

SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
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J. KALIĆ, The First Coronation Churches of Medieval Serbia • V. ŽIVKOVIĆ, The Vow of Ivan Crnojević to the Virgin Mary in Loreto under the Shadow of the Ottoman Conquest • M. MATIĆ, The Virgin of Savina: Identity and Multiculturalism • A. FOTIĆ, Tracing the Origin of a New Meaning of the Term Re‘ayā in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Balkans • R. GRÉMAUX, Alone of All Her Sex? The Dutch Jeanne Merkus and the Hitherto Hidden Other Viragos in the Balkans during the Great Eastern Crisis (1875–1878) • M. KOVIĆ, Austria-Hungary’s “Civilizing Mission” in the Balkans: A View from Belgrade (1903–1914) • D. T. BATAKOVIĆ, On Parliamentary Democracy in Serbia 1903–1914: Political Parties, Elections, Political Freedoms • S. G. MARKOVICH, Activities of Father Nikolai Velimirovich in Great Britain during the Great War • D. BAKIĆ, Regent Alexander Karadjordjević in the First World War • D. R. ŽIVOJINOVIĆ, Douglas Wilson Johnson: A Forgotten Member of the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences • V. JOVOVIĆ, Contacts between Duklja/Zeta and the Apennine Peninsula in the Middle Ages as a Topic in Montenegrin Periodicals in 1835–1941 • K. NIKOLIĆ & I. DOBRIVOJEVIĆ, Creating a Communist Yugoslavia in the Second World War • A. STOJANOVIĆ, A Beleaguered Church: The Serbian Orthodox Church in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) 1941–1945 • I. VUKOVIĆ, An Order of Crime: The Criminal Law of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) 1941–1945 • A. SORESCU MARINKOVIĆ, Elena Ceaușescu’s Personality Cult and Romanian Television ∞

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The origin of the Institute goes back to the Institut des Études balkaniques founded in Belgrade in 1934 as the only of the kind in the Balkans. The initiative came from King Alexander I Karadjordjević, while the Institute's scholarly profile was created by Ratko Parežanin and Svetozar Spanačević. The Institute published *Revue internationale des Études balkaniques*, which assembled most prominent European experts on the Balkans in various disciplines. Its work was banned by the Nazi occupation authorities in 1941.

The Institute was not re-established until 1969, under its present-day name and under the auspices of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. It assembled a team of scholars to cover the Balkans from prehistory to the modern age and in a range of different fields of study, such as archaeology, ethnography, anthropology, history, culture, art, literature, law. This multidisciplinary approach remains its long-term orientation.



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CONTENTS

ARTICLES

MEDIEVAL STUDIES

- Jovanka Kalić*, The First Coronation Churches of Medieval Serbia 7
- Valentina Živković*, The Vow of Ivan Crnojević to the Virgin Mary
in Loreto under the Shadow of the Ottoman Conquest 19
- Marina Matić*, The Virgin of Savina: Identity and Multiculturalism 33
- Aleksandar Fotić*, Tracing the Origin of a New Meaning of the Term *Re'āyā*
in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Balkans. 55

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

- René Grémaux*, Alone of All Her Sex? The Dutch Jeanne Merkus and the
Hitherto Hidden Other Viragos in the Balkans during
the Great Eastern Crisis (1875–1878). 67
- Miloš Ković*, Austria-Hungary's "Civilizing Mission" in the Balkans:
A View from Belgrade (1903–1914) 107
- Dušan T. Bataković*, On Parliamentary Democracy in Serbia 1903–1914:
Political Parties, Elections, Political Freedoms 123
- Slobodan G. Markovich*, Activities of Father Nikolai Velimirovich in
Great Britain during the Great War 143
- Dragan Bakić*, Regent Alexander Karadjordjević in the First World War . . . 191
- Dragoljub R. Živojinović*, Douglas Wilson Johnson: A Forgotten Member
of the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences. 219
- Vasilj Jovović*, Contacts between Duklja/Zeta and the Apennine Peninsula
in the Middle Ages as a Topic in Montenegrin Periodicals in
1835–1941. 229
- Kosta Nikolić & Ivana Dobrivojević*, Creating a Communist Yugoslavia
in the Second World War 243
- Aleksandar Stojanović*, A Beleaguered Church: The Serbian Orthodox Church
in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) 1941–1945 269

<i>Igor Vuković, An Order of Crime: The Criminal Law of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) 1941–1945.</i>	289
<i>Annemarie Sorescu Marinković, Elena Ceaușescu's Personality Cult and Romanian Television</i>	343

IN MEMORIAM

<i>Dušan T. Bataković: In memoriam, Nikola Tasić (1932–2017)</i>	361
<i>Vojislav G. Pavlović: In memoriam, Dušan T. Bataković (1957–2017)</i>	365

REVIEWS

<i>Danica Popović: Irena Špadijer, Sveti Petar Koriški u staroj srpskoj književnosti</i>	369
<i>Jovana Kolundžija: Elena Dana Prioteasa, Medieval Wall Paintings in Transylvanian Orthodox Churches: Iconographic Subjects in Historical Context</i>	372
<i>Dušan Fundić: The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism, ed. John Breuilly</i>	374
<i>Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović: Ulf Brunnbauer, Globalizing Southeastern Europe: Emigrants, America, and State since the Late Nineteenth Century</i>	376
<i>Anja Nikolić: John Paul Newman, Yugoslavia in the Shadow of War. Veterans and the Limits of State Building 1903–1945</i>	379
<i>Miloš Vojinović: Adam Tooze, The Deluge: The Great War and the Remaking of Global Order 1916–1931</i>	381
<i>Rastko Lompar: Franziska Zaugg, Albanische Muslime in der Waffen-SS: Von „Großalbanien“ zur Division „Skanderbeg“</i>	385
<i>Vojislav Pavlović: Boris Milosavljević, Slobodan Jovanović. Teorija [Slobodan Jovanović. Theory]</i>	387
<i>Florin Țurcanu: Alin Ciupală, Bătălia lor. Femeile din România în primul război mondial</i>	389
<i>Instructions for authors</i>	393

The First Coronation Churches of Medieval Serbia

Abstract: The medieval ceremony of coronation as a rule took place in the most important church of a realm. The sites of the coronation of Serbian rulers before the establishment of the Žiča monastery church as the coronation church of Serbian kings in the first half of the thirteenth century have not been reliably identified so far. Based on the surviving medieval sources and the archaeological record, this paper provides background information about the titles of Serbian rulers prior to the creation of the Nemanjić state, and proposes that Stefan, son of the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty, was crowned king (1217) in the church of St Peter in Ras.

Keywords: Serbia, *corona regni*, Stefan the First-Crowned, Sava of Serbia, Žiča monastery

Coronation sites of medieval monarchs hold an important place in the “cultural geography” of European nations. They are a major subject of every history because the rite of coronation sums up previous history and, as a rule, announces the one that lies ahead. The rite encompasses the totality of the circumstances of a given community, political as well as religious, at that particular moment. In the context of such interrelatedness of phenomena, the *coronation site* carries multiple meanings. There is, of course, nothing random about it in a society based on the Christian view of the world and the monarch’s supreme authority. As was frequently emphasized in the middle ages, it is only the holy act of coronation that confers legitimacy on the authority of God’s chosen monarch. Coronation was the decisive moment both in an elective and in a hereditary monarchy. Since the phenomenon was European-wide, this research is necessarily comparative.

Serbian history, as other histories in Europe, remembers various coronations, those performed in normal situations as well as under forced circumstances (wars, dynastic conflicts, the ruler’s illness etc.). The coronations were performed in episcopal churches, in monastery churches, in the seat of government or at the court. Our search for the coronation sites of the first Serbian monarchs will begin with the text of the Žiča foundation charter, and it will return to the monastery of Žiča in the end, and for good reason, of course.

The so-called *second Žiča charter*, the text of which survives on the south wall of the passage through the monastery’s gate tower, contains the long-published and much-discussed order of Stefan the First-Crowned that it is in that

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church, the church of Christ the Saviour, that “all the future kings of this state, and archbishops, and bishops, and abbots be ordained”.¹ This important charter *makes no mention of Stefan’s own coronation* in that church. It expressly states that the *future kings* “of this state” should be crowned there.

Owing to D. Sindik’s invaluable work, we know now that the date of the so-called *first Žiča charter*, whose text is inscribed on the north wall of the gate passage, is 1219/20, while the *second Žiča charter*, which contains the above-mentioned coronation clause, has been dated to “about 1224”.² What led to this revision of the previously accepted chronology of the issuance of the Žiča charters apart from the analysis of their surviving texts was the piece of information about the political marriage concluded between Radoslav, son of Stefan the First-Crowned, to whom the second Žiča charter refers as his father’s co-ruler, and Anna, daughter of the influential ruler of Epiros, Theodore I Angelos.³ This marriage took place in late 1219 or early 1220.⁴

Both Žiča charters are in fact excerpts transcribed from the original charters in the early fourteenth century. Significant events that took place at the time of their issuance were clarified by B. Ferjančić and placed in the overall context of Serbo-Byzantine relations in the first half of the thirteenth century.⁵

Consequently, the facts are as follows:

- 1) About 1224 (1224–1227) Stefan the First-Crowned ordered that the future Serbian kings be crowned at Žiča;
- 2) Stefan the First-Crowned, in the foundation charters for the monastery of Žiča, *did not mention his own coronation in the monastery church.*

In other words, we do not know where the coronation of Stefan the First-Crowned in 1217 took place.⁶ This is not to say that one should not try to understand what the coronation clause in the Žiča charter meant compared to the previous customs. Did Stefan the First-Crowned change something with it, and

¹ F. Miklosich, *Monumenta serbica spectantia historiam Serbiae Bosnae Ragusii* (Vienna 1858), 13; St. Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici srpskih država srednjega veka* (Belgrade 1912), 572.

² D. Sindik, “Jedna ili dve žičke povelje?”, *Istorijski časopis* 14–15 (1965), 314–315; D. Sindik, “O savladarstvu kralja Stefana Radoslava”, *Istorijski časopis* 35 (1988), 23–29; D. Sindik, “Značaj žičkih hrisovulja za istoriju srpskog naroda”, *Povelja, n.s.*, XXV-2 (1995), 64–68.

³ S. Kisas, “O vremenu sklapanja braka Stefana Radoslava sa Anom Komninom”, *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 18 (1978), 131–139; B. Ferjančić, “Srbija i vizantijski svet u prvoj polovini XIII veka 1204–1261”, *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 27–28 (1989), 124–125.

⁴ Sindik, “O savladarstvu”, 27.

⁵ Ferjančić, “Srbija i vizantijski svet”, 123–137.

⁶ S. Ćirković, *Srbi u srednjem veku* (Belgrade 1995), 56. English edition: S. M. Ćirković, *The Serbs, The Peoples of Europe series* (Wiley & Sons, 2004), 38.

if he did – why? Stefan Nemanjić, in a letter to pope Honorius III of March 1220, referred to himself as “crowned king” (*rex coronatus*).⁷

It is known that the Nemanjić state was created by the unification of two core lands: one was Zeta/Duklja (Dioclea, Dioclia), and the other was centred on the city of Ras. The rulers of Zeta bore the title of king in the second half of the eleventh century. In a letter of pope Gregory VII of 1077, the ruler of Zeta Mihailo (Michael) was referred to as “king of the Slavs” (*rex Sclavorum*).⁸ His son Bodin bore the same title, and so did his successors. A papal document of 1089 mentions the “regnum Diocliae”.⁹

The middle of the eleventh century was a time of major ecclesiastical reforms in the West. The Cluniac reform influenced the papacy too, especially from the time of pope Leo IX (1048–1054), cardinal Humbert and pope Gregory VII Hildebrand. The long conflict between the papacy and the Holy Roman (German) Empire over investiture basically was a conflict between church and state over fundamental theoretical as well as practical questions concerning their relationship: the relationship between temporal and spiritual authority in the Christian community of nations. The doctrine of papal theocracy which was gradually developed had considerable political implications in medieval Europe. It gave rise to the belief that it was the pope’s right and duty to confer power upon secular rulers, to grant crowns and thrones but also to declare the throne vacant if he deemed it necessary, and to be the judge of rulers. These topics, however important, fall outside the scope of our subject, and so do the shifts in the meaning of the noun “rex” (king) in European society: in the evolution of society and of the idea of monarchy, there was a long way to go from tribal chiefs who bore the title of *rex* to Christian rulers. I am mentioning this because the first Serbian crowns came from the European West. They were the product of the West-European, not of the Serbian evolution of the concept of kingship.

If we narrow our subject down to the possible oldest coronation sites, our attention will necessarily first turn to Zeta. There was “from the beginning a large kingdom” there, the monk Domentijan says explicitly in the thirteenth century.¹⁰ It is the tradition of that kingdom that Stefan Nemanjić invokes when

⁷ F. Rački, “Pismo prvovenčanoga kralja srpskoga Stjepana papi Honoriju III 1220. godine”, *Starine JAZU* (1876), 53–55.

⁸ K. Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, vol. I (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1952), 122; S. Ćirković in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. I (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1981), 189–191.

⁹ L. Thallóczy, C. Jireček and E. Sufflay, eds., *Acta et diplomata res Albaniae mediae aetatis illustrantia*, vol. I: *Annos 344–1343 tabulamque geographicam continens* (Vienna 1913), 21; Jireček, *Istorija*, vol. I, 122.

¹⁰ Domentijan, *Život Sv. Simeuna i Sv. Save*, ed. Dj. Daničić (Belgrade 1865); Jireček, *Istorija*, vol. I, 122.

he requests a royal crown from the Roman pope at the time Byzantium was under Latin rule.

Where could the kings of Zeta have been crowned, if they were crowned at all? Some scholars have suggested that the ruler of Zeta Mihailo, who bore the Byzantine title of *protospatharos*, in fact “took” the title of king.¹¹ The text variously known as the *Chronicle of a Priest of Dioclea*, *Bar Genealogy* or *Regnum Sclavorum* contains a passage which should be taken into account here regardless of all the historical untrustworthiness of this piece of writing. As is well known, the text abounds in ambiguities – there are a number of persons and lines of rulers which find no corroboration whatsoever elsewhere, made-up events which frequently merge into unbelievable, and inextricable, tangles or even contradict reliably established facts. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars managed to clarify only some of the problems involved, but most of the major questions concerning the identity of the author, the time the text was written and even its genre (chronicle, genealogy, literary fiction), remain open ever since the time of K. Jireček.¹² Despite this unenviable state of affairs, the view has become largely accepted that the information it provides for a historical geography of the described areas are useable, albeit with much caution, as remarked by E. Dümmler,¹³ or, as St. Novaković put it: “its geographical narrative is always consistent and faithful, and many details it speaks about provide actual proof of its trustworthiness even by today’s standards [1880].”¹⁴ Many historians expressed their opinions on the text.¹⁵ F. Šišić believed it to be an “important and reliable source for eleventh- and twelfth-century geography, ergo for objective facts”.¹⁶

The author places his narrative and his heroes in some historical space, to be sure, but different centuries are all muddled up. The problem that needs to be solved in every single case is: to which period should a particular church, fortress

¹¹ Jireček, *Istorija*, vol. I, 135.

¹² *Ibid.* 130–131.

¹³ E. Dümmler, “Über die älteste Geschichte der Slaven in Dalmatien”, *Sitzungsberichte der Phil.-hist. Cl. XX* (1856), 353; St. Novaković, “Srpske oblasti X i XII veka”, *Glasnik Srpskog učenog društva* 48 (1880), 2; before him, H. L. Krause, *Res Sclavorum in imperiorum occidentalis et orientalis confinio habitantium saeculo IX*, Pars I (Berlin 1854).

¹⁴ Novaković, “Srpske oblasti”, 2; St. Novaković, *Prvi osnovi slovenske književnosti medju balkanskim Slovenima* (Belgrade 1893).

¹⁵ Jireček, *Istorija*, vol. I, 131; N. Radojčić, “F. Šišić, *Letopis popa Dukljanina*, prikaz”, *Slavia* 8 (1929), 168–178; N. Radojčić, *O najtamnijem odeljku Barskog rodoslova* (Cetinje 1951); M. Medini, *Starine dubrovačke* (Dubrovnik 1935), 29–64; V. Mošin, ed., *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina* (Zagreb 1950); S. Mijušković, ed., *Ljetopis popa Dukljanina* (Titograd 1967), 115; N. Banašević, *Letopis popa Dukljanina* (Belgrade 1971); J. Lésny, ed., *Historia Królewstwa Słowian, czyli, Latopis Popa Duklanina* (Warsaw 1988), and others.

¹⁶ F. Šišić, ed., *Letopis popa Dukljanina* (Belgrade and Zagreb 1928), 179.

or settlement he makes mention of be dated? This goes particularly for highly-variable names (churches, settlements and the like), and less for more permanent toponyms (rivers, mountains etc.). The phenomenon was European-wide. Many nations have their own texts of the kind. At any rate, methods have been honed of battling one's ways through the fictitious in medieval narratives in order to reach, if possible, the real.

Chapter IX of the *Chronicle* contains a reference to a church of St Mary in the city of Dioclea (ecclesia Sanctae Mariae in civitate Dioclitana).¹⁷ In that church king Svetopelek was buried. In that church people “elevated his son Svetolik, who was consecrated and crowned there by the archbishop and bishops. On that day the custom was instituted to elect and enthrone every king of this land in that church.”¹⁸

F. Šišić, in his time, regarded this passage as being a later gloss put together “sometime in the thirteenth century, probably in the environs of Split.”¹⁹ He pointed to its similarity to the text of Thomas the Archdeacon (of Split) about the coronation of Stefan the First-Crowned, and concluded that the text of the anonymous Dioclean priest was a fabrication created after the establishment of Žiža as the coronation site of Serbian kings.²⁰

If we put aside the description of the coronation of the imaginary Dioclean ruler Svetolik, if we disregard even the style of coronation – “more Romanorum regum” – which, such as described, does not correspond to the situation in the Roman Church in the ninth and tenth centuries (contrary to what the Dioclean priest claims, there was no papal vicar and cardinal Honorius at the time, and some other details are also inaccurate), briefly, if we disregard the event and the fictitious time in which it takes place, the question remains: was there a church of St Mary in the city of Dioclea in the middle ages? The same ninth chapter of the *Chronicle*, as is well known, contains many accurate geographical data: cities (Scodra/Shkoder, Antivari/Bar, Ulcinium/Ulcinj, Suacium/Svač, Drivastum/Drivast/Drishti etc.), regions (Serbia, Bosnia, Zachlunia/Zahumlje, Terbunia/Travunija, Rassa/Rascia/Raška etc.), rivers (Drinus/Drina).²¹

First archaeological excavations on the site of the ancient city of Dioclea, in the area bounded by the Morača and Zeta rivers and the Širalija rivulet, were carried out as early as the nineteenth century. They were resumed later, with particular intensity after the Second World War.²² Two early Christian basilicas

¹⁷ Ibid. 308–309.

¹⁸ Mijušković, ed., *Ljetopis*, 202.

¹⁹ Šišić, ed., *Letopis*, 431.

²⁰ Ibid. 429–431.

²¹ Ibid. 306–307.

²² D. Vučković-Todorović and Dj. Stričević, “Duklja près de Titograd”, *Starinar* 7–8 (1956–57), 409–410; V. Korać, “Doclea près de Titograd: cite romaine”, *Starinar* 9–10 (1958–59),

were discovered. One of them, designated as Basilica B, was in the north-eastern part of the city. On its foundations a cruciform church was built.²³ As far as is known, it belongs to the last construction phase in Dioclea.²⁴ Next to the church was discovered a stone lintel (230cm × 22.5cm) with a votive inscription of the deaconess (*diaconissa*) Ausonia, who had a foundation built with her sons. The inscription is believed to have come from an older structure, presumably from one of the two basilicas.²⁵ The probable date of the construction of the church, which remains an open issue, is the sixth century.²⁶ J. Kovačević, who studied the inscription, dated it to the ninth century,²⁷ and did not rule out the possibility that it had come from the church of St Mary.²⁸

What remains as a fact is:

- 1) The Priest of Dioclea refers to the church of St Mary in the city of Dioclea as a coronation site;
- 2) In that city, on the foundations of an early Christian basilica, a cruciform church was built.

That is all that can be said at present.

Another coronation site is the church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras (today known as St Peter's near Novi Pazar). I would like to draw attention to two events, both from the life of Stefan Nemanjić, one from 1196, the other from 1217.

Medieval Serbian biographies carefully recorded Stefan Nemanja's decision to step down from the throne and take monastic vows. He decided, as is known, to pass the throne to his second son, Stefan, son-in-law of Byzantine emperor Alexios III Angelos, who at that time already bore the title of *sebastokrator*. Let us first hear the testimony of a participant in the event, Nemanja's son Stefan himself. Nemanja, he writes, summoned his wife, and his sons, and his bishop by the name of Kallinikos – the bishop of Rascia – and his elders, noblemen and warriors, and expressed his will and, "rising up from his throne,

378–379; for an overview of the archaeological excavations on the site see *Istorija Crne Gore*, vol. I (Titograd: Redakcija za istoriju Crne Gore, 1967), 200–201, n. 88 etc.

²³ *Istorija Crne Gore*, vol. I, 269–270, provides plans of Basilica B and the church; photographs of the basilica and the church are available in P. Mijović and M. Kovačević, *Gradovi i utvrđenja u Crnoj Gori* (Ulcinj and Belgrade 1975), figs. 67 and 68.

²⁴ I. Nikolajević-Stojković, "Dve beleške za istoriju Prevalisa", *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 20 (1981), 9–13.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 11–12.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 9–13; V. Korać, oral communication.

²⁷ *Istorija Crne Gore*, vol. I, 309, 320, 369, 440.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 440.

passed it to him [Stefan] with a blessing”, and then he spoke to the holy one [bishop of Rascia] with these words: “Proceed and do as I have requested.”²⁹

Stefan Nemanja’s youngest son, Sava, describes the rite by which his father personally transferred power to Stefan: Nemanja, the text reads, summoned the nobility (“all of the most distinguished lords, higher as well as lower”), announced them his intention, and “chose his noble and beloved son Stefan Nemanja, son-in-law of the God-crowned *kyr* Alexios, Greek emperor”, and presented him to them with the words: “Have this one instead of me”[...] “It is him that I seat upon the throne in the state”, and he “wreathed [crowned] him himself and blessed him extraordinarily...”³⁰

Domentijan reiterates the main facts about the enthronement ceremony. He says that Nemanja chose a son of his as his heir and “created him lord *autokrator* of the whole of his realm and, rising up from the throne, passed it to him with his every blessing”.³¹

Monk Teodosije is even more specific. He tells us that Nemanja, having decided to abdicate, “promptly summoned his son Stefan... The father *autokrator* took him and, with the most reverend bishop Kallinikos and all noblemen, entered the church of the holy and foremost Apostles Peter and Paul. And when the service and prayer were over, the father *autokrator*, with the honourable holy bishop, consecrated Stefan as grand *župan*, as lord and *autokrator* of the whole of the Serbian land, with a cross and by the laying on of hands.”³²

These sources show that in 1196 the so-called *investiture of a monarch*, to use the term of the European West, was performed in the church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras; in Serbian historical literature the term “enthronement” predominates. It is known today that a grand *župan* was also entitled to a “wreath”, the monarch’s wreath. The note of one of the scribes of *Vukan’s Gospel*, abba Symeon, says that a *holy wreath* as a symbol of power over the Serbian lands was handed to the grand *župan* by Christ himself.³³

²⁹ “Žitije Simeona Nemanje od Stefana Prvovenčanog”, ed. V. Ćorović, in *Svetosavski zbornik*, vol. 2 (Belgrade 1939), 39–40; Stefan Prvovenčani, *Život Stefana Nemanje*, in *Stare srpske biografije*, ed. and transl. M. Bašić (Belgrade 1924).

³⁰ V. Ćorović, ed., *Spisi sv. Save* (Belgrade and Sremski Karlovci 1928); transl. in Bašić, *Stare srpske biografije*, 48.

³¹ Domentijan, *Život sv. Simeuna i sv. Save*, 41–42; Domentijan, *Životi svetoga Save i svetoga Simeona*, transl. L. Mirković (Belgrade 1938), 156.

³² Teodosije Hilandarac, *Život Svetoga Save*, ed. Dj. Trifunović (Belgrade 1973).

³³ J. Vrana, *Vukanovo jevandjelje* (Belgrade 1967), 2, 485; S. Marjanović-Dušanić, *Vladarske insignije i državna simbolika u Srbiji od XIII do XV veka* (Belgrade 1994), 124; cf. A. Solovjev, “Pojam države u srednjevekovnoj Srbiji”, *Godišnjica N. Čupića* 42 (1933), 81 = “Corona regni. Die Entwicklung der Idee des Staates in den slawischen Monarchien”, in *Corona regni: Studien über die Krone als Symbol des Staates im späteren Mittelalter*, ed. M. Hellmann (Weimar

Until the establishment of the Serbian autocephalous church in 1219, the church of Sts Peter and Paul in Ras was the ecclesiastical seat of the realm. It was located, in the words of Stefan the First-Crowned himself, in the “throne city”.³⁴ In the dynastic history of the Nemanjić family this church is also known as the place where Stefan Nemanja “received a second baptism at the hands of the holy man and bishop [of Rascia] in the middle of the Serbian land”, again in the words of Stefan Nemanjić.³⁵

There could be no coronation of a Christian monarch without the participation of the Church. The consent of the Church was a prerequisite for coronation: through bishops, acting as intermediaries in the rites of coronation, God’s grace passed on to monarchs. The Church was a direct participant in such events across Europe. Examples abound. The Church carefully kept everything associated with coronation – objects (insignia), written records, or memory. In the Serbian case, nothing of it has survived except memory. A vestige of that memory, at least as far as coronation sites are concerned, was preserved in the Serbian Church: the document put together by two Serbian Orthodox monks, Damian and Paul, and submitted to pope Clement VIII in late 1597. It was a time when hope was harboured that the papacy would be able to support the Serbs’ struggle against the Ottomans. The pope’s reply is dated 10 April 1598.³⁶ I have been able to consult a copy of the document from the Vatican Archives and its translation into Italian. In its concluding section, which depicts the Serbian lands and people, mineral resources and customs, we can read: “We have documents of ancient lords that kings can be crowned in three places, in St Peter’s or in Žiča or in Peć.”³⁷

There are, then, three coronation sites – the church of St Peter is listed first, before Žiča. The text explicitly refers to the coronation of Serbian *kings*, not Serbian *župans*, and the reference is apparently based on *written evidence* (“docu-

1961), 156–197; S. Ćirković, “The Double Wreath: A Contribution to the History of Kingship in Bosnia”, *Balcanica* XLV (2014), 108–109.

³⁴ Ćorović, “Žitije Simeona Nemanje”, 18–19; transl. in Bašić, *Stare srpske biografije*, 31.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ K. Horvat, “Monumenta historica nova historiam Bosniae et provinciarum vicinarum illustrantia”, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja* 21 (Sarajevo 1909), 55–58; the pope’s reply in A. Theiner, ed., *Vetera monumenta Slavorum meridionalium historiam illustrantia*, vol. II (Rome 1875), 90/1; cf. J. Tomić, *Pečki patrijarh Jovan i pokret hrišćana na Balkanskom poluostrvu 1592–1614* (Zemun 1903); J. Kalić, “Stolno mesto”, *Novopazarški zbornik* 12 (1988), 19–21.

³⁷ Archivum secretum apostol. Vaticanum, Borghese Serie I, 913. The Italian text reads: “Hanno privilegii delli antichi signori che li re se possono incoronar in tre luoghi, nella chiesa de San Pietro, overo in Scica, overo in Pechi” (*ibid.* 485); this piece of information was used by S. Ćirković, “Mileševa i Bosna”, in *Mileševa u istoriji srpskog naroda*, ed. V. Djurić (Belgrade 1987), 139.

ments of ancient lords”). Before March 1220, when Stefan Nemanjić wrote to the pope referring to himself as crowned king (*rex coronatus*), there had been only one royal coronation – in 1217. In other words, *the known coronation of Stefan Nemanjić with a crown from Rome took place in the church of St Peter in Ras in 1217.*

On this occasion I have put all other questions aside – the style of coronation or a possible “second” coronation, in Žiča, after 1220 (the fact is, however, that Stefan the First-Crowned makes no mention of it in the Žiča charters).

The search for the site of the coronation of the first Serbian king with a crown granted by the pope in 1217 opens up one more aspect of the problem. Even if the explicit reference of 1597 did not exist, it could be concluded indirectly that the coronation took place in St Peter’s in Ras. This is suggested by comparative research. The Roman Church attached great importance to the rite of coronation. The site of coronation was carefully chosen whenever possible. It carried some meanings by itself. The traditions of the Bishopric of Rascia can be traced back to Roman, pre-Slavic times. A vestige of the belief in the antiquity of the church survives in Serbian chronicles. It was believed that the foundations of Christianity had begun to be laid there early on by a disciple of the apostle Paul, Titus. The historian I. Ruvarac dismissed this belief as “pious tales”.³⁸ The fact that the piece of information is not true and that it was recorded at a comparatively late date in Serbian history cannot, if we follow Ruvarac’s line of thinking, prevent people from believing in the great antiquity of the church.

The archaeological investigation of the church of St Peter in Ras showed that it had been built on the site of an earlier, sixth-century, religious building³⁹ whose remains constitute its core, which is visible in the plan of the church.⁴⁰ Besides, an important Christian centre dating from the late Roman period was discovered not far from St Peter’s, in the area of present-day Novopazarska Banja. Archaeological excavations established that a pagan temple had been converted into a church in the fourth century. It was an episcopal seat in the early Byzantine period: a sixth-century basilica with a synthronon was also discovered.⁴¹ This religious centre of a pre-Slavic date had also been abandoned. In the middle ages, St Peter’s was restored.

Consequently, the medieval church of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul in Ras was a continuation of an early Christian centre. For centuries it was the

³⁸ I. Ruvarac, “Raški episkopi i mitropoliti”, *Glas Srpske kraljevske akademije* 62 (1901), 2.

³⁹ J. Nešković, “Petrova crkva kod Novog Pazara”, *Zbornik Arhitektonskog fakulteta* 5 (Belgrade 1961), 18–31.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* 19.

⁴¹ A. Jovanović in *Politika*, 12 September 1994; A. Jovanović “Arheološka istraživanja u Novopazarskoj Banji”, *Novopazarski zbornik* 19 (1995), 31–67.

seat of the bishops of Rascia, who played an important role in the life of the country both in Byzantine and in Serbian times.⁴²

The coronation in 1217 of Stefan Nemanjić in the cathedral church of the bishop of Rascia with the crown granted by pope Honorius III played a role in the creation of the concept of *Regnum Rasciae*, the “kingdom of Rascia” or the “Rascian kingdom”. This was the name for the medieval Serbian state which was in use in all types of sources (narrative, diplomatic, coinage etc.) in the West but never in Byzantium, as correctly established by M. Dinić.⁴³ In Western sources, for example, even the Serbian despot, Stefan Lazarević, was referred to as “despot of the Kingdom of Rascia”, and so was his successor, despot Djuradj Branković.⁴⁴

This research suggests that Žiča was a turning point. The church of Christ the Saviour, which had no previous Roman-period history,⁴⁵ became the seat of the Serbian autocephalous archbishopric (1219) reorganized by Sava of Serbia, and soon (about 1224) also the new, and permanent, coronation site of Serbian kings, if the Žiča charter is read literally. The road led from Ras, from the cathedral church of Rascia, to Žiča via Studenica in many respects. The first Nemanjić rulers were laying the foundations of an independent Serbian state carefully and wisely. Instrumental in the process was no doubt Sava of Serbia.

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⁴² H. Gelzer, “Ungedruckte und wenig bekannte Bistümerverszeichnisse der orientalischen Kirche II”, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 2 (1893), 44–45; St. Novaković, “Ohridska arhiepiskopija u početku XI veka”, *Glas Srpske kraljevske akademije* 76 (1908), 57–58.

⁴³ M. Dinić, “O nazivima srednjevekovne srpske države”, *Prilozi za književnost, jezik i folklor* 32/1-2 (1966), 31–32. Cf. J. Kalic “Naziv ‘Raška’ u starijoj srpskoj istoriji”, *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta* 14 (Belgrade 1979), 79–92.

⁴⁴ L. Thallóczy and A. Áldásy, *Magyarország melléktartományainak oklevéltára* (Budapest 1907); A. Veselinović, *Država srpskih despota* (Belgrade 1995), 72–73.

⁴⁵ There are no vestiges of earlier religious buildings on the site.

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The Vow of Ivan Crnojević to the Virgin Mary in Loreto under the Shadow of the Ottoman Conquest¹

Abstract: This paper looks at the circumstances in which Ivan Crnojević, a fifteenth-century ruler of Zeta (historic region in present-day Montenegro), made a vow to the Virgin in a famous pilgrimage shrine, the Santa Casa in Loreto (Italy), where he was in exile fleeing another Ottoman offensive. The focus of the paper is on a few issues which need to be re-examined in order to understand Ivan's vow against a broader background. His act is analyzed in the context of the symbolic role that the Virgin of Loreto played as a powerful *antiturca* protectress. On the other hand, much attention is paid to the institutional organization of Slavs (*Schiavoni*) who found refuge in Loreto and nearby towns, which may serve as a basis for a more comprehensive understanding of the process of religious and social adjustment of Orthodox Slav refugees to their new Catholic environment.

Keywords: Ivan Crnojević, Cetinje, Zeta, Santa Casa in Loreto, confraternities, *Schiavoni*

Ivan Crnojević, the ruler of Zeta (in present-day Montenegro), states in the 1485 foundation charter for the monastery of the Virgin Mary in Cetinje that he paid his devotions and made a vow to the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary in the pilgrimage shrine of the Santa Casa in Loreto (Italy).² His vow was clear and simple: he would build a church in her honour in Cetinje if he returned safely to his homeland, which he had been forced to leave twice, in 1476 and again in 1479, due to Ottoman conquests. Upon returning to his homeland in 1481, Ivan Crnojević set out to honour his vow. The construction was completed in August 1484, when the stone slab with his donor's inscription was affixed to the

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² The charter of the Cetinje monastery in: S. Milutinović Sarajlija, *Istorija Crne Gore od iskona do novijega vremena* (Belgrade: Knjaževsko-srpska pečatnja, 1835), 4–7; reprinted in *Povjesnica crnogorska. Odabrane istorije Crne Gore do kraja XIX vijeka* (Podgorica: Unireks 1997), 43–48, 77–82; F. Miklosich, *Monumenta Serbica spectantia historiam Serbiae, Bosnae, Ragusii* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1858); 3rd rpt. ed. (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet, 2006), 530–534, no. CDLIII; B. Šekularac, *Vranjinske povelje XIII–XV vijek* (Titograd: Leksikografski zavod Crne Gore, 1984), 115–122; B. Šekularac, *Dukljansko-zetske povelje* (Titograd: Istorijski institut Crne Gore, 1987), 197–207. I am wholeheartedly grateful to my colleague Djordje Bubalo, who generously shared with me invaluable and exhaustive information about the charter of Ivan Crnojević.

church dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin Mary.³ He transferred the seat of the Orthodox Metropolitanate of Zeta to the newly-founded monastery and, by moving his residence to Cetinje, rounded off the formation of his capital.⁴

Ivan's vow and its fulfilment raise a myriad of questions which are highly relevant to reviewing the historical and cultural circumstances in the Metropolitanate of Zeta at the time of the Ottoman threat in the last decades of the fifteenth century. Even though the topic is exceptionally intriguing, it has only been mentioned in passing by historians in the context of the chronology of the Ottoman conquest. The only more extensive study which discusses it in some detail, as an example of Loretan themes in the visual arts in the area of "Illyricum", has been produced by the Croatian art historian Ivana Prijatelj Pavičić.⁵ Offering her findings on the significance that the Holy House of Loreto had for Slavs – *Schiavoni*, and the possible influence of its architecture on Ivan's foundation, she poses the question as to what the Madonna of Loreto may have meant to Ivan – whether he considered her as the protectress of his homeland or as his own protectress.

The purpose of reopening this topic is to problematize a few questions which have not received enough attention in modern historiography. One of them is the presence of *Schiavoni* from the areas of the former medieval Serbian state in Italy in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. The stay of Ivan Crnojević in Loreto offers a good opportunity to review our current knowledge on the subject but also to raise some new questions, the investigation of which may help us to better understand how the Orthodox Slav refugees coped with adjusting to a new, Catholic environment. Therefore, the focus of the paper will be on emigration from the eastern Adriatic coast and hinterland to the Italian region of the Marches, notably to the town of Recanati and to Loreto itself. Particular attention will be paid to some questions relating to a strong institutional

³ Construction must have been well underway in 1483, considering that it was then that some 2,000 tiles were imported from Dubrovnik, see V. J. Djurić, "Umjetnost", in *Istorija Crne Gore 2/2* (Titograd: Redakcija za istoriju Crne Gore, 1970), 489. The slab with the inscription – В име Рождества ти пресвета Богородице, зидах си свети храм твој в лето 6992 [In the name of your Nativity, most holy Mother of God, I built your holy shrine in the year 6992] – was affixed above the entrance to the church of the new monastery in Cetinje. For the inscription see Dj. Sp. Radojičić, *Tvorci i dela stare srpske književnosti* (Titograd: Grafički zavod, 1963), 282–285.

⁴ Ivan Crnojević endowed his foundation with land, the income from customs duties collected in Kotor and from the salterns in Grbalj, and the possessions of the abandoned monasteries of Kom and Gorica on Lake Scutari, see J. Erdeljanović, *Stara Crna Gora*, 2nd ed. (Belgrade: Slovo ljubve, 1978), 218–237, 239–244; M. Janković, "Saborne crkve Zetske episkopije i mitropolije u srednjem veku", *Istorijski časopis* 31 (1984), 199–204.

⁵ I. Prijatelj-Pavičić, *Loretske teme: novi podaci o štovanju Loretske Bogorodice u likovnim umjetnostima na području "Ilirika"* (Rijeka: Vitagraf, 1994), 47–54.

network and support which the Slav immigrants in Loreto and its environs developed, and which the ruler of Zeta must have come in contact with and most likely used at the time he made his vow. The problematization of this issue will hopefully lay a basis for further research into the transfer and merging of cultural, religious and artistic influences in late fifteenth-century Zeta.

Ivan Crnojević made his vow to the Virgin of Loreto at a volatile time of war and diplomatic efforts in Zeta. For Zeta, which had been part of the Serbian Nemanjić state in the middle ages, the whole fifteenth century was a period of great turbulence, which forced its rulers to change their overlords several times. In 1421, its last ruler of the Balšić family bequeathed his domain to his maternal uncle, the Serbian despot Stefan Lazarević. In the 1440s, under the despot's successor, Djuradj Branković, Zeta became the scene of rivalry among the Serbian despot, the Republic of Venice and the regional Bosnian lord, *herceg* Stefan Vukčić Kosača. The Crnojević rulers took advantage of the despot's weak central power to grow in independence. In 1451, Ivan's father, Stefanica Crnojević, recognized the suzerainty of Venice. Ivan succeeded him in late 1464 (or early 1465).⁶ He pursued a different and more independent policy than his father, acting against Venice from time to time and making alliances with Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. The Venetians described him as a "restless spirit, prone to intrigue". Balancing between two strong powers, Venice and Turkey, and regional lords, Ivan sought to secure his domain and assert his dominance. From 1469 he expanded his power to the regions of Crmnica, Paštrovići and Grbalj. He then married for a second time, to Mara, daughter of *herceg* Stefan Vukčić Kosača, at whose court he had, at a young age, spent ten years as a hostage. About 1475, since his seat at Žabljak was under imminent threat by the Ottomans, Ivan Crnojević moved it to his newly-built fortress in Rijeka (Obod), with a church of St Nicholas.⁷

Ivan Crnojević left for Italy during a war with the Ottomans in 1476. The threat he had been under after the Ottoman capture of Žabljak forced him to flee. In 1479 he returned from Italy to coastal Zeta to stir up a rebellion. But, the Venetians reported the sultan of every anti-Ottoman movement, and he had to seek refuge in Italy once more. The situation calmed down following the death

⁶ For more see *Istorija Crne Gore* 2/2, chapters by I. Božić, "Doba Balšića"; "Zeta u Despotovini"; and "Vladavina Crnojevića", 49–371; Dj. Bubalo, "Nekoliko dokumenata o zetskom vojvodi Stefanici Crnojeviću", *Istorijski zapisi* LXXXVIII/1-2 (2015), 27–45.

⁷ On 28 August 1474 Ivan Crnojević made a request of the Venetian Senate to be recognized as the sole ruler of Upper Zeta if he succeeded, with God's help, in wresting it from the hands of the Ottomans: "che nessun altro non habia bailia ne podesta sopra la dicta excepto io Ivan Zernovich e li mei figlioli, et romasta a me libera et fina da uno cavo fino l altro, zoe da Chussevo fina Ostrog" (quoted after *Istorija Crne Gore* 2/2, 178). Djurić, "Umjetnost", 488–499, suggests that this threat to Žabljak might have been the reason why Ivan Crnojević was granted permission by the Dubrovnik authorities to purchase and export 8,000 roof tiles.

of Mehmed the Conqueror in 1481. Ivan returned home from Italy, only to realize that his only chance to survive was to make peace with the sultan. The new Ottoman sultan Bayezid II accepted Ivan as his vassal. Fighting arduous diplomatic, political and military battles both with the Ottomans and with Venice, Ivan Crnojević managed to establish Cetinje as a short-lived centre of Orthodox culture and spirituality.⁸

The threat of Ottoman invasion was acute on the Italian Adriatic coast as well. It became imminent after the *massacro di Otranto* (in Apulia) between 1480 and 1481. One of the measures undertaken in early 1480, before the attack on Otranto, had been the order of pope Sixtus IV to Martin Segon of Novo Brdo, bishop of Dulcigno (Ulcinj), to put together a report on possible Balkan routes for deploying troops to intercept the advancing Ottoman forces.⁹ Loreto itself was in fear – cardinal Girolamo Basso della Rovere, together with the bishop and council of Recanati, took further steps to fortify the town port and the church of Santa Maria di Loreto. It was then that the anti-Turkish aspect of the cult of Our Lady of Loreto came to the fore.¹⁰ And it was exactly the time when Ivan Crnojević was in Loreto, where he clearly professed his faith in the power of the Virgin's protection by making a vow before her miraculous icon. Namely, legend has it that an icon (now lost) turned up in Loreto together with the Santa Casa. In 1472 the rector of the Loreto basilica, Pietro Giorgio Tolomei, also known as Teramano, wrote about the 1294 flight of the Santa Casa to Loreto (*Translatio miraculosa Ecclesie Beate Marie Virginis de Loreto*). He gave an account of the legend of the *translatio* to Italy of the house in Nazareth in which Mary had been born, received the Annunciation, and lived during the Childhood of Christ and after his Ascension. Teramano also pointed out that it had been in this house in Nazareth that the apostle Luke had painted the image of Mary with his own hand.¹¹

⁸ M. Spremić, *Srbija i Venecija, VI–XVI vek* (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik, 2014), 199–204.

⁹ Martin Segon's *De itineribus in Turciam libellous* was in fact plagiarized by Feliks Petančić, *Quibus itineribus Turci sint aggrediendi*. Only an excerpt from an Italian translation of his work has survived, but it remained unknown until 1981, when it was published by Agostino Petrusi, *Martino Segono di Novo Brdo, vescovo di Dulcigno. Un umanista serbo-dalmata del tardo Quattrocento* (Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1981). On that see *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, vol. 7, eds. T. David and J. A. Chesworth (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 54.

¹⁰ For more see R. Mancini, *Infedeli. Esperienze e forme del nemico nell'Europa moderna* (Florence: Nerbini, 2013), 48–51, 99–101.

¹¹ Legend has it that the angels took the Santa Casa first to *castel Fiume* in 1291 (which has been identified as present-day Rijeka, i.e. Terssato, in Kvarner, Croatia) and thence, a few years later, to Italy, to a wood near Recanati. Early authors mostly mentioned the name *Fiume*, without specifying its location more closely. In 1468 Giacomo Ricci wrote in *Virginis Mariae Loretae Historia* that the shrine had been moved to the *illiricorum provinciam in oppidi*

Heading for Loreto, Ivan Crnojević took the usual migration route from the Balkans to the Marches. From ancient times there had been a lively economic exchange between two Adriatic coasts. Of particular importance to the towns on the eastern coast were the Italian towns of Ancona and Fermo as well as the trading fair held in Recanati.¹² Apart from trade, this Italian region maintained strong cultural, institutional and religious ties with urban centres across the sea. Let me mention but a few examples by way of illustration: in the first half of the fourteenth century the notaries of the commune of Kotor (Cattaro) came from the towns of Ossimo and Fermo;¹³ at the time Ivan Crnojević fled Zeta, the bishop of Dubrovnik (Ragusa) was a native of Recanati, Giovanni Veneri (1470–1490); Loreto was a favourite pilgrimage destination for people from the eastern Adriatic coast and hinterland – as suggested by the will of *Nicolaus Joncich*, a Ragusan priest and *rector et magister scholarum in Catharo*, drawn up in 1465: *Item volo quod mitatur aliquis pro voto meo ad ecclesiam sancte Marie de Rechaneto*.¹⁴

In the notarial documents drawn up in Loreto and Recanati, immigrants from the eastern Adriatic coast and hinterland are usually referred to as *Schiavoni* or named by the town they came from. During the most intense emigration to Italy caused by the threat of Ottoman conquest, *Schiavoni* of the Catholic faith from Dalmatian towns were much more numerous among the immigrants to the Marches.¹⁵ We have considerably less information about Orthodox im-

Flumen. The identification of *castel Fiume* with today's Rijeka in Kvarner was made by Girolamo Angelito in 1530, see F. Grimaldi, *Pellegrini e pellegrinaggi a Loreto nei secoli XIV–XVIII* (Foligno 2001). On the legend see E. Renzulli, "Tales of Flying Shrines and Paved Roads: Loreto, an Early Modern Town of Pilgrimage", *Città e Storia* VII (2012), 27–41.

¹² *Per una storia delle relazioni tra le due sponde adriatiche*, ed. P. P. Fausto (Bari: Società di storia patria per la Puglia, 1962).

¹³ N. Fejić, "Kotorska kancelarija u srednjem veku", *Istorijski časopis* 27 (1980), 5–62.

¹⁴ Nikola also states in his will the wish that a pilgrimage be made for his soul: *aliquis sacerdos secularis vadat pro anima patris mei Romam, et hoc si placuerit matri, quia ipsa fatetur illud votum suum implevisse.... Item quod vadat quis duabus vicibus ad Sanctam Mariam de Antibarano...* At the end of the will he bequeaths a legacy for someone to visit also *Santo Antonio de Padua per voto persona una religiosa delo convento de Santa Croxe*, and mentions that he possesses, in his home, a silver cross of St Anthony, see J. Tadić, *Gradja o slikarskoj školi u Dubrovniku XIII–XVI v.*, vol. I (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1952), 230–232.

¹⁵ On the emigration of Slavs to Italy in the 13th and 14th centuries see D. Dinić Knežević, "Prilog proučavanju migracija našeg stanovništva u Italiji tokom XIII i XIV veka", *Godišnjak Filozofskog fakulteta u Novom Sadu* XVI/1 (1973), 39–62; J. Kolanović, "Le relazioni tra le due sponde dell'Adriatico e il culto Lauretano in Croazia", in *Loreto – crocevia religioso tra Italia, Europa ed Oriente*, ed. F. Citterio and L. Vaccaro (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1997), 165–190.

migrants, who came by the same migration routes and upon their arrival had to adapt to a new life in Catholic environments.¹⁶

The most intense Slavic migrations to Recanati and Loreto were triggered by the troubles caused by Ottoman conquests and poverty. There is no doubt that among the reasons for emigrating were plague epidemics, given that one of the most massive migrations took place in the wake of the 1435 and 1456 epidemics. But that was also the main reason why the Slav immigrants were not welcomed in new environments. Namely, since the newcomers from the Balkans were believed to be responsible for the spread of the disease from the eastern to the Italian Adriatic coast, they were not given much chance to integrate into society and had to do humble jobs. The commune of Recanati tried to curb immigration, especially during the spread of the plague in 1456, by issuing an ordinance which required the banishment of newcomers and the punishment of its citizens who offered them hospitality. The next major outbreak of the plague, in 1464, greatly weakened the Slav community, but it survived. The *Schiavoni* banished from Recanati found refuge in nearby places along the coast and in Loreto. The integration of *Schiavoni* into the life of Italian communes was easier to carry out if the newcomers were organized into confraternities, because in that way the authorities were able to control them more closely. The main duty of the confraternities was to do charity work, by taking care of pilgrims, the sick and the poor in hospitals, and by providing for burials. This system meant a great relief to the authorities in Recanati and Loreto, and in times of plague it operated as part of an organized system of sanitary control on the level of the commune.¹⁷ The history of these confraternities, apart from providing information about the ways in which Slav immigrants were organized, sheds much light on the social, economic and cultural situation in Recanati and Loreto in the

¹⁶ On that see K. Jireček, *Istorija Srba*, vol. I (Belgrade 1984³), 428; M. Spremić, *Dubrovnik i Aragonski (1442–1495)* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 1971), 24; P. Rokai, *Dubrovnik i Ankonitanska Marka u srednjem veku* (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 1995), 79; M. Sensi, "Confraternite lauretane e pellegrinaggio", in *Pellegrini verso Loreto*, ed. F. Grimaldi (Ancona 2003), 111–152. Attention to this has recently been drawn by M. Moroni, "Rapporti culturali e forme devozionali fra le due sponde dell'Adriatico in età moderna", in *Pellegrini verso Loreto*, 181–216, who points to the fact that Loreto was also a pilgrimage destination for prominent persons from an Orthodox background such as, in the first place, cardinal Bessarion (in 1472) or, before him, Vladislav Hercegović (1454), and, finally, Ivan Crnojević.

¹⁷ G. Santarelli, "Štovanje Majke Božje Loretske te prisuće Hrvata u Loretu", *Domesti* 24 (1991), 59–76; M. Sensi, "Fraternite di slavi nelle Marche: il secolo XV", in *Le Marche e l'Adriatico orientale. Economia, società, cultura dal 13. secolo al primo Ottocento*, ed. A. Ventura (Ancona: Deputazione di storia patria per le Marche, 1978), 53–84; M. Sensi, "Slavi nelle Marche tra pietà e devozione", *Studi maceratesi* XXX (1996), 481–501; F. Coltrinari, "Loreto as an Illyrian Shrine: The Artistic Heritage of the Illyrian Confraternities and College in Loreto and Recanati", *Confraternitas* 27/1–2 (2016), 46–61.

times of Ivan Crnojević. That this issue should be revisited seems obvious in the light of the fact that the confraternities and hospitals, i.e. shelters for pilgrims (and there is no doubt that Ivan was also a pilgrim, given that he made a vow to the icon of the Madonna) provided organized care and support for those fleeing from the Balkans to Italy.

When Ivan Crnojević arrived in Italy, most probably via Dubrovnik, there had already been *confraternite degli schiavoni* in Loreto and Recanati. The earliest reference to a confraternity of Slavs in Recanati dates from 1337: the *fraternità dei Frustati di San Pietro Martire, tutta composta di schiavoni*, based in the Dominican church of San Domenico.¹⁸ The first Dominicans who had arrived in Recanati soon after 1272 began constructing a church and a monastery, where a relic of the True Cross (*una reliquia della Santa Croce*) brought by St Peter the Martyr was enshrined.¹⁹ The Slav members of the confraternity played a prominent role in the procession which used to take place on the anniversary of the miraculous arrival of the Santa Casa: they were assigned to carry *il simulacro* in token of remembrance that the Santa Casa had first landed on the Slavic side of the Adriatic. They were clad in white habits (*sacco bianco*) with a large red cross.²⁰

In 1469, after the plague epidemic, the Slavs requested permission from the authorities to found a confraternity in Loreto in order to be able to provide assistance to their fellow citizens. The authorities of Recanati recognized the potential benefits and the *Confraternita del Sacramento* was founded.²¹ The fact

¹⁸ *Questa Fraternità esisteva nell'anno 1337. in cui Ugone Generale delli Domenicani le accordò la partecipazione a tutte le Indulgenze dell'Ordine*, see M. Leopardi, *Annali di Recanati*, vol. I, ed. R. Vuoli (Varese: La Tipografica, 1945), 206; Santarelli, "Štovanje Majke Božje Loretske", 59–76. Also, there is, in the 1320s, a mention of the church of *Santus Vitus de Sclavonibus* near Otranto, and, in 1362, of the church of *San Niccolò degli Schiavoni* in the small town of Vasto; some family names in the area of Gargano are obviously of South Slavic origin, such as, among others, *Pastrovicchio*, see L. Čoralić, "'S one bane mora' – hrvatske prekojadranske migracije (XV–XVIII stoljeće)", *Zbornik Odsjeka povijesti znanosti Zavoda za povijesno društvene znanosti HAZU* 21 (2003), 189; F. Gestrin, "Migracije iz Dalmacije u Marke u XV. i XVI. stoljeću", *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 10/1 (1977), 395–404.

¹⁹ D. Calcagni, *Memorie storiche della città di Recanati nella marca d'Ancona* (Messina: V. Maffei, 1711), 332.

²⁰ M. Leopardi, *Serie dei vescovi di Recanati con alcune brevi notizie della città e della chiesa di Recanati raccolte dal conte Monaldo Leopardi* (Recanati: G. Morici, 1828), 86–87.

²¹ The Corpus Christi or Sacrament confraternity, whose purpose was to encourage frequent communion and devotion to the sacraments by the laity, cf. C. F. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 69. On the Sacrament confraternities see D. Zardin, "Le confraternite in Italia settentrionale fra XV e XVIII secolo", *Società e Storia* X (1987), 81–137; N. Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion in Renaissance Bologna* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 219.

that the former confraternity, whose members were for the most part Slavs, was dedicated to the patron saint of the Inquisition, St Peter the Martyr – who emphasized the power of the host and the doctrine of transubstantiation in eradicating heresy – and the latter to the Blessed Sacrament, may be taken as symbolic evidence of the aspiration of the Roman Catholic Church to preserve the faith of the immigrants coming from areas which were not exclusively Catholic. The *Cappella dei Schiavoni* dedicated to the *Santissimo Sacramento* was built in the Loreto church in 1476, and the confraternity soon proposed to build their own hospital where care would be provided to their ailing fellow Slavs, and which would have an oratory where they would be able to meet, hold congregations and celebrate mass at least once a month. The hospital was to serve the sick and pilgrims. The running of the hospital was entrusted to the confraternity of the *Santissimo Sacramento dei Schiavoni*. On that occasion cardinal Basso della Rovere pointed out that the intention of the *Schiavoni* was good, and their deed pious and commendable. The *Schiavoni* had two shelters in Loreto at their disposal – the one within the walls of the fortress was intended for the accommodation of pilgrims of higher status (*honestiores peregrini*), while the other was outside the walls and provided lodging for the sick and the poor (*per gli Scabbiosi, e ed altre più miserabili Persone*).²²

What seems to follow as an inevitable conclusion from this brief chronological overview of the emergence and development of the confraternities and hospitals in Loreto is that Ivan Crnojević found himself in a region where there was a very well organized system of charitable economic support to the immigrants from the eastern Adriatic coast and the Balkans. It is in that light that we may reach a deeper understanding of the motivations behind his symbolic act of making a vow to the Virgin and of praying to her for protection before her miraculous icon.

When the Virgin of Loreto was petitioned for protection by an entire commune or a town, the usual devotional practice was to present a wax or silver votive model of the town.²³ Ivan's prayerful vow was its inverse, so to speak: he pledged to build a church, which would be the seat of the Metropolitanate of Zeta, while the establishment of the capital town, which he probably had in

²² V. Murri, *Dissertazione critico-istorica sulla identità della Santa Casa di Nazarette ora venerata in Loreto* (Loreto: A. Carnevali, 1791), 95. On the founding of hospitals in Loreto see F. Grimaldi, *La Santa Casa di Loreto e le sue Istituzioni* (Foligno: Accademia Fulginia di Lettere, Scienze e Arti, 2006), 293–305.

²³ M. Sensi, "Santuari 'contra pestem': gli esempi di Terni e Norcia", in *Dall'Albornoz all'età dei Borgia. Questioni di cultura figurativa nell'Umbria meridionale* (Todi: Ediar, 1990), 347–362; V. Camelliti, "Tradizione e innovazione nell'iconografia dei santi patroni marchigiani tra Medioevo e Rinascimento", in *Santi, patroni, città: immagini della devozione civica nelle Marche*, ed. M. Carassai (Ancona: Consiglio regionale delle Marche, 2013), 71–119: http://www.araldicacivica.it/pdf/saggi/santi_vessilliferi.pdf

mind to do, only came afterwards. The original appearance of the monastery church built by Ivan is a matter of conjecture because it had been torn down in 1692 by the Venetians, who had to retreat before the Ottoman troops, and remained in ruins until 1886, when king Nicholas of Montenegro had his court chapel built on its foundations.²⁴ Some assumptions about its architecture have been based on the depiction of a three-aisled basilica in the background of the portrait of Byzantine poets in the *Octoechos* printed in the Crnojević printing house in Cetinje in 1494.²⁵ However, archaeological excavations have proved them to be erroneous. Ivan's church had no aisles and terminated in a three-sided eastern apse. This is corroborated by a drawing of the site plan of the monastery which was made, a few months before its demolition in 1692, by the Venetian engineer Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, who was staying in Cetinje.²⁶ His drawing shows a church with three apses on the east side and with columns on the northern and southern sides sited in the middle of the monastic enclosure. On account of the fact that Ivan maintained good relations with Dubrovnik and paid it frequent visits, some have suggested that the model for the colonnaded portico around the church – a rare feature of religious architecture – was the old cathedral of St Mary in Dubrovnik.²⁷ A third interpretation that has been proposed is that the use of this architectural feature may be attributed to an influence of the Loreto prototype.²⁸ From the end of the fifteenth and especially in the sixteenth century, one of the manifestations of devotion to Our Lady of Loreto was the building of chapels and churches on the model of the Loreto prototype.²⁹ Prior to the construction of the present-day basilica in Loreto, the

²⁴ For contemporary statements on the demolition see F. Ongania, *Il Montenegro da relazioni dei provveditori veneti (1687–1735)* (Rome: F. Ongania, 1896), 94–99, 106, 108. P. Mijović, “Cetinje”, in *Enciklopedija likovnih umetnosti*, vol. 1 (Zagreb: Jugoslavenski leksikografski zavod, 1959), 611.

²⁵ Prijatelj-Pavičić, *Loretske teme*, 49–50; B. Borozan, “Sakriveni iskaz gravure iz Cetinjskog oktoiha”, in *Crnojevići: značaj za crnogorsku državu i kulturu*, ed. C. Drašković (Podgorica: Matica crnogorska, 2011), 103–136.

²⁶ The plan was published by Ongania, *Il Montenegro*, 110–111.

²⁷ On similarities and possible models see Djurić, “Umjetnost”, 489–493. A description of Dubrovnik cathedral destroyed by the 1667 earthquake in M. Rajković, “Stara dubrovačka katedrala”, in *Naučni prilozi studenata Filozofskog fakulteta* (Belgrade 1949), 117–121; C. Fisković, *Prvi poznati dubrovački graditelji* (Dubrovnik: JAZU, Historijski institut Dubrovnik, 1955), 23.

²⁸ Prijatelj-Pavičić, *Loretske teme*, 48–49.

²⁹ The first example of the spread of the Loreto cult beyond the Marches has been recorded in Foligno, in a will of 1404: the notary Giacomo di Vagnolo di Puccio directed in his will that a chapel “sub vocabulo S. Marie de Lorito” be built for his grave in the church of *San Pietro in Pusterla* and that “una immagine della Vergine simile a quella lì venerate” be donated to it. This is the oldest known example of a shrine fashioned after the Loretan model, see

Santa Casa (*la preziosa reliquia*) was located in a smaller church surrounded with a colonnaded portico. A *tempietto* symbolizing the Holy House occurs in many representations of the Madonna di Loreto, to mention but the *Madonna di Loreto* by Lorenzo d'Alessandro called il Severinate (1445–1501) in the Chapel of the Hospital of San Sollecito in Camerino, or the triptych of the *Madonna di Loreto with Sts Sebastian and Rocco* by Andrea de Lizio (1445–1450) in the church of St Nicholas in Atri.³⁰

What may be suggested with much certainty is that Ivan Crnojević sought to combine tradition (one-aisled church) with elements of the late Gothic and Renaissance styles which were in use on both sides of the Adriatic at the time.³¹ Ivan's artistic tastes must have been influenced by his travels in Italy, and a role in shaping them could have been played by his frequent stays in Dubrovnik and Kotor, where he had a mansion which the Venetian government had granted to his father.³²

A. Bartolomei Romagnoli, "Loreto, o l'invenzione di uno spazio angelico", *Frate Francesco. Rivista di cultura francescana* 82/1 (2016), 196.

³⁰ The cult of the Madonna of Loreto did not, however, take strong root until the second half of the 15th century. Construction of the Sanctuary of the Santa Casa in Loreto began in 1468, see Mark J. Zucker, "The Madonna of Loreto: A Newly Discovered Work by the Master of the Vienna Passion", *Print Quarterly* 6/2 (June 1989), 149–160.

³¹ This is obvious from the surviving architectural elements – eleven capitals (probably from the naos) and a slab with Ivan's coat-of-arms in a Renaissance frame. Six of the capitals were reused for the gallery on the upper floor of the dorter of the new monastery, five were placed on top of the surviving original columns around the new church, and the slab was built into the wall of its apse. The ornaments of the capitals are diverse: some are late Gothic with acanthus designs (such as occur from Dubrovnik, Lastovo and Kotor to the Holy Archangels, a foundation of emperor Stefan Dušan near Prizren), some are early Renaissance with volutes and a flower in the middle (such as occur in Venice and the Drago Palace in Kotor or in the church of St Dominic in Recanati, attributed to Giorgio da Sebenico). Two of the Renaissance capitals show stylized lion's heads. The most interesting are two capitals carved with the Crnojević coat-of-arms: a two-headed eagle with expanded wings and a ball under each talon, see Djurić, "Umjetnost", 494–495; M. Tomić Djurić, "Artistic Trends on the Periphery – the Lands of the Balšić, Kosača and Crnojević families", in *Byzantine Heritage and Serbian Art*, vol. II: *Sacral Art of the Serbian Lands in the Middle Ages*, eds. D. Popović and D. Vojvodić (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik, 2016), 407–409.

³² P. D. Šerović, "Dvor Ivana Crnojevića u Kotoru", *Glas Boke* 158 (Kotor 1935). Ivan Crnojević's palace in Kotor was described by Timotej Cizila (Timoteo Cisilla) in his 1623 *Bove d'oro*: "Nor should one forget the old palace of Ivan Crnojević, ruler of Montenegro, one of the Venetian and Ragusan togated noblemen, as was said in an excerpt from the annals of Petar Lukarević [Luccari]. He would stay there when he came to Kotor to get some rest and also, as was his habit, to make merry with Kotor noblemen, especially those of the Buća [Buchia] family, to whom he was closely related... He made his residence in it. There you can see dungeons for offenders, a large hall or Town Hall, where he received his subjects and others... The palace is now in the possession of the illustrious lord Marin Meksa [Marinus

The church of the Virgin in Cetinje with its decoration and, especially, with its impressive colonnaded portico was a very different sight from the previous Crnojević foundations, which were quite simple in terms of architectural design, as would be expected under difficult political and military circumstances. The situation was just as difficult, perhaps even more so, but Ivan apparently wished to confer some grandeur to the seat of the Metropolitanate of Zeta.

Ivan's emphasis in the foundation charter for the monastery on the fulfilment of the vow he had made to the most powerful protectress against the Turks and the transfer of the seat of the Metropolitanate of Zeta to it both carry a very clear state and church symbolism. This much can be said with certainty: Ivan laid a strong emphasis on anti-Turkish symbolism epitomized by *Our Lady of Loreto* and maintained the Orthodox spiritual heritage, especially through the significant manuscript-copying activity of the new monastery.³³ On the other hand, one should not lose sight of what preceded the construction of the church: the exile of the lord of Zeta in an area which had already become established as a refuge reached by a well-trodden migration route, which he then enveloped in the symbolism of a pilgrimage by emphasizing his prayerful address and the vow he had made. The powerful picture that emerges from the vow of Ivan Crnojević and the whole network of Slav refugees and their religious confraternities centred around an anti-Ottoman shrine, the Madonna of Loreto, is one of an overcoming of religious differences at a time of great danger for all of Christendom.

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Mexe], a nobleman of Kotor...."; see *Analisti. Hroničari. Biografi. Književnost Crne Gore od XII do XIX vijeka*, ed. M. Milošević (Cetinje: Obod, 1996), 75–76.

³³ After the foundation of the monastery of the Virgin, Cetinje became the most important manuscript copying centre in Zeta because the monasteries on the isles in Lake Scutari whose scriptoria had flourished in Balšić times (1360–1421) had been largely deserted. For more see *Istorija Crne Gore* 2/2, 499–508, and earlier literature, e.g., Dj. Sp. Radojčić, "O štampariji Crnojevića", *Glasnik Skopskog naučnog društva* XIX (1938), 133–171; D. Medaković, *Grafika srpskih štampanih knjiga XV–XVII veka* (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1958), 5–26. Ivan's son Djuradj mentions in his will that there were plentiful valuables and not a small number of icons in the monastery. He drew up his will, now lost, in 1499 in Cyrillic and – in *schiaava*. It was translated into Italian by Stefano di Pasquali in 1514 – *ho trasduta de lingua et lettera Schiaava*, cf. D. G. Wright, "The first Venetian love letter? The testament of Zorzi Cernoevich", *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 9/2 (2006), 11.

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The Virgin of Savina Identity and Multiculturalism

Abstract: The sixteenth-century miracle-working icon of the Virgin Glykophilousa in the Serbian Orthodox monastery of Savina, modern Montenegro, has been the focus of cult and devotions for centuries. A compelling visual presence, it played multiple roles: liturgical, social, legal, and cultic. In each of its roles, it provided support for ethnic and religious identity, being above all a palladium both for believers as individuals and for the Orthodox Christian community as a whole in the complex multicultural and multiconfessional contexts of foreign Venetian rule in the eighteenth-century Gulf of Kotor (Boka Kotorska/Bocche di Cattaro).

Keywords: Gulf of Kotor (Boka Kotorska/Bocche di Cattaro), Virgin of Savina, Cretan School, ex-voto, palladium, multiculturalism, identity

The silver-clad icon of the Virgin of Tenderness *Background information. Iconography. Style*

One of the most highly revered miracle-working icons in the Serbian Orthodox Church, the icon of the Virgin from the monastery of Savina, in present-day Montenegro, has not hitherto been an object of scholarly scrutiny. In the second half of the twentieth century, the icon was transferred from the tier of despotic icons in what is popularly called the monastery's Small Church to its Big Church dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin, where it was placed on the left-hand side of the altar screen. It is known that miracle-working icons of the Virgin, Mother of God, were the focus of particular reverence in churches dedicated to the Dormition, which was based on the belief that the Virgin's miracle-working had begun at her death and assumption to heaven.¹ Although the Savina monastery has a rich archive, there are virtually no data about the icon of the Virgin. There are no original documents suggesting possible donors, and the icon itself, being covered with a revetment, does not allow a more detailed examination. Local traditions refer to Josif Komnenović² or the well-known

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¹ M. Timotijević, "Bogorodica Smederevska", *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 36 (2008), 74.

² S. Nakićenović, *Boka: antropogeografska studija* (Belgrade: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1913), 498.

Lombardić³ family from the town of Herceg Novi as donors of the icon to the monastery. It is reliably known that the icon was already in the monastery by the mid-eighteenth century. This is evidenced by scant data from the monastery's income record book (*libro ot prihodka*), where an entry reads that, after the Day of the Dormition of the Virgin in 1755, on 29 August: "Count Basil offered a red gold-threaded cloth in front of the icon of the Virgin."⁴ The next relevant entry is dated 27 June 1760, when the icon was furnished with a new glass case which could be locked with a key.⁵

Since the scant archival data make no mention of the silver revetment that now covers the entire icon except for the faces of the painted figures (fig. 1), it cannot be known whether it was already there in the eighteenth century or whether it was added later, in keeping with the then widespread practice of lavishly adorning highly-venerated icons.⁶ The practice of completely covering an icon with a precious metal revetment, as is the case with the Virgin of Savina, was not common in Serbian Orthodox churches north of the Sava and Danube rivers, where the purpose of adorning the Virgin's icons with a metal crown, more frequent in the age of the Baroque, was to emphasize her status as Queen of Heaven.⁷ The complete covering of icons was characteristic of Russian and Levantine practice.⁸ There was almost no icon venerated in a public setting on the Eastern Adriatic coast which was not adorned with a silver cover, often called by the borrowed Italian word *camicia* (shirt).⁹ Besides being simply an

³ L. Seferović, *Manastir Savina*, a catalogue (Herceg Novi: Bratstvo manastira Savina, 2012), 14.

⁴ Arhiv manastira Savine [Archive of the Monastery of Savina], *Libro ot prihodka* [Income record book], inv. no. 40 (1755), 3: "Kont Vasil priloži skut crven zlatotkan pred ikonu Bogorodičinu."

⁵ D. Medaković, *Manastir Savina: Velika crkva, riznica, rukopisi* (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet, 1978), 39: "Vestno budi kako opravismo prestolnu čudotvornu ikonu Prestia Bogorodica iznovu staklo i kornič s ključem koe sve kostalo cekina osam (N: 8) i libara 7 dobre i dadosmo s iste ikone zavetnie cekina 6; a dva cekina (N: 2) dade Gdn kapetan Marko Mirković, i suviše munite dobre libara 7: Bila mu pomoštnica Prestaja Bogorodica" [We have furnished the miracle-working despoticon of the Virgin with new glass and a frame with a key, all for the price of eight sequins (N: 8) and libro seven, we have given from the same icon six votive sequins, and two sequins (N: 2) were donated by Captain Marko Mirković: May the Most Holy Mother of God help him!].

⁶ An expert on Italo-Cretan painting, and especially on the Eastern Adriatic coast, Z. Demori-Staničić of the Croatian Conservation Institute, Split, believes that the revetment may be of an eighteenth-century date.

⁷ M. Timotijević, "Bogorodica Bezdinska i versko-politički program patrijarha Arsenija IV Jovanovića", *Balcanica* 32–33 (2002), 325.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Z. Demori-Staničić, "Ikone Bogorodice Skopiotise u Dalmaciji", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 34 (1994), 327–328.

Fig. 1 The Virgin of Savina, 16th-century Cretan School icon, Big Church of the Monastery of Savina, Herceg Novi, Gulf of Kotor



external decorative addition, or an expression of particular reverence, the re-vestment could, of course, have a deeper theological justification. Some authors interpret the icon's metal cover as functionally analogous to the *podēa* or to the iconostasis, which protect the front of a holy icon or the holiest space of the church, respectively, from the eyes of the laity.¹⁰ This corresponds to the view of those researchers who link the origin of the "icon cover" with the symbolism of the Old Testament Ark of the Covenant which shielded the relics from being accessed and seen by the faithful.¹¹ In that respect, however, the icon cover may also be interpreted in a markedly mystical manner as a source of divine grace. Similarly to the iconostasis which screens the altar table, it at the same time reveals the symbolism of holiness in its fullness and indicates direction.¹² The well-known theologian of the Baroque period Dimitrii of Rostov drew an analogy between

¹⁰ M. E. Gasper-Hulvat, "The icon as performer and as performative utterance: The sixteenth-century Vladimir Mother of God in the Moscow Dormition Cathedral", *Anthropology and Aesthetics* 57/58 (2010), 182.

¹¹ A. Lidov, "Miracle-Working Icons of the Mother of God", in *Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. M. Vassilaki (Athens and Milan: Skira, 2000), 56.

¹² I. A. Sterligova, "O znachenii dragotsennogo ubora v pochitanii sviatykh ikon", in *Chudotvornaia ikona v Vizantii i Drevnei Rusi*, ed. A.M. Lidov (Moscow: Martis, 1996), 125.

the icon with its cover and the dual nature of Christ.¹³ Some philosophers see some sort of unconscious iconoclasm in the practice of covering icons. According to them, cladding the icon “in a cover” entails a negation of its painting and a pious lack of taste which reveals the loss of religious and artistic meaning.¹⁴

The rich metal cover of the Savina icon indeed constitutes an impenetrable barrier between us and its painting. Deprived of the opportunity to examine it more closely, we have to content ourselves with whatever information, however meagre, the icon’s uncovered portions may offer. What can be established beyond doubt is that it is a frequent iconographic type of the Mother of God and the Christ Child known as Eleousa (*Ελεούσα*), Glykophilousa (*Γλυκοφιλούσα*), Virgin of Tenderness or of Loving Kindness.¹⁵ The name of this representation of the Virgin has, however, been the subject of long and well-known debates. Based on the analysis of the accompanying inscriptions, it has been generally accepted that Eleousa is not an iconographic type but a dogmatic attribute (Merciful) which belongs to all representations of the Virgin, including those of the Glykophilousa type.¹⁶ Perhaps the most illustrative example of the relativity of this kind of iconographic classification is the famous Virgin of Vladimir. Although this icon is of the Glykophilousa type, its veneration in Russia on the model of the Constantinopolitan Virgin Hodegetria perceives it, historically and spiritually, as a Hodegetria without evoking a sense of contradiction.¹⁷

Some authors interpret the tenderness between the mother and child as the effort of the Virgin, an acknowledged intercessor, to soften Christ towards

¹³ Timotijević, “Bogorodica Bezdinska”, 325.

¹⁴ J. Trubeckoj, *Istina u bojama* (Belgrade: Logos, 1996), 33.

¹⁵ Some authors distinguish three different subtypes of the Glykophilousa type, cf. N. P. Lihachev, *Istoricheskoe znachenie italo-grecheskoi ikonopisi, izobrazhenia Bogomateri* (St. Petersburg: Izd. Imp. rus. arkheol. o. va., 1911), 171–177. The epithet Glykophilousa (Slavic *Umilenie*) was quite common in Russian icons of the type in the seventeenth century, cf. G. Babić, “Epiteti Bogorodice koju dete grli”, *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 21 (1985), 264. The Glykophilousa type is believed to have been introduced in Cretan painting by the famous Cretan painter Andreas Ritzos in the second half of the fifteenth century, cf. M. Chatzidakis, *Icons of Patmos: Questions of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Painting* (Athens: National Bank of Greece 1995), 67.

¹⁶ M. Tatić-Djurić, “Bogorodica Vladimirska”, *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 21 (1985), 31, provides an overview of this debate and relevant bibliography.

¹⁷ L. A. Shchennikova, “Chudotvornaia ikona ‘Bogomater’ Vladimirskaia’ kak ‘Odigitriia evangelista Luki’”, in *Chudotvornaia ikona v Vizantii i Drevnei Rusi*, ed. A. M. Lidov (Moscow: Martis, 1996), 252, believes that the Glykophilousa developed from the Hodegetria, as assumed much earlier by V. Lasareff, “Studies in the iconography of the Virgin”, *Art Bulletin* 20/1 (1938), 38. It is thought that the theme of the “loving mother” did not become popular until the tenth century, cf. H. Belting, *Bild und Kunst*, reference after the Serbian edition: *Slika i kult* (Novi Sad: Akademaska knjiga, 2014), 329.

mankind for the sake of its salvation.¹⁸ Yet, the interpretation associating the iconography of the Virgin Glykophilousa with the Passion of Christ seems more convincing.¹⁹ It may also be pertinent to note that the introduction of the Passion service (in the eleventh and twelfth century) coincides with the spread of this iconographic type.²⁰ The purpose of such a depiction of sorrow and emotion is believed to have been to emphasize God's closeness to humanity.²¹

The relief surface of the silver revetment apparently faithfully follows the outlines of the painted shapes under it,²² allowing us to see the waist-length figure of the Virgin holding the Christ Child on her left side with both arms and gently pressing her cheek to his. To the left and right of the Virgin's head is the usual abbreviated inscription for the Mother of God, ΜΡ ΟΥ, and, next to the Child's head, ΙΧ ΧΙ for Christ. Christ is holding a scroll with both hands. He wears a tunic and sandals, and his left leg is bare to above the knee. The revetment is decorated with fine floral patterns, including the nimbus and the entire surface of the Virgin's maphorion. The three symbolic flowerlike stars are in their usual place, on the Virgin's shoulders and head.

The manner of painting flesh classifies the icon among high-quality works of the so-called Cretan School.²³ Products of this school of icon painting were

¹⁸ A. Grabar, "L'Hodigitria et l'Eléousa", *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 10 (1974), 10; on similar lines, Lasareff, "Studies", 38, believed that the Glykophilousa type expressed the idea of the Virgin's kind, merciful intercession on behalf of humankind.

¹⁹ M. Vassilaki and N. Tsironis, "Representations of the Virgin and their Association with the Passion of Christ", in *Mother of God*, ed. M. Vassilaki, 453–454.

²⁰ L. Kouneni, "The Kykkotissa Virgin and its Italian Appropriation", *Artibus et Historiae* 29/57 (2008), 98. Also, this period, the end of the 11th and the 12th century, is believed to have been crucial in formulating the cult of icons, cf. A. Weyl Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage in Middle Byzantine Constantinople", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2002), 90.

