitles, for that matter – are susceptible to certain distortions in order to please publishers and secure the best possible sale. Be that as it may, Djokić changed the subtitle for the Serbian edition to meet the case: it reads "Serb-Croat Question in Inter-

war Yugoslavia".⁴ To his credit, the book rests on extensive research. In addition to the relevant archives located in Belgrade and Zagreb, this study draws on collections held in the Bakhmeteff Archive of Russian and East European Culture at the Columbia University and the Hoover Institution Archives at the Stanford University, which are of crucial importance but have so far been largely neglected by historians. The only other collections that could have been beneficially consulted are Hinko Krizman Papers in the Archives of Yugoslavia and Svetozar Pribičević Papers deposited at the Bakhmeteff Archive – the two were the most prominent members of the Independent Democratic Party which formed a coalition with the Croatian Peasant Party (CPP) in 1927 known as the Peasant Democratic Coalition. The book is very well-written and accessible not just to specialists, but also to wider audiences. Djokić's main argument, however, can only be partially sustained. He stands his ground in demonstrating that the dynamics of political struggle, including that between Serbs and Croats, became even livelier post-1921 by reviewing its ups and downs and the involvement of many actors. In that context, it is rather intriguing to ponder how a tragic event, or even a coincidence, could have decisively shaped the course of events. For example, the murder of Stjepan Radić and two other members of the Croatian Peasant Party by a Serb fellow deputy in the National Assembly in June 1928 had reversed the situation created by the 1925 agreement between the Croat leader and Prime Minister Pašić. The author wonders, and this reviewer as well, "what the effect on Serb-Croat relations it would have been if Pribičević, a Serb [who was also shot at], had been murdered too" (p.

³ Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: origins, history, politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).

⁴ Dejan Djokić, *Nedostižni kompromis: srpsko-hrvatsko pitanje u međuratnoj Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade: Reč, 2010).

67, fn. 92). Or perhaps murdered instead of Radić? On the other hand, Djokić greatly overstates his case concerning the alleged over-pronounced significance of Serb-Croat rivalry. He is at pains to support his claim when discussing both major developments and certain details, but almost invariably fails to do so. This will be discussed in more detail below.

The first two chapters, in Djokić's words, set the scene for an in-depth exploration that is to come. The major events of the First World War are reviewed to show how the unification of Yugoslavia took place on 1 December 1918. In doing so, Djokić also debunks the oft-repeated claims which have reflected political needs in Serbia and Croatia since the turbulent 1990s rather than historical analysis. The British proposal of the summer of 1915 that Serbia should cede her southern parts, i.e. Vardar Macedonia, to Bulgaria in exchange for the large tracts of the then Habsburg territories has been too simplistically interpreted as an offer of an extended (Greater) Serbia which the Pašić government rejected and opted for a Yugoslav state (pp. 16–17), a disastrous mistake in that interpretation with the benefit of hindsight. The Croatian *Sabor* (Diet) dissolved itself on 29 October 1918, more than a month before the creation of Yugoslavia, with the motivation that it was not needed as the State of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SCS) was formed and historic Croatia ceased to exist (pp. 25–26) – this fact contradicts the myth of the continuity of Croatian statehood transferred into Yugoslavia. Of particular interest is the account of the deliberations of the November 1918 Session of the National Council of the State of SCS, which disclosed a variety of opinions among the Habsburg Yugoslavs as to the internal structure of a Yugoslav state. However, it was a foreign danger, namely the advancing of Italian troops in Dalmatia, that cut the Gordian knot and effected

a prompt and unconditional unification with Serbia predicated on the notion that Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were the three tribes of a single Yugoslav nation.

The differences made apparent in the National Council carried on in the Provisional Parliament of the newly-established Kingdom of SCS (Yugoslavia). Djokić stresses that the division into the supporters of the Democratic-Socialist Bloc and the Parliamentary Union did not run along ethnic lines. Yet, the two largest Serbian parties agreed in the aftermath of the November 1920 elections to promulgate the centralist *Vidovdan* Constitution against the wishes of all other parties. Therefore, it does not seem plausible to divorce the constitutional debate between centralists and autonomists from a Serb-Croat conflict, although the author admits that the former contest “gradually turned into” (p. 43) the latter. It has long been demonstrated that this clash stemmed from the opposing political traditions of the two nations: the Serbs had lived in a centralist unitary state prior to the Great War, whereas Croats had been used to complex state arrangements such as that of the 1868 Compromise (*Nagodba*) with Hungarians.⁵ The centralist-minded Croats were a tiny minority just as Stojan Protić could not gather much support for the autonomy of historical provinces on the Serbian side. “The volatile twenties”, as Djokić aptly describes them, provide perhaps most evidence for his argument since this period witnessed Radić's political alliances with three Serb leaders, Davidović, Pašić and Pribičević. The mercurial Croat leader recognised the state and the Kardjorđević dynasty and even spent some time as a Minister in

⁵ Srdja Trifković, “The First Yugoslavia and Origins of Croatian Separatism”, *East European Quarterly* XXVI:3 (September 1992), 345–370.