²¹ Vassilaki and Tsironis, "Representations", 453–454.

²² Demori-Staničić, "Ikone Bogorodice", 327–328.

²³ Post-Byzantine Cretan religious painting, flourishing from the mid-15th century until the end of the 17th century, is considered to be the only Orthodox school of art which can legitimately lay claim to that name, cf. G. Babić and M. Hadžidakis, "Ikone Balkanskog poluostrva i grčkih ostrva (2)", in *Ikone*, ed. K. Vajcman et al. (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga and Vuk Karadžić, 1983), 310; on the Cretan school, with a broader bibliography, see Z. Rakić, "Kritsko slikarstvo", in *Enciklopedija pravoslavlja*, vol. II: I-O, ed. D. M. Kalezić (Belgrade: Savremena administracija, 2002), 1051–1052. The debate on defining this school is still ongoing, see D. Mourelatos, "The debate over Cretan icons in twentieth-century Greek historiography and their incorporation into the national narrative", in *A Singular Antiquity: Archaeology and Hellenic Identity in Twentieth-century Greece* (Suppl. 3), eds. D. Damaskos and D. Plantzos (Athens: Benaki Museum, 2008), 201. M. Chatzidakis was instrumental in emphasizing the artistic values of Cretan School icons as an expression of Greek national identity. The term Italo-Cretan School is also in frequent usage – cf. S. Bettini, *La pittura di icone cretese-veneziana e i madonneri* (Padova: Cedam, 1933) – but, as a result of Chatzida-

tremendously popular as much for the refinement of style and precision of technique as for their diversity and openness to different artistic influences.²⁴ There were on the Eastern Adriatic coast under Venetian rule several painting centres and there were many Greek artists working in them,²⁵ but the refined execution of the Savina icon indicates that it may be attributed to a more prominent, possibly Venetian, workshop. The flourishing period of post-Byzantine Cretan painting in Venice began in the second half of the sixteenth century, when there arose a genuine school of painting centred on the Greek Orthodox church of St. George – *San Giorgio dei Greci*.²⁶ The trade in Cretan icons in Venice was so extensive that it led local Italian painters to lodge a complaint with the authorities.²⁷ From this main centre, icons travelled via merchant routes to destinations all along the Eastern Adriatic coast and beyond.²⁸ Thus many arrived in Serbian Orthodox monasteries in Dalmatia and the Gulf of Kotor where, despite their sustained contact with Russia, Cretan icons were often quite numerous.²⁹ How the Virgin of Savina arrived in the monastery remains unknown but, judging by

kis's research, it remains in use only as a matter of habit, because it actually is Greek art with various admixtures, cf. G. Gamulin, "Italokrećani na našoj obali", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 16 (1966), 267.

²⁴ In keeping with the tradition of Palaiologan art but also of earlier Byzantine periods, the most popular icons of the Cretan School were those of the Virgin, notably the Glykophilousa, Hodegetria and Passion types, cf. S. Rakić, "The Representations of the Virgin on Cretan Icons in Serbian Churches in Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 20/1 (2006), 58. For a detailed classification with iconographic and stylistic characteristics of Cretan School production by period supported by plentiful examples see P. L. Vocotopoulos, "Iconographie et style des icônes dans le Bassin méditerranéen et les Balkans", in *Îcônes: Le Monde orthodoxe après Byzance*, ed. T. Velmans (Paris: Hazan, 2005), 35–98.

²⁵ L. Mirković, "Ikone grčkih zografa u Jugoslaviji i u srpskim crkvama van Jugoslavije", *Ikono-grafske studije* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1974), 336–343.

²⁶ On the church of St George in historical context and on its importance for the Greek Orthodox community in Venice and beyond see S. Antoniadis, "Introduction", in *Îcônes de Saint-Georges des Grecs et de la Collection de l'Institut*, ed. M. Chatzidakis (Venice: Neri Pozza, 1962), xvii–xxvi.

²⁷ Z. Demori-Staničić, "Neki problemi kretske-venecijanskog slikarstva u Dalmaciji", *Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji* 29 (1990), 89–90. It may be interesting to note that in 1499 Venetian dealers commissioned Cretan painters to paint 700 icons of the Virgin, of which 200 "alla greca". Cretan painters were commissioned to do icons for Roman Catholic cathedrals and monasteries across the territories under Venetian administration, cf. Chatzidakis, *Icons of Patmos*, 25.

²⁸ Dj. Mazalić, *Slikarska umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini u tursko doba (1500–1878)* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1965), 168; Bettini, *La pittura di icone cretese*, 12.

²⁹ D. Medaković, "Srpska umetnost u severnoj Dalmaciji", *Muzeji* 5 (1950), 191.

the facts mentioned above, it seems clear that Cretan icons were easily available along the entire coast.

The Virgin and Christ's flesh is basically painted a fine cinnamon shade of brown.³⁰ Some parts of the faces are illuminated more prominently, with delicate whitish hatching around the eyes, on the forehead, nose and neck. The cheeks are painted in a fine pink, while the lips show a somewhat deeper pink shade. Two parallel lines drawn on each of their eyelids are quite typical of the Cretan School. The figures of mother and child are graciously elongated in the tradition of Palaiologan art, which is most distinctly expressed in the Virgin's left hand fingers.³¹ The icon gives the impression of technical perfection, balance and careful modelling characteristic of the best work of Cretan masters.³² The Virgin's grave and sad eyes, carefully traced eyebrows, soft and delicate skin are in the manner of the great masters of the Cretan School such as Angelos Akotantos³³ and Andreas Ritzos. The impression of volume is achieved by the strong contrast between broad highlighted areas and dark brown shadows, which is skilfully attenuated by layers of warm, pale pink flesh paint. The Virgin's strikingly sad eyes under her long arched eyebrows framed with a strong shadow running to the root of the nose lend particular expressiveness to her countenance. Still, the meticulous execution does not result in the cold, calligraphically precise form subsequently characteristic of the work of Emanuel Lambardos,³⁴ slightly

³⁰ Dionysius of Fourná, in the section of his manual devoted to painting in the Cretan manner, prescribes the use of a mixture of dark ochre, a bit of black and just a tad of white for a brown underpainting of the faces and flesh, cf. M. Medić, *Stari slikarski priručnici*, vol. III: *Erminija o slikarskim veštinama Dionisija iz Furne* (Belgrade: Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, 2005), 153. Dj. Mazalić, "Kritska škola i njezini primjerci u Sarajevu", *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* XLIX (1937), 58–59, explains that the difference between the Cretan and the Greek manners of painting flesh is in that the latter used different colour mixtures resulting in a predominantly greenish, olive-green shade instead of brown.

³¹ The second and third fingers of this hand are almost without exception prominently set apart from each other in the other Cretan icons of the Virgin Glykophilousa. It was obviously a standardized feature, tirelessly passed on and on by means of various models and painting manuals.

³² Z. Rakić, *Dela kritskih majstora i njihovih sledbenika iz Zbirke ikona Sekulić u Beogradu*, an exhibition catalogue (Belgrade: Muzej grada Beograda, 2013), 7.

³³ Very similar to the Savina Virgin in painting technique, shading and colour pattern is the well-known icon of St Anne and the Virgin Child produced by Akotantos's workshop (mid-15th c.), now in the Benaki Museum in Athens; for this icon see A. Delivorrias, *A Guide to the Benaki Museum* (Athens: Benaki Museum, 2000), 75; some authors, e.g. G. Babić and M. Hadžidakis, "Ikone Balkanskog poluostrva", 336, attribute this icon to Emmanuel Tzanes.

³⁴ Chatzidakis, *Ícônes de Saint-Georges des Grecs*, 85 – *The Virgin of Passion*, late 16th or early 17th century, fig. 56, Pl. 44; Z. Auflage, *Kurzgefasster Museumsführer* (Athens: Benaki Museum, 1965) – *The Virgin of Tenderness*, 1609, Γ-66.

diminishing the immediacy of manner and emotion. The general impression made by the Savina icon is that of rhythm and symmetry complemented by a noble elegance of posture and movement. The modelling of form by delicate hatching and shading, and the harmony of colours heighten the impression of the voiceless melancholy of the captured moment. As far as the demanding depiction of flesh is concerned, the Virgin of Savina is very close to several other icons, notably the despotic icon of the Virgin Hodegetria (late sixteenth century) from the Krupa Monastery painted by a renowned Cretan painter from Venice;³⁵ the Virgin Glykophilousa (Pelagonitissa) (sixteenth century) from the Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo;³⁶ the Virgin of Tenderness from the Church of the Dormition in Novi Sad (second half of the sixteenth century);³⁷ the Virgin of Tenderness from the Sekulić Collection of Icons in Belgrade (sixteenth century);³⁸ or the two icons of the Virgin of the Passion, one from the Collection of Icons of the Church of St. George of the Greeks in Venice (mid-sixteenth century),³⁹ and the other from the Banja Monastery near Risan, Gulf of Kotor (sixteenth/seventeenth century).⁴⁰

However, the painters or workshops of most Cretan icons, scattered throughout the Balkans and beyond, remain unknown. The Virgin of Savina cannot be dated with precision but comparisons with the published high-quality icons of the same iconographic type suggest a sixteenth century date.⁴¹ The sixteenth century was the flourishing period of post-Byzantine Cretan paint-

³⁵ He probably painted the despotic icons for the Krupa Monastery in Dalmatia in the late 16th and early 17th century. The icons remained unnoticed for a long time because they, too, were covered with silver revetments, which are now removed, cf. A. Skovran, "Nepoznato delo zografa Jovana Apake", *Zograf* 4 (1972), 44.

³⁶ Rakić, "Representations", 72 (R-8).

³⁷ P. Momirović, "Dve italokritske ikone Uspenjske crkve u Novom Sadu", *Zograf* 4 (1972), 65–67.

³⁸ Rakić, *Dela kritskih majstora*, 4 (3S 51).

³⁹ Chatzidakis, *Icones de Saint-Georges des Grecs*, 56 (fig. 20, Pl. 11). The icon might have been painted by M. Damaskinos.

⁴⁰ A. Čilikov, *Ikone u Crnoj Gori* (Podgorica: CID, 2014), 140.

⁴¹ Most of these icons have been dated to the 16th century, e.g. those from the already mentioned Sekulić Collection, where the Virgin Glykophilousa (3C 53), originating from Dalmatia, shows an identical iconographic pattern as the Virgin of Savina – cf. M. Bajić-Filipović, *Zbirka ikona Sekulić*, catalogue (Belgrade: Zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, 1967), 53; or several Cretan icons from south-western Serbia – cf. R. Stanić, "Nepoznate ikone u jugozapadnoj Srbiji", *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 11 (1975), 255–262; or the very sophisticated icon of *Our Lady of Dobrić* – cf. C. Fisković, "Tri ikone u Splitu", *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 11 (1975), 247–248; the icon of the Virgin Glykophilousa from the Dormition Church in Novi Sad – cf. Momirović, "Dve italokritske ikone", 66; and others.

ing and significant artists. It seems, therefore, that the Virgin of Savina may be dated, with some reservations, to the same period.⁴²

The interrelatedness of the image, cult and popular piety in the social context of identity confirmation and preservation

It is known that the cult of the Virgin in the age of Baroque was largely focused on miracle-working icons in both Orthodox and Catholic environments.⁴³ It should be noted that such icons owed much of their increasing popularity to the famous writing of Agapios Landos *Miracles of the Virgin*, which was copied by hand or mechanically reproduced in many Serbian monasteries in the second half of the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century.⁴⁴ Copies of famous miracle-working icons brought from various lands contributed to a wider revival of the cult of the Virgin in the seventeenth century. The most popular were copies of the Virgin of Vladimir, the most highly revered icon of the Muscovite empire, its *palladium*.⁴⁵ It was in this capacity that it gained fame and was replicated across the Orthodox Christian world, since Russia was also seen as the protector of the Orthodox Christians living under Ottoman rule.⁴⁶ The veneration of the Virgin of Savina, which follows the Virgin of Vladimir in terms of iconography, may also be viewed in that light.

There has never been any written tradition about the Virgin of Savina. The belief in its miracle-working power was transmitted orally.⁴⁷ Such oral leg-

⁴² The eminent experts we consulted during our research also favour the proposed time span. Z. Rakić of the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy, dates the Virgin of Savina to the second half of the 16th century, while B. Miljković of the Institute for Byzantine Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, dates it to the late 15th or first half of the 16th century; Z. Demori-Staničić of the Split Department of the Croatian Conservation Institute, expresses the view that: "Delicately and softly executed linear patterns, with gradation and a marked use of linear parallels, indicate the period around the middle of the sixteenth century, i.e. the period before Damaskinos (1568–1600)."

⁴³ S. Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu: Bogorodica i Boka Kotorska, barokna pobožnost zapadnog brišćanstva* (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet, 2006), 184–211; M. Timotijević, "Poštovanje Bogorodice Brnske kod Srba", *Saopštenja XXIX* (1997), 181.

⁴⁴ T. Jovanović, "Čuda Presvete Bogorodice Agapija Landosa Krićanina", in A. Landos Krićanin, *Čuda Presvete Bogorodice* (Vršac: Eparhija banatska, 2002), 241–252.

⁴⁵ Timotijević, "Bogorodica Smederevska", 57.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ The veneration of miracle-working icons among the Serbian Orthodox population north of the Sava and Danube rivers, where there were many respected miracle-working icons of the Virgin, was also based on and perpetuated by oral traditions, cf. M. Timotijević, "Između sećanja i istorije: predanje o čudotvornoj ikoni Bogorodice Šikluške", *Saopštenja XLII* (2010), 167.

ends and tales actively connected the experiences of the community in the historical past and present with the holy image (Virgin) painted in the icon.⁴⁸ This historical memory of myths reflects psychological changes in the human perception of miracles.⁴⁹ Thus the miracle, as an experience of divine grace, becomes part of local collective memory entailed by icon veneration.⁵⁰

The practices surrounding the Virgin of Savina included the institution-ization, as it were, of some socially important aspects of customary law. For example, if there were no eyewitnesses to a crime, it was common to resort to having the suspect take an oath in the church, usually before its holiest icon. The same practice was followed in Savina, before the icon of the Virgin.⁵¹

It is important to keep in mind that the Virgin of Savina as a despotic icon in the Small Church played a role in daily religious services until deep into the twentieth century. The first time the icon was temporarily transferred from the Small to the Big Church was on the day of the Dormition of the Virgin in 1877. It was returned to the Small Church eight days later.⁵² The celebration of the feast day of the Dormition – when the icon was ceremonially carried in a procession around the monastery and then to an oak grove (*Dubrava*) and back – featured a particular amalgamation of official church ritual and popular piety.⁵³ The official celebration would begin with vespers at five in the afternoon, after which the procession with the icon of the Virgin would start from the church. Since, in the given religious and political circumstances, i.e. under Venetian rule, the Orthodox in the Gulf of Kotor were not allowed to mount a large town celebration such as was commonly set up by the Catholics,⁵⁴ they resorted to a compromise solution. The procession with the miracle-working icon would start from the monastery, *locus*

⁴⁸ V. Shevzov, "Icons, Miracles, and the Ecclesial Identity of Laity in Late Imperial Russian Orthodoxy", *Church History* 69/3 (2000), 628.

⁴⁹ Lidov, "Miracle-Working Icons", 49.

⁵⁰ Shevzov, "Icons, Miracles", 628–629.

⁵¹ Dj. D. Milović, *Prilog proučavanju krivičnih sudova dobrih ljudi u Komunitadi topaljskoj (mletački period)* (Cetinje: Istoriski institut NR Crne Gore, 1959), 62–63; Arhiv Herceg Novi [Archives of Herceg Novi], Političko-upravni mletački arhiv [Venetian political-administrative archive], fasc. 130, 103 (1); 210, 47 (1); 232, 4 (1), 13 (1); 233, 35 (2), 36; 247, 21 (1), 59 (1); 321, 336 (1).

⁵² J. Šarić, "Bilješke", *Šematizam pravoslavne eparhije Bokokotorsko-dubrovnčke za godinu 1878* (1878), 29.

⁵³ Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu*, 8–9, clarifies the difference between cult (*culto*) and devotions (*devotione*). Cult denotes the official, canonically shaped expression of faith, while devotions are a form of popular piety expressed individually or in community outside of the liturgy. In practice, the two intertwine.

⁵⁴ On the Roman Catholic ritual celebration of the icon miracle-working icons of the Virgin in the Gulf of Kotor (Our Lady of the Rocks) see *ibid.* 266–294.

sanctus, proceed along the *via sancta* to the oak grove, and return to the monastery, symbolically completing a full circle.⁵⁵ In that way, profane spaces outside the monastic precinct, such as the abovementioned oak grove, become transformed into sacred spaces. A much larger area becomes included in the space for collective prayer, repentance and liturgical acclamation.⁵⁶ The processional completion of a full circle also becomes part of a more universal symbolism which goes back to the very roots, the archetypes at the heart of the order of the universe.

The procession was frequently headed by a bishop clad in episcopal vestments and holding a cross in his hand. Behind him followed many priests singing the hymn for the Dormition, and a crowd of the faithful. Having circled the church three times, the procession would head towards the oak grove, where prayers to the Virgin were sung. Upon the procession's return to the (Small) church, where the icon was put back in its place on the iconostasis, there followed the rite of anointing the faithful with myrrh and the folk rituals of making vows, honouring, kissing and giving offerings to the icon.⁵⁷ The relationship between these two forms of active piety was complex and inspiring, and ultimately in the service of the cult and power of the image.⁵⁸ The whole event also perpetuated the ancient hierotopic practice, where the beholder/believer, possessing collective and individual memory, spiritual experience and knowledge, participates in the creation of a sacred space.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ It may be interesting to mention a unique procession practice of the Hilandar monks recorded in the mid-18th century: the monks carrying icons in a procession begin to shake, jump and bend at the waist under the influence of invisible divine force. For more see B. Miljković, "Povest o čudotvornim ikonama manastira Hilandara", *Zograf* 31 (2006–2007), 219–220.

⁵⁶ These aspects have been discussed in detail by A. Lidov with regard to the Byzantine period, but their universality makes them applicable to later periods as well, cf. A. Lidov, "Spatial Icons. The Miraculous Performance with the Hodegetria of Constantinople", in *Hierotopy: The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow: Indrik, 2006), 351.

⁵⁷ N. Velimirović, *Uspomene iz Boke* (Herceg Novi: J. Sekulović, 1904), 51–53. The celebration of the feast day of the monastery, the Dormition of the Virgin, as described by Velimirović at the beginning of the 20th century has not since changed significantly. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that his detailed account may be taken as a fairly reliable basis for assuming how the celebration may have looked like in the 18th century, although we have no contemporary accounts.

⁵⁸ D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 96.

⁵⁹ A. Lidov, "Hierotopy. The Creation of Sacred Spaces as a Form of Creativity and Subject of Cultural History", in *Hierotopy: The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow: Indrik, 2006), 41.

The most explicit expression of popular piety was the practice of presenting votive offerings to the icon. The practice of offering votive gifts to the Virgin's holy images can be traced back to pre-iconoclastic times,⁶⁰ but it subsequently became widespread. It was common in coastal churches dedicated to the Virgin,⁶¹ and the miracle-working Virgin of Savina is no exception in that respect.⁶²

Most of the Savina *ex-votos* date from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (figs. 2 and 3). They do not provide much information either about those who made them or those who offered them. Only a few are engraved with the mark of the workshop and the year of production (later period). Tradition has it that many believers, even the richest and the most prominent, used to come barefoot to the church to present their offerings.⁶³ Rows of votive gifts suspended on threads used to cover almost the entire icon.⁶⁴ When the icon was moved to the Big Church, the *ex-votos* were deposited in the monastery's treasury. Presently some fifty framed artefacts of the type are stored there. The *ex-votos* are diverse but all are made of metal. They have the form of crowns, hearts, small icons, boats, portraits, body parts (arms, legs, eyes), medallions, kneeling supplicants. The exact list of votive gifts in the treasury is as follows: three crowns; six hearts (one in association with a hand); five showing one or both eyes (two as one eye, three as both eyes); four hands or arms; three legs;

⁶⁰ P. J. Nordhagen, "Icons Designed for the Display of Sumptuous Votive Gifts", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 41, *Studies on Art and Archaeology in Honor of Ernst Kitzinger on His Seventy-fifth Birthday* (1987), 459, argues that the practice led to the shaping of a special type of the Virgin's image in order to create the impression that the Virgin accepts the offerings with her own hands.

⁶¹ Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu*, 221. There were on the Eastern Adriatic coast several important Catholic votive shrines to the Virgin in the 18th century. One of the biggest collections of votive gifts is kept in the church of Our Lady of the Rocks in the Gulf of Kotor, cf. P. Pazzi, *Tesori del Montenegro II. Ex-voto delle Bocche di Cattaro: Perasto, Mula, Perzagno e Stolivo nelle Bocche di Cattaro (Secoli XVII–XIX)* (Venice: Merigo Art Books, 2010). Stating the exact number of offerings (1,427), Pazzi describes the technique of their manufacture and discusses the workshops that produced them. On votive offerings in Our Lady of the Rocks in the context of Marian piety see Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu*, 218–227. The shrines to the Virgin in Kaštel Štafarić (Kaštel) and Stomorska on the island of Šolta, Dalmatia, also had rich collections of *ex-votos* in the 18th century, cf. F. Cornaro, *Notizie storiche delle apparizioni e delle immagini piu celebri di Maria Vergine* (Venice: Presso Antonio Zatta, 1761), 570.

⁶² Besides respected icons, votive gifts were also offered to the relics of saints. A large number of such *ex-votos* can be found in the Serbian Orthodox monasteries of Hilandar, Dečani, Patriarchate of Peć, Ostrog, Studenica etc., cf. L. Pavlović, *Kultovi lica kod Srba i Makedonaca* (Smederevo: Narodni muzej, 1965), 285.

⁶³ G. Petranović, "Manastir Savina", *Srbsko-dalmatinski magazin za leto 1852. i 1853* (1856), 114–115.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*; B. Drobnjaković, "Manastir Savina u Boki Kotorskoj i ikona Bogomaterne Čudotvorke", *Pravda*, 8, 9, 10 and 11 April 1939.

Figs. 2 and 3

Votive gifts offered to the miracle-working icon of the Virgin of Savina, Treasury of the Monastery of Savina



one arm and leg combined; nine portraits; five kneeling supplicants; four boats; two depictions of bedridden ailing persons; two small icons of the Virgin and Christ; one icon of a praying saint; one icon of a saint praying to the Virgin and Christ; three medallions (one with a coat-of-arms showing a two-headed eagle and a partially legible inscription BURG CO. TVR. 1780. X on one side, and only DUX legible on the other; and one showing a man and a boy in oriental clothes).⁶⁵

By presenting votive offerings, believers established contact with the divine and made their intentions public, visible to others.⁶⁶ Being a part of popular culture, ex-votos constitute a rich source for studying the history of everyday life, of people's perceptions of death, fears and beliefs, as well as individual and

⁶⁵ Some ex-votos indicate the possibility that they were offered by members of other religions, which opens the way for interesting further research into the spread of the cult of the Virgin of Savina beyond the boundaries of Orthodox Christianity.

⁶⁶ L. Silling, "Metalni votivi u pravoslavnom manastiru u Bodjanima", *Rad muzeja Vojvodine* 53 (2011), 187.

collective identities.⁶⁷ Furthermore, through their visual rhetoric conveying human experiences, they acted as a link between generations and a means of their mutual identification.⁶⁸

As we have seen, most ex-votos in the Savina collection show anthropomorphic motifs. The votive identical in shape to persons seeking divine assistance or to a part of their body has been termed identificational or analogical.⁶⁹ Thus the votive depicting a head or a face, besides representing a particular person, was offered for fertility and a fortunate childbirth.⁷⁰ Having left their kneeling portraits in front of the icon, people believed they were under constant protection against illness because they were, symbolically, forever kneeling before the Virgin.⁷¹ A very frequent motif was the heart or the flaming heart. Its meaning could range from earnestness and gratitude⁷² to a prayer for the restoration of health or for a successful marriage.⁷³

Some Savina ex-votos are simple compositions. Their plain and schematically structured language was not a random choice. It ensured that their message was direct and readily understood.⁷⁴ There are two types of such compositions in the Savina collection. One type comprises depictions of prayers for recovering from illness, with the ailing person lying in bed (praying or surrounded by praying family members), and the Virgin and Christ in the clouds shown in the upper part. The other type comprises so-called maritime ex-votos,⁷⁵ which also have a two-part composition. The lower shows a boat, often in distress, while

⁶⁷ Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu*, 221; T. Mayhew, "Facing Death on the Sea. Ex-voto Paintings of Northern Adriatic Sailing Ships in the 19th Century", in *Faces of Death: Visualising History*, eds. A. Petö and K. Schrijvers (Pisa: University Press, 2009), 208.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 209.

⁶⁹ Ž. Dugac, "Zavjetni darovi za zdravlje u zbirci dominikanskog samostana u Starome Gradu (otok Hvar)", *Medicus* 13/1 (2004), 131. According to some authors, this type of votive offerings, often called health gifts because of their being offered due to health problems, indicate a great respect of female believers for the Virgin, cf. M. Timotijević, "Bogorodica Neštinska", *Sunčani sat* 10 (2001), 196.

⁷⁰ Dugac, "Zavjetni darovi", 133.

⁷¹ Silling, "Metalni votivi", 191.

⁷² R. W. Lightbown, "Ex-votos in Gold and Silver: A Forgotten Art", *Burlington Magazine* 121/915 (1979), 354.

⁷³ Silling, "Metalni votivi", 189.

⁷⁴ A. Pampalone, "Gli ex voto del Santuario di Gallinaro Riflessioni sui rapporti fra immagine culta e immagine popolare", *La Ricerca Folklorica* 24 (Artisti, icone, simulacri. Per una antropologia dell'arte popolare) (1991), 84.

⁷⁵ That the Savina monastery was held in great respect by seamen may be seen from a legend (happening at an unspecified time in the past) according to which the ships sailing past the monastery used to fire three shots in salute, and the brotherhood responded by raising flags and ringing all bells, cf. Petranović, "Manastir Savina", 119.

the Virgin and Christ are depicted in the heavenly space above.⁷⁶ Besides their prayerful function or the function of expressing gratitude for salvation from a dramatic storm at sea, maritime votive offerings were also an expression of seamen's wish to maintain a connection with land. Since the sea was often perceived as a God-forsaken, dangerous expanse of primordial chaos,⁷⁷ the ex-voto also implied symbolic communication between seamen and their families praying for them on dry land.⁷⁸

The veneration of miracle-working icons, including the Virgin of Savina, involved an especially important dimension which nurtured the sense of belonging and identification.⁷⁹ The holy image enabled bonding within the religious community and fostering ecclesial cohesion through the shared faith in the same divine power.⁸⁰ The reputation of miracle-working icons often crossed narrow religious boundaries, and icons kept in Orthodox churches were venerated by Catholics as well.⁸¹ There is a written record that "Serbs of the Muslim faith" also came to bow and pray to the Virgin of Savina.⁸² We know that Catholics of the Gulf of Kotor and Dubrovnik used to come to the Savina monastery for the celebration of Dormition Day.⁸³ Although there was a strong Marian cult within the local Catholic community,⁸⁴ some of the Savina ex-votos were of-

⁷⁶ Brajović, *U Bogorodičinom vrtu*, 221.

⁷⁷ G. Restifo, "Hanging Ships: Ex-Voto and Votive Offerings in Modern Age Messina Churches", *Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea* 4 (2010), 421.

⁷⁸ Mayhew, "Facing Death", 219.

⁷⁹ The Roman Catholic Church expressed itself as a distinct entity through public events, town rituals, processions and sacred dramas. The Orthodox Church did not have that opportunity under the Venetian religious and political administration, and for that reason there was yet another distinctive aspect to its role. Since it was not the official church of the Venetian Republic, its fundamental role involved the effort to preserve the ethnic and religious identity of the Serbian Orthodox community as one of the pivotal points of multiculturalism in the area. For more on this subject and on socio-ethnic and religio-cultural aspects of multiculturalism and multiconfessionalism in the Gulf of Kotor in the 18th century see M. Matić, "Multikulturalnost i multikonfesionalnost u Boki Kotorskoj pod Mletačkom republikom u XVIII veku", *Etnoantropološki problemi* 4 (2016), 1101–1116. For intercultural relations in the Gulf of Kotor in earlier periods (15th–17th c.) see S. Brajović, "Interkulturalnost u Boki Kotorskoj renesansnog i baroknog doba", *Interkulturalnost* 1 (2011), 192–203.

⁸⁰ Shevzov, "Icons, Miracles", 629.

⁸¹ Timotijević, "Poštovanje Bogorodice Brnske", 186.

⁸² N. Ružičić, "Manastir Presvete Bogorodice na Savini", *Starinar* XI (1894), 109. The votive gift showing figures dressed in oriental clothes mentioned earlier in the text may be evidence of visits paid to the monastery by members of Islamic religion.

⁸³ Velimirović, *Uspomene iz Boke*, 38–40.

⁸⁴ There was almost no church in the Gulf of Kotor without an altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary or at least an especially respected painting of the Virgin, cf. N. Luković, *Zvijezda*

ferred by Catholics. The town of Herceg Novi, like most of the Gulf of Kotor and Dalmatia, was a multiconfessional and multicultural environment. Most of the social interaction was taking place between the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic population, and under the watchful eye of the Venetian authorities. Although ordinary people belonged to different religious communities, their common ethnic origin, economic and political interests favoured interconfessional tolerance in Herceg Novi, and in the Gulf of Kotor in general,⁸⁵ as may be seen from mixed marriages concluded as early as the first decades following the Venetian conquest of the north-western part of the Gulf of Kotor from the Ottomans (1684–1687). The establishment of such ties was inspired primarily by the common striving for prosperity and they were the strongest guarantee of peaceful coexistence.⁸⁶ They are also considered to have had a considerable impact on the reshaping of old Balkan culture, on the intertwining of its eastern and western components, which is one of the features of the Baroque age in the Herceg Novi area, and of interculturality in general.⁸⁷ One of the most explicit examples of the influences of different environments, periods, motifs and forms amalgamated with distinctly local features is the Baroque structure of the Savina monastery's Big Church itself.⁸⁸ What also played an important role in local intercultural relations was the belief in the power of the cult of miracle-working icons which brought local people together regardless of their differences.

The aura of reverence surrounding the Virgin of Savina in this multi-confessional environment was closely connected with the role of the Virgin as "Champion Leader" or "Defender General" (*Vozbranoj vojvodje*). Her help in the successful defence of the monastery and the destruction of an attacking Venetian ship⁸⁹ strongly resounded in the local community both as a miracle and as

mora (Perast: Gospa od Škrpjela, 2000).

⁸⁵ V. Radović, "Prilog o migracionom faktoru u istoriji Boke", *Boka* 9 (1977), 309–310.

⁸⁶ M. Crnić-Pejović, "Prilog proučavanju društvenih prilika baroknog doba u hercegnovskom kraju", *Istorijski zapisi* 1 (1996), 100.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ M. Matić, "Architectural Forms of the Savina Monastery Big Church", in *Beyond the Adriatic Sea: A Plurality of Identities and Floating Borders in Visual Culture*, ed. S. Brajović (Novi Sad: Mediteran, 2015), 173–200.

⁸⁹ Legend has it that in 1762 a Venetian ship captain, Germano, tried to destroy the monastery with cannon fire from his ship. The brotherhood invited people to the monastery, and they ardently prayed together before the icon of the Virgin. As they prayed, the Venetian ship was struck by thunder and destroyed, and the monastery remained intact, cf. Petranović, "Manastir Savina", 114. In that way the Virgin's well-known role as Protectress of the City, crowned with a legend, was refocused to a different symbolic and visual centre, the monastery. Cf. C. Angelidi and T. Papamastorakis, "Picturing the spiritual protector: from Blachernitissa to Hodegetria", in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. M. Vassilaki (Aldershot, UK and Burlington, USA: Ashgate, 2005), 209–223;

a warning. Perhaps it was this legend that inspired the respect of the Catholics and of the Venetian authorities as well⁹⁰ for the Savina miracle-working icon, thereby indirectly creating a “protective canopy” over the monastery and the Serbian ethnic community in the Gulf of Kotor. In this respect, the Virgin of Savina is certainly not a lonely example.⁹¹

The idea underlying the cult of the Virgin of Savina, then, was that of direct protection of the monastery and the local Serbian Orthodox community. The icon also played a role in consolidating the social power of the monastery as a centre. Thus, the miracle-working Virgin of Savina was given the role of an instrument of heavenly protection over the ethnic and religious identity of the community united by the authority of the monastery as a rallying point in the circumstances of foreign, Venetian, rule and the absence of the Orthodox ecclesiastical organization and bishop in the eighteenth-century Gulf of Kotor. That identity remains, therefore, an undeniable constitutive element of the multicultural Gulf of Kotor.

A. Naumov, “Bogorodičine ikone i ritualizacija odbrane grada”, *Crkvene studije* 3 (2006), 187–198. For more on this particular case of transposing the idea of the protection of the Savina monastery into the iconographic programme of the iconostasis of its Big Church see M. Matić, “Predstava ‘Stena jesi djevam’ iz manastira Savina”, *Saopštenja XLVIII* (2016), 291–297; M. Matić, “Ikona Bogorodičinog Pokrova iz manastira Savina”, *Zbornik Matice srpske za likovne umetnosti* 45 (2017), (in the press).

⁹⁰ Since religion was usually closely linked with tradition and ethnicity, it was an important factor in shaping Venetian policies. Unlike the Roman See and its Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, however, the *Serenissima* tended to look at other religious communities through the ethnic rather than the religious lens. Striving for the absolute sovereignty of the state authority, it uncompromisingly blocked every foreign influence which it thought might threaten the primacy of state interest (*ragione di stato*), cf. B. Cecchetti, *La Repubblica di Venezia e la corte di Roma nei rapporti della religione I* (Venice: P. Naratovich, 1874), 455–457. This is the background against which the attempted destruction of the Savina monastery (1762) by the Venetians should be viewed. From the Venetian point of view, it was not as much an attack on an Orthodox monastery as it was on a potential centre of the Serbian idea in an area under its rule.

⁹¹ In medieval times, a similar role of protector and conciliator was assigned to the Greek icon of the Virgin Mesopanditissa in Crete. It was the “guarantor” of peace and of peaceful coexistence between two opposed Cretan communities, the Venetian colonizers and the native Greeks. The cult of the icon was incorporated into Venetian religious practice, the icon became the palladium of Venetian Crete and a symbol of the “harmony” of colonial cohabitation, cf. M. Georgopoulou, “Late Medieval Crete and Venice: An Appropriation of Byzantine Heritage”, *Art Bulletin* 77/3 (1995), 488–489.

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Tracing the Origin of a New Meaning of the Term *Re'āyā* in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Balkans

Abstract: Besides its usage with the primary meanings: 1) social status; 2) subjectship, the term *re'āyā* was used to denote, as many historians tend to claim, "only non-Muslim subjects" from "sometime" in the second half of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth century. The paper demonstrates that this meaning of the term *re'āyā* had already been in use since the first decades of the eighteenth century, and not to the exclusion of but along with other meanings. More frequent replacement of the neutral *shari'ā* term *zimmī(ler)* and the usual official term *kefere* with the word *re'āyā* should be considered a consequence of structural social change taking place in the same century.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Balkans, *re'āyā*, non-Muslims, eighteenth century

To understand correctly the term *re'āyā* is very important in our efforts to shed more light on the social, economic and political history of the Ottoman Empire. It had more than one meaning, a fact that historians largely failed to recognize until as late as the mid-twentieth century. Even though many are aware of it today, the phenomenon has not yet received a thorough study. The exception is the article of the Czech scholar J. Kabrda, which was based on the analysis of a small number of the then known documents. He raised the most important questions, and suggested how to address them. However, his work remained largely unknown to contemporary historians, not to mention a wider public.¹ After a few introductory notes on Ottoman eighteenth-century social and economic realities, the meanings of the term *re'āyā* will therefore be analysed here in detail.

The history of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire is an immensely challenging area of study. Ottoman society was going through long and irresolvable economic crises that affected both Muslims and non-Muslims. Discontent was further fuelled by increasingly frequent military defeats and territorial losses. The technological gap between Western Europe and the Empire was more

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¹ I. Kabrda, "Raya", *Izvestiya na Istorichesko to družestvo v Sofiya* 14–16 (1937), 172–185. Curiously, even in the most comprehensive and widely-known analytical encyclopaedic entry some meanings are omitted altogether, and some are not looked at in detail, see C. E. Bosworth and S. Faroqi, "Ra'īyya", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, CD-ROM Edition, v. 1.0 (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

and more difficult to narrow. Even if significant changes in the areas of administration, army, financial and fiscal policies happened to be well conceived, they received little support even from the majority of the capital's elites, let alone the Empire's drowsy periphery. Traditional ways of coping with a crisis, as a rule entailing regression to "glorious" times and strict obedience to *shari'a*, proved ineffective. Ironically, however, those who offered fresh ideas and believed the way out lay in breaking with tradition and introducing major changes were denounced as the main hindrance to overcoming the crisis.

Yet another target for laying the blame for the situation were those who, during the many wars waged in the eighteenth century, responded, and responded in massive numbers, to the calls of hostile states and rose against their own. The more so as the state, once the wars were over, was too lenient, at least that was what the majority believed, in granting them amnesty, even several-year tax exemption, hoping to retain them as its subjects and entice them back from the countries they had fled to. Thus, the distrust of non-Muslim subjects continued into times of peace. Economic crises, inevitably accompanied by tax rises, and a growing feeling of being powerless to change anything, swayed the impoverished Muslim subjects against those perceived as being covert internal enemies. The safety of Muslims in a Muslim country became an important issue on local levels. As a result, demands arose that non-Muslim subjects be considered untrustworthy, expelled from the *derbendci* and *märtölös* services and disarmed, and that all police work be entrusted to Muslims. Such demands had been voiced before, whenever a crisis broke out, but they had never been so loud.

It is understandable why in 1692, amidst the war with the Holy League, the *kādi* of Manastır/Bitola had been ordered to appoint a certain Mustafa as head of the police force (*märtölös-başı*) in his jurisdictional area (*kazā*). The argument was that *märtölöses* "of Christian *re'āyā* origin" were murdering and oppressing people and should therefore be expelled from the police force and replaced with Muslims.² The policy of distrust as regards the Christian population continued, however, even after the war was over. As a result of complaints lodged by some *kādīs*, in 1704 all *kādīs* of the Central and Left wings of Rumelia received the *fermān* forbidding recruitment into the police force of non-Muslims and Albanians (*zimmī ve Arnāvud tā'ifesinden pāndūr olmayub*) because of their involvement with outlaws. All newly-recruited policemen were to be "Muslims (*Müslimān*) of good conduct and character references".³ A similar *fermān* ordering appointment of "Muslims" was sent in 1749 to the governor of Rumelia

² *Turski izvori za ajdustvoto i aramistvoto vo Makedonija (1650–1700)*, ed. A. Matkovski (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1961), 94–95.

³ *Turski izvori za ajdustvoto i aramistvoto vo Makedonija (1700–1725)*, vol. 3, ed. A. Matkovski (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1973), 11–12. It is worthy of note that the Albanians are therein presented as an ethnically rather than religiously defined group, in the same way as the Roma. That means that they were commonly believed to attach greater importance to

and the *kādīs* of Yenişehir-i Fener/Larissa, Serfice/Servia, Dimotika, Trikala, Veroia, Kastoria, Manastır/Bitola and other places.⁴

None of these measures proved effective. Clusters of similar documents throughout the eighteenth century show that many bands of outlaws were homogeneously Muslim, but also that many were religiously mixed.⁵ Keeping this in mind, as well as the fact that decrees on the disarmament of non-Muslims kept being issued throughout the eighteenth century, it is quite understandable why the Christians felt more and more insecure and mistrustful of a state which was unable to protect them from local dignitaries and their extortions.

The term *re'āyā* was introduced in Ottoman society from Arab Islamic civilization. The adopted denotation of the term was the lowest social class, the “flock”, the mass of common taxpaying subjects. Peasants did constitute the vast majority of *re'āyā* but, broadly speaking, it comprised all taxpayers, including nomads, urban population (craftsmen, merchants) and those members of the *ulemā* (religious and legal scholars) who were not state employees; briefly, all who were not members of the military (*‘askerī*) class regardless of their religious affiliation and financial standing. Yet, there was a multitude of minor political and social groups which eluded classification into the military class or the ordinary *re'āyā* (so-called *mu‘āf ve müselleme re'āyā* – tax-exempt *re'āyā* and, on the other hand, holders of free *baştines* who had *‘askerī* status even though they worked the land themselves). The line of demarcation between the military class and the *re'āyā* fully depended on the sultan’s will or, more precisely, on the needs of the state. Owing mostly to the work of Suraiya Faroqhi, the meaning of the term that refers to political and social category is the meaning that has been most thoroughly examined.⁶ That meaning, in addition to others, remained in use until the beginning of the *Tanzimat* reforms, when the division into *‘askerī* and *re'āyā* was abolished by the 1839 Edict of *Gülhane*.

It is from that meaning that derived a narrower one referring exclusively to the members of the “peasantry” (*re'āyā* versus *şehirli*). That meaning is evi-

their ethnic affiliation than to the religious affiliation of an individual, a group or a tribe or, in other words, that they did not take their religious affiliation seriously enough.

⁴ *Turski izvori za ajdutstvoto i aramistvoto vo Makedonija (1725–1750)*, vol. 4, ed. A. Matkovski (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1979), 110–111.

⁵ See the multi-volume collection of documents *Turski izvori za ajdutstvoto i aramistvoto vo Makedonija*, published in Skopje 1961–1980, covering the period from 1650 to 1810.

⁶ Bosworth and Faroqhi, “Ra’iyya”; S. Faroqhi “Political Activity among Ottoman Taxpayers and the Problem of Sultanate Legitimation (1570–1650)”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 35/1 (1992), 1–39; idem, “Politics and socio-economic change in the Ottoman Empire of the later sixteenth century”, in *Süleyman the Magnificent and his Age. The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, eds. M. Kunt and Ch. Woodhead, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Longman, 1997), 105–113.

dent in the Balkans as early as the sixteenth-century – in the *kānūnnāme* for the Bosnian *sancak* (1565) and the one for the *sancak* of Klis (1574): “[As a] *sipāhī’s* [income], for bridal tax, 60 *aķçe* shall be taken from the virgin daughters and 30 *aķçe* from widows; 30 *aķçe* from the virgin daughters of city dwellers and *re’āyā*, and from their widows 15 *aķçe*; the same from the virgins and widows of infidels – 30 *aķçe* for the tax from the richer and 15 *aķçe* from the poor” (*ve resm-i ’arūsāne sipāhiniñ bakire kızından altmış aķçe ve dül ’avretinden otuz aķçe ve şehirlü ve re’āyānūñ bakire kızlarından otuz aķçe ve ve dül ’avretinden on beş aķçe alınur kefereniñ bakire ve bivelereinden dahī kezalik ā’lāsından otuz ve ednāsından on beş aķçe resim alınur*).⁷

The term was widely used with its primary and most general meaning: “population”, “populace”, “inhabitants”, as well as “subjects” and, in this sense, the “people” of a state, Muslim as well as non-Muslim: “subjects of the Sultan”, “Venetian subjects”, “Polish subjects” (*re’āyā-yi Padişāhī*, *Venedik re’āyāsı*, *Leh re’āyāsı*); of a vassal state or region: “the population of Dubrovnik” (*Dübrovnik re’āyāsı*); of a larger or smaller region or settlement: “people of Montenegro”, “inhabitants of Bitola”, “townspeople”, “villagers” (*Karaca Dağ re’āyāsı*; *Manāstır re’āyāsı*; *şehir re’āyāsı*; *karye re’āyāsı*); or meaning any “community”, any “group” of people within the Empire tied together in some way – by the same religion: “Muslim and infidels”; “non-Muslim subjects”; “Orthodox subjects”; “Catholic subjects” (*Müslimān ve kefere re’āyāsı*; *zimmī re’āyāsı*; *Rüm re’āyāsı*; *Lātīn re’āyāsı*); by membership in the same nation, ethnic group, tribe, clan: “Bulgarians and Serbs/Bulgarian and Serbian people”, “Greeks”, “Armenians”, “Albanians”, “Kurds” (*Bulgār ve Sırb re’āyāsı*; *Rüm re’āyāsı*; *Ermenī re’āyāsı*; *Arnāvud re’āyāsı*; *re’āyā-yi Ekrād*); by the same trade or privileges: guardians of the passes; *voynüks* – tax-exempt peasant soldiers; miners; dwellers on pious foundation land (*derbendci re’āyāsı*; *voynük re’āyāsı*; *ma’den re’āyāsı*; *vakf re’āyāsı*).⁸ In order to emphasize the equality of Muslims and non-Muslims, the Reform Edict of 1856 abolished the use of the term *re’āyā* to denote a “subject”, and introduced the neutral term *teba’ā* (follower, member and, hence, subject).

The term *re’āyā* with its general meaning “group”, and hence “people”, was used in the same contexts and cases as the terms *ahālī*, *tā’ife* and *millet*, or as the somewhat less frequent terms *halk*, *cema’at* or *zümre*. There is no doubt that the use of the term with *this meaning was completely class neutral*. Until recently, how-

⁷ *Kanuni i kanun-name za Bosanski, Hercegovacki, Zvornički, Kliški, Crnogorski i Skadarski sandžak*, eds. B. Djurdjev et al. (Sarajevo: Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, 1957), 77, 88, 128, 136.

⁸ A. Fotić, “Institucija amana i primanje podaništva u Osmanskom carstvu: primer sremskih manastira 1693–1696”, *Istorijski časopis* 52 (2005), 248–251. It should be pointed out that in some documents, especially those concerning the church, *Rüm re’āyāsı* meant not only “Greeks” but also “Orthodox people” in general.

ever, it was almost unknown in Balkan, and not only Balkan, historiographies. That is why we can find misinterpretations of the original documentary material in many cases, misinterpretations which result from assuming or implying social stratum membership.⁹ Curiously, this meaning, albeit by now largely known to the international scholarly community, is not even mentioned by Brill's *Encyclopaedia of Islam*.¹⁰

This lengthy introduction has seemed to me necessary for a clear understanding of the new meaning of the term *re'āyā* which gained wide usage in the eighteenth century – the one referring to non-Muslim populations.

This new meaning, inadequately and imprecisely explained in the early nineteenth century, is included in the first Serbian dictionaries, encyclopaedias and histories, which subsequent historians then used as sources. Vuk Karadžić, the author of the first Serbian dictionary, published in 1818 and then in 1852, had no second thoughts: "In the Turkish Empire *re'āyā* is the name for all people who are not of the Turkish faith" (*U Turskome carstvu raja se zovu svi ljudi koji ne vjeruju Turske vjere*). This, however could have been just one general view. His contemporary, the Orthodox priest Matija Nenadović, an educated man himself, used the term "rajaluk" (*ra'yyet*) to denote "being a subject" (a meaning that most modern Balkan historians would miss).¹¹ Yet, it cannot be established whether the meaning he used included Muslim subjects as well.

It should be remembered that nineteenth-century or even later scholarship was nowhere near to elucidating the key meaning that the term had had in earlier centuries, the one referring to social status. Hence the prolonged presence, and not only in popular but also in scholarly history writing, of the completely erroneous view that Muslims could by no means have had the status of *re'āyā*, not even in the sixteenth century.

⁹ Ibid. 251.

¹⁰ Bosworth and Faroqhi, "Ra'yya". This meaning is included in the following dictionaries: F. A. M. Meninski, *Lexicon Arabico-Persico-Turcicum ...*, vol. 1, 2nd rev. ed. (Vienna 1780; first published 1680); J. Th. Zenker, *Türkisch-Arabisch-Persisches Handwörterbuch*, facs. ed. (Hildesheim: Olms, 1967; first published 1866); Sir J. W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, facs. ed. (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1978; first published 1890); *Redhouse Yeni Türkçe-İngilizce Sözlük (New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary)*, eds. U. B. Akım et al. 7th ed. (Istanbul: Redhouse Press, 1984); M. Z. Pakalin, *Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, vol. 1, 3rd ed. (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1983).

¹¹ V. Karadžić, *Srpski rječnik istumačen njemačkijem i latinskijem riječima* (Vienna 1852; facs. ed. Belgrade: Nolit, 1972); *Memoari prote Matije Nenadovića*, ed. Lj. Kovačević (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1893), 176–177, 197–198 (see discussion in Fotić, "Institucija amana", 251–252).

The primary definition of the term “raja” (*re’āyā*) in Serbian and older Yugoslav dictionaries amounts to “non-Muslim subjects in former Turkey” (*nemuslimanski podanici u negdašnjoj Turskoj*) or “subjugated Turkish subjects who are not Muslim and who pay taxes” (*pokoreni turski podanici koji nisu muslimani i koji plaćaju danak*).¹² Definitions of the term intended for a broader public have obviously not made any progress since the publication of Vuk Karadžić’s *Dictionary* two hundred years ago. More recent editions of the dictionaries pay no heed to the entry contributed to the *Encyclopaedia of Yugoslavia* by H. Šabanović in 1968, where the meaning referring to social status is included as well.¹³

Even now, when other meanings of the term *re’āyā* have been largely elucidated, historians do not seem to be interested in the meaning referring to non-Muslim population. Some on purpose, because the negative connotations that stem from defining “non-Muslim” and “subject” as the lowest social category fit the intended interpretation.

It is high time to go further than the single explanatory sentence granted to this meaning of the term *re’āyā* in Brill’s analytical and very widely used and very reliable *Encyclopaedia of Islam*: “From the 12th/18th century onwards, the term is increasingly used for the Christian taxpayers only; 13th/19th-century population counts distinguish between *re’āyā* and Islam.” A very good handbook, included as mandatory reading for students, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, first published in 1994, whose title and table of contents mislead the reader into expecting that the topic is not merely outlined, but scrutinized in its social context, does not even mention the topic. It is only at the end of the book, in the Glossary, that we can find a single meaning: “All those groups, Muslim, or non-Muslim, outside the *askerī* elite, engaged in economic activities and thus subject to taxes.” The latest relevant book, the third volume of *The Cambridge History of Turkey* entitled *The Later Ottoman Empire 1603–1839*, does mention this meaning, also in the Glossary, but without the necessary precision: “... in the nineteenth century used only for non-Muslims”.¹⁴

Since the 1960s, historians in the former Yugoslavia have been increasingly aware of the central meaning of the term: lowest social status regardless of

¹² M. Vujaklija, *Leksikon stranih reči i izraza*, 4th ed. (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1991); *Rečnik srpskohrvatskoga književnog jezika*, vol. 5, eds. M. Stevanović et al., 2nd ed. (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1990); A. Škaljić, *Turcizmi u srpskohrvatskom-hrvatskosrpskom jeziku*, 5th ed. (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1985).

¹³ H. Šabanović, “Raja”, *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, vol. 7 (Zagreb: Jugoslavenski leksikografski zavod, 1968), 32.

¹⁴ Bosworth and Faroqhi, “Ra’iyya”; *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 2: 1600–1914, eds. S. Faroqhi et al., 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 991; *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 3: *The Later Ottoman Empire 1603–1839*, ed. S. Faroqhi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 526.

religion (H. Šabanović, N. Filipović, D. Bojanić and others). As for the ways of referring to Christians, things have mostly remained on what Šabanović reiterated several times from 1964 onwards while editing various source materials: "From the 18th century the term begins to denote *only* those subjects of Christian faith (who pay taxes)." In another place, he expanded this statement by adding that "from the middle of the 17th century in the European part of the Ottoman Empire the term comes to be predominantly used to denote the dependent peasantry of the Christian faith". A. Matkovski was much more concerned with the term itself, and looked at it from various angles. As for this meaning, he restricted the period of its usage to the second half of the eighteenth and first four decades of the nineteenth century, stressing, just as erroneously, that it had referred *only* to non-Muslim population, and adding that it had been then that the term had become derogatory.¹⁵

Later work of Bosnian historians has clearly shown that there indeed was in the eighteenth century a numerous "Muslim *re'āyā*". And not only in the eighteenth but also in the early nineteenth century. A. Sućeska drew attention to a document of 1814 which shows that the Sultana, who enjoyed income from an imperial *hāss* estate in the environs of Sarajevo, complained to the Porte of the Muslim *re'āyā* refusing to pay *re'āyā* taxes claiming that Muslims were not liable to taxation. The order she received in reply was explicit that all registered Muslim *re'āyā*, both urban and rural, were liable to pay *re'āyā* taxes, the same as their ancestors had been.¹⁶ Besides, it is well known that almost the entire eighteenth century was marked by the attempts of Muslim *re'āyā* in Bosnia to acquire *ʿaskerī* status one way or another in order to rid themselves of taxation, usually by signing up fake janissary lists.

That was likely the case all across the Empire rather than only in Bosnia. A 1803 *fermān* of Selim III regarding tax collection abuses in the *kazā* of Manastir/Bitola specifies that it has been issued at the request of Muslim and non-Muslim *re'āyā* (*Manāstir kazāsın/d/a sâkin ve mütemekkin Müslim ve ehl-i zimmet re'āyânın takdîr eyledikleri arzuhâlları*).¹⁷

The authorities certainly used this kind of terminology. However, common people in Bosnia during the nineteenth century, and probably even earlier,

¹⁵ *Turski izvori za istoriju Beograda*, vol. 1, 1. *Katastarski popisi Beograda i okoline 1476–1566*, ed. H. Šabanović (Belgrade: Istoriski arhiv grada Beograda, 1964), 631; Šabanović, "Raja"; A. Matkovski, *Krepostništvo vo Makedonija vo vreme na tursko vladeenje* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1978), 68.

¹⁶ A. Sućeska, "Pokušaji muslimanske raje u Bosni da se oslobode rajinskog statusa u XVIII vijeku", in *Stopanskite, socijalnite i etničke promeni na teritorijata na Jugoslavija i Čehoslovačka od XVI do sredinata na XVIII vek* (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1986), 195–206.

¹⁷ *Turski dokumenti za makedonskata istorija 1803–1808*, vol. 2, ed. P. Džambazovski (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1953), 34, 143.

mostly used other terms for the Muslims with the status of *re'āyā*. In the middle of that century, the Franciscan Ivan Frano Jukić wrote, “beys and other Turkish notables call [Muslim peasants] *poturica* and *čosa*, while Catholics call them *balija*”.¹⁸ All these words have very insulting connotations. The word *potur* for Muslim *re'āyā* was well known as early as the sixteenth century, and remained in use through centuries. “The village is called *selō*, and the peasant *pōtūr* (*Köye selō, köylüye dendi pōtūr*); as Üsküfi Bosnevī wrote in 1631/32 in his Ottoman-Slavic dictionary.¹⁹ Also, local Muslim and non-Muslim Balkan population called Muslim *re'āyā* “Turks”, which was the word most commonly used for all Muslims in the Balkans (except Roma and sometimes Albanians). A century earlier, around 1757, Zulfikar Rizvanbegović, captain of Stolac fortress, wrote in a Cyrillic letter addressed to the *knez* of Dubrovnik that “according to imperial writ all those who hold imperial land have to take title-deeds on the land, the same as the other Turks and *re'āyā do*” (*pak im pada po zapoviedi carevoje uzimati tapije na zemlje kakono uzimaju i ostali Turci i rajeja*).²⁰

In order to avoid imprecision in translation, it is very important to keep in mind at all times that the term *re'āyā* could refer to Muslims with that status as well. It is only if the content of any one eighteenth-century document permits it that we can argue with certainty that the term *re'āyā* refers to non-Muslims.

From the sixteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, documents often mention Muslim and non-Muslim populations in the same sentence, especially when they deal with issues concerning both groups. Insistence on the distinction between them is quite understandable, because it stemmed from the *shari'a* tenets and was reflected in almost all spheres of everyday life. The distinction was expressed in a variety of ways: “Muslims and infidels” (*Müslimān ve kefere*); “community/group of Muslims and of infidels” (*Müslimān ve kefere tā'ifesi*); “Muslim and non-Muslim/infidel *re'āyā*” (*Müslimān ve zimmi re'āyā, Müslimānān ve kefere re'āyāsi*); “people of Islam and the Armenian community” (*ehl-i İslām ve Ermenī tā'ifesi*); “Muslim and Christian” (*Müslim ve Nasrānī*); the Muslim and infidel poor (*Müslimān ve kefere fukarāsi*); and many others.²¹

Also, and more frequently from the eighteenth century, documents contain phrases without *kefere* or *zimmi* or any other clarifying term being added, such as: “people of Islam and *re'āyā*”; “Muslims and poor *re'āyā*”; “population of the province and *re'āyā*”; “poor *re'āyā* and population of the state” (*ehl-i İslām ve*

¹⁸ I. F. Jukić, *Sabrana djela*, vol. 1, ed. B. Ćorić (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1973), 310.

¹⁹ D. M. Korkut, “Makbûl-i 'āryf (Potur-Şāhidija) Üsküfi Bosnevije”, *Glasnik hrvatskih zemaljskih muzeja u Sarajevu* 54 (1942), 401.

²⁰ Ć. Truhelka, “Nekoliko mlađjih pisama hercegovačke gospode pisanih bosanicom iz dubrovačke arhive”, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 26 (1914), 491.

²¹ See various volumes of published Ottoman chronicles, *mühimme defters*, *sicills*, and other published Ottoman documents.

re'âyâ; *Müslimân u re'âyâ vu fukarâ*; *ahâlî-i vilâyet ve re'âyâlar*; *fukarâ-yi ra'iyet ve ahâlî-i memleket*), etc.²² Unless the content of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century documents is explicit, we shall not be able to draw a reliable conclusion as to whether they refer to social status or to religious division. Especially because the terms *ahâlî* (basic meaning: “population,” “inhabitants”) and *Müslimân* often refer to members of the *âskerî* class, those exempted from taxation, model Muslims, rich people and, also, members of the religious class (*‘ulemâ*). For documents dating from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, we might tend to rely on our previous experience and assume that the division implied is class division. But was it always the case, in all types of seventeenth-century documents and texts?

It is for the same reason that we cannot be completely sure as to whom the terms such as those found in a document registered in the court records (*sicill*) of the *kādî* of Manastır/Bitola in 1706 refer to. Pleading for the promised amnesty, an outlaw admitted to the authorities: “We used to kill people and plunder the property of Muslims and *re'âyâ* and other subjects” (*emvâl-i Müslimîn ve re'âyâ u berâyâyı gâret ve katl-i nufûs*).²³ The same goes for Selim III's *fermân* of 1800 ordering that the burden of taxes be distributed evenly between “Muslims and *re'âyâ* alike” (*ehl-i İslâm ve re'âyâ*).²⁴ Unless we are able to learn more about the context, we shall by no means be able to know with certainty whether the division is social or religious.

When was it, then, that the term *re'âyâ* really came to be used for Christians only (alongside all other meanings)? There is not enough time or space to analyze all documents from the first half of the eighteenth century which do no more than suggest that the distinction is religious rather than social. Writing on Ottoman Vidin, Rossitsa Gradeva makes a remark: “It is not surprising that Vi-

²² 85 *Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1040–1041 (1042)/1630–1631 (1632)) <Özet – Tanskripsiyon – İndeks>*, eds. H. O. Yıldırım et al. (Istanbul: Başbakanlık Osmanlı Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2002), 454; *Topçular Kâtibi Abdülkâdir (Kadri) Efendi Tarihi, (Metin ve Tahlil)*, vol. 1, ed. Z. Yılmaz (Ankara: TTK, 2003), 16, vol. 2, 790; H. Doğru, *Rumeli' de Yaşam. Bir Kadî Defterinin Işığında* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2007). Ek: *Rumeli'de Bir Kaza: Hacı-oğlu Pazarı Kadî Defterleri (Şer'îye Sicili) 29 Cemaziye'l Ahir 1213 – 2 Şaban 1224* (http://www.kitapyayinevi.com/download/Kadi_Sicili_Ek.pdf <28 Jan. 2007>), nos. 27, 110, 111, 390; *Das sicill aus Skopje. Kritische Edition und Kommentierung des einzigen vollständig erhaltenen Kadiamtsregisterbandes (sicill) aus Üsküb (Skopje)*, ed. M. Kurz (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 192, 251, 264, 512, etc.

²³ *Turski izvori za ajdutstvoto i aramistvoto vo Makedonija (1700–1725)*, vol. 3, 31, 202. I have tersely translated the term *berâyâ* as “other subjects”. The meaning of this term has not been clarified yet. As it almost always occurs after the term *re'âyâ* in phrases, it is quite possible that it referred to those who were members of the *re'âyâ*, but were exempted from paying certain taxes (see Matkovski, *Kreposništvo*, 70–98).

²⁴ *Turski dokumenti za makedonskata istorija 1800–1803*, vol. 1, eds. P. Džambazovski and A. Starova (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1951), 31, 152.

din is one of the places where the division between 'Muslims' and 'reaya', in which *reaya* stands for Christians, appears in local documentation rather early, from at least the first decade of the 18th century."²⁵ Bearing in mind the arguments mentioned above, it would be good to see quotations from those documents.

The earliest reliable reference I have been able to find comes from the year 1731. The order to collect money for paying the soldiers engaged in pursuing outlaws (*haydūts*) in the *kazā* of Manastır/Bitola prescribes that a portion of the financial burden is to be distributed among "town Muslims, *re'āyā* and Jews in Bitola, and some Yürük and Albanian villages". At the end of the document, where the total sum collected is added up, the same pattern of division, though expressed in a different way, fully confirms that the term *re'āyā* refers to Christians only. The sum collected in Bitola comprised "355 grosses from town Muslims, 405 from town Christians and 210 from Jews."²⁶ A similar pattern probably applies to a document of 1710, but that cannot be argued with certainty: the burden of the upkeep of *martōlōs* in Manastır/Bitola was distributed among "the *re'āyā* registered in *cizye*-records, *çiftlik re'āyā*, town Jews, and Muslim and Albanian villages."²⁷

From the second half of the eighteenth century, an increasing number of examples clearly show that the term *re'āyā*, even though it was not preceded by the explanatory label "infidel" (*kefere*), was used for the Christian population.

Although there may be a few random earlier examples, it could be said that the increasingly frequent use of a new meaning of the term *re'āyā* was associated with the structural political and social changes brought about by the wars of the late seventeenth and first two decades of the eighteenth century in which a large part of Ottoman territory in Europe had been lost. It was certainly a consequence of the growing Muslim distrust of the Christians. Finally, a circumspect approach requires reemphasizing that the term *re'āyā* came to refer to the Christian population only *gradually*, and that throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it was used with that meaning *alongside* all other meanings. Great caution should therefore be exercised when interpreting the sources where the term *re'āyā* lacks a modifier. There is no doubt at all that in the period in question it does not necessarily refer to tax-paying non-Muslim subjects, and documents usually do not offer sufficient information for ruling out the meaning referring to the lowest social stratum. To make things even more

²⁵ R. Gradeva, "Between Hinterland and Frontier: Ottoman Vidin, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries", *Frontiers of Ottoman Space, Frontiers in Ottoman Society* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2014), 36. She adds in a footnote that this division appears even earlier, in 1664, but "it had become a standard formula only from the mid-18th century onwards".

²⁶ *Turski dokumenti za makedonskata istorija 1818–1827*, vol. 4, ed. P. Džambazovski (Skopje: Institut za nacionalna istorija, 1957), 33–37.

²⁷ *Turski izvori za ajdutstvoto i aramistvoto vo Makedonija (1700–1725)*, vol. 3, 63–68.

difficult, there is no way whatsoever to know which meaning was intended in a document that concerns areas where there were no Muslim *re'āyā*.

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Alone of All Her Sex? The Dutch Jeanne Merkus and the Hitherto Hidden Other Viragos in the Balkans during the Great Eastern Crisis (1875–1878)[†]

Abstract: This paper deals with the question as to whether the well-reported Dutch volunteer warrior Jeanne Merkus was indeed the sole female fighter at the time of the anti-Ottoman rebellions and the wars in the Balkan Peninsula from 1875 to 1878, when the Great Eastern Crisis raged. While this rich outlandish lady – who has only recently earned her official biography – attracted much attention from the contemporary press, and later often surfaced in memoirs of sorts as well, her few female colleagues, mainly home-grown and of modest background, went mostly unnoticed by the general public. This first attempt at settling the score of undeserved neglect sets out to establish the individual stories from the hard-to-find pieces of information in old newspapers and non-fiction literature. The existence of five other cases of actual fighting females could be proved, yet four of them were, unlike Miss Merkus, in male disguise. Moreover, a larger number of females trying to engage militarily on the battlefield have been discovered, some passing as males, some not.

Keywords: female volunteer fighter, rebellion, war, Great Eastern Crisis, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Romania, Turkey-in-Europe

Throughout human history warfare has been predominantly a male pursuit; females handling weaponry to wound or kill members of hostile groups are far less common. This contribution addresses the question as to whether the Western Balkans in the second half of the nineteenth century constitutes an exception to this rule, while focusing on the Great Eastern Crisis (1875–1878), the culminating point of the armed conflict of that epoch in the region. Our search for fighting females centres on not any less rare and often equally heroic instances of females who, when male support is lacking and utmost necessity prevails, defend their homes, their honour, their own lives and that of their offspring with weapons.

Looking at this part of Europe in those years one could easily come to believe that there was just one genuinely active female warrior: Jeanne Merkus (1839–1897), the shady forerunner of Sofija Jovanović (1895–1979), Milunka Savić (1892–1973), and the British Flora Sandes (1876–1956) – Serbia's indisputable heroines of the 1910s, a decade full of warfare. The mysterious and controversial Dutch lady, who has somehow escaped complete oblivion, was in her

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Balkan heyday a popular subject in virtually all world's newspapers, which creates the impression that then and there she indeed was without any female competition in that martial role. This article tries to unearth her barely reported female colleagues, to grasp their motivations and careers, and to compare this usually defective biographical material with the much more thoroughly researched Merkus case. The theoretical pitch of the subject matter lies in determining the relative degree of autonomy and self-determination of females operating within a downright patriarchal framework, as well as ascertaining the varying levels of success of the individuals concerned in transcending this and other constraints, in freeing themselves of the strong bonds of homestead and family, religion and ethnicity, nation and homeland.

Jeanne Merkus: a great life in brief

Only recently have the fascinating life and times of Jeanne ("Jenny") Merkus been reconstructed, resulting in her first extensive and scholarly biography.² At the age of 36 she was catapulted into the role of the Joan of Arc of the Serbian-led struggle for South-Slav liberation from the Muslim yoke of the Ottoman Turks. Well into 1875, this unwed heiress of colonial assets in her native Dutch East Indies (present-day Indonesia), of which her father had served as Governor-General, had been active as a social reformer, philanthropist and missionary in France and Italy. The original strong Protestant faith of this individual, who had been together with several brothers and sisters orphaned in childhood and adopted in Holland by her father's brother, a vicar, became blended with socialist elements, and – mainly thanks to a long relationship in her twenties with a female composer and writer who shared that conviction – also with some feminist ones. Altruistically minded, she started dispensing of her fortune on the poor and the sick, while spreading the gospel. Shortly after becoming an adherent of chiliasm, she made in the years 1872/3 her maiden trip to the Holy Land, where she purchased a plot outside the city of Jerusalem for the construction of a palace of sorts, all on her own account, intended for the Second Coming of Christ which she expected to happen very soon after the liberation of Palestine, the land of her Lord, from infidel rule. While in all likelihood volunteering as a nurse, and doubtless being generally most supportive of the newly proclaimed Third

² R. Grémaux & W. van den Bosch, *Mystica met kromzwaard. Het opzienbarende leven van Jenny Merkus (1839–1897)* (Delft 2014). For shorter contributions see R. Grémaux, "Žana Markus – Holandjanka u ratovima 1875–1876", in S. Branković, ed., *Od Deligrada do Deligrada 1806–1876* (Aleksinac and Belgrade 1997), 297–301; R. Grémaux, "Merkus, Jeanne", in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland*, vol. 6 (The Hague 2008), 306–309; R. Gremo, "Merkus, Žana (Merkus, Jeanne)", in *Srpski biografski rečnik*, vol. 6 (Novi Sad 2014), 370–372; W. van den Bosch & R. Grémaux, *Jenny Merkus/Jovanka Merkusova: The Dutch Joan of Arc of Serbia and Herzegovina* (Belgrade 2016).

French Republic, she had experienced the Prussian siege of the French capital in late 1870 and early 1871, as well as the ensuing Paris Commune. During this short-lived left-wing experiment of spring 1871 she must have grown familiar with females as political and military leaders. She may well have become herself one of the “Amazones de la Seine”, combining functions on the barricades with taking care of the poor, sick and wounded.

By mid-December 1875³ this generous Dutch lady had, without resorting to disguising herself as a man, managed to enter the otherwise all-male ranks of the Herzegovinian insurgents. Personally she wanted to be instrumental in bringing down Muslim rule over Christians, starting in the Balkans but ultimately aiming at recapturing the Holy Land. She was admitted to the insurgent movement thanks to the open-minded indigent leader Mihailo Ljubibratić (1839–1889), who had in the first five months of this upheaval become the rallying point for dozens of West-European volunteers (mainly Italians, former Garibaldinians). This was the first time that men from Europe’s West took part in a Serbian-led revolutionary endeavour, thus following the great example set by Lord Byron on behalf of the oppressed Greeks.

Adopting the local men’s dress and giving ample proof of her fighting spirit and martial abilities, Miss Merkus also carried bandages for the wounded. On 10 March 1876 she was, together with *vojvoda* Ljubibratić and most of his staff, treacherously captured on Turkish soil by Austrian forces, while the company, on the run for the increasingly strong arm of Montenegro’s ruler, Prince Nicholas, in insurgent Herzegovina, tried to reach rebellious western Bosnia with its strong sympathies for Serbia. Whereas the chief insurgent was taken to Linz to live in internment in the Austrian heartland, his female companion, who had recently spent a small fortune on a battery of mountain cannons for the in-



Jeanne Merkus
by an unknown photographer
(c. 1860–1862), published in S. A. Reitsma,
“Een gouverneur-generaalsdochter. Jeanne
Merkus”, *Tropisch Nederland* (Amsterdam),
28 June 1937, p. 66

³ Dates are given according to the Gregorian or new calendar, but sometimes (always between brackets) in the Julian or old calendar as well.

surgents, together with ammunition and a trained crew from abroad (this major material contribution of hers eventually ended up in Montenegro), was free to go. Still wearing male attire, she headed for Belgrade, the capital of the Principality of Serbia, where she was warmly received in circles around the United Serbian Youth, a revolutionary liberal and patriotic organisation eager to employ her as a battering-ram for pressing the government of Prince Milan into adopting a much firmer stance in favour of the insurgence in Herzegovina, even if the consequence would be having to go to war against the vast and mighty Ottoman Empire.

When June blended into July, Serbia did embark upon this endeavour, and so did Montenegro which, however, pursued its own interests, or rather those of its ruler. For the larger Serbian principality the war would soon turn out to be hazardous. The country lacked proper preparation and was not supported by official Russia. Miss Merkus, capitalizing on the status of the “amazon of Herzegovina” and the “Joan of Arc of Serbia”, as well as being a major financial benefactor of the war effort, could hardly be refused in her military capacity by the Minister of War, Colonel Tihomilj Nikolić, or forced into accepting the role of a nurse, the only option deemed appropriate for the “second sex”. In the end, she was sent to the banks of the River Drina, facing Turkish-held Bosnia. At that westernmost front of Serbia she was supposed to become honorary adjutant of Ranko Alimpić, at the time Serbia’s one and only home-grown general. However, this supreme commanding officer refused the newcomer, claiming “women knights” not to be in accordance with the traditions of Serbia’s army and people. In her capacity as a volunteer she was transferred under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Gruja Mišković who led the unit of foreign nationals (mainly Serbs from Austro-Hungary and Turkey) in the vicinity of the Drina. At first he was not too pleased either, fearing the admittance of a female would turn into “a comedy”. Yet his reluctance gave way to adoration as soon as he had a chance to witness her fighting skills and spirit. Thenceforth the officer would confront male cowards in his army with her as a shining example of bravery.

Newspapers abroad depicted her as a foreign woman without whose presence and example Serbian men were unable to perform properly on the battlefield. Thus, a major blow was dealt to the patriarchal and nationalist underpinnings of the country’s warfare and politics. About the same time the tsarist Russian intelligence claimed her to be “a common Austrian Jewish spy”. Merkus herself actively engaged in her own downfall by not hiding her sympathies for the republican form of government and for the Commune. To make things even worse, she publicly criticised the Serbian commander-in-chief at the Drina for being passive militarily, while expending his energy flirting with a nurse. Moreover, Merkus had the gall to ask this general in front of others to resign and make way for a better one. This insubordination sealed her own dismissal from the Drina Army, a decision against which she revolted to the point that force

had to be employed to send her off. Returning to Belgrade she realised that her support among the elite and in the public opinion of the predominantly war-weary and almost defeated Serbia had drastically eroded. A few days later, in mid-August 1876, the hitherto national heroine left the Principality. By the water-route of the Danube and the Black Sea she reached Constantinople, to return from there also by boat to her base at the French Riviera.

Although never ever to see the Western Balkans again, Miss Merkus – just back from a short trip to Java, the distant island of her youth – turned up in the Danubian Principalities (modern Romania) almost three months after Russia had declared war on the Ottoman Empire and started to attack it from Romanian soil. Serbia's prominence in the first phase of the Great Eastern Crisis was thus taken over by the mighty tsarist state, which had kept itself aside in 1875 and 1876. Now Serbia was to be pressed by its "big brother" to take up arms against their common enemy, and it yielded to the pressure by mid-December 1877, having hesitated for almost eight months. The few scant traces found in the press concerning Merkus's Romanian adventure are from early July 1877. In the first half of that month, when the military campaign for the liberation of the Bulgarian Christians was already in full swing, she was placed, as

a "rambling armed amazon", near the Russian headquarters on Romanian soil. Newspapers further claimed that she offered her military skills for that endeavour, but was allowed into the army and the war zone only as a nurse. Did she, unlike in the previous year in Serbia, subject herself to such a role, perhaps too humble for a former virago? Another newspaper placed her as an "amazon" at one of two main points of entry for the Russian forces into Ottoman Bulgarian territory. Without hardly any other source, and nothing to substantiate Merkus's



Fantasy portrait of Jeane Merkus
in or near Herzegovina or Bosnia
in 1875 or 1876 by the Austrian artist
Johann Wilhelm Frey, in M. B. Zimmerman,
Illustrierte Geschichte des Orientalischen Krieges
von 1876–1878 (1878), 181

presence in the killing fields south of the Danube, it is most likely that her new adventure in South-East Europe was ill-fortuned and short-lived. Never again was she to return to that part of the continent.

By the time of the final cessation of hostilities between Turkey and Russia (with Serbia at its side), which took place on the last day of January 1878 N. S., Miss Merkus was in Paris. Upon the signing of the peace agreement in early March the same year, she made a short trip to Beirut and Jaffa in order to restart her building project near Jerusalem that had been obstructed as a result of her anti-Turkish deeds during the Great Eastern Crisis. Whereas she was rapidly forgotten by most Serbs, the Muslim overlords in Turkish Palestine were much less forgetful, keeping a grudge against the person who had dared to fight their co-religionists in the Balkans. This resentment was an

important reason why her edifice, her aspired life's work, was never completed. Saddened by this and by the failed expectations of the imminent return of her Lord to earth, and personally reduced to utter poverty, her vital urge broke down in the end. Her family managed to retrieve her from a wretched Paris existence and brought her back to the Netherlands, where she, aged 57, passed away in the Protestant nursing house in the city of Utrecht.

The one and only period in Merkus's lifetime when she, beyond any doubt, wielded arms was in the Balkans during the first and second year of the Great Eastern Crisis, the big clash of interests over the future of Turkey-in-Europe in the wake of upheaval and war, which lasted in total from mid-1875 until early 1878. This international emergency was itself the *ouverture* of the Berlin Congress of mid-1878, by virtue of which Serbia and Montenegro ceased to be Ottoman vassal-states and gained, on enlarged territories, full independence.



Photograph of Jeanny Merkus
by Henri le Lieure, Rome (probably c. 1880),
according to an old photocopy in Kennisinstituut
Atria, Amsterdam

Bulgaria, a newly-autonomous principality of the Ottoman Empire, became territorially reduced as compared to a recent arrangement. Bosnia and Herzegovina, with their sizeable rebellious Serbian-Orthodox population that had several times in successful periods of upheaval expressed the desire to join Serbia and Montenegro, were handed over to be ruled by the Catholic-dominated Austro-Hungary, though both regions formally remained Ottoman. This crisis was, thus, for the Dutch lady fighter, by all accounts, the sole occasion for effectively launching a military career, but was she at the given juncture of time and place really the one and only woman warrior, as superficial reading of newspapers and other printed sources suggest? And if not, who were her colleagues and what were their personal circumstances and motivations? Which major traits did they share and what made them different? Did they disguise themselves as men, did they resort to “passing”, or were they allowed into the ranks of fighting males without having to commit this kind of deceit? This is the subject to which the following sections are devoted.

Successful passing as genuine fighters

Females from several countries and epochs determined to enlist and remain in the exclusively male ranks of the military have employed an occasionally successful stratagem. It consists in the painstaking and continuous pursuit of keeping their biological sexual self secret, convincingly dressing, posing, acting and talking⁴ like men, adopting an alias, while being in constant fear of detection.⁵ Miss Merkus was rich, influential and self-assured enough to surmount the obstacles to joining Serbia’s army without having to resort to the abovementioned form of deception. Moreover she had gained military accolades in Herzegovina. During any campaign she wore men’s clothes; she did so for practical reasons as well as to show symbolically her place in the realm of warfare. In the cultural idiom of that time and place donning male garb signified, “Beware! I have the ability and willingness to take lives, risking my own life in doing so,” whereas according to the same cultural rules, unarmed and otherwise appropriately dressed females were never targets of collective violence. Taking their lives would be most dishonest and shameful, and the same held true for targeting male lives by perpetrators simulating females.

⁴ Speaking Serbian in the first person involves using masculine (or feminine) verbal forms.

⁵ For this stratagem see e.g. R. Dekker & L. van der Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (London 1989); J. Wheelwright, *Amazons and Military Maidens* (London 1989).



Serbia's fronts in the 1876 war;
 1) Drina Army; 2) Ibar Army; 3) Main Morava Army; 4) Timok Army

Stana Kovačević

If Miss Merkus deliberately chose not to pass as a member of the opposite sex, what about the others? A mixture of patriotic and romantic motivations is said to have prompted the person discussed here to resort to this act of deception, stealthily and on purpose. Unfortunately, no newspaper article of the time concerning this case or the person's *démasqué* has come to our notice. The first name of this impersonator was Stana, and her maiden name is unknown, as is her adopted male name. As such adopted names were often the masculine form of the first name, she might have called herself Stanko. Before the war she had married Stevan Kovačević, with whom she settled down in Šabac, his credible hometown, situated to the west of Belgrade on the southern bank of the River Sava, on Serbia's side of the border with Austria-Hungary.

Two early twentieth-century Serbian reviews of the 1876/8 volunteer movement mention briefly the active role played by only three women: Stana Kovačević, Jeanne Merkus, and Marina Veličković, née Grgić (see below).⁶

⁶ A. J. Milojević, *Za otažbinu 1804–1904* (Belgrade 1904), 341: "two women – Stana and Marina, and the famous miss *markiza Markusova*"; P. Lazarević, "Dobrovoljci", in the Latin edition of St. Stanojević's *Narodna enciklopedija SHS*, vol. I (Zagreb, c. 1925), 611, mentions for this period only Marina Veličković and Mara [sic] Kovačević.

However, the earliest mention of Stana Kovačević we have come across occurs in a short anonymous article in a Serbian monthly of 1901:

In the battles at the Drina, fighting side by side with Stevan Kovačević was his wife Stana. Stana originated from Crnjovode in Bosnia, and was born in the year 1850. Fearful that they would send her back home from the volunteer ranks, Stana donned men's clothing and fought for three whole months, as she herself says, "with the fellow volunteers". At the time, no one knew that she was a woman. But when the Turks wounded her husband at the battle near Batković [a village north of Bijeljina, eastern Bosnia], whence Serbian medical orderlies transported him to Šabac, it became apparent from her grief for her good comrade, that she was a woman. She was awarded a silver medal for bravery during the war itself, and at this year's volunteer celebration, she has received a medal for military merit as well. Stana now lives permanently in Šabac.⁷

In June 1901 Belgrade celebrated the volunteers who had taken part in the Serbo-Turkish war twenty-five years earlier. Here is what Gliša Marković (1847–1911), a retired major of Serbia's army and participant in the 1876 war on the Timok battlefield, says about the person he refers to as "Stana N." in his diary published in 1906:

After the religious service, at the 25th-anniversary celebration of the volunteers association, a female in the ranks of these brave war veterans from the Drina, Aleksinac [until 1878 this town was situated near Serbia's south-eastern border] and the Timok [a river near the country's eastern frontier], marched the streets of Belgrade with a firm step, her chest adorned with medals for bravery.⁸

A book about traditional Serbian-Montenegrin-Russian brotherhood published in 1936, written in Serbian by a man calling himself "Deda Rus [Grandpa Russian] Aleksandar", contains almost the same passage about "the Serbian volunteer Stana Kovačević" as the one cited above, until the description of what happened to her in 1901. Apart from a slightly different spelling of her place of birth (Crnovode instead of Crnjovode), her husband Stevan is described as a "soldier" as far as 1876 is concerned. Additionally, Stana is reported to have cut her hair and to have fought "together with Russian fellow volunteers", without specifying for how long. When Stevan was wounded, she revealed herself by "screaming, lamenting and crying over her good man". She was awarded a silver medal by Cherniaev (see below) while the war was still on.⁹

⁷ "Stana Kovačević, dobrovoljac u srpsko-turskom ratu 1876.g. [Uz naše slike]", *Nova Iskra* III/8 (Belgrade, Aug. 1901), 251. Her place of birth, Crnjovode or Crnovode, a hamlet in western Bosnia, is too small to be included in maps.

⁸ G. Marković, *Dnevnik srpsko-bugarskih dobrovoljaca na Timoku 1876.god.* (Belgrade 1906), 26; briefly reiterated in N. Nikolić, *Ratni dnevници 1875–1886* (Belgrade 2007), 104–105.

⁹ Deda Rus Aleksandar, *Knjiga o bratstvu srpskog, ruskog i crnogorskog naroda u prošlosti* (Niš 1936), 53–54. The author, apparently of Russian extraction, had reportedly lived in Niš for

Both the 1901 and 1936 texts imply that Stana, who was most likely childless at the time, first operated undetected in a volunteer unit on the Drina front in July and/or August of 1876, at about the same time as Miss Merkus, the so-called “Joan of Arc of Serbia”. Her secret finally revealed, Stana was nonetheless allowed to continue fighting, but now on the Morava front, in the south-east. All volunteers in Serbia’s army, who came from Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro and Old Serbia, were by the end of August 1876 (N. S.) transferred to the main Morava front under the command of Cherniaev, the man who reportedly decorated Stana. Mikhail Grigor’evich Cherniaev (1828–1898), dubbed the Lion of Tashkent and the Russian Garibaldi, was a retired Russian general in the service of Serbia.

Apparently aware of these or similar sources on Stana, and perhaps mingling this information with some imagination of his own, the military historian and poet Slobodan Branković offered in 2012 a plausible explanation for the temporary break in Stana’s military career. We quote from his text in a popular Belgrade-based news outlet:

Stana Kovačević, born in the village of Crnovode in Bosnia, married to Stevan Kovačević, went to war in 1876 together with “her man”. A woman in uniform, carrying arms, fighting at the front against Ottoman soldiers, was not customary or acceptable in the Serbian tradition of warfare. That is why Stana disguised herself as a man, simply to pass as a warrior at the front. She donned men’s clothes and cut off her hair in order to fight together with the volunteers, the Russian brothers in particular.

At the battle on the Drina nobody had any suspicions about her identity as a brave fellow warrior. When her husband Stevan was wounded near Batković, Stana’s identity was revealed. Serbian medical orderlies carried him off to the hospital in Šabac. For Stana, that was a more difficult moment than fighting with the Turkish oppressors. Hearing her lamenting and crying, her fellow soldiers were astonished to realize that the bravest amongst them was a woman! For all the admiration for Stana’s prowess in battle, this meant that she lost her place in combat ranks, because it was inconceivable for a woman to be amongst Serbian soldiers on the front lines.

When, during the 1876 war, as a result of adverse developments on the main Morava front, the call was issued to the warriors at the Drina front to set off voluntarily for Aleksinac, those who had removed Stana from the ranks of the Drina heroes were put into a “quandary”! **According to abruptly changed criteria, women were allowed to sign up as volunteers for the severest front of the 1876 war!** [emphasis R. G.] For Stana, this was the opportunity to fight once again for freedom as the highest personal and national ideal.

In the unequal battle, she amazed with her fearlessness. The commander, General Cherniaev, decorated Stana Kovačević for her heroism in battle at the

Morava. He took the medal for bravery from his own chest and conferred it upon the heroine from the Drina.¹⁰

Watching the photo of Stana Kovačević as a middle-aged country woman of seemingly humble standing, one is inclined to think that after her warrior's experience she returned completely to the traditional standards of womanhood. Shy as she appears to be, one finds it hard to picture her proudly marching with her former comrades-in-arms. She had proved unable to keep up her mimicry until the war was over; yet both of the following individuals were more successful in this respect.



Stana Kovačević

newly decorated for military virtues in 1901, photograph by an anonymous photographer published in "Stana Kovačević, dobrovoljac u srpsko-turskom ratu 1876.g. [Uz naše slike]", *Nova Iskra* (Belgrade), August 1901, 237; also in Deda Rus Aleksandar, *Knjiga o bratstvu srpskog, ruskog i crnogorskog naroda u prošlosti* (Niš 1936), 54. No other picture of any of the women discussed here except Jeanne Merkus could be found

An anonymous Serbian girl from Bosnia

About a Serbian girl from Bosnia, whose name as well as male alias have been lost, the abovementioned Gliša Marković wrote the following in 1906:

After the disbandment of the volunteers in the winter of 1876/7 even newspapers brought a notice about her, that she had first fought on the Drina, and later around Aleksinac, that she was a corporal, and decorated with medals for

¹⁰ S. Branković, "Legija kneginje Natalije", *Večernje novosti online* (Belgrade), 17 Feb. 2012 (retrieved 30 June 2017). Since we happened to discover the latter text just before learning that its author, professor Branković, had deceased, all our hopes to have its content properly validated seem to have gone up in smoke, leaving us for the time being with one option only: to take his claims at face value.

valour. It was only at the disbanding of the volunteers that it became known that she was a maiden girl; and she was financially rewarded from the highest places.¹¹

Unfortunately, the retired major was our only source in this case, a case bearing resemblance to that of Stana Kovačević.

Vukosava Nikolić (aka Vukosav Nikolić)

The information about the person we are now turning to also comes from a single source. The following “fine episode from Serbia” was published in a mid-1877 issue of the *Srbski narod*, a conservative clerical-Orthodox, Serbian language newspaper edited and printed in the then southern-Hungarian town of Novi Sad (Újvidék/Neusatz). It is most critical of the state of affairs in the Principality of Serbia, and also neglects to mention important information such as the person’s age, background, length and places of military service:

When the volunteers came to Belgrade for disbandment, one volunteer was given male clothes, just like the others. But he kept asking for other clothes, until they shouted: “But what other clothes?”, and he answered: “Female, because I am a woman!” The prince [Milan] was informed about this; the prince summoned her and rewarded her. When the princess [Natalia] heard about this, she also wanted to meet her and she rewarded her too. This woman is a real hero, she was already awarded a medal on the battlefield, was wounded and hospitalized, and still was not recognized as a female. Her name is Vukosava Nikolića, but as a volunteer bore the name Vukosav Nikolić.¹²

Whereas in the previous case rewards came from unspecified “highest places”, Vukosava Nikolić was received by the ruling couple, the same privilege as the one Miss Merkus had been granted in the *ante bellum* April of 1876. It is likely that Vukosava Nikolić was one of the “brothers” from Srem, the region between the Sava and Danube rivers where the article was written and whence it was sent. If we take the “prekosavski” (from across the Sava) origin of Vukosava Nikolić for granted, she might have been active in the Drina area in July and/or in the first half of August N. S. That front saw the highest concentration of volunteer Serbs from the Habsburg Monarchy – reportedly some 1,200 of a total of at first 2,700, and later 5,000 men, often operating under officers and non-commissioned officers formerly engaged in the k.u.k army.¹³ If Vukosava

¹¹ Marković, *Dnevnik srpsko-bugarških dobrovoljaca*, 26.

¹² “Dopisi. Iz Srema (Beograd i Srbija)”, *Srbski narod* 9/46 (Novi Sad), 14(2) July 1877, p. 2. The surname is archaically rendered as Nikolića, meaning “of the Nikolić family”.

¹³ General information about the Serb volunteers from Austria-Hungary used here comes from B. Bešlin, “Srbi iz Habsburške monarhije dobrovoljci u srpsko-turskim ratovima 1876–1878. godine”, in Branković, ed., *Od Deligrada do Deligrada*, 142.

Nikolić joined the Serbian forces as a volunteer later, she was probably assigned to the “Battalion of Princess Natalia” (*Bataljon kneginje Natalije*), named after its benefactress Natalia, the spouse of Serbia’s ruler Prince Milan.¹⁴ According to the late Slobodan Branković, this battalion was:

composed of Serbian volunteers from Hungary, and craftsmen and servants from Belgrade. [...] Its core, in the military sense, was made up of Serb volunteers from Austria-Hungary. Its strength varied from 230 to 500 men. Coming from Belgrade, the battalion reached Deligrad on 6 [18] August [1876]. As for clothing, the volunteers did not have greatcoats. Although it was midsummer, the nights were chilly, and some complained that they had gone stiff with cold.¹⁵

Thus Jeanne Merkus might have had two or three female colleagues at the Drina, all still undetected at the time of battle.

Draga Strainović (aka Dragutin Strainović)

After two accomplished, full-born careers of passing as male military volunteers comes a prematurely terminated one, after a month of undetected campaigning. The enlistment and the end of the military career of the person concerned has been vividly described by Gliša Marković, then a commanding officer in Serbia’s army, who had unsuspectingly accepted “him” at first. This officer’s previously mentioned recollections of his 1876 days devote special attention to the assertive and outspoken young lady who had almost reached her final goal of helping the Bulgarians in their struggle for freedom, but whose hopes were dashed upon her being ferreted out. About this case we are, sadly enough, informed by this single source. Furthermore, Marković relies entirely on the victim’s own testimony for the denouement. Marković’s story, too fine and rare not to be quoted here extensively, starts in the early morning of 1 July (19 June) 1876 when Nikolai Alexeevich Kireev – a Russian officer from St. Petersburg serving as commander of the volunteers in the Timok army with the rank of major – left Zaječar with 1,100 men and, following the Beli Timok River, headed for the border area near Knjaževac in the south. At noon, a sergeant brought another twenty-one volunteers from Negotin, a town north of Zaječar, north-eastern Serbia. To quote Marković for what followed:

With these volunteers came a lad, in uniform and a *kalpak* [high-crowned cap] with the Bulgarian coat-of-arms, “lafa” [lion]. To me, he appeared too young for

¹⁴ The Montenegrin *vojvoda* Gavro Vukotić wrote in his memoirs: “It is rumoured that Princess Natalia has given one million florins for the formation of the volunteer legion” (*Memoari vojvode Gavre Vukotića*, vol. 2, 357, as quoted by Lj. Perović, “Jaraganska legija ili leteći kor vojvode Maša Vrbice”, in Branković, ed., *Od Deligrada do Deligrada*, 129, who seems to suggest that the said sum went to Mašo Vrbica’s legion (see below) and not to her own.

¹⁵ S. Branković, *Nezavisnost slobodoljubivih* (Belgrade 1998), 189.

a volunteer, and so I asked: Lad, what are you doing among these volunteers? You want to fight the Turks? That's fine, but I think that you'd be better off serving in a supply unit or in some hospital. He puffed up his chest angrily and said: Sir, I won't be separated from my comrades, and you can do with me whatever you like! [...] Why did I spend money on this uniform? To tend to the supply unit's horses dressed like this? No! I want to fight the Turks; and if you won't take me, then I'll go all by myself.

I was not offended by his impudence, but I thought to myself: I'll get you; and I told him: Well, if you've made up your mind to fight the Turks, may luck be with you; but first you have to aim that small gun (calibre 18.) of yours with one hand at that shrub over there; because otherwise I can't be sure about your ability. – I ordered that more as a joke.

But he did not hesitate a second; he immediately stepped forward from the line, raised the gun with one hand and started aiming. I was surprised, and I shouted right away: Enough! You're accepted.

On 3 July (21 June) at dawn Marković, who was in position in the vicinity of Zaječar, received the order to send his twenty-one volunteers to seize an area on the left bank of the Beli Timok. In that context he states:

Upon the return of the volunteers from the iron bridge their sergeant reported that the young volunteer had proved himself very energetic in performing his duties; he also said that his rifle butt had an excellent effect on disobedient soldiers, and I commended him in front of his comrades.

On the 4th of July (22 June) the unit of *vojvoda* Rista Makedonski [an important Bulgarian emigrant leader in Serbia] arrived in Zaječar with 191 volunteers; I gave over these volunteers, and they were sent to Major Kireev at the Knjaževac border.[...]

Here Marković abruptly jumps to 31 July (19 July), the day when he set off hastily on a march to Boljevac, a place west of Zaječar. He arrived there at 7 o'clock next morning and encamped his troops for a short break. For himself and his staff he took a room in the inn, where he was soon informed by the innkeeper that "some female" was at the door asking to have a word with the officer in charge. Exhausted and already in bed as he was, he refused to see her, but to no avail. Even the soldier standing guard could not prevent her from entering the commanding officer's room:

I jumped out of my bed and shouted: What are you doing? What do you want in here?! The soldier released the woman and she struck the military pose just like a veteran and looked him straight in the eye.

Go away! I shouted at her coarsely; I'm not receiving anyone. Hasn't the innkeeper told you?... I want to rest; and I sat down on the bed.

She remained immobile; I gestured to the soldier to leave, and asked her again: What do you want? Instead of an answer, she came one step closer and said with a free voice: I ask Mr. Commander to listen to a word or two and then I'll be off at once.

Go away, I said, I'm not in the mood for your trifles, and I turned away from her. Then she [said] with a more serious tone: Neither am I, sir, in the mood for idle talk, as you might've thought?! – at that remark I flinched and turned to face her, and she went on: I only wanted to use this opportunity, because we're leaving for Lukovo [to the west of Boljevac] in an hour or two: and I considered it my duty to express my gratitude to you on this occasion...

And I stopped her with the question: And who are you? I'm not receiving anyone's gratitude today! After a night's journey I need rest. Please go.

While she was watching me more seriously: Oh Mr. Commander; today our army is on retreat from Zaječar, abandoning it to the Turkish arsonists; fatigue is, at least in my opinion, not permitted for a soldier... as a matter of fact, until just recently I have also been weapon in hand in the first lines of the volunteer fighters around Kadibogaz, Korito, Salaš and in front of Rakovitsa [a place across the border in Ottoman Bulgaria]; and I regret it strongly that I could no longer remain in their ranks and show the Turks that the Serbian woman also knows how to die fighting for her fatherland.

This story of hers was a big surprise to me! – and, almost ashamed for having treated her so roughly, I interrupted her by saying: What, what?! Have you been fighting weapon in hand?

Yes I have, sir, and I am very sorry that a volunteer on outpost guard, when we were on duty in pairs, attacked me ... with insulting expressions! Otherwise I would still be in the ranks of the brave volunteers, if I had not been – she said smiling – already eaten away by worms in some thorn-bush.

But how did it happen? I asked her; here is what she told me: the same day when our commander Major Kireev fell [in battle] before Rakovitsa; in the evening of that same day I was assigned to guard duty in front of our camp together with another volunteer: it was almost midnight; and... do you remember that young male volunteer in Zaječar?

Well, there were more of them, both Serbian and Bulgarian, but I don't recall any particular one.

Marković was waiting for the right moment to ask her how her stint on sentry duty had in fact ended, but before he was able to say anything, she suddenly grabbed his hand, kissed it and said with tears in her eyes:

I am the young volunteer you didn't want to accept at first! And whom you ordered to aim that heavy gun with one hand; you told me you wouldn't accept me unless I passed (the test), and believe me, I'm amazed myself how I managed! But my determination to fight the Turks prevailed; and you commended me; and after the fighting at Izvor you were satisfied with my performance at the iron bridge...

Hesitantly and faintly smiling, she went on to say: You are my first commander; and the second was *vojvoda* Rista Makedonski, with whom we left for the Knjaževac border area. I considered it my duty to thank you for your attention to me at my enlistment in Zaječar as a "young" – she smiled – male volunteer and your advice to be steadfast in the service; and indeed you gave me the op-

portunity to fight as a female with a gun in my hand for the liberation of both the Serbian and the Bulgarian people. I regret that it wasn't meant for me to persevere in battle with my honourable and brave comrades... and I'd be in the ranks of first-line fighters today if that comrade of mine, like some drunkard, didn't attack me while we were on sentry duty. – Uttering these words, she clenched her fists, her face glowing with anger. – As my gun was loaded, I took a few steps back and almost pulled the trigger; but I realized that firing the gun would sound the alarm in the entire camp, and the soldiers who were already tired after the fighting would have to take their arms; and so instead I reported myself to the lance corporal, who replaced me immediately with another volunteer.

The next day I was already on the way to Knjaževac. There they took away my weapons and military clothes, and gave me, as you can see, my natural uniform and assigned me to the accounting division of the medical corps. Yesterday we arrived here and in a few hours we'll be moving on to Lukovo.

I was enlisted in the volunteer registry under the name of Dragutin Strainović from Karanovac [present-day Kraljevo, central Serbia], but my name is Draga, the surname is the same.

I was the only one in that volunteer group from Negotin who had a uniform and *kalpak* with the Bulgarian coat-of-arms "Lafa"; and I earnestly believed that we would cross the border and raise the Bulgarian people to arms; if only I'd been able to win over yet another friend from Bulgaria, to fight for the liberation of her own people...

What happened that night between the two soldiers on sentry duty is far from clear; we only have one side of the story. It is reasonable to assume that the unnamed sentry found out his colleague's secret. Perhaps he tried to blackmail her, demanding sexual or other favours. Did she refuse and enrage him by doing so, causing him to call her names? Yet it is more than likely that – at least there and then – denouncement led to the end of active participation in war. Both parties seem to have been aware of that. Did the lance corporal who replaced her act on his own accord, or on the orders of his superiors? Maybe of *vojvoda* Risto Makedonski, who was on his way to his native Bulgaria with the troops? Or of Colonel Milojko Lešjanin, commander of the Timok Army? General Cherniaev, supreme commander of the joint Timok and Morava armies, but mainly occupied with the latter, does not seem a likely candidate as he is reported to have personally decorated Stana Kovačević for bravery after her involuntary coming out, which did not result in her being permanently removed from the fighting ranks. Is it possible that the Strainović case had occurred before and that of Kovačević after the shift in enlistment policy that Slobodan Branković claimed to have happened? A non-passing Bulgarian girl was allowed to join the volunteer force. She and some other openly female candidates were evidently given permission to stand in the volunteer ranks, as will be shown in the following paragraph.

In wrapping up the story of Draga Strainović, we quote Gliša Marković once more:

I would not have recalled that young volunteer had she not mentioned hitting the target with one hand. At the enlistment of volunteers I indeed had believed that young volunteer to be a naïve lad misled by the volunteers to obey them. And now, instead of that lad there stood in front of me a young woman with a tanned face, brownish skin, of a medium height, full-blown, well-built, with bright eyes from which two candid sparks were shining on me, as a symbol of respect and gratitude.

Analysis

Marković recalled having been astonished to hear that a female like Draga Strainović had been actually fighting. Having in mind two more cases from 1876 – the anonymous martial girl from Bosnia (see above) and Marina Grgić (Veličković), a brave nurse (see below) – in 1906 this retired officer advocated an end to male exclusivity in military matters by stating:

We think that such serious work by females – who take it on with full masculine energy and responsibility, and regardless of their earlier youthful pleasures – is nonetheless praiseworthy; because the females entering the ranks of more serious fighters in order to fight for the fatherland themselves are shining virtues which will serve as an example to the next generation.

And it is exactly because of this that we believe that Draga Strainović [...] deserves to have her name recorded alongside other brave volunteers; and also to make it easier, in future wars, for more serious Serbian females to show up, who, next to their maternal duty will fight with weapon in hand for the well-being of their fatherland, religion and people.¹⁶

This expectation did not materialize before the wars of the 1910s, and to a small extent only, as we have observed earlier on.

That Stana Kovačević, Vukosava Nikolić, the anonymous Serbian girl from Bosnia, and Draga Strainović all were ready to resort to deceit in order to enter the realm of warfare can also be deduced from what Alfred Wright, then a student of medicine in Great Britain, who in July 1876 decided to travel to Serbia as a medical free lance, heard from a local lady, called Miss Milojković, upon his arrival:

I wish I were a man instead of a woman, I would enlist in our army immediately. [...] I long for vengeance.¹⁷

¹⁶ Marković, *Dnevnik srpsko-bugarskih dobrovoljaca*, 19–25. Draga's story as told by Major Marković is rendered in short and without any additions from possible other sources in Nikolić, *Ratni dnevnic*, 104–105.

¹⁷ A. Wright, *Adventures in Servia* (London 1884), 52.

This was certainly a reflection of the state of affairs during the first two months of the war, when females were vehemently denied access, with the exception of Miss Merkus and the four cases of successful passing. But why is there no reference in Marković's text to a shift in admittance policy which, according to Branković, occurred as a reaction to the gloomy turn in the course of the war with its increasing shortage of fighting men? Can this discrepancy be related to a difference between a more conservative Serbian Timok front – where Marković had been active – and a rather modern, Russian-dominated front at the Morava – which Branković probably had in mind?

Accepted in the army without passing but lacking evidence of fighting

Whereas in the preceding four cases passing was the precondition for being able to enlist in the military, followed by a longer or shorter career as a fighter, the same number of female individuals was found to have entered armed formations operating on and from the territory of the Principality of Serbia as volunteer combatants without pretending to be males. Or rather, they are reported as being accepted, but it cannot be confirmed whether they really fought. Unfortunately, each case to be dealt with now is single-sourced, scanty in detail, and without any clue as to the further fate of the individual concerned.

A young Bulgarian woman

In mid-July 1876 the aforementioned conservative newspaper *Srbski narod* from Novi Sad quoted an unnamed Serbian correspondent of the *Russkii mir*, a liberal Russian newspaper, who after having left for General Cherniaev's Morava Army near Aleksinac, observed:

Apart from the Markus woman [Jeanne Merkus], there is among the Serbian libertarians (sg. *slobodnjak*) appointed for Bulgaria a young Bulgarian woman. After the call was issued she came as well, intending to instil enthusiasm into the insurgents and to fight side by side with them for the liberation of their homeland.¹⁸

Jeanne Merkus was not operating nowhere near Bulgaria, as suggested above, but in the opposite, western part of the country, bordering on Bosnia. And, what call, or invitation, does it refer to? Nothing of the kind has emerged from our research, nothing specifically addressed to females. Even so, the air was

¹⁸ *Srbski narod*, 15(3) July 1876, 4. Consulting the Russian original and similar relevant material from that country has thus far failed. *Russkii mir* had been started as a project of General Cherniaev and a few associates of his.

full of plans for the formation of volunteer units, several of which became reality. The only appeal to females that we know of was conceived by Mara Ljubibratić (c.1847 – c.1913), a close associate of Jeanne Merkus during the early months of 1876. Returning to Belgrade in early August 1876 from Austria, where her husband, the *vojvoda*, was still forced to stay, she brought along a blueprint of her own design. This draft, which had the approval of her spouse, called for the military participation of females, but only in defending Serbia's trenches and fortified cities behind the frontline, and under the guidance of old officers and other experienced males.¹⁹ In addition to this project, which was never adopted by the government or the army, probably for being at odds with the prevailing attitude in the country, the reader is reminded of Draga Strainović, who wished that Bulgarian females would come to take part in the struggle. It is certain that she belonged to the Timok army, and the same destination was by far the most likely for the nameless young Bulgarian woman. At the River Timok thousands of Bulgarian male volunteers gathered, but their attempts to attack Turkish positions in their native land soon proved to be a bridge too far.

Jevto Lapovac's "nephew"

Our information about the next case stems from the personal experience of the then well-known Serbian historian and politician professor Miloš S. Milojević, who had distinguished himself as a captain in the 1876–77 war, during which he raised and commanded several volunteer units. At the end of July 1876 he was astonished to see barely 15-year-old boys in Jevto Lapovac's newly-arrived volunteer unit in Sokobanja near Aleksinac, the main site of the Morava front. One of them, to whom Lapovac referred as "my nephew", appeared to be a girl, as Milojević later personally confirmed.²⁰ The youth was apparently the daughter of the unit leader's sister, so one may assume that at least he himself was from the very beginning fully aware of the passing, and must have approved of it as well.

A Herzegovinian girl from Belgrade

It was the progressive Serbian-language newspaper *Zastava* from Novi Sad that published a dispatch sent from Belgrade on 16 (4) October 1876:

¹⁹ Arhiv Hercegovine [Archives of Herzegovina], Mostar, Mića Ljubibratić Papers, inv. no. 1350, pp. 1–2; S. Ljubibratić & T. Kruševac, "Prilozi proučavanju hercegovačkog ustanka 1875–1878", *Godišnjak Društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine* 11 [1960] (1961), 153.

²⁰ M. Milojević, *Srpsko-turski rat 1877 i 1878 god.* (Šabac 1887), 22.

A girl from Herzegovina, who has been working for Janja Spiridonović, a local tailor, and has [now] been admitted to the Yataghan Legion [*Jataganska legija*], yesterday received military clothing, which she immediately put on and left for the battlefield between 15th [3] and 16th [4] this month. The same girl is said not only to be skillful with weapons and a good marksman but also to have the courage of a man.²¹

The aforementioned military skills must have been the result of some kind of private training, as the person in question was most likely a newcomer in the army, as Draga Strainović conjectured as well. The formation in late August 1876 of the Yataghan Legion, also known as the “Flying Brigade” (*Leteći kor*) or the “Montenegrin Legion” (*Crnogorska legija*), was the result of deliberations held by Mašo Vrbica (1834–1898), Montenegro’s deputy in Serbia, with the country’s political and military leadership.²² Only on the condition of receiving most golden ducats from Serbia’s public treasury, as well as obtaining the guarantee that their two armies would operate independently, each on the half of the still Ottoman-held territory each claimed as its own, could Montenegro be won over to sign the bipartite war agreement, which took place in Venice on 15 (3) June. Following the outburst of hostilities Vrbica, the prime warrior-diplomat the small state had on offer, was sent as his Prince Nicholas’s personal envoy to Serbia’s military headquarters.

The Herzegovinian girl left Belgrade for the battlefield between 15 (3) and 16 (4) October, thus after the brave exploits that had already cost so many legionaries their lives. Allowing this undisguised girl to enter the Yataghan Legion could have well had to do with these losses which were so hard to compensate for. The reader is also reminded of Branković’s claim that the re-admittance of Stana Kovačević after her “coming out” was the result of a change in policy.

Referring to the battle of Veliki Šiljegovac of 19–21 (7–9) October which ended in a defeat for Serbia’s forces, Branković writes about Vrbica:

[He] appealed to all officers, about 50 men, with the words: “Brothers Montenegrins and other Serbs!” He urged them to chase the enemy from the Serbian hearth, reminded them of battles and heroes and of everything that the nation would celebrate forever. The *vojvoda*, though wounded, kept on fighting. Janko Radulović substituted him as the commander.²³

By order of Serbia’s Ministry of War of the first day of the abovementioned battle, all male citizens of 17 to 60 years of age were conscripted into the army.²⁴ Following the Battle of Djunis of 29 (17) October, Serbia’s last great

²¹ “Vesti iz Beograda 16 [4] okt.,” *Zastava* (Novi Sad), 22 (10) Oct. 1876.

²² The financing of this legion is not clear. Princess Natalia may have been its benefactress – see n. 14 above.

²³ Branković, “Čestitka Knjaza Nikole”.

²⁴ *Das Vaterland* (Vienna), 21 Oct. 1876, 2.

defeat in the war, the Russian ultimatum of 30 (18) October led to the ceasefire of 1 November (21 October). In view of the truce of November 19 (7) 1876, the Montenegrin senator and *vojvoda* was called back to Cetinje.²⁵ According to a contemporary newspaper, the members of the national army were sent home, whereas the volunteers and the Yataghan Legion were to be encamped in the northern Serbian town of Smederevo on the Danube.²⁶ If the anonymous Herzegovinian girl really managed to enter the war zone, she could not have been taking part in fighting longer than from 16 (4) October until the ceasefire of 1 November (October 21), and in skirmishes until 19 (7) November 1876, the day the lasting truce came into force. As Vrbica's troops were also active in the decisive battles of Veliki Šiljegovac and Djunis, our anonymous girl from Herzegovina might have been among them. However, there is no trace of a daring female in the Serbian *Poem on the Serbo-Montenegrin war against the Turks of 1876* by Jovan Dj. Milutinović. About Vrbica, portrayed as the epitome of bravery, the ode claims that he issued a proclamation in which he "summoned the sons/ [...] I need heroes/ Cravens and women I do not need at all/[...] The fearsome army of men with yataghans."²⁷

A brave Herzegovinian girl

At an unspecified date in the summer or autumn of 1876, but given the evidence just presented October is the most likely month, an unnamed foreign correspondent was in the office of Jakov Tucaković, the prefect of the city of Belgrade, awaiting the dispatch of his accreditation, when a *Bošnjak* (Bosnian; in this context meaning: a Serb from Bosnia) came into the room, uttering only: A gun, a gun! The little man would not leave without being supplied with a gun, an old much too big for him. Our source for this, an item in a serial publication of the next year, continues:

After him a brave Herzegovinian girl entered. She briskly approached the administrator's desk and spoke, her eyes flashing fire: My mother's been killed by the Turks, my father's going to battle, give me male clothes and a weapon, I want to avenge my mother!

The text concludes that the request was granted.²⁸ Given this scarce information the possibility cannot be excluded that this Herzegovinian girl was in fact the same as the previous one.

²⁵ Branković, "Čestitka Knjaza Nikole".

²⁶ *Zastava* (Novi Sad), 22 (10) Nov. 1876.

²⁷ Jovan Dj. Milutinović, *Spev srpsko-crnogorskoga rata protiv Turaka 1876* (Belgrade 1877), 36.

²⁸ "Ratne beleške", *Orao. Veliki ilustrovani kalendar za godinu 1877*, vol. 3 (Novi Sad 1877), 22.

Analysis

For all of the four cases just mentioned, an equal number of frustratingly short pieces of information were available, leaving the curious researcher wondering about many things. Only with regard to the last one do we find a clearly stated personal motive for pursuing a fighting career. The urge to revenge slain close relatives or invoking some other grave plight might well have more often served to make otherwise reluctant authorities sympathetic. The accessibility of the armed forces for some highly motivated and capable females was – with or without passing – surely greater in times of severe peril, in the face of acute danger of losing battles or territory, as especially the Morava front often experienced. One should not forget that Serbia was, mainly thanks to Russia, in the very nick of time saved by diplomatic means from the Ottoman recapture of the fortified towns (Šabac, Belgrade, Smederevo, Kladovo; all relinquished in 1867) and the obligation to pay its suzerain huge reparations.

This being said, it remains an open question as to how long the persons discussed in this paragraph stayed in the army and whether they really engaged in combat operations. Sometimes military careers which started relatively late in 1876, such as that of the Herzegovinian girl who left Belgrade in mid-October, may have been cut very short simply because of the approaching November truce, the forerunner of the peace treaty signed early the following year.

Nurses decorated for valour

In order to understand the exceptional role played by the two nurses the following passage is devoted to, one should be aware of how inaccessible to females Serbia's theatre of war was. Montenegro had fewer restrictions in that respect (the latter issue is dealt with in the following paragraphs). Elaborating on this particular historical difference, the Serbian feminist Jelena Lazarević noted in the late 1920s:

Serbia's laws on the military and warfare are less well-disposed towards females coming anywhere near the front. As little are the sisters of mercy allowed to visit the military zone, let alone the line of fire.²⁹

With regard to the 1876 war, Miss Lazarević, who was also versed in the history of the Serbian Red Cross, continued by mentioning only "the volunteer-warrior on the Drina, the Dutchwoman *Jeni Merkus*, the Amazon of the Herzegovinian Uprising". She was either unaware of there being any others or regarded them as much less important. Not before the Balkan Wars of the early

²⁹ Jelena Lazarević, *Engleskinje u srpskom narodu* (Belgrade 1929), 216.

1910s does she see two “(female) Samaritans approach the battlefields”, adding that it was exceptional for Serbia.³⁰

Marija/Marijana/Marina Grgić (married Veličković) – an unarmed sister of mercy

Late in 1912 an anonymous article (in Serbian) entitled “The Serbian Joan of Arc” first devoted attention to Sofija Jovanović, a Belgrade heroine of the then just-finished First Balkan War, and went on to say:

We had such heroines in the Serbo-Turkish war of 1876–78 as well. Such a girl back then was Marija Grgić from Belgrade, nowadays married Veličković. She did not carry arms, unlike the above-mentioned Sofija, but she would go among fighting soldiers under the rain of bullets to pull the wounded back to the rear lines, where first aid was provided. For this she was awarded the silver medal for bravery and the war certificate for military merit. And on this occasion [the First Balkan War], she, a 53-year-old woman, wanted to go to the combat lines and give first aid to the wounded, and could barely be dissuaded from doing so. She even wanted to leave her husband, saying: the fatherland counts more than anything else.³¹

The latter part provides us with a rare follow-up, a rare glimpse of a person's life after the wartime period under study. Stana Kovačević and Marie Michailowna Sadowskaja (see below) were the only other cases in our sample of which similar information has come to light. In the Kovačević case there is no attested rekindling of the fighting spirit, as she perhaps did not live long enough to experience the sheer horror of the Great War, when the Austro-Hungarian occupation forces ravaged her Šabac and its countryside. She died between 1907 and 1925.

We failed to find newspaper articles mentioning Veličković née Grgić, but thanks to Major Marković some additional information is available. To quote the 1906 text of this former officer for the very last time:

And at the first celebration of these volunteers [most probably in Belgrade in 1903, when Stana Kovačević received much attention] a rather tall middle-aged woman was also attending as their full member; her chest was adorned with decorations for bravery and of the Red Cross.

During the fights around Knjaževac she had been, so I was told, a nurse; and had personally carried wounded away from the battlefield; and on that occasion she had, thanks to her caution, saved an entire supply unit with munitions from a Cherkess [Circassian] ambush. Her name is Marija-Marijana, a Serbian

³⁰ Ibid. The “Samaritans” mentioned were Miss Nadežda Petrović and Miss Kasija Miletić.

³¹ “Srpska Jovanka Orleanka”, *Ženski svet* vol. 27, no.12 (Novi Sad), 1 Dec. 1912, p. 279.

woman from Pančevo, now living in Bela Palanka [a town in southern Serbia; Smederevska Palanka in the north is much more likely].³²

Some twenty years later we find her mentioned once again, but now only very briefly. It would be the last time. The entry entitled “Dobrovoljci” (Volunteers) in the first joint South-Slav encyclopaedia puts “Marina Veličković from Pančevo (still alive today)” on a pedestal by naming only her, Stana Kovačević and the Belgrade volunteer nurse Natalija-Neti Munk (1864–1924) as distinguished women from “our liberation wars” of the late nineteenth century.³³

Marie Michailowna Sadowska(ja) – an armed sister of mercy on horseback

The second and last nurse we happen to know to have been decorated with military honours for her role during the 1876–77 Serbo-Ottoman war was of Russian extraction. At the Morava front in the days between 28 (16) August and 1 September (20 August) 1876, Dr Vladan Djordjević, Serbia’s Surgeon General and one of the founding fathers of the country’s brand new Red Cross organisation, recorded in his memoirs published four years later:

Arriving at the place where the Prugovac dressing-station was, we were met by the adjutant to the general [Cherniaev], Captain Maksimov, who had been on leave for several days in Belgrade, and now returned. But he did not return alone.

Next to him, riding a small Šumadija [central Serbia] horse was an unusual figure. The face feminine, quite beautiful, with long blond hair rolled up in a giant bun and, on top of the bun, our *šajkaša* [military cap] coquettishly tipped to one side. On the body, a military shirt, strongly swollen at the chest. Around the slender waist, a lacquer belt and, on it, a holster for some tiny revolver, like a toy. On the legs, wide blue trousers, tucked into small, very coquettish lacquer boots. In one hand a whip and, around the left upper arm, a white ribbon with a red cross.

³² Marković, *Dnevnik srpsko-bugarskih dobrovoljaca*, 26.

³³ Lazarević, “Dobrovoljci”, in the Latin edition of the *Narodna enciklopedija*, 536, and the Cyrillic edition, 610–611 (“Mara Kovačević from Šabac”, i.e. Stana Kovačević). Born in Belgrade’s Jewish quarter, Natalija-Neti Munk (née Tajačak) started her long and splendid career as a humanitarian worker and voluntary nurse in the Serbo-Bulgarian war of 1885. Dealing with some 340 male members of the Union of Volunteers of the Kingdom of Serbia in the years 1903–1912 the Serbian historian Ljubodrag Popović, “Savez dobrovoljaca Kraljevine Srbije 1903–1912”, in P. Kačavenda, ed., *Dobrovoljci u oslobodilačkim ratovima Srba i Crnogoraca* (Belgrade 1996), 58, observed: “Besides these we also mention the names of two women – female members, who participated in the wars very actively [...] Natalija Munk from Belgrade and Marina Veličković from Pančevo, who was then living in Smederevska Palanka.”

Captain Maksimov approached the general to report, and then introduced his travelling companion.

Cherniaev just smiled, nodded, and said:

– That is the job of our physician-in-chief! and pointed at me with his hand.

Both of them now approached me, and Captain Maksimov said:

– This is my sister, Missus Sadovska from St. Petersburg, who has come in order to become a sister of mercy in our army!

I greeted her most courteously.

– I am delighted, my lady. May I see your permit for providing private help to the wounded?

– Oh, you speak Russian – the martial lady said clapping her hands gladly like a child – that’s very lucky. Here is your “document”, but, my dear doctor, you are going to put me in the most terrible place, aren’t you, aren’t you?

The general was already ahead of us and we all followed him, but as he was in the habit of riding fast, the obligation to give an answer to the romantic desire of Miss Sadovska fell on me.

But it was as if she had forgotten what she had asked me, so much did she like to ride with the general’s numerous and splendid suite at such a furious pace, and I only heard her say to her “brother”:

– O Sasha, this is good! I’m staying at the headquarters, verily!

Riding fast, we soon reached Šumatovac [elevation near Aleksinac].³⁴

From the Aleksinac-Deligrad area, the heart of the Morava front, the attractive Russian lady somehow moved to the Ibar front, where she served under her countryman, the retired General-Major Semen Kornilovich Novoselov, who despite his 64 years of age and decaying health had come to Serbia during the armistice of late summer 1876 together with about 1,000 Russian volunteers, including some 50 officers, two colonels and three lieutenant-colonels, medical doctors, medical orderlies, members of supply units, and a few sisters of mercy. General Novoselov had arrived with the volunteer corps from the Caucasus, via Odessa. From the end of September to the middle of November 1876, he served in the armed forces of Serbia, where he was appointed commander of the

³⁴ V. Djordjević, “Na granici, ratne uspomene iz prvog srpsko-turskog rata god.1876” (Belgrade 1880), 458–459. Branković, *Nezavisnost slobodoljubivih*, 184 (without citing his source) states: “Captain Maksimov, the adjutant to General Cherniaev, returned from his leave in Belgrade with his Sadovska sister. The Russian lady had come from St. Petersburg as a volunteer to be employed in the Serbian [military] medical corps. Her appearance was unusual for the daily wartime troubles. With a *šajkača* on top of her bun, a whip in the right hand, a white ribbon with the red cross around the left upper arm, she inadvertently drew attention to herself.”

southern Ibar army by princely decree,³⁵ replacing Serbian Lieutenant-Colonel Ilija Čolak-Antić.³⁶

A soldier since 1835, Novoselov had fought in the Caucasian War in 1842/3, received the honour of being called “Conqueror of Yalta” during the Crimean War, and was wounded in the Polish campaign of 1863. According to a despatch in an Amsterdam newspaper of 10 October 1876, General Novoselov had, in the company of (Lieutenant-)Colonel Djordje Vlajković, a Serb previously serving in the Russian army, left for the Ibar army with twelve Russian officers.³⁷ After the Ottomans took the dominant Javor mountain range, there were no great clashes on the Javor/Ibar front any more.³⁸ A front on which not much success could be expected as Montenegro’s ruler had insisted on waging a separate war on a separate territory, the dividing line between the zones of responsibility of the armed forces of the two countries running just to the south of the Ibar front.

The much later published wartime notes of Dimitrije Mita Petrović show that General Novoselov and his volunteers arrived from Belgrade in Ivanjica, a small town between Mt Javor and the River Ibar in the evening of 29 September (probably O. S.). About their new commander, this source states:

The grey-haired general arrived, followed by quite a number of lower- and higher-ranking officers. He was also accompanied by Colonel Djoka Vlajković, a famous hero of Sevastopol [referring to the Crimean War], and by a young and rich Russian lady – Sadovska.³⁹

In mid-November 1876 the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* praised Novoselov, describing him as “ordinary and upright”, while stressing the alleged rivalry and personal differences between him and Cherniaev, the highest-placed Russian officer in Serbia’s army. Novoselov, who had reportedly given his own clothes to wounded soldiers in the snow, was – as the article further claims – adored by his men and in his Ibar army “exemplary order” reigned.⁴⁰

Novoselov’s female assistant was probably first introduced to a wider audience in January 1877. Under the title “A sister of mercy on horseback” an

³⁵ Branković, *Nezavisnost slobodoljubivih*, 184.

³⁶ Apart from Cherniaev and Novoselov there was yet another Russian general in Serbia’s army: Vissarion Vissrionovich Komarov, chief of staff of the Russian 37th infantry division and chief of staff of the Serbian Morava army.

³⁷ *De Standaard* (Amsterdam), 10 Oct. 1876, p.1 – Uit Semlin wordt heden gemeld.

³⁸ Branković, *Nezavisnost slobodoljubivih*, 206.

³⁹ D. M. Petrović, *Ratne beleške sa Javora i Toplice 1876, 1877 i 1878. Sveska prva: Dogadjaji sa Javora 1876* (Čačak 1996), 204.

⁴⁰ *Neue freie Presse* (Vienna), 17 Nov. 1876, p. 2.

Austrian provincial newspaper quoted what a Russian writer had said about the battlefields of Serbia's Ibar army:

The shortage of officers was so large that the staff constantly had to go to the front line and General Novoselov was often left all alone. As a consequence, the following episode occurred on 19 October [31 N. S.?), a day of fierce fighting. All the officers were in position; in the general's vicinity only a sister of charity, Miss Sadowskaja, had stayed behind. When in the heat of the fight it came to the test, to send an order to a spot that was under heavy Turkish fire, the General, lacking an adjutant, entrusted Miss Sadowskaja with transmitting the order. The undaunted lady rode very fast through the worst hail of bullets and discharged her commission to the letter, and then returned to the general with the announcement that the order had been executed. The brave lady was unanimously awarded a silver medal for bravery.⁴¹

Two memoirs provide a closer look at this lady: the already mentioned one by doctor Djordjević, published in 1880; the other, published in 1889, was written by Richard von Mach, a former Prussian officer who had been serving in Serbia's army thirteen years earlier. Novoselov's portrait as painted by this former subordinate officer of his is all but flattering:

The new supreme commander, General Novoselov, was not giving them a shining example. This sad knight never appeared outside his block-house, which had been built for him at a safe distance; neither I nor any of the other officers on the outpost lines had ever seen him. His aide-de-camp, Maria Michailovna S., by contrast, would make us happy by her frequent visits. This aide-de-camp was a graceful young woman who preferred campaigning to her husband, and now rode on horseback, in Cherkess uniform covering her beguiling figure, all over our camp and participated in all our doings. It was always an exciting sight to see this young woman in her colourful Cherkess dress on a Serbian brisk grey horse rushing through the forests; not less exciting it seemed to us to lie around a fire in the cave with Marie Michailovna and chat drinking Serbian wine. [...] For all the frivolity and all her unusual inclinations, Marie Michailovna was nothing less than a tomboy (Mannweib); I believe that in the Javor heights many a young heart beat for her and surely with less luck than the exhausted heart muscle of Novoselov, our wreck of a general.⁴²

⁴¹ *Steyer Zeitung*, 11 Jan. 1877, p. 3 – Eine barmherzige Schwester zu Pferd.

⁴² R. von Mach, *Elf Jahre Balkan. Erinnerungen eines Preussischen Officiers aus dem Jahren 1876 bis 1887*. (Breslau *Elf Jahre Balkan*), 71–73. Donning Cherkess dress does not seem very likely for a Russian given the animosity between the two ethnicities, as the expanding Russian empire had driven most Muslim Cherkess into the arms of their Ottoman co-religionists. In the war fought in the Balkans Cherkess were the culminating-point of Muslim cruelty. On the snowy 31st (19th) October 1876 Cherkess and bashi-bazouks (irregular forces) burnt down, according to Branković (*Nezavisnost slobodoljubivih*, 221), all Serbian villages between the Morava river and the Deligrad–Ražanj road.

Von Mach was probably not exaggerating about Novoselov's poor health, as the general passed away in St. Petersburg in March 1877 after a longer illness.⁴³ And the Prussian proceeded to say:

The young woman was in possession of a considerable fortune, of which she had spent quite a lot for Serbia; she belonged to those enthusiastic Russian females who sacrifice wealth, happiness and life for their hobby-horse, and among whom the nihilists for choice and with result are recruiting.⁴⁴

Jeanne Merkus also spent considerable amounts of money for the Serbian cause, being sometimes deemed a nihilist, too. Von Mach's recollections of the Russian lady shed some light on the person's vicissitudes after the war, whereas in other cases post-1876/7 information could only be found about Stana Kovačević and M. Veličković née Grgić. To quote Von Mach once more:

Years later I heard from a Russian officer of our Javor corps that Marie Michailovna, because of participation in nihilistic activities, had been sentenced to lifelong exile in eastern Siberia, where she is said to have shot herself, after being violated by her guards.⁴⁵

Rounding off her case, Von Mach returns to her attitude towards Novoselov and other Russian men:

Our old general was treated by her like a parrot by its mistress, neither better nor worse. Marie Michailovna energetically kept most Russian officers at bay: once she gave a Russian captain a lash to the face with her riding-whip which was still visible six weeks later.⁴⁶

With the possible exceptions of Draga Strainović, our sample does not contain any clues to the difficulties individual women experienced for being too attractive for the opposite sex, and Jeanne Merkus herself cannot be expected to have drawn attention of this kind. "[Miss Merkus] hopes to win from Mars the victories denied her by Cupid",⁴⁷ a newspaper of the time cynically remarked alluding to her unwomanly appearance.

In an attempt to test the Prussian's harsh judgement on the Russian adversary, one looks for what other people who may have been observing there and then said about related issues. By far the closest to the Sadowskaja case can be encountered in the memoirs of Colonel Mihajlo Marković published in 1906. This Serb who was appointed head of the military medical corps on the Morava front later in the war, recalled a lady he had met in mid-October (most prob-

⁴³ *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 27 Mar. 1877. Beilage, p.1: St. Petersburg, 18. März.

⁴⁴ Von Mach, *Elf Jahre Balkan*, 71–73.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Winona Daily Republican* (Winona, Minnesota), 4 Aug. 1876, p.1 – Tea-Table Talk.

ably O. S.) 1876 when he was still acting physician of the Rudnik brigade. He describes her as a “pre-eminently beautiful and tall blonde of about 25–26 years of age” who introduced herself as “V.V.N...ska”. Springing from a noble Polish family, she was highly educated, speaking several foreign languages. To quote Dr. Marković:

Miss V. married an Austrian higher officer, but divorced her husband shortly after the wedding. I cannot explain till this day how such a tender, angelically beautiful and well-educated woman could have ended up in Serbia as a sister of charity.⁴⁸

By her beauty, approximate age, being a divorcée and a sister of charity, Miss V. resembled M. M. Sadowskaja. As Marković claims, Miss V. felt lonely among her colleagues, and was once slightly intoxicated all by herself. He also claims that “she hated Russian officers out of all proportion”, which could be due at least in part to the overall Russian-Polish rivalry. Upset by their numerous uninvited visits, she finally brutally told them to stop. She, so the medic writes, followed him wherever he went, never leaving his side.

She complained to me about the boring Deligrad fair, about Russian physicians and officers behaving very discourteously towards ladies, and about them not considering them to be sisters of mercy who had come to Serbia to show their Slavic brothers compassion, but as something completely different, ugly and terrible! With tears in her eyes she begged me to rescue her from that intolerable company, and to take her with me to a place where she could peacefully do the job for which she had come to Serbia.⁴⁹

During the few hours the doctor spent in Deligrad, he became convinced that the complaints of “Miss V.” against Russian officers were grounded. In his opinion the sisters of charity were not treated as they deserved. So he granted her wish and took her with him to his camp, wondering how to get rid of her, should it turn out she had other intentions. The lady remained twelve days in the doctor’s camp, during which time he got to know her and her life story better. “One day Miss V. received a letter from somewhere, packed her belongings, said her farewells and left. Six weeks later I received her letter from [Austrian-held] Cracow, thanking me for the hospitality.”⁵⁰

The doctor’s testimony strengthens the impression that Serbia in late summer 1876, as flooded by Russian militaries as it was, was not at all a safe place for single foreign women who wanted to lead a decent life. Unlike the Serbian Grgić (Veličković) woman and the Russian Sadowskaja, the (Austro-?) Polish Miss V. V. N.–ska was not reported to have been decorated in Serbia,

⁴⁸ M. Marković, *Moje uspomene* (Belgrade 1906), 182–184.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

either for military bravery or for charitable work with the wounded, which puts her fully outside our sample.

Analysis

As far as M. Grgić (Veličković) from Pančevo in Hungary is concerned, nothing is known as to how she came to be involved in the humanitarian relief effort. We do not know if this most probably Serbian-Orthodox young woman had moved to Serbia and its nearby capital before 1876, or she left her country and place of birth because of the war? Nor do we know if she acted on her own initiative or under the guidance of some male relative(s). The young divorcée Sadowska had clearly come to Serbia following in the footsteps of her brother. Whether she had martial aspirations before becoming a nurse is not known. Was her tiny gun primarily intended to be used against the Turks or to protect her from the assault of men from her own ranks? In wartime Serbia Jeanne Merkus had, as we have seen, managed to escape the only available role, that of a nurse, but whether she managed to do so later in Romania/Bulgaria as well is highly questionable.

Women-at-arms from outside the main area of interest

Andjelija (Andja) Miljanov

Following 28 (16) June 1876, St. Vitus's Day (*Vidovdan*), the anniversary of the equally heroic and fatal Battle of Kosovo of 1389, Montenegro declared war on the Ottoman Empire. As opposed to the prevailing practice in Serbia of keeping women far from combat, the customs of its mountainous and somehow archaic little brother were generally more lenient toward female presence near the battlefield. According to the already quoted Jelena Lazarević, a feminist from Serbia writing in the 1920's, Montenegro's females had overall a much more active role in the 1876–78 wars than their sisters in Serbia. She saw female participation in many battles in and around Montenegro, mentioning in particular the siege of the Turkish fortified town of Onogošt (Nikšić). They wore, so the author claims, military clothes. Courageously they pulled wounded men behind the firing-lines, took care of provisioning, changed linen, washed laundry, etc. Although Miss Lazarević in her contribution about the Red Cross falls short of naming Montenegro's female combatants,⁵¹ we know of at least one relevant case from the 1875–78 military conflicts in and around that mountain fortress. The person, named Andjelija, was 17 years of age when she started, by mid-1876, to participate in the war armed and in male dress. She was the oldest child, yet

⁵¹ J. Lazarevićeva, "Uzajamnost Crvenog krsta i srpskih žena", *Domaćica* (Belgrade), vol. 42, nos. 1–4 (Jan.–Apr. 1927), pp. 28–33.

still untied by betrothal or matrimony, of Marko Miljanov Popović (1833–1901) and his wife Milosava (died 1876). Miljanov was the famous *vojvoda* of the Kuči, a tribal confederation situated just outside the Montenegrin state and, hence, nominally still in Ottoman territory. Under the title “Montenegro’s amazon” a Viennese newspaper of 13 October 1876 introduced Andjelija to its readers:

As is written from the Montenegrin camp in Kuči-Drekalović, since the beginning of the war one finds there the oldest daughter of *vojvoda* Marko Miljanov, the brave Andzelija. *Vojvoda* Marko has no sons, and therefore he is accompanied by his daughter, who graduated with distinction from the Girl’s School in Cetinje [Montenegro’s capital]. She is tall, lithe and slender, accustomed to all the heavy fatigues of a mountain war and jumps in her light *opanci* [traditional leather footwear] like a chamois from rock to rock. Yet, she is a heroine as well. On 14 [2] August she had, under the command of her father, at the battle of Fundina [in the Kuči area] distinguished herself so much that the Kuči honoured her with a very beautiful “puška” (rifle) as a token of remembrance of that day. In this battle she was all the time standing in the first lines during the deadliest fire, and participated in the memorable charge by the Kuči men against the Turks wielding a shiny sabre.⁵²

The Battle of Fundina was a great victory for the joint Montenegrin and Kuči warriors, with Marko Miljanov as one of their two military leaders. For this role in the great success of the tribesmen under his command he was hailed as the hero of Medun, his birthplace. In the aftermath of this victory many Turkish heads were severed from the bodies. Whether brave Andjelija also took part in this ultimate reckoning, history does not reveal.

A Serbian-language source of 1877/8 states that Andjelija accompanied her heroic father “in all battles as an apparition amidst the bullets. A falcon breeds a falcon!”⁵³ Arsa Pajević, a journalist of the Novi Sad newspaper *Zastava* reporting from that area during the war, is luckily not sparing with details:

Andjelija inherited tall stature from her father, she is willowy and with a fine figure, which we see only seldom in females in Montenegro because of the extremely hard work the poor devils have to do since their early childhood. For that reason, you do not often find females as physically well-built as their male counterparts.⁵⁴

After the flattering words about the girl’s beautiful eyes and posture, the ex-war correspondent continued:

⁵² *Neuigkeits Welt-Blatt* (Vienna), 13 Oct. 1876, p. 11 – Die Amazone Montenegros.

⁵³ Milko, “Vojvoda kučki Marko Miljanov”, in Jovanović-Zmaj’s *Ilustrovana ratna kronika* (Novi Sad), afl.6, Jan. 1878, p. 378.

⁵⁴ Ar[s]a P[aje]vić, “Vojvoda Marko Miljanov i kći mu Andjelija”, *Orao. Veliki ilustrovani kalendar za godinu 1877* Novi Sad 1877), vol. 3, p. 90; A. Pajević, *Iz Crne Gore i Hercegovine. Uspomene vojevanja za narodno oslobodjenje 1876* (Novi Sad 1891), 363–364.

Andjelija is the oldest daughter of the prime hero, *vojvoda* Marko, who has no male children and for that reason has treated his daughter as a son, but leaving her female name, since she truly is always hovering above him like a guardian angel.⁵⁵

Here we encounter for the first and only time in this particular type of research an undeniable allusion to the occasionally reported practice of sonless families from the tribal region in the vicinity of Montenegro to have a sister lastingly replace the missing brother. This emergency measure of the fictitious son usually entailed for the person concerned adopting the status of a social male, which also included embracing celibacy.⁵⁶ However, Andjelija does not seem to have been transformed completely, her female name not being changed into a male one, as was common in such cases. By all accounts, she acted as a son as long as the war lasted, until 1878, and got married afterwards. It is an established fact, though, that in 1914 one of her two sisters, Milica Lazović Miljanova, then a middle-aged married woman or widow, became a volunteer in the Montenegrin army and distinguished herself as a fighter and worthy of her father's name.⁵⁷ Even in the far-off and much less patriarchal Belgrade of 1912, at the beginning of the First Balkan War, the father of Sofija Jovanović, a man without a son, was overwhelmed with joy to see his daughter, who had just completed secondary education, becoming a warrior, and a heroic one at that. To continue Andjelija's story as told by Pajević:

But as far as heroism is concerned, she is a true lad. Only a few girls in the world have been given a gun by the army for heroism. After the fierce battle and the Turkish defeat at Fundina on 2 [14] August [1876] the heroic army of vojvoda Marko, a valiant Kuč, solemnly presented a small gun to the heroine Andja, who, at her father's side, stood the heaviest fire of that day's battle, from the beginning until its completion, in the first lines.⁵⁸

Outstripping the rest of this accolade by far, Pajević's last sentence on Andja reads:

O heroic Serbian land, you are blissful now and in eternity if on your fringe such exemplary daughters are being born!⁵⁹

⁵⁵ P[aje]vić, "Vojvoda Marko Miljanov i kći mu Andjelija", 90; Pajević, *Iz Crne Gore i Hercegovine*, 363–364.

⁵⁶ See e.g. R. Gréaux, "Woman Becomes Man in the Balkans", in G. Herdt, ed., *Third Sex, Third Gender. Beyond Sexual Dimorphism in Culture and History* (New York 1994 and 1996), 241–281, 548–554.

⁵⁷ A. Djurić, *Žene-solunci govore* (Belgrade 1987), 8; Petar Opačić, "Žene-junaci", in *Juriš u porobljenu otadžbinu*, spec. issue of the Belgrade weekly *Intervju* no.5, 25 Aug. 1988, p. 52.

⁵⁸ P[aje]vić, "Vojvoda Marko Miljanov i kći mu Anđelija", 90; Pajević, *Iz Crne Gore i Hercegovine*, 363–364.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Instead of a conclusion

As a female warrior, Jeanne Merkus by all accounts had no competition in Herzegovina, since not a single genuine contestant, either home-grown or from abroad, has popped up for that area – or in Bosnia – during the entire Great Eastern Crisis, that is to say: from the very start of the rebellion in July 1875 until its final collapse in early 1878. At least in this first phase of her Balkan military career – which probably started as late as 10 December 1875 and lasted until 10 March 1876 – she was truly unique. Yet, things changed when Serbia, the country she had moved to, went to war in the summer of 1876. Apart from her, another four genuinely fighting females could be found, and at least seven more *attempted* to pursue a martial career in that country. The quartet of fully proved cases consists of: 1) Stana Kovačević; 2) an anonymous girl from Bosnia; 3) Vukosava Nikolić; and 4) Draga Strainović. All four were Serbian-Orthodox. All were already residing in Serbia before the war, with the possible exception of the third one, who might have come to the Principality specifically for enlistment. Moreover, each of them was admitted as a volunteer owing to the passing ruse. Whereas in the second and the third case this deceit was not revealed prior to the disbandment, the other two were unable to keep their secret hidden long enough. By the time the trick of the first was disclosed, she had already been decorated for bravery in battle. Following a shift in the admittance policy, which allowed a few strong-spirited warlike females to enlist as females, she was again given admittance, but on a different front from the one where she had started her military career in disguise. Yet, when the deceit of the fourth person was disclosed, she was promptly removed from active duty to an administrative function in the army. As the circumstances in these latter cases diverge largely (the one who was allowed to stay and fight on had already been decorated, and the other was not; they were fighting on different fronts under different direct commanders), it is hard to say whether there was a general policy in the volunteer section of the army as to how to respond to such curious cases. The second and third cases – to our knowledge, the only examples of sustained passing and fighting – were reportedly awarded from Serbia's very top in the end, when the battles were over and after the individuals' *démasqués*. It is hard to imagine that passing in times of national peril and for an undisputed patriotic cause was really considered to be such a grave misdemeanour or offence.

Of the few other females who joined Serbia's volunteer units, but whose actual fighting cannot be supported by evidence, Jevto Lapovac's "nephew" resorted to passing, whereas the Herzegovinian girl entering the special Montenegrin-led corps within the Principality of Serbia did not, and neither did her avenging heroic compatriot. Miss Merkus's own case strengthens our belief that passing was not always and everywhere a *conditio sine qua non*, but even the acclaimed amazon of Herzegovina, the Serbian Joan of Arc, experienced difficulties before being admitted to the world of Serbia's military. No wonder that some indigenous females, truly determined ones with a cause but without the

prestige and grandeur of Merkus's kind, used passing as an effective tool to avoid refusal at the very start, and the risk of suffering harassment while living among male volunteers and soldiers.

The need to resort to deceit in order to be allowed into the realm of warfare seems to have been the strongest at the still hopeful beginning of the war, when able-bodied fighting males were not yet in short supply, and naïve expectations of easy success were still rampant. A couple of months later, after suffering many military setbacks, with thousands killed, maimed and wounded, Serbia's war prospects turned very bleak, and hence the need for extra "manpower" grew. Under these altered circumstances the young Bulgarian girl, the girl from Herzegovina and the "brave Herzegovinian girl" seem to have been allowed to enlist as volunteers without having to hide their sex.

As for our "outsider", Andjelija Miljanov, she is the sole fully proved case of a female fighter from Montenegro and its surroundings we have been able to trace, which is bewildering given the scope and intensity of the anti-Ottoman struggle in that area during these years combined with a reportedly considerable degree of female participation (and casualties) both at the 1858 battle of Grahovac (where Serbs from Montenegro and Herzegovina jointly fought against the Turks) and in the 1869 revolt of the Serbs from the Gulf of Kotor and adjacent Krivošija against conscription imposed by the Austrian government. So the broader Montenegro region, with its living tradition of rebellion and war (not to mention feuding), in which females also participated in different ways and degrees, and, if need be, temporarily under arms, produced only one of our cases, whereas Serbia – a country that had largely lived in peace since its successful revolutions against its Ottoman overlord six or seven decades earlier, resulting in *de facto* independence – had four home-grown Balkan military maidens in its midst, of course in addition to the outlandish Miss Merkus. The disproportion cannot be simply explained away by referring to the huge difference in geographical size and population numbers in Serbia's favour, but should also be linked to the latter's much greater openness towards volunteers. Serbia opened its door to thousands of Serbs from its neighbourhood, to Russians, Bulgarians and other Slavs but also to dozens of West and Central Europeans, including Miss Merkus, as fighters. In contrast to the fairly modernized and liberal Serbia, the much more conservative and autocratic Montenegro proved to be generally closed and self-sufficient in this respect.

In Serbia's war of 1876/7 some 10,000 native and foreign volunteers took part, and much less on the Serbian side in the Russia-led war effort of 1877/8. The overall number of Serbia's effective fighting force (soldiers and volunteers combined) in the 1876/7 war may have been 115,000.⁶⁰ Another estimate for

⁶⁰ For the maximum figure of 115,000 soldiers and 10,000 volunteers see V. Stojančević, "Opšte prilike u Srbiji i učešće dobrovoljaca u ratu 1876. godine", in Branković, ed., *Od Deligrada do Deligrada*, 99.

the number of men under arms is 180,000–200,000.⁶¹ In the course of the first war only five females could be proved to have really engaged themselves in martial exploits, and another seven made at least a serious attempt to become active militarily. Not a single piece of evidence, not even a circumstantial hint, has come to the surface pertaining to active military female participation in the second war, which was admittedly much less thoroughly investigated as compared to the previous one. All we know is that Miss Merkus reportedly tried to join the Russian army in Romania on its way to Ottoman-held Bulgaria, but instead of being accepted in the fighting role, the former heroine was – so the story goes – only allowed as a sister of mercy.

The lists that we have seen of the many hundreds fallen insurgents, volunteer fighters, and soldiers against the Ottomans during the entire 1875–78 conflict, both in the western and in the eastern half of the Balkan Peninsula, fail to mention a single female, thus rendering it all the more certain that the active military participation of females in that arena of combat was extremely rare and highly abnormal. Nor do we see them in the Serbo-Bulgarian war of November 1885.⁶² It was only in both Balkan Wars (1912–13) and the First World War that the first well-reported native female heroines stepped forward, whose glory – unlike their rare predecessors of the 1875–78 period – *did* strike roots in national memory. The heroines of the 1910's to be best remembered are Sofija Jovanović and Milunka Savić, both young maidens at the time. A third one was the inevitable British volunteer Flora Sandes, much older but likewise still unwed. That in 1912 and a few ensuing years at least a part of Serbia's army was still an almost impregnable fortress for females, no matter how brave they were, can be seen from the case of Milunka Savić, who could only enter it in disguise and under a male alias. Which suggests that the opening of the ranks of the Serbian armed forces to exceptional females, as indicated for the autumn of 1876 on the Morava front, remained without a follow-up. Nevertheless, Sofija Jovanović, probably Serbia's first female warrior of the 1910's, was in 1912 admitted to a volunteer unit from the north without having to resort to disguise. Miss Sandes was the first female warrior from far away to follow in the pioneering footsteps of Miss Merkus – whom she rivalled in social status, wealth and philanthropy – into Serbia's armed forces. Having started her Serbian career

⁶¹ Branković, *Nezavisnost slobodoljubivih*, 228.

⁶² Western newspapers of October and November 1885 wrote about a then recently established ethnic Bulgarian squadron of twelve adult amazons on horseback led by Miss Raïna, youthful director of the orphanage in Philippopolis (Plovdiv), Eastern Rumelia. All were armed with sabres, and Raïna also carried a pistol. They took part in the successful unification of that Ottoman-held territory with the semi-autonomous Principality of Bulgaria created in 1878; e.g. *Le Figaro* (Paris), 31 Oct. 1885, p. 3 – *Les amazones bulgares*; *Hamburger Nachrichten*, 6 Nov. 1885, p. 21. Nothing points to the participation of these or other females in the clash with Serbia's army that was to follow as a consequence of the unification.

as a nurse, Miss Sandes, a reverend's daughter, was to become the one and only female from Central and Western Europe to be militarily active in the Balkans since the close of the Great Eastern Crisis. The activities of Miss Merkus are described as "pioneering" as she presumably was the first ever fighting female in the Balkans coming from afar.⁶³

Jeanne Merkus was the only one of the few female warriors operating in Serbia's armed forces in July and early August 1876 who was non-passing from the beginning. As far as timing is concerned, she was also unique since, unlike the others, she started her Balkan fighting career not in Serbia of the second half of 1876, but in Herzegovina at least more than six and a half months earlier. In this respect she was for sure the very first of her four rivals, and the same holds true for Andjelija Miljanov, the one and only case from Montenegro and its tribal outskirts, because she did not start fighting earlier than mid-1876, when the war broke out. Seen from another angle, Merkus was – with a single exception – also at the top of the list as far as their age at the time is concerned: 36 or 37 years old, she was almost twice as old as any of the others taken into account in this article for whom some indication to that effect exists. With the exception of the married Stana Kovačević and the divorced/estranged Marie Michailowna Sadowska(ja), all persons in this sample were single at the time, and all of them almost certainly childless. Merkus would stay unwed and without children all her life, Grgić married, and for the others information is lacking.

Now is the time for the tricky task of situating Miss Merkus and the other discussed contestants about whom at least some relevant information is available on an imaginary scale. This is to say between the opposed principles of (a) strict compliance with kinship and wider spheres of the in-group of extraction, and (b) full personal autonomy and self determination as females associating and acting in solidarity with people outside the confines of their own social context exemplified by family, home space, rank/class, religion, ethnicity, nation, and culture.

By far the closest to the first principle is Andjelija Miljanov who fought on her native soil under the command of, and side by side with, her father, whose temporary fictitious son she was. If we look at Stana Kovačević, we do not see the importance of the father, but of the conscripted husband, whose wartime fate she wanted to share, a romantic motive to be found nowhere else in the presented material. At first trying to help liberate adjacent Bosnia, her country of origin, she was, after her unintended *démasqué*, forced to move to a distant front, probably without her wounded husband. The urge to avenge a slain parent, the

⁶³ Yet, a woman from the Netherlands in male disguise, a mercenary, is said to have been among the victorious Austrian-led troops fighting the Ottomans at Petrovaradin (opposite of Novi Sad across the Danube) and/or Belgrade at some point in the first decades around the year 1700.

paramount motivation of the heroic Herzegovina girl, is strongly linked with the individual's familial affiliation as well. Operating in the unit of a relative not far from home, as the "nephew" of Jevto Lapovac was reported to do, points to an overriding importance of family and local ties, too.

Primordial influences of the kind are much less observable in the young Bulgarian girl, whose motive for joining the army was to raise the fighting spirit of the volunteers setting out to liberate her country of origin. The idealistic, altruistic motivation was even stronger in the case of Draga Strainović, a citizen of Serbia from its central part, who tried to assist the neighbouring Bulgarians to liberate themselves. And the same applies to the brave nurse M. Grgić, an ethnic Serb from Hungary who came to tend to Serbia's wounded. Not internal Serbian solidarity as in the previous case, but a wider Slavic-Orthodox singleness of purpose was the driving motive behind M. M. Sadowska's leaving native Russia to help her wounded brethren, Serbian and Russian, as a Samaritan in distant Serbia, where she was introduced by her brother.

Of all the individuals covered in this contribution, Jeanne Merkus was doubtless most detached from patriarchy and the other rather narrow ties of traditional society and culture. Only she had come from a distant and distinct world. She did so in order to alleviate the plight of fellow believers of quite another branch of Christianity, of people of another nationality, language, and the like. She helped them in every possible way, risking bankruptcy and death. In this religiously inspired self-sacrificing globalist idealism she really stood all alone.

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Austria-Hungary's "Civilizing Mission" in the Balkans A View from Belgrade (1903–1914)

Abstract: The conflict between Serbia and Austria-Hungary in the years preceding the First World War is looked at in the global context of the "age of empire". The Balkans was to Austria-Hungary what Africa or Asia was to the other colonial powers of the period. The usual ideological justification for the Dual Monarchy's imperialistic expansion was its "civilizing mission" in the "half-savage" Balkans. The paper shows that the leading Serbian intellectuals of the time gathered round the *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald) were well aware of the colonial rationale and "civilizing" ambitions of the Habsburg Balkan policy, and responded in their public work, including both scholarly and literary production, to the necessity of resistance to the neighbouring empire's "cultural mission".

Keywords: imperialism, colonialism, "civilizing mission", nationalism, Austria-Hungary, Serbia, *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald)

I

Pierre Renouvin remarked long ago that the history of Serbia in the decade that preceded the First World War cannot be understood outside the context of her conflict with Austria-Hungary.¹ Moreover, his remark may be expanded on to claim that the political, economic and cultural history of the Serbs in the period bounded by the entry of Austro-Hungarian troops into Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878 and the Sarajevo assassination in 1914 cannot be understood outside the context of the resistance of Serbian nationalism to Habsburg imperialism. The resistance began to germinate in Serbian society, in the electorate's mass response to the messages of the People's Radical Party, taking clear shape by 1895, when even the Serbian Progressive Party turned its eyes to Russia.² After the overthrow of the Obrenović dynasty in 1903, the state was "conquered" by society, and the resistance of Serbian society to the imperial ambitions of the neighbouring empire took the form of a conflict between two states.

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¹ Pierre Renouvin, *La Crise européenne et la Première Guerre mondiale*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1948), quoted after the translated edition: *Evropska kriza i Prvi svjetski rat* (Zagreb: Naprijed, 1965), 99.

² See Mihailo Vojvodić, *Srbija u međunarodnim odnosima krajem XIX i početkom XX veka* (Belgrade 1988), 43–56.

What this paper seeks to do is to bring under attention the broader, European or even global, context of the conflict. What was going on in the world at the time was above all determined by the phenomenon of imperialism – the rivalries among the great powers for creating colonial empires. It is not at all by chance that Eric Hobsbawm, in his famous trilogy devoted to the nineteenth century, dubs the whole period between 1875 and 1914 “the age of empire”.³ Empire and imperialism studies are nowadays considered to be a very relevant and topical research field, and the literature on these phenomena keeps growing.⁴

The subjugation of “small”, faraway countries and peoples was nothing new in world history. What was new in “the age of empire” was that the process of European conquest and colonization of distant continents abruptly gathered pace and, in this first era of globalization, until 1914, almost the whole world ended up divided among the great powers. Also new were theoretical, ideological arguments used to justify the conquests. Economic arguments invoked the need for new markets, raw materials and cheap labour. Racist theories, concocted in justification of the enslavement of Africa and, to a lesser extent, Asia, invoked the necessity of having “inferior”, “mixed” races ruled by “superior”, “pure” races. Social Darwinists claimed that the weak and incapable of adaptation should, as is the case in nature, succumb in the struggle to survive in favour of big, strong and adaptable societies and nations. Finally, there were many who believed that it was the duty of Europeans to help “primitive” peoples embrace the benefits of civilization. They claimed that local tribal wars could only be stopped by foreign occupation. European administration would impose peace and order, improve dietary habits, housing conditions, health care, road systems, and then the local population would be able to enjoy the benefits of Christianity, and of Western science and art. This doctrine was dubbed the “civilizing mission” (*la mission civilisatrice*). An alternative term was “the white man’s burden”, after Rudyard Kipling’s popular poem of the same title (1899) which preached the “duty” of the white man to “help” the other races climb up the ladder of civilization. The term in preferred usage in Vienna was “cultural mission”. More recent work, especially within post-colonial studies, has been examining the areas of art and science in search for theoretical arguments for and sources of imperialism and colonialism. A particular emphasis has been laid on the theories of power and the need of the colonizers to control the souls, possessions and natural resources of other peoples.⁵

³ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875–1914* (London: Weidenfeld, 1987).

⁴ Useful general overviews are *Encyclopaedia of the Age of Imperialism, 1800–1914*, 2 vols., ed. Carl Cavanagh Hodge (Westport, US, London, UK: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2008); *Encyclopaedia of Western Colonialism since 1450*, 3 vols., ed. Thomas Benjamin (Macmillan Reference USA, Thomson Gale, 2007); Andrew Porter, *European Imperialism 1860–1914* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1994); Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Theories of Imperialism* (University of Chicago Press, 1982), first published in German in 1977.