Pašić's government. Following his death, however, the Serb-Croat confrontation became rather crystallised, much more than Djokić would have it. The dictatorship of King Alexander and the government-sponsored "integral Yugoslavism" designed to erase all "tribal" identities and forge a single Yugoslav nation further aggravated the Serb-Croat divide.

All attempts to find a solution to the "Croat Question" within the framework of integral Yugoslavism failed dismally. After the assassination of King Alexander in Marseilles in October 1934 and the 5 May 1935 elections which fully legitimised Radić's successor at the head of the CPP, Vlatko Maček, as the leader of the entire Croat people, it fell to the Regent, Prince Paul, and his new Premier Milan Stojadinović to seek a solution to internal disruptions. The latter two considerably relaxed the dictatorship and immediately showed good will – by releasing Maček from prison – and readiness to come to terms with Croats. They were not devoted to integral Yugoslavism as King Alexander had been, but they were not willing to abrogate the octroyed Constitution of 1931 or accept a federal solution either. Djokić recounts Maček's parallel contacts with the regime and the Serbian opposition parties which formed an informal and rather loose coalition known as the United Opposition (UO, composed of Democrats, Agrarians and the faction of Radicals loyal to the party's Main Committee). He attaches great importance to the formation of the Bloc of the National Agreement on 8 October 1937 comprising the Peasant Democratic Coalition and the UO, and goes so far as to present it as "the Serb-Croat democratic opposition" (p. 272). In line with that, he presents a detailed account of Maček's "triumphant" visit to Belgrade in August 1938 for the purpose of conferring with the leaders of the UO. However, both the democratic potential and the overall importance of

the said Bloc are highly dubious. For the Serbian opposition, restoration of full civil liberties and political freedoms was indeed the chief objective; once achieved, it would create favourable conditions for a democratic solution to the Croat question. Maček and his party, on the other hand, were exclusively concerned with attaining broad autonomy for Croatia. They knew that the Crown alone could grant them concessions and guarantee any agreement, quite apart from Maček's personal sympathy and respect for Prince Paul. In addition, the Serbian political scene was so fragmented that there was no single political party or leader that could speak for the majority of Serbs. Under the circumstances, the Croats directed most of their energies to negotiations with Prince Paul and whoever enjoyed his confidence. Flirtation with the UO was rather a tactical move. It strengthened the CPP's position towards the government – Stojadinović's Radicals, Slovene Clericals and Bosnian Muslims gathered in the Yugoslav Radical Union. Maček flaunted the abolishment of the dictatorship as a popular slogan, but that was of no importance to him. In fact, a return to democracy might have been an obstacle to reaching an agreement with the Crown since he was aware of Prince Paul's intense dislike for all the leaders of the UO. Maček was perfectly content to have an autonomous Croatia under the Karadjordjević dictatorship and that was exactly what happened in 1939. Djokić provides plenty of evidence for the CPP's somewhat cynical attitude towards the UO (esp. pp. 162–163) and that is what makes his praise of the Bloc of the National Agreement surprising. Equally surprising is his statement that the Bloc "and even the Pašić-Radić pact of the mid-1920's were political compromises arguably more deserving of the label 'Serb-Croat'" than the 1939 *Sporazum* which gave life to an autonomous Croatia (p. 276).

Stojadinović encouraged Maček to deepen his cooperation with the UO so that a two-party system could be established pitting unitarists and federalists against each other – with Serbs and Croats, particularly the former, in both camps – but the Croat leader dismissed the proposal as detrimental to the Croatian cause. This may have led Djokić to claim that “unlike Maček, Stojadinović did not see divisions between the government and opposition as strictly ‘national’ (i.e. Serb-Croat) but as ‘political’ (i.e. centralism vs. Federalism)” (pp. 149–150). The claim is not convincing: Stojadinović simply employed the tactics used by Pašić in the 1920s trying to persuade the Croats to put an end to their boycott of political institutions and thus transform their national struggle into a regular political and parliamentary contest – for that reason Maček rejected his suggestion, as mentioned above. Furthermore, Djokić entirely neglects the international dimension to the Croat question and Stojadinović’s foreign policy in particular. By concluding the 1937 pact with Italy and nurturing cordial relations with Germany, Stojadinović made sure that no foreign help would be forthcoming to Maček or the terrorist *Ustaša* organisation. Admittedly, Maček remained intransigent but he could not use foreign support as a means of pressuring Belgrade into concessions. The same lack of appreciation for the decisive impact of the international situation on the Croat question in the late 1930s accounts for Djokić’s claim that the fall of Stojadinović “should be understood primarily in the context of the internal political debate on the future of Yugoslavia” (p. 174).⁶