⁵ For a general introduction see Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2003); John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduc-*

The application of such theories in Austria-Hungary's Balkan policy, especially in its administering of Bosnia-Herzegovina and parts of the Sanjak of Novi Pazar in 1878–1914, would mean that rule over those lands was to Vienna what rule over Egypt or India was to London or what rule over Indochina or Algiers was to Paris. Indeed, the sources confirm that the Habsburg Monarchy's Balkan policy was perceived domestically as a "civilizing mission". The Balkan countries admittedly were in Europe, and inhabited by white people, but they were seen as barbarian and semi-oriental, and it was repeatedly underlined that they were torn by chronic conflicts and kept in a state of backwardness by primitive economies. Not a small part of the contemporary literature on these topics paints the Habsburg Monarchy's Balkan policy in positive colours, notably its administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina, seeing it as a grand modernizing undertaking, which, by the way, is just another word for a "civilizing mission". But then, there are historians who see Austria-Hungary's rule over Bosnia-Herzegovina as typical of the "age of empire", and use the terms "civilizing mission" and "white man's burden" to describe it.⁶

Yet, what has not been researched so far is the question as to whether the local Balkan elites saw Austria-Hungary's advancement into the Balkans as a "civilizing mission", and whether they viewed it against the background of global trends in the "age of empire". We shall try to look into these questions using the example of the group of leading Serbian intellectuals who, between 1901 and 1914, gathered round the foremost Serbian journal of the period, the Belgrade-based *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald).⁷ It was the group of

tion (London: Continuum; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2002). Within postcolonial studies and the study of "cultural imperialism", particularly relevant to our subject are Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978) and Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁶ On the divergence of opinion among historians on the nature of Austria-Hungary's administration in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and for the conclusion that it was a classic case of imperialism, see Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815–1918* (London and New York: Longman, 1989), 243–246. See esp. Robin Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism. The Habsburg "Civilizing Mission" in Bosnia 1878–1914* (Oxford University Press, 2007), vii–ix, 217–223, 251–257. That Bosnia-Herzegovina was "the white man's burden" to Austria-Hungary just as Africa was to the other empires, is also the view of Alan J. P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy, 1809–1918: A History of the Austrian Empire and Austria-Hungary*, quoted after the Serbian edition: *Habsburška monarhija 1809–1914: Istorija Austrijske carevine i Austrougarske* (Belgrade: Clio, 2001), 173. The "civilizing mission" in the set of the notions of the uncrowned king of Bosnia-Herzegovina Benjamin von Kállay is especially highlighted in Tomislav Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini 1882–1903* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1987), 61–87.

⁷ The literature on the "old series" (until 1914) of the journal is too vast to be covered by a single footnote. Among more recent works see, by all means, Dragiša Vitošević, *Srpski književni glasnik 1901–1914* (Belgrade 1990); *Sto godina Srpskog književnog glasnika. Aksiološki*

intellectuals who, as one of them, Milan Grol, later wrote, “came to power”⁸ after 1903, and whose ideas would become incorporated into the official cultural model in the Kingdom of Serbia.

II

In the 1880s and 1890s, growing up in a Serbia whose newly-won independence was under threat from the ambitions of the neighbouring empire, and pursuing their higher education in metropolises of colonial empires, the generations which would later gather round the *Srpski književni glasnik* had the opportunity to acquaint themselves with imperialism first hand. Interpretations and explanations of the phenomenon, they found them, too, in the books of West-European authors.

It was even during his doctoral studies in Lausanne that Jovan Skerlić (1877–1914) encountered theoretical justifications for imperialism and “civilizing missions”. In the French historian Edouard Driault’s book *Political and Social Problems at the End of the 19th Century* he found the claim that imperialism was the most important political phenomenon in Europe at the time. In his review of the book he sent from Lausanne to the Belgrade literary magazine *Zvezda* (Star)⁹ in 1900, Skerlić recapitulates Driault’s views, occasionally adding his own interpretations. He claims that: “Colonial expansion is the most characteristic phenomenon at the end of the 19th century”,¹⁰ and concurs with Driault that: “Never on earth has force been more brutal, the weak more disempowered and bigger words used to obscure great crimes.”¹¹ He also notices the increasingly frequent mention of the “civilizing mission” concept in Europe. The reasons for the “colonization mania” are economic in nature, but the “capitalist class” has “clapped a mask of the interest of civilization and Christianity” on its “half-piratic desires and ambitions”.¹² In advance of others in colonial conquest are Western powers, England and France; and even America, “which has for a whole century so honourably, with her history and her politics, stood up for the

aspekt tradicije u srpskoj književnoj tradiciji, eds. Staniša Tutnjević and Marko Nedić (Novi Sad: Matica srpska; Belgrade: Institut za književnost i umetnost, 2003). See also Ljubica Djordjević, *Bibliografija Srpskog književnog glasnika* (Belgrade 1982).

⁸ Milan Grol, “Bogdan Popović”, *Iz predratne Srbije: Utisci i sećanja o vremenu i ljudima* (Belgrade: SKZ, 1939), 59.

⁹ Jovan Skerlić, “Politički i socijalni problem krajem XIX veka. Les problèmes politiques et sociaux à la fin du XIX-e siècle, par E. Driault, professeur agrégé d’histoire au lycée d’Orléans”, *Feljtoni, skice i govori*, vol. VII of Jovan Skerlić’s *Collected Works* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1964), 49–52.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 49.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 50.

¹² *Ibid.* 49.

cause of national freedom, even America has been intoxicated with imperialism, and jumped from Cuba to the Philippines".¹³ Russia herself is also busy "nibbling at China from the north"; Germany and Italy are penetrating into Africa and "throwing themselves" on an already "half-dead China".¹⁴

What was especially important was that Skerlić found the following statement in Driault: "Austria is the only great power which has no colonies, but only on the face of it. Driault claims that the Balkan Peninsula is planned to become an Austrian colony and the route for Germany's thrust towards Asia Minor."¹⁵ It is in French writers, then, that Skerlić found not only the interpretation of "civilizing missions" as an excuse for imperialistic conquests but also the view that the Balkans was to the Habsburg Monarchy exactly what Africa and China were to the other great powers.

The same keynotes appear in the texts he published in the *Srpski književni glasnik* upon returning from his studies abroad, and even his early articles met with an encouraging response. It was he who set the tone of the whole journal when he succeeded Bogdan Popović as editor, at first together with Pavle Popović (1905–1907), and then as sole editor (1907–1914).

In his article "Youth Congresses" published in 1904, Skerlić alerts the Balkan nations to the danger coming from "semi-feudal and clerical Austria",¹⁶ arguing that either they will cooperate or they will be left to await "the day when they will become a Russian *guberniia* or an Austrian province".¹⁷ Rejecting both Central- and Eastern-European models, he concludes that "the West is the source of light and the focus of life on earth; there are two roads for new nations, to embrace Western culture, like the Japanese, and live, or to oppose it and be run over, like the American Redskins or the Australian Blacks..."¹⁸

The reference to the Japanese or the Blacks shows that Skerlić thought in global terms and placed the Serbs' experience with the neighbouring empire in a global context. In his article "The Principle of Solidarity" he even dubs Serbia "the China of the Balkans".¹⁹ The awareness of the importance of cultural affiliation for the future of "small" and "new" nations entailed the belief that the adoption of "Western culture" was the main prerequisite for their survival. It meant the rejection of the over-assertive colonial Central-European cultural models and the adoption of Western ones, the French, the British and even the

¹³ Ibid. 50.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ "Omladinski kongresi", *Srpski književni glasnik* (hereafter: SKG) XIII/2 (1904), 126, 127.

¹⁷ Ibid. 124.

¹⁸ Ibid. 127.

¹⁹ "Načelo solidarnosti", SKG XI/8 (1904), 592.

American. These ideas should be seen as making up the gist of the ideology of the *Srpski književni glasnik*.

In the view of the journal's editors and contributors, what was hiding behind Vienna's "civilizing mission" discourse were the imperial ambitions of German elites and, lurking behind them, a much greater, pan-German threat. The neighbouring empire's civilizing ambition was one of the main reasons for the *Glasnik's* markedly "Westernizing" editorial policy. The purpose of asserting one's own Western identity and – expressed in the terminology of the period – "capacity for culture" was to invalidate Austria-Hungary's "civilizing" arguments in order to preserve one's own independence; at the same time, it was supposed to garner the support of the West for the Serbian national cause.

That Jovan Skerlić recognized clearly the main features of the age of empire may also be seen from the texts he wrote shortly before his premature death in 1914. In the 1913 article "New Youth Newspapers and Our New Generation", he says: "We are living in an age of cultural regression, of the revival of the vile 'right of the fist'; in an age when human ideals, law and justice are being trampled underfoot, when, amid the merciless ride roughshod over the small and the weak, the barbaric shout is heard: Woe to the small, woe to the conquered! Brutal force alone has a say, and when it comes to the right of small nations to exist, the chancellors of great powers speak in the language of the times when the Teutonic knights were exterminating Baltic Slav tribes 'with fire and sword'."²⁰

Books and articles of French authors were an important source of knowledge about the phenomenon of imperialism. Under Skerlić's editorship, the *Glasnik* published a translation of René Pinon's essay on German and British imperialism in which a particular emphasis is laid on the distinctly German civilizing zeal. Pinon claimed that the Germans had a sense of civilizational superiority combined with the readiness to use force to spread that civilization: "The Germans have found in their philosophers the idea of a Germany which rules by force and uses force to establish a higher level of civilization produced by the German genius. From Hegel to Nietzsche, a whole string of thinkers posited a metaphysics of beneficent force, and of war as bringer of order and progress. This idea, to which Wagner composed lauds and which Bismarck put into practice, has been disseminated by university professors down to the deepest strata of the people. It is by German battalions and battleships, trade and merchant navy, that the empire of German science and culture should be expanded."²¹

The Serbian intellectuals around the *Glasnik* did not, of course, have much good to say about British and French imperialism either. After all, they did not fail to notice that some British and French authors hailed the Austrian

²⁰ Jovan Skerlić, "Novi omladinski listovi i nas novi naraštaj", *SKG* XXX/3 (1913), 321.

²¹ René Pinon, "Englesko-nemačko suparništvo" (translated from French by M. Zebić), *SKG* XXIII/10 (1909), 777–778.

"civilizing mission" in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A quite interesting article of Kosta Kumanudi that appeared in the *Glasnik* in 1902²² pointed to the fact that the French were not disinclined to liken the Dual Monarchy's administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina to their own rule over their African and Asian colonies. Namely, Kumanudi reviewed the article about Austria-Hungary's achievements in Bosnia-Herzegovina which Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, one of the leading ideologues of French imperialism,²³ had published in the influential *Revue des deux Mondes*, a forum of liberal, pro-Catholic Parisian circles. Leroy-Beaulieu saw Kállay's administration in Bosnia-Herzegovina as bringing Western order and civilization to sluggish populations of the East.²⁴ He even claimed, according to Kumanudi, that France should draw lessons from the example of Bosnia-Herzegovina for her own colonial rule in Algiers, Tunisia and Indochina.²⁵ Leroy-Beaulieu expressed his support for the Jesuits in Bosnia-Herzegovina who, unlike the unreliable local Franciscans, were putting into practice the ideas of the pope Leo XIII and the bishop Strossmayer about an alliance between Rome and the Slavs, and the union of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches.²⁶

It was known in Belgrade that the British tended to draw analogies between the Habsburg administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina and their colonial experience in Egypt. In 1912 Jovan "Pižon" Jovanović presented to the Serbian public an article from the London *Times* which showed that Vienna and London harboured similar ideas. The article claimed, among other things, that the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, count Aehrenthal, on the occasion of a meeting between Edward VII and Franz Josef I shortly before the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Habsburg Monarchy in 1908, had made it explicit to the British that the annexation of Egypt to their empire would be a normal thing to expect.²⁷

Yet, the *Glasnik* was careful to weigh its words when covering the powerful northern neighbour; after all, its mission as a modern Serbian and pro-Western magazine was to reach Austria-Hungary's Serbian community on a regular basis. Still, the fear of a "cultural invasion" would surface in times of crisis in relations between the two countries. In the wake of the disturbing Münzsteg Agreement reached between Russia and Austria-Hungary in 1903, Kosta Ku-

²² Kosta Kumanudi, "Jedno mišljenje o Bosni i Hercegovini. L'Autriche-Hongrie en Bosnie-Herzégovine. Nationalités, religions, gouvernement. *Revue des deux Mondes*, 15 mars 1902", *SKG VII/6* (1902), 1102–1109.

²³ Said, *Orijentalizam*, 293.

²⁴ Kumanudi, "Jedno mišljenje o Bosni i Hercegovini", 1107–1109.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 1108–1109.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 1105–1106.

²⁷ Inostrani [Jovan Jovanovic Pižon], "Grof Erental. Izbori u Turskoj", *SKG XXVIII/5* (1912), 392.

manudi openly called Austria-Hungary the vanguard of the pan-German campaign against the Slavs,²⁸ concluding: “Behind her good wishes and civilizatory glaze Austria-Hungary has always been hiding an insatiable voracity, her entire politics is permeated with imperial ambitions.”²⁹ After the annexation crisis of 1908/9, Vladimir Ćorović, in his review of a German army officer’s travel account of Mostar, wrote that the latter had chosen to “*dip his sabre into ink* [italics V. Ć.] and start a literary career by writing about the lands dotted with so many minarets and harems, about new parts, unexhausted, alien to the innocent German public which, in preparation for a car ride across the Sava, packs tents, canned food and weapons, as if venturing into Tibet or those frighteningly described parts around the source of the Nile.”³⁰ In an ironic and acerbic tone, Ćorović in fact implied that the German public looked at Bosnia-Herzegovina as just another non-European colony.

III

The refusal to submit to the neighbouring empire’s cultural, scientific and literary tutelage had been noticeable in the *Glasnik* from its very first issues. Back then, in 1901, under the editorship of Bogdan Popović, which marked the beginning of the magazine’s opposition to the regime of king Alexander Obrenović,³¹ it seemed necessary to opine on relations between Serbia and Austria-Hungary as well. On the front line in this respect were those members of the magazine’s Editorial Board who came from the Political-Educational Department (PED) of the Ministry of the Interior, which was responsible for national propaganda in Old Serbia and Macedonia. In a retrospective overview of Serbia’s foreign policy in the century which had only just elapsed, Slobodan Jovanović drew an analogy between the position of Serbia in relation to Austria-Hungary after the “Secret Convention” and the position of Tunisia in relation to France after the colonial conquest the same year (1881).³² His explicit conclusion was that Serbia would not be able to avoid a conflict with Austria-Hungary.³³ Svetislav Simić and Ljubomir Jovanović, *Glasnik* contributors recognized as experts in

²⁸ Kosta Kumanudi, “Pogled na ulogu Rusije i Austrije u Istočnom Pitanju” SKG XXVIII/5 (1903), 604.

²⁹ Ibid. 605.

³⁰ Vladimir Ćorović, “Mostar, von Robert Michel, Prag 1909”, SKG XXIV/5 (1910), 390.

³¹ See Miloš Ković, “Politička uloga ‘Srpskog književnog glasnika’ 1901–1914”, in *Sto godina Srpskog književnog glasnika*, 363–378; Slobodan Jovanović, “Političko poreklo S. K. Glasnika”, SKG XXXII/2 (1931), 129–131, as well as his “Svetislav Simić”, SKG LXII/6 (1941), 437–439; “Osnivanje Srpskog književnog glasnika”, *Tamo daleko* I/1 (Oct.–Nov. 1958), 2–12; and *Vlada Aleksandra Obrenovića*, vol. II 1897–1903 (Belgrade 1931), 267–270.

³² Slobodan Jovanović, “Spoljna politika Srbije u XIX veku”, SKG IV/6 (1901), 472.

³³ Ibid. 472–473.

the domain of "national work", did not conceal their resentment towards Serbia's northern neighbour.³⁴ Providing an overview of "Serbian national-political life", Ljubomir Jovanović claimed that, with the beginning of the Austro-Hungarian thrust towards the south-east, at the Congress of Berlin, Austria-Hungary replaced Turkey as Serbia's main adversary, and that "the twentieth century will be able to see many a fight between her and the Serbian people".³⁵

Dragomir Janković had quite a lot of experience in national propaganda, just like Slobodan Jovanović and Svetislav Simić. In an overview of the current Serbian theatre he published in the *Glasnik* in 1901, at the time he served as head of the PED, he observed that the repertoires predominantly consisted of plays translated from German and Hungarian.³⁶ "In that way, we are suffering a loss both in a cultural and in a national sense," he warned³⁷ and, adding that even French and English authors were being translated from German, suggested following the French example and protecting national authors and national drama.³⁸

Especially important for the rejection by Serbian intellectuals of Austria-Hungary's scientific tutelage was a text by Ljubomir Jovanović published in the first issue of the *Glasnik*, in 1901, right after Janković's analysis of the situation in the Serbian playhouses. In his review of Milan Rešetar's study *Die serbokroatische Betonung südwestlicher Mundarten* published by the "Balkan-Kommission" of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna, Stojanović quotes from a statement of the Balkan Commission where the historiographical-archaeological and philological-ethnographical study of the Balkans is described as "one of our natural and first cultural tasks, worthy of the Academy" (italics Lj. S.).³⁹ "The expression 'sphere of interest' has become so popular in Austria that Austrian scholars are even using it in scholarship when referring to the Balkan Peninsula," he remarks.⁴⁰ Suspecting that there is more to it than mere academic pursuits, he adds: "One should not forget that scientific expeditions used to be, and still are, sent from Vienna to other parts of the world (e.g. to India, whence they brought a bit of the plague to Vienna) without any scientific sphere of in-

³⁴ Miloš Ković, "Istočno pitanje kao kulturni problem: Svetislav Simić i 'Srpski književni glasnik'", in *Evropa i Istočno pitanje (1878–1923): političke i civilizacijske promene*, ed. Slavenko Terzić (Belgrade: Istorijski institut SANU, 2001), 618–622.

³⁵ Ljubomir Jovanović, "Pregled nacionalno-političkog života srpskog u XIX veku", SKG III/1 (1901), 49.

³⁶ Dragoslav Janković, "Pogled na današnje pozorišne prilike", SKG I/1 (1901), 49.

³⁷ Ibid. 67.

³⁸ Ibid. 62, 65.

³⁹ Ljubomir Stojanović, "Srpsko-hrvatski u jugozapadnim govorima od Milana Rešetara", SKG I/1 (1901), 70.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 60.

terest being mentioned; no, that is reserved for the Balkans alone, no one must go there but them.”⁴¹ Commenting in the same tone about the engagement of Viennese scholars in philological research in the Balkans, Stojanović concludes: “They’ve done the job of examining every single of the many languages at home and now, not wanting to sit idle, they’ve set out for the Balkans.”⁴²

Ljubomir Stojanović voiced what the *Glasnik* founders thought: the way to oppose the patronage of German and Austro-Hungarian science was to raise the quality of national production, in which French and British examples should be taken as models. A few years earlier, Stojanović had been polemicizing with Vatroslav Jagić, his former professor in Vienna and a leading authority in Slavic studies. Namely, Stojanović believed that Jagić’s scholarly work supported the Austro-Hungarian government’s policy in Bosnia-Herzegovina embodied in Benjamin Kállay.⁴³ It was not by accident that Stojanović, a German-educated philologist, signed his abovementioned review of Rešetar’s book as follows: “In Paris, January 1901, Lj. Stojanović.”⁴⁴ Almost thirty years later, in an issue of the *Glasnik* new series (restarted in 1920 after the break caused by the war), he recalled that, in the years before the Great War, Franz Ferdinand himself had liked to say that “the Balkans should be won over for European civilization.”⁴⁵

This programmatic resistance to the establishment of Austria-Hungary’s “scientific sphere of interest” in the Balkans by relying on French and British models instead, was demonstrated even more clearly by Mihailo Gavrilović. In his critical review of Benjamin Kállay’s history of the Serbian uprising against the Ottomans (*Die Geschichte des serbischen Aufstandes 1807–1810*) prefaced by Kállay’s closest associate, historian Lajos Tallóczy,⁴⁶ Gavrilović offered ample proofs of their methodological inadequacy. What he noticed in Tallóczy’s text apart from “the Serbs being lectured in a discreet and less discreet way” was “a certain condescendence when speaking about their affairs. We shall not dwell on that; that is a manner which has already become a prerogative even of the Hungarian second-rate press.”⁴⁷ A disciple of the French school of history, Gavrilović chose instead to dwell on the examples of Tallóczy’s political bias, factual errors, and unfamiliarity with the archival material and literature of French, Russian

⁴¹ Ibid. 70.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ “Pristupna akademska beseda Ljub. Stojanovića govorena na svečanom skupu Akademije 11. jan. 1986”, *Glas Srpske kraljevske akademije* LII/34 (1896); Ljubomir Stojanović, “Jagić i Oblak o pristupnoj akademskoj besedi”, *Delo* XIV (1897), 347–362.

⁴⁴ Stojanović, “Srpsko-hrvatski u jugozapadnim govorima”, 74.

⁴⁵ Ljubomir Stojanović, “Hrvatska ‘Austrijanština’”, *SKG* XVII/5 (1926), 360.

⁴⁶ See Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim*, 252–256 and 267–272.

⁴⁷ Mihailo Gavrilović, “Istorija srpskog ustanka 1807–1910 od Benjamina Kalaja”, *SKG* XXV/9–10 (1910), 788.

and Serbian provenance.⁴⁸ He also remarked that Tallóczy did not know French all that well.⁴⁹

The same motives led yet another French-educated intellectual, Bogdan Popović, to make wholesale, and negative, judgements about contemporary Austrian and German literature.⁵⁰ For the same reason, Tihomir Djordjević, educated in Central Europe, or Ljuba Stojanović when enumerating "the most beautiful cities" of Europe, chose not mention Berlin or Vienna, but rather Paris and London,⁵¹ while French-educated Milan Grol wrote that "Austrian waltzes and petty officers' courtesies have no place in the National Theatre in Belgrade",⁵² Such ideas spread in all places reached by the *Glasnik*. Jovan Skerlić contentedly relayed the demands of the youth from Bosnia-Herzegovina for the "introduction of logical French-English punctuation, which is increasingly in use in Belgrade, instead of grammatical German punctuation".⁵³

As usual, Skerlić was the most forthright of all. From his 1904 "Youth Congresses" and debates with Serbian intellectuals from Austria-Hungary to his 1910 polemic with Stanoje Stanojević, he persevered in denigrating "Austrian half-culture" and advocating Serbia's cultural emancipation through emulating Western models. He was the most explicit in the polemic with Stanojević in which he turned what may have been their personal disagreement into a principled debate between the proponents of French and the proponents of German cultural and scientific models. Remarking that Stanojević is "Austrian-educated" and "firmly believes that Vienna is the centre of world culture and the source of the highest wisdom", Skerlić observes that Stanojević is completely unfamiliar with "other cultures, and the cultures which are not equal to Austrian culture but incommensurately higher than it."⁵⁴ After a few belittling remarks about the intellectual abilities of the Germans,⁵⁵ the editor of the *Glasnik* concludes: "Mr Stanojević only knows that which he was taught at school; he thinks that there is no culture other than German culture, that Vienna is the Athens of our times. He is unable to understand our successful movement of the last twenty years towards ridding Serbia of Austrian half-culture, to be more than merely an

⁴⁸ Ibid. 787–797.

⁴⁹ Ibid. 794.

⁵⁰ [Bogdan Popović], "Nemačka secesionistička lirika", SKG V/5 (1902), 392; [Bogdan Popović], "Pol Verlen u Nemaca", SKG VII/6 (1902), 473; U. B. [Bogdan Popović], "Artur Šnicler, 'Potporučnik Gustel'", SKG V/3 (1901), 237.

⁵¹ Tihomir Djordjević, "O etnologiji", SKG XVII/7 (1906), 520.

⁵² Milan Grol, "Pitanje o opereti u Narodnom pozorištu", SKG XI/4 (1904), 302–310.

⁵³ Skerlić, "Novi omladinski listovi", 216.

⁵⁴ Jovan Skerlić, "Ocena G. Stanoja Stanojevića o 'Srpskoj književnosti u XVIII veku'", SKG XXV/7 (1910), 546.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Austrian spiritual province. Mr Stanojević, with his narrow-minded and primitive notions, is unable to realize that nowadays we are learning from the true sources of literary science, from those the others learn from, from the French and the English, and that we have been so successful in our emancipation from the 'Slavist' philological empty-wordiness and the sluggish and undigested German learnedness that nowadays the history of Serbian literature can be learnt and worked on in a modern and European manner only in Belgrade, in Belgrade and nowhere else!"⁵⁶

Škerlić here said loud and clear that which he had only hinted at elsewhere. The political motives of the *Glasnik's* scholarly and literary mission were laid out in just a few sentences. It should be noted, however, that its response to Vienna's and Berlin's colonial arguments went along much the same lines: generalized judgements about whole nations and "superior" and "inferior" cultures. It would seem that it was as difficult to escape one's own time as ever.

On the eve of the First World War Slobodan Jovanović, in his inaugural speech as rector of the University of Belgrade, advocated the transformation of the University into not only a Serbian but also a South-Slavic "scientific centre" which would hold "first place" in the "scientific study of the whole of the Balkans."⁵⁷ Many texts about Belgrade University and the inaugural speeches of its rectors published in the *Glasnik* may be described as genuine programmes of national policy.⁵⁸ At Škerlić's funeral in 1914, Pavle Popović summed up Škerlić's basic ideas and concluded the eulogy he gave on behalf of the University as follows: "Professors die in Vienna and Berlin, too, but their students do not weep for them."⁵⁹

Behind principled, academic and ideological, dissensions as a rule stood also personal disagreements. Jovan Škerlić and Pavle Popović were members of the academic staff of what was popularly known as the "Serbian Seminar" of Belgrade's Faculty of Philosophy together with Stanoje Stanojević and Aleksandar Belić.⁶⁰ Stanojević's father had been Škerlić's best man, and Belić was his childhood friend.⁶¹ The prelude to their falling-out was the negative re-

⁵⁶ Ibid. 547.

⁵⁷ Slobodan Jovanović, "Univerzitetsko pitanje", *SKG XXXII/3* (1914), 191–199.

⁵⁸ See Petar L. Vukićević, "Beleške o Univerzitetu", *SKG XIII/8* (1904), 599–601; Sava Urošević, "Pred Srpskim Univerzitetom", *SKG XIV/3* (1905), 192–204, as well as his "O zadatku Univerziteta na prosvetivanju i moralnom preporodjaju naroda", *SKG XXII/2* (1909), 198–201, and "Naša Univerzitetska Omladina", *SKG XXIV/3* (1910), 184–198.

⁵⁹ Pavle Popović, "Dr Jovan Škerlić", *SKG XXXII/10* (1914), 786.

⁶⁰ Dragoljub Pavlović and Dimitrije Vučenov, "Katedra za istoriju jugoslovenske književnosti", in *Sto godina Filozofskog fakulteta*, ed. Radovan Samardžić (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1963), 358.

⁶¹ Živorimir Mladenović, "Univerzitetska karijera i ženidba", *Život i delo Jovana Škerlića* (Belgrade: Ž. Mladenović, 1998), 81.

view of Stanojević's *Istorija Bosne i Hercegovine* (History of Bosnia and Herzegovina) published in the *Glasnik* in 1909 by Jovan Tomić,⁶² a close friend of Pavle Popović's. In the private correspondence maintained between Popović and Tomić in and around that year, critical remarks about Stanojević and Belić are not a rare occurrence.⁶³ Their disagreements became public in 1910 when Stanojević, in the *Letopis Matice srpske*, harshly criticized Skerlić's and Popović's scholarly work.⁶⁴ In their replies published in the *Glasnik*, Skerlić and Popović dismissed Stanojević's criticisms as inspired by motives of self-interest, claiming that he saw the two of them as rivals in his aspiration for promotion to full professorship.⁶⁵ This exchange led to an invisible dividing line being drawn across the "Serbian Seminar": on one side of it were Skerlić and Popović, disciples of the French positivists; on the other, Stanojević and Belić, followers of the Austrian and Russian traditions of philological criticism.

IV

Examples of other "small nations" which had to cope with German imperialism encouraged the Serbian intellectuals in their resistance to the neighbouring empire's "cultural mission". The *Glasnik* kept up with the latest news about the conflict of Masaryk's Czechs with the Germans and with what they used to call the Czechs' "private cultural work".⁶⁶ It even tended to interpret the Norwegian question in much the same way. In his review of a performance of Edvard

⁶² Jovan Tomić, "Istorija Bosne i Hercegovine. U Beogradu u Državnoj štampariji Kraljevine Srbije 1909", SKG XXII (1909), 10, 783–789; 11, 846–855.

⁶³ Arhiv Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti [Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts; hereafter: ASANU], Jovan Tomić Papers, 14509/V-93/9, Popović to Tomić, Vienna, 10 Dec. 1909; 14509/V-93/10, Popović to Tomić, Vienna, 15 Jan. 1910; 14509/V-93/12, Popović to Tomić, St. Petersburg, on St Sava's Day [27 Jan.], 1911.

⁶⁴ Stanoje Stanojević, "Stara srpska književnost u Pregledu srpske književnosti g. Pavla Popovića", *Letopis Matice srpske* 268 (1910), 50–61, and "Jovan Skerlić, Srpska književnost u XVIII veku", *ibid.*, 61–69.

⁶⁵ Jovan Skerlić, "Ocena G. Stanoja Stanojevića o 'Srpskoj književnosti u XVIII veku'", SKG XXV (1910), 6, 457–473; 7, 544–550; Pavle Popović, "Stanoje Stanojević, Kritika na 'Pregled srpske književnosti'", SKG XXV (1910), 10, 767–787; 11, 853–876; 12, 929–955.

⁶⁶ I[van]. Š[ajković]., "Slovenska kancelar (Agence Slave)", SKG V/3 (1902), 239–240; I[van]. Š[ajković]., "Naše doba", SKG V/4 (1902), 317–318; I[van]. Š[ajković]., "Zemledelska politika", SKG V/5 (1902), 319; I[van]. Š[ajković]., "Prva radenička izložba u Pragu", *ibid.*, 320; Dr. Ivan Šajković, "Slovenski klub u Beogradu", SKG V/5 (1902), 343–348; "Češka otazka", *ibid.*, 391 (unsigned); "Jednoženstvo i mnogoženstvo" od T. G. Masarika, SKG VII/6 (1902), 479 (unsigned); Jaša Prodanović, "O zadacima djaka. Od prof. T. G. Masarika. Preveo Dr Ivan Šajković", SKG VII/2 (1902), 233–235; Dr Tomaž Masarik, "Etika i alkoholizam", SKG XXIII/2 (1909), 122–138.

Grieg's works at the National Theatre in Belgrade in 1908, Cvetko Manojlović referred to the composer's intention to rid Norwegian music of German influences. According to him, Grieg realized "that Norway was able to create her own language, her own freedom and a completely independent art. What it required above all was: 'To cut loose from foreign countries, from Germany'."⁶⁷

Perhaps an even more interesting text in this respect was Pavle Popović's brief note on Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, where the role of the Germans as "cultural subjugators" was assigned to the Danes, Norway's one-time masters.⁶⁸ "The Norwegian people, politically free, has been slowly freeing itself from the former intellectual influence of Denmark,"⁶⁹ but outmoded Danish romanticism still dominated in Norwegian literature.⁷⁰ Then this "lonely artist" who "carries inside him the soul, aspirations and hopes of all of Norway"⁷¹ placed himself at the head of the radical party and the movement for intellectual emancipation, relying on the "modern European spirit", on the works of John Stuart Mill, Hippolyte Taine and other Western writers.⁷² To say the name of Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson means, according to Popović, to "fly the Norwegian flag."⁷³

This portrait of Bjørnson did not depart much from his actual role in Norwegian cultural and political life.⁷⁴ The *Glasnik* gave him quite a lot of space even later.⁷⁵ As if the reason was to emphasize that Bjørnson, a conventional nineteenth-century author, defender of the rights of small nations and Captain Dreyfus,⁷⁶ was much closer to the *Glasnik* than his countryman, the radical individualist, rebel and modernist Ibsen. Moreover, the writer of Ibsen's obituary in the *Glasnik* even found it relevant to make the remark that Ibsen had been held in high esteem by "the German press" in particular.⁷⁷

⁶⁷ X.X.X., "Edvard Grig", SKG XX/1 (1908), 64.

⁶⁸ "Bjersterne Bjernson", SKG VIII/1 (1903), 79–80 (unsigned).

⁶⁹ Ibid. 80.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid. 79.

⁷⁴ On Bjørnson and his political role see Ronald G. Popperwell, *Norway* (London – Tonbridge 1975), 240–242.

⁷⁵ See the lengthy essay of George Brandes, "Bjersterne Bjernson" (translated from German by Nikola Stajić), SKG XXIII (1909), vols. 3, 202–297; 4, 288–297; 6, 453–460; 7, 532–544; 8, 605–613; 9, 694–700; see also R. [Pavle Pavlović], "Bjersterne Bjernson. 'Laboremus'", SKG III/2 (1901), 156–158; "Bjersterne Bjernson", SKG VIII/1 (1903), 79–80 (unsigned); L. [Branko Lazarević], SKG XXIV/9 (1910), 718–720; Milan Grol, "Bankrotstvo, komad u četiri čina, od Bjersterna Bjernsona", SKG XXV/8 (1910), 602–605.

⁷⁶ Popperwell, *Norway*, 242.

⁷⁷ IV. [Miloš Ivković], "Henrik Ibzen", SKG XVI/10 (1906), 799–800.

* * *

The group of leading intellectuals of the Kingdom of Serbia gathered round the *Srpski književni glasnik* from its inception in 1901 apparently were acutely aware of the fact that the age they lived in was the "age of empire". Moreover, they saw their entire public engagement as serving the cause of the defence of Serbian culture against Austria-Hungary's colonial "civilizing mission". That is the ideological framework which should be borne in mind in every analysis of not only the foreign and domestic policy of the Kingdom of Serbia but also and above all of its culture in the critical years preceding the First World War.

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On Parliamentary Democracy in Serbia 1903–1914 *Political Parties, Elections, Political Freedoms*

Abstract: Parliamentary democracy in Serbia in the period between the May Coup of 1903 and the beginning of the First World War in 1914 was, as compellingly shown by the regular and very detailed reports of the diplomatic representatives of two exemplary democracies, Great Britain and France, functional and fully accommodated to the requirements of democratic governance. Some shortcomings, which were reflected in the influence of extra-constitutional (“irresponsible”) factors, such as the group of conspirators from 1903 or their younger wing from 1911 (the organisation Unification or Death), occasionally made Serbian democracy fragile but it nonetheless remained functional at all levels of government. A comparison with crises such as those taking place in, for example, France clearly shows that Serbia, although perceived as “a rural democracy” and “the poor man’s paradise”, was a constitutional and democratic state, and that it was precisely its political freedoms and liberation aspirations that made it a focal point for the rallying of South-Slavic peoples on the eve of the Great War. Had there been no firm constitutional boundaries of the parliamentary monarchy and the democratic system, Serbia would have hardly been able to cope with a series of political and economic challenges which followed one another after 1903: the Tariff War 1906–11; the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina 1908/9; the Balkan Wars 1912–13; the crisis in the summer of 1914 caused by the so-called Order of Precedence Decree, i.e. by the underlying conflict between civilian and military authorities. The Periclean age of Serbia, aired with full political freedoms and sustained cultural and scientific progress is one of the most important periods in the history of modern Serbian democracy.

Keywords: Serbia 1903–1914, parliamentary democracy, political freedoms, democratic culture, cultural progress, Radical Party

Cultural progress. National élan

After a brief period of full parliamentary democracy in Serbia – between the adoption of a liberal constitution in 1888 and king Alexander Obrenović’s coup d’état in 1893 – it took a decade until a true parliamentary system was restored. The reign of Peter I Karadjordjević from 1903 to 1914 (nominally to 1921) is sometimes dubbed a “golden” or “Periclean” age of Serbia on account of the effective exercise of political liberties, and a rapid national and cultural rise combined with the pursuit of economic independence. Socially and culturally, Serbia had already been one of the countries in which the process of modernisa-

tion, europeanisation and westernisation had been increasingly pushing aside the traditional mores of patriarchal Balkan society.¹

By 1910 Serbia had already had a population of 2,922,058 and a five-year population growth of about 190,000 people in a total state area of 48,303 km² (unchanged from the independence in 1878 to the Balkan War in 1912). Immigration from the two neighbouring empires was steady. There were about two million Serbs living in Austria-Hungary, and about one million under Ottoman rule. This situation, along with a vigorous foreign policy, acted as a boost to the aspirations for national unification which, after 1903, became complementary to the new ideology of South-Slavic (Yugoslav) unity.²

Although a free country in political terms, Serbia was still seen as the same “poor man’s paradise” by many foreign travellers³ since the pace of her economic growth fell short of the speed required by her ambitious foreign policy plans. It was a predominantly agrarian society, with peasants accounting for as much as 87.31 per cent of the total population. The process of urbanisation was under way, but the cities were still quite small by European standards. The twenty-four settlements officially designated as cities had a little more than 350,000 inhabitants combined. Only six of them had a population of more than 10,000 people, 13 up to 10,000, and three fewer than 5,000. The approximate number of persons that formed the bourgeoisie may be obtained by subtracting from the total number of persons living in the cities, approximately 350,000, or about 30 to 40 per cent. The composition of that social stratum in 1905 was as follows: 46.4 per cent craftsmen, 22.2 per cent merchants, and 18.9 per cent civil servants. With a population of 70,000 at the beginning of the 1900s and 90,000 a decade later, Belgrade was still far behind the criterion which counted as cities only the settlements with a population of more than 100,000. The middle class was urban almost without exception. For instance, only two per cent of Belgrade’s population in 1905 were civil servants, craftsmen accounted for 23 per cent and merchants for 13 per cent.⁴

¹ For more see Milan Grol, *Iz predratne Srbije* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1939); see also Wayne S. Vuchinich, *Serbia between East and West. The Events of 1903–1908* (Stanford: Stanford University Publications, 1954); Dimitrije Djordjević, “Srbija i Balkan na početku XX veka (1903–1906)”, in *Jugoslovenski narodi pred Prvi svetski rat* (Belgrade: SANU, 1967), 207–230.

² The number of immigrants may be deduced indirectly from the 1900 census data for Belgrade: of the total number of inhabitants of the capital city 48,000 were born in it, 19,000 were immigrants from the neighbouring empires, and 3,000 came from other European countries. Cf. statistical data in *Nova istorija srpskog naroda*, ed. D. T. Bataković (Belgrade: Naš dom, 2002), 185–192.

³ An idealised picture of Serbia by Herbert Vivian, *Servia. The Poor Man’s Paradise* (London, New York and Bombay: Longmans, Green and co., 1897).

⁴ Dimitrije Djordjević, “Serbian Society 1903–1914”, in Dimitrije Djordjević and Bela Kiraly, eds., *East Central European Society and the Balkan Wars* (Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Mon-

The most conspicuous advance was made in the area of education, and understandably so, because Serbia was aware that her more dynamic development directly depended on the level of education in the general population and an adequate pool of educated workforce. Intellectuals were proud to point out that the number of elementary schools rose from 534 in 1885 to 1,425 in 1911, which is to say in thirty years within the same state borders. By 1910, the number of 19 secondary grammar and vocational schools with 386 teachers and 6,049 students rose to 49 schools with 723 teachers and 12,892 students. Although the number of educated persons was small by European standards (the illiterate still accounted for 76.97 per cent of the total population and 45 per cent of the urban population), the growth of elite classes was clearly felt in political life. Secondary and higher education, marked mostly by French-inspired liberal models, was conducive to a more dynamic rise of middle classes, which now were to interpret the democratic ideals of the social strata only recently detached from their rural roots from the perspective of a citizen.⁵

The *Great School* established in Belgrade in 1838 was in 1905 transformed into a university with five faculties. In comparison with no more than 58 teachers and 450 students in 1900, on the eve of the First World War the University of Belgrade had 80 teachers and 1,600 students, and there were more than one hundred Serbian students at foreign universities, mostly in France but also in Switzerland, Belgium, Germany and Russia. These figures highlight the cultural progress made since the 1890s. The political and academic charisma of some university professors, notably the Independent Radical leaders Jovan Skerlić, a literature professor, and Jovan Cvijić, a geographer, drew many students from Bosnia and Dalmatia, and in 1907 even a large group of young Bulgarians enrolled in the University of Belgrade.

The *Royal Serbian Academy*, founded in 1886 as a new institution following in the tradition of the *Serbian Learned Society*, soon asserted itself as a leading scientific institution in the Slavic South. Scientists of European renown (Mihailo Petrović "Alas", Sima M. Lozanić, Stojan Novaković, Jovan Cvijić, Branslav Petronijević, Živojin Perić, Slobodan Jovanović, Jovan Žujović, Mihailo

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⁵ On French influences in Serbia see D. T. Bataković, "French Influence in Serbia 1835–1914: Four Generations of 'Parisians'", *Balkanica* XLI (2010), 93–129; D. T. Bataković, "Srbija na Zapadu. O francuskim uticajima na politički razvoj moderne Srbije", in *Susret ili sukob civilizacija na Balkanu*, ed. S. Terzić (Belgrade: Istorijski institut SANU; Novi Sad: Pravoslavna reč, 1998), 307–328; D. T. Bataković, "L'influence française sur la formation de la démocratie parlementaire en Serbie", *Revue de l'Europe Centrale* VII/1-1999 (2000), 17–44 ; D. T. Bataković, "Le modèle français en Serbie avant 1914", in *La Serbie et la France: une alliance atypique. Les relations politiques, économiques et culturelles 1870–1940*, ed. D. T. Bataković (Belgrade: Institut des Etudes balkaniques, 2010), 13–99.

Gavrilović, Bogdan Popović, Jovan Skerlić...) were members of the Academy and/or university professors. *Srpska književna zadruga* (Serbian Literary Cooperative) with its 11,000 members in Serbia and the Balkans primarily operated as a publishing house, but its actual role was that of an educational institution that carefully fostered national culture, promoted the ideology of Yugoslav mutuality, and cultivated the literary taste of its ever-growing circle of readers and subscribers. Many of its books – from domestic authors to translations of Greek and Roman classics and contemporary French literature – with large print runs based on subscription publishing, were smuggled into Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Slavonia and other provinces under Austrian rule, because the Austrian authorities deemed them liberally and nationally charged reading matter.⁶

The restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1903

After the overthrow of the Obrenović dynasty by the coup of May 1903, a “revolutionary government” composed of all parties was formed under the premiership of Jovan Avakumović. The election of the king at the joint session of the Assembly and the Senate of 15 June 1903 opened with an acclamation: “Long live Peter Karadjordjević, King of Serbia!” Each of the 119 Assembly members and 39 senators pronounced himself for the election of Prince Peter as king with the right to hereditary succession.⁷ Then they issued a public statement: “The body of popular representatives unanimously decides that the Constitution of 22 December 1888 shall be reinstated as well as all political laws that were passed under it with amendments and supplements and those that will be passed during the term of this body of popular representatives even before the elected Monarch takes his oath of office on it.”⁸

An aspirant to the throne for whole forty years, Prince Peter was not elected king only because he was a member of a dynasty which had always enjoyed much popular support, or because of his unquestionable patriotism and personal bravery. He was elected new king of Serbia because of his unwavering commitment to liberal and democratic principles, which stood in stark contrast to the Obrenović dynasts’ absolutist leanings. Although a soldier by education – he graduated from the Saint-Cyr Military Academy – Peter I had developed his political outlook in France and then, during his long exile in Geneva, in the atmosphere of harmonious democratic evolution of Swiss society, he had had the

⁶ For more see Ljubinka Trgovčević, *Istorija Srpske književne zadruge* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1992).

⁷ According to some sources, Žujović subsequently refused to sign the act on the election of Prince Peter as king. See also Jovan Žujović, *Dnevnik*, vol. I (Belgrade: Arhiv Srbije, 1986), 112–116.

⁸ Milivoje Popović, *Borba za parlamentarni režim u Srbiji* (Belgrade: Politika A.D., 1939), 86.

opportunity to see for himself the beneficial effects of the democratic principles that he had been steadfastly championing.⁹

Unlike the last Obrenović kings, detested by the people not only for their autocratic rule but also for reducing Serbia to the position of Austria-Hungary's client state, Peter I was seen as a proponent of the country's reliance on imperial Russia, traditionally popular in Serbia. His sons Djordje (George) and Aleksandar (Alexander), born of his marriage to the Montenegrin Princess Zorka Petrović-Njegoš, had been trained at the Imperial Corps of Pages in St. Petersburg. When he was elected king, he was already sixty-one. The long and difficult years of exile had taken the edge off his irascible nature and gave him the experience and temperance needed for the constitutional monarch of a country where cooling down heated political passions was not an easy challenge.¹⁰

King Peter I's political affinities undoubtedly lay more with Ljubomir Stojanović's Independent Radicals than with Pašić's Old Radicals. He believed coalition cabinets on the French model to be a better solution than homogeneous majority cabinets of the British type which seemed to him a form of participatory. More or less consistently, except when the interests of the army officers, former conspirators to whom he owed the throne were involved and, on one occasion, when he authorised the minority Independent Radical government to call the election, King Peter I was careful not to overstep his constitutional powers.¹¹

As a result of the bitter experience with the last Obrenović kings and their autocratic rule, the constitutional boundaries were laid down with precision. The new unicameral Constitution of 1903, in fact the amended Constitution of 1888, was an important step towards a fully-fledged parliamentary system: it strengthened the role of the National Assembly, limited the role of the monarch to its constitutional boundaries and, by reducing the tax-based qualification for voting, practically introduced universal male suffrage. Serbia was defined as a constitutional and parliamentary monarchy. The legislative power was exercised equally by the king and the unicameral body of popular representatives (National Assembly), with the State Council as an advisory body. The king had the right to sanction laws (Art. 43), but the consent of the Assembly was required for every law to enter into force (Art. 35), and no law could be passed, revoked or interpreted without the consent of the Assembly (Art. 116). Every bill signed by the king had to bear a ministerial countersignature to become a law (Art. 135). Since the cabinets were as a rule formed from the ranks of the

⁹ Dragoljub R. Živojinović, *Kralj Petar I Karadjordjević*, vol. I: *U izgnanstvu 1844–1903. godine* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1988), 420–446.

¹⁰ Dragoljub R. Živojinović, *Kralj Petar I Karadjordjević*, vol. II: *U otadžbini 1903–1914. godine* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1990), *passim*.

¹¹ *Ibid.* See also Peter Karadjordjević's preface to his translation of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty: O slobodi* (Belgrade: Sveslovenska knjižarnica M. J. Stefanovića, 1912).

parliamentary majority (even though this was not a constitutional requirement given that the ministers were appointed by the king and were not necessarily Assembly members), the ministerial countersignature ensured the Assembly's control over all royal acts. The more significant of the amendments to the Constitution show that there was a general will for further democratisation, even though the process involved a number of halfway solutions which resulted from the pragmatic wish of the strongest party, the Old Radicals led by Nikola P. Pašić, to secure favourable election conditions for themselves and the Independent Radicals, with whom they sought to achieve reconciliation¹² after the latter had split from their common People's Radical Party. The changes to the articles relating to the proportional representation system, requested by the Old Radicals who had grudgingly given up the majority election system in 1888, actually advantaged larger parties.¹³

With the tax-based qualification for voting reduced to a symbolical amount, voting rights encompassed most males over twenty-one years of age: in the parliamentary election of 1903, 53 per cent of the registered voters took to the polls, and as many as 70 per cent five years later. The elections were reasonably free by the European standards of the time despite the fact that the police machinery was able to influence the outcome of the voting process locally, but on a quite limited scale. Peasants held less than 30 per cent of parliament seats, while lawyers, schoolteachers, merchants and priests accounted for more than 30 per cent.

The political scene in Serbia in 1903–1914 was dominated by the Radicals divided into two opposing factions. In 1904 one faction finally split to form the *Independent Radical Party*. The other retained the original name, the *People's Radical Party*, and therefore was commonly known as Old Radicals. The Independent Radicals took a markedly opposition stance even though the two parties shared the same or quite similar programmatic goals. Taking together more than 80 per cent of the vote, the two Radical parties governed the country alternately or in coalition, but the Old Radicals led by Nikola P. Pašić fared better with voters. In eight years, they formed as many as eight homogeneous majority cabinets, and remained in power alone during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) as well. The Independent Radicals, led by Ljubomir Stojanović, were able to form

¹² Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères [hereafter: AMAE], Paris, Nouvelle série [NS], Serbie, vol. 3, no. 66, Belgrade, le 5 août 1903.

¹³ Popović, *Borba za parlamentarni režim*, 89–91. See also different, unconvincing and frequently one-sided views which, based on strictly legal analyses or on press or parliament debates, play down the level of democratic achievement and relativize the existence of democratic values in Serbia, such as Olga Popović-Obradović, *Parlamentarizam u Srbiji 1903–1914* (Belgrade: Službeni list, 1998); Dubravka Stojanović, *Srbija i demokratija 1903–1914. Istorijska studija o "zlatnom dobu srpske demokratije"* (Belgrade: Udruženje za društvenu istoriju, 2003).

only one homogeneous cabinet, and it remained in office for less than a year (1905–1906).¹⁴ Both the Old and the Independent Radicals held that the Serbian king should behave the same as the British monarch did: he should refrain from exercising the right of veto (which turned out to be the case), and appoint the cabinet ministers only nominally; the government should emerge from the parliamentary majority (which was to cause some debate). Finally, they believed that the king was not entitled to dissolve the Assembly at will, but only at the request of the government. The Old Radicals, and especially their parliamentary ideologue Stojan M. Protić, prone to a simplified interpretation of the British parliamentary system, openly stated their belief that the king “must not have a different opinion from that of the government.”¹⁵

The former Liberals of Jovan Ristić divided into two fraction after the coup of 1903 merged again in 1905 and created a unified party under the new name of the *National Party* (1905) presided by Stojan Ribarac and Vojislav Veljković. The dissolved Progressive Party (1896) was renewed (1906) owing to the repute of one of its original founders (1881), the famous historian and philologist Stojan Novaković.¹⁶ Neither the Nationals (Liberals) nor the Progressives were able, however, to garner any significant support from the electorate, both being perceived as worn-out political parties generally loyal to the overthrown Obrenović dynasty, and the Progressives also as Austrophiles. Neither of them took part in government except for the concentration cabinet of the Progressive Stojan Novaković (1908–1909) put together for the purpose of joint resistance to the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Social Democratic Party at first had one, and later two, out of 160 parliament seats.

There was little difference between the Old and Independent Radicals in party programme. After the May coup in 1903, the Old Radicals argued for maintaining the bicameral Constitution of 1901, whereas the Independent Radicals demanded the reinstatement of the unicameral Constitution of 1888, and their proposal was accepted in parliament by majority vote. Parliamentary democracy, representative government, local self-government and the “unification of Serbian lands” were the objectives reiterated since 1881, the year the People’s Radical Party was officially founded. Of all the parties in Serbia whose pro-

¹⁴ For more detail see Djordjević, “Serbian Society 1903–1914”, 210–214.

¹⁵ Slobodan Jovanovic, “Perić o vladalačkoj vlasti”, *Arhiv za pravne i društvene nauke* XXXVI/1–2 (1938), 2. For more see Stojan M. Protić, *Odlomci iz ustavne i narodne borbe u Srbiji*, 2 vols. (Belgrade: Štamparija D. Obradović, 1911–1912).

¹⁶ Mihailo Vojvodić, “Stojan Novaković i obnovljena Srpska napredna stranka”, *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu. Spomenica Radovana Samardžića XVIII* (1994), 251–281. See also D. T. Bataković, “Nacija, država, demokratija. O političkim idejama Stojana Novakovića”, in *Stojanu Novakoviću u spomen*, ed. Andrej Mitrović (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruža, 1996), 147–176.

grammes stated as their imperative the liberation and unification of different Serbian lands, the Independent Radicals were the only who included the “cultivation of the spirit of Yugoslav community” among their objectives. Intending for themselves the role of a “moral gendarmerie”, they kept accusing the Old Radicals for abandoning the original principles of radicalism, for identifying the party and the state, and for being prone to corruption. The Nationals (Liberals), for their part, criticised the Radicals for betraying the sacred national cause for narrow party interests, and the Progressives, favouring a gradual, evolutionary process towards a parliamentary system, denounced the Old Radicals for their demagogic methods and complete lack of restraint in what they saw as unlimited democracy.¹⁷ If compared with the most advanced European democracies, parliamentary democracy in Serbia worked quite well despite all difficulties.

Political and cultural newspapers and periodicals: the flourishing of democratic culture

From among several dozen dailies there stood out the independent *Politika* (established in 1904) and two party organs, the *Samouprava* (Self-governance) of the Old Radicals, and the *Odjek* (Echo) of the Independent Radicals. The liberal law of 1904 provided for an unqualified freedom of the press, so much so that many foreign diplomats deemed it to be excessive. Out of a total of 218 papers in Serbian in 1911, 125 were printed in Serbia with a total distribution of 50 million copies. There were 90 papers, of which 15 dailies and 15 periodicals, printed in Belgrade alone. Of 302 papers and magazines published in Serbian in 1912, 199 were printed in Serbia with a total distribution of about 50 million copies. Of these, 126 were printed in Belgrade alone, of which 24 dailies and 20 (literary and scholarly) periodicals, and 84 technical papers and magazines.¹⁸

All political parties and groups had their organs. At first the *Pokret* (Movement), then the *Mali žurnal* (Little Journal) and, finally, the *Pijemont* (Piedmont), were considered mouthpieces of the 1903 conspirators, while their political opponents were assembled around the *Narodni list* (People’s Newspaper). Two leading parties, the Old Radicals and the Independents, published the *Samouprava* (print run of 2,000 copies) and the *Odjek* (2,000–4,000 copies) respectively. The former Liberals (renamed Nationals) published the *Srpska zastava* (Serbian Flag). Austria-Hungary’s interest in Serbia was promoted quite overtly by the anti-dynastic papers subsidised by the Vienna government: the organs of the Progressives the *Štampa* (Press) and the *Pravda* (Justice). Con-

¹⁷ On the political parties’ programmes in more detail in Vasilije Krestić and Radoš Ljušić, *Programi i statuti srpskih političkih stranaka do 1918. godine* (Belgrade: Književne novine, 1991).

¹⁸ J. Škerlić, *Istorija nove srpske književnosti* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1967), 436; originally published in 1914 (Belgrade: Izdavačka knjižara S. K. Cvijanovića).

sidered as a paper discreetly promoting Russia's interest in Serbia, the *Politika* kept a critical distance to all parties, thereby ensuring the highest daily circulation of 8,000 copies. The Montenegrin dynastic interest was promoted by the *Beogradske novine* (Belgrade Newspaper), while the *Večernje novosti* (Evening News), with a print run of 4,000 copies, voiced the position of the Metropolitan of Belgrade and ecclesiastical circles. The Socialists had two little-read dailies. A dozen more papers were published irregularly, mostly in Belgrade, ceasing publication and being restarted under a different name. The number of newspaper readers was much larger than the number of copies because every pub in the capital city and in the interior offered its customers free use of daily papers. Apart from two prestigious literary and scholarly magazines, the *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald) and the *Delo* (Action), foreign diplomats in Belgrade had a high opinion of an exemplarily edited economic daily, the *Trgovinski glasnik* (Trade Herald).¹⁹ Freedom of the press, fair political competition and freedom of political association were the features of this "golden age" of political liberties which subsequently brought it the epithet of Serbia's "Periclean" age.²⁰

French influence was particularly visible in the literary production which increasingly drew on French models. The spread of this influence was considerably facilitated by a "strong spiritual similarity between the French and Serbian mentalities and the French and Serbian languages".²¹ In lyrical poetry and literary criticism, and increasingly also in the novel genre, French influence ennobled Serbian culture insofar as the Serbian literary language, abandoning the unnatural punctuation modelled on German in favour of French punctuation and French literary model in fact came to conform to the logic of Serbian. The style which originated from this combination – and which was to predominate in Serbia throughout the twentieth century – has become known as the "Belgrade style".²² Following in the footsteps of André Cheradame and Victor Bérard, a contemporary French traveller subscribed to their view that "Serbia is the most Francophile country in the world".²³

¹⁹ The National Archive, Foreign Office, London [hereafter NA, FO], 881/9254, Annual Report 1907, chap. XII; for more on the press see AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 114, Belgrade, le 24 octobre 1910.

²⁰ Grol, *Iz predratne Srbije*, 9–13.

²¹ Pierre de Lanux, *La Yougoslavie. La France et les Serbes* (Paris: Payot, 1916), 222–223.

²² Radovan Samardžić, "La langue littéraire serbe et l'influence française à la fin du XIX^e et au début du XX^e siècle", in *Relations franco-yougoslaves. Actes des colloques franco-serbes tenus à Belgrade en 1989 et à Paris en 1990 à l'occasion de 150 ans de l'ouverture du premier consulat français en Serbie* (Belgrade: Institut d'histoire, 1990), 85–90.

²³ De Lanux, *La Yougoslavie*, 223.

The substantial cultural growth and broad political liberties made up to an extent for the absence of a modern economy and stronger urban middle classes. The belief that an educated and enlightened cultural elite would be able to activate economic development was yet to be proved in practice. That it was not completely unfounded was shown by the economic results which, despite major challenges such as the Tariff War with Austria-Hungary (1906–1911) which commanded the search for new markets for Serbia's agricultural commodities, were not at all insignificant. When presented to the Assembly by the finance minister in 1911, they received applause of members of all parties: Serbian exports increased from 117 million francs in 1902 to 183 million in 1910, and at the beginning of 1911 Serbia's foreign-exchange reserves exceeded 20 million francs.²⁴

Elections, election battles and parliamentary procedure

Frequent elections became common in Serbia in 1903–1914 and were an indicator of political instability. Under the Constitution of 1903 it was the monarch's prerogative power to dissolve the Assembly and order that an election be called within two months, and to convene the Body of Popular Representatives within a month of the election. In 1903–1914 five general elections were held. After the first election, which took place on 8 October 1903 in relative peace, the ensuing four were marked by heated political campaigning which, due to the supremacy of two Radical parties, enabled the creation of pre-election alliances, the practice King Peter I found desirable. Until 1914, when the election was called but did not take place because the war broke out, there had been no true coalitions (apart from the period of the Annexation crisis in 1908/9). A pre-election coalition of parties in opposition to the Old Radicals was not formed until shortly before the Sarajevo assassination of 28 June 1914, i.e. for the election called for the autumn that year.

At the 1905 parliamentary election the two Radical parties won 70.7 per cent of votes: the Independents took 38.4 and the Old Radicals 32.3 per cent of the votes cast. Support to the Nationals (Liberals) slightly dropped, to the Progressives slightly rose: the two old parties combined took 24.2 per cent of the votes. A newly-founded agrarian party (1903), the Peasants' Concord, with its 3.7 per cent of votes cast by disgruntled Old Radicals' supporters, was unable to satisfy the ambitions of the Progressives, who had founded the party hoping to challenge the dominance of the Radicals not only in the numerically preponderant agrarian stratum of Serbian society but also among the younger generation of educated people who saw support to the peasantry as an opportunity for their

²⁴ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 154, Belgrade, le 5 décembre 1911.

own political promotion. The liberal opposition expected that the government would be formed from both Radical parties.²⁵

A look at the distribution of seats shows how decisively the introduction of the election quotient favoured the party that won the largest number of the votes. In 1905 the Independents won 107,706 votes or 81 seats, the Old Radicals 88,834 votes or 55 seats, the Nationals (Liberals) 44,912 or 17 seats, the Progressives 23,000 votes or four seats. *Srbija*, the newspaper of the Serbian Nationals (Liberals) wrote: "A vast majority of voters give their votes to Radical candidates for the nth time. They extolled Pašić's Radicals even yesterday, and now they're turning to the Independent Radicals. And it has been going on for 25 years. All of us who fight against radicalism and its theories will remain a minority. The Radicals quarrel, splinter and make mistakes, but people stay at their side."²⁶ The king was disappointed at the Independents' victory because he had expected a decisive majority for one Radical party, which would have ensured a stable and continuous functioning of the National Assembly.²⁷

All in all, the Independent Radicals won 81 seats, the Old Radicals 55 seats, the Nationals 17, the Progressives four, the Socialists two, and the Peasants' Concord one seat; which means that their 38.4 per cent of votes brought the Independent Radicals 50.6 per cent of the total number of seats. The situation produced by the use of the largest remainder method – meaning that the votes for the parties that remained below the quota prescribed for a constituency were allotted to the party-list which won most votes – was slammed by the political opponents of the Radicals, above all the Progressives and the Nationals (Liberals), as a "vote robbery" and a "proof of the Radicals' Jacobinism".²⁸ On account of the clause on the use of the electoral quotient the voting system functioned in practice as a majority rather than as a proportional one. The electoral system forced the weakened Nationals (Liberals) to form a pre-election coalition, and in the only electoral district where they had failed to win a seat at the previous election; their joint party list brought them two seats. It was the first, if modest, sign of future alliances.

The sitting of the Assembly in 1905 was one of the most productive in the post-1903 period: the government submitted 74 proposals, of which 51 concerned public finances and the economy; members of parliament submitted 96

²⁵ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 4, no. 94, Belgrade, le 1 août 1905.

²⁶ *Srbija* no. 33, Belgrade, 13[26] July 1905.

²⁷ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 4, no. 98, Belgrade, le 8 août 1905. For more detail see D. Djordjević, "The 1905 Parliamentary Crisis in Serbia", *Balkanica* XLVII (2016), 197–216.

²⁸ Olga Popović-Obradović, "Političke stranke i izbori u Kraljevini Srbiji 1903–1914: Prilog istoriji stranačkog pluralizma", in *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima XX veka* (Belgrade: Institut za noviju istoriju, 1994), 333–348.

proposals, and 197 interpellations to the government. The ministers replied to 50 interpellations.

The election campaign in 1906 was vigorous and conducted with unprecedented fierceness because the Independent Radicals now, after the definitive split from the Old Radicals, entered a battle in which the latter showed little mercy. The opposition parties accused the Pašić government of abuse of power and unacceptable political pressures, the accusation that continued to resonate even after the election. Of a total of 520,000 voters, 376,796 cast their ballots. Of these, 166,354 went to the Old Radicals, 109,945 to the Independent Radicals, 45,907 to the Nationals (Liberals), 28,640 to the Progressives, and 3,212 to the Socialists.²⁹ The clause on the election quotient made the Old Radicals' 13 per cent advantage (a 55 per cent victory) over the Independent Radicals into 27.5 per cent. Finally, they had 91 seats, the Independent Radicals 47, the Nationals (Liberals) and the Progressives each had five seats, and the Socialists had one, whereas the Peasants' Concord failed to enter Parliament.³⁰

The Parliament elected in 1906 showed that a stable parliament majority, believed to be a requisite for the successful pursuit of government policies, was not enough in itself.³¹ Even though the efforts of Old Radical leaders to enforce party discipline on their MPs had more success than those of other parties, there still were irregular attendees or those who voted contrary to the party line, thereby weakening the position of the party and the government. The latter group ("les radicaux intrasigeants") was characteristic of both Radical parties because small differences between the two in ideology and the tradition of voting in keeping with personal convictions undermined even the sizeable majority of about a dozen seats. Between the autumn of 1904 and the spring of 1905 the Old Radicals had managed to win over six Independent Radical MPs and, on top of it, their leader Ljubomir Živković.³² The Independent Radicals, on the other hand, had managed in early 1906 to bring around General Sava Grujić and another six Old Radical MPs to their side.

In 1906/7 four government proposals were submitted to the Assembly, five proposals by MPs, and there were also 28 interpellations and 75 questions from MPs. None of the proposed bills was enacted into law. Faced with a homogeneous Old Radical majority, the opposition, availing itself of the opportunity

²⁹ AMAE, NS, vol. 5, Serbie, no. 103, Belgrade, le 27 juin 1906.

³⁰ Ibid. The Assembly elected in 1906 voted twice to verify the mandates of Old Radical MPs. Between six and eight MPs gave up their seats and were replaced by the next candidates on the appropriate election lists, which did not affect the balance of forces among the parties. Cf. PRO, FO, 881/9254, Annual Report 1907, chap. IV: Parliamentary Proceedings.

³¹ PRO, FO, 371/130, no. 58, Belgrade, 16 October 1906.

³² The winning over of Živković, by then already with little influence among the Independent Radicals who were informally led by Ljuba Stojanović, would turn out to be a miscalculated move because it did not cause dissent among the Independent Radicals.

provided by the Rules of Procedure, resorted to parliamentary obstruction as the only way to stop the government from carrying out its programme.³³

Local election held in December 1907 gave the opposition further reason for discontent on account of pressures exerted by the government.³⁴ The opposition resorted to obstruction again in March 1908, calling for the dissolution of the Assembly and a new general election. It was believed that without government pressure exerted through the police, which had marked the election in 1906, the distribution of parliamentary seats might be different. The obstruction was overtly joined by the Nationals (Liberals), whose leader Vojislav Veljković in an open letter to the king made it clear that he would be considered the king of a party unless he supported the demand for the dissolution of the Assembly and new elections. One of the Independent Radical leaders, Jaša Prodanović, in a series of articles, sought to justify the demand with the argument that an “outlawed minority” has a legitimate right to use obstruction and, if that method fails, even “revolution”.³⁵

Even though the common opposition towards Pašić’s caretaker government gave rise to the expectations that a new pre-election coalition with Independent Radicals would be formed, that did not happen because the parties could not agree on a common election platform and the distribution of seats. A small coalition, an important novelty in Serbian post-1903 parliamentary history, was brought into being by the agreement between the Progressives and the Nationals (Liberals) whose common platform amounted to anti-radicalism. In the 1908 election held on 31 May and 7 June (second round), the Old Radicals won 175,667 votes or 84 seats, and the Independent Radicals 125,131 votes or 48 seats. The public had finally begun to perceive the two Radical parties as two separate political blocs.³⁶ The Socialists remained at one seat, and the Peasants’ Concord left the political scene for good. As a result of the strengthening of the non-Radical opposition, the distribution of seats corresponded more to the numbers of the votes won.

Contrary to expectations, the joint list of Progressives and Nationals, who had teamed up motivated by the assessment that “radicalism is experiencing an abrupt decline” and that an “anti-radical majority is no longer impossible”,

³³ Georges Pavlovitch, “Serbie. Notice générale sur les travaux de l’Assemblée nationale en 1905”, *Annuaire de législation étrangère* (Paris: Société de législation comparée) Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence 1906), 547–554.

³⁴ PRO, FO, 881/954, Annual Report 1907, chap. IV: Parliamentary Proceedings.

³⁵ *Odjek* nos. 51, 53 and 54, Belgrade, 8 February/13 March, 3/16 March and 4/17 March 1908, respectively.

³⁶ Georges Pavlovitch, “Serbie. Notice générale sur les travaux de la Skoupchtina et les lois promulguées en 1908”, *Annuaire de législation étrangère* (Paris: Société de législation comparée) Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence 1909), 620–627.

won 65,605 votes. (The separate lists of the former won 16,449, and of the latter 11,855 votes.) Of their 27 seats, 20 went to the Progressives, and seven to the Nationals. In comparison with their results in the 1903 election, these two parties recorded an increase of 11 seats.³⁷ The Socialists remained at one seat, and the Peasants' Concord disappeared from the political scene of Serbia for good. As a result of the strengthening of the non-Radical opposition, the distribution of seats reflected more closely the number of votes won.³⁸

According to the opposition, the election once again took place in an atmosphere of pressure by local officials and police. It was therefore expected that the opposition, being somewhat stronger, would continue to apply obstruction to hamper the work of the government led again by Nikola P. Pašić.³⁹ Since the Old Radicals saw their four-seat majority as too thin to escape obstruction, they reached a compromise with the Independent Radicals: the Pašić cabinet stepped down, and on 20 July a moderate Old Radical, Petar (Pera) Velimirović, put together a new government.⁴⁰ The Independent Radical leadership's decision to join the Velimirović cabinet was explained to the party membership by the need to create the conditions for a new election which would be free from political influence and police pressure. Before that, it was necessary to settle the issue of the government budget and of a trade agreement with Austria-Hungary. The Liberals and Progressives had also negotiated about joining the government in a bid to overcome their chronic marginalisation, but they lacked the numerical strength to rival the Independent Radicals.⁴¹

The election that the Independent Radicals expected would take place in a few months was postponed until as late as April 1912 by the onset of the Annexation crisis in October 1908. The Assembly elected in 1908 was the longest-serving one in the period between 1903 and 1914, it coped with the Annexation crisis in 1908/9, and it was the only that served nearly the whole constitutional term four years.⁴²

³⁷ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 51, Belgrade, le 11 juin 1908.

³⁸ With a similar number of votes to that won in the 1906 election the Old Radicals now saw a decline of seven seats because the Progressive-National coalition took six seats, and the Independent Radicals won a seat more. For more see Radul Veljković, *Statistički pregled izbora narodnih poslanika za 1903, 1905, 1906, 1908. godinu* (Belgrade: Izdanje Narodne skupštine, 1912).

³⁹ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 58, Belgrade, le 29 juin 1908.

⁴⁰ Arhiv SANU [Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade], no. 7940; Georges Pavlovitch, "Serbie. Notice générale sur les travaux de la Skoupchtina et les lois promulguées en 1908", 625–626.

⁴¹ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 62, Belgrade, le 19 juillet 1908.

⁴² Alex N. Dragnich, *The Development of Parliamentary Government in Serbia* (Boulder: East European monographs, 1978; distributed by Columbia University Press), 95–114.

The coalition of two Radical parties lasted until June 1911. By then some important new legislation had been in place: from the law on elections to the rules of procedure of the Assembly which considerably narrowed the room for obstructionism. Faced with the strengthening of the Radical bloc, which effectively exercised the executive and legislative powers despite constant internal friction, the Progressives and Nationals (Liberals) sought to establish the necessary balance of political power by resorting to new forms of collaboration, which culminated in an attempt to create a firm “anti-radical” agreement in 1910. The announcement of the “fusion” of Progressives and Nationals into a conservative bloc envisaged to take place before the next election was received well by both party memberships,⁴³ but the negotiations unexpectedly ran aground over a doctrinal issue. The Progressives insisted on a constitutional reform to introduce an upper house, whereas the Nationals (Liberals) were adamant in rejecting it as incompatible with their fundamental political tenets.⁴⁴ Instead of the announced organisational fusion, the relationship between the two parties remained where it had been brought by political necessity, a pre-election coalition.⁴⁵

On the other hand, the Radical coalition operated with increasing difficulty because the Old Radicals were skilful in using the thin parliamentary majority to marginalise the Independent Radicals and push their own bills through the Legislature. Independent Radical supporters in the interior of the country were aware that the party was losing its *raison d'être* before the much better organised and far more disciplined Old Radical party machinery, and that it acted inefficiently in the legislative process: for example, the adoption of changes to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly limiting the possibility of obstructionism which the Independent Radicals had hitherto used with much success.⁴⁶

A four-party coalition government with party leaders as cabinet ministers was in office from 24 February to 24 October 1909, a period when tremendous pressures resulted eventually, in March, in recognition of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. After the external challenges ended, the coalition which had little authority and was marked by the rivalry of two Radical parties fell apart on internal political issues: the apportionment of civil service positions

⁴³ PRO, FO, 371/982, no. 11, Belgrade, 3 February 1910.

⁴⁴ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 114, Belgrade, le 24 octobre 1910.

⁴⁵ Georges Pavlovitch, “Serbie. Notice générale sur les travaux de la Skoupchtina et les lois promulguées en 1910”, *Annuaire de législation étrangère* (Paris: Société de législation comparée, 1911); Popović-Obradović, “Političke stranke i izbori u Kraljevini Srbiji 1903–1914”, 341.

⁴⁶ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 65, Belgrade, le 18 juin 1910.

among parties.⁴⁷ After the formation of a new government led by Milovan Dj. Milovanović on 7 July 1911, the balance of power in Parliament could for some time be maintained only owing to the “great restraint” of the Independent Radicals who considered the new prime minister a moderate politician noticeably sympathetic to their political tenets.⁴⁸ Despite the Liberals’ harsh attacks against the Milovanović cabinet over inter-party clashes which had left a few dead in their wake in the interior of the country, the Independent Radicals abstained from vote of no confidence which would have led to a new election.

A new election did not, however, bring the Old Radicals the desired stable majority. Pašić’s assessment that the dissolution of the Assembly, for which he had trouble obtaining the king’s assent, would secure such a majority proved wrong.⁴⁹ Electoral support to both Radical parties dropped by 5.5 per cent in comparison with the previous election, and slid below 70 per cent of the total number of voters for the first time since 1903. The Radicals also had a separate dissident list which practically repeated the 1908 results (a total of 44.1 per cent). Insignificant shifts within the electorate showed not only the people’s weariness of frequent elections but also a certain amount of dissatisfaction, above all with the Radicals. Yet, owing to the latter’s strong tradition and efficient organisation, their position remained relatively stable.

Of 166 parliamentary seats – the number varied from one election to another, growing with the growth of the electorate – the Old Radicals under the leadership of Nikola Pašić took 84 plus seven dissident seats, the Independent Radicals had 38 seats, the Nationals (Liberals) 22, the Progressives 12, and the Socialists two seats. With a total of 91 seats the Old Radicals only had a weak majority, and Milovan Dj. Milovanović, the former prime minister, grumbled to the French minister about the election system which made it impossible to establish a stable majority.⁵⁰

Obstructionism was one of the main features of parliamentary life in Serbia in 1903–1914, but it did not become a significant practice until 1907, when it was used by the Independent Radical MPs with tacit support from the Progressives and National (Liberals). After a while, the method proved effective. By countless interpellations and extended debates, the opposition delayed the progress of parliamentary business, forcing the extension of one year’s budget into the following year. The practice strengthened the habit of dissolving the As-

⁴⁷ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 64, Belgrade, le 20 juillet 1910. On the coalition in detail see D. Djordjević, “Obrazovanje i raspad četvorne koalicije u Srbiji 1909. godine”, *Istorijski časopis XI* (1960), 213–230.

⁴⁸ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 94, Belgrade, le 11 juillet 1911.

⁴⁹ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 56, Belgrade, le 2 mai 1912.

⁵⁰ AMAE, NS, Serbie, vol. 5, no. 53, Belgrade, le 22 avril 1912.

sembly and holding new elections as a way out of the blockade, which resulted in the frequent change of government and chronic governmental instability.⁵¹

There were other practices that departed from constitutional procedures. Stojan M. Protić, for example, had in the late 1880s advocated the French model of the budget process as opposed to the one laid down in the Constitution of 1888, and after 1903, the practice adopted in the British House of Commons, which had already largely given up control of the government's budget policy.⁵² The purpose of raising the question of the budget was not parliamentary control of the government; it was only a means for bringing it down for completely different reasons. When there was a compromise between two strongest parliamentary parties, as in December 1908, the Assembly, at the request of the finance minister, extended that year's budget indefinitely, i.e. until the adoption of a new budget. In 1912, the Assembly adopted only the total amount of the budget, leaving it to the government to allocate it as it saw fit.⁵³

Conclusion

Parliamentary democracy in Serbia in the period between the May Coup of 1903 and the beginning of the First World War in 1914 was, as compellingly shown by the regular and very detailed reports of the diplomatic representatives of two exemplary democracies, Great Britain and France, functional and fully accommodated to the requirements of democratic governance. Some shortcomings, which were reflected in the influence of extra-constitutional ("irresponsible") factors, such as the group of conspirators from 1903 or their younger wing from 1911 (the organisation Unification or Death), occasionally made Serbian democracy fragile but it nonetheless remained functional at all levels of government.

A comparison with crises such as those taking place in, for example, France clearly shows that Serbia, although perceived as "a rural democracy" and "the poor man's paradise", was a constitutional and democratic state, and that it was precisely its political freedoms and liberation aspirations that made it a focal point for the rallying of South-Slavic peoples on the eve of the Great War. Had there been no firm constitutional boundaries of the parliamentary monarchy and the democratic system, Serbia would have hardly been able to cope with

⁵¹ Jaša Prodanović, "Odlaganje Narodne skupštine", *Srpski književni glasnik* XVIII (1913).

⁵² Vojislav S. Jovanović, "Parlamentarna hronika", *Arhiv za pravne i društvene nauke* XIII (1913), 54–56; see also Vladislav Koyitch, *Le Contrôle du budget en Serbie*, Thèse pour le doctorat, Paris 1920.

⁵³ Milan M. Stojadinović, "Budžet za 1913. godinu", *Arhiv za pravne i društvene nauke* XVI (1914), 74–78.

a series of political and economic challenges which followed one another after 1903: the Tariff War 1906–11; the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina 1908/9; the Balkan Wars 1912–13; the crisis in the summer of 1914 caused by the so-called Order of Precedence Decree, i.e. by the underlying conflict between civilian and military authorities.⁵⁴ The Periclean age of Serbia, aired with full political freedoms and sustained cultural and scientific progress is one of the most important periods in the history of modern Serbian democracy.

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⁵⁴ D. T. Bataković, “La Main Noire (1911–1917): l’armée serbe entre démocratie et autoritarisme” *Revue d’histoire diplomatique* 2 (1998), 95–144.

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Activities of Father Nikolai Velimirovich¹ in Great Britain during the Great War

Abstract: Nikolai Velimirovich was one of the most influential bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the twentieth century. His stay in Britain in 1908/9 influenced his theological views and made him a proponent of an Anglican-Orthodox church reunion. As a known proponent of close relations between different Christian churches, he was sent by the Serbian Prime Minister Pašić to the United States (1915) and Britain (1915–1919) to work on promoting Serbia and the cause of Yugoslav unity. His activities in both countries were very successful. In Britain he closely collaborated with the Serbian Relief Fund and “British friends of Serbia” (R. W. Seton-Watson, Henry Wickham Steed and Sir Arthur Evans). Other Serbian intellectuals in London, particularly the brothers Bogdan and Pavle Popović, were in occasional collision with the members of the Yugoslav Committee over the nature of the future Yugoslav state. In contrast, Velimirovich remained committed to the cause of Yugoslav unity throughout the war with only rare moments of doubt. Unlike most other Serbs and Yugoslavs in London Father Nikolai never grew unsympathetic to the Serbian Prime Minister Pašić, although he did not share all of his views. In London he befriended the churchmen of the Church of England who propagated ecclesiastical reunion and were active in the Anglican and Eastern Association. These contacts allowed him to preach at St. Margaret’s Church, Westminster and other prominent Anglican churches. He became such a well-known and respected preacher that, in July 1917, he had the honour of being the first Orthodox clergyman to preach at St. Paul’s Cathedral. He was given the same honour in December 1919. By the end of the war he had very close relations with the highest prelates of the Church of England, the Catholic cardinal of Westminster, and with prominent clergymen of the Church of Scotland and other Protestant churches in Britain. Based on Velimirovich’s correspondence preserved in Belgrade and London archives, and on very wide coverage of his activities in *The Times*, in local British newspapers, and particularly in the Anglican journal *The Church Times*, this paper describes and analyses his wide-ranging activities in Britain. The Church of England supported him wholeheartedly in most of his activities and made him a celebrity in Britain during the Great War. It was thanks to this Church that some dozen of his pamphlets and booklets were published in London during the Great War. What made his relations with the Church of England so close was his commitment to the question of reunion of Orthodox churches with the Anglican Church. He suggested the reunion for the first time in 1909 and remained committed to it throughout the Great War. Analysing the activities of Father Nikolai, the paper also offers a survey of the very wide-ranging forms of help that the Church of England provided both to the Serbian Orthodox Church and to Serbs in

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¹ His name is also sometimes spelled Nicholai or Nicholas in English, and Nikolaj in Serbian. His family name is also spelled Velimirovic or Velimirović, and Velimirovitch in French. The form used in this text – Nikolai Velimirovich is the one that he used himself when he signed his affidavit following the Second World War.

general during the Great War. Most of these activities were channelled through him. Thus, by the end of the Great War he became a symbol of Anglican-Orthodox rapprochement.

Keywords: Father Nikolai Velimirovich (Velimirović), pro-Serbian and pro-Yugoslav propaganda in Britain, reunion of the Orthodox churches and the Church of England

Nikolai Velimirovich (1881–1956) is the most influential churchman in the Serbian culture of the twentieth century. Ever since the 1910s when he published his first works he has ranked among the most popular authors in Serbia. His anticommunist position made him half-proscribed during the communist era in Yugoslavia, and he spent the last eleven years of his life in exile in the United States. The Serbian Orthodox Church canonised him in May 2003.² Some of his occasional statements made in the 1930s and particularly a book written in 1945, but published only posthumously in 1985, include anti-Semitic paragraphs. This gave rise to harsh criticisms,³ but later studies have placed his late anti-Semitic statements in their historical context.⁴

The main line that he advocated in inter-church relations was very liberal and focused on religious Christian ecumenism and a cooperation of the Apostolic churches, particularly between the Church of England and the Orthodox churches. In his early writings he advocated close cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church as well. Within the Serbian Orthodox Church he demonstrated a very unique interest often followed by admiration for the religious traditions of India and the Far East, for Hinduism as well as Buddhism. All these views earned him a range of opponents and enemies both within the ranks of the Serbian Orthodox Church and among mainstream authors of various backgrounds.⁵ Surprisingly, even some leftist authors pointed out his lack of Chris-

² His feast day is celebrated on 3 May. Radovan Bigović, s. v. "Velimirović, Nikolaj (Nikola)", *Srpski biografski rečnik*, vol. 2 (Novi Sad: Marica srpska, 2006), 122.

³ For this harsh criticism see Jovan Byford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism: Post-Communist Remembrance of the Serbian Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2008).

⁴ See a well-elaborated contextualisation by Zoran Milutinović, *Getting over Europe. The Construction of Europe in Serbian Culture* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2011), 147–168. The best historical work on the subject is Milan Koljanin, *Jevreji i antisemitizam u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji 1918–1941* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2008), 332–343. Koljanin demonstrates that from the end of 1939, as the war approached, both Bishop Nikolai and Patriarch Gavriilo of Serbia publicly supported the Jewish community. Some of their statements were even censored in the Yugoslav press, since the Yugoslav authorities sought to avoid any conflict with the Third Reich at that point. On this matter see also Bojan Aleksov, "Jovan Byford, *Denial and Repression...*", *American Historical Review* 114, no. 5 (Dec. 2009), 1568–1569.

⁵ In 1926 Dimitrije Kirilović claimed: "The faith of Njegoš and Mr. Velimirović, taken as a whole, may not be considered to be the faith of the Church, and therefore they have excluded themselves, since the Church itself has not done it." In his sermon delivered in December 1939, Platon Jovanović, Bishop of Bitolj and Ohrid, attacked Bishop Nikolai, implying that

tian Orthodox dogmatism.⁶ Both his ecumenism and his concept of panhumanism reached their climax during his stay in Great Britain and the United States in the course of the Great War, from 1915 to 1919. Concomitantly with that he developed a very systematic and rather successful pro-Serbian and pro-Yugoslav propaganda effort in Britain and the United States of America.

This paper is focused on Velimirovich's work and activities until 1919. The theologian and philosopher Bogdan Lubardić has identified three phases in the development of Velimirovich's ideas: the pre-Ohrid phase (1902–1919), the Ohrid phase (1920–1936), and the post-Ohrid phase (1936–1956). Taking the years 1919/20 as the main dividing line in Velimirovich's thought, he has also offered a more general division into the pre-Ohrid and post-Ohrid periods. While the first period of Velimirovich's ideas was pro-Western, the one that ensued was Orthodox and directed towards the East, but was also "above the East and the West".⁷ This paper, therefore, analyses the pre-Ohrid phase of Nikolai Velimirovich, which was pro-Western and increasingly Anglophile.

Studies abroad and the first stay in Britain

Velimirovich attended the grammar school in Valjevo from 1892 to 1898, and then a theological school in Belgrade from 1898 to 1902. During his studies at the Theological School he was co-opted into the circle of the priest Aleksa Ilić, the leader of the ecclesiastical reformist opposition and editor of the very influential journal *Hrišćanski vesnik* [Christian Herald]. Ilić took him under his wing and supported him in every possible way. By joining this circle Velimirovich became a part of the reformist church movement which was in open conflict with Archbishop Dimitrije of Serbia, and with the church hierarchy in Serbia. That essentially meant that he was now a part of the opposition to the "Russophile class", the main line in the Serbian Church in Serbia at the time.⁸ This opposi-

he was a sectarian and a heretic. *Politika*, 28 Dec. 1939, p. 12. Milan D. Janković, *Episkop Nikolaj. Život, misao i delo*, vol. 2 (Belgrade: Bishopric of Šabac and Valjevo, 2002), 672 and 697–699.

⁶ Jovan Skerlić (1911) claimed that Velimirovich had the "conscience of a Protestant" and the "imagination of a Catholic" and advised him that he should not read Renan if he wished to have a career in the Church. Svetislav Marić (1925) held that Velimirovich's All-Man was not identical to biblical Christ, but to a version of Christ combined with elements of Buddha and Socrates. Janković, *Episkop Nikolaj*, vol. 2, 15 and 668.

⁷ Bogdan Lubardić, "Nikolaj Velimirović 1903–1914", in M. Ković, ed., *Srbi 1903–1914. Istorija ideja* (Belgrade: Clio, 2015), 328.

⁸ See notes of Jovan Velimirovic on Nikolai Velimirovich in Janković, *Episkop Nikolai*, vol. 1, 6.

tion enjoyed the support of many political circles, including the Serbian court and King Peter Karageorgevich.

Nikola Velimirovich wanted to continue his studies, and under the influence of Ilić insisted to be sent to the West. He first went to the University of Halle, where he stayed from November 1905 to August 1906. Then he attended the Old Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Bern in Switzerland from October 1906 to July 1908.⁹ In July 1908 he obtained a D.D. degree *summa cum laude* in Bern with his dissertation entitled “The Resurrection of Christ as the fundamental dogma of the Apostolic Church”, under the supervision of the Bishop of the Old Catholic Church, Eduard Herzog (1841–1924).¹⁰ When he returned to Belgrade in July 1908, he again wanted to continue his studies in the West and in spite of the opposition of the Serbian Church he secured another stipend through the Ministry of Education and owing to the connections of Aleksa Ilić. This time he went to England.

He arrived in Britain for the first time on 3 November 1908, and found lodging at 38 Sinclair Road, W. in London. A letter to his family informs us that his English was very limited. He complained about Englishmen: “Those who do not speak their language cannot communicate with them. I have a smattering of it and it is not easy. I have to sit down and study.”¹¹ Only scarce documents from this phase in his life have been preserved. Some of his surviving notes may date from this period. They contain quotes in English from George Tyrrell (1861–1909),¹² an Irish Catholic excommunicated from the Catholic Church for his modernist views in the same year when Velimirovich arrived in London. The notes reveal his interests in reformist and modernist theology. Archbishop Dimitrije cancelled his stipend previously approved by the Ministry of Education and he managed to stay in Britain only owing to the financial aid of his friends from the *Hrišćanski vesnik* and some minor help of his father’s. On 3 May 1909, Nikola Velimirovich wrote to the dean of the Faculty of Humanities in Bern from London explaining that after he had obtained the D.D. degree in Bern he went to London, “where I visited the great library of the ‘British Museum’ and prepared myself for the examination in the historical-philosophical section.”¹³

⁹ Urs von Arx, “Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović (1880–1956) and his Studies in Bern within the Context of the Old Catholic-Serbian Orthodox Relationship”, *Serbian Studies* 20/2 (2006), 312, n. 18.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 314.

¹¹ Arhiv Srbije [Archives of Serbia; hereafter: AS], Fonds NV – 19, pp. 1–2.

¹² AS, Fonds NV – 11, pp. 2–4.

¹³ Von Arx, “Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović”, 315. “Examination” refers to his second doctoral dissertation in Bern.

He continued learning English even after his departure from England, and he took a course in English syntax in Bern in the summer term of 1909.¹⁴

His first appearance in the British media took place in March 1909. In the leading Anglican weekly in the United Kingdom, *The Guardian*, the Anglican theologian Leighton Pullan published an article entitled "Problems of Reunion with the East", stating: "We believe, as there is one Christ, so there is one Church." At the end of the article in which Pullan discussed major theological differences between the two churches, he expressed his belief that "the East would move to meet the West".¹⁵ Velimirovich reacted to this piece: "I should say that it is not an agreement on the problem of the *Filioque* or of Transubstantiation that is absolutely necessary in order to bring about reunion, but before all else an *entente cordiale*." He was quite confident that the union was actually at hand: "The Eastern and Anglican Churches have already, therefore, in their existing confessions of faith a completely sufficient doctrinal foundation, not on which a union ought to be based, but on which it is actually based and actually exists." For him the key issue of the reunion was not about theological issues but about *entente cordiale* or *unium cordium*, and in line with that he ended his reply with the following question: "Is not love mightier than the knowledge of the deepest mysteries?"¹⁶ Leighton Pullan replied to this and clarified that in his opinion both union of hearts and understanding of mutual differences were needed.¹⁷ The most important aspect of this opinion exchange is that Velimirovich appeared as a fervent proponent of the reunion of the Eastern Orthodox Churches with the Church of England and other churches as early as 1909.

From England, he again went to Switzerland, where he obtained another doctoral degree (PhD) in June 1909, and then returned to Belgrade.¹⁸ In 1909 he published a series of articles on Western theology in the *Hrišćanski vesnik*. They dealt with Catholic modernism, the work of the Anglican Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott, and the theories of Cardinal Newman.¹⁹ His knowledge of and sympathy for Catholic modernism and Anglican theology are clearly expressed

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Leighton Pullan, "Problems of Reunion with the East", *Guardian* no. 3296, 3 Feb. 1909, 171.

¹⁶ Nikola Velimirovitch D.D., "Problems of Reunion with the East", *Guardian* no. 3300, 3 March 1909, 340–341.

¹⁷ Leighton Pullan, "Reunion with the East", *Guardian* no. 3301, 10 Mar. 1909, 398.

¹⁸ Von Arx, "Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović", 314–315. Prota Aleksa Ilić, *Moji doživljaji sa dr. Nikolajem Velimirovićem i dr. Vojom Janjićem* (Belgrade: Private edition, 1938), 9–10.

¹⁹ N. Velimirović, "Velika kriza u rimokatolicizmu", *Hrišćanski vesnik* [hereafter: HV] (Jan. 1909), 17–37; N. Velimirović, "Njuman i njegova teorija", HV (March 1909), 186–203; N. Velimirović, "Anglikanski episkop Vestkot. Jedna glava iz engleske modern teologije", HV (July-Aug. 1909), 533–543, HV (Sep. 1909), 625–638.

in these articles. When George Tyrrell died, the *Hrišćanski vesnik* published a very sympathetic obituary, which was probably written, or at least inspired, by Velimirovich.²⁰

It is sometimes claimed, without any evidence, that he spent the academic year 1908/9 at the University of Oxford and that he prepared a dissertation on George Berkeley there which he supposedly defended later in Geneva, or that he was awarded a PhD in London.²¹ Swiss library catalogues confirm that he indeed defended two doctoral dissertations and that both were published in Bern in 1910, but the second treats a quite different topic from the one usually mentioned. The first is on the resurrection of Christ.²² The second, however, is entitled “French-Slavic Struggle in Bocca di Cattaro [Boka Kotorska] from 1806 to 1810”²³ and it was submitted to the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Bern as his “Inaugural-Dissertation” for obtaining a PhD. His second doctoral degree was obtained in June 1909, again with *magna cum laude*, from the Faculty of Humanities in Bern under the supervision of Prof. Philipp Woker.²⁴ He left a testimony about some of his inner feelings during his studies. In a sermon delivered in 1927 at St. Luke’s, Camberwell, Velimirovich recalled: “I remember that when I was a student of Philosophy in Germany I was very much confused by all that was written of Philosophy. I was almost at the verge of suicide, as are many young people of today...”²⁵

On 4 December 1909, Velimirovich took his monastic vows and changed his name from Nikola to Nikolai.²⁶ It was precisely in that year that the dispute between the *Hrišćanski vesnik* and Archbishop Dimitrije²⁷ reached its peak and

²⁰ HV (Oct. 1909), 768.

²¹ Notes of Jovan Velimirovic on Nikolai Velimirovich, 10. When Velimirovich became Bishop of Žiča in 1919, the ecclesiastical journal *Vesnik*, which, in a way, continued the traditions of the *Hrišćanski vesnik*, published his biography, claiming that he had defended a PhD on “Philosophy of Berkeley” in London. “Dr. Nikolaj Velimirović. Episkop žički”, *Vesnik. Crkveno-politički i društveni list* no. 6 (25 May 1919), 1.

²² Nicola Velimirovitch, *Der Glaube an die Auferstehung Christi als Grunddogma des apostolischen Kirche* (Bern 1910).

²³ Nicola Velimirovitch, *Französisch-slavische Kämpfe in der Bocca di Cattaro, 1806–1814* (Bern: Gottfr. Iseli, 1910).

²⁴ Von Arx, “Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović”, 315–316; HV (June 1909), 480.

²⁵ The sermon was delivered on 13 November 1927, and its content has been preserved in the Papers of Canon J. A. Douglas at Lambeth Palace Library. It has been quoted at length in Muriel Heppell, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirović, The Story of a Friendship* (Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2001), 31.

²⁶ HV (Dec. 1909), 926.

²⁷ Dimitrije Pavlović was Archbishop of Serbia from 1905 to 1920. In 1879 the Serbian Orthodox Church in Serbia became autocephalous and since then its head was titled “Archbishop of Belgrade and Metropolitan of Serbia.” In 1920 the Archbishopric of Serbia was

the journal published severe attacks on the Archbishop in each of its monthly issues. It was therefore not surprising that after his return to Belgrade Velimirovich faced an inimical church hierarchy which did whatever it could to prevent the post-validation of his D.D. and PhD degrees. Without at least one of the two degrees being post-validated, he could not apply for a teaching position. Apparently, he had to take some additional exams. It appears from his correspondence with Bishop Eduard Herzog that he expressed willingness to return to Bern to obtain habilitation, which would entitle him to become *Privatdozent* (university lecturer). Only Herzog's reply dated 3 January 1910 has been preserved, which means that Velimirovich wrote to him at the end of 1909.²⁸

He was finally appointed as junior lecturer (*suplent*) at the Seminary in Belgrade in October 1910. The sermon he held on St. Stephen's Day in 1910 (9 January) in Belgrade Cathedral had made him very popular. King Peter came to hear it, and those in attendance were so pleased that they shouted "Long live!" at the end of his sermon.²⁹ The sermon caused a sensation and was spoken of in Belgrade as an event of the highest cultural significance. Archbishop Dimitrije and other church dignitaries were very upset. They believed that Velimirovich's activities "introduced the Protestant spirit into the Serbian Church".³⁰ His articles on Catholic modernism and Anglican teachings in the *Hrišćanski vesnik* could only have strengthened such views. As a result, he was sent to Sankt Petersburg in Russia to become "more Orthodox" and he stayed there from January 1910 to May 1911.³¹ It was upon his return from Russia that he could take the position at St. Sava Seminary in Belgrade.

It was in 1911 that he published his book *Religija Njegoševa* (The Religion of Njegoš). It analyses the religious and theological views of Peter II Petrovich (1813–1851, Prince of Montenegro from 1830, Metropolitan of Montenegro from 1833), Montenegrin Prince-Bishop who has been considered the greatest Serbian poet. His play *The Mountain Wreath* (*Gorski Vijenac*) was immensely popular both in Serbia and Yugoslavia. In 1930 Vladeta Popović wrote: "*The Mountain Wreath* has had a success unparalleled by any other work in Serbo-

raised to the status of Patriarchate and Dimitrije became the first patriarch of the united Serbian Church (1920–1930).

²⁸ Von Arx, "Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović", 318.

²⁹ HV (Dec. 1909), 926.

³⁰ Notes of Jovan Velimirović on Nikolai Velimirovich, 12.

³¹ *Hrišćanski vesnik* published the information both about his departure for Russia and about his return: HV (Jan. 1910), 72; and HV (May 1911), 394. It seems that, in November 1910, he had to briefly return to Belgrade to take up the position of lecturer at the Theological Seminary. HV (Nov. 1910), 830.

Croatian literature.”³² This assessment was confirmed in later decades.³³ Therefore a re-evaluation of Njegoš could only have drawn a lot of attention and a potential storm of criticism. Velimirovich demonstrated that the views of the Prince-Bishop were quite unorthodox, especially those expressed in his poem *Luča mikrokozma* (The Ray of the Microcosm). At one point he even equated Njegoš’s teachings with those of Zarathustra (Zoroaster). Even so, he expressed much admiration for the poet. The way the book is written can easily lead the reader to think that the young monk sympathises too openly even with some heretical views of his favourite poet, who was an Orthodox bishop at the time he published his poems! Some of Velimirovich’s assessments of Njegoš inevitably strike us as speaking of his own inner world more than of the poet himself and as being his own projections more than analytical observations about the poetry of Njegoš. Thus, he says of him: “Njegoš is both an artist and a moralist, a sceptic and a theist, a pessimist and an optimist, a Darwinist and a Bible-believer.”³⁴ During his studies abroad, Velimirovich had become a true erudite and his learning is evident almost in every page of the book. That his stay in Britain left a clear mark on this work may be seen from the fact that he quotes or mentions Charles Dickens, Lord Byron, John Milton, Charles Darwin, Thomas Carlyle, Shakespeare and George Berkeley.

In 1910 the *Hrišćanski vesnik* published the news that Velimirovich had been offered the position of assistant professor (*dozent*) at the Theological Faculty in Bern and the position of editor of the *Revue Intenationale de Théologie*.³⁵ Bishop Herzog indeed wrote to him on 30 September 1910, asking him if he would be willing to assume the editorship of the journal.³⁶ Velimirovich must have mentioned this to his colleagues at the *Hrišćanski vesnik* and they immediately made use of it and published the news, clearly aiming to contrast young and promising theologians who had no positions in the Serbian Church with the Serbian episcopate, which was depicted by the Belgrade journal in a very unfavourable light. Another contributor to the *Hrišćanski vesnik* was Čedomir Marjanović, who had also earned a D.D. degree in Bern in 1904, and was also targeted by the episcopate and even suspended in 1910.

³² Vladeta Popović, “Introduction”, in P. P. Nyegosh, *The Mountain Wreath* by P. P. Nyegosh. Prince-Bishop of Montenegro, transl. James W. Wiles (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1930), 11.

³³ *Mountain Wreath* “is rightly considered the highest achievement in poetry among the South Slavs” (Dragiša Živković, “Romantizam u srpskoj književnosti”, in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. V-2 (Belgrade: SKZ, 1994), 406).

³⁴ Nikolaj Velimirović, *Religija Njegoševa* (Belgrade: Štamparija “Sveti Sava”, 1911), 77.

³⁵ HV (Oct. 1910), 746.

³⁶ Von Arx, “Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović”, 320.

Upon his return from Russia, Velimirovich continued with his enormously popular sermons in Belgrade. He was openly supported both by the *Hrišćanski vesnik* and by King Peter, who continued to attend his sermons, but also by some politicians. In 1913 he was appointed Bishop of Niš. The appointment probably came as a result of mediation by secular authorities, which insisted on the Serbian Church including young and educated bishops into its ranks. Yet, to everyone's surprise, Velimirovich declined the appointment. As one of the reasons for declining the post, he cited his plans to go to Britain.

In late 1913 the decision was made to resume the publication of the *Hrišćanski vesnik* after a two-year break, with Velimirovich as a member of the editorial board and his friend Dr. Vojislav Janić as its editor. However, only the issue for January 1914 was published. The owner of the journal, Aleksa Ilić, came into open conflict with Janić and Velimirovich because of Janić's peculiar lecture given in Prague on the occasion of the celebration of the centenary of Njegoš. He advocated not only the political but also religious unification of Slavs and claimed that a group of young theologians in Serbia would like to carry out reforms similar to those promoted in the teachings of Jan Hus and Martin Luther. According to Aleksa Ilić's memoirs, he asked Velimirovich to prepare a written denial of Janić's claims for the next issue of his journal, but Velimirovich is supposed to have answered that he could not do it because Janić had delivered his lecture with his knowledge and approval. After that, Ilić stopped publishing the journal.³⁷ On the eve of the Great War, Velimirovich was, in some respects, too reformist even for a reformist journal.

Mission to the United States

Soon afterwards the Great War began and, in April 1915, the Serbian government decided to send Velimirovich to Britain and the United States. On 13 May 1915, Prime Minister Pašić informed his Minister Plenipotentiary in London, Bošković: "England is the state where I believe the most energetic action needs to be organised both for the sake of informing the public about our country, its needs, characteristics, wishes and hopes, and for the sake of working on the realisation of our unification with the Croats and Slovenes. This is the kind of work that demands many and very different forces. Dr. Nikolai Velimirovich will come [to Britain] for a short period and he will then proceed for America."³⁸ The Serbian priest was among the few persons in Serbia who had spent some time in Britain, spoke English, and had already been known as a good and very popular preacher. Since his target public in the United States were Yugoslav/South-Slavic immigrants, he was almost an ideal choice. The Yugoslav immi-

³⁷ Ilić, *Moji doživljaji sa dr. Nikolajem*, 20–27.

³⁸ AJ, Fonds 80, f. 2, 267.

grants in the United States were Orthodox (Serbs) and Catholic Christians (Croats and Slovenes), and a person with liberal theological ideas who could address both groups was needed. Additionally, he was already known as an open supporter of the bringing of various Christian churches together.

In May 1915 Velimirovich received 100 British pounds from the Serbian Legation in London for his mission to the United States.³⁹ In June Velimirovich was in the United States. Before his departure he completed a booklet entitled *Religion and Nationality in Serbia*, dedicating it “to the memory of the great Croatian patriot Bishop Strossmayer on the centenary of his birth (1815–1915)”.⁴⁰ He was impressed by the fact that the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church in England worked together “in the same grand patriotic and national cause”. He found the same to be applicable to the Yugoslavs belonging to different Christian churches. The Orthodox Church, in his opinion, was “the best spiritual medium of the national ideal”, while the Catholic clergy “also proved themselves both nationalistic and patriotic”.⁴¹ He considered that the two “great bishops”, Prince-Bishop Peter II of Montenegro and Bishop Strossmayer of Djakovo, were “the mightiest champions of national union”.⁴² Arguing that differences between the two churches could be overcome, he optimistically claimed: “All we Yugoslavs are sure that there will be harmony and unanimity between the two priesthoods, the two confessions, and the two Churches in the future Serbian State.”⁴³ Robert William Seton-Watson prefaced the booklet, impressed by its author’s religious tolerance. He expressed considerable respect for the Serbian monk, claiming that he represented “in its best form the new spirit which is awakening in the Serbian Church and from which many expect a serious movement of internal reform”.⁴⁴

Upon his arrival in the United States, Velimirovich worked closely with Prof. Mihailo (Michael) Pupin. Pupin had established the Serb National Defence the previous year, and was Serbia’s honorary consul for the USA and Canada. Velimirovich was sent by the Serbian government to raise support from Serbian and other Yugoslav-Americans in the United States, which was neutral

³⁹ AS KSPL, f. II p. 1220/1915, Dispatch of the Royal Legation in London to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, London, 20 May [2 June] 1915. The dates in brackets are in the New Style (Gregorian calendar).

⁴⁰ Nicholas Velimirović, *Religion and Nationality in Serbia* (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1915), 4.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 7–8.

⁴² *Ibid.* 12.

⁴³ *Ibid.* 23.

⁴⁴ R. W. Seton-Watson, “Prefatory Note”, in *ibid.* 3. The note was written on 15 June 1915.

at the time. His numerous lectures and speeches contributed to the fundraising effort in aid of Serbia.⁴⁵

His activities in the United States had one main aim which he himself defined. It was to show to Serb Orthodox Americans, as well as to Croat and Slovene Catholic Americans, that they could be Yugoslavs, and that their adherence to two different churches should not be an obstacle to their unification. During his stay in America, he became engaged in the publication of the New York-based weekly *Živa crkva* (Living Church), subtitled “Nedeljni glasnik slovenskog hrišćanstva” (Weekly herald of Slavic Christianity). Five issues of the journal were published, and each in fact was a separate pamphlet written by Velimirovich. The first issue is entitled “Sveti Jovan Hus” (St. John Hus). It was published on the 500th anniversary of the burning at stake of Jan Hus (1369 – 6 July 1415) for alleged heresy. The author’s high esteem for Hus may be seen from the following passage: “Professor Palimov, a very Orthodox Russian theologian, called the doctrine of Hus Orthodox. The Protestants call Hus their founder and leader. The enlightened Catholics call him their hero and role model. I think that Hus was formally neither Orthodox, nor Protestant, nor Catholic, but that in essence he therefore was at once all of the three. He was a Christian, a true Christian in action and deed. Like James and Philip, like Thaddeus and Andrew.”⁴⁶ The fifth and last issue is entitled “Two Churches in One Nation”. This was a reprint of Velimirovich’s pamphlet published in London under the title *Religion and Nationality in Serbia*, with some altered headings.

In keeping with his words from the last issue of the *Živa crkva* that the two churches could easily cooperate, he worked on bringing Catholic and Orthodox priests in the United States together. He visited New York, Chicago and California, and in July he organised “a congress in Pittsburgh known for the fact that it was the first congress in Yugoslav history in which Catholic and Orthodox priests took part together, and there they swore that they would work in harmony for the sake of national unity and religious tolerance.”⁴⁷ He also brought together American journalists of Yugoslav descent, who adopted the “Resolution of Yugoslav Journalists in America”. Its first point states: “Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, being one people by blood, language and national aspirations, will not be able to consider the European war over until the whole of it [people] is liberated from all of its current masters and united into one state.”

⁴⁵ Krinka Vidakovic Petrov, “The Serb National Federation: Champion of Serbdom in America”, in K. Vidakovic Petrov, ed., *Serb National Federation. First 100 Years* (Pittsburgh: Serb National Federation, 2001), 44.

⁴⁶ “Sveti Jovan Hus”, *Živa crkva* no. 1 (1915), 11–12.

⁴⁷ Milada Paulová, *Jugoslavenski odbor* (Zagreb: Prosvjetna nakladna zadruka, 1925), 235.

The resolution was signed by 22 journalists working for Serbian and Croatian journals in America.⁴⁸

He made a deep impression on the Serbian and other Yugoslav communities in the United States. In March 1917, a year and a half after his departure from the United States, Jelena Lozanić-Frothingham (Helen Losanitch Frothingham) visited the Serbian Club in San Francisco and saw the paintings and photographs of King Peter, King Nicholas of Montenegro, St. Sava, Ivan Gundulić, Nikolai Velimirovich and Savka Subbotić.⁴⁹

Velimirovich left New York for London on 3 September and arrived in London on 13 September.⁵⁰ He described his activities in the United States in a letter to the Serbian Minister in London. "I informed our people of the struggle of the Serbs which has begun one hundred years ago, and which is to be completed now, and to be completed with the liberation and unification of all of our people. ... I asked them ['our people'] to declare themselves freely against Austria and for Serbia. And the people did. And, I felt that my mission was thereby accomplished."⁵¹ On 16 September, he counselled with the Legation if he should return to Serbia, and the Legation forwarded his question to Serbia. Two days later, the reply came from Prime Minister Pašić, who decided that both Pavle Popović and Nikolai Velimirovich were to stay in London.⁵²

Mission and work in Britain. Propaganda for and promotion of Serbia and the Yugoslav idea

Velimirovich came to London in May 1915, briefly stayed there, and then left for the United States. In the spring of 1915 there was a group of Serbian intellectuals in London. The former Serbian diplomat and minister of finance in several cabinets, Chedomille Miyatovich, had been living in Britain since 1889. In August 1914 one of the ideologues of the Yugoslav literary movement in Bosnia, Dimitrije Mitrinović, also came to London and settled there permanently. In May 1915 Pavle Popović and his brother Bogdan Popović, both professors of

⁴⁸ AJ, Fonds 80, 40-375, "Rezolucija jugoslovenskih novinara u Americi".

⁴⁹ Jelena Lozanić-Frothingham, *Dobrotvorna misija za Srbiju u I svetskom ratu* (Belgrade 1970), 156. Helen Losanitch Frothingham, *Mission for Serbia: letters from America and Canada, 1915-1920*, ed. Matilda Spence Rowland. New York: Walker and Co., 1970

⁵⁰ Pavle Popović, *Iz dnevnika* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2001), 236. AJ, Fonds 80, 40-372/374, 40-376.

⁵¹ AJ, Fonds 80, 40-376, N. Velimirovich to the Serbian Minister, London, 15 Sept. 1915. It appears that Velimirovich used New Style dates in his letters since the Legation informed the Prime Minister on 3 [16] September that Velimirovich had returned from the United States (AJ, Fonds 80, f. 2, 409).

⁵² AJ, Fonds 80, f. 2, 404, Draft of Pašić's reply to Bošković, 4 [17] Sept. 1915.

Literature at the University of Belgrade, joined the group. Additionally, the Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić was in London from February to July 1915.⁵³ All Serbs in London were formally or informally attached to the Serbian Legation, and most of them, including Velimirovich, the Popović brothers and Cvijić, had been sent there by the Serbian government.

At the end of September and in October of 1915, Velimirovich attended some of the meetings of the Yugoslav Committee in London. The Committee, set up in Paris on 30 April 1915, had its seat in London. It was presided over by Ante Trumbić and its members were Croat, Slovene and Serb politicians and cultural workers from Austria-Hungary. Its aim was the liberation of the Yugoslav areas of Austria-Hungary and their unification with Serbia.⁵⁴ Although Trumbić was its president, the most influential member of the Yugoslav Committee in London was Frano Supilo.

By the time Velimirovich came back from the United States, a serious crisis had already erupted between the Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian Legation in London. Serbian Minister Mateja Bošković and the brothers Professors Pavle and Bogdan Popović came into conflict with Frano Supilo, the leading Croat in the Yugoslav Committee who was suspected by the Serbian Minister of having a narrowly Croatian standpoint. Serbian Prime Minister Pašić had to send the Serbian politician and President of the Serbian Royal Academy, Prof. Jovan Žujović, from Paris to London, to try to mediate between the two groups and bring about mutual understanding. The Croat members of the Yugoslav Committee all sided with Supilo,⁵⁵ and all the leading “British friends of Serbia” and future Yugoslavia (R. W. Seton-Watson, Henry Wickham Steed and Sir Arthur Evans), who held Supilo in high regard, almost stopped any communication with Bošković because of the conflict. The Serbian envoys sent to London by the Serbian government were divided.

Bogdan and Pavle Popović supported Bošković, while Velimirovich and Žujović advocated a conciliatory line and maintained regular contacts with British friends of Serbia. That was also the official line requested from the Serbian envoys in London by Prime Minister Pašić in his dispatch of 19 September 1915.⁵⁶ Žujović considered Father Nikolai’s activities as very important and noted in his Diary that he would report to Prime Minister Pašić that the main credit for the consolidation within the Yugoslav Committee should be given to

⁵³ Ljubinka Trgovčević, *Naučnici Srbije i stvaranje Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga and SKZ, 1986), 327–333.

⁵⁴ Dragovan Šepić, s. v. “Jugoslavenski odbor”, in *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, vol. 4 (Zagreb 1960).

⁵⁵ See Žujović’s diary entry of 10 [23] Sept. 1915 in Jovan Žujović, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2 (Belgrade: Arhiv Srbije, 1986), 191.

⁵⁶ Žujović, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 191–200.

Velimirovich and that he should stay in London.⁵⁷ Christopher and Hugh Seton-Watson also noticed that at that time Velimirovich, “surprisingly, had good relations with Yugoslav exiles in London”,⁵⁸ R. W. Seton Watson, in a letter to Mabel Grujić of 19 September 1915, complained about the conflict between Supilo and Bošković and at the end of the letter mentioned that Father Velimirovich was back from the USA and that “perhaps he may save the situation”.⁵⁹

The conflict took place at the most critical point for Serbia. In October 1915 the Central Powers attacked the country and soon occupied it. During these weeks Velimirovich vacillated between enthusiasm and utter despair. On 22 September 1915 he wrote to R. W. Seton-Watson and expressed great satisfaction with the way the Serbian Flag Day had been celebrated in London: “It was a real joy for me to look everybody in London, in the Centre of the World, with a Serbian flag on the breast. A hundred years ago nobody in this great town did know even that there is a nation with the name ‘Serbs’. What a change.”⁶⁰ On 29 October he wrote to Seton-Watson that Serbia “fought and died once for Christianity”. That was 500 years earlier. Serbia was “again fighting and dying for Christianity and Civilisation”, and she was “looking upon to the Leader-Nation of Christianity and Civilisation”. He asked if England would help his country which was “not fighting only for Serbia but at the same time for India and Egypt”. He appealed to “the most Christian people of the World” for help, and warned: “We are your unique friend between Hamburg and Baghdad.”⁶¹

Velimirovich was so well placed in London society that he had lunch with Lord Bryce on 15 October 1915, on which occasion he warned him that the collapse of Serbia would mean that the British Empire would be threatened because Turkey would be organised by Germany.⁶² Žujović soon went to Paris and was followed by Velimirovich. It was there that they received news of the fall of major Serbian towns. The atmosphere was very depressing and even Velimirovich began to doubt if his Yugoslav policy was good for Serbia. Žujović noted down his doubts in his diary entry for 11 November 1915: “Father Nikolai keeps

⁵⁷ Žujović’s diary entry of 3 Oct. 1915, Žujović, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 200.

⁵⁸ Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*. R. W. Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary (London: Methuen, 1981), 152.

⁵⁹ R. W. Seton-Watson and the Yugoslavs. *Correspondence 1906–1941*, vol. 1: 1906–1918 (London and Zagreb: British Academy and the Institute of Croatian History, 1976), 241.

⁶⁰ R. W. Seton-Watson and the Yugoslavs, vol. 1, 243. School of Slavonic and East European Studies [hereafter: SSEES], London, Collection of R. W. Seton-Watson [SEW] 7.1.5, Nicolay Velimirovich to Dr. Seton-Watson, London, 23 Sept. 1915 (names are spelled as in original letters).

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 251. Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, 152. SSEES, SEW, 7.1.5, Fr. Nicholay Velimirovich to Dr. Seton-Watson, London, 29 Oct. 1915.

⁶² Žujović, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 209.

asking himself: have we not, by working for Yugoslavia in England, worsened our position? Should we abandon that work (and he should go home), or should we continue it (and he should go to London)?”⁶³ After the occupation of Serbia, her leading politicians, the king and the regent, and what was left of her armies crossed Albania to the coast and were transported to Corfu in January-February 1916, where the troops were recuperated and a reorganised army was later sent to the Macedonian front. By December 1915 Serbia was fully occupied. In the autumn of 1915, the Serbian envoys abroad had asked if they should return to Serbia. At the beginning of 1916 they had nowhere to return, and the Serbian government needed them even more to appeal to foreign governments and public opinions for all kinds of aid for Serbia.

Therefore Velimirovich stayed in London and continued to cooperate with the Yugoslav Committee. On 16 February 1916 the Committee established a task force for dealing with volunteers, which included Ante Trumbić, Frano Supilo, Velimirovich, Bogumil Vošnjak, Franko Potočnjak and Nikola Stojanović.⁶⁴ The volunteers mentioned in this entry from Nikola Stojanović’s diary are probably Yugoslav volunteers from Russia.

In January 1916 the Serbs from the Kingdom of Serbia in London formed an unofficial “Tuesday group”. Its meetings held every Tuesday were attended by the following persons: the Serbian Minister to the UK, Mateja Bošković, and, from September 1916, his successor Jovan Jovanović Pižon;⁶⁵ the Popović brothers, Nikolai Velimirovich, and Tihomir Djordjević.⁶⁶ Nikola Stojanović, a Serb from Bosnia and member of the Yugoslav Committee also used to come, as well as the Slovene Dr. Niko Županič who was a resident of the Kingdom of Serbia since 1907.

The fall of Serbia prompted Velimirovich to appeal for help with British officials. On 27 January 1916 he approached Bonar Law, then serving as Secretary of State for the Colonies, urging him to help sending British ships to the Albanian coast to transport the exhausted Serbian troops to Corfu. He said that the people of Serbia could understand that there was no help to save Serbia from being defeated, but that they could not understand why it should take so long for the ships to arrive.⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibid. 221.

⁶⁴ Nikola Stojanović, *Dnevnik (od godine 1914. do 1918)* (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 2015), 284.

⁶⁵ Jovan M. Jovanović came to London on 17 Sept. 1916, and submitted his credentials to the King on 6 Oct. Jovan Jovanović, *Dnevnik (1896–1920)* (Novi Sad: Prometej and Belgrade: RTS, 2015), 159 and 169.

⁶⁶ Trgovčević, *Naučnici Srbije*, 104.

⁶⁷ Dragoljub Živojinović, *Nevoljni ratnici* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010), 155.

In January 1916 Velimirovich sent a message to the Archbishop of Serbia, Dimitrije, informing him that a new appeal for help needed to be prepared for the British public. He asked the Archbishop for permission to put together such an appeal on his behalf, which would be similar to the one that had already been issued earlier. The Archbishop replied on 9 February, asking Father Nikolai to wait until his upcoming visit to Britain.⁶⁸ The Archbishop indeed came to Britain and was very well received by the primates of the Church of England. On 23 April 1916, on Easter Day, the Bishop of London played host to the Archbishop of Serbia at St. Paul's.⁶⁹ The whole visit had been largely prepared by Velimirovich. Bogumil Vošnjak recalled one impressive detail in particular: "The way the English clergy led the head of the Serbian Church triumphantly through the Westminster Church will remain unforgettable to me. There was some mystical half-darkness and it seemed like an ancient victorious campaign in an age-old setting."⁷⁰ During this visit Archbishop Dimitrije accepted to be patron of the Anglican and Eastern Association.⁷¹

In London, Father Nikolai found a room in Saville Row with a Serbian tailor by the name of Milan.⁷² In April 1916, the owners of an office space at 39 King Street, St. James's, offered him to use the property free of charge. He was only required to provide written guarantees from the Legation in case of damage being done in the offices and the Legation immediately provided guarantees.⁷³ With the help of an American lady, Miss Pack, Velimirovich set up the Serbian Information Bureau on the premises, and he also received visitors and prepared lectures and sermons there.⁷⁴ Several preserved letters of Velimirovich from late 1917 and 1918 have letterheads with the above address and the title "Serbian Information Bureau".⁷⁵ The Bureau consisted of two rooms, a small flat and a shop on the opposite side. As B. Vošnjak recalled, "that shop was the real centre of Father Nikolai." His assistant at the Bureau was Dušan Janjić, a barber, whose

⁶⁸ AS, KSPL, f ii, r 124/1916, Letter of the Serbian Legation in Rome to the Serbian Consulate General in Geneva, dated 21 Jan. [3 Feb.] 1916, and the reply, dated 9 Feb.

⁶⁹ "The Metropolitan of Serbia at St. Paul's", *Church Times*, 28 Apr. 1916, 404.

⁷⁰ Bogumil Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu* (Ljubljana, Belgrade and Zagreb 1928), 179.

⁷¹ "The Anglican and Orthodox Churches", *Church Times*, 1 June 1917, p. 467.

⁷² Stephen Graham, *Part of the Wonderful Scene. An Autobiography* (London: Collins, 1964), 120.

⁷³ AS, KSPL, f ii, r 393/1916, Letter of N. Velimirovich to the Serbian Royal Legation dated 25 Apr.; and *ibid.* f iv, r 93/1916, Copy of a letter by the Legation to Sidney Straker and Squire Ltd. dated 25 Apr. 1916.

⁷⁴ Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu*, 182–183.

⁷⁵ AJ, Fonds 80, 40, 601-602; SSEES, SEW, 7.1.5, Nicholai Velimirovic to Dr. Seton Watson, 5 Dec. 1917.

nickname was Def.⁷⁶ It had a shop window with Serbian publications, pictures and maps. There was also a cellar beneath the shop. Father Nikolai received visitors in that room, and it was there that he prepared his lectures and wrote his letters. One of his most frequent visitors at the Bureau was Dr. Niko Županič, a Slovene ethnographer who had moved to Serbia in 1907, and worked as museum curator in Belgrade.⁷⁷ Father Nikolai was also very active in the Serbian Relief Fund, where he was a member of its sub-board for education together with Prof. Pavle Popović.⁷⁸

A note on Father Nikolai's activities was published in *The Bookman* at the very end of the war. It summarised many of his wartime activities in England. "While the Serbian Government was at Nisch, father Nicholai was sent on a mission to the United States, and he is now in England in charge of the Serbian Information Bureau. He is one of those who look after the welfare of the Serbian boys who, to the number of three hundred and seventy, are being educated in England and Scotland for various professions, including the priesthood."⁷⁹

In Britain Velimirovich had to face residues of Serbia's previous image developed after the 1903 assassination of King Alexandar Obrenovich and his wife Draga by Serbian army officers. The regicide had caused a break-off in diplomatic relations between 1903 and 1906 and was far from forgotten. Moreover, many circles in Britain were suspicious that an enlarged Serbia might become Russia's puppet state. The problems arising from the British perceptions of Serbia may be seen from a letter written for Velimirovich by Natalia, the former Queen of Serbia. He saw her during his visit to Paris in November 1915. Since she had converted to Roman Catholicism, he urged her to go to England to work in Catholic circles for Serbia. She did not rule out that possibility,⁸⁰ but in the end she only wrote a letter of endorsement for him recommending him to Bishop Vaughan. In the draft of the letter dated 6 December 1915 she explicitly referred to British fears that Serbia might become too close to Russia. She recommended Velimirovich and emphasised that he "would be very happy to clarify to you a misconception that may exist between England and Serbia, a misconception which is of old date, and which has caused many troubles that should be avoided in the future." The misconception in Britain was "that Serbia is a servile tool in the hands of Russia and that for this reason her expansion could become a danger to Europe in a foreseeable future. Not only has Serbia never been a tool

⁷⁶ Jovanović, *Dnevnik*, 443. Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu*, 179, mistakenly claims that Dušan Janjić was the brother of the priest Dr. Vojislav Janić, since Dušan was from Banat and Vojislav from Kraljevo.

⁷⁷ Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu*, 166–167.

⁷⁸ AS, KSPL, f iv, r 535/1916.

⁷⁹ *The Bookman* no. 325 (Oct. 1918), 2.

⁸⁰ Žujović, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 223.

in the hands of Russia, she in fact was often sacrificed on her behalf." The former Queen of Serbia insisted that Russia disapproved of religious tolerance in Serbia and feared the potential unification of Serbia with Catholic areas because of "infiltration of Catholic Slavdom among schismatic Slavs in the Balkans".⁸¹ In parallel with Queen Natalia's efforts, it seems that in late 1915 Velimirovich himself wrote an article refuting the claim of German Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg that Serbia was the "vanguard of Russia".⁸²

He was also engaged in a quite different mission. In the course of 1916 many Britons were sceptical about the prospect of a multi-religious Yugoslav state. As one of the excuses for British official circles' undecided stance on the Yugoslav question, many cited that Russia would be against such a state. Velimirovich was therefore desperate to find a Russian intellectual who would send an article in favour of the Yugoslav cause to British journals. For this purpose he turned to the Serbian envoy in Sankt Petersburg, Prof. Aleksandar Belić, who had been sent there with the same task as the one Velimirovich had been charged with in London. In August 1916 he asked Belić to find a Russian who would write a text "on the Serbian (or Yugoslav) question for English newspapers", suggesting Maxim Gorky or Andreyev.⁸³ Belić finally got the article from V. Kovalevsky, but Velimirovich considered that it was "insufficiently well argued, un-Western and Slavic", and therefore expressed concerns that it might not achieve the expected results among the British public.⁸⁴ In the end the article was published in Seton-Watson's *New Europe*⁸⁵ and in the Irish journal *Tuam Herald*. Velimirovich became more optimistic and informed Belić that, although only just published, the article "would undoubtedly make a big impression".⁸⁶ Before that he tried to have Kovalevsky's article published in *The Times* and *The Daily News*, but both papers rejected it.⁸⁷

In most of his pamphlets Velimirovich discussed the question of the unification of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. At the very end of the war he offered

⁸¹ AS, Fonds Jovan Žujović [JŽ], no. 59 [Dnevnik u Parizu (Sep. 1915 – Oct. 1917)], 427–428. The draft of the original letter is in French, AS, JŽ, no. 255.

⁸² Ibid. 443 (Žujović's entry for 2 Jan. 1916).

⁸³ Arhiv Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti [Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts; hereafter: ASANU], Fonds A. Belić [AB], part II, no. 14386-IV-101, Nikolai Velimirovich to Mr. Belić, London, 4 Aug. 1916.

⁸⁴ Ibid., Nikolai Velimirovich to Prof. A. Belić, London, 1 Oct. 1916.

⁸⁵ V. Kovalevsky, "Russia and the Jugoslav Idea. From the Russian", *New Europe* 3 (2 Nov. 1916), 79–83.

⁸⁶ ASANU, AB, part II, no. 14386-IV-101, Nikolai Velimirovich to Mr. Belić, London, 6 Nov. 1916.

⁸⁷ SSEES, SEW, 7.1.5, Father Nicholas Velimirovic to Dr. Seton Watson, London, 2 Nov. 1916.

a comprehensive overview of the Yugoslav idea in *The New Age*, a literary and modernist weekly open to radical and socialist political thought. Its editor was the influential Alfred Richard Orage, who was very interested in religious and spiritual issues, even in the occult.⁸⁸ In this article Velimirovich claims that the Yugoslav idea has a fourfold meaning: spiritual, moral, cultural and political. In corroboration of the first meaning, he argues: “The striking proof that the Yugoslav idea is a spiritual idea lies in the fact that a long series of great Yugoslav divines, both Orthodox and Roman Catholic, were the principal founders and most enthusiastic defenders of this idea in modern times.”⁸⁹ For the second point he exploits propaganda binaries developed during the Great War. “The difference between the two codes of morals – that of the ruling classes in Austro-Hungary on the one hand, and the Yugoslavs, like the Czecho-Slovacks – is as beyond any hope of reconciliation as black and white.”⁹⁰ Still, he admits that “the Yugoslav ethics, as ideal and as practice, though naturally not perfect, is a serious, constructive and promising ethics.” As far as the cultural aspect of the idea is concerned, he projects his own then preferences and sees in the Yugoslav idea “an ethnical and a pan-human tendency. A combination of both is considered as all-saving.”⁹¹ Velimirovich’s writing about the political aspect of the Yugoslav idea demonstrates that during his stay in Britain he had absorbed the political reasoning of British foreign policy. “It has been said and truly, that the Yugoslav State will be a bulwark between Central Europe and the East; also, that such a State will be of great commercial importance for France and Great Britain; also, that it will be a guarantee of the future peace of the Balkans; also, that it is in the best interest of Italy to have such a neighbour instead of having Turkey and Austria-Hungary. All this is quite right, even if looked at from the external point of view. But a Serbian peasant looks at it from an inner point of view, from inside the building, and finds that the building is solid and strong as it can possibly be.” At the end he clarified what he meant by the adjectives “ethnical” and “pan-human” in the previous section: “The ethnical—which means the freedom and union of the Yugoslav nation, the pan-human—which means federation of the Yugoslav State first of all with all the neighbouring national free States, and then with all the free national and ethnical human units on the globe.”⁹²

In the following sections some of the most important activities of Father Nikolai Velimirovich in London will be discussed.

⁸⁸ For the activities of Orage and his friendship with Mitrinović see Philip Mairet, *A. R. Orage. A Memoir* (New York: University Books, 1966, first published 1936), esp. Mairet’s “Reintroduction” on pp. v-xxx.

⁸⁹ Father Nicholas Velimirovic, “The Yugoslav Idea”, *New Age* 23, no. 24 (10 Oct. 1918), 377.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 378.

⁹² *Ibid.*

Velimirovich, “the Kossovo Day Committee” and the celebrations of “Kossovo Day”

Soon upon coming to London Velimirovich developed close relations with R. W. Seton-Watson. Just before his departure for the United States he wrote to thank him “for all you have done for me and for my dear country”.⁹³ In September 1915 he wrote him a personal confession inspired by his book *The Balkans, Italy and Adriatic*.⁹⁴ He expressed regret that the Foreign Office was unwilling to accept a new Yugoslav state and claimed that every Serbian soldier of that day was saying: “We Serbs, Croats, Slovenes – and later Bulgars too – must be all united in a free and democratic state.”⁹⁵ Their relations seem to have become very close by the spring of 1916, when Velimirovich, in a letter to R. W. Seton-Watson, expressed his particular joy at the fact that the latter had given his son his “unworthy name”.⁹⁶ Three months later the efforts of R. W. Seton-Watson and other friends of Serbia resulted in the celebrations of “Kossovo Day”, as *Vidovdan* (St. Vitus’s Day) was called in Britain.

The visit of Prince-Regent Alexander Karageorgevich to London in April 1916 also significantly contributed to the Serbian cause. He was received very cordially by King George V and leading British statesmen.⁹⁷ Since the Serbian Minister in London, Bošković, by that time had very strained relations with influential British members of Serbian societies, it was Velimirovich who wrote to R. W. Seton-Watson about the details of the visit and asked him to arrange special meetings and visits for Prince-Regent Alexander and for the Prime Minister of Serbia, Nikola Pašić.⁹⁸

Efforts of British friends of Serbia to help her cause following her defeat and the exodus of her Army across Albania at the end of 1915 reached their peak in mid-1916. The defeat of Serbia had brought many Serbs to Britain, and testimonies of British nurses and medical doctors who had helped suppress typhus epidemics in Serbia in 1915 were available in numerous books and memoirs. They all had one thing in common: a great sympathy for Serbia.

In mid-1916 Velimirovich was already well known in many circles of London political and cultural life. In June 1916, the League of the Empire asked

⁹³ SSEES, SEW, 7.1.5, Nicolas Velimirovitch to Dr. Watson, London, 8 May 1915.

⁹⁴ R. W. Seton-Watson, *The Balkans, Italy and the Adriatic* (London: Nisbet, 1915).

⁹⁵ SSEES, SEW, 7.1.5, Nicolas Velimirovich to Dr. Watson, London, 17 Sept. 1915.

⁹⁶ SSEES, SEW, 7.1.5, Nicholaj Velimirovic to Dr. Seton-Watson, London, 24 Mar. 1916. Cf. Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, 166. R. W. Seton-Watson’s eldest son was born on 15 February 1916. His full name was George Hugh Nicholas Seton-Watson.

⁹⁷ See Čedomir Antić, *Neizabrana saveznica* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2012), 290–292.

⁹⁸ SSEES, SEW, 7.1.5, Nicholaj Velimirovic to Dr. Seton-Watson, London, 26 Mar. 1916.

him to deliver a lecture and to that end sent an invitation through the Serbian Legation.⁹⁹ Only one week after the invitation was sent, he delivered an address entitled "The New Ideal in Education".

His role was crucial for the celebration of Kossovo Day organised by the British friends of Serbia to give moral encouragement to Serbia. The commemoration of Kossovo Day began on 28 June, on the very anniversary of the battle, when a service was held at the church of St. Mary-le-Bow, Cheapside. All arrangements for it had been made by Rev. Fynes-Clinton. Father Nikolai was the officiating priest, "assisted by fathers Illitch and Lukovitch of Cambridge". This commemoration was intended for the Serbian colony in London but members of the diplomatic corps and the British War Office were also present. Father Velimirovich read several letters of support, including the letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury in which the highest Anglican prelate stated: "Our thoughts go out in admiration and sympathy to our friends and Allies, the brave-hearted people of Serbia. In the cause of honour and freedom, for which we and all our Allies are fighting, they have suffered untold misery and wrong."¹⁰⁰ Four days later another service was held at the chapel of the House of Charity in Soho with the permission of the Bishop of London. Father Nikolai Velimirovich officiated again. The report of the Kossovo Day Committee claims: "It was the first time that a Serbian priest had celebrated the Orthodox Liturgy in an Anglican Church."¹⁰¹ This, however, does not seem to be correct in view of the report of *The Church Times* on the service held in the church of St. Mary-le-Bow four days earlier.

The Church Times announced the events related to Kossovo Day. The commemoration was to be held under the slogan: "For Serbia. Think of Serbia. Pray for Serbia. Restore Serbia." It had three main events: 1) Service of intercession at St. Margaret's with a sermon by Nikolai Velimirovich; 2) "A solemn memorial service for all the Serbs and British who have laid down their lives for the Allies' cause, in Serbia", at St. Paul's Cathedral; and 3) Service of intercession for Serbia at Chapel Royal, Savoy.¹⁰²

On 2 July St. Margaret's church, in which Velimirovich was already famous, held its own "service of intercession for the Serbian nation". The service was followed by an address by Father Nikolai in which he paid special tribute to the British women who had lost their lives "in succouring the poorest and most persecuted people of this planet". He also thanked the Kossovo Committee for making it possible for Serbs to commemorate Kossovo Day in Britain, since it

⁹⁹ AS, KSPL, f iv, r 93/1916, Letter of the League to the Serbian Legation dated 9 June 1916.

¹⁰⁰ "Kossovo Day. Tributes to Serbian Fortitude", *Times*, 29 June 1916, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ *Kossovo Day (1389–1916). Report and two lectures* (London: Kossovo Day Committee, 1916), 14.

¹⁰² *Church Times*, 30 June 1916, 612 d.

was the first time that they could not do it in Serbia.¹⁰³ Father Nikolai's sermon delivered on that occasion was entitled "Serbian saints and sinners".¹⁰⁴ It was a special token of respect for Velimirovich that *The Church Times* published its integral version.¹⁰⁵

Most of the activities related to Kossovo Day were coordinated by the Kossovo Day Committee summoned through the initiative of Dr. Elsie Inglis and Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson, with Seton-Watson and Rev. Fynes-Clinton as its honorary secretaries. The Committee had fourteen British and only two Serbian members: Father Nikolai and Milan Ćurčin.¹⁰⁶ The climax of the commemoration took place on 7 July when a grand memorial service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral. At the service the Serbian national anthem was sung by Serbian boys studying in Britain. Besides the highest representatives of the diplomatic corps, the service was attended by the British Prime Minister, by Sir Edward Grey, heads of the British Army, the highest government officials, and relatives of the British doctors and nurses who had lost their lives in Serbia.¹⁰⁷

During the ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral Velimirovich was paid special respect by the Church of England, one in a series of tributes that would be bestowed on him over the following three years. In a letter to his wife May, R. W. Seton-Watson noted: "Father Nikolai in his cope took his place in the procession, and Mrs Inge [wife of the Dean] told your mother that it was the highest place of honour ever accorded to a foreign ecclesiastic in the Cathedral. A lot of big bugs attended..."¹⁰⁸ The report of the Kossovo Day Committee contains the following description: "The Archbishop of Canterbury addressed the congregation, and in the choir, in the gold embroidered robes of the priest of the Orthodox Church, sat Father Nikolai Velimirovic, the exiled priest of a scattered nation."¹⁰⁹ The Croatian politician and member of the Yugoslav Committee Hinko Hinković left a testimony on how the service was perceived by the Yugoslav colony in London. "That 'parastos',¹¹⁰ which was attended by numerous members of parliament and of the diplomatic world, was particularly interesting for us Yugoslavs because we saw among Anglican clergy also the current

¹⁰³ "Celebration of Kossovo Day", *Times*, 3 July 1916, 11 c.

¹⁰⁴ *Kossovo Day (1389–1916). Report and two lectures*, 14.

¹⁰⁵ Fr. Nicholai Velimirovic, "Serbian Saints and Sinners. An address given at St. Margaret's, Westminster" [on Sunday, 2 July 1916], *Church Times*, 14 July 1916, 45–46.

¹⁰⁶ *Kossovo Day (1389–1916). Report and two lectures*, 11.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 15.

¹⁰⁸ Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *Making of a New Europe*, 175.

¹⁰⁹ *Kossovo Day (1389–1916). Report and two lectures*, 14.

¹¹⁰ A Serbian word of Greek origin denoting a memorial service for a deceased person.

Bishop of Ohrid, Fr. Nikolai Velimirovich, in rich Byzantine, gold embroidered robes.”¹¹¹

The Kossovo Day Committee published its own 36-page report on the 1916 commemoration of Kossovo Day in Britain. In addition to a number of church services held, lectures, presentations, meetings and exhibitions were organised throughout Britain. Kossovo Day Circular was printed in 85,000 copies, and R. W. Seton-Watson’s address and pamphlet in 25,000 and 50,000 copies respectively. The press cuttings covering the commemoration of Kossovo Day that the Committee collected reached the number of 408.¹¹² Another pamphlet with the same title, *Kossovo Day (1389–1916)*,¹¹³ has on its front cover the image of “Tsar Lazar” as a saint. This 32-page publication is a collection of descriptions and appreciations of the Battle of Kosovo compiled from various monographs published in Britain, Austria, Germany, France and Russia, and it also contains some early modern texts, and translations of Serbian and Croatian authors such as Chedomille Miyatovich and Franjo Rački. Velimirovich’s bio-bibliography by M. D. Protić attributes a three-page prefatory note to this pamphlet to Velimirovich and also considers him an editor of the pamphlet.¹¹⁴ The following words are found in the pamphlet: “During 500 years under a criminal régime Serbia found always in this memory of Kossovo an immense source of force, virtues, and life. She celebrated Kossovo Day both in the time of darkness, and in the time of light and freedom. Well, at the present moment, suffocated and abased by the Christian Sultans, Serbia will look back towards her greatest day in history, towards Kossovo Day, and will live.”¹¹⁵

Celebrations of Kossovo Day continued in 1917 and 1918. Velimirovich’s typed speech written for Kossovo Day in 1917 has been preserved in the Collection of R. W. Seton-Watson.¹¹⁶ The subsequent celebrations were not as spectacular as those in 1916, but became a regular practice. *The Cambridge Daily News* left a testimony of the effects of the 1916 campaign conducted by the Kossovo Day Committee: “Kossovo Day – as every schoolboy now knows, thanks of the energetic educational effort of the committee set up last year – celebrates a great struggle of the Serbs against their Turkish oppressors, and

¹¹¹ Hinko Hinković, *Iz velikog doba. Moj rad i moji doživljaji za vrijeme svjetskog rata* (Zagreb 1927), 279.

¹¹² *Kossovo Day (1389–1916). Report and two lectures*, 17–25.

¹¹³ *Kossovo Day (1389–1916)* (London: Polsue Limited, 1916).

¹¹⁴ Milisav D. Protić, “Bio-bibliografija, 1902–1941”, in Janković, *Episkop Nikolaj*, vol. 3, 630, item 209.

¹¹⁵ “Prefatory Note”, in *Kossovo Day (1389–1916)*, 5.

¹¹⁶ SSEES, SEW, 5.3.1. The speech signed with the initials “N. V.” is entitled “A Nation’s Celebration of Supreme Sacrifice. The Serbian Kossovo Day”. It covers seven full typed pages and one paragraph on the eighth page.

has been the chief historic inspiration of the national poets and ballad writers. Those who have heard Father Nikolai Velimirovich on the subject have realised something of what it means to the Serbs."¹¹⁷ What the celebrations of Kossovo Day meant for the knowledge of Serbia among the Allies was elaborated in the leading British evening newspaper: "Formerly the world in general knew little of Serbia and nothing of 'Kossovo Day'; now newspapers in England, France, Italy, and America refer to the day, and innumerable friends whom the last three years have taught to know and love the Serbs join with them in keeping this anniversary."¹¹⁸ Needless to say, Velimirovich took a very active part in all these commemorations.¹¹⁹

Famous preacher

During his stay in Britain Velimirovich earned his high reputation primarily by his sermons and public lectures. Stephen Graham describes the impression that Father Nikolai made on him in 1915. "He spoke arrestingly as if he had just arrived with a message. No compliments, no clichés, no wishful thinking, his words made the speeches of the other clerics from the platform seem dim, as if they told of a faith which once existed."¹²⁰ A few paragraphs later, Graham added another vivid description: "He was gentle, persuasive, original, like a page of the Gospel read for the first time. The Spirit of Truth was pilgrimaging among us."¹²¹

He was already known as a good preacher when, in March 1916, *The Times* announced that he and Stephen Graham would deliver five lectures at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster. Nikolai's previous speeches had made a strong impression on the rector of the Church, a well-known Anglican priest, Canon William Hartley Carnegie. In order for Velimirovich to deliver lectures in Anglican churches, special permission was needed. And he was granted one: "With the leave of the Bishop of London, and the approval of the Archbishop of Canterbury, he gave lectures at St. Margaret's, Westminster, and other churches."¹²² St. Margaret's is situated in the very heart of London next to Westminster Abbey

¹¹⁷ *Cambridge Daily News* no. 9016, 29 June 1917, 3 a.

¹¹⁸ "Kossovo Day. The Conditions of the Slavs in 1389 and to-day", *Westminster Gazette*, 28 June 1918.

¹¹⁹ "Serbia's Day", *Westminster Gazette*, 28 June 1918; "Kossovo Day. Tributes to Serbian Fortitude", *Times*, 29 June 1918, 3.

¹²⁰ Graham, *Part of the Wonderful Scene*, 101.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* 103.

¹²² *The Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record 1914–1921* (London: Published for the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1921), 16.

and has been the church attended by members of the British Parliament. The purpose of these one-hour lectures was “to promote understandings of the Slav peoples on the deeper level of their thought and feeling”. Velimirovich’s lectures were scheduled for 30 March, and 6 and 12 April.¹²³ They further strengthened the respect that he already enjoyed in the Church of England. Commenting on his lecture of 6 April 1916, *The Church Times* described his command of English language as “wonderful”, and added that even “more remarkable were the fervour of the man and his alertness of mind, to say nothing of his inspiring and prophetlike appearance”. The lecture was on Slav Orthodoxy and the preacher used Tolstoy’s example and his excommunication to explain what he considered to be an essential feature of Slav and Orthodox Christianity. In his opinion: “Slav Christianity is not juristic like the Roman, nor scientific like Protestantism, nor reasonable and practical like Anglicanism, but dramatic. It is not self-sufficient. It is founded in suffering, and every man who suffers while holding the optimistic hope of Christianity is in a way a founder of the Church...”¹²⁴

The congregation at St. Margaret’s consisted of top British politicians. Graham writes that MPs and their wives listened to father Nikolai “intently”. He also admits that his Serbian friend “was the hero, he had the first place, but it was fine to have the second place.”¹²⁵ Indeed, such was the impression his sermons made that *The Church Times* expressed the wish that they should be fully printed, and they indeed were, as a separate pamphlet.¹²⁶ Recollections on these lectures are also provided by a Yugoslav. Bogumil Vošnjak states in his memoirs: “In the vicinity of the English Parliament Englishmen and Englishwomen stood before the church doors in long queues. There were a lot of people. The church was filled to the brim. Russian church music was played. Father Nikolai spoke about [Christian] Orthodoxy. It was a song full of faith, love, and nationalism. He stood at the pulpit like Hus in a black frock.”¹²⁷

The Kosovo Day commemorations significantly raised interest in Serbia in Great Britain. By the end of 1916 Velimirovich was already so well known and popular that he received almost daily requests to give lectures and sermons all across the United Kingdom. Relatively detailed data survives on his activities in November and December 1916, and it may give a glimpse of his overall endeavours in Britain.

¹²³ “Russian and Serbian Religion”, *Times*, 15 Mar. 1916, 12 c.

¹²⁴ “Slav Orthodoxy. Father Nicolai Velimirovitch at St. Margaret’s Westminster”, *Church Times*, 7 Apr. 1916, 338.

¹²⁵ Graham, *Part of the Wonderful Scene*, 105.

¹²⁶ Rev. father Nicolai Velimirovic, *The Religious Spirit of the Slavs. Three lectures given in Lent, 1916. Sermons on subjects suggested by the war. Third series. St. Margaret’s Westminster* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1916), 40 p.

¹²⁷ Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu*, 177.

On 2 August, he was in Stratford-on-Avon where he delivered a lecture at a conference on “the national life of the Allied countries”. All the Allied countries were represented on that occasion. Velimirovich presented Serbia’s case together with R. W. Seton Watson.¹²⁸ Two months later he was invited by Scottish Women’s Hospitals (SWH) to visit Scotland in November 1916. The Serbian Legation, most likely Milan Ćurčin, prepared a short biography of Velimirovich at the request of SWH.¹²⁹ In the biography it was stressed: “Here in England there is hardly a Serbian name so well-known lately as the name of Father Nicholas, whose sermons in St Margaret’s, Westminster were a great success, and whose preaching all over the country is propaganda in the best sense of the word to bring knowledge of the Serbian people to this country.”¹³⁰ Father Nikolai was receiving many requests to address various audiences in Scotland, and Scottish Women’s Hospitals also made a rather busy schedule for him. Miss Cragie of SWH had to telegraph to M. Ćurčin in order to kindly ask Velimirovich not to make any other arrangements since “much [has] already [been] arranged” by SWH.¹³¹ Apart from preaching at various churches, speaking in public meetings and attending various receptions, he was also to visit the Serbian boys in Edinburgh, and George Heriot’s School there. Two programmes of his visit have been preserved. He was to spend sixteen days in Scotland (12–28 November), to visit Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, and was scheduled in advance to have 16 different appointments.¹³² He wrote to the worried Ćurčin from Glasgow on 20 November to inform him that up to that moment “nothing bad has happened. May God help me from now on as well!”¹³³

In July 1917 the Church of England bestowed on Father Nikolai Velimirovich the highest possible honour. He was invited to deliver a sermon at St. Paul’s Cathedral. *The Church Times* was particularly pleased about this invitation and the following words were published in this leading Anglican journal: “Bishops and priests of the Orthodox Eastern Church have not seldom assisted in the sanctuary at liturgies and offices of the English rite. But never before has a priest of the Orthodox Church preached in the cathedral church of London, though the preacher of last Sunday morning has already spoken from the pulpits of many parish churches. By their invitation to Fr. Nicholai Velimirovic the

¹²⁸ “Belgium and Serbia. Spirit of the small nations”, *Birmingham Daily Post*, 3 Aug. 1916, 3 d.

¹²⁹ AS, KSPL, SPA f. X p. 3, pp. 6–10, Letter of Muriel Cragie to Ćurčin, Edinburgh, 15 Oct. 1916, and an unsigned reply to Miss Cragie [probably by Milan Ćurčin] dated 20 Oct. 1916, with an enclosed biography of “the Rev. Father Nikola Velimirovic, D. D.”. In subsequent letters Miss Cragie is signed as “press and meeting organiser”, *ibid.* 12.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.* 10.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* 33.

¹³² *Ibid.* 21, 23.

¹³³ *Ibid.* 34, Velimirovich to Ćurčin, Glasgow, 20 Nov. 1916.

Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's have given great satisfaction to Churchmen." The journal also stressed that two years had passed since Father Velimirovich came to England "as an informal representative and interpreter of his Church and his people", and made an assessment of what he had accomplished. *The Church Times* ranked Velimirovich as the most successful promoter of Serbia, and mentioned only Chedomille Miyatovich, former Serbian Minister to the Court of St. James, as a person who had done anything similar for Serbia in the past. "We are not unmindful of the services rendered to Serbia by her diplomats, notably by M. Mijatovic, when we say that none has done more than the single-minded priest and monk, and learned theologian, who has already won for himself and for his people so many warm friends in the land of his exile."¹³⁴

The sermon was scheduled for 10.30 a.m. Sunday, 23 July 1917.¹³⁵ It was fully reproduced in *The Church Times* covering almost one full four-column page. The sermon was dedicated to Christ's sacrifice with the following introductory paragraph: "Inviting me to preach in this mountain-like, Sion-like *sanc-tum sanctorum* of the Anglican world, the Dean and the Canons of St. Paul's have honoured both my Church and my nation because, I presume, of their sacrifices. For the highest ideal of the Eastern Church is sacrifice, and Serbia's sacrifice has gone almost beyond the limits of the possible, as you all know."¹³⁶

The sermon made Velimirovich a person in high demand. Not only the Anglican but also the Presbyterian and other Christian churches wanted to host him. His sermon at St. Paul's "was rapidly followed by invitations to preach and speak all over the country, and in each case the Diocesan Bishops gave him the necessary permission, among whom were the Archbishop of York, and the Bishops of Winchester, Oxford, Peterborough, Birmingham, and Edinburgh." The Church of England made another unusual concession. Its bishops allowed Velimirovich and other Serbian priests "to celebrate the Holy Liturgy according to the full Orthodox rite. Services were regularly held on Sundays for the refugees in London in the Sisters' Chapel of the House of Charity, Soho."¹³⁷

It seems that not only Velimirovich's public respect but also his political connections grew over the months and years spent in London. An episode with Stephen Graham may perhaps serve as an illustration. Having learnt that Graham had been conscripted and was about to be sent to France, Father Nikolai decided to act. In October 1917 he wrote to the Serbian Minister in London about "one of the greatest friends of Slavdom in this country", and urged him to try to persuade the War Office against deploying Graham to France, and into

¹³⁴ *Church Times*, 27 July 1917, 76 a.

¹³⁵ *Church Times*, 20 July 1917, 57 a.

¹³⁶ Father Nicholas Velimirovic, D. D., "The Sacrifices of Nations. A sermon preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, on the seventh Sunday after Trinity", *Church Times*, 27 July 1917, p. 73.

¹³⁷ *Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record*, 17.

sending him instead to Salonika so that he could write about Serbs. He asked the Minister to do that “through our friends at the War Office”. If necessary, he suggested, Prince Regent Alexander of Serbia should telegraph asking that Graham be sent to Salonika. All interventions, including Velimirovich’s, failed, and Graham was deployed to the frontline in France. Disappointed, Velimirovich could only say at some point to Graham: “Is it possible England sees in you only a bayonet?”¹³⁸ Even so, the tone of his letters reveals a man who is well connected and very well informed, a man influential enough to ask such a favour, and even to involve the ruler of a country in the effort!

Velimirovich’s preaching talent was noticed by Serbian literary critics as well. In December 1917, Pavle Popović completed his book *Jugoslovenska književnost* (Yugoslav Literature). Although he was sometimes at odds with Velimirovich’s propaganda activities in Britain, he had to add a paragraph at the end of the section dealing with literary criticism. “There is,” he states, “a distinctive form which has recently arisen suddenly and unexpectedly. That is church oration. It has been cultivated with a lot of gift by Nikolai Velimirovich. He has modernised this form, giving it a certain philosophical breadth, literary tone, and patriotic feeling.”¹³⁹

It is worth mentioning that he was given another great honour at St. Paul’s during his visit to Britain in December 1919. *The Church Times* announced that a special service would be held at St. Paul’s on 18 December 1919. The full title of the service was: “Solemn Service of Supplication for Eastern Christians suffering and in danger in Russia and the Near East and of Thanksgiving for the liberation already accomplished, and for the reunion of Serbian race.”¹⁴⁰ It was also announced that the preacher would be “Right Rev. father Nicholai Velimirovitch, bishop of Zica, Serbia”. Chedomille Mijatovich attended the service and sent a dispatch to the *Politika*. He emphasised that in the history of St. Paul’s Cathedral only one thanksgiving mass was held for a foreign nation: for the United States of America.¹⁴¹ He further reported about the sermon: “I saw it, and was later even more confident in my belief that his sermon had made a deep impression on the audience.” He ends his lengthy report with the following lyrical passage: “I left the Cathedral to fight the darkness, rain and wind again. But I took from it heavenly light in my soul and warm joy in my heart.”¹⁴² *The Church Times* was also full of praise for the Bishop of Žiža: “Bishop of the Church of Serbia, stood before the high altar of St. Paul’s to lead a great congre-

¹³⁸ AJ, Fonds 80, f. 40-393, N. Velimirovich to J. Jovanović, London, 6 Oct. 1917. Graham, *Part of the Wonderful Scene*, 153.

¹³⁹ Pavle Popović, *Jugoslovenska književnost* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1918), 149.

¹⁴⁰ “Services and Meetings”, *Church Times*, 12 Dec. 1919, 588 c.

¹⁴¹ Čedo Mijatović, “U katedrali Sv. Pavla”, *Politika*, 3 Jan. 1920, 1.

¹⁴² *Ibid.* 2.

gation in thanksgiving to God 'for the deliverance of our Eastern brethren from the chains of darkness and oppression,' spoke to that congregation of the need of Christian unity, and from the gates of the choir gave his blessing to men and women of several countries and of the Orthodox and English communions. The thoughts of England aroused first in his Serbian school have developed into an intimate knowledge and a great love; Nicholai Velimirovic has been bidden to the task of forging a strong link between the Churches of Serbia and of England, and has become one of the most powerful and persuasive advocates of the great cause of unity."¹⁴³ The sermon was subsequently published by the Faith Press.¹⁴⁴ In his sermon Bishop Nikolai strongly preached for Christian unity or, as he said: "The angels of the churches are sounding the trumpets summoning to unity. Lost will be, in this world and in the world to come, whoever does not hear the sounding trumpet of the angel of his church."¹⁴⁵

Three weeks later, he delivered a lecture at King's College, London. After the lecture the College Dean, Rev. W. R. Matthews, presented Bishop Nikolai with a watercolour of the interior of St. Paul's Cathedral. Referring to the sermon(s) that Velimirovich had delivered at St. Paul's, he said: "It was an historic occasion, for, I am told, you are the first person, not being in formal communion with the Anglican Communion, that has preached from the pulpit of our Metropolitan Cathedral."¹⁴⁶

Velimirovich positively surprised his British friends by his openness to all Christian churches and particularly to Roman Catholicism. Stephen Graham remarked that Father Nikolai was "very friendly towards Roman Catholics, had nothing against them, and certainly did not want to convert anyone who was already a Christian. In the spiritual anxiety of the war, with Christians arrayed against Christians, there was a singularly attractive quality of Fr Nikolai."¹⁴⁷ Bogumil Vošnjak mentions that Nikolai, in addition to having had close relations with the Church of England, also had links with the Catholic Church in England. "Cardinal Bourne highly appreciated Nikolai Velimirovich and was in touch with him all the time."¹⁴⁸ Henry Wickham Steed told Father Nikolai that Frano Supilo expressed readiness to convert to the Orthodox faith. In Septem-

¹⁴³ "The Churches of the East. Intercession and Thanksgiving at St. Paul's", *Church Times*, 24 Dec. 1919, 622.

¹⁴⁴ Nicholai Velimirović, "The Principle of the Eastern Orthodox Church. A Sermon preached in St. Paul's Cathedral", *The Spiritual Rebirth of Europe* (London: Faith Press, 1920), 43–60.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 59.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 42.