A further instance of downplaying the essential importance of the Serb-Croat rift is the author’s insistence on the fact that the coalitions which took part in the 1935 and 1938 elections, both governmental and opposition, were not made on ethnic basis. That is no doubt true, but it proves little more than the pragmatism of Yugoslav politicians who were able to put aside all differences in order to overcome technical difficulties of an electoral law and boost their chances of success. That is how, for example, a freakish alliance between the CPP and the Yugoslav National Party, pledged to unitarism and integral Yugoslavism, came into being. It is revealing, however, that the opposition list headed by Maček failed to issue a joint election manifesto both in 1935 and 1938 (pp. 185–186). On a much smaller scale, it is an exaggeration to conclude, from an anecdote which involved sending a cake to Maček in his prison cell, that “leading Serbian academics supported cooperation between the Serbs and Croats” (p. 123) – though it is not said here that some of them did not. The same can be said of drawing far-reaching conclusions based on an incident in a Croatian village (pp. 146–147). “The enmity between Stojadinović and Živković [Prime Minister during King Alexander’s dictatorship] matched and even overshadowed the one between the Prime Minister and Maček, providing yet another example of an intra-ethnic, political conflict”, Djokić concludes without much regard for the nature of the relations between Stojadinović and the other two (p. 180).

Dragiša Cvetković, Stojadinović’s successor as premier, continued talks with Maček acting as Prince Paul’s personal envoy. This time the pressure of the precarious international situation loomed even larger, but the Croat leader was now in a position to sound Italy out – Berlin turned down his overtures so as not to wound Italian susceptibilities. Djokić

⁶ Dušan Biber, “O padu Stojadinovićeve vlade”, *Istorija 20. veka* VII (Beograd, 1966), 5–71, makes it clear that the reasons were much more complicated.

seems to underrate what the British saw as Maček's blackmailing tactics and the difficulties in which Prince Paul found himself. The deal was finally struck on 26 August 1939: the ethnic-based *Banovina* of Croatia, unlike King Alexander's *banovinas*, was formed the territorial scope of which exceeded that of the Habsburg historic or, for that matter, today's Croatia. Djokić describes the situation in the newly-created Croatian *banovina* marked by a number of violent incidents in which Serbs and pro-Yugoslav Croats were victims. Yet, he tries to argue that these conflicts were "in many aspects personal and ideological, not necessarily 'ethnic'" (pp. 217–218). Djokić focuses on the town of Split to prove his point and stresses how the local branch of the CPP split into a number of mutually hostile factions (pp. 220–222) and the conflict arose as much among Croats as between Croats and Serbs. But from the evidence he quotes it is clear that these realignments among Croats were caused purely by hunger for power, not by any ideological reasons or different attitude towards local Serbs. Similarly, he argues that the demand of Serbs from the Croatian town of Vukovar to have their district transferred "to the jurisdiction of the Dunavska *banovina*" was some "local goal" (p. 242), although it was no doubt motivated by their wish to be excluded from the scope of Croatian *banovina*.

The 1939 *Sporazum* did not settle down the heated atmosphere in Yugoslavia since it was incomplete. It marked the beginning of the federalisation of the country, but that process was never completed. Djokić provides an excellent overview of the political confusion that engulfed the Serbs who did not receive their own ethnic *banovina* – just like the Slovenes – which provoked the "Serbs, rally together" movement. The status of Bosnia was also an open question. The author seems to display certain dissatisfaction with the 1939 agreement on account of its failure to bring about a return to democracy, but still maintains that it "marked a positive step toward finding a Serb-Croat compromise" (p. 268). It was the Axis aggression, and not domestic instability, that liquidated Yugoslavia in April 1941. Djokić briefly sketches these events but not without some highly contentious assertions, such as his endorsement of the 27 March military coup and Anthony Eden's allegedly prophetic advice to Prince Paul, as well as his speculation on what might have befallen Yugoslavia had she survived the war intact.

Overall, Djokić has produced a thoroughly researched, well-written and somewhat contentious book which will be a mandatory reading for any student of Serb-Croat relations in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

ZORAN MILUTINOVIĆ, *GETTING OVER EUROPE. THE CONSTRUCTION OF EUROPE IN SERBIAN CULTURE* (STUDIA IMAGOLOGICA SERIES). AMSTERDAM – NEW YORK: RODOPI, 2011, pp. 288.

Reviewed by Veljko Stanić*

A study on the images of Europe in the Serbian culture of the first half of the twentieth century by Zoran Milutinović appeared as the eighteenth volume in the Amsterdam-based Rodopi publisher's

Studia Imagologica series. Milutinović, professor of South-Slavic literature and literary theory at the School of Slavon-

* Institute for Balkan Studies, Belgrade