¹⁴⁷ Graham, *Part of the Wonderful Scene*, 103.

¹⁴⁸ Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu*, 177. Vošnjak is referring to Cardinal Francis Alphonsus Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster from 1903 until his death in 1935.

ber 1915, Velimirovich shared this information with J. Žujović, and they both agreed that such requests should not be made of Croats.¹⁴⁹

Velimirovich had already been known as a good preacher in Serbia in 1910–1914. His reputation in Britain grew throughout the Great War. Upon returning to Yugoslavia, he continued to be respected as a great orator and is still sometimes considered “the greatest orator in the history of the Serbian people”. He has even been described as the “Serbian Chrysostom”.¹⁵⁰ Since he did not have a proper predecessor in Serbia who could have served as a model to him in this field, one can only assume that his stay in Britain in 1908/9 influenced his oratory, and that his second stay during the Great War encouraged him to hone his oratorical skills.¹⁵¹

Booklets and pamphlets

During his wartime and immediate post-war activities in Britain (1915–1920) Velimirovich published at least ten booklets and pamphlets. Furthermore, in New York he edited the journal *Živa crkva* (Living Church). In four out of five issues of this journal published in New York, Velimirovich is credited as author, and it is clear that he was also the author of the third issue entitled “Christianity and War. Letters of a Serbian to his English Friend” since it was later republished in England under his name. Two of the issues are in English¹⁵² and three are in Serbian. This means that in 1915–1920 Velimirovich published at least twelve booklets and pamphlets in English. Some of them contain three or four of his lectures delivered throughout Britain, and some are single lectures or addresses.

The target audience for Velimirovich was quite different in the United States and in Britain. In the former, he primarily addressed Serbs, Yugoslavs and other Slavs living in the States. In the latter, he addressed Britons of the highest circles, including MPs, ministers, opinion makers, dignitaries of the Church of England and other churches, university teachers and humanitarian workers. What is impressive about his sermons and lectures is not only their quantity but even more their quality. A publication of St. Margaret’s Church was not likely to be widely distributed. Yet, it was quite enough if a booklet with three of

¹⁴⁹ Žujović, *Dnevnik*, vol. 2, 196.

¹⁵⁰ Radovan Bigović, *Od svečoveka do bogočoveka. Hrišćanska filozofija vladike Nikolaja Velimirovića* (Belgrade: Raška škola, 1998), 72. Chrysostom means “golden-mouthed” in Greek.

¹⁵¹ He was aware of the importance of sermons as early as 1902. Bogdan Lubardić, “Nikolaj Velimirović 1903–1914”, 331.

¹⁵² *Christianity and War. Letters of a Serbian to his English Friend*, *Živa crkva* no. 3 [New York], 31 p. Rev. N. Velimirovich D.D., *Two Churches in One Nation*, *Živa crkva* no. 5 [New York], 16 p.

Velimirovich's lectures delivered in that church reached the MPs who attended the church and their family members.

His booklets and pamphlets were published by various societies, and in some cases were supported by the Serbian Legation. Upon the publication of the booklet *Serbia in Light and Darkness* the Serbian Legation purchased 400 copies and sent them to Velimirovich's flat.¹⁵³ Many of his activities were coordinated with the Serbian Legation and he represented the Legation officially at the meetings related to church affairs. *The Church Times* announced the public meeting of the Anglican and Eastern Association to be held on 27 October 1915, in which would take part the Secretary of the Russian Embassy and Nikolai Velimirovich "representing the Serbian Legation".¹⁵⁴ The speakers at the meeting which marked the ninth anniversary of the Association included Dr. Seton-Watson, Leighton Pullan, Father Nikolai and Stephen Graham.

Another impressive fact concerns the forewords to some of his booklets. They were written by very prominent Britons including: Robert William Seton-Watson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of London, and Canon A. J. Douglas. In revising his booklet *Serbia in Light and Darkness* he had the help of Rev. G. K. A. Bell, subsequently Bishop of Chichester. All of these names belonged to the highest ranks of the Church of England at the time. He also delivered many lectures in Catholic and Presbyterian churches, and a foreword was written by Rev. Alexander Whyte, Principal of New College in Edinburgh.

It seems that his interpretation of the Lord's Prayer was particularly popular. It had three editions, and the Archbishop of York, Cosmo Gordon Lang,¹⁵⁵ stressed in his foreword: "It has an originality of spirit, method, and language which distinguishes it from any other interpretation of the Lord's Prayer which I have read."¹⁵⁶ *The Church Times* announced the publication of this booklet. "A month or two ago there appeared in the columns of the *Men's Magazine* one of the most remarkable contributions ever made to it. It was impossible that it should be allowed to remain there. *The Lord's Prayer: a Devout Interpretation* (C.E.M.S., Church House, – Westminster, 6d.) has now been issued separately, and the Archbishop of York commends it to a wider public."¹⁵⁷ The booklet was reprinted in 1917 and 1918. That it was popular may be seen from a foreword to

¹⁵³ AS, KSPL, f iv, r 82/1916, Reply of the Secretary of the Serbian Legation to the publisher Longmans, Green & Co. dated 24 June 1916.

¹⁵⁴ *Church Times*, 15 Oct. 1915, 384.

¹⁵⁵ Cosmo Gordon Lang was Archbishop of York from 1908 until 1928, and then Archbishop of Canterbury from 1928 until 1942.

¹⁵⁶ Foreword of the Archbishop of York to Nicholai Velimirovic, *The Lord's Prayer. A Devout Interpretation* (London: Church of England Men's Society, 1916).

¹⁵⁷ *Church Times*, 24 Nov. 1916, 468 b, c.

another publication devoted to a similar topic, *The Lord's Commandments*. The Lord Bishop of London says therein that Father Nikolai "won all our hearts," and adds: "His little book upon 'The Lord's Prayer' has been widely read, and I much hope his accompanying volume will find as many readers."¹⁵⁸

Relations with the Church of England and other Christian churches

The commemoration of Kossovo Day in June/July 1916 was done with the clear support and blessing of the Church of England. Another indicator of how close relations had become between the two churches came in the autumn of 1917. In late 1917 the Church of England had a 104-page *Molitvenik* (Prayer book) printed in Serbian and in Cyrillic in London "as a gift of members of the Church of England to the Church of Serbia". The Prayer book is prefaced by the following note of Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury, written in October 1916: "I think it gives cause for thankfulness, and is also a matter of good omen, that at this time of supreme crisis the Church of England should aid the work and worship of the Church of Serbia by the publication of this book. The Serbian people have been passing through a valley of humiliation and sorrow, and we value the privilege of outstretching a helpful hand."¹⁵⁹

The Church of England adapted two prayers for being "used in the English churches on the anniversary of the Battle of Kossovo". One of them, "For the Departed", was adapted from the Liturgy of Serapion. It was a prayer to the Lord for "the men and women who have laid down their lives in bringing succour to the wounded and sick, together with all those who have been slain in defence of Serbia." The other, "For Those in Adversity", was adapted from the Liturgy of St. Mark. It addresses the Lord: "Have compassion upon the oppressed people of Serbia; strengthen and defend the Bishops and the Clergy in body and soul"¹⁶⁰ The prayers were in use in Anglican churches in 1917 and later. *The Times* clarified that the Prayer book was compiled by Velimirovich, that it was meant for the Serbian Army, and that 10,000 copies would be sent to Serbs in Salonika, Corfu and elsewhere.¹⁶¹ *The Church Times* also informed its readers that "the prayers have been arranged and written in Serbian for the Society by Father Nicholas Velimirovic, chaplain to King Peter."¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Foreword by the Bishop of London to Nicholai Velimirovic, *The Lord's Commandments, etc.* (London: Church of England Men's Society, 1917).

¹⁵⁹ *Molitvenik* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1917), 3.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 104.

¹⁶¹ "A Serbian prayer-book", *Times*, 12 Jan. 1918.

¹⁶² "Dispatch of 10,000 prayer books to Serbian troops", *Church Times*, 14 Dec. 1917, 514 c.

At the very end of the war Velimirovich helped Serbian Prime Minister Nikola Pašić to save his face because some British officials boycotted him. In October 1918 a new conflict between Pašić and the Yugoslav Committee became evident. The Prime Minister of Serbia came to London on 2 October 1918. British circles were under the strong influence of British Serbian/Yugoslav friends, the Serbian opposition and the Serbian Minister in London Jovan Jovanović, who were all emphatically against Pašić.¹⁶³ Velimirovich accused Jovanović and his associates of having created in London an atmosphere of ill will towards Pašić, but he was also critical of Pašić and obviously had more sympathies for the points of the Yugoslav Committee than Pašić.¹⁶⁴ Yet, he decided to facilitate communication between Pašić and British officials. He first supported the Serbian government at the requiem mass at a Greek church in London, and then set up a huge meeting with prelates of the Church of England. On 12 October 1918 Pašić gave a special dinner at Claridge's Hotel. All guests were presented with a souvenir: a leaflet with the image of a window of the twelfth-century Serbian monastery of Studenica on its front cover, and an ethnographic map of future Yugoslavia inside. It also contained a short history of the Serbian Orthodox Church with a note at the end: "There are 40 Serbian theological students now being educated at Oxford and Cuddesdon."¹⁶⁵

In his speech Pašić thanked the Church of England for all it had done for Serbia during the Great War. "May it be (he ended) that, by the aid of the Almighty, this work of charity for the Church of Serbia may be the foundation stone on which may be placed the *rapprochement* and the definite union of our two Churches for the good of all humanity." This announcement must have been made in collaboration with Velimirovich who had been a proponent of the union of the two churches since at least 1909. It certainly made an excellent impression on Anglican prelates. This occasion also provided an apt opportunity to honour top Anglican officials who had helped Serbia so much during the war. By order of King Peter many of them were awarded the Order of St. Sava. "The first class was given to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops of London and Oxford; the second class upon the Archbishop of York, the Revs. Dr. W. H. Frere, C. R., Canon W. H. Carnegie, H. J. Fynes-Clinton, and Dr. Hermitage Day."¹⁶⁶ A malicious comment of Minister Jovanović, who was not even invited to this ceremony, should be seen in the light of the mutual animosity between him and Pašić.¹⁶⁷ Contrary to most Serbian and Yugoslav emigrants in London,

¹⁶³ For more detail see Antić, *Neizabrana saveznica*, 438–455.

¹⁶⁴ Jovanović, *Dnevnik*, 533, diary entry of 27 Sep. (10 Oct) 1918.

¹⁶⁵ AS, KSPL, SPA, f. X.

¹⁶⁶ *Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record*, 26.

¹⁶⁷ Jovanović, *Dnevnik*, 534, diary entry of 29 Sep. (12 Oct.) 1918. He implied that Pašić offered Velimirovich the position of a bishop in Serbia in return for this service.

Velimirovich remained loyal to Pašić throughout the Great War. After all, it was Pašić who had sent all the Serbian envoys to London.¹⁶⁸ Velimirovich also followed quite loyally the instructions he had been given in 1915, which was to promote the future Yugoslav state and to maintain close relations with the Yugoslav Committee.

A very important action that brought the two churches together was the education of future Serbian priests which the Church of England gradually took on itself. In October 1917, at Velimirovich's instigation, Rev. H. J. Fynes-Clinton in cooperation with Rev. L. Pullan arranged that four Serbian students should be sent to Oxford.¹⁶⁹ This was the same L. Pullan with whom Velimirovich had discussed the question of the reunion of the two churches in *The Guardian* in 1909.¹⁷⁰ The Archbishop of Serbia endorsed this scheme and asked the Archbishop of Canterbury to bring as many seminary students over to England as possible. A cordial support for this scheme followed from the Church of England and, with the help of Rev. Canon W. H. Carnegie, "The Serbian Church Students' Aid Council" was set up with the Archbishop of Canterbury as its president and the Archbishops of York and Dublin as its vice-presidents. By July 1918 the Council was supporting eleven Serbian students at Oxford, and twenty-eight younger seminarians at Cuddesdon College near Oxford. The Council estimated the annual costs of this scheme at 10,000 pounds.¹⁷¹ In January 1918 St. Stephen's House, Oxford, became a Serbian Theological College. The scheme was continued after the war and, in October 1919, the Anglican and Eastern Association, which had taken over managing the scheme from the Council, established its own Hostel of St. Sava and St. George at 16 Parks Road, Oxford, with fourteen students from Serbia.¹⁷²

Another vivid proof of how close relations between the two churches had become during the Great War may be gleaned from Father Nikolai's letter to *The Times* published in January 1919. The letter was about the Serbian priests killed during the war in occupied Serbia, particularly in the Bulgarian occupa-

¹⁶⁸ Until Pašić's death in 1926, Velimirovich was considered to be politically sympathetic to his Radical Party. Milan Jovanović Stoimirović, *Portreti prema živim modelima*, 65.

¹⁶⁹ "Theological Students from Serbia in England", *Westminster Gazette*, 7 Mar. 1918.

¹⁷⁰ For more on Leighton Pullan and on Anglo-Catholic stream within the Church of England see Mark D. Chapman, "The Church of England, Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church during the First World War", in Vladislav Puzović, ed., *Pravoslavni svet i Prvi svetski rat* (Belgrade: Pravoslavni bogoslovski fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2015), 385–401. For Anglo-Catholicism see Mark Chapman, *Anglicanism. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 75–93.

¹⁷¹ Publication of the Council with the list of its members on the cover page, and a report on the back page, AJ, Fonds 83, f. 73, no. 6, "Nikolai Velimirovich and Vojislav Janic".

¹⁷² *Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record*, 23.

tion zone. At the end of the letter he conveyed the appeal of the Archbishop of Serbia “to the English clergy to mention the Serbian clergy martyrs in their prayers.”¹⁷³

When Velimirovich returned to Serbia, he sent a private letter to an English churchman, excerpts from which were published in *The Church Times*. The letter reveals the gratitude he felt for the help provided by the Church of England but also the effects of the aid sent to Serbs. In the letter he states: “It will interest you to know that many of my clergymen who were interned in Austria-Hungary are still wearing the English clergy clothes which they received while in Austrian camps last year in parcels from England. It was due, as you will remember, to the appeal of the Bishop of London through *The Church Times*. They are most grateful. They keep saying ‘We should not know what to wear, even now, had we not these English coats.’ Is it not curious to see a priest of the mountains wearing a coat which was worn by some English dean in the magnificent cities of England? Even coats have their life adventures like men.”¹⁷⁴

In December 1919, at Lambeth, Nikolai Velimirovich, by then already a bishop, summarised what he believed had contributed to strengthening the friendship between the Church of England and the Serbian Church, and cited four things: 1) the help provided to deported Serbian clergy in Austria; 2) the aid to the Serbian students in England; 3) the gift of tens of thousands of Serbian prayer books by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge to the Serbian troops; and 4) the prayer made for the Serbs throughout England.¹⁷⁵

The Church of England found in Father Nikolai Velimirovich an able, learned and committed advocate of church unity, and this Church had been in search of such a man in Eastern Churches for years. During the years of the Great War, the British alliance first with Serbia and then with the Hellenic Kingdom seemed to have opened the possibility for church union. At the beginning of 1919 Dr. Percy Dearmer optimistically echoed the expectations raised in many quarters of the Church of England during the war: “Fr. Velimirović’s sojourn in this country, preaching in and receiving Communion in our own Church, had been a wonderful means of cementing brotherhood with the Serbian Church. While the Metropolitan of Athens, who had been in England too, was bearing back to Greece the same message of fraternal love. The possibility of reunion with the East was becoming greater and greater.”¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³“The Serbian Church”, *Times*, 6 Jan. 1919.

¹⁷⁴“Letter from Bishop Nicholai”, *Church Times*, 18 July 1919, 54.

¹⁷⁵ *Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record*, 20–21.

¹⁷⁶“Reunion Conferences”, *Church Times*, 11 Apr. 1919, 351.

Bishop Bury gave an introductory address before Bishop Nikolai's sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral in December 1919. It revealed the kind of respect the Bishop of Žiča had earned in the ranks of the Church of England:

I do not think that any Bishop of our own Communion – not to speak of the other Orthodox Dignitaries who have been welcomed from time to time – have ever had the same reception here in London, and there is good reason why this should be so. Bishop Nicholai, as well as having endeared himself to us for his own sake, has been vividly representative to us all through the war, as he is still, of the Spirit of Serbia... I only hope Serbia knows what she owes to him – at no distant date I hope to find out for myself, and if necessary to tell both people and Church what they owe – but we know what Serbia owes to Bishop Nicholai, and not only Serbia but the whole Eastern Church, including Russia, in whose future I still proclaim myself a firm believer. We too know here, in our own Anglican Church, what we owe to the Bishop, for while he is, in a sense, like one of our own clergy in his service to us, he has done what none of our own clergy could have done in the same way, helped us to look outside our own boundaries, wide as they are, into the fuller life of the whole Catholic Church of Christ.¹⁷⁷

In addition to forging the Anglican-Orthodox rapprochement, Velimirovich significantly contributed to a radical change in British views on the impact of religion on potential South-Slav unity. Before the Great War, the Catholic-Orthodox divide among the South Slavs had been seen as very strong. Father Nikolai's overall activities combined with the activities of the "British friends of Serbia" during the Great War considerably relativised the importance previously attached to religious differences among Yugoslavs.¹⁷⁸ This was probably the most relevant achievement Velimirovich made in promoting the Yugoslav cause in Britain.

Influence of British cosmopolitanism

During his four years in Britain (1908–1909; 1915–1919) Velimirovich met the most prominent British theologians, clergymen, writers, scholars and humanitarian workers, but also illustrious persons from all corners of the British Empire, including the Bengali poet Tagore and Muslim sheiks from India. Additionally, in London he also met prominent Slavic intellectuals who had left Austria-Hungary, the most prominent of them being the Czech Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. This cosmopolitan experience influenced him strongly. He also maintained close relations with the Serbian ex-diplomat Chedomille Miyatovich and the writer Dimitrije Mitrinović, who both were sympathetic to universalist

¹⁷⁷ Velimirović, *Spiritual Rebirth of Europe*, 45–46.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. James Evans, *Great Britain and the Creation of Yugoslavia. Negotiating Balkan Nationality and Identity* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2008), 66–67.

ideas, and both endeavoured to re-conceptualise Christianity as a cornerstone of new universalism. Velimirovich's ideas gradually evolved and can be followed through his texts published or prepared during his stay in Britain.

In April 1916 Israel Gollancz, professor of English literature at King's College, prefaced a collection of essays in honour of Shakespeare on the occasion of the tercentenary of his death. He made a selection of texts on Shakespeare which included well-known authors such as Thomas Hardy, John Galsworthy, Rudyard Kipling, and Sir Rabindranath Tagore. Besides Anglo-American authors he added writers from Allied and neutral countries. Among them were Henri Bergson, Romain Rolland, Émile Verhaeren, Maurice Maeterlinck and Henryk Sienkiewicz. The two contributions by Serbs in the collection were written by Nikolai Velimirovich and Pavle Popović, and a paragraph on "Shakespeare and Yugoslavs" in Serbian in Cyrillic was also included.¹⁷⁹ Velimirovich defines Shakespeare's spirit as panhumanist and the artist himself as someone who knew "to find out essential good", and thanks to him also the British nation knows the same. "Their principle is not to *uniform* the world, but to multiply their own spirit by learning and understanding all other spirits in order to be just towards all. Their way is going not towards the Super-man, but towards the All-man; not towards Nietzsche, but towards Shakespeare." For him the real founder of the multicultural Empire was Shakespeare and since the Bible reached Britain "there has been no similar *panhuman* document read on this island as Shakespeare".¹⁸⁰ It is obvious that British cosmopolitanism had made a huge impression on Velimirovich. His political dreams are clearly expressed in his comparison in this text between Dostoevsky's *vsechlovek* and Shakespeare as a pananthropos. "That is the reason why these two grand races, the Anglo-Saxon and the Slav," Velimirovich writes, "are secretly gravitating by their soul towards each other, in spite of all possible temporary divergency of politics. Their ideal is the same – panhuman."¹⁸¹ Indeed, the Great War brought about unprecedented interest in Britain in Russian literature and philosophy, as well as the Eastern Orthodox Church, and Velimirovich was one among several authors who could now dream that this interest would materialise not only as a temporal military alliance but also in the development of spiritual links. Another one was

¹⁷⁹ Nicholas Velimirovich, "Shakespeare – the Pananthropos", in Israel Gollancz, ed., *A Book of Homage to Shakespeare. To commemorate the three hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death* (Oxford University Press, 1916), 520–523; Pavle Popović, "Shakespeare in Serbia", *ibid.* 524–527; Срђан Туцић, "Шекспир и Југословени" [Srdjan Tucic, "Shakespeare and the Yugoslavs"], *ibid.* 528.

¹⁸⁰ Velimirovich, "Shakespeare – the Pananthropos", 520 and 523.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* 523. In its review of this book, the highly esteemed *Spectator* quoted only a few contributors and among them twice Velimirovich: "A Book of Homage to Shakespeare", *Spectator*, 27 May 1916, 661.

his friend Stephen Graham, who did a lot to bring Russian and British cultures closer to one another during the war. The Bolshevik Revolution made any rapprochement of the two cultures hardly possible. This is echoed in the second sermon Velimirovich delivered at St. Paul's.

From his second sermon at St. Paul's one learns which British theologians and preachers particularly influenced him. On that occasion he said: "Speaking from this sacred place, from which the shining stars of your church, like Dr. Liddon, Dean Church, and Dr. Robertson used to speak, I am trying to speak, though not so eloquently as they did, at least in the spirit in which they spoke, and in which they would speak were they now amongst us."¹⁸² In the same sermon he elaborated on his favourite topic: the need for church unity. He outlined three main reasons for unity. 1) Love. "With all of you we shall feel more perfect, more alive", he claimed. 2) The Peace Conference failed to rely on higher powers. Velimirovich held churches responsible for that, not politicians. "It is not their [politicians'] fault, I am sure. It is the fault of the Church being many instead of being one." With one and united church the "white race" would be able to "solve the seemingly insoluble problems of boundaries, of League of Nations, of Labour and the rest." 3) With Russia lost peoples of the Near East and "unredeemed Greece" faced rising Islam. "Therefore they are looking to Great Britain as the champion of Christendom at the present moment." He expressed his belief that "Serbia and all her Yugo-Slav brothers" were "being set free thanks not only to your [Britain's] material and military help, but also to your steady prayers for her in this place [St. Paul's Cathedral] and in hundreds of other of sanctuaries of yours during the last four years." But many anxieties were yet to come, and to meet them rapprochement would not be sufficient, "but real unity" would.¹⁸³ In Britain, his ideas on church unity expressed as early as 1909 only gained momentum. Moreover, everything that the Church of England did for the rapprochement with the Orthodox Churches seemed to indicate that unity was far from impossible to achieve.

He seems to have been under the significant influence of Rabindranath Tagore. In their search for the spiritual self, they both were fascinated and disenchanted by British culture. British cosmopolitanism impressed both of them, but they also witnessed lust for material gains and a civilisation that seemed to be losing its spiritual grounds. They both identified two faces of Britain and Western Europe. As Tagore summarised it in his essay on nationalism in Japan: "Europe is supremely good in her beneficence where her face is turned to all humanity; and Europe is supremely evil in her malefic aspect where her face

¹⁸² Velimirovic, *Spiritual Rebirth of Europe*, 57–58; he added that he was "glad to call" some members of the present chapter of St. Paul's Cathedral "my personal friends".

¹⁸³ Velimirović, *Spiritual Rebirth of Europe*, 53–57.

is turned only upon her own interest, using all her power of greatness for ends which are against the infinite and the eternal in Man.”¹⁸⁴

The legacy of Velimirovich’s British cosmopolitan experience is best summarised in an article of his published in *The New Age*, “Indian Panhumanism”,¹⁸⁵ which he probably submitted for publication during his visit to Britain in December 1919. The article begins with a quote from Tagore: “There is only one history – the history of man.”¹⁸⁶ He sees the freedom of the will as the beginning of human tragedy. He speaks very highly of the traditions of Hinduism and is impressed that it knows not “of the two great enemies of mankind”, and these are narrow-minded nationalism and unscrupulous imperialism.¹⁸⁷ The experience of the Great War had left a deep mark on Velimirovich’s religious views. He was profoundly disheartened by what had happened in Europe. “The World War is the proof that Christ has been once more crucified by Nationalism and Imperialism, and that he has to ask for refuge among those of more pan-human spirits.”¹⁸⁸ Disillusioned with Europe, he finds India to be the most apt new refuge for Christian teachings, openly asking why Krishna should not be called “our great prophet”. The Christian religion has become “a lost jewel in the West”, and he therefore asks: “Why should not India bow and take it [Christianity] up, and brush it up from the dust, and make it perfect?”¹⁸⁹

This article was an introduction to his major work in Serbian – *Discourse on Pan-Human*, a literary work written in allegorical form and published anonymously. Its main character, *Ananda Vran Gavran*, travels around the world in search of Pan-Human. This *Pananthropos*, whom Velimirovich found in Solovoyov and Shakespeare but also in religious teachings of the East, can best be found in true Christianity. Since that kind of Christianity has been abandoned in the West, he finishes his Serbian book with the following words: “And Pan-Human boarded a ship which sailed the Pacific Ocean. And his face glowing with light was turned towards Asia. And it was night. And the stars were in the sky. And the Asian magi examined the stars, and with great excitement they spotted a new star, which announced to them the coming of the King from exile.”¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁴ Sir Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism* (San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1917), 84–85.

¹⁸⁵ Nicolai Velimirovic (*Bishop of Zica, Serbia*), “Indian Panhumanism”, *New Age* 26, no. 8 (25 Dec. 1919), 125–128.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Tagore, *Nationalism*, 119.

¹⁸⁷ Velimirovic, “Indian Panhumanism”, 126.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 127.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 128.

¹⁹⁰ *Reči o svečoveku* (Belgrade: S. B. Cvijanović, 1920), 338.

For Bishop Nikolai's enemies in Serbia, this was too much. His second sermon at St. Paul's, a lengthy praise of it in the *Politika*, and now his new book, and they were enraged. The new book, as every allegory, could be interpreted in more ways than one. It led his enemies to publish a text in rhyme on the front page of the leading Belgrade daily *Politika*. It was entitled "Pan-Human in Belgrade" and signed with a pseudonym. The text implied that the proper place for Ananda Vran Gavran, the main protagonist of Velimirovich's book, was a lunatic asylum, and that the author of the book equated Christ, Muhammad and Brahma.¹⁹¹

Velimirovich continued to hold Eastern traditions in high esteem. When, in November 1926, Tagore visited Belgrade, one of his hosts was Velimirovich. He greeted Tagore in the Belgrade premises of the Young Men's Christian Association and called India "a Christian country without Christ" which gave the world people "whose greatness is admired by all".¹⁹² During his years in Ohrid, where he served as bishop (1920–1936), he was more focused on the mystical traditions of Orthodox Christianity. Yet, his fascination with Eastern teachings did not vanish. In the 1930s, while showing Lake Ohrid to the writer Grigorije Božović, Velimirovich said: "This is Tibet."¹⁹³

As Predrag Palavestra noted: "From England, where he found refuge during the First World War and where, apart from energetically working for the national cause, he pursued an interest in pan-Slavic pan-humanist ideas and the spiritual conflict between Eastern and Western philosophy, Velimirovich returned as a neo-Christian poet of the moralist philosophy of Pan-Human."¹⁹⁴

Recollections of Velimirovich in the Church of England

Some of Father Nikolai's Serbian contemporaries in London were not too happy about the extent of his influence and his abilities. The role of the Orthodox Church in Serbia prior to the First World War was not prominent in spite of the fact that it enjoyed the status of state church.¹⁹⁵ Even high-ranking clergymen

¹⁹¹ Felet, "Svečovek u Beogradu", *Politika*, 31 Jan. 1920, 1–2.

¹⁹² "Tagora u hrišćanskoj zajednici", *Politika*, 17 Nov. 1926, 6.

¹⁹³ Janković, *Episkop Nikolaj*, vol. 1, 187.

¹⁹⁴ Predrag Palavestra, "Doba modernizma u književnosti", in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. VI-2 (Belgrade: SKZ, 1994), 388. Velimirovich's criticism of Europe's materialism intensified in the interwar period. For the evolution of Velimirovich's political and cultural ideas in the interwar period see Milutinović, *Getting over Europe*, 156–167.

¹⁹⁵ The Archbishop of Serbia, Dimitrije, complained to Bogumil Vošnjak (*U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu*, 179), that the Serbian government did not even inform him about the Concordat with Vatican in 1914. On the low prestige of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Serbia prior to the First World War see Chedo Mijatovich, *Servia and the Servians* (London:

had to admit that something was not right with religious sentiment in Serbia and that “rechristianizing” was needed. Stevan M. Veselinović, director of the Theological Seminary, wrote in 1909: “As a matter of fact, party politics have done visible harm to the purely religious sentiments of the mass of the Servian people. It is everyone’s hope that the Church will succeed in purifying the stagnant atmosphere of the Servian nation if she devotes herself to her apostolical mission of rechristianizing the Servian peoples.”¹⁹⁶ It was almost inconceivable that a simple monk could play any socially or culturally significant role. In the absence of the nobility and industrial magnates, the high society of Serbia on the eve of the Great War consisted mostly of university professors, army officers, civil servants and diplomats. That a monk could surpass them in influence in Britain was not an easy pill to swallow. For this reason, the Serbian Minister in London, Jovan Jovanović, or the Serbian envoys, professors Bogdan and Pavle Popović, were often very suspicious of Velimirovich. The most sympathetic Yugoslav assessment of his work came from a Catholic Slovene, Bogumil Vošnjak, rather than from a Serb. Vošnjak described Nikolai’s propaganda efforts as something peculiar, something that made him look like an apostle: “It was not propaganda in the simple sense of the word; it was something reminiscent of the activity of an apostle who influences the masses through the secrets of religion.” He deemed his activities in Britain “so comprehensive, so multifaceted, and so universal that it was a veritable miracle.”¹⁹⁷ A Dalmatian member of the Yugoslav Committee, the famous sculptor Ivan Meštrović also had a high opinion of Velimirovich and not so high of the other Serbian envoys in London. As recorded in his memoirs: “Father Nikolai Velimirovich, a monk, and a former student in England, has also come. A young man then, but very well-read and unusually gifted as an orator and preacher. These older Serbian gentlemen somewhat look down on him, but he is more useful for the Serbian and general cause than all of them put together. He is closer to us in terms of ideas, is more broad-minded and more considerate. And while they only speak of Serbia and Serbdom, and of some Greater Serbia, the monk speaks both of Serbia and the Serbian people and of Yugoslavs and a future Yugoslavia.”¹⁹⁸ R. W. Seton-Watson had a similar opinion. His short note accompanying Bishop Nikolai’s article written for *The New Europe* reads: “During the dark days of war and exile no one did more to in-

Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1908), 48–53. Milan Jovanović Stojimirović, *Portreti prema živim modelima* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska), 1998, 17–18.

¹⁹⁶ S. M. Veselinovitch, “Religion”, in Alfred Stead, ed., *Servia by the Servians* (London: William Heinemann, 1909), 157.

¹⁹⁷ Vošnjak *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu*, 177 and 184.

¹⁹⁸ Ivan Meštrović, *Uspomene na političke ljude i događaje* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1969), 58.

terpret to this country the soul of Serbia and the spirit of the Orthodox Church than Father Nikolai Velimirović.”¹⁹⁹

Velimirović's activities during and after the Great War, and Anglophile sentiments were not forgotten in Britain. On 12 March 1919, prior to his departure from England, Father Nikolai was presented with a pectoral cross by his English brethren in Christ. On that occasion, the Archbishop of Canterbury said the following: “During his exile in England he had been regarded with growing affection and respect, as one who was essentially a spiritual guide. By his words and his pen he had taught many lessons, he had gained many friends, and the cross which they were offering him would be the symbol and the reminder of English friendship. Destined to be a leader in Church and State in his own country, it was no small thing that Father Nicolai should know England and English life and thought. There were links between the two countries, but the strongest link of all was the time that Father Nicolai had spent here. Ideas of union were in the air, we knew not to what they would grow.”²⁰⁰

During his first post-war visit to the UK, at the end of 1919, a series of honours and praises were bestowed on him. This visit, which he made in his capacity as Bishop of Žiča,²⁰¹ provides evidence of the respect he had gained in Britain. In November 1919, shortly before his departure for Britain, he had been awarded an honorary D.D. degree by the University of Glasgow.²⁰² He arrived in Britain on 12 December and, four days later, was received by British King George V.²⁰³ On 18 December he delivered his second sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral. Finally, on 9 January 1920 he delivered a lecture at King's College, London. The Vice Chancellor of the University of London, Dr. Sydney Russell-Wells, felt obliged to say before his lecture that Velimirović was “the type of man the University of London delights to honour. Had it been our practice to confer Honorary Degrees I have no doubt that, long ere this, had he been willing to accept the title, he would have been numbered among the Doctors of our University.”²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ Nikolai Velimirović, “Freedom's Reality and Delusions”, *New Europe* (1 Jan. 1920). The article was republished in Velimirović, *Spiritual Rebirth of Europe*, 61–80.

²⁰⁰ “A Parting Presentation”, *Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record*, 20. The Archbishop's words in this report are not in quotations marks but have been paraphrased. Before this presentation, it was thought that Father Nikolai should be awarded a Lambeth D.D. or an honorary Oxford D. D., but Fynes-Clinton soon learned that only British nationals were eligible for the former, and only priests of the Anglican Church for the latter, see M. Heppell, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirović*, 12–13.

²⁰¹ He was elected Bishop of Žiča in April 1919.

²⁰² “Glasgow Honorary Degrees”, *Evening Telegraph*, 18 Nov. 1919, p. 4 d.

²⁰³ “Court and Personal”, *Yorkshire Post*, 17 Dec. 1919, p. 6.

²⁰⁴ Velimirović, *The Spiritual Rebirth of Europe*, 13.

In 1921, the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association published a report entitled *The Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record 1914–1921*. A substantial part of the report bears the heading “Our relations with Serbia”, of which more than a half is devoted to the activities of Father Nikolai. It becomes evident from the report that relations between the two churches during the Great War essentially were relations between the Church of England and Nikolai Velimirovich. As far as the “close intercourse” between the two churches is concerned, the report assesses that he was “the chief personality in this rapprochement”.²⁰⁵

In 1940 Harold Buxton, Bishop of Gibraltar, recalled Nikolai Velimirovich who “made impression on all of us by his serious commitment and his Christian sermons, but also by his efforts to offer young Serbian seminarists a necessary theological education”. He also mentioned other bishops who had co-operated with the Church of England in the interwar period, such as Irinej Djordjević, Bishop of Dalmatia, Dr. Irinej Ćirić, Bishop of Bačka, and Dr. Dositej Vasić, Metropolitan of Zagreb, and the Serbian churchmen Kosta Luković, Dušan Stojanović and Branislav Kovandžić.²⁰⁶ This Anglophile current in the interwar Serbian Orthodox Church was undoubtedly something for which Nikolai Velimirovich had paved the way with his activities during the Great War.

In his obituary *The Church Times* called him a “friend of Britain” and pointed out that he had been “an outstanding figure in the rapprochement between the Church of England and the Serbian Orthodox Church”.²⁰⁷ Bishop George Bell echoed the respect that Nikolai Velimirovich had earned in England in his lifetime but particularly during the Great War when he said in his eulogy at the memorial service held in the Serbian church in London in September 1956: “In the midst of all the noise and traffic, the conflict of politics and the wars of nations, he always stood for the eternal... He was a prophet of God, not only of God’s mercy, but of God’s judgment.”²⁰⁸

He was still remembered in Britain at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In 2001, Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Wales, subsequently Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote in his foreword to M. Heppell’s book: “Bishop Nikolai Velimirović was, for several generations of British Anglicans, one of that group of unmistakable moral and spiritual giants who brought something of

²⁰⁵ *Anglican and Eastern Churches: A Historical Record*, 16.

²⁰⁶ Harold Bakston, “Odnosi između Engleske crkve i Srpske pravoslavne crkve”, *Danica* no. 7 (1 Jan. 1941), 2.

²⁰⁷ “Death of Bishop Velimirovich. Friend of Britain”, *Church Times* no. 4,859, 29 Mar. 1956, 13.

²⁰⁸ Heppell, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirović*, 92–93.

the depth and challenge of the Orthodox world in the West.”²⁰⁹ Finally, in 2016, during his official visit to Serbia and the region of the Western Balkans Prince Charles delivered a speech in the Parliament of Serbia and made special reference to Velimirovič and his sermons at St. Paul’s: “1916 is also the centenary of St. Nicolai Velimirovič’s visit to England where he became the first Orthodox Christian to preach at St. Paul’s Cathedral.”²¹⁰

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²⁰⁹ Ibid. 5.

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Regent Alexander Karadjordjević in the First World War

Abstract: This paper analyses the role played by Regent Alexander Karadjordjević in Serbia's politics and military effort during the First World War. He assumed the position of an heir-apparent somewhat suddenly in 1909, and then regency, after a political crisis that made his father King Peter I transfer his royal powers to Prince Alexander just days before the outbreak of the war. At the age of twenty-six, Alexander was going to lead his people and army through unprecedented horrors. The young Regent proved to be a proper soldier, who suffered personally, along with his troops, the agonising retreat through Albania in late 1915 and early 1916, and spared no effort to ensure the supplies for the exhausted rank and file of the army. He also proved to be a ruler of great personal ambitions and lack of regard for constitutional boundaries of his position. Alexander tried to be not just a formal commander-in-chief of his army, but also to take over operational command; he would eventually manage to appoint officers to his liking to the positions of the Chief of Staff and Army Minister. He also wanted to remove Nikola Pašić from premiership and facilitate the formation of a cabinet amenable to his wishes, but he did not proceed with this, as the Entente Powers supported the Prime Minister. Instead, Alexander joined forces with Pašić to eliminate the Black Hand organization, a group of officers hostile both to him and the Prime Minister, in the well-known show trial in Salonika in 1917. The victories of the Serbian army in 1918 at the Salonika front led to the liberation of Serbia and the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia), while Alexander emerged as the most powerful political factor in the new state.

Keywords: Regent Alexander Karadjordjević, Serbia, First World War

General works on Serbia in the First World War naturally bring plenty of material concerning the attitude and activities of Prince Regent Alexander Karadjordjević (King of Yugoslavia after 1921),¹ but there is a lack of studies that attempt to examine this subject in its own right. The exception is the first volume of Branislav Gligorijević's biography of Alexander that covers the time of the Great War, but this three-volume work must be read with an eye to its somewhat hagiographic nature.² For that reason, this paper seeks to focus on the

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¹ See e.g. Andrej Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1984); for a shortened English edition of this book see *Serbia's Great War, 1914–1918* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2007); also Mihailo Vojvodić and Dragoljub Živojinović, eds., *Veliki rat Srbije* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1970); Dušan Bataković, *Srbija i Balkan: Albanija, Bugarska i Grčka 1914–1918* (Novi Sad: Prometej, 2016).

² Branislav Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, 2nd ed., 3 vols (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2010), vol. I: *U ratovima za nacionalno oslobođenje*; see also from the same author

Regent and offer an assessment of his contribution and role within the Serbian government during the most trying period in the history of Serbia. In order to do so, it is necessary to look back at the circumstances in which Alexander rose to the position of Regent because that was not his birthright and because these circumstances had a lasting effect on the power structure in war-torn Serbia. In mid-1903, a group of officers carried out a coup d'état in Serbia that saw the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga, the last rulers of the Obrenović dynasty. Following the so-called May overthrow, Prince Peter Kardjordjević, the grandson of Karadjordje, the leader of the First Serbian Uprising against the Ottoman Turks in 1804, was elected a new king. This was the end of a century-long rivalry between the supporters of the Obrenović and Karadjordjević dynasties. It was also the outset of a new era in Serbia's internal political life and foreign affairs. Domestically, parliamentary democracy was firmly established and Nikola Pašić and his People's Radical Party emerged as a leading political force in the country. The new regime also pursued a more assertive foreign policy, the main object of which was to secure the liberation of the historic Serbian provinces in the south, and Bosnia-Herzegovina with the relative majority of Serb population in the west, both under the yoke of the Ottoman Empire. The annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina on the part of Austria-Hungary in 1908 was a marked setback which the Serbian government had to accept under duress. The shadow of the military conspiracy of 1903, however, remained cast over Serbia throughout the following decade not just on account of her tarnished reputation, but also because the plotters assumed control of the army and interfered with the political establishment. In time, Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijević-Apis emerged as the moving spirit of the conspirators through the sheer strength of his charismatic personality and extraordinary energy. King Peter was indebted to this group of officers for his crown and susceptible to their influence, although he otherwise respected the bounds of parliamentary monarchy in the exercise of his royal duties. He had three children who survived infancy, daughter Helen (Jelena), who later married the Russian Grand Duke Ivan Konstantinovich, and sons George (Djordje) and Alexander (Aleksandar). The eldest son George was thus the heir apparent, but he was mentally unstable and responsible for a series of incidents that scandalized public opinion. Alexander was sent to St. Petersburg, where he attended the prestigious Page Corps under the protection of the Russian Emperor Nicholas II Romanov. But following a particularly nasty incident committed by his older brother in which his servant passed away, there was a wave of public fury and Prince George had to relinquish his right to the throne. The fate thus brought Alexander out of the shadow and placed him at the centre

"King Alexander I Karadjordjević", in Peter Radan and Aleksandar Pavković, eds., *The Serbs and their Leaders in the Twentieth Century* (Hants: Ashgate, 1997), 140–157.

stage of political life in Serbia as he became Crown Prince in 1909 at the age of twenty-one and without having completed his education.

Alexander was sympathetic to the patriotic zeal of his officers and shared their national aspirations. The most determined among them, who belonged to the group of Apis's plotters, founded in 1911 the secret organization "Unification or Death", much better known under the name of Black Hand, for the purpose of pan-Serb unification through revolutionary means as opposed to Prime Minister – and also Foreign Minister – Pašić's cautious policy.³ Initially, Alexander established cordial relations with the Black Handers and even contributed a substantial sum of money to their newspaper *Pijemont* (Piedmont).⁴ With this in view, it was not surprising that Apis and his supporters backed Alexander's replacing George in line of succession; they believed he had the makings of a fine sovereign. It was at Apis's instigation that Alexander was appointed Inspector General of the army to bring him in closer touch with the armed forces.⁵ Crown Prince proved to be ambitious and surrounded himself with a group of officers, most notably Major Petar Živković of the Royal Guards and Captain Josif Kostić, his adjutant, whose loyalty to him was absolute. These were not respected in the army and their connection with Alexander had an air of personal favouritism and protectionism about it. A bitter clash soon erupted in the officer corps, involving the Crown Prince and affecting future developments in Serbia. At their instigation, Alexander took fright of the conspiratorial officers's organization with considerable political ambitions which could easily turn against himself and the entire dynasty. Živković organized his supporters into the so-called White Hand formed for the sole purpose of counteracting the influence of Black Handers under the banner of dynastic loyalty. Apis was, however, more influential with the War Ministry and his opponents were transferred away from Belgrade. In March 1912, Alexander met with ten senior military commanders and they agreed to put an end to internal conflicts in the army and fully commit to realizing national goals.⁶

³ For more on Apis and his followers see Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu*, 306–321; Vladimir Dedijer, *The Road to Sarajevo* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966); David Mackenzie, *Apis the Congenial Conspirator: the Life of Colonel Dragutin T. Dimitrijević* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); Dragoljub Živojinović, *Kralj Petar I Karadjordjević, život i delo*, 3 vols. (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1990), II, 315–340; and Vasa Kazimirović, *Crna ruka: ličnosti i događaji u Srbiji od Majskog prevrata 1903. do Solunskog procesa 1917. godine* (Novi Sad: Prometej, 2013).

⁴ Mackenzie, *Apis the Congenial Conspirator*, 74.

⁵ Antonije Antić, *Beleške*, eds. Bora Dimitrijević and Jelica Ilić (Zaječar: Zadužbina "Nikola Pašić"), 240–244; Mackenzie, *Apis*, 78–79.

⁶ Mackenzie, *Apis*, 85–86.

This agreement allowed the Serbian army to consolidate on the eve of the outstanding challenges that it would face during two successive Balkan Wars in 1912–1913. The first one saw the coalition of Balkan states nearly drive the Ottoman Empire out of Europe and the second broke out because of the division of spoils between Bulgaria and her allies, Serbia and Greece. Prince Alexander took command of the First Serbian Army and won laurels for the great victory against the Turks at Kumanovo and the capture of the town of Bitolj. The First Army also took the brunt of the fighting in defeating the Bulgarians in the Bregalnica battle. Alexander's prestige received a boost due to his exemplary agility and personal courage during military operations. Following the victorious Balkan Wars, in May 1914 the Black Hand came into conflict with civilian government in the newly-acquired Macedonia. The officers refused to acknowledge the priority of civil authority decreed by the Pašić Cabinet. The Black Hand became involved in a power struggle in which the opposition Independent Radical Party backed the army for the self-serving purposes – to remove Pašić's Radicals from office. The army's influence prevailed over King Peter and he was willing to dismiss Pašić, but the latter received decided support from the influential Nikolai Hartwig, Russian Minister in Belgrade, who made it clear that St. Petersburg wanted to see the Prime Minister remain in office. King Peter was placed in an unenviable position and decided to renounce his role in politics; on 24 June he transferred his royal powers to Prince Alexander, although he remained nominally King. The dispute between the Cabinet and the Black Hand was laid to rest as the Pašić Cabinet withdrew the priority decree, but the central issue concerning the troubled civil-military relations was unresolved.⁷

Just four days after Alexander had assumed royal powers, on 28 June 1914, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo. This fateful event set in motion diplomatic events that would culminate in the outbreak of the First World War. Austria-Hungary blamed Serbia for the actions of certain Serbian citizens, members of the Black Hand – albeit the organization was not mentioned – for their role in the conspiracy to assassinate Franz Ferdinand. These persons were indeed involved in the preparations of Gavrilo Princip and his comrades from the Young Bosnia organization, but they did so behind the back and against the intentions of the government. On 23 July, Vienna delivered

⁷ Dušan Bataković, "Sukob vojnih i civilnih vlasti u Srbiji u proleće 1914", *Istorijski časopis XXIX–XXX* (1982–1983), 477–492; and Mile Bjelajac, *Vojska Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, 1918–1921* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1988), 39–45. The troubled relations between civilian and military authorities are also discussed in Bataković's following articles: "La Main Noire (1911–1917): l'armée serbe entre démocratie et autoritarisme", *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 2 (1998), 95–144; "Nikola Pašić, les radicaux de et la 'Main noire': Les défis à la démocratie parlementaire serbe (1903–1917)", *Balcanica XXXVII* (2006), 143–169; and "Storm over Serbia: the Rivalry between Civilian and Military Authorities (1911–1914)", *Balcanica XLIV* (2013), 307–356.

an ultimatum to Belgrade, advancing a series of humiliating demands in relation to the Sarajevo assassination. As Pašić was in the south of Serbia, campaigning for the general election, Alexander presided over the Cabinet meeting which adopted emergency measures, including the mobilization of the army. "Crown Prince rushed nervously from the Court to the Cabinet Presidency, the Army Ministry and the Danube Division. Chaos everywhere. It was clear that a new war was likely, and what a war at that," Lieutenant-Colonel Panta Draškić, Alexander's adjutant later recalled.⁸ Facing mortal danger, Serbia was willing to make the utmost concessions compatible with her sovereignty and placed all her hopes in Imperial Russia to protect her from the Austro-Hungarian invasion. Late in the evening that day, Prince Alexander himself went to the Russian Legation in Belgrade to inquire of Russia's attitude and consult as to Serbia's response to the ultimatum. Basil Strandman, Chargé d'Affaires who acted in place of the suddenly deceased Hartwig, advised that the Regent rather than King Peter should personally appeal to Nicholas II for help, since the Emperor was fond of young Alexander.⁹ The exchange of telegrams that followed had an immense importance for Serbia, although preparations for defence against the threatened Austro-Hungarian attack had already been underway. "In these agonizing moments, I express the feelings of My People which begs Your Majesty to take interest in the fate of the Kingdom of Serbia," read a dramatic plea to St. Petersburg. Nicholas II insisted that he would spare no effort to prevent bloodshed as long as there was the slightest chance to succeed. "If we do not succeed despite our most earnest wish, Your Majesty can be assured that even in that case Russia will not abandon Serbia."¹⁰ Indeed, Russia did not leave Serbia in the lurch when, after having brushed away Belgrade's humble reply to the ultimatum, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July. The chain of events led to a European conflict within a week. It was only on 28 July that the Regent left Belgrade, which was subjected to bombardment from across the Sava and Danube rivers, and joined Pašić's Cabinet which had evacuated three days earlier to the town of Niš, the wartime capital of Serbia. Thence he proceeded to Kragujevac to take up his place in the military headquarters in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the Serbian army.

⁸ Panta Draškić, *Moji memoari*, ed. Dušan Bataković (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1990), 81.

⁹ Vasilij Štrandman, *Balkanske uspomene*, transl. and ed. Jovan Kačaki (Belgrade: Žagor, 2009), 299–303.

¹⁰ *Dokumenti o spoljnoj politici Srbije*, vol. 7/2: 1/14. maj – 22. jul/4. avgust 1914, eds. Vladimir Dedijer and Života Antić (Belgrade: SANU, 1980), doc. 505, Regent Alexander to Emperor Nicholas II, 11/24 July 1914, 637, and doc. 604, Emperor Nicholas II to Regent Alexander, 14/27 July 1914, conf. no. 3675/a, 691.

The outbreak of war necessitated formulating Serbia's war aims. Besides defending her own existence, official Serbia was increasingly embracing Yugoslavism, the unification of Serbia, Montenegro and the South Slavs (Yugoslavs) living under Habsburg rule – the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs – into a single state, an ideal that had gained momentum over the last few years, especially with the Serbian victories in the Balkan Wars. However, it was not possible to proclaim instantly such a far-reaching objective that implied the disintegration of Austria-Hungary, while the Entente Powers still hoped to prevent the escalation of the conflict between Serbia and the Habsburg Monarchy. Regent Alexander hinted at the sufferings of Serbs and Croats at the hands of Vienna in his manifest to the people of 29 July and six days later, in his first order to the army, he again referred to the brethren from Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Banat, Bačka, Croatia, Slavonia, Srem and Dalmatia.¹¹ But the Austro-Hungarian invasion left little time to reflect on political issues. In mid-August, the Serbs decisively defeated the Habsburg troops at Mountain Cer and expelled them from Serbian soil – this was the first victory of the Entente Powers and their smaller allies in the Great War. The Austro-Hungarians mounted a second offensive in the autumn of 1914 which brought the Serbian army to the brink of catastrophe due to its inferiority in the number of troops and, in particular, the lack of artillery ammunition. The situation was so serious that the Chief of Staff of the Army, Field-Marshal Radomir Putnik, became despondent and thought of a separate peace with Austro-Hungary.¹² Despair also overwhelmed the old and ailing King Peter, who was determined to die on the battlefield. Alexander exchanged a number of telegrams with his father to dissuade him from his fatalistic decision and point out the dangers of such an action.¹³ King Peter eventually made an appearance in the trenches of the Second Army, which had an electrifying moral effect on his soldiers. On 10 November Alexander turned to the Russian Emperor, imploring for an urgent delivery of artillery ammunition without which military resistance would collapse.¹⁴ This appeal did not fall on deaf ears and cannon shells from Russia and France arrived in time to make a dramatic turnabout on the Serbian front possible. In a vigorous counteroffensive in early December, the Serbian First Army under the command of General Živojin Mišić once more put the Austro-Hungarian forces to flight at the battle of Kolubara. In late 1914, there was not a single enemy soldier on Serbian soil. The critical military situation before the Serbian counteroffensive had brought about important political developments. At the height of the battle of Kolubara, Pašić

¹¹ Milorad Ekmečić, *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914*, 2nd ed. (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1990), 84.

¹² Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, I, 137–140; Savo Skoko, *Vojvoda Radomir Putnik*, 2 vols (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1984), II, 143.

¹³ Živojinović, *Kralj Petar I Karadjordjević*, III, 32–34.

¹⁴ Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, I, 141–142.

formed a coalition Cabinet composed of his Radicals, two most prominent Independent Radicals, Ljubomir Davidović and Milorad Drašković, and the leader of Progressives Vojislav Marinković. On its second day in office, 7 December, the new Cabinet issued the so-called Niš declaration that announced that Serbia's war aim was the liberation and unification of all Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.¹⁵

In the triumphant atmosphere in early 1915, during a lull in the war, Alexander insisted upon taking over from Field-Marshal Putnik direct, instead of just formal, command over the army – in the same strain, Emperor Nicholas II would assume the role of commander-in-chief of the Russian army in September 1915. Unlike the Russian Emperor, however, Alexander did not have his way. To his chagrin, Putnik rightly refused his request as being unconstitutional, since the person of a monarch could not assume such responsibility.¹⁶ The request was also unreasonable from the point of view of the Regent's lack of qualification, as he had never completed the military academy and had never had operational command, but it was instructive of his great ambitions. Another conflict arose in March 1915, when relations between the Regent and Apis deteriorated markedly. It is difficult to say what exactly the reason for this resurgence of mutual antipathy was and who was more responsible. The Black Handers showed signs of impatience with the Regent, while the latter, due to constant denunciations, became intolerant of Apis to the point of having him removed from his vicinity. Apis was transferred from the military headquarters in Kragujevac to the position of the chief of staff of the Užice Army.

Although two splendid victories in 1914 relieved Serbia of Austro-Hungarian military pressure for much of the following year, Regent Alexander and his government suffered major diplomatic difficulties at the hands of their Allies. They resisted the Russian pressure to undertake an offensive across the Drina river to support Italy's military operations – after the latter's entry into the war on 23 May 1915 – in the direction of Ljubljana, in accordance with the Russo-Italian military convention concluded two days earlier. Instead, the Serbian army intervened in Albania to back pro-Serbian Essad Pasha Toptani in his fight against the supporters of Austria-Hungary. To assist Essad Pasha and secure its southern flank in future operations against the Habsburg army, the Serbs captured Elbasan and reached Tirana. This campaign was frowned upon among the Allies, especially the Russians and French, who were dissatisfied with any diversion of Serbian forces from the Austrian front. In fact, the Allies requested a Serbian attack on Austria-Hungary with the aim of tying

¹⁵ Dragoslav Janković, *Srbija i jugoslovensko pitanje 1914–1915. godine* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1973), 329, 468–470.

¹⁶ Milan Živanović, "O evakuaciji srpske vojske iz Albanije i njenoj reorganizaciji na Krfu (1915–1916) prema francuskim dokumentima", *Istorijski časopis XIV–XV* (1965), 258–259, 297–298.

down as much enemy forces as possible so that they could not be engaged elsewhere.¹⁷ Whereas Pašić was inclined to meet the demands of the Allies on political grounds, Alexander strongly backed the view of the military that an offensive against Austria-Hungary could not be launched while there was a danger of Bulgaria's attack in the rear.¹⁸

Indeed, the attitude of Bulgaria towards Serbia and her potential entry into the war had been of paramount importance in the Balkan theatre since the outbreak of war in 1914. The Entente Powers had pressured the Serbian government to grant territorial concessions to Sofia in Macedonia, namely to cede those regions that had been a matter of dispute in 1913 and that Serbia had secured by force of arms in the Balkan Wars. The Allies laboured under the illusion that Bulgaria could be bought off at Serbia's expense, but the reality was that they could not outbid the Central Powers in that respect. Alexander openly professed to Professor Robert William Seton-Watson, British expert on South-Eastern Europe, that he would rather lose Bosnia than abandon Macedonia to Bulgaria.¹⁹ Another diplomatic misfortune for the Serbian government stemmed from the efforts of the Entente Powers to induce Italy to side with them. During the negotiations in London, Rome extracted generous territorial concessions in Istria and Dalmatia in a blatant disregard for the nationality principle. These concessions were granted at the expense of the Slovene and Croat population and thus made difficult the realization of a Yugoslav unification and embittered both the prominent anti-Austrian Yugoslav émigrés and Pašić's Cabinet. Alexander was at the forefront of Serbian opposition to Italy's imperialist designs in the Adriatic. At his own initiative, he proposed to the Russian Minister, Grigorii Nikolaevich Trubetskoi, to arrange for Pašić's visit to Russia for the purpose of presenting Serbia's views and preventing the passing of the Yugoslav people in Austria to Italian domain – the proposed visit never took place.²⁰ The pressure of military considerations was overwhelming for the Allies and Italy's demands were satisfied in the notorious Treaty of London signed on 26 April 1915. In a conversation with Trubetskoi, Alexander voiced his bitterness on account of the cynical manner in which the Allies treated Serbia and, to further stress his point, spoke of Pašić's desire to resign.²¹ Italian encroachment on the Yugoslav-populated territories and the prospects for Yugoslav unifica-

¹⁷ Nikola Popović, *Odnosi Srbije i Rusije u Prvom svetskom ratu* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1977), 70–72.

¹⁸ Živko Pavlović, *Rat Srbije sa Austro-Ugarskom, Nemačkom i Bugarskom 1915* (Belgrade: SANU, 1968), 22–23; Savo Skoko, *Vojvoda Radomir Putnik*, II, 220–221.

¹⁹ Ubavka Ostojić-Fejić, "Robert Vilijam Siton-Votson i Džordž Makoli Treveljan u Srbiji 1914–1915", *Istorijski časopis XXIX–XXX* (1983), 496.

²⁰ Popović, *Odnosi Srbije i Rusije*, 200.

²¹ Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, I, 370.

tion intensified the activities of the Yugoslav Committee, a body composed of exiled Yugoslav politicians from Austria-Hungary set up under the aegis of the Serbian government. The leading figures of this committee were Ante Trumbić and Frano Supilo, both Croats from Dalmatia – the former was its president and the latter died in 1917.

In the autumn of 1915, Serbia faced a daunting situation of a two-front war against the joint German and Austro-Hungarian forces in the north and the Bulgarian army in the east. The Serbian military even entertained the possibility of a preventive attack on Sofia to disrupt Bulgarian mobilization, but the Allies set their face against it. Bulgaria's entry into the war, however, proved decisive in October 1915: coordinated with the attack of the Central Powers on Belgrade, the Bulgarian troops cut off the retreat route of the Serbian army along the Vardar river in the direction of the Greek port of Salonika (Thessaloniki) where Franco-British troops disembarked despite the neutrality of Greece. Hoping that Allied forces would come to Serbia's aid at this belated hour, Alexander asked for immediate assistance from the Russian Commander-in-Chief, General Mikhail Alekseev. He also requested from General Joseph Joffre, Commander-in-Chief of the French forces on the Western front, to send Anglo-French troops from Salonika to support the Serbian army with a view to preventing the Austro-Germans from joining hands with Bulgarians and securing direct contact with Constantinople.²² However, there was no possibility, or even political will in France, to send an expeditionary corps to prevent the downfall of Serbia. In the dramatic circumstances, Regent Alexander presided over the Cabinet meetings held in Kruševac and Raška on 29 October and 2 November respectively. Despite the looming disaster, the Regent, the ministers and Field-Marshal Putnik all agreed to continue resistance and remain loyal to the Entente Powers even if the army and the government were forced to withdraw from their country.²³ This is exactly what followed. In a unique example in the history of warfare, the Serbian King, Prince Regent, Cabinet and army, along with some 5,000 civilian refugees, left their country and retreated over the mountains of Albania to continue the fighting on foreign soil, placing all their hopes in the assistance of the Entente Powers.

Alexander and his entourage moved fairly quickly and were the first to reach the town of Scutari (Shkodra) in northern Albania on 1 December, ahead of Pašić's Cabinet and the army's Supreme Command. After the ministers assembled in Scutari, Alexander attended the first Cabinet meeting in exile and heard about the measures undertaken to organize the distribution of food to

²² Ibid. 175–176; Popović, *Odnosi Srbije i Rusije*, 92.

²³ *Zapisnici sednica Ministarskog saveta Srbije 1915–1918*, eds. Dragoslav Janković and Bogumil Hrabak (Belgrade: Arhiv Srbije, 1976), 187–194.

his starving and exhausted soldiers who were arriving on a daily basis.²⁴ It is difficult to overstate the gravity of the situation in which the remnants of the Serbian army found themselves on the Albanian coast and the anxiety of the Commander-in-Chief to ensure supplies for his troops and their evacuation. Alexander urged the French Minister to Serbia, Auguste Boppe, and General Joffre to save the Serbs from disaster.²⁵ Just as he had done in the critical moments of July 1914, Alexander sought salvation in St. Petersburg, believing that Russia alone would provide an unreserved support for his troops. On 16 December, he once more appealed to Emperor Nicholas II to spur his hesitant Allies into action. Alexander stressed the urgency of sending Allied ships to transport the Serbian troops from the Albanian port of San Giovanni di Medua (Shëngjin) “to some safe place, not far from Serbia’s border (preferably the surroundings of Salonika), because the hungry and exhausted army, unprotected against the enemy, cannot make it on land, on a goat path, from Scutari to Valona where the Allied Supreme Commands intend to direct it.”²⁶ The Regent also personally appealed to the Italian King, Victor Emanuel III, to provide the necessary assistance to the Serbs.²⁷ His hopes were not disappointed: it was the energetic insistence of the Russian Emperor with the British King, George V, and the French President, Raymond Poincaré, which did not stop short of hinting at Russia’s withdrawal from the war, that led to the last-minute evacuation of the Serbs.²⁸ Finally, the Serbian troops were embarked on Allied ships at the ports of San Giovanni di Medua, Durres and Valona and transported to the Greek island of Corfu, a destination chosen at Alexander’s personal request. The Regent himself endured considerable physical suffering during this last stage of what the Serbs later called the “Albanian Golgotha”. In early January 1916, he was struck by an inflammation of the testicle, which caused him immense pain and he had to undergo an operation in a building in Scutari. He was then transported on a simple horse-cart to San Giovanni di Medua from where he was supposed to sail to Durres. However, when he realized that the commander of an Italian ship intended to take him to Brindisi in southern Italy, he refused angrily to go on board and continued his trip to Durres.²⁹ In early February, the Regent joined his soldiers and ministers in Corfu, the seat of an exiled Serbia which main-

²⁴ Ibid. 210–211.

²⁵ Živanović, “O evakuaciji srpske vojske”, 231–307.

²⁶ See the introductory study of Dragoslav Janković, “O radu srpske vlade za vreme Prvog svetskog rata”, in *Zapisnici sednica Ministarskog saveta*, 31.

²⁷ Živojinović, *Kralj Petar I Karađorđević*, III, 145, n. 18.

²⁸ Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karađorđević*, I, 190–191.

²⁹ Draškić, *Moji memoari*, 137–143.

tained her war effort despite the odds, although the rank and file of the army needed some time to recuperate before it could take the field again.

Together with Pašić, Alexander left Corfu on 15 March and visited Paris, London and Rome – the latter capital without his Prime Minister – where he met with all the Allied heads of state and leading politicians and received recognition for the heroic struggle of Serbia and promises of assistance for the Serbian army.³⁰ Upon their return, the Serbian troops were relocated in the vicinity of Salonika and re-equipped by the Allies; they took their place alongside the Anglo-Franco-Italo-Russian forces prepared to engage the enemy and make their way to the homeland. There was, however, a thorny issue of command over the Allied forces on the Salonika (Macedonian) front that caused much difficulty in Franco-Serbian relations and took four months to resolve. The crux of the problem was to reconcile the special position of Regent Alexander as Commander-in-Chief of the Serbian army and, more importantly, as sovereign of an Allied country, with the joint command of the Eastern Allied army, which was entrusted to French General Maurice Sarrail. Alexander and the Serbian government believed that he was supposed to be in command of all the Allied forces as Regent of Serbia; otherwise, they considered the Serbian army would be effectively reduced to the role of mercenaries. Eventually, the French government agreed that General Sarrail command the joint Allied troops in the name of Regent Alexander and that the Serbs maintain their special status and be employed as a whole on a particular section of the front.³¹ In September 1916, the Serbian army was engaged in repulsing the Bulgarian attack in the direction of Salonika at the battle of Gorničevo; it then counterattacked and, after a great but costly victory, took the mountain top Kajmakčalan that dominated the entire front. The Serbs then drove the Bulgarians out of Bitolj, the southernmost town in Serbia, and thus liberated a small part of their homeland. Despite these military successes, the Allies, especially the British, had doubts as to the real potential of the Salonika front and entertained the possibility of withdrawing some troops to redeploy them elsewhere. It was only with the active support of Russia that the Regent and Pašić's Cabinet managed to forestall such plans and lobbied for additional Entente troops to be sent to Greece.³²

Apart from military operations, this phase of the war was marked by internal tensions within the Serbian government and the army, which culminated in a power struggle between Alexander, Pašić's Cabinet and the Black Handers, bringing to an end the conflict that had been smouldering from before 1914. In the unhealthy atmosphere in Corfu in the wake of the "Albanian Golgotha" in which the exiled Serbs reflected on the reasons for the tragedy that befell Ser-

³⁰ Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, I, 212–213.

³¹ *Ibid.* 214–225.

³² *Zapisnici sednica Ministarskog saveta*, 412–415; Popović, *Odnosi Srbije i Rusije*, 273–278.

bia, the Regent, Pašić and the Black Handers blamed each other. These three centres of power were increasingly mutually hostile and anxious to pin the responsibility for the disaster on their antagonists. It was against this background of despondence and recriminations that an underground, internal strife took place. As early as mid-December, while he and the Cabinet were still in Scutari, Alexander pushed through major changes at the highest level of the army, which implied the Supreme Command's responsibility for the breakdown of late 1915. Field-Marshal Putnik had long been unfit for his duty due to his ailing health and he was replaced by General Petar Bojović, while Colonel Božidar Terzić was appointed the new Army Minister instead of Radomir Bojović. Having removed Putnik, an immensely popular and authoritative commander, and a number of his closest associates, the Regent established firm control over the Supreme Command and the army as a whole. At the same time, these changes cut the ground from under the feet of the Black Hand, since pliable officers, completely loyal to the Regent replaced those who were in sympathy with and protective of Apis and his comrades. Alexander was also dissatisfied with Pašić. After imposing his authority on the Supreme Command, to which Pašić had consented, Alexander suggested to his Prime Minister to resign. Pašić was not willing to do so and the Regent did not press it any further. Nevertheless, the latter caused a crisis when he requested from Pašić to accept Colonel Alimpije Marjanović, Regent's confidant, as War Minister in his Cabinet. The Prime Minister resolutely refused such crude interference of the Crown in Cabinet affairs and offered his resignation in the face of Alexander's persistence. He presented his leaving office as a departure from the unswerving policy of solidarity with the Entente Powers and thus detrimental to Serbia's interests.³³ But the resignation was not accepted and Pašić remained at the head of government. An observing historian has commented that the inexperienced Regent did not yet know how to bring about a ministerial crisis.³⁴

In Corfu, Alexander was equally anxious to see Pašić out of power. At the initiative of Svetolik Jakšić, a journalist and an implacable opponent of the Radicals, the Regent considered a dismissal of Pašić on the grounds that the Constitution, the Cabinet and the National Assembly were invalid after the state territory had been lost, which left the Crown alone to represent Serbia. Alexander would thus assume all legislative and executive powers, and effectively establish a personal regime. He would appoint a new non-political Cabinet with Field-Marshal Mišić, the hero of the Kolubara battle, as prime minister. The support of Black Handers was also required to ensure successful realization of such combination, and their hostility to Pašić might have secured their consent. Jakšić

³³ Živojinović, *Kralj Petar I Karadjordjević*, III, 135.

³⁴ Slobodan Jovanović, *Moji savremenici: VIII Uroš Petrović, IX Jovan Skerlić, X Apis* (Vindor: Avala, 1962), 46–47.

sounded out Apis, but the latter was not enthusiastic about his proposal; Apis claimed that he was willing to reconcile with Alexander, but their understanding was not sincere. An experienced and adroit politician, Pašić sensed what was going on and tried to deter the Regent from carrying out his plan. Pašić offered Alexander an addition of 150,000 French francs to his civil list in something of a not too subtle attempt to bribe him, but the Regent declined. More importantly, Pašić revived the sessions of the National Assembly in Corfu in July 1916 – he had hitherto not been eager to work with the parliament and, for that reason, many MPs, even from the ranks of his Radicals, had voiced their dissatisfaction – which clearly ran against the Prince Regent's intentions to do away with parliamentary democracy altogether.³⁵

Alexander's plans for the change in government were evident during his visit to the Allied capitals in March 1915, together with Pašić and his assistant in the Foreign Ministry, Jovan Jovanović-Pižon, a friend of the Regent's. Alexander insisted on Pižon's presence in Paris and London with a view to acquainting him with Allied statesmen for he was a likely new foreign minister in Field-Marshal Mišić's Cabinet. Jovanović-Pižon later confided to Boppe that the Crown Prince had grown tired of corruption and partisan bias of his government, and that "he might get sick and tired of the Cabinet and seek for another. He must not return to the country without some programme and better prospects than those provided by these present partisans."³⁶ He advanced similar arguments to his colleague diplomat Mihailo Gavrilović and significantly added that it was "crazy to blame the Crown Prince for wanting to abolish the Constitution and carry out [Yugoslav] unification with a coup d'état."³⁷ A reference to the future unification was especially important as Alexander appears to have contemplated to take a lead in this matter by forming a Cabinet which would make its Yugoslav programme a cardinal point of its policy. This was not necessarily his own idea. The key pro-Yugoslav public figures in London, Seton-Watson and the foreign policy editor of *The Times*, Henry Wickham Steed, handed him a memorandum, urging Serbia to renew her struggle for the national unity of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.³⁸ No doubt, Jovanović-Pižon, a firm believer in Yugoslavism, who had Alexander's ear, also influenced him in this direction. The Regent certainly

³⁵ Vojislav Vučković, "Unutrašnje krize Srbije i Prvi svetski rat", *Istorijski časopis* XIV–XV (1965), 204–209. Gligorijević's claim in *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, I, 259–260, that Alexander had nothing to do with the idea of toppling Pašić and that the initiative actually originated with Apis is entirely unconvincing.

³⁶ Jovan M. Jovanović Pižon, *Dnevnik (1898–1920)*, eds. Radoš Ljušić and Miladin Milošević (Novi Sad: Prometej, 2015), entry of 30 Aug. 1916, 155–156.

³⁷ *Ibid.* entry of 7 Nov. 1916, 195–196.

³⁸ Vojislav Vučković, "Iz odnosa Srbije i Jugoslovenskog odbora. Pitanje o ulasku predstavnička Odbora u Srpsku vladu", *Istorijski časopis* XII–XIII (1963), 362–366.

advocated the unity of Yugoslavs in London with sufficient ardour as to impress his British interlocutors.³⁹ After their conversations, Steed lauded Alexander's broad-minded appreciation of the Yugoslav question as opposed to Pašić's short-sightedness.⁴⁰ In fact, it is difficult to assess Alexander's intimate views on the problem of Yugoslav unification and the formation of a single state. Perhaps his views were not quite clear-cut and definite and wavered between the primary objective of unifying the Serbdom and the creation of a wider Yugoslav union. Such impression can be derived from Alexander's proclamation to his troops made upon his return to Corfu in which he pointed out that the Allies were prepared to lend their support "to make Serbia great so that she encompasses all Serbs and Yugoslavs, to make her [Serbia] a powerful and mighty Yugoslavia, which will justify the sacrifices offered so far and respond to the demands of a new era that will come into being after the end of this great and bloody European war".⁴¹ After all, many Serbs saw these two objectives as being complementary rather than constituting alternative solutions to their national problem, and understood the Yugoslav ideal in such terms. But the distrust between the Regent and his Prime Minister was grounded in power struggle, and not in their differing national and political conceptions. Pašić decided to proceed alone from Western Europe to Russia where he no doubt expected, in view of his previous relations with that country, to be given strong support for his continued tenure of premiership. Alexander saw through this manoeuvre and forced him to take Jovanović-Pižon along despite the Prime Minister's protest. Eventually, nothing came out of these tentative combinations and Pašić remained at the head of government. For all his impatience with Pašić and desire for personal affirmation, Alexander did not dare make a move against him for two reasons: both France and Russia placed their trust in Pašić and his determination to stick with the Allies, and it was not opportune to enter into confrontation with his Prime Minister while the influence of Black Handers in the army posed a grave danger.⁴² Nevertheless, the Regent's distaste for Pašić was unabated. After his return to Corfu from Paris and London, he told Professor Slobodan Jovanović, who dealt with propaganda in the military headquarters, point-blank that he would like to topple Pašić. "[When] speaking of Pašić, he would get very angry and pace around the room as if chasing flies."⁴³

³⁹ Dragovan Šepić, *Italija, saveznici i jugoslovensko pitanje* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1970), 158.

⁴⁰ Henry Wickham Steed, *Through Thirty Years 1892–1922*, 2 vols. (London 1924), II, 166, 175.

⁴¹ Ferdo Šišić, *Dokumeti o postanku Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca 1914.–1919.* (Zagreb: Naklada "Matice Hrvatske", 1920), doc. 40, Regent Alexander to the Serbian Army, Corfu, 20/7 Apr. 1916, 62–64.

⁴² Janković, "O radu srpske vlade", 50–52.

⁴³ Jovanović, *Moji savremenici*, 47.

To a certain extent, Alexander's inclination to assert his influence in the formulation and execution of policy was a natural corollary of the extraordinary circumstances in which the Serbian government operated. In an unparalleled situation in which it found itself exiled on a small Greek island, and in which military requirements constituted the core of foreign policy, the role of the sovereign, who was also the supreme military commander, was inevitably weighty. In addition, the authority of a monarch was a rather useful asset in dealing with the Allies with a view to securing necessities for the army and protecting vital Serbian interests. It was only natural that Alexander routinely granted audiences to notable visitors in Corfu and had important political conversations with them. Lieutenant-Colonel Draškić recorded the Regent's entire correspondence and he believed, on the basis of the records he kept, that Alexander handled foreign policy largely by himself, especially the issues concerning the Salonika front and the supplying of the Serbian army. "For all more important matters he addressed telegrams and letters directly to the Russian Emperor Nicholas II, Poincaré, Briand, Lloyd George etc."⁴⁴ This was certainly an exaggeration as the Cabinet was very much involved with the affairs pertaining to the Salonika front with which Alexander's adjutant was not familiar.⁴⁵ Draškić also observed that the "Crown Prince did not much respect or care for Pašić, and he showed even then a strong inclination to authoritarian rule over the country." As an example of Alexander's ignoring the Cabinet, Draškić pointed out that he maintained contact with the Russian Emperor through the agency of the Military Attaché in St. Petersburg, Colonel Branimir Lontkijević, rather than through the Minister, Miroslav Spaljković.⁴⁶ This statement requires qualification: Spaljković was loyal to Pašić, but he was also the Regent's trusted person; it must have seemed more straightforward to Alexander to communicate with Nicholas II through a military officer directly subordinated to him as commander-in-chief. Nevertheless, Draškić's impressions tally with the evidence that suggests that the Regent was keen to remove Pašić from policy-making and impose himself as a decisive, if not the only, factor in the Serbian government. In military matters, in particular, Alexander went to great lengths to stress his absolute authority in the army. In a striking example, he discussed with General Joffre the position of the Serbian army in relation to the French command of the Eastern Army without the Chief of Staff, or any other representative, of his Supreme Command.⁴⁷

But Alexander's control over the army could have never been complete while the influence of Black Handers still existed and caused him much concern.

⁴⁴ Draškić, *Moji memoari*, 182–183.

⁴⁵ Petar Opačić, *Srbija i Solunski front* (Belgrade: Književne novine, 1984), 48–54.

⁴⁶ Draškić, *Moji memoari*, 183–184.

⁴⁷ Živanović, "O evakuaciji srpske vojske", 296–297; Janković, "O radu srpske vlade", 41.

As he confided to Professor Slobodan Jovanović, he thought that Apis was at the root of the troubled state of the army and that an agreement with him could not be trusted.⁴⁸ To be sure, the officers-plotters provided much reason for the Regent's fears with their high-handed and arrogant demeanour and bitter accusations against Alexander and the Radicals for Serbia's defeat. A prominent Black Hander, Colonel Vladimir Tucović, encapsulated such frustrations in the threat that the officers would make everyone pass through a "gate of sabres" and allow only those who they deemed worthy to return to Serbia. It is not surprising that Alexander did not take lightly the threats coming from the officers who had already assassinated one king and had been exerting considerable influence in affairs of state ever since. He decided to strike first. The first indication of the Regent's intentions was his proposal for the introduction of a court-martial for officers that even denied the accused the right to defence, which he submitted to the Cabinet together with the information that there had been an attempt on his life behind the front lines in September 1916. The connection between the proposed court-martial, which the Cabinet rejected, and the alleged failed assassination was too obvious to escape anyone's notice. The latter incident was but a fabrication conjured for the purpose of eliminating Apis and his supporters. Pašić's Cabinet was initially reluctant to prosecute the Black Handers and preferred to undertake "administrative measures", that is to say to remove them from the army and retire. Intent on destroying his opponents, Alexander was, however, adamant in his request for instituting judicial proceedings and he prevailed over his government.⁴⁹ What followed was a show trial in Salonika in which Apis and his two closest associates, Major Ljubomir Vulović and Rade Malobabić, were sentenced to death in August 1917, while a number of other Black Handers received lengthy prison sentences.⁵⁰ It was in the course of this trial that the information on Apis's involvement in the Sarajevo assassination was revealed, although his written statement remains controversial, especially in view of the situation in which it was given. In the political sphere, Alexander's refusal to pardon Apis and his comrades led the Independent Radicals and Progressives to leave the coalition Cabinet. The Regent then entrusted Pašić to form

⁴⁸ Jovanović, *Moji savremenici*, 49–50.

⁴⁹ Vučković, "Unutrašnje krize", 216–218.

⁵⁰ The Salonika trial is covered in Borivoje Nešković, *Istina o solunskom procesu* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1953); Milan Živanović, *Pukovnik Apis: solunski proces hiljadu devetsto sedamnaeste: prilog za proučavanje političke istorije Srbije od 1903. do 1918. godine* (Belgrade: Kultura, 1955); David Mackenzie, *The "Black Hand" on Trial: Salonika, 1917* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); and Dušan Bataković, "The Salonika Trial 1917. Black Hand vs. Democracy (The Serbian Army between Internal Strife and Military Success)", in *The Salonika Theatre of Operations and the Outcome of the Great War: Proceedings of the International Conference organised by the Institute for Balkan Studies and the National Research Foundation "Eleftherios K. Venizelos"* (Thessaloniki 2005), 273–293.

a Radical Cabinet which was amenable in the matter of the sentenced Black Handers. In order to eliminate Apis, Alexander needed Pašić's cooperation and, for that reason, he was prepared to give his premiership a new lease of life despite his own earlier desire to have the leader of Radicals removed from office. Although reluctant to have the blood of Apis and the others on his hands, Pašić eventually accepted such an arrangement and remained in power.⁵¹

The entry of the United States of America into the war in the spring of 1917 and the collapse of the imperial regime in Russia, Serbia's staunchest ally in the Entente camp – which withdrew from the war after the Bolshevik revolution – were momentous events that necessitated affirmation of the Serbian war aims. Furthermore, relations between Pašić and his Cabinet, on the one hand, and Trumbić and the Yugoslav Committee, on the other, grew increasingly strained due to their differing conceptions of Yugoslav unification. Whereas Pašić insisted on the leading role of Serbia as the Piedmont of Yugoslavs and his own direction of political affairs, Trumbić and his supporters laboured to constitute themselves as representatives of all Yugoslavs from the Habsburg Empire and an equal partner with the Serbian government.⁵² In these conditions, an important conference took place in Corfu between representatives of the Serbian government, Serbian opposition parties and the Yugoslav Committee in June-July 1917. Although differences between Pašić's and Trumbić's outlook on Yugoslav unification clearly emerged from the discussions, the well-known Corfu declaration was issued, embodying the essentials on which all the participants agreed. These concerned the principles on which a future Yugoslav state would be founded: a constitutional parliamentary democracy, national and religious equality of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and a monarchical form of government with the Karadjordjević dynasty.⁵³ Alexander's role in the run-up to and during the deliberations in Corfu remains, to a large extent, obscure as he did not take part in the conference sessions. He made the point of coming to Corfu from the Salonika front; he also granted an audience twice to the Yugoslav delegation as a whole and had several private conversations with Trumbić and other members of the committee. Therefore, it seems highly likely that his role was more conspicuous than the silence of the records suggests. There was one instance in which Alexander had a direct impact on the ongoing discussions: he agreed not to have a provision regarding the Orthodox Christian faith of the monarch, unpalatable to Roman Catholics among the Yugoslavs, included in the

⁵¹ Vučković, "Unutrašnje krize", 222–223.

⁵² Djordje Stanković, *Nikola Pašić i jugoslovensko pitanje*, 2 vols. (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1985), II, 111–150.

⁵³ Ibid. 151–183; Dragoslav Janković, *Jugoslovensko pitanje i Krfska deklaracija 1917. godine* (Belgrade: Savremena administracija, 1967).

declaration.⁵⁴ In doing so, he made a concession to Trumbić and brushed aside Pašić's view – the matter concerned his own person and he wanted to be conciliatory. It can be assumed that after the Corfu conference Alexander's standing in the eyes of the "Yugoslavs" was left intact, if not enhanced, regardless, or perhaps because, of their clashes with Pašić. Before he left Corfu, Trumbić asked and received from the Regent two letters of recommendation for Prime Minister Lloyd George and Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour for the purpose of lobbying the two leading British statesmen for the Yugoslav cause.⁵⁵

In the aftermath of the Corfu declaration, Regent Alexander left the handling of Yugoslav policy entirely in the hands of Pašić's Cabinet. He steadfastly supported his Prime Minister and declined all attempts of the Yugoslav Committee to enlist him as an arbiter and thus overcome Pašić's opposition to its views. The dispute between the "Yugoslavs" and the Serbian government emerged after the January 1918 statements of Lloyd George and American President Woodrow Wilson, which suggested the survival of Austria-Hungary and, by implication, denied the creation of a Yugoslav state. The Yugoslav Committee took initiative to promote the Yugoslav programme: it proposed the organization of a large congress that would consist of the Serbian National Assembly, the Yugoslav Committee, the Montenegrin Committee for National Unification and distinguished individuals and émigrés for the purpose of manifesting national unity and solidarity. Pašić rejected this proposal as being in contravention with the Serbian Constitution, effectively seeing it as another manoeuvre to push his government into the background. Trumbić then appealed to Alexander in order to marginalize Pašić, but the young Prince ignored his approach; he approved Pašić's reply before it was sent to the Yugoslav Committee.⁵⁶ The increasing divergence between the Serbian government and the Yugoslav Committee intersected with the interparty strife that had been going on in Corfu since the break-up of the coalition Cabinet due to the execution of Apis and his friends. After Pašić's ministry had lost a majority in the National Assembly and resigned in February 1918, the opposition parties joined in a single bloc. In March 1918, Pašić started his negotiations with the opposition which soon reached a deadlock. The opposition requested that Pašić be excluded from premiership and foreign policy portfolio in a coalition Cabinet on the grounds that he had not been effective in affirming the policy embodied in the Corfu declaration. He and his Radicals refuted this charge and remained inflexible in the matter of Pašić's place

⁵⁴ Janković, *Jugoslovensko pitanje*, 253–254.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 379, 458.

⁵⁶ *Gradnja o stvaranju jugoslovenske države (1.I–20.XII 1918)*, 2 vols., eds. Dragoslav Janković and Bogdan Krizman (Belgrade: Institut društvenih nauka, 1964), I, doc. 50, Pašić to the Yugoslav Committee, Corfu, 30 Jan. 1918, 62–64; Nikola Stojanović, *Mladost jednog pokolenja (uspomene 1880–1920)*, ed. Mile Stanić (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 1915), 200.

in the government. Their position was reinforced when Alexander offered the leader of Radicals a mandate to form either a coalition Cabinet, if possible, or a Radical one, if not. Alexander's favourable attitude towards Pašić also stemmed from the fact that the opposition demanded an investigation into the manner in which the Salonika trial had been conducted. The opposition then made a concession and agreed to Pašić's premiership, but insisted that the foreign minister must be appointed from their own ranks. Pašić refused this arrangement as well and formed a Radical Cabinet, after which Alexander left Corfu and returned to Salonika. Clearly, it was the Regent's support that allowed Pašić to overcome a most difficult situation and keep his firm grip on power – the former ignored a memorandum submitted to him by the opposition, demanding the formation of a coalition Cabinet.⁵⁷

Alexander also continued to back his Prime Minister in his trial of strength with Trumbić. The Croat politician started to pressure Pašić to recognize the Yugoslav Committee as an official representative of all the Yugoslavs from the Habsburg provinces. This would be a precondition for the formal recognition on the part of the Entente Powers and the committee would become a legal government of the Habsburg Yugoslavs on the pattern set by the Czechoslovak Committee of Jan Masaryk and Edvard Beneš. To achieve this objective, Seton-Watson and Steed, who were Trumbić's main supporters and bitter opponents of Pašić, urged Alexander to take the matters in his own hands. The Regent eluded their pleas by downplaying the differences regarding the Yugoslav question, which he reduced to the level of "tactical details".⁵⁸ Jovanović-Pižon, now Serbian Minister in London, also attempted to bring about the Regent's intervention and smooth over the feud between Pašić's Cabinet and the Yugoslav Committee, but his efforts too ended in failure. Alexander let him know through his confidant Živojin Balugdžić that, in his view, the dispute was a matter of personal differences between Pašić and Trumbić, and he "did not see how he could intervene there".⁵⁹ Incidentally, Alexander's attitude in 1918 suggests that he was not a devout supporter of Yugoslavism in the mould of Jovanović and others among the Serbian opposition, mostly Independent Radicals. In this light, his flirtation with the Yugoslav programme as a basis for a neutral, non-political Cabinet during his visit to London two years earlier seems to have also been a

⁵⁷ Milan Živanović, "Jugoslovensko pitanje u svetlosti pregovora za obrazovanje koalicionne vlade Srbije u proleće 1918 na Krfu", *Rad JAZU* 9/321 (1960), 211–213; Dragoslav Janković, "Narodna skupština Srbije za vreme Prvog svetskog rata i pitanje njenog kvoruma", *Anali Pravnog fakulteta u Beogradu* 3–4 (1966), 340–347.

⁵⁸ *Gradja o stvaranju jugoslovenske države*, I, doc. 196, Steed and Watson to Crown Prince Alexander, London, 9 Aug./27 July 1918, and doc. 197, Crown Prince Alexander to Steed and Watson, Salonika (?), 10 Aug./28 July 1918, 246–247.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* II, doc. 303, Balugdžić to Jovanović, Salonika, 18/5 Oct. 1918, 371.

tactical device to dispose of Pašić and not just a reflection of his personal conviction. In the changed circumstances following the Salonika trial, at the time when his relations with Pašić were better, he showed no inclination whatsoever to placate the sensitivities of the “Yugoslavs” at the expense of his Prime Minister. In this respect, he was not affected even by public criticism in Britain to which Seton-Watson subjected him in the pages of the influential *New Europe* journal.⁶⁰

In September 1918, the Serbian army, together with other Allied troops on the Salonika front, launched an offensive that would prove decisive for the outcome of the Great War. The Serbs broke through Bulgarian lines and quickly pushed towards the Danube. Bulgaria signed capitulation on 29 September and the military position of Austria-Hungary was becoming increasingly critical. On 1 November, Serbian forces entered their plundered capital Belgrade and continued their advancement across the Danube, Sava and Drina rivers into the Habsburg territory. Their supreme commander reached Belgrade nine days later. A renowned Serbian writer, Isidora Sekulić, described the scene of the Regent's return to Belgrade at the head of his soldiers: “Before everyone, standing by himself, a young and not a young officer, alone. His overcoat, heavy, unironed, does not fit his body, the boots rough, the cap old; his hands gloveless; on his face, a darkened pretty face, the expression of an exhausted and excited man, a man with strained nerves.”⁶¹ It was as if the appearance of the Regent bore witness to an epic struggle that he had to endure, together with his army and his people, to see the long-awaited day of victory and liberation, a struggle that took a heavy toll – Serbia lost a quarter of her population. With the crumbling of Austria-Hungary and the rapid advance of Serbian forces into its provinces, the final stage of Yugoslav unification was taking place. It was determined by the situation on the ground that created an accomplished fact. Through his contacts with the Commander of the Eastern Army, French General Franchet d'Esperey, Alexander secured the support of France for the entrance of Serbian troops into Montenegro and Dalmatia with a view to preventing Italian intrigues against the Serbs in these parts.⁶² In such circumstances, the prolonged dispute between Pašić and the Yugoslav Committee was not substantial for the creation of a Yugoslav state. Nevertheless, the “Yugoslavs” were persistent, with the strong backing of Seton-Watson and Steed, in the efforts to exert their influence on the Regent and shape the course of events. Alexander resented their meddling in what he considered internal affairs of Serbia, especially the suggestions that Pašić was

⁶⁰ Ibid. I, doc. 208, Jovanović to Pašić, London, 22/9 Aug. 1918, 258–264.

⁶¹ Milorad Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790–1918*, 2 vols. (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1989), II, 810.

⁶² *Gradja o stvaranju jugoslovenske države*, I, doc. 272, Balugdžić to Pašić, Salonika, 8 Oct./25 Sept. 1918.

preparing him to become an autocratic ruler.⁶³ As for his views on the union of the Habsburg Yugoslavs with Serbia, Alexander was diplomatically subtle in his letter to Steed, stating that they would be free to join Yugoslavia in any form they liked, and even in a federal state, without being pressured from Serbia. This pronouncement did not preclude an integral unification of Serbs, however, and the British Admiral Ernest Trowbridge, who was a link of communication between the Regent and Steed, thought it meant a "Greater Serbia" to which other Yugoslavs could opt to join.⁶⁴

The clash between Trumbić and Pašić reached its climax at the conference held in Geneva on 6–9 November 1918 which was convened to close ranks before the preliminary peace conference. Apart from the Serbian Prime Minister and the Yugoslav Committee's delegates, the conference was also attended by the leaders of Serbian opposition parties and three delegates of the newly-formed National Council from Zagreb, the government of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes from the Habsburg Empire. Pašić doggedly defended Serbia's leading role in the process of national unification, but he was confronted with a joint demand of all other participants to the effect that a union should be carried out by two equal and independent partners – Serbia and the State of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs carved out from the Habsburg Monarchy. Alone and isolated, Pašić gave way in order to prevent a breakdown in relations, but his ministerial colleagues in Corfu rejected the decisions reached at Geneva and brought about the resignation of Pašić's Cabinet.⁶⁵ Alexander's attitude in this matter remains a somewhat moot point. It has been claimed that Pašić shifted the responsibility for the rejection of the Geneva agreement onto the shoulders of the Regent.⁶⁶ Pašić himself reported to his deputy, Stojan Protić, that he had informed Anton Korošec and Melko Čingrija of the National Council and Trumbić that the Regent's opinion was not clear from the telegram he had received from Corfu,

⁶³ Dragoljub Živojinović, "Dnevnik Admirala Ernesta Trubridža kao izvor za srpsko-britanske odnose u 1918. godini", in *Srbija 1918. godine i stvaranje jugoslovenske države* (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 1989), 147–148.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 146.

⁶⁵ Bogdan Krizman, "Ženevska konferencija o ujedinjenju 1918. godine", *Istorijski glasnik* 1–2 (1958), 3–32; Dragoslav Janković, "Ženevska konferencija o stvaranju jugoslovenske zajednice 1918. godine", *Istorija XX veka* 5 (1963), 225–262, and from the same author "Još o Ženevskoj konferenciji o stvaranju jugoslovenske zajednice 1918. godine", *Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta u Novom Sadu* 3–4 (1966), 247–264; Mirjana Stefanovski, "Nikola Pašić na Ženevskoj konferenciji 1918. godine", in *Nikola Pašić: život i delo* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 1997), 331–354; Stanković, *Nikola Pašić i jugoslovensko pitanje*, II, 199–209.

⁶⁶ Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, I, 406.

which was perfectly accurate information.⁶⁷ Moreover, Pašić expected that Alexander might arrive in Paris in a few days to meet him and the delegates of the National Council and the Yugoslav Committee to clear the ground, so it seems doubtful that he would have misinterpreted the Regent's stance in such a blatant manner. But Alexander found it difficult to leave his troops in the midst of their successful military operations, although he went to Salonika for four days (11–14 November) to be informed about what was going on. "Politics already started to do its thing," Ješa Damjanović, Draškić's successor as Regent's adjutant, recorded. "Our various committees in Europe started to differ in their views. Fortunately, military considerations prevailed and the Supreme Commander had to decide to return to His victorious armies."⁶⁸

The Regent sent his trusted Balugdžić to Paris to establish the facts. The latter found the leaders of the Serbian opposition highly dissatisfied with the Regent, as Pašić had presented him as the main opponent of the Geneva agreement.⁶⁹ This seems to confirm that the Prime Minister had no qualms about manipulating both the Serbian opposition and the "Yugoslavs" and abusing the authority of the Crown. But Balugdžić, apparently, did not take these accusations too seriously. He reported to Alexander that a new coalition government for the entire Yugoslav territory would be formed in Serbia, putting an end to "this not serious business of certain committees, clubs and certain individuals, which usurped the right to decide on such substantial questions."⁷⁰ Balugdžić appears, to say the least, not to have attributed the blame for misunderstandings at Geneva to Pašić alone. But the question of a Yugoslav union was largely settled on the battlefield. The Entente's Eastern Army concluded an armistice with Austria-Hungary on 13 November 1918 in Belgrade. According to the terms of the Belgrade armistice, the Serbian troops were authorized to occupy the provinces of the Banat, Bačka and Srem, a part of Slavonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a part of Dalmatia up to the cape Planka north of the town of Split. In the rapidly changing situation, the Yugoslav Committee was completely side-tracked, whereas the Serbian army and the National Council emerged as key partners in the creation of a Yugoslav state. The provisional government in Zagreb was, however, in a precarious position because of the internal disorder generated by Austria-Hungary's collapse and the fact that the Entente Powers regarded the Yugoslav provinces as an enemy territory. In addition, there was a

⁶⁷ *Gradnja o stvaranju jugoslovenske države*, II, doc. 494, Pašić to Protić, Paris, 14/1 Nov. 1918, 574.

⁶⁸ Ješa Damjanović, *Iz moga ratnoga dnevnika (zabeleške iz ratova 1912.–1918.)* (Osijek: Štamparski zavod Krbavac i Pavlović, 1929), 75.

⁶⁹ Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karadjordjević*, I, 408.

⁷⁰ *Gradnja o stvaranju jugoslovenske države*, II, doc. 574, Balugdžić to Crown Prince Alexander, Paris, 28 Nov. 1918, 661.

strong pressure from below in favour of an immediate unification among the Serb population in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Srem, the Banat and Bačka, and the Croat population in Dalmatia which faced Italian occupation of much of its province, as well as in Montenegro. In the prevailing conditions, the Supreme Command of the Serbian army and, by implication, its Commander-in-Chief, Regent Alexander, emerged as the crucial actors in the formation of a new state, capable of maintaining order and restraining Italian expansion into the Slovene and Croat lands.⁷¹ Such development was further reinforced by Pašić's prolonged absence from the liberated country – he stayed in Paris after the Geneva conference – and the slow gathering of his ministers in Belgrade. Deputy Prime Minister Protić and most of his colleagues were still in Greece during the final military operations. Momčilo Ninčić, Construction Minister, was the only Cabinet member who accompanied the Regent immediately after his return to Belgrade, later to be joined by Ljubomir Jovanović, Interior Minister. The final act of the long-drawn-out Yugoslav imbroglio occurred in Belgrade on 1 December when the delegation of the National Council addressed Regent Alexander and he proclaimed "the unification of Serbia with the lands of the independent state of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs in a single kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes".⁷²

In conclusion, it can be said that Prince Alexander came to the fore of the political arena in a somewhat sudden manner following King Peter's decision to step down in a difficult political situation both for him and the country. Just as he assumed royal powers, the young Regent was thrown into the whirl of one of the most infamous political crisis to which his tiny Serbia was central, leading to the First World War. He fully embraced his duties and responsibilities in the forthcoming Armageddon and emerged as a key political factor, besides being the Commander-in-Chief of the Serbian army. The rise of the Regent's personal influence on the conduct of policy partly stemmed from the exigencies of wartime strategy and diplomacy, especially in view of an unprecedented situation in which the Serbian government was placed in the latter part of the war. With Pašić's Cabinet exiled in Corfu and the army entrenched at the Salonika front, the importance of Prince Alexander both as head of state and military commander was amplified. In part, Alexander's predominance over the government resulted from his great personal ambitions and the lack of regard for con-

⁷¹ Bogdan Krizman, "Srpska Vrhovna komanda u danima raspada Austro-Ugarske 1918", *Historijski zbornik XIV* (1961), 167–216.

⁷² *Gradja o stvaranju jugoslovenske države*, II, doc. 589, Address of the Delegation of the SCS National Council to Crown Prince Alexander and his Reply, Belgrade, 1 Dec./18 Nov. 1918, 673–676.

stitutional boundaries of his position.⁷³ Unlike King Peter, he was not willing to tolerate other informal centres of power in the army, just as he was determined not to give a largely free hand to the Pašić Cabinet in the shaping and execution of policy.

Alexander established his hold on the Supreme Command of the army after the downfall of Serbia in late 1915. He also wanted to step out of the shadow of the old and experienced Pašić, and made plans to remove him from office, but that did not materialize during the war. Pašić's ouster was not an easy matter, since the Entente Powers viewed his premiership as a guarantee of Serbia's continued perseverance in the war effort. The power struggle within the civil and military government also included the Black Hand and the resolution of conflict in the Regent-Pašić-Apis triangle held the key to the distribution of power. The Salonika show trial was a brutal denouement: Alexander joined forces with Pašić to annihilate the Black Hand in the midst of war and without much scruple for the methods used. The Salonika affair tarnished the hitherto impeccable reputation of the Regent but it damaged even more the position of Pašić – his coalition partners in the Cabinet resigned and he formed a new, exclusively Radical Cabinet without sufficiently broad support in the parliament. The balance of power between Alexander and the Pašić Cabinet was thus tipped in favour of the former. But the elimination of Apis forged the bond between the Regent and his Prime Minister, which allowed the latter to maintain his position in the face of growing challenges from the united Serbian opposition and the Yugoslav Committee. Eventually, it was the bravery and the tremendous success of the Serbian army at the Salonika front that not just vindicated Alexander's and Pašić's leadership, but also achieved the national unification of Yugoslavs under the terms favoured by the Serbian government.

In the way of epilogue, Alexander asserted his authority over Pašić immediately after the war when he declined to appoint him Prime Minister in the first Cabinet of the newly-minted Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia after 1929) formed on 7 December 1918. Although all political parties from pre-war Serbia and the former Habsburg lands proposed the grand old man for premiership in recognition of his services, Alexander was unbending on account of his bitterness because of Pašić's attitude at Geneva.⁷⁴ As has been noted,

⁷³ "He wants to be a ruler and does not agree to be ruled," Colonel Milan Gr. Milovanović Pilac, a close friend of Apis, noted Alexander's words at the height of tensions between the government and Black Handers in 1914. Likewise, in 1915, Alexander stressed to another Black Hander, Velimir Vemić, that he "does not want to be a tool in the hands of others, he wants his freedom and [free] will, even if it gets him killed." See Gligorijević, *Kralj Aleksandar Karađordjević*, I, 62–63, 248.

⁷⁴ Jovan M. Jovanović Pižon, *Dnevnik*, entry of 10 May 1919, 583, and of 19 May 1919, 586; Branislav Gligorijević, "Kralj Aleksandar Karađordjević i Nikola Pašić", in *Nikola Pašić: život i delo*, 428.

Pašić's abuse of the Regent's authority at Geneva was, at least, open to suspicion. In his draft letter of resignation, Pašić mentioned his failure to include Ninčić in his ministry as a primary reason for Alexander's wrath.⁷⁵ Be that as it may, the Regent seems to have exploited the differences during the Geneva conference as a convenient excuse to get rid of Pašić rather than nurtured a genuine grievance. The timing was essential: Alexander was intent on strengthening his grip on the government and, for that reason alone, Pašić's well-nigh legendary place in Serbian politics was a hindrance. His dismissal of Pašić, despite the rules of parliamentary democracy, was something of a coup d'état and it was a harbinger of Regent's autocratic ambitions that would become manifest in the Yugoslav state. The ordeals of the Great War and the manner in which he dealt with difficulties constituted a formative experience for the young Prince Alexander that made him into the ruler of Yugoslavia he would be during the next fifteen years until his tragic death in 1934.

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⁷⁵ Živanović, "Jugoslovensko pitanje u svetlosti pregovora", 218, n. 36.

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Douglas Wilson Johnson A Forgotten Member of the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences¹

Abstract: The paper presents a little-known foreign member of the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences, the American geomorphologist Douglas Wilson Johnson (1876–1944), his role as an expert on border delimitation issues in support of the claims of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes at the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919, his collaboration with Yugoslav experts, notably Jovan Cvijić, and his election to the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences shortly after the First World War.

Keywords: Douglas Wilson Johnson, Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences, 1919 Paris Peace Conference, border issues, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes

The reason that my search for the subject I shall speak about today has taken so long is the diversity of my scholarly interests and concerns. In the end, I have chosen to present to you a scientist who gave significant support to the newly-created Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SCS) in its struggle for borders at the 1919 Peace Conference in Paris.

There has been yet another reason for making this particular choice. The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) and its predecessor, the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences (RSAS), have had persons from various walks of life among its membership – marshals, generals, ministers, diplomats and, of course, scientists of different disciplines and interests. Some of them have left a deep imprint and exerted a powerful influence on its activities. Some others, on the other hand, have been soon neglected and forgotten. Almost nothing is known of them today. One of them is the American scientist Douglas Wilson Johnson (1876–1944).² It is of him and of the reasons for his election as a member of the Serbian Academy that I wish to speak about on this occasion.

Little is known today of the merits that led to his election as an Academy member. After his election, he never came to Serbia, never stayed in Belgrade or set foot in the Academy building. It is my intention to give an account of what he did for Serbia and the Kingdom of SCS at the 1919 Paris Peace Confer-

¹ Inaugural address as a full member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 23 May 2013.

² Bucher, Walter H., *Biographical memoir of Douglas Wilson Johnson, 1878–1944*. Presented to the academy at the annual meeting, 1946, Washington, National Academy of Sciences, 1947.

ence, of the process of his election to the RSAS and of his collaboration with its members.

Who is Douglas Wilson Johnson?

He pursued higher education in Ohio, New Mexico and Massachusetts. In 1903 he received his PhD from Columbia University, where he would teach geophysics, geology and geography from 1912 to 1942, as professor from 1919. He was an officer of the US Armed Forces and member of a team that gathered material for future peace conferences. He was a friend of Mihailo I. Pupin, himself a professor at Columbia.

During the war years he spent some time in Europe for the purpose of making studies in "military geography". He visited the battlefields in Belgium, France, Italy and the Balkans. He presented his findings in the book *Battlefields of the World War* (New York 1921). He described the operations on the Salonika (Macedonian) Front which he considered a natural continuation of the Western theatres of war.³

His assignment in Paris was to deal with issues of boundary geography and he sat on several commissions on border disputes (Austria, Kingdom of SCS, Italy, Hungary).

During his stay in France in 1918 he met Jovan Cvijić. The two men later closely collaborated, and their friendship lasted until Cvijić's death in 1927.

What did Douglas Wilson Johnson do for the Kingdom of SCS?

The Adriatic question

During his time in Europe in 1918 Johnson learnt about many controversial issues, including Italian territorial pretensions to the eastern Adriatic coast. He became aware of the severity of the conflict between Italy and the nascent Kingdom of SCS at the Peace Conference. He realised that Italy demanded that the terms of the 1915 Treaty of London be implemented and laid claims to the Adriatic city and seaport of Rijeka/Fiume.⁴ Firmly believing in the principle of equity for all nations and peoples, he considered such demands unacceptable and dangerous for peace. When, on 11 March 1919, the Italian delegation presented its demands, Johnson responded energetically. In a memorandum to President Woodrow Wilson of 18 March he insisted that Dalmatia and Rijeka

³ Johnson Douglas Wilson, "The Balkan Campaign", *Geographical Review*, 2, 1916, 27–47.

⁴ Johnson Douglas Wilson, "The story of Fiume and the Adriatic question", *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, Jan. 8 1921.

should be incorporated into the Kingdom of SCS. In support of his case, he cited statistical and economic arguments, as well as the sentiments of the local population. Italy's invoking "historical rights" was seen by him as an anachronistic relic of the past. Rijeka was indispensable to the economy of the Kingdom of SCS and Central Europe.⁵

Johnson's views met with resistance from within the American delegation, since some of its members advocated the annexation of the disputed areas to Italy. The resistance did not discourage Johnson from proceeding with his activities, nor did it make him change his convictions. He suggested American mediation in the dispute between Italy and the Kingdom of SCS, which Wilson approved and the Italians rejected. The Italians also rejected the proposal by the Kingdom of SCS for the dispute to be settled by a plebiscite. As a result, Johnson and other experts addressed a letter to Wilson emphasising that relinquishing Dalmatia and Rijeka to Italy would be a big "robbery" and that the USA would betray the rights of small nations by letting it happen. Wilson concurred and rejected the Italian claims in a statement issued on 23 April. Johnson informed Pupin about it, and the latter passed the information to Dr Ante Trumbić. In the following weeks, Johnson exchanged opinions with them. He also bombarded Wilson with proposals and advised him against making any concessions to Italy. On 27 June he sent him a lengthy memorandum laying out his view on the Adriatic question and the way of resolving it. Reminding the President of the statements and promises concerning territorial concessions on the eastern Adriatic coast, he urged him not to back down on his principles and to remain the "champion of justice for small nations".⁶

Until his return to the USA in September 1919, Johnson was instrumental in preparing the memorandum, and busy replying to the proposals and offers concerning the resolution of the Adriatic question made by the delegations of great powers. He called on Trumbić not to accept a buffer state as the way of resolving the Rijeka question. Should that turn out to be impossible, he believed that the city should be placed under the administration of the League of Nations and the port rented on a 99-year lease. He assured Trumbić that the offshore islands should be incorporated into the Kingdom of SCS, neutralised and placed under the supervision of the League of Nations. The neutralisation of the coast and islands would prevent an armed conflict between the two countries. This was Johnson's legacy to the Kingdom of SCS as regards the Adriatic question.⁷

⁵ Johnson Douglas Wilson, "The problem of Fiume", *Geographical Review* 9, 1920, 173–175.

⁶ Johnson, Douglas Wilson, *Role of Geology in the First World War*, New York: The Society, 1942.

⁷ Johnson Douglas Wilson, "A geographer at the front and at the peace conference", *Natural History* 19, 1920, 511–621.

The Banat

The process of border delimitation in the Balkans involved a sharp conflict between Romania and the Kingdom of SCS. On 31 January 1919 the Romanian delegation submitted a memorandum to the Peace Conference demanding the implementation of the Bucharest Treaty of August 1916 according to which the Romanian border was to fall along the Danube and Tisa/Tisza rivers. In other words, they claimed the whole of the Banat. The claim caused much debate and harsh words were exchanged given that Romania had exited the war in the autumn of 1919, thereby losing the right to request the implementation of the Bucharest Treaty.

The Kingdom of SCS formulated its claims in the Banat in mid-February 1919, envisaging the division of the region. Its delegation supported its claims by invoking historical rights, and economic and strategic reasons. The Kingdom claimed the flatland part of the Banat, Torontal County, part of Temes County, Temesvar and the port of Bazias on the Danube. Possession of the western and central Banat would ensure the defence of Belgrade and the confluence of the Morava and Danube rivers. A part of the problem was the presence in the Banat of Serbian troops in the Eastern Army. Neither side was willing to make concessions.

The first clashes took place as early as 31 January 1919 at the meeting of the Council of Ten. They were caused by the Romanian demand for the implementation of the Bucharest Treaty, which the delegation of the Kingdom of SCS refused to discuss. On 1 February the Council of Four set up a commission on territorial claims which was to deliberate the question of Romania's border and recommend a fair settlement. A day later, on 2 February, the Council of Ten discussed Romania's behaviour during the war and its claims to Erdely/Transylvania, Bukovina, Bessarabia, Dobrudja and the Banat. The Romanian delegation demanded the withdrawal of Serbian troops from the Banat and their replacement by Allied troops. No decision on the issue was made because President Wilson asked for an expert opinion. On 4 February, General Franchet d'Esperey, commander of the Eastern Army, ordered the withdrawal of Serbian troops from the Banat. The government in Belgrade asked for the postponement of this operation until after the decision on the Banat was made.⁸

How did Johnson conduct himself? He was not a member of the commission on the Romanian border, but his close associates Charles Seymour and Clive Day were. His attention was focused on the developments in the Adriatic but he kept abreast of the Banat affair. He had meetings with members and experts of the delegation of the Kingdom of SCS who sought advice and support

⁸ Johnson Douglas Wilson, *The geographic and strategic character of the frontier imposed on Roumania by the treaty of Bucharest*, Department of State, Tests of the Rumanian Peace, 1918, 168–171.

from various sources, the Americans, the British, the French. Johnson's most frequent interlocutor was Jovan Cvijić, the chief adviser on territorial issues. Participants in these discussions were also Jovan Radonić and Stanoje Stanojević, who were particularly engaged with the border issues in Vojvodina. There was also Mihailo Pupin, who was directly interested in the fate of the Banat. In several discussions with Cvijić, Radonić and Stanojević, Johnson openly expressed his opinion on the Banat problem. He argued that the "ethnic question and ethnic relations" would be the main consideration in the deliberation and decision process. Economic and strategic considerations would also be taken into account. The border in the Banat would depend on a Romanian or a Serbian majority. All Slavic peoples living in the region would be counted as belonging to a Serbian majority.⁹

During March, meetings with Johnson became ever more frequent as a result of the proposal the Yugoslav delegation had submitted on 18 February. A day later the Council of Ten rejected the Romanian claim to the Banat, though only in principle. Territorial experts were not able to agree on the issue, while the Americans backed the argument concerning the defence of Belgrade and the confluence of the Morava and Danube rivers. Towards the end of February, the commission had reached an agreement on the border in the northern Banat in spite of Italian insistence on the whole region being annexed to Romania. On 10 March the decision to divide the Banat was made. Two days earlier, on 8 March, Radonić and Stanojević had visited Johnson and argued for the necessity of annexing the requested areas to the Kingdom of SCS on grounds of the need for securing food for the parts of the country with low-productivity land. The memorandum they had presented to him on that occasion requested Bela Crkva, Vršac and Kikinda for the Kingdom. Radonić and Stanojević had learnt that no decision on the Banat had been made yet. Johnson had informed them about strong opposition to the Yugoslav claims. On 6 April the commission on borders decided that the western Banat, except Temesvar, belonged to the Kingdom of SCS.¹⁰ The Romanian delegation responded by requesting that a plebiscite be held.

In mid-July, the Council of Ten rejected the claim of the SCS to the Danube island of Ada Kale as well as the proposal for reconsidering the Yugoslav claims. On 8 June, at a meeting of the American delegation, Johnson made a motion for a new discussion about the Banat question. The motion was rejected by the committee of experts.

⁹ Johnson Douglas Wilson, "Territorial problems of the peace conference", *Historical Outlook* 11, 1950, 260–264.

¹⁰ Johnson Douglas Wilson, *Battlefields of the World War, western and southern fronts; a study in military geography*, with a foreword by General Tasker H. Bliss, New York: Oxford University Press, 1921.

In that way an end was put on the border question in the Banat. In August the Yugoslav delegation officially accepted the border solution in the Banat. Johnson had done all that lay in his power.

Carinthia

Johnson played an important role in the deliberations on the fate of Carinthia. The Carinthia problem was a complex one because of the conflicting positions of great powers, the presence of a part of the Eastern Army on its soil and armed conflicts between local forces of Slovenians and Austrians in which the Italians also became involved. The effort to put a stop to the conflicts and ensure the withdrawal of foreign armed forces from Carinthia failed, which led to its division into eastern and western parts with the Mur/Mura river as a boundary.

The American delegation sent Prof. G. A. Coolidge and Colonel Sherman Miles on a mission to Carinthia to sound out the sentiment of the population. The mission proposed, as the best solution, that a plebiscite under the supervision of the League of Nations be conducted.

The delegation of the Kingdom of SCS, particularly its Slovenian members, sought to incline the American delegation to support the annexation of Carinthia to the Kingdom. Focusing their efforts on Johnson, convinced that he would support their claim, they conferred with him on several occasions during March 1919. The Slovenian delegate Ivan Žolgar presented him with a memorandum detailing the future border between Austria and the Kingdom of SCS. On 25 March they spoke about Villach/Bejjak, and on 27 March Žolgar submitted a memorandum on the ethnic situation in Carinthia. The conversations and meetings continued into April.¹¹

In mid-May 1919 the commission on territorial issues endorsed the proposal to hold a plebiscite. In the event that a majority opted for unification with the Kingdom of SCS, the great powers were willing to accept it as a definitive solution.

The American territorial experts were not of the same mind on the border issue. Towards the end of May, Johnson, Seymour and Miles presented a memorandum on the Klagenfurt/Celovec basin to President Wilson. All except Johnson believed that the population of the Klagenfurt basin would remain in Austria and that the division of the basin as proposed by the Kingdom of SCS might lead to a conflict in the long run. Johnson was resolutely against such views. He refuted Miles's arguments. He argued that it was necessary that the region belong to the Kingdom of SCS considering the Slavic self-sentiment of

¹¹ Johnson Douglas Wilson, *Battlefields of the World War, western and southern fronts; a study in military geography*, with a foreword by General Tasker H. Bliss, New York: Oxford University Press, 1921

its population. He emphasised that the strategic, economic and ethnic considerations had more bearing than the others that had been put forward. Wilson disregarded Johnson's arguments, which was confirmed by the decision of the Council of Four of 29 May that Villach/Beljak belonged to Austria, that the border in the Klagenfurt/Celovec basin would be provisional and that the outcome of the plebiscite should be accepted as the definitive solution.¹²

Johnson arguing against the plebiscite

Objections to the decision were raised by Nikola Pašić and Milenko Vesnić, but they had no effect. Johnson lodged his energetic protest, and some other members of the American delegation were also opposed to it (White). Nothing of it brought any result. On 2 June Johnson put forth a compromise proposal, but Wilson rejected it too. Two days later, on 6 June, the Council of Ten decided that a plebiscite would be held. The partition of the region into two zones was discarded. The same day Johnson advised Wilson of the Italians wanting to divide Carinthia into a northern and a southern part, and called on him to prevent it. There was no response.

On 20 June, a week before Wilson's departure from Paris, Johnson made one last attempt to make him change his stance. Italy's intention was to take control over the Jesenice railway junction and Villach/Beljak–St. Veit/Šentvid railway. This would lead to the occupation of an area with a Slovenian majority in the southern part of the Klagenfurt basin, and to an armed conflict with the Kingdom of SCS, which was exactly what the Italians wanted. Such a development would certainly have an effect on the objective outcome of the plebiscite, leading to the annexation of the region to Austria. As a possible solution, Johnson proposed the withdrawal of Austrian and Yugoslav troops from the region and their replacement with American, British and French troops. If that was infeasible, the conflicting parties could be placed under the control of Allied officers. Johnson concluded by asking that the deployment of Italian troops to the disputed areas be prevented. There was no response to his belated proposal.¹³

After Wilson's departure from France, Johnson continued in his role as an intermediary between the Americans and the Yugoslav delegation. A problem was the reluctance of the Yugoslav side to sign a peace agreement with Austria before the dispute with Italy was settled. Johnson was of the opinion that the SCS delegation had no reason to insist on the settlement of the dispute with Italy as a precondition for signing the treaty with Austria. That was all that could be done.

¹² Johnson Douglas Wilson, "The story of Fiume and the Adriatic question", *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, Jan. 8 1921.

¹³ Ivo J. Lederer, *Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference : a study in frontiersmaking*, Yale University Press, 1963

The election to the RSAS and collaboration with Jovan Cvijić

In September 1919 Johnson was back in New York to resume his teaching and scientific career. In November 1919 Johnson's Serbian acquaintances and interlocutors Jovan Cvijić, Jovan Radonić, Stanoje Stanojević, Jovan Žujović, Sima Lozanić and other experts were back in Belgrade. All of them returned to their duties at the University and the Royal Academy. The capital city's university and public libraries had been ravaged and pillaged by the occupying forces. The war had taken its toll in death and illness. The election of new Academy members and University teachers was a necessity.¹⁴

During the last days of 1919 the nomination of candidates for the membership of the Royal Academy's Science Department began. The nominators were Lozanić, Cvijić and Žujović. They nominated Juraj Majcen, Artur (Franović) Gavazzi and Douglas Johnson as corresponding members. An excerpt from the statement of reasons for Johnson's nomination signed by Lozanić and Cvijić reads: "Mr Douglas Johnson, vice-president of the National Academy of Sciences in New York, a renowned geomorphologist, who was the chief adviser on our territorial issues to President Wilson and rendered a great service to the cause of truth and justice." In the issue of the annual journal of the Royal Serbian Academy for the years 1914–1919 a short biography of Johnson was published (*Godišnjak SKA XXVIII*, Belgrade 1921, pp. 322–329). It said, inter alia, that he was professor at Columbia University, a member of the National Research Council, a former major of the American Armed Forces and chief of the boundary geography division on the American delegation at the Peace Conference. In that way, Johnson was presented to the members of the Academy and the Serbian public.

During the following years, until Cvijić's death in 1927, the two scientists kept up a scientific and friendly correspondence. Faced with the bleak state of his department library, he appealed a few times to Johnson to send him some maps and atlases necessary for the teaching of geology and geography. Johnson responded to his appeals and urged various government institutions such as the Geology Survey and the Smithsonian Institution to send the requested material to Belgrade. He wrote commendably about Cvijić's book *La Péninsule balkanique*, and about their collaboration in Paris. They spoke about meeting each other in France and frequently mentioned Pupin.

In late February 1920 Cvijić informed Johnson of his election to the RSAS, and Johnson replied: "I am deeply grateful for the honor of being elected a member of the Royal Serbian Academy." And he thanked Cvijić.

¹⁴ Vidojko Jović, Ana M. Petrović, eds: *150th anniversary of Jovan Cvijić's birth : proceedings of the international conference held at the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade ASSA 2015*,

The signing of the Rapallo Treaty in November 1920 reminded Johnson of the dispute with Italy at the Peace Conference. He was eager to learn Cvijić's opinion about the treaty and the circumstances in which it had been concluded. He enquired about the status of Rijeka and suspected that its becoming an independent state would be a step towards its being annexed by Italy. What Cvijić replied is not known. In the autumn of 1921 Cvijić invited Johnson to contribute an article to the *Glasnik SKA*, and Johnson accepted. Owing to Johnson, the exchange of scientific publications was established between the USA and the Kingdom of SCS. In 1923 Cvijić invited Johnson to visit the Kingdom, but administrative hurdles prevented the visit from taking place. Johnson was willing to come to Belgrade "to meet old friends from Paris". Cvijić's death put an end to a fine friendship.¹⁵

Cvijić's death did not, however, put an end to Johnson's ties with scientific circles in Serbia. In 1931 he was elected an honorary member of the Geographical Society in Belgrade, and in 1933 he was awarded a medal by the same Society. A year later, he was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of St Sava with Star.

Johnson's support to the delegation of the Kingdom of SCS in Paris earned him great respect among the membership of the Royal Serbian Academy of Sciences. That and his scientific work was the reason for his election as a member of the most distinguished Serbian scientific institution.

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¹⁵ Bucher, Walter H., *Biographical memoir of Douglas Wilson Johnson, 1878–1944*. Presented to the academy at the annual meeting, 1946, Washington, National Academy of Sciences, 1947.

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Contacts between Duklja/Zeta and the Apennine Peninsula in the Middle Ages as a Topic in Montenegrin Periodicals in 1835–1941

Abstract: This paper shows that continuity of connections between Duklja/Zeta and the Apennine Peninsula during the middle ages, which were manifested both in the political and in the cultural sphere, attracted attention as a topic in the periodical press issued in the territory of present-day Montenegro from 1835 to 1941. The paper offers a systematized overview of such, for the most part descriptive, texts on political and cultural links between what now are Montenegro and Italy in the middle ages.

Keywords: Montenegrin periodicals, middle ages, cultural contacts, Duklja, Zeta, Apennine Peninsula

The periodicals published in the territory of present-day Montenegro from 1835 – when the first periodical was started, the almanac *Grlica* (Turtle-dove), until 1941 – when the Second World War began, allotted some space to political and cultural links between Duklja/Zeta¹ and the Apennine Peninsula during the middle ages. Contributors to the Montenegrin periodical press in the observed period found inspiration for their texts in the common political framework of lands that now constitute Montenegro and Italy (within the Byzantine Empire, under the Republic of Venice), the spreading of Christianity and literacy (Beneventan script), the cult of saints (St Michael and St Nicholas), the practice of founding and endowing churches (St Nicholas in Bari) or marriage ties between ruling families (Vojislavljević, Crnojević).

During the period under study Montenegro went through different forms of government and different statuses as a polity: a theocracy in the Njegoš era, a secular principality (1852), a kingdom (1910), and eventually (from 1918) part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929). Since the periodically issued publications were generally in step with the official government line, texts in them as a rule echoed the views of the official political

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¹ The medieval Serbian states of Duklja and Zeta occupied more or less the same territory which nowadays is part of Montenegro. The territory between the river Bojana and the Gulf of Kotor was a part of the kingdom of Duklja (Dioclea) until the 11th century, when the same territory began to be known as Zeta. Both terms, Duklja and Zeta, were in use until the 15th century when they were replaced by the name Crna Gora (Montenegro).

elite. The approach to medieval topics should also be seen in that light. Since the period was one of intense development of cultural, educational and intellectual life in Montenegro, the publication of periodicals which would support such development was an expected tendency. It is important to note that a certain number of periodicals which were similar to those published in Montenegro in content and concept were being published in the Gulf of Kotor which was part of the Habsburg Monarchy from 1815 until 1918.

From 1835 until the end of the First World War

In the period from 1835 until the end of the First World War in 1918 the Montenegrin periodical press was marked by the magazine *Glas Crnogorca* (The Voice of the Montenegrin), the official organ of the Montenegrin government. Montenegrin journalism had begun with the weekly *Crnogorac* (The Montenegrin), which was devoted to political and cultural issues. Owned by Jovan Sundečić and edited by Simo Popović, it was published in Cetinje from 23 January 1871 to 15 February 1873. Although the weekly did not have any official subtitle, it in fact was the organ of the Montenegrin government. Because of its anti-Turkish and anti-Austrian content the *Crnogorac* was banned both in the Ottoman Empire and in the Habsburg Monarchy. Without giving up its role in encouraging the Serbs to rebel against the Ottomans or its anti-Austrian agenda, the weekly changed its name and reappeared on 23 April 1873 as the *Glas Crnogorca*. Publication continued until 1 October 1877, when it was ceased due to the Montenegrin-Turkish War of 1876–1878. Its publication was resumed on 6 January 1879 and continued until 20 December 1915, when it was ceased once more due to war, this time the First World War. Publication was resumed on 22 January 1917 and it remained in print until 18 June 1922, sponsored by the Montenegrin government-in-exile and printed in Neuilly-sur-Seine near Paris, and then in Rome. The *Glas Crnogorca* was the longest-running Montenegrin magazine. In the period of Montenegro's existence as an independent state (1987–1918), it was printed in Cetinje.² It should not be seen merely as the official organ of the Montenegrin government. Namely, it contains exceptionally rich material for studying the political, cultural, educational, scientific and literary history of Montenegro in the second half of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The *Glas Crnogorca* brought parts of the book about Montenegro written by the Russian scholar Pavel Apollonovich Rovinskii.³ Devoting several instal-

² N. S. Martinović, *Razvitak štampe i štamparstva u Crnoj Gori 1493–1945* (Belgrade: Jugoslovenski institut za novinarstvo, 1965), 379.

³ P. A. Rovinskii (1831, Gusevka – 1916, Petrograd) came to Cetinje, the old royal Montenegrin capital, in May 1879 and, with minor breaks, lived there for some twenty-seven years.

ments to the period when Zeta was ruled by the local lords of the Balšić family (1360–1421), Rovinski describes their relations with the Republic of Venice.⁴ He claims that all members of the Balšić family were careful to maintain friendly relations with the Republic of Venice, guaranteeing freedom of trade and protection to its merchants. The Republic of Venice considered them to be its citizens, gave them assistance against the Turks and provided haven for their families. But despite all that friendship, Venice feared the Balšić family and did not permit them to have armed ships at sea.⁵

The historian Jovan Tomić⁶ contributed a history of the Crnojević family.⁷ Under the Turkish pressure, the lord of Zeta/Montenegro Ivan Crnojević (1465–1490) had to flee to Italy (Apulia), where he stayed from 1479 to 1481.⁸ Ivan Crnojević asked the Turkish sultan for permission for the marriage of his elder son Djuradj and Isabetha (Elisabetta), daughter of a Venetian nobleman, Antonio Erizzo. By arranging this marriage towards the end of his life Ivan Crnojević managed to allay the hostility of the Venetian Republic. He betrothed his son, but did not live to meet his daughter-in-law, who arrived in Kotor in 1490.⁹ During his exile in Italy Ivan Crnojević visited the famous pilgrimage church dedicated to the Virgin Mary in Loreto, and vowed to build a monastery in her honour if he returned home safely. He fulfilled his vow by founding the Cetinje Monastery in 1484.¹⁰

For more than thirty years he was engaged in research about Montenegro, which resulted in his life's work, the multivolume *Montenegro in its Past and Present (Chernogoria v ee prošlom i nastojashtem*, St. Petersburg 1888–1915), which remains a very important source. His history of Montenegro was published as a serial in the *Glas Crnogorca*. See D. Martinović, "Pavle Apolonovič Rovinski (1831–1916)", *Portreti* (Cetinje: Centralna narodna biblioteka, 1987), 127–141).

⁴ P. A. Rovinski, "Crna Gora", *Glas Crnogorca* (1891) no. 6, 1–3; no. 7, 1–3; no. 8, 1–3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 7, 2.

⁶ Jovan N. Tomić (1869, Nova Varoš – 1932, Belgrade) completed elementary and secondary education in Kragujevac, and graduated in history from the Great School in Belgrade in 1890. As director of the National Library in Belgrade from 1903 to 1927, he greatly contributed to enriching its book and manuscript holdings. He was elected a corresponding member of the Serbian Royal Academy in 1903, and a full member in 1906. Many of his works are based on archival material dating from the second half of 15th century to the end of 18th century, especially from the Venetian archives, see M. Janković, "Jovan Tomić", in *Enciklopedija srpske istoriografije* (Belgrade: Knowledge, 1997), 678–679.

⁷ J. Tomić, "Crnojevići i Crna Gora od g. 1479–1528", *Glas Crnogorca* (1900), nos. 31–39.

⁸ *Ibid.* no. 33, 2. King Ferdinand I of Naples helped Ivan Crnojević to return to his homeland and reestablish his power, cf. I. Božić, "Vladavina Crnojevića", in *Istorija Crne Gore*, vol. II-2 (Titograd: Redakcija za istoriju Crne Gore, 1970), 321.

⁹ Tomić, "Crnojevići i Crna Gora", no. 37, 3; no. 38, 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* no. 37, 2.

The *Glas Crnogorca* borrowed many articles from the foreign press, among them being a text on the Crnojević family from the Italian magazine *Rivista Militare Italiana* published in two instalments under the heading “Crnojević family in Venice”.¹¹ It was written on the occasion of the marriage of the future Italian king Victor Emanuel III of the House of Savoy and the Montenegrin princess Jelena Petrović in 1896. Drawing on Venetian chroniclers (Marino Sanuto, Domenico Malipiero), it portrays the last ruler of the Crnojević family, Djuradj (1490–1496), in a new light, and gives some historical notes relating to Djuradj Crnojević from a book by the Italian historian Giuseppe Marcotti. The text says that Djuradj, the lord of some regions and mountains near Kotor in “Slavonia”, arrived in Venice in late 1496, since his brother Stefan had deposed him with the help of the Turks. Stefan was also helped by their third brother, Skanderbeg, who had converted to Islam and lived in Turkey. Marino Sanuto describes Djuradj Crnojević as a tall and very handsome man clad in gold in the Greek style. Upon his arrival in Venice, Djuradj Crnojević was appointed as commander of the city of Bergamo, and then as *proveditor in campo* under the city of Alessandria.¹² He was incarcerated for some time because of his attempt to return to Zeta and stir up a rebellion against the Turks. The Republic of Venice had good relations with Turkey at the time and it was not in its interest to spoil them. According to Marcotti, Djuradj Crnojević was imprisoned from 30 June to 25 October 1498, when he was released upon the intervention of the French king Charles VIII. In 1499 Djuradj arrived in Zeta and submitted to the Turks.¹³ The sultan assigned him to rule in Rhodes, and then in Anatolia, and set his pay at 25,000 aspers, which is 3,000 liras.¹⁴ Djuradj Crnojević died in exile in Anatolia sometime about 1520. His wife and children were granted an annual stipend of sixty ducats by the Venetian Senate.¹⁵

Another text from the Italian magazine *Rivista Militare Italiana* published in the *Glas Crnogorca* was written by E. Barbarić on the Ottoman siege of

¹¹ “Crnojevići u Mlecima”, *Glas Crnogorca* (1896), no. 48, 2–3; no. 49, 2–3.

¹² *Ibid.* no. 48, 2.

¹³ Having lost all hope of regaining rule over his territory with the help of the Republic of Venice and Western states, Djuradj Crnojević turned to the Turks. At the beginning of 1500, he left Italy secretly and went to Firuz Bey, sanjak-bey of Scutari, to negotiate about switching his allegiance to the sultan. He was at the Sublime Porte as early as March the same year, but instead of the territory he desired, the sultan granted him only a *timar* in Anatolia, cf. M. Blagojević and M. Spremić, “Slom Crnojevića”, in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. II (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1981), 429.

¹⁴ “Crnojevići u Mlecima”, no. 49, 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 3. References to Djuradj’s descendants in the Republic of Venice occur until 1636, cf. R. Dragičević, “Veze Zete-Crne Gore sa Jadranskim primorjem”, *Zapisi* 4 (1935), 194.

Scutari in 1474.¹⁶ According to Barbarić, the Turkish siege of the city was described by a contemporary chronicler, Domenico Malipiero, in his *Annali veneti dell'anno 1457–1500*.¹⁷ In 1474 the Turks tried to capture the Venetian-controlled city of Scutari in Zeta, but failed. The Venetians managed to defend it with the help of Ivan Crnojević.¹⁸

The anonymous article “An old Serbian monument in Italy”¹⁹ published in the *Glas Crnogorca* speaks about the gifts that king Stefan Uroš II Milutin of Serbia (whose realm included today’s Montenegro) made to the Roman Catholic church of St Nicholas (Basilica di San Nicola) in the Italian city of Bari in 1319. King Milutin had a large altar built and a large silver icon executed by Obrad Desislavov, an artist from Kotor, as a gift to the church. Inside the church, near the door which leads into a circular space, one can see on the marble slab that serves as the altar support, a wide silver plaque (in a semi-Lombard style) which bears an inscription referring to the rich gift of king Milutin. The inscription says that in 1319 Uroš (as the king is referred to in the sources), king of Rassaia, Dioclia, Albania, Bulgaria and all of the Adriatic coast from the sea to the Danube river, commanded that an altar, a large silver icon, a silver altar cover, icon lamps and candlesticks be made in honour of St Nicholas and presented as a gift to the church of the same name in Bari. The names of craftsmen and artists who carried out the king’s commission were cited in the inscription. The Serbian ruler’s gift to the Roman Catholic church of St Nicholas in Bari is a good indicator of his policies. In 1895 Milan Jovanović, a member of the Royal Serbian Academy, found the icon of St Nicholas, king Milutin’s gift, in the treasury of the church of St Nicholas. Good relations between Kotor and Bari were the reason why Serbian rulers made rich gifts to the pilgrimage church of St Nicholas. In an earlier period, the church was presented with lavish gifts by Stefan Nemanja. King Milutin’s mother, queen Helen of Anjou, donated an icon of St Nicholas which showed her kneeling in prayer with her sons Dragutin and Milutin. Donations to the church were also made by the Serbian king Stefan of Dečani (r. 1321–1331), and by king Dušan (r. 1331–1355) who, on the day of his coronation as emperor (1346), ordered that 200 perpers (ducats) of the tribute paid by Dubrovnik (Ragusa) be transferred annually to the church of St Nicholas in Bari. According to the anonymous author of this article, there is no reason to speak about Milutin’s conversion to Catholicism, which some “Catholic” writers, such as Charles du Fresne du Cange, suggest on the basis of king Milutin’s lavish gifts to the church of St Nicholas in Bari.²⁰ The author uses

¹⁶ E. Barbarić, “Opsada Skadra”, *Glas Crnogorca* (1896) no. 50, 2; no. 52, 2–3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* no. 50, 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ “Stari srpski spomenik u Italiji”, *Glas Crnogorca* (1902) no. 34, 2; no. 35, 2–3.

²⁰ *Ibid.* no. 34, 2.

excerpts from a book of cardinal Bartolini (*Su l'antica Basilica di S. Nicolo di Bari nella Puglia. Osservazioni storiche, artistiche et archeologiche*, Rome 1882) claiming that king Milutin ruled Serbia together with his brother Stefan Dragutin, as well as that he published a letter to pope Benedict XI (1303/4) promising to adopt the Catholic faith, but did not fulfil his promise until 1320, when he was defeated by king Charles Robert and became his vassal, renounced schism and became a Catholic. There is also a statement in the text that king Milutin died in November 1323.²¹

The *Glas Crnogorca* also published texts about the first printing press among the South Slavs. That this great cultural contribution by which the short reign of Djuradj Crnojević was remembered was a lasting inspiration is evidenced by the large number of texts in Montenegrin periodicals in the period discussed here.²² They emphasize that the Obod-Cetinje printing press was one of the earliest in Europe, the first state printing-press and the first that printed in Cyrillic.²³ They also emphasize that Ivan Crnojević had even before that time sent a monk (Macarius) to Venice to learn the art of printing, and that it was also in Venice that his son Djuradj Crnojević purchased the printing press. In Venice, Djuradj's men were trained in the basics of the printing process, and purchased the printing press, tools, and probably also larger quantities of paper than could be procured in Kotor. These statements have been confirmed by modern historiography.²⁴

The Orthodox priest Petar Rafailović was a contributor to the *Boka: Veliki ilustrovani calendar* (Great Illustrated Calendar of the Gulf of Kotor) – published from 1909 to 1914 – with a text on the diocese of Kotor. He notes that the diocese had been subordinate to the archbishop of the city of Bari, in the Italian region of Apulia, from the eleventh century. At the time of the conflict

²¹ Ibid. no 35, 3. However, the date of king Milutin's death established by modern historiography is 29 October 1321, see S. Ćirković, "Vladavina Stefana Uroša III Dečanskog", in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. I (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1981), 497; on the life and reign of king Milutin of Serbia see also S. Stanojević, "Kralj Milutin", *Godišnjica Nikole Čupića* XLVI (1937), 1–43; M. Dinić, "Odnos između kraljeva Milutina i Dragutina", *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 3 (1955), 49–81; V. Mošin, "Žitije kralja Milutina prema arhiepiskopu Danilu II i Milutinovoj povelji-autobiografiji", *Zbornik istorije književnosti* 10 (1976), 110–147.

²² "Četiristogodišnjica Obodske štamparije (u Crnoj Gori)", *Glas Crnogorca* (1893) no. 9, 1; "Slava zetskijem gospodarima Ivanu i Djurdu Crnojevićima", *Glas Crnogorca* (1893) no. 29, 1; "Svečani dani". *Glas Crnogorca* (1893) no. 29, 1–4; Rovinski, "Crna Gora", no. 17, 1–2; L. Tomanović, "O Obodsko-cetinjskoj štampariji", *Glas Crnogorca* (1900) no. 26, 2–3. On the occasion of the 500th anniversary of Gutenberg's printing-press, Dr. Tomanović gave a lecture in Mainz, which was presented in the *Glas Crnogorca*.

²³ Tomanović, "O Obodsko-cetinjskoj štampariji", 2.

²⁴ Božić, "Vladavina Crnojevića", 339–340.

between the archdioceses of Dubrovnik and Bar, the diocese of Kotor (at the time of bishop Ursacius) placed itself under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Bari. Aristocratic families of Kotor gave many clergymen who served as bishops not only in their hometown but also in Italy: in Bari, Livello, Trani, Bisceglie. Rafailović points out that there was a link between Kotor and these places, so it was not surprising that the citizens of Kotor sought to be under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Bari in spiritual matters.²⁵

Between the two world wars (1918–1941)

In the interwar period the territory of present-day Montenegro was part of the *Oblast* (region) of *Zeta* in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In 1929 the kingdom was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the *Oblast* was renamed *Banovina* (banate) of *Zeta*. A large number of periodicals were published and many of them devoted attention to medieval topics, including the cultural and political connections between Duklja/Zeta and the Apennine Peninsula.

The *Zetski glasnik* (The Herald of Zeta), issued in Cetinje (1931–1941) under the editorship of Vuko Mitrović, was the official organ of the Banovina of Zeta. It published political articles, reportages, literary, historical and ethnographic contributions. It regularly published documentary material from the State Archives at Cetinje compiled and edited by Dušan Vuksan. It was a well-edited magazine with a distinctively Yugoslav orientation, which it maintained until the end of 1941.²⁶

Articles about the Duklja kings Mihailo (Michael) and Bodin Vojislavljević and their relations with the Normans of Southern Italy were contributed by Ilija Radulović.²⁷ According to him, in the reign of Mihailo (mid-eleventh century – 1081) those relations saw an improvement. In 1080 Mihailo married his son and heir Bodin to Jaquinta, daughter of Archiriz, leader of the Norman party in

²⁵ R. P. Rafailović, “Kotorski biskupi u borbi za prvenstvo između barskog i dubrovačkog arhiepiskopa”, *Boka, veliki ilustrovani kalendar za godinu 1912*, 28–34. Kotor was under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Bari from 1172 to 1828 with short breaks, see L. Blehova Čelebić, *Hrišćanstvo u Boki 1200–1500: kotorski distrikt*. Podgorica: Pobjeda; Narodni muzej Crne Gore; Istorijski institut Crne Gore, 2006), 18.

²⁶ Martinović, *Razvitak štampe i stamparstva*; S. Raspopović Babović, *Kulturna politika u Zetskoj banovini 1929–1941* (Podgorica: Istorijski institut Crne Gore, 2002), 165–166.

²⁷ Radulović was a geographer and teacher at the Podgorica Grammar School. He published some noted texts about medieval Dioclea, Bar, Shkoder, Medun, Podgorica and Dubrovnik, about settlements and population in medieval Zeta, the monastery of St. Nicholas in Vranjina, Mihailo and Bodin Vojislavljević in the *Zetski glasnik* and in the *Godišnjak nastavnika podgoričke gimnazije* (The Annual of the Podgorica Grammar School Teachers). He was a member of the Sokol association in Podgorica and teacher at its school established in 1934. See Raspopović Babović, *Kulturna politika*, 142.

Bari.²⁸ This move of Mihailo's was an attempt to suppress Byzantine influence. King Bodin (1081–1099) also maintained good relations with the Normans, under the influence of his wife Jaquinta, and the papal curia sought to organize a Norman-Duklja alliance against Byzantium.²⁹ These developments made a strong impression on an anonymous later writer, known as the Priest of Duklja. He gave his account of them in his *Bar Genealogy* or *The Chronicle of a Priest of Duklja*, written probably in the second half of the twelfth century.³⁰

The periodical *Zapisi* (The Records) was launched by a group of teachers of the Cetinje Grammar School in 1927. It published primary source material from the Archives of Cetinje, and especially from the archival department of the State Museum in Cetinje, as well as short discussions, studies, and articles on the political and cultural history of Montenegro. In the first phase of publication, from 1 July 1927 to 1 April 1933, the periodical had a scholarly and literary profile. The editor in chief was Dušan D. Vuksan (1881–1944), a Slavist and classical philologist. After a break in publication, the magazine was restarted as a monthly of the Cetinje Historical Society, from 1 January 1935 to 1 April 1941. Vuksan continued to serve as its editor, although at that time he retired and moved to Belgrade.³¹ Risto J. Dragičević served as managing editor.³²

In his article on relations between Zeta/Montenegro and the coastal region of the eastern Adriatic (Primorje) published in the *Zapisi*, Risto Dragičević points out that as a result of the rivalry between the archbishop of Dubrovnik and the archbishop of Bar, the bishopric of Kotor was subordinate to the Italian

²⁸ I. Radulović, "Kralj Bodin", *Zetski glasnik* (1939) no. 807, 4.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ There are several modern editions of this chronicle. One of them, published in the interwar period, was edited by F. Šišić, *Letopis popa Dukljanina* (Belgrade – Zagreb: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1928).

³¹ ²⁷ There is an ample literature about the *Zapisi* and its editors: Martinović, *Razvitak štampe i štamparstva*; Dj. Pejović, "Zapisi, časopis za nauku i književnost", *Zapisi* 3 (1967), 391–403; R. Dragičević, "Zapisi – glasnik Cetinjskog istorijskog društva (1935–1941)", *Zapisi* 3 (1967), 405–421; Dj. Pejović, *Prosvjetni i kulturni rad u Crnoj Gori 1918–1941* (Titograd: Istorijski institut SR Crne Gore, 1982); Babović-Raspopović, *Kulturna politika*.

³² Risto Dragičević (Potpeće, Piperi, 1901 – Cetinje, 1980) completed his secondary education in Cetinje, and graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade in 1928. He specialized in history at the University of Warsaw. He taught history and literature at the Orthodox Seminary and the Gymnasium in Cetinje, and then served as director of the State Museum in Cetinje. He was concerned with the past of Montenegro from the middle ages to modern times, especially noteworthy being his work on Montenegrin printing works. He wrote many articles and studies, mostly on political and cultural history as well as on the history of health care in Montenegro. He was also interested in ethnography and folklore. See Martinović, *Razvitak štampe i štamparstva*, 218.

archbishop in Bari for several centuries.³³ Modern historiography has confirmed that the bishop of Kotor was referred to as suffragan to the archbishop of Bari as early as the eleventh century, when both cities were under Byzantine rule. When the newly-established archdiocese of Bari (1089) entered into dispute with the archdiocese of Dubrovnik over ecclesiastical jurisdiction, laying claims to the diocese of Kotor, the latter, territorially situated between the two rivals, remained under Bari.³⁴

The *Glasnik Narodnog univerziteta Boke Kotorske* (The Herald of the Popular University of the Gulf of Kotor) was the first scholarly periodical to be published in the Gulf of Kotor. It was started by a group of professors and diligent explorers of the cultural past gathered around the Popular University of the Gulf of Kotor. The University was founded in 1933, with its main office in Kotor. It published the *Glasnik* from 1934 to 1940. Edited by professor Predrag Kovačević, the *Glasnik* published short scholarly contributions and source materials in the fields of history, archaeology, art history, archival studies, ethnography etc. It was a very useful publication, especially for the history, ethnography and archaeology of the Gulf of Kotor.³⁵ Among the articles on medieval topics was a text on a false charter of emperor Stefan Dušan to Datajko Medin from the pen of Nikola Radojčić, professor at the University of Ljubljana.³⁶ This charter was published in 1878 in *Auspicatissime nozze dei conti Giuseppe-Giuseppina Medin* by professor Antonio Medin, an Italian literary historian, and reprinted in 1906 in G. Grimaldi's book which outlined a history of various Eastern rulers and despots. The occasion of the wedding of professor Medin's relatives was an opportunity for him to emphasize the family's old aristocratic lineage.³⁷

An important place in the history of the interwar periodical press in the Gulf of Kotor is held by the weekly *Glas Boke* (The Voice of the Gulf of Kotor). It was started by a group of Kotor intellectuals who envisaged it as a democratic, non-party magazine. The first issue appeared on 29 November 1932 and the

³³ R. Dragičević, "Veze Zete-Crne Gore sa Jadranskim primorjem", *Zapisi* 3 (1935), 129–136; 4, 193–200; 5, 267–273.

³⁴ I. Božić, "O jurisdikciji kotorske dijeceze u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji", *Nemirno Pomorje XV veka* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1979), 15.

³⁵ Martinović, *Razvitak štampe i štamparstva*, 162.

³⁶ Nikola Radojčić (Kuzmin, 1882 – Belgrade, 1964) pursued his higher education at the universities of Graz, Zagreb, Jena and Munich, receiving his doctoral degree with a thesis on the history of Byzantium in 1907. He was a versatile historian concerned with Byzantine history, the history of Serbian history writing, of Serbian law, the history of Bosnia. His other contributions to the *Zapisi* dealt with the historian Ilarion Ruvarac and the medieval toponym "Red Croatia". See S. Ćirković, "Nikola Radojčić", in *Enciklopedija srpske istoriografije* (Belgrade: Knowledge, 1997), 607–608.

³⁷ N. Radojčić, "O lažnoj povelji cara Dušana kir Datajku Medinu", *Glasnik Narodnog univerziteta Boke Kotorske* 1-4 (1938), 48–49.

last (no. 414) shortly before the war, on 29 March 1941. Coming out regularly every Saturday for ten years, it recorded all important local events. As a magazine devoted to economic and educational issues (as was stated in its subtitle), it published articles on economics, and encouraged the development of tourism, but it was also concerned with certain historical events, and published polemical texts on cultural life.³⁸ The *Glas Boke* to an extent followed in the tradition of the weekly *Boka* which had been published from 1908 to 1909 in Kotor. Its editorial policy followed the programme of Yugoslav state and national unity. It supported king Alexander's three-year royal dictatorship (1929–1931) and published texts written in the spirit of integral Yugoslavism and unitarism.³⁹

A certain number of articles in the periodicals published mainly in the Gulf of Kotor wrote about Benedictine monasteries and the Benedictines and their missionary activities in medieval Duklja/Zeta. The most important authors were Maksim Zloković and Petar Šerović.⁴⁰ According to Zloković's historical review of Bijela in the *Glas Boke*, there was in the ninth or tenth century a Benedictine monastery in the place called Rake (Bijela), which was confirmed by a seventeenth-century Benedictine abbot, Timothy Cisilla, who called it *San Pietro in Alba* in his manuscript *Bove d'oro*.⁴¹ The monastery gave the name to the

³⁸ M. Luketić, "Periodika Boke Kotorske", *Kazivanja o prošlosti* (Budva: Istorijski arhiv, 1988), 166–167.

³⁹ Raspopović Babović, *Kulturna politika*, 173.

⁴⁰ Maksim Zloković (Bijela, 1910 – Kotor, 1996) studied Serbo-Croatian language and history at the Higher School of Pedagogy in Cetinje. He published dozens of articles about the maritime history of the Gulf of Kotor and useful biographical sketches of prominent local figures based on unpublished archival material. He published an aesthetical and historical portrait of the Bijela area, his hometown, in the *Glas Boke*, and wrote again about old churches in Bijela in the *Zetski glasnik*, see R. Mihaljčić, "Maksim Zloković", in *Enciklopedija srpske istoriografije* (Belgrade: Knowledge, 1997), 391–392. Petar D. Šerović (Bijela, 1887–1968) studied law in Zagreb, Vienna and Graz, where he graduated in 1913. When he moved to Kotor in 1933, he and a group of local intellectuals founded the Popular University of the Gulf of Kotor, and the following year launched the *Glasnik Narodnog univerziteta Boke Kotorske*. He was a tireless explorer of the past of the Gulf of Kotor and his bibliography consists of some 200 works on the cultural and political history of the Gulf of Kotor, most of them presenting the results of his research marked by his excellent knowledge of the classical and living languages, and of the local heritage and mentality, see V. Ivošević, "Bokeljske teme Petra Šerovića", *Boka* (1988) no. 20, 294; I. Zloković, "Petar Šerović", *Istorijski zapisi* 21 (1968), 328.

⁴¹ Timotej Cizila (Cisilla) was a Benedictine and history writer born in Kotor in the second half of the 16th century. He was mentioned as prior of the Benedictine abbey of St. James in Višnjica near Dubrovnik in 1605. He managed to obtain permission from the Ottoman authorities for pastoral work among Christians on the Venetian-Turkish border. He was the author of a historical writing, *Bove d'Oro* (Golden Bull), preserved in a later transcription, which contains the history of the noble Bolica (Bolizza) family of Kotor, see S. Vulović, "Bove

whole of Bijela, which was called “Saint Peter’s village”, or “Saint Peter in Alba” or “de campo” back then. Pope Clement VI (1342–1352), in his letter to Serbian emperor Dušan of 6 January 1346, recommended to him the churches and monasteries in his country, and asked for the monastery of “sancti Pietri de Campo” to be returned to the bishop of Kotor.⁴² In his article on the Nemanjić dynasty and the Gulf of Kotor, Petar Šerović notes that the monastery and church of St Benedict in Kotor was built by a master builder of Kotor, Petar Radoslavov, during the first years of the reign of the Serbian emperor Dušan,⁴³ and he also mentions other Benedictine churches and monasteries in the Gulf of Kotor and along the coast.⁴⁴

The weekly *Zeta* (Podgorica, 1930–1941) brought texts about the Serbian printing-shop owner Božidar Vuković of Podgorica (1460–1539) and his son Vincenzo (Vincenzo della Vecchia). After the Ottoman conquest of Zeta/Montenegro (1496), he started a printing-shop in Venice, which printed various liturgical books. One of these texts, written by S. P. Vuletić, notes that Božidar Vuković left Zeta at a young age and settled in Venice, where he died in 1539. He points out that Vuković, who ran a Slavic printing shop in Venice, worked hard and earned considerable wealth.⁴⁵ A programmatic article published on the occasion of the unveiling of the monument to Božidar Vuković in 1938 emphasizes his importance in Yugoslav terms, gives an overview of his life and work, and notes that his dying wish to his son Vincenzo was to bury him in his homeland. Vincenzo honoured his father’s wish and buried him on the isle of Starčevo in Lake Scutari.⁴⁶ From 1519 to 1540 Vuković’s shop in Venice printed seven books: a psalter, a service book, two anthologies for travellers, an octoechos, a festal menaion and a euchologion. The first of them was the Psalter, completed on 7 April 1519. The printing of its edition supplemented with an acolouthia and a book of hours was completed on 12 October 1520.⁴⁷

d’Oro, rukopisno djelo benediktinca Kotoranina o. Timoteja Cizile”, in *Program C. k. državne velike gimnazije u Kotoru za sk. god. 1887–88* (Zadar 1888), 3–31; A. Milošević, “Notatione et memoratu digna quoad Episcopos Catharenses”, *Schematismus seu Status personalis et localis Dioecesis Catharensis pro anno Domini MCMVII* (Dubrovnik 1907), 20; P. Butorac, *Opatija sv. Jurja kod Perasta* (Zagreb 1928), 48–50.

⁴² M. Zloković, “Bijela: estetsko-istorijski prikaz”, *Glas Boke* (1936) no. 190–191, 3.

⁴³ D. P. Šerović, “Nemanjići i Boka”, *Glasnik Narodnog univerziteta Boke Kotorske* 1-3 (1935), 7–10.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ S. P. Vuletić, “O životu i radu vojvode Božidara Vukovića”, *Zeta* (1938) no. 16, 4.

⁴⁶ B. Djurović, “Otkrivanje spomenika Božidaru Vukoviću, crnogorskom prosvjetaru i štamparu”, *Zeta* (1939) no. 25, 1.

⁴⁷ R. Vujošević, *Vojvoda Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin, štampar iz XVI vijeka* (Titograd: Muzeji i galerije, 1981), 11.

Conclusion

Political and cultural contacts between Duklja/Zeta and the Apennine Peninsula in the middle ages were the subject of articles published in periodicals issued in the territory of present-day Montenegro for almost a century – from 1835 to 1941. During the period from the appearance of the first periodical publication, the almanac *Grlica*, in 1835 until the end of the First World War in 1918 such articles were the most frequent in the magazine *Glas Crnogorca*. The most common topics revolved around the donation of king Stefan Uroš II Milutin to the church of St Nicholas in Bari, relations of Ivan Crnojević and his son and heir Djurađ with the Republic of Venice, the Obod printing press, the bishopric of Kotor. The most prominent authors were Jovan Tomić, E. Barbarić and Petar Rafailović. In the period between the two world wars, 1918–1941, these topics were written about mostly in the magazines *Zetski glasnik*, *Zeta*, *Glas Boke*, *Glasnik Narodnog univerziteta Boke Kotorske* and *Zapisi*. The most prominent authors were Ilija Radulović, Risto Dragičević, Nikola Radojčić, Maksim Zloković, Petar Šerović, Savo Vuletić and S. Djurović. Their texts pointed to many political and cultural connections between Duklja/Zeta and the Apennine Peninsula in medieval times. These connections were manifested through: the common political framework in which lands constituting present-day Montenegro and Italy existed (under the Byzantine Empire or the Venetian Republic), the evangelization of today's Montenegro, the endowing of churches, marriage ties, printing activities.

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Creating a Communist Yugoslavia in the Second World War

Abstract: The Second World War involved the conflict of three different ideologies – democracy, fascism and communism – an aspect in which it was different from the Great War. This ideological triangle led to various shifts in the positions, views, and alliances of each of the warring parties. Yugoslavia with its historical legacy could not avoid being torn by similar ideological conflicts. During the Second World War a brutal and exceptionally complex war was fought on its soil. The most important question studied in this paper concerns the foremost objective of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (KPJ) – to carry out a violent change of the legal order and form of government of the pre-war Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Keywords: Yugoslavia, Second World War, Communist Party, Josip Broz Tito, national ideology

The Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav idea

On 1 December 1918, following the four-year tragedy of the Great War, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia from 1929) was solemnly proclaimed. On that occasion the Crown-Prince and Regent of Serbia, Alexander Karadjordjević, said:

Accepting this announcement, I am convinced that by this act I am fulfilling my duty as ruler, for I am thereby only at last putting into effect the vision which the best sons of our blood, of all three faiths, all three names, on both sides of the Danube, Sava and Drina rivers, have begun to prepare as far back as the reigns of my grandfather, Prince Alexander I, and Prince Michael.¹

Serbia survived the defeat of 1915 and its troops became the largest contingent in the French-led forces that broke through the enemy's line on the Salonika (Macedonian) front with a decisive outcome in 1918. Serbia, a winner in the Great War, willingly transferred its sovereignty to a new state. The terms of this transfer would, however, turn out to be controversial not only among

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¹ Quoted in Branko Petranović and Momčilo Zečević, *Jugoslavija 1918–1988* (Belgrade: Rad, 1988), 136.

Croats, Slovenes and other non-Serbs, which is well known, but also among the Serbs themselves.²

Founded in 1919, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistička partija Jugoslavije*, KPJ) had been a legally recognized political party until its involvement in subversive and terrorist activities forced the authorities to ban it in 1921. The fourth-ranking political party in the first post-war election in 1920, the KPJ continued to operate as an underground organization.³ Its activities were completely dependent on the Communist International's (Comintern) orders. For the Yugoslav communists, the Soviet Union was a political and spiritual centre; Lenin and later Stalin were not just "ingenious leaders" but they also embodied the communist idea and the "envisioned new society".

Immediately after Yugoslav unification, the Communists had some specific difficulties regarding the Yugoslav idea and the Yugoslav state itself. Between 1919 and 1941 they changed their views on Yugoslavia several times, always in step with whatever was the current policy of the Comintern. They argued that Yugoslavia was the result of an "imperialist war", a product of the anti-Soviet policy of containment and of the policy of the Greater-Serbian bourgeoisie which was driven by its imperialist goals of exploiting other ethnic groups and classes in the country.⁴

For the Yugoslav Communists, Yugoslavia was the most imperialist state which should be destroyed for two reasons: first, to protect the USSR, and second, to create new national states in its former territory. Consequently, their anti-Yugoslav stance was manifested in maintaining contacts with separatist movements in Yugoslavia and in laying down an ideological and psychological basis for the complete negation of the Yugoslav state. As a result, the Communists were declared public enemies and persecuted.

Remaining at the fringe of political life for a good part of the interwar period, the Communists were not directly engaged in the on-going political

² Marko Bulatović, "Struggling with Yugoslavism: Dilemmas of Interwar Serb Political Thought", in *Ideologies and National Identities. The Case of Twentieth-Century*, eds. John Lampe and Mark Mazower (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 254–268, 254.

³ The success of the Communist Party in the election for the Constituent Assembly held on 28 November 1920 greatly worried the government. On 30 December 1920, after a number of Communist-led strikes which were interpreted as a threat to national security, the government issued the *Obznana* (Proclamation), a decree banning the Communist Party, followed by the strict enforcement of the ban. A faction of the Party responded by an attempt on the life of Regent Alexander on 29 June 1921 and, on 21 July 1921, by the assassination of Milorad Drašković, the former interior minister and author of the *Obznana*. This led to even harsher legislation against the Party, the Law on the Protection of the State enacted on 2 August 1921. Parliament annulled the credentials of all fifty-eight Communist MPs.

⁴ Dejan Jović, *Yugoslavia: A State that Withered Away* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2009), 54.

struggle over what the relations between the new Yugoslav state and its nations, and among the nations themselves should be. Yet, the complexity of relations between various groups and their struggle to define their own status greatly influenced the development of the Yugoslav Communists' revolutionary strategies. The growing political tensions in the country also played a part. The Communists' capacity to act as an effective political force was greatly inhibited by their inability to decide on a strategy on the national question.⁵

From 1919 until 1941, the KPJ went through a number of phases in its search for its own approach to the national question in Yugoslavia. The most important factor in its development of strategies on the national question was the strong influence of the Comintern. The Comintern's favoured strategies were not always particularly sensitive to the reality of the Yugoslav socio-political context or to the problems of socialist revolutionaries within it. Although the Comintern's officially stated main purpose was to promote world revolution, in practice it functioned more like an extended defence system for the Soviet Union in which it was expected that the highest duty of all communist parties was the defence of "the only real existing socialist society".⁶

The Communists saw the national question as potentially the main source of revolution. The concept of destroying Yugoslavia and creating new national states in its place gave rise to the Yugoslav form of Stalinism, specific in that the entire struggle of the Yugoslav Communists came down to revolving around the national question. This meant cooperation with and support to nationalistic organizations, even those from the ranks of the bourgeoisie, such as the Croat Ustasha movement and anti-Serbian terrorist organizations in Slavic Macedonia. In the area of their foreign policy, support was given to the countries which sought a revision of peace treaties or harboured territorial pretensions towards Yugoslavia (Hungary, Bulgaria, and Italy). The theory of secession and formation of national states in the territory of Yugoslavia directly relied on Stalin's "teaching" and key decisions of the Comintern.

The application of the principle of secession as envisaged by the Communists was not consistent as it was not based on the national rights of particular nations but on the territory predominantly inhabited by them even though these nations had not previously existed as separate national states and their borders were not only unknown but also difficult to mark out because of their mixed ethnic makeup. Accordingly, in the case of Croatia, the arguments used invoked the obsolete "state and historical right" dating back to the age of feudalism. This was the result of a politics based primarily on revolutionary phraseology, on the incessant repetition of revolutionary slogans about Serbian "hegemony", "oppress-

⁵ Hilde Katrine Haug, *Creating a Socialist Yugoslavia: Tito, Communist Leadership and the National Question* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 15–16.

⁶ *Ibid.* 16.

sion” and “occupation” of non-Serbian territories, a politics which ignored the situation as it objectively was and the reality of relations among the nations in Yugoslavia.⁷

The policy of the Comintern and the KPJ in regard to the Serbian issues was perceived from two aspects: first, in regard to the denial of the Serbs’ national interest, and second, in regard to internal rifts and dissent, mostly on the part of Serbian Communists. The persecution of Serbian Communists by the Comintern and the KPJ leadership was motivated primarily by the former’s social-democratic tradition and their strong conviction that the Yugoslav communist movement should develop as independently as possible.⁸

At its Fifth Congress held in 1924, the Comintern abandoned the idea of federal reorganization of Yugoslavia on account of the argument that “the western imperialists” were using Yugoslavia and the other Balkan countries as a “cordon sanitaire” on the south-eastern border of the Soviet Union. In order to break this “cordon sanitaire”, a new and radical political stand was defined in Moscow. According to it, the right to secession was acknowledged to “the oppressed nations” in the states of the enemy camp. Moreover, the Fifth Congress of the Comintern explicitly acknowledged the right of Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia to secede and create independent states. It was also emphasized that assistance should be extended to “the liberation of ethnic Albanians” in Kosovo.⁹

From then on, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was to the Yugoslav Communists a “dungeon of nations” in which the Serbian political elite allegedly oppressed the other nations and ethnic minorities. The Third Congress of the KPJ (Vienna, 1926) accepted the resolution of the Fifth Plenum of the Comintern’s Executive Committee of 1925 which had called for the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the creation of a revolutionary Balkan federation. The political platform adopted at the Fourth Congress (Dresden, 1928) stressed the absolute necessity of breaking up the common South-Slavic state and acknowledged “the right of all oppressed nations – Croats, Slovenians, Macedonians and Montenegrins – to self-determination including secession”.¹⁰

The position on the national question acquired an even sharper tone at the Fourth Conference of the KPJ (Ljubljana, December 1934). It was stressed that the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was essentially “an occupation” of Croatia, Dalmatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina by “Serbian troops”. The basic view was that “Greater-Serbian Yugoslavia” was po-

⁷ See Branislav Gligorijević, *Komintern, jugoslovensko i srpsko pitanje* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1992), 285–286.

⁸ Ibid. 288.

⁹ See Kosta Nikolić, *Mit o partizanskom jugoslovenstvu* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2015), 34.

¹⁰ Ibid. 41.

tentially one of “the most dangerous hotspots in a new imperialist war in Europe”. Consequently, the main goal of the KPJ was to topple “fascist dictatorship” by an armed uprising and to establish a Soviet type of government: “There can be no talk of toppling the Greater-Serbian fascist military dictatorship without a systematic revolutionary action within the army.”¹¹

The evolution of the KPJ into a Bolshevik party entailed the acceptance of a totalitarian ideology. Communists openly denied the significance of democracy, considering it unnecessary to the revolutionary needs of society. Their leadership took steps to introduce a system of intraparty subordination, the ascendancy of a minority over the majority. The KPJ was an oligarchic party, applying repressive methods to its own members and demanding unquestioning obedience. The Stalinist syndrome in the KPJ continued to exist even after the reversal of this policy, perpetuated by the “popular front” tactic and the struggle against fascism, when the emphasis was laid on preserving the unity of the Yugoslav state.

The revolutionary war

In 1939, after a series of brutal intraparty purges in the Soviet Union when some 800 Yugoslav Communists were executed or died in concentration camps, Josip Broz Tito (1892–1980) became Secretary-General of the KPJ. His major task was to “purge” the Party and he did so by eliminating the most prominent leaders of the Yugoslav communist movement.¹²

The political doctrine of the KPJ was initially based on the view that “English imperialists” were warmongers provoking Germany. This doctrine was promulgated after the Soviet-Nazi agreement of 23 August 1939 which Soviet propaganda justified by the claim that the new war was entirely “imperialistic” and that England and France were responsible for its outbreak. Nothing was said about the smaller nations directly threatened by Germany. All communist parties were ordered to enter into direct confrontation with the social-democratic and democratic antifascist parties which refused to accept the Comintern’s interpretation of the on-going war. The KPJ had advocated the abolishment of the existing order of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia even before the Second World War. Its regime had been labelled “fascist” and accused of belonging to the bloc of “imperialist countries which had been provoking” a global conflict. Also, the Yugoslav Communists had always regarded the Croat Ustashas as their allies in the revolutionary struggle against the pre-war Yugoslav regime.¹³

¹¹ Quoted in *ibid.* 48.

¹² See G. R. Swain, “Tito: The Formation of a Disloyal Bolshevik”, *International Review of Social History* XXXIV/2 (1989), 248–271.

¹³ Nikolić, *Mit o partizanskom jugoslovenstvu*, 186–187.

Following the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, the KPJ loyally adhered to the Soviet policy. In this respect, it should be noted that the KPJ did not cause trouble to the Germans even after they attacked and conquered Yugoslavia, a fact which was to be conveniently left out of the Party's history after the war. Still more controversially, the Yugoslav Communists remained hesitant about rising to arms against the occupiers even after the German invasion of the Soviet Union. It was not until the stern warning from Moscow of 1 July 1941 that the order for an immediate uprising was issued by the KPJ. The armed actions in early July were directed against local Serbian authorities, especially the gendarmerie, rather than against small German garrisons. Such behaviour reflected the fact that the Yugoslav Communists embarked on a revolutionary war: their most important war aim was to establish a new social and political system.¹⁴

Unsurprisingly, the Communists began their action in Serbia. Tito was a pragmatic politician and it did not take him long to realize that there was no one else he could propose "the defence of Yugoslavia" to except the Serbs (and the Slovenians) but that this would not be enough to carry out a revolution and seize power. A class war seemed to be the best solution, even more so because the Serbian Communists saw it as putting the idea of a "pure revolution" into practice without dragging the national question into it. It is in this light that the decision to start the revolutionary war in Serbia should be interpreted.

Tito himself was not too enthusiastic about the idea of Yugoslav unity. A loyal Austro-Hungarian subject in his youth, he knew hardly anything about the culture and history of the South-Slavic peoples. He had spent very little time in Yugoslavia before 1941, only a few years, not counting his years in prison. The Yugoslav state itself had only existed for a little more than two decades and, except for the Serbs, no one, including Tito, was too upset about its collapse in the April war.

It was clear to the communists that monarchical Yugoslavia would be restored in the event of Germany's defeat, which was an outcome that seemed more than certain to them after the outbreak of the German-Soviet war. The revolution would never be able to be carried out unless Serbia was taken, at any cost and using all necessary means. Marxist theoreticians would later explain this line of reasoning of the KPJ leadership as follows: there could be no "national self-determination" for Croats, Montenegrins, Macedonians or Slovenians in support of a new Yugoslav community without the "firm assumption" that Serbia would also be a part of that Yugoslavia – but a communist Serbia.¹⁵

Unlike the Soviet Union, where Stalin had declared the Second Patriotic War and sought recourse to the national symbols of tsarist Russia, Tito openly

¹⁴ Ibid. 258; see also Stanley G. Payne, *Civil War in Europe, 1905–1949* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 212.

¹⁵ Janko Pleterski, *Nacije, Jugoslavija, revolucija* (Belgrade: Komunist, 1985), 386.

used the iconography of international communism. For example, he adopted the five-pointed red star as a symbol of the Partisan army and the raised fist salute. In addition to a five-pointed star, the Partisans had their respective national flags on their caps, although in Bosnia, they had the Serbian and/or the Croatian tricolour (in the shape of a triangle); in Croatia, the Croat Partisans only had the Croatian tricolour, whereas the Serb Partisans had to wear both the Serbian and the Croatian one.¹⁶

National revolutions were affirmed by the decision to raise the status of the Party's provincial military headquarters to that of the main headquarters of the respective provinces (Slovenia and Serbia had already had theirs). The Marxist elite of post-war Yugoslavia would for decades interpret this decision as expressive of equality among the Yugoslav nations because it was from that moment on that each nation could independently organize its own armed forces and fight for its own "national liberation".

As for Yugoslav symbols, there were none. The main headquarters of each republic independently managed the uprising and the Partisan warfare that followed, which was a clear indication that the liberation struggle was "federalized" from the start. At the establishment of individual main headquarters, Tito carefully delineated the area each was in charge of. Every main headquarters also functioned as a state government. The purpose of this policy was to promote a new internal organization of Yugoslavia. This was a way to bring the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to its end and define some principles of the future federalization of the country, which would exercise its sovereignty based on agreement among its federal units.

In the post-war period, this was something that the Croatian and Slovenian Communists persistently insisted on when speaking about "revolutionary achievements". Whether it could have ever been any other way or not, Partisan Yugoslavism was taking shape only gradually and partially. The primary concern of Tito and the top of the KPJ was the "class approach" and the defence of the Soviet Union, an "invincible land of the proletariat". It was only from mid-1943, when the need for obtaining international legitimacy arose, that the emphasis on Yugoslavism and Yugoslavia itself became more prominent and more consistent.

Communists started a revolution in Serbia straight away, following the Comintern's model of the "united front" of the proletariat and the "poor peasantry, enslaved agricultural workers and other servants in rural areas". The ideology of "equality in poverty" in a society dominated by egalitarian ideas and a centuries-long craving for land was a key to success. Still, this did not prevent the Communists and leftist intellectuals from strongly encouraging among the Serbs pro-Yugoslav sentiment based on the old concept of integral Yugoslavism. Quite the opposite, during the war, this was valued as part of the "freedom-

¹⁶ Josip Broz Tito, *Sabrana djela*, vol. VII (Belgrade: Komunist, 1982), 139.

loving traditions” of the Serbian people. Unlike the Communists from other Yugoslav nations, the Serbian Communists encouraged their own to fight for the liberation of Yugoslavia, and the Partisans in Serbia were the only who swore the oath of enlistment as “the people’s Partisans of Yugoslavia”.¹⁷

The uprising in Serbia in the summer and autumn of 1941 did not cause serious losses to the German army (some 200 German soldiers were killed and 400 wounded). German documents reveal the brutality with which the Wehrmacht handled the Serbian rebellion. By the end of December, about 4,000 insurgents were killed in action and 35,000 civilian hostages were executed in reprisal.¹⁸

The reprisals led the Serbian royalists (Chetniks), haunted by the memory of the horrible loss of life suffered in the Great War, to conclude that the continuation of resistance would amount to a “national suicide”.¹⁹ Tito, however, was not too upset by the events. On the one hand, the people fleeing from such brutal reprisals were easily recruited into his units. On the other hand, such tragedies were tearing the fabric of normal society, creating favourable conditions for those bent on carrying out a revolution in a war-torn country.²⁰

In order to preserve the army and civilian lives, the royalists had to reduce considerably their military activity. By contrast, the Communists maintained their revolutionary optimism. At a meeting held on 7 December 1941, the top of the KPJ concluded, encouraged by the Red Army’s counteroffensive in front of Moscow, that the armed struggle against the invader had grown into “a class war between the workers and the bourgeoisie”. The conclusion was based on the literal reading of Stalin’s statement of 7 November that the war might be over “in a month, or perhaps two months, or six months, or a year”. Milovan Djilas claimed that the danger at Moscow “has largely passed”, that the situation on the Eastern front “will develop at the speed of a lightning”, and that the Germans had in fact already suffered a disaster in the Soviet Union.²¹

The Partisans pursued a clear objective throughout the chaos of the civil war: to take power and carry out a communist revolution. As early as 21 December 1941 they formed a unit specifically assigned with the task of fighting a class war (the First Proletarian Brigade commanded by the Spanish Civil War veteran Koča Popović). This means that they gave a higher priority, both

¹⁷ Nikolić, *Mit o partizanskom jugoslovenstvu*, 389.

¹⁸ Kosta Nikolić, *Istorija Ravnogorskog pokreta*, vol. I (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2014), 165–166.

¹⁹ Ben Shepherd, *Terror in the Balkans: German Armies and Partisan Warfare* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 144.

²⁰ Heather Williams, *Parachutes, Patriots and Partisans. The Special Operations Executive and Yugoslavia, 1941–1945* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 2003), 60–61.

²¹ Quoted in Nikolić, *Mit o partizanskom jugoslovenstvu*, 260.

in theory and in practice, to a social revolution than to a liberation war. Far from the official post-1945 narrative about the joint struggle of all Yugoslav nations against the Axis powers, the Partisans in fact were one of the instigators of and participants in the horrible civil war which was fought along ethnic and ideological lines and which claimed most of the lives lost during the war. Their main enemies became not the German and Italian or any other occupying force, but rather Mihailović's Chetniks labelled "Greater-Serbian nationalists". To justify their ruthless struggle for power, the Communists conveniently employed a discourse which presented them as fighters against "traitors".

The fundamental problem, which the Communists coped with in stages during the war, depending on the situation, was how to make the liberation war compatible with the KPJ's strategic goal – to carry out a class revolution – especially because the far left of the party leadership had never had any doubts that the main goal, in fact, was to take power and sovietise Yugoslavia.²² The central problem was how to reconcile the right to self-determination with the struggle for the restoration of Yugoslavia? According to the revolutionary primer, the country's rebirth depended on whether the "working class" would manage to destroy the pre-war regime, i.e. whether the KPJ would manage to take power. This was why in the initial phase of the revolution Tito did not present the question of Yugoslavia as a state legal goal.²³

The offer made to the Serbs was class war and defence of Yugoslavia, whereas the other nations were offered the destruction of pre-war "Serbian hegemony", which was a process that was taking shape as the defeat of the Axis powers was becoming more certain. The basic elements of the communist revolution and of the struggle for a new Yugoslavia met on one point which remained central throughout the war: the fight against the "Greater-Serbian centre" embodied in General Dragoljub Mihailović. The motive was the fact that he was not only at the head of a resistance movement which had Yugoslav pretensions – the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland – but also became, in January 1942, a member of the Yugoslav government-in-exile which was recognized as legitimate by the antifascist coalition.

This is precisely why, and why at that particular moment – in the same January of 1942, the developments in Serbia were described as decisive for the whole of Yugoslavia. The KPJ was supposed to propagate the idea that the goal of Mihailović's Chetniks was not the liberation of the country:

Their goal after the end of the war, whatever its outcome, is to preserve the system of hegemony of the Greater-Serbian reactionary elements. This is why they

²² Ivo Banac, *Sa Staljinom protiv Tita. Informbirovski rascjepi u jugoslavenskom komunističkom pokretu* (Zagreb: Globus, 1990), 87–88.

²³ Pleterski, *Nacije*, 381.

are supported by all anti-popular reactionaries who will in no time become the main enemy of the Yugoslav peoples' demands for self-determination.²⁴

Mihailović was accused of continuing to pursue the “old defeatist policy” and denounced as the main threat to the liberation struggle. The author of this report, Ivo Lola Ribar, wrote to the Slovenian Communists urging them to offer the most resolute resistance to “similar attempts of such reactionary elements” in Slovenia because the Slovenian people “deserves a future which will be different from their thorny past”. Ribar believed that a harsher attitude towards the Chetniks and an emphasis on the danger posed by the “resurrection of Greater-Serbian hegemonists” would be just as useful for the Communists’ operation in Croatia. Such policy would be a “bridge which will bring many elements over to us”.²⁵

The decision of the KPJ leadership to start the second phase of the liberation struggle (a proletarian revolution) could mean only one thing in practice – that the liberation struggle was being turned into the struggle against the “bourgeoisie” and its armed forces – the Chetniks. In order to discredit them and, ultimately, the national struggle of the Serbian people, the KPJ used the tactic of accusing them of “betrayal and collaboration”, which would be consistently applied throughout the war. Mihailović and his resistance movement became the main target of the KPJ’s strategy, enabling it to reconcile the liberation and revolutionary goals. Elements of this strategy had been defined much earlier: the Comintern-era slogan about the struggle of “oppressed nations” for national liberation was replaced with the one about the struggle against the occupiers, but it was the Serbs who were once again branded as the main bearers of fascism and a far greater danger than the external enemy. To prop up the pretence of “liberation”, the KPJ even accused the Serbs of high treason.

The KPJ’s slogans about “brotherhood and unity” and the principle of complete equality of the Yugoslav peoples are quite well known. But there had to be something substantial behind a political catchphrase, something that most Yugoslavs would gather around. The invocation of “Greater-Serbian threat” proved to be the most effective stratagem in this case, too, and was developed to its full potential in Bosnia and Croatia. It is in that light that one should look at the Communists’ insistence on a more aggressive “class approach” and a stepped-up revolution. Contrary to usually unclear interpretations of what the latter meant in practice, there is the interpretation of the KPJ’s Politburo: after the quelling of the uprising in Serbia and given the fact that the Yugoslav government-in-exile enjoyed respectable status in the eyes of the antifascist coalition, there was a pressing need to address the question of the status of the non-Serb peoples in the

²⁴ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodno-oslobodilačkom ratu naroda i narodnosti Jugoslavije*, vol. II-2 (Belgrade: Vojnoistorijski institut JA, 1952), 159–165.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 208–214.

envisioned federation in a most aggressive way. It should be made perfectly clear to them that they would not be able to achieve their “national liberation” unless they supported the maximalist goals of the communist revolution.

Post-war Marxist theoreticians argued that in this phase the KPJ leadership had stepped up the policy of “brotherhood and unity” based on the principles of equality of nations and their self-determination in the struggle against the occupiers and their collaborators. In practice this meant that the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and partitioned and occupied Serbia were treated as equal in terms of legal and political status. Labelling the Serbian national resistance movement as “treasonous” was aimed at presenting both the Yugoslav government-in-exile and the Yugoslav king himself as traitors, which was exactly what happened at the end of the war. At a later stage Tito made use of these claims as a simple means for extorting concessions from the western Allies – the restoration of Yugoslavia was only possible in accordance with the KPJ’s model, and that was presented as the only way for the Yugoslav nations to contribute “significantly” to the Allied efforts to crush fascism.

And so the old propaganda about the “Serbian danger” went on and, in the circumstances of war, became the main reason for the social revolution (winning over a considerable number of Serbs from the western parts of Yugoslavia) and for “the national liberation struggle of oppressed peoples”, which led to their changing sides in massive numbers and joining the People’s Liberation Movement (*Narodnooslobodilački pokret*, NOP) at the final stage of the war. At the same time and on the same basis, the Serbian ethnic group was being broken up by the construction of the Montenegrin and Macedonian nations.

A federal state or a union of states?

The foundation stone of socialist Yugoslavia was laid at the Second Session of the Antifascist Council for the People’s Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Antifašističko veće narodnog oslobodjenja Jugoslavije*, AVNOJ) held in Jajce, central Bosnia, on 29 and 30 November 1943. The capitulation of Italy signalled it was time to set up an “authoritative political body” which would pronounce its stance on the Yugoslav king and government-in-exile. This initiative coincided with the Red Army’s significant successes on the Eastern front and the decisions reached at the Allied Tehran Conference (from 28 November to 1 December 1943), all of which worked in the Partisans’ favour.

At the Second Session of AVNOJ, this Council was declared “the highest representative body of legislative and executive power” in future Yugoslavia. Elected on the same occasion was the National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Nacionalni komitet oslobodjenja Jugoslavije*, NKOJ) as “the highest body of people’s power” which had attributes of a provisional “people’s government”. The Yugoslav government-in-exile was stripped of its powers to act as a

lawful government, and King Peter II Karadjordjević was banned from returning to the country, but the issue of the political system was to be “settled” after the liberation of the country. The decision to found a new Yugoslavia was extremely ambiguous and non-binding:

Based on every nation's right to self-determination, including the right to secession or union with other nations, and in compliance with the true will of all nations of Yugoslavia demonstrated throughout the joint three-year-long national liberation struggle which has forged an indissoluble brotherhood of the nations of Yugoslavia. [...] Yugoslavia is being and shall be built on the federal principle which will provide for the full equality of Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Macedonians and Montenegrins, i.e. the peoples of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.²⁶

Serbia was the only federal unit of the envisaged federation which did not have its highest revolutionary authority – an antifascist council – at the Second Session of AVNOJ. The stereotypes of “Great-Serbian hegemony”, the “oppressed” nations and an “oppressing” nation were still in force. Serbian political and military officials did not raise the question of Serbia's position in the future federation or of the delineation of the federal units' borders. The Second Session of AVNOJ confirmed the process of Yugoslavia's federalization which had been underway since the beginning of the war. The internal partition entailed dividing lines between the Serbian people because a considerable part of Serbs remained outside of the Serbian federal unit. In the federal system, the KPJ was the dominant force, which essentially made the federalization of Yugoslavia a mere form: all the power was in the hands of the party leadership.

The national restructuring of the Yugoslav state (federalization) was taking place under the oppressive burden of the concept of alleged “Serbian hegemony”, an unwarranted stigma stamped on the Serbian people as a whole. Croatian representatives insisted on a confederation, claiming they could not “appear before their people” offering them the prospect of Croatia ceasing to be an independent state, as it was at the time (NDH), and demanded that its territory would have to be at least as large as the interwar Banovina of Croatia had been. This was the reason why Tito explicitly told the Croatian delegation that Croatia's role was special since “Croats and Croatia have been leaders of the fight against Greater-Serbian reactionism”.²⁷

On the other hand, the position of Serbia in the Yugoslav federation was not determined. It would be reasonable to presume that the AVNOJ session could not have been held without the qualified representatives of the largest land. A freely elected Serbian delegation would have been able to raise the ques-

²⁶ Quoted in Branko Petranović and Momčilo Zečević, *Jugoslovenski federalizam. Ideje i stvarnost*, vol. I (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1987), 800–801.

²⁷ Quoted in Pleterski, *Nacije*, 458.

tion of Serbia's position in the new federation, as well as the question of borders, but that would have been inconvenient for Tito and the KPJ leadership. Consequently, decisions had to be reached without the presence of a qualified Serbian delegation capable of raising the Serbian question. Instead, the session was attended by a compliant delegation consisting of members of the Serbian units of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (*Narodnooslobodilačka vojska Jugoslavije*, NOVJ) operating outside of Serbia, prominent Communists who unquestioningly adhered to the KPJ's principle of centralism. There simply could be no civilian or military initiative in Serbia other than those launched from the centre of the party and military leadership of communist Yugoslavia. It was Tito who imposed all political decisions regarding the position of Serbia and the Serbian people in the new state.

Changes to the country's political structure were also carried out under irregular wartime circumstances. In the name of the restoration of Yugoslavia, a "silence strategy" regarding Serb victims was employed. The policy of "national balance" drastically changed Serbia's pre-war position. AVNOJ essentially obliterated all traces of Serbia's former statehood which had been built into Yugoslavia's statehood in 1918. The appointment of the first communist government (NKOJ) and the stripping of the Yugoslav government-in-exile of its lawful powers cancelled out, in form and content, the tradition of administrative state bodies based on the Serbian political thought and experience of the nineteenth and twentieth century. The decision to ban King Peter from returning to the country meant that the dynasty which was identified with Serbian statehood since the beginning of the Serbian revolution (1804) had been eliminated.

The internal borders established at the Second Session of AVNOJ would remain unchanged after the war. It was at this session that the Croatian revolutionary assembly's decision of 20 September 1943 on the annexation to Croatia of areas formerly occupied by Italy (Istria, Rijeka, Zadar and the islands) was endorsed, despite the fact that Tito had at first criticized Croatia for usurping the sovereignty which belonged only to Yugoslavia. The same decision was adopted for Slovenia: the prior decision of the Plenum of the Slovenian Liberation Front (*Osvobodilna fronta*) was endorsed, allowing "free Slovenia in federal Yugoslavia" to incorporate the Slovenian Primorje (Coast) and all previously annexed parts of Slovenia.

At a special meeting with the Croatian delegation on 30 November, Tito emphasized the important role of Croatia in the liberation struggle, for "Croats and Croatia have been leaders of the fight against Great-Serbian reactionarism", and stated that the most important task now was the joint fight of Croats and Serbs in order to destroy internal enemies, "because they are more dangerous than the occupiers".²⁸

²⁸ Quoted in Nikolić, *Mit o partizanskom jugoslovenstvu*, 382.

Croatia incorporated a larger part of Istria than Italy and so became a net gainer”, although Andrija Hebrang thought the boundaries of NDH had been “fairer”.²⁹ The borders fixed for Croatia and Montenegro drew the Communist leadership into ethnic adjudication that would be openly held against them by the 1980s. Absorbing the larger part of the Istrian Peninsula from Italy made Croatia a net gainer, but condemned the 250,000 Italians living there to an effective, mostly bloodless, campaign of ethnic cleansing that began in 1945 and continued into the early 1950s.³⁰

At the same time, Tito once again rejected proposals to establish one or, perhaps, several autonomous Serbian regions in the new Croatian republic. Since the KPJ was not too popular with the Croatian people, it did not even dare think of creating separate Serbian regions.

The decisions made at the Second Session of AVNOJ would be further shaped until the very end of the war. For decades, the post-war Serbian Marxist elite struggled to prove that the Yugoslav state created in Jajce had been a unitary one, and that its (con)federalization was the result of historical events which entailed the abandonment of AVNOJ’s “fundamental principles”. But that is not true. Even before Jajce, all constituent nations except the Serbs had stated their positions on their respective statuses, thus confirming that the new Yugoslavia would be a federation of states, not a federal republic. The Slovenian historian Janko Pleterski never had any dilemmas about this and considered it “pointless juridical nitpicking”, since “if we look at AVNOJ’s decisions at Jajce, they represent, in content and form, the realization of the principle of sovereignty of the Yugoslav nations”.³¹

The whole point of the revolution was the federation which came into existence through the nations exercising their right to self-determination. The ethnic principle was built into the structure of the new federation and, consequently, all the republics (except Bosnia and Herzegovina) were national republics. This was insisted upon by Slovenia and Croatia even during the peak period of building socialism, when the idea was promoted that socialism “abolished” all differences in Yugoslavia.

All these contradictions fully re-emerged in the late 1980s, when Slovenia and Croatia insisted that they had not exercised their right to secession, because they had once voluntarily united with other Yugoslav nations and republics to form a federal Yugoslavia. The underlying political idea was that it was a permanent right which could be exercised more than once.

²⁹ Aleksa Djilas, *Osporavana zemlja* (Belgrade: Književne novine, 1990), 242.

³⁰ John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History. Twice There was a Country*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 232.

³¹ Pleterski, *Nacije*, 461.

Winners and losers

In the summer of 1944 the Partisans entered Serbia breaking through the Chetniks' resistance while the Germans were focused on defending the route for their troops to withdraw from Greece. The Soviet army took part in the campaign to liberate Serbia between September and October 1944. In Serbia, where greater resistance to the Communists was expected, the new authorities were introduced under the auspices of bodies of the restored Yugoslavia. Those who had taken part in the occupation regime were dealt with brutally; in most towns people were executed without publicity. As its first priority, Tito's regime focused on the remaining domestic military forces still rallied against it. In the final stages of the war, the remnants of different enemies retreating with German troops were destroyed in the region along the Austrian border, approximately 100,000 men, many of them Serbs.

According to the party's official view, Serbia had acted hegemonically in the interwar Yugoslavia, the Serbian bourgeoisie, military, government, and monarchy had acted as the gravediggers of the interwar state and the oppressors of the other nations. Serbia thus came in for some very specific treatment after the liberation.³² The days that followed the end of the war led to one last round of vengeful bloodletting. Tito's Partisans executed at least 60,000 Serb civilians from November 1944 to June 1945. In addition, Tito's secret police (OZNA) hunted down the Chetniks in Serbia, and in July 1946 executed General Mihailović as a "traitor" and "war criminal".³³

The Republic was declared on 29 November 1945, and the constitution, modelled after the constitution of the Soviet Union, was promulgated on 31 January 1946. The Communist representatives to the bicameral Constituent Assembly voted unanimously for the abolishment of monarchy, ending the short-lived period of regency on behalf of the exiled King Peter, in whose name Tito had ruled as prime minister since March 1945. The state was named the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Its division into republics introduced during the war was legalized: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia each had its own government, assembly and constitution. Serbia had an autonomous province, Vojvodina, and an autonomous region, Kosovo and Metohija, set up on account of their ethnically mixed population. The Serbs were the most dissatisfied with the reorganization of the state along federal lines even though Serbs from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia had been the predominant force in the Partisan army which had brought about

³² Nick Miller, *Non-Conformists: Culture, Politics and Nationalism in Serbian Intellectual Circles 1944–1991* (Central European University Press, 2007), 10.

³³ See Kosta Nikolić, *Mač revolucije. OZNA u Jugoslaviji 1944–1946* (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik, 2016).

these changes.³⁴ The prevailing feeling was that the federation was detrimental to the Serbs in a number of ways, including the invention of new nations, such as the Macedonian, and the separation of the Montenegrins and their declaration as a new nation. Montenegrin ethnic distinctiveness was a communist demand since their ideology involved the establishment of a separate Montenegrin nation. Up to that point, no political force of any significance had thought of going against history and tradition and requesting the separation of Montenegrins into a different ethnic group from the Serbs.

The Montenegrin Communists had been speaking very clearly and unambiguously about the “Montenegrin nation” from the beginning of the war. It is a historical paradox that, until the very end of the war, they never once mentioned the existence of Serbs in Montenegro, and until the Second Session of AVNOJ they did not speak about the restoration of Yugoslavia, but only about creating the “Soviet republic” of Montenegro. Therefore, what followed as a logical result of Partisan Yugoslavism in Montenegro was the creation of a new nation. Since war is usually the key driving force for the building of a nation, it seems reasonable to assume that the conflict that the Partisans in Montenegro started against the Chetniks was in fact motivated by the intention to create a clear and unambiguous national identity for the population of Montenegro. The extreme violence which marked this conflict did not originate from “opposing and irreconcilable” identities, but simply served as a way to create a new Montenegrin identity or, in other words, to erase Serbian identity in Montenegro.

Later the Bosnian Muslims, who had been traditionally claimed by both Serbs and Croats, were “added to the list”. Another important source of dissatisfaction was asymmetry: Serbia was the only republic which had autonomous subdivisions. It has been observed that Dalmatia was a natural province in Croatia where Serbs lived in greater numbers and more compact groups than any of the ethnic minorities in Vojvodina. In the beginning, while there was strict centralism, the autonomous provinces were not a practical problem. However, when the republics began to transform into national states, provincial autonomy became one of the central issues.³⁵

Partisan Yugoslavism, which was the basis of communist Yugoslavia, was not a uniform historical phenomenon and cannot be considered as being the same in all parts of Yugoslavia and among all Yugoslav nations. From 1942, the Partisan army formally operated under the name of the People’s Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (NOVJ), but this name only referred to Tito, his Supreme Headquarters and the forces that left Serbia (1941) and Montenegro (1942) and followed him to Bosnia. These were Partisans from Serbia and Montenegro, and partly from Sandžak. It is a striking fact that not even Tito and his Supreme

³⁴ Sima M. Ćirković, *The Serbs* (Carlton, Australia: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 274.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 275.

Headquarters ever set foot on Croatian territory. Throughout the greatest crisis the NOVJ faced in January 1943, during the German operation *Weiss*, Tito tried to get help from Croatian Partisan units, but to no avail.³⁶

An almost identical process was taking place in Slovenia, making Partisan Croatia and Slovenia the only organized states with their own army, parliament and government. It was not until 1 March 1945, when the Partisans launched an offensive towards the west of Yugoslavia, that a single Yugoslav army was created.

In Slovenia, Yugoslavism was just a framework for fighting a liberation war and achieving national goals (finally establishing Slovenian statehood and national territory). Still, it was in Croatia that Yugoslavism was the weakest, despite the fact that the Croatian position during the Second World War was extremely unfavourable due to its allegiance to the Nazi alliance.

In fact, in a meeting with Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary, on 15 March 1943, US President Roosevelt contended that the Croats and Serbs had virtually nothing in common, and that the concept of re-uniting them in one state was “ridiculous”. Roosevelt believed that Serbia deserved to emerge as an independent state while Croatia could exist under a “trusteeship of some sort”. Roosevelt did not oppose the continuation of Yugoslavia, but he wished for the South Slavs to determine their fate without it being dictated to them by Western powers. President Roosevelt held that Serbian desires were paramount, considering their commitment to the Allied cause.³⁷

Instrumental in the process of “saving” Croatia was Tito. He managed to move Croatia from the side of the defeated to the side of the Allies, the winning side in the Second World War. And he had created the federal state of Croatia, which provided the legal basis for Croatia’s independence in 1991. It was Tito who drew present-day Croatia’s borders which, considering “the historical circumstances and conditions under which they were drawn, could certainly not have encompassed a larger territory”, as put by the modern Croatian intellectuals who give a preference to Andrija Hebrang for ideological reasons.³⁸

This did not stop the Communists from spreading propaganda in Serbia at the end of the war that Stjepan Radić³⁹ “gave his life for Yugoslavia”; that the

³⁶ Josip Broz Tito, *Sabrana djela*, vol. XVI (Belgrade: Komunist, 1984), 53.

³⁷ Robert B. McCormick, *Croatia under Ante Pavelić. America, the Ustaše and Croatian Genocide* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 111.

³⁸ Pavle Kalinić, “Andrija Hebrang i hrvatsko pitanje”, *Politička misao* 2–3 (1996), 291.

³⁹ Stjepan Radić was a Croatian politician, the founder of the Croatian People’s Peasant Party in 1905, throughout his career opposed to union with Serbia. He became an important political figure in Yugoslavia. He was shot in parliament on 20 June 1928 by the Serbian Radical MP Puniša Račić, and died several weeks later. This assassination deepened the alienation between Croats and Serbs.

Croatian uprising against the invaders began before the Serbian one; that the genocide against the Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) had never happened; and, if it ever did, it was a “well-deserved punishment for Serbs” because the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had been a “dungeon” in which nations had “suffered oppression at the hands of Greater-Serbian hegemonists, and the former power holders fomented hatred among Yugoslavia’s nations”.⁴⁰

The national policy of the KPJ was formally laid down by the first Constitution of the new Yugoslavia drawn up under the direct influence of the 1936 Soviet Constitution. This Constitution expressed the “achievements” of the communist revolution in the country in constitutional law terms. In September 1945, a constitutional committee was set up within the Constituent Assembly Ministry. A number of experts sat on the committee, but all the decisions were made by Edvard Kardelj who was charged by the KPJ’s Politburo with building the country’s social and political system.⁴¹ Kardelj kept this status until the adoption of the last Yugoslav constitution in 1974.

For Kardelj, the significance of convening the Constituent Assembly lay in the fact that it would decide whether to restore the bourgeois system in Yugoslavia or preserve the “revolutionary achievements”. The new constitution was to be founded on republicanism, rejecting monarchy and defining Yugoslavia as a “people’s democratic republic”. Kardelj sought an original form of government for the future state, and he used to say in discussions that he saw Yugoslavia as a “plebeian state of the Jacobin type”. He expressly requested that the draft of the constitution emphasize that the power was in the hands of “the basic masses of people”, demanding a fusion of the executive and legislative branches of power in order to eliminate the influence of the “reactionary bloc acting through parliament”. He believed that the existence of the state sector in the country’s economy was a necessary element in maintaining the “revolutionary achievements”, as was the separation of church and state, although the freedom of conscience should not be equated with “a rigid policy of eliminating the church from people’s lives”.⁴²

The Constitution was adopted on 31 January 1946. Its distinctive feature was the importance attached to the strengthening of the executive power. The country’s official name was the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia. The break with the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was made complete with the declaration of the federal system and six new republics. The “one three-tribe nation” idea was abandoned; the Communists believed that the “Yugoslav nation” was in fact a Serbian one, and Macedonians and Montenegrins were granted the status of

⁴⁰ Ivan Becić, “List *Borba* u borbi za ovladavanje javnim mnjenjem u Srbiji 1944–1945”, *Istorija 20. veka 2* (2012), 95.

⁴¹ Ljubodrag Dimić, *Istorija srpske državnosti*, vol. III: *Srbija u Jugoslaviji* (Novi Sad: Platonum, 2002), 329–330.

⁴² Quoted in Petranović and Zečević, *Jugoslovenski federalizam*, vol. II, 216–217.

nations. Competences were divided between the federal state, the member-republics, territorial self-governments and local self-governments. The fusion-of-powers model was applied at all levels of government, while the vertical system was based on the principle of so-called democratic centralism, leading to the implementation of the etatist social structure and a centralized system of government, despite it nominally being a federal one. Ideological, political and other forms of pluralism were forbidden.

Simultaneously with the federal constitution, constitutions of the republics were adopted (in Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia on 31 December 1946; in Slovenia, Serbia and Croatia on 16, 17 and 18 January 1947 respectively). Each contained one identical provision – the people's right to self-determination, "including the right to secession". This in fact meant that the republics were in the position of independence which stemmed from their original rights and not from the powers delegated to them by the federal government.

The Serbian constitution guaranteed "the right of autonomy" to the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and the Autonomous Region of Kosovo and Metohija. These rights were supposed to be confirmed by the statutes of these autonomous units. Ethnic minorities were guaranteed protection of cultural identity, freedom of language use and all other minority rights.⁴³ The Croatian constitution highlighted that the People's Republic of Croatia was constituted by Croats and Serbs and that the two were equal, but the Serbs' right to self-determination was never mentioned – this was only granted to Croats. In addition, the use of the word "Serbs" and not "the Serbian nation" suggested that Serbs belonged to the Croatian nation in the political sense.

The highest price for the realization of the idea of Partisan Yugoslavism was paid by Serbs. According to the most conservative estimates, they accounted for between 53 and 58 percent of all casualties in the Second World War in the territory of Yugoslavia. Serbs accounted for one half of those killed in Croatian territory, and 71 percent of those killed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Out of the total number of Serb casualties in the Second World War, more than 70 percent of those killed were civilians. Yet, in the restored Yugoslavia, the Serbs found themselves living in four different federal units, while Serbia itself, unlike the other republics, was in an inferior position. Vojvodina was granted autonomy on account of Hungarians and other minorities, Kosovo was granted the same because of Albanians, but the Serbs in Croatia were never granted autonomy despite having been the backbone of the Partisan army.

Communists believed that "eternal brotherhood and unity" would neutralize the devastating consequences of the brutal and multifaceted civil war (ideological, religious and ethnic), forgetting that hatred cannot be healed unless the sentiment of distrust disappears and that it takes generations for painful

⁴³ Ibid. 248–249.

memories to fade away. Every civil war in history has proved it clearly, but the Communists never admitted that there had been a civil war in Yugoslavia.⁴⁴

The communist victory had five long-term effects on Serbian post-war history: 1) the loss of the monarchy and the monarchic system of government – the national dynasty was abolished and was replaced by the government of an individual of Croat nationality; 2) the influence that the Serbian Orthodox Church had on government and society became practically non-existent – the Serbs became an atheist and godless people; 3) Serbian territory was reduced to the area preceding the Balkan Wars; 4) the structure of the Yugoslav army was radically changed – the army led by royalists had maintained the traditions established in the Serbian army before the First World War, and the defeat of this army marked the end of an era; 5) the Serbs lost the right of participating on equal terms in the politics of the new state.⁴⁵

The ensuing events came as a logical outcome of a misguided policy. Serbia was a clear loser in the new communist re-composition of Yugoslavia although only the Serbian Communists had called upon their fellow Serbs for the restoration of that country. The establishment of Serbia as a unit in the future federation had been the result of the utter inability and unwillingness of Serbian Communists to protect Serbian national interests. Contrary to Partisan mythology, Partisan Yugoslavism was a thin veil designed to cover the rampant nationalisms of Yugoslav Communists, with the noted exception of those of Serb origin, and to provide a framework for the dictatorial rule of Tito and the KPJ. As such, it had planted the seeds of the destruction of Yugoslavia in a civil war a mere decade after Tito's death.

Communist atheism and the creation of a new identity

The victory in the war enabled the communists to start building a socialist society in Yugoslavia. Their concept of a socialist society is based on unshakable ideological values and a precise political strategy. Socialism was a process in which the past and present were deconstructed in order to make room for the construction of the future. Constructed by the “enlightened vanguard”, this

⁴⁴ Communists maintained that the internal strength of Yugoslavia rested on the Yugoslav nations' brotherhood and unity and on their equality “forged in the struggle against the German aggressor and against hegemonists of all shades and colours siding with the enemy during the armed struggle”. They believed it to be the right solution to the national question since it followed the model of the Soviet Union, showing the entire world, “for the first time since the October Revolution, that even in our times, brotherhood and equality of nations in one country is possible” – according to *Priručnik za političke radnike NOV i POJ* (Belgrade: Propagandno odeljenje Vrhovnog štaba NOVJ, 1945), 5.

⁴⁵ Jozo Tomasevich, *The Chetniks. War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1975), 471.

bright future was to be built in opposition to the present and the past. Thus the forces of the past and present, “retrograde elements” and “conservative forces” are the main enemy of socialism. The stronger they are, the more brutal the violence against them must be. Violence is justified if it serves “social progress”. But even in a later phase of the revolution (once its first, brutal phase is over) the vanguard needs to be aware of the existence of the forces of old, because “the enemy never sleeps”. The revolutionary army and the secret police are instruments of this instrumentalist understanding of violence. They essentially are revolutionary institutions, whose purpose is not only to defend the country and prevent violence (as in liberal democracies) but to raise class consciousness and safeguard the revolution. The army and the secret police in socialism do not defend the state as such, since the state is a conservative institution of the past and present. They defend the revolution, the vision of the future and its supreme visionaries. In a socialist society, these institutions are ideological by definition.⁴⁶

Religiousness has been a feature of the human species ever since its emergence and, thus, religious thinking is one of basic identities in the human world. One of the oldest questions among scientists is whether religiousness is phylogenetically programmed and biologically determined or it is a form of adaptive behaviour resulting from the conditions the humans have been living in throughout their history. Religiousness has always been in contradiction with the materialistic view of the world; namely, the idea of two realms – physical and metaphysical has for a long time been present in human culture.

In this sense, communist atheism should be viewed as a secular religion. Although it sounds unacceptable to many researchers, the contention that communist atheism possesses an extensive religious potential is nevertheless full well found. It concerns the transformation of the prophecies that aspired to be scientific into objects of faith and worship. In the foundation of leftist atheism lies the idea of the historical inevitability of movement towards communism by force. Marx wrote about this as early as 1845 (*The Holy Family*). The proletariat will liberate not only itself from the difficult position but also the entire world from its “inhumanity”, he taught.

Marxism was not merely a teaching of historical or economic materialism; it was also a teaching about salvation, a “Messianic mission” of the proletariat, about a perfect society due in the future, a teaching about man’s power and the defeat of the irrational forces of nature and society. The attributes of the chosen “People of God” have been transferred to the proletariat. A logically contradictory blend of materialist, scientific-deterministic and non-moralist elements with idealistic, moralistic and religious mythmaking elements has existed

⁴⁶ Dejan Jović, “Communist Yugoslavia and Its ‘Others’”, in *Ideologies and National Identities. The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe*, eds. John Lampe and Mark Mazower (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press), 279.

in the Marxist system. Marx created the proletariat myth and his mission was an object of faith. Marxism was not merely a science and politics but also a religion. Its power was based on this.

The nature of Marxism as a religion is best confirmed by its crucial goal – joining of the “ideal man” and God, so one might claim that communism was an atheistic version of a particular type of religious eschatology, and Marxist dialectics an atheistic form of religious laws of history.⁴⁷

Communist atheism was a type of “apophatic theology”, the next step of development that should lead to the obliteration of the theological component. This was best reflected in the rise of earthly gods in the absence of God in heaven. Violence and totalitarianism were the most significant features of this process. The energy of negation of the previous religious concept was transferred into the affirmation of a new, terrestrial hierarchy. That is how the god-type leaders appeared quite rapidly as the state forms of serving and worshipping God, which represented more than good conditions for the formation of personality cults.

The claim that religious contents exist in socialism has long been present in social theory. Most researchers have viewed communism as a substitute for religion, or as a pseudo-religion; communism does resemble religion, but its reach remains just there. Michail Ryklin argues that communism was in fact really a religion, perhaps the most important religion of the twentieth century. But how can it really be a religion without a god? It is precisely this feature that attracted so many intellectuals to communism. Having been brought up in monotheistic traditions, many of them were drawn to Russia after the 1917 October Revolution because they were fascinated by the idea of a country making something without God. They saw the revolution as an event which would solve the puzzle of history. At the heart of communism lies a paradox, which is that the renunciation of God is the founding article of faith. In their zealous belief that they had moved beyond the realm of God and faith into the realm of the scientific laws of history, the revolutionaries and their supporters prove themselves to be precisely true believers.⁴⁸

Like all religions, communism is irrational, dogmatic and based on faith, rather than on science. Like Christianity or Islam, communism had its own scriptures, the works of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. Like most other religions, it required irrational faith; the people living in communist countries had to have absolute faith in the order and its leaders; those who did not were treated as classic heretics.

⁴⁷ See Murray N. Rothbard, “Karl Marx: Communist as Religious Eschatologist”, *Review of Austrian Economics* 4 (1990), 123–179.

⁴⁸ See Michail Ryklin, *Kommunismus als Religion. Die Intellektuellen und die Oktoberrevolution* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Weltreligionen im Insel Verlag, 2008).

The system of government established in Serbia after 1944 had ambitious plans for coping with basic existential problems, presuming even to play the role of a new religion which would find a “just” solution to people’s greatest problem – poverty. The new regime proposed to “free” people of the restrictions imposed by nature and duty, and to relieve them of all suffering. The Yugoslav communists aspired not only to solve the country’s social problems but also to create a comprehensive religious teaching which would provide answers even to the questions such as the meaning of life and the purpose of history. They preached their communist morality, created their own communist science and art, and subjected every sphere of life to the economic imperative. They insisted that theirs was a unique view of life, the view that the socialist world would be a world reborn and that the new society would represent a process transcending history (or marking the beginning of a new history).

The new apostles had no mercy for the individual – the individual was not an end but merely a means for creating a proletarian “heaven.” The individual could be oppressed in every way and stripped of all rights in the name of the ultimate objectives of socialism. Nikolai Berdyaev had warned long ago: “Uniformity and some sort of abstract mediocre values shall reign.” The new socialist religion simplified all social relations to the extreme – what had existed before the revolution had been evil (capitalism). The culture of past ages was presented as resting on the economic exploitation of the working man, and history before the revolution as consisting entirely in class struggle. After the revolution the world was supposedly transformed, exploitation was wiped out and replaced by truth and eternal justice. The birth of socialism was not referred to as a simple historical fact – it was presented as something exceptional and unique, a sort of mystical transformation in the very foundations of history.

The socialist religion resolutely denied the past and a constructive mode of thinking was not highly valued; on the contrary, the dignity of the model revolutionary depended on the importance of opponents he could persecute, his strength was measured by the force of his hatred for “the evil” and not by the power of his love for what was good, except in the materialistic sense. Morality was founded on negative merits – the elimination of “the evil” that had reigned in the past. Persons were not accepted for their individual qualities independently of social circumstances. The proletarian was idealized; he was depicted as being the driving force of the future, the ultimate criterion for determining the truth. Equality among men was interpreted as meaning the uniformity of the masses. Physical labour acquired a cult-like significance: all of life values were subjected to economic production. Social status could only be acquired through direct participation in production, while the value of intellectual work and the quality of work in general became less important.

Like in the Soviet Union, the totalitarian political power in Yugoslavia was imposed through the sacralisation of the Communist Party and its lead-

er. The most important elements in this process were the level of party Manichaeism, the view of the party as the centre of “holiness” surrounded by a sinister “mass of enemies”. A new faith was developed over time, which replaced the original tendency to have things improved. Communists were unforgiving in treating their political opponents as mortal enemies. Any deviation was seen by the representatives of “new religion” as “intolerable weakness”.

Communist rulers followed the old pattern of behaviour where all new states and nations, especially those emerging from a revolution, maintain a compelling organic relationship with the nation and religion. The survival of a new state depended to a great extent also on formulating and imposing new forms of obedience or, in other words, on shaping a new religion. The establishment of new rituals, whose commemorative character was similar to Christian holiday celebrations, imposed itself as the best solution.

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A Beleaguered Church The Serbian Orthodox Church in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) 1941–1945

Abstract: In the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) from its establishment only days after the German attack on Yugoslavia in early April 1941 until its fall in May 1945 a genocide took place. The ultimate goal of the extreme ideology of the Ustasha regime was a new Croatian state cleansed of other ethnic groups, particularly the Serbs, Jews and Roma. The Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC), historically a mainstay of Serbian national identity, culture and tradition, was among its first targets. Most Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries were demolished, heavily damaged or appropriated by the Roman Catholic Church or the state. More than 170 Serbian priests were killed and tortured by the Ustasha, and even more were exiled to occupied Serbia. The regime led by Ante Pavelić introduced numerous laws and regulations depriving the SPC of not only its property and spiritual jurisdiction but even of its right to existence. When mass killings stirred up a large-scale rebellion, a more political and seemingly non-violent approach was introduced: the Croatian regime unilaterally and non-canonically founded the so-called Croatian Orthodox Church in order to bring the forced assimilation of Serbs to completion. This paper provides an overview of the ordeal of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the NDH, based on the scholarly literature and documentary sources of Serbian, German and Croatian origin. It looks at legislation, propaganda, the killings and torture of Orthodox clergy and the destruction of church property, including medieval holy relics. The scale and viciousness of some atrocities will be looked at based on unused or less known sources, namely the statements of Serbian refugees recorded during the war by the SPC and the Commissariat for Refugees in Serbia, and documents from the Political Archive of the Third Reich Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Keywords: Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC), Independent State of Croatia (NDH), Croatian Orthodox Church (HPC), Ustasha, Second World War, genocide, persecution, destruction

The Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, NDH),¹ one of the most monstrous countries in the history of civilization, was es-

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¹ On the history of the Ustasha movement, the NDH and the genocide committed in it see Fikreta Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska: 1941–1945* (Zagreb–Rijeka: Liber; Školska knjiga, 1977); Bogdan Krizman, *NDH između Hitlera i Musolinija* (Zagreb: Globus, 1986); Bogdan Krizman, *Ustaše i Treći Reich*, 1–2 (Zagreb: Globus, 1986); Srdja Trifković, *Ustaša: Croatian separatism and European politics 1929–1945* (London: The Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies, 1998); Nevenko Bartulin, "Ideologija nacije i rase: ustaški režim i politika prema Srbima u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj 1941–1945", *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povjest* 39 (2007), 209–235; Milan Koljanin, "Ideologija i politika uništenja Srba u NDH", *Vojnoistorijski glasnik* 1 (2011), 66–91, and, by the same author: "The Role of Concentration

tablished in the early days of the German invasion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. On 10 April 1941, four days after the beginning of the invasion, Colonel Slavko Kvaternik, a former officer of the Austro-Hungarian army and one of the leaders of the Ustasha movement, proclaimed Croatian independence and the creation of a new state. The territory of the NDH considerably exceeded both historic and contemporary Croatia. Apart from most of present-day Croatia, it comprised the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Srem, and a tiny part of Slovenia.² According to German data, it had a population of about 6.25 million, of which 1.9 million were Serbs.³ The NDH was a one-party dictatorship ruled by the pre-war terrorist Ustasha organization whose leader, Dr. Ante Pavelić, took the title of *Poglavnik* and de facto was the country's supreme ruler. Although both German and Italian forces were present in the NDH and the state was undoubtedly a puppet-state of Nazi Germany, Pavelić and his associates had much freedom in internal policies, and the main one was the ethnic cleansing of its territory of the Serbs, Jews and Roma (Gypsies).

During the Second World War a large-scale genocide against the Serbian people and the Holocaust took place in the NDH. The exact number of victims has never been established, at first mostly because of political pressures on historiography after the communist takeover, and later on because of the rise of extreme nationalism in the 1990s. It is certain, however, that hundreds of thousands were killed, more than 200,000 Serbs were deported or fled to occupied Serbia,⁴ and thousands were forcefully converted to Roman Catholicism (and there are no reliable data on how many of them reverted to the faith of their ancestors after the war and the communist revolution). The Serbian Orthodox Church (*Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, SPC), being a vital institution and symbol of the Serbian people, was one of the greatest victims of the tragic events in the NDH which have probably been best described by Dinko Davidov as "total genocide".⁵ Historically present for centuries in the territory that now became

Camps in the Policies of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) in 1941", *Balcanica XLVI* (2015), 315–340; V. Dj. Krestić, *Dosije o genezi genocida nad Srbima u NDH* (Novi Sad: Prometej, 2009); Vasilije Dj. Krestić, *Genocidom do Velike Hrvatske* (Belgrade: Katena Mundi, 2015).

² Most of Dalmatia was under Italian control from May 1941 (Rome Agreements) until September 1943 (capitulation of Italy), when it was integrated into the NDH.

³ Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i NDH*, 106.

⁴ The Commissariat for Refugees in occupied Serbia officially registered 241,011 refugees. However, high-ranking German officials in Serbia Dr. Franz Heuhausen and General Heinrich Danckelmann had estimates of 300,000–400,000 refugees, most of them from NDH territory (Slobodan D. Milošević, *Izbeglice i preseljenici na teritoriji okupirane Jugoslavije 1941–1945* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga; ISI, 1981), 278–280.

⁵ Dinko Davidov, *Totalni genocid: Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941–1945* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2013).

the NDH, the SPC faced one of the greatest challenges in its ever turbulent and difficult history and was brought to the brink of total destruction.

The sufferings of the SPC in the NDH have been the object of attention of many historians, popular history writers, SPC officials and other researchers. This wide and multifaceted topic has been addressed in a number of books.⁶ Although limited in size and scope, this paper still hopes to provide a useful contribution to the discussion on the genocide in the NDH and on the persecution of the SPC as one of its major components. It will offer an overview of the reliable and relevant literature and data, adding some new angles and contexts, mainly relying on almost unused historical sources: the statements of Serbian refugees given after their escape to occupied Serbia and documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Third Reich. These sources provide detailed information about the scale and brutality of the crimes committed by the Ustasas and the suffering of the SPC.

NDH legislation, the Serbs and the SPC

It was obvious from the very first day of the creation of the NDH that the stage was being set for large-scale ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Serbs, Jews and Roma. A large number of anti-Serb decrees were passed in the first weeks and months of the Pavelić regime. The Law Decree on the Defence of the State and the People published as early as 17 April 1941 legalized the destruction of everyone and everything that might stand in the way of “the vital interests of the Croatian people” or offend the “honour of the Croatian people”.⁷ The purpose of the decree prohibiting the use of the Cyrillic alphabet of 25 April was clearly the genocidal assimilation of the Serbs in the NDH. The Serbs were forbidden to use their alphabet in official and public communication, and high penalties and/or a month in prison were prescribed for those who did not comply.⁸ In June 1941 all Serbian confessional schools and kindergartens were closed and the Serbian Patriarchate was stripped of its right to collect the tithe

⁶ Among many books and papers see in particular Veljko Dj. Djurić, *Ustaše i pravoslavlje. Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva* (Belgrade: Kosmos, 1989); Radmila Radić, “Srpska pravoslavna crkva u Drugom svetskom ratu”, *Vojnoistorijski glasnik* 1/1995, 203–218; Veljko Dj. Djurić, *Golgota Srpske pravoslavne crkve 1941–1945* (Belgrade: Ami, 1997); Djoko Slijepčević, *Istorija Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, vol. II (Belgrade: JRJ, 2002); Dinko Davidov, *Totalni genocid*; Radmila Radić, *Život u vremenima: Gavrilo Dožić (1881–1950)* (Belgrade: INIS, 2006); Jovan Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj/Suffering of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Independent State of Croatia* (Belgrade: Svet knjige, 2016).

⁷ *Hrvatski narod*, 17 April 1941. These terms were purposely left undefined in order for the authorities and courts to be able to apply them to any part of the opposition or any person they wanted removed from Croatia.

⁸ *Narodne novine*, 25 April 1941.

(10% tax on the income of Orthodox citizens); moreover the SPC was forbidden to receive and register any kind of financial support from NDH citizens and entities. In the following months many place-names were stripped of their Serbian or geographical components and croatized: Sremska Mitrovica became Hrvatska Mitrovica, Sremski Karlovci – Hrvatski Karlovci, Srpske Moravice – Hrvatske Moravice, to mention but a few examples.⁹

The aim of a special set of laws was to assimilate the Serbs and turn them into Croats. As early as 3 May 1941 the Law Decree on Conversion from one Religion to Another laid down the rules for converting to Roman Catholicism, but the significance of this law became much more obvious in the following months.¹⁰ In July 1941 a decree was issued banning the use of the term “Serbian Orthodox faith”, and replacing it with “Greek-Eastern faith”.¹¹ Conversions of Serbs were spurred by local authorities and Roman Catholic clergy, and were usually approved by their superior bishops and archbishops. Some archbishops, such as Dr. Antun Akšamović, Archbishop of Djakovo, launched large-scale campaigns for conversion with the support and close collaboration of the Ustasha regime.¹² The Serbs were being assured that all human rights they had been deprived of by previous NDH legislation would be restored to them by the act of conversion. The Serbs complaining to local- or national-level authorities for whatever reason were first asked if they had filed a request for conversion to Roman Catholicism, and if the answer was negative their complaints and pleas were simply ignored.¹³ The massacres of Serb civilians in the Orthodox church

⁹ For more examples see Djurić, *Ustaše i pravoslavlje*, 54.

¹⁰ The question of “religious conversions” in the NDH and, especially, the role of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac in the process remains highly controversial in historiography. For more on the topic see Djurić, *Ustaše i pravoslavlje*, 65–80; Jure Krišto, “Crkva i država. Slučaj vjerskih prijelaza u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj”, *Dijalog povijesničara – istoričara*, 1 (Zagreb: Fridrich Naumann Stiftung, 2000), 189–205; Bartulin, “Ideologija nacije i rase”, 225–232.

¹¹ *Narodne novine*, 19 July 1941.

¹² Davidov, *Totalni genocid*, 45–62. The role of the Catholic clergy in the genocide against the Serbs in the NDH has already been the subject of many extensive scholarly studies, e.g. Viktor Novak, *Magnum Crimen: pola vijeka klerikalizma u Hrvatskoj* (Belgrade: Nova knjiga, 1986); Erve Lorijer, *Ubice u Božje ime* (Belgrade: Filip Višnjić, 1987), first published as Hervé Laurier, *Assassins au nom de Dieu* (Paris: Éd. la Vigie, 1951); Krestić, *Dosije o genezi genocida*; Krestić, *Genocidom do Velike Hrvatske*. The role of the Roman Catholic Church in the preparation and execution of the genocide in the NDH was documented in detail in the report produced by the Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of Crimes of the Occupiers and their Collaborators [hereafter: YSC], Arhiv Jugoslavije [Archives of Yugoslavia; hereafter: AJ], 110–611–321/363, “Političko-verska aktivnost Vatikana na Balkanu kroz vekove” [Political and religious activity of the Vatican in the Balkans over the centuries].

¹³ This is corroborated by the statements of many Serb refugees: Muzej Srpske pravoslavne crkve [The Serbian Orthodox Church Museum; hereafter: SPC Museum], *Ostavština*

in Glina and in the Vrginmost area showed that not even religious conversion was enough to save one's life.

Finally, a full-scale plunder of the SPC's property was legalized under laws introduced in September and October 1941. This type of legislation and administrative actions were amply backed by the propaganda activity of the Ustasha regime. In the summer of 1941 the only content of political rallies held throughout the NDH was anti-Serb speeches and calls for their destruction. The Croatian press was rife with anti-Serb discourse on a daily basis, selling malicious lies and misinterpretations of history, vilifying the Serbs as the arch-enemy of the Croatian people, a cancer eating away at Croatian statehood.¹⁴ The Serbian Orthodox Church, being a mainstay of the Serb community in Croatia and its identity, was under constant attacks. There were even pseudo-scholarly attempts to prove that historically there had never been any Serbs in Croatia or that they in fact were Orthodox Croats.¹⁵

Murders of the SPC's priests, monks and officials in the NDH

Torture and killing of SPC priests and monks began almost immediately after the creation of the NDH. The total number of deaths has never been established accurately. Official estimates – made by the SPC and the Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of Crimes of Occupiers and Their Collaborators – and scholarly estimates vary from “more than 100” to “more than 500”, with the majority of the latter ranging between 120 and 300.¹⁶ One of the reasons for the discrepancy in the estimated figures is the fact that some scholars

Radoslava Grujića [Radoslav Grujić Papers; hereafter: ORG], ORG 1301/V – Hearings of Serb refugees – Actions of the Roman Catholic Church; ORG 1301/VI – Hearings of Serb refugees – Franciscan actions; ORG 1301-VII – Hearings of Serb refugees – Bosnia and Herzegovina.

¹⁴ Djurić, *Ustaše i pravoslavlje*, 56–57; Mario Jareb, *Mediji i promidžba u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2016), 806–809; 822–828.

¹⁵ Prof. Dr. Edo Lovrić, “O nazivu istočne crkve u području Kraljevine Hrvatske i Slavonije do konca Svjetskog rata”, *Alma mater Croatica. Glasnik Hrvatskog sveučilišnog društva V/1* (Zagreb, Sept. 1941); Mile Budak, *Govor u Slavonskom Brodu* [Speech in Slavonski Brod], *Hrvatski narod*, 16 June 1941.

¹⁶ The SPC Calendar for 1945 contains the list of 193 Serbian Orthodox priests murdered by the Ustasha and the foreign occupiers of Yugoslavia; an internal report by the Holy Synod entitled “The list of Orthodox priests killed in the Independent State of Croatia” contains 128 names, while the Report of the Holy Synod of the SPC to the Holy Assembly (March 1947) gives the figure of 171 (in tables 172) victims of the Ustasha. See Veljko Dj. Djurić, “Sudbine arhijereja i sveštenika Srpske pravoslavne crkve u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj – prema objavljenim dokumentima Srpske patrijaršije”, in *Zbornik o Srbima u Hrvatskoj*, vol. 4, ed. V. Dj. Krestić (Belgrade: SANU, 1999), 218–219.

and researchers counted in all priests, monks, theology students and administrative church staff, while others counted only the priests in active service on the eve of the Second World War.¹⁷

Among the murdered were also bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church:¹⁸ Metropolitan of Dabar-Bosnia Petar (Zimonjić), Bishop of Banja Luka Platon (Jovanović), Bishop of Gornji Karlovac Sava (Trlajić), while the Metropolitan of Zagreb Dositej (Vasić) was transported to occupied Serbia where he died in consequence of the brutal torture he had been subjected to by the Ustashas.¹⁹ The circumstances of Metropolitan Petar's death have not been fully established. It is known that he was arrested on 12 May 1941, taken to Zagreb and treated like a criminal, and then sent to prison in Samobor and from there to Gospić. His whereabouts after Gospić and the place of his death are still unknown: according to some sources, he was taken to Koprivnica, according to others he died in a concentration camp (either Jadovno or Jasenovac).²⁰ Bishop of Banja Luka Platon was required by the Ustashas to leave the NDH and move to Serbia, but he refused. As a result, he was arrested in the early days of May 1941 and taken in the direction of Kotor Varoš. On 23 May his body and the body of Dušan Subotić, Episcopal Dean of Gradiška, were found in the Vrbanja River. The bodies were savagely mutilated and the victims had obviously been tortured before they were finished off with a bullet in the head.²¹ Bishop Sava (Trlajić) was arrested in Plaško in June 1941, after he had refused to leave the

¹⁷ On the methodology of, different approaches to, and problems in the estimation of the number of killed SPC priests see Veljko Djurić Mišina, "Neki problemi istraživanja istorije Srpske pravoslavne Crkve", in *Genocid u XX veku na prostorima jugoslovenskih zemalja*, ed. J. Mirković (Belgrade: Muzej žrtava genocida; INIS, 2005), 477–488.

¹⁸ For a detailed account of the deaths of SPC bishops in the NDH see Djurić, "Sudbine arhijereja i sveštenika", 211–281.

¹⁹ Metropolitan Dositej was arrested on 7 May in Zagreb; allegedly found in his apartment were passports, a ticket to Bombay and a "chetnik diploma" – probably some document supposedly proving that he had been a participant in the Chetnik movement in the early years of the twentieth century. Documents from German archives show that the metropolitan was subjected to brutal torture by the Ustashas and that his life was spared through German intervention, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes [PA AA], Geistliche Angelegenheiten (RZ 509), R 67687.

²⁰ Djurić, *Golgota Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 136–137.

²¹ Bishop Platon's eyes were scooped out, his beard ripped off and parts of his face cut off. The torture that preceded his death was brutal and sadistic and he must have died an agonizing death. The YSC accused Viktor Gutić, a high-ranking Ustasha official responsible for Bosanska Krajina, of having ordered Bishop Platon's arrest and murder, alongside numerous other atrocities against the Serbs in that area. Published Report No. 85 (*Saopštenje br. 85*) of the YSC contained a photograph of Bishop Platon's body, and despite its low resolution and poor quality, mutilations were obvious (Državna komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača, *Saopštenja br. 66–93*, Belgrade 1946, 771–772). Gutić's responsibility for

NDH. He was taken to Gospić with other imprisoned Serbs and killed in the area of Mount Velebit.

Some of more than 170 Serbian priests killed in the NDH were subjected to brutal torture and mutilation prior to their deaths. The deaths of Danilo Dane Babić, the village priest of Svinica, and Branko B. Dobrosavljević, the parish priest of Veljun, are paradigmatic of Ustasha savagery. Babić was captured by Ustashas, buried to his waist in the ground, and his flesh was cut off with knives bit by bit for several hours.²² Dobrosavljević was brutally murdered alongside other 525 Serbs, mostly his parishioners, victims of the infamous mass war crime known as the Veljun Massacre. The priest was first forced to watch his own son, who was a local teacher, being tortured and murdered, and to say a prayer over his dead son's body. Then he was blinded, his beard and hair were ripped off, his ears cut off, and then he was finished off by Ustashas.²³ Georgije Bogić, a young parish priest from Našice, also died after long and painful torture and mutilation. His murder was instigated by Fra Sidonije Šolc, and committed by the Ustashas led by Feliks Lehner, a local milkman.²⁴ Jovan Andrić, the parish priest of Tepljuh (Dalmatia), was arrested and tortured in Drniš prison. The Ustasha slashed his ribs and cut off all his fingers before throwing him, already half-dead, in a disused pit of the mine in Kljaci/Kljake.²⁵

Desecration, plunder and destruction of the SPC's buildings and property in the NDH

The area which came under Ustasha control in the spring of 1941 abounded in Serbian Orthodox monasteries and churches. In keeping with the ideology and

Bishop Platon's death was confirmed by statements of several Serbian refugees from the Banja Luka area (SPC Museum, ORG 1301/VI, Bajić Djordje's statement taken on 25 April 1942).

²² This callous torture and murder took place in the night between 14 and 15 June 1941 in Svinica (Banija). The priest's mutilated body was taken to the village of Graboštani, Majur municipality, where a "commission" made up of several Ustashas pronounced that Babić had been murdered by unknown perpetrators (Lorijer, *Ubice u Božje ime*, 85–86; Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 43).

²³ Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 68. In 2000 Dobrosavljević was officially included among the saints venerated by the SPC. The feast day of St Branko of Veljun the Hieromartyr is 7 May, the date of his murder.

²⁴ Vojni arhiv, Ministarstvo odbrane Republike Srbije [Military Archives, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia; hereafter VA], Funds NDH, 233–15/2-15; *Zločini Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, vol. 1 of *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima u Prvom i Drugom svetskom ratu – zbornik dokumenata* (Belgrade 1993), doc. no. 76, German Legation in Zagreb to the Administration of the Military Commander in Serbia on the crimes of the Croatian Ustashas against the Serbs and measures for their destruction.

²⁵ Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 308.

nature of the Ustasha regime, they were destined to be plundered, desecrated and destroyed. The exact number of the churches of the SPC which were burnt down, demolished, devastated or taken over by the Roman Catholic Church has never been established, partly because many sustained damage or destruction during the fighting and bombing in a later stage of the war. The Yugoslav State Commission for the Investigation of Crimes of Occupiers and Their Collaborators made several estimates, most of them being around 450 destroyed and 800 damaged Orthodox churches.²⁶ Official publications of the SPC offered estimates ranging between 399 and 450 destroyed churches.²⁷ The most recent estimate, made by Jovan Mirković who has been researching this topic for decades, offers the following figures (destroyed churches by region): Banija – 70; Kordun – 44; Lika – 56 (with Gorski Kotar and Ogulinsko-Plašćanska Valley included – 94); Slavonia – 54; Dalmatia – 19 (17 churches and two monasteries; plus 18 destroyed parish houses and 23 damaged churches); Srem – 28 (many of which were monastery churches; plus 62 damaged churches); Bosanska Krajina – 64; Central Bosnia – 29; Eastern Bosnia – 46; Herzegovina – 1 (18 damaged churches).²⁸ The SPC suffered the greatest damage and loss of life in the Eparchy of Gornji Karlovac: 188 out of 220 churches were destroyed, and 65 out of 157 priests, including Bishop Sava Trlajić, were killed by the Ustasas.²⁹

The scale and dynamic of destruction varied from one part of the NDH to another but it has been established that plundering and destruction as a rule took place in several phases, beginning in the very first days of the NDH and (in some cases) lasting until the last weeks of the war. The first phase was the Ustasha revolutionary terror in the summer of 1941: Orthodox churches were desecrated, plundered, damaged, and then closed. Contemporary sources record numerous atrocities taking place in churches and monasteries, from rapes and beatings³⁰ to murders, setting on fire and mass killings such as the slaughter in

²⁶ AJ, Funds 110 Državna komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača, f. 675, doc. 466.

²⁷ Cf. Risto Grdjić, *Srpska crkva na istorijskoj prekretnici* (Belgrade: Pravoslavlje, 1969), *Srpska pravoslavna crkva: njena prošlost i sadašnjost / The Serbian Orthodox Church: Its Past and Present* (Belgrade: Pravoslavlje, 1989) and Djurić, *Golgota Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 181.

²⁸ Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 22, 60, 99–100, 169, 291–292, 316, 373, 446, 472, 530.

²⁹ Arhiv Srpske pravoslavne crkve [Archives of the SPC], Holy Synod, Report to the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the SPC no. 1060/1947, session of 27/14 March 1947, document made available to me by Dr. Radmila Radić.

³⁰ Among the most hideous Ustasha atrocities were brutal rapes committed in churches, usually on the altar. Historical sources contain detailed descriptions of the mass rape of Serbian women that took place in the Orthodox church in Topusko on 2 August 1942 (SPC Museum, ORG 1301/V, Stanko Šapić's testimony of 4 October 1941), which was followed by the massacre of Serbs (*ibid.* Julka Škaro's testimony taken on 5 January 1942).

the Orthodox church in Glina.³¹ Such atrocities were so numerous that they cannot be discussed in any significant detail in an article of limited size. Among the better documented war crimes are those committed in Kusunje, Kolarić, Zborište (near Bosanska Krupa), Sadilovac/Slunj and Dobro Selo, where the churches full of Serb civilians were set on fire and burned to the ground, resulting in hundreds of deaths and complete destruction.³²

A second phase in the plunder and destruction of the SPC's property was much more systematic. Numerous decrees and orders issued by both state and local authorities required the confiscation of all objects found in churches. Most of these decrees were issued in the summer of 1941, but some issued at a later date have also been preserved. As evidenced by documentary sources, church bells seem to have been of special interest for the Croatian authorities: many were taken from Serbian Orthodox churches and melted down for re-use in the war industry or some other purpose; some were used to replace or enhance the bells in Roman Catholic churches and monasteries.³³ The total number of looted church bells has never been established either, but the State Commission's findings offer an estimate of more than 700. In most cases, the SPC's possessions were confiscated and stockpiled by local authorities, and an official receipt for confiscated property was produced on the spot.³⁴ However, the most valuable objects ended up in the Croatian state Museum of Arts and

³¹ In his extensive study on the ordeal of the SPC in the NDH, Jovan Mirković states that, according to the "War Victims 1941–1945" database, as many as 48 different churches are listed as murder sites. The most horrifying war crime took place in Glina, in the church of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos, where Ustasha-led Croatian regular troops (*domobrani*/Home Guard) organized a wholesale slaughter of civilians between 29 July and 5 August. Serb civilians from the Vrginmost area who came voluntarily to convert to Catholicism were massacred together with Serbs from Topusko and Glina. Djuro Aralica identified 1,241 victims by name, while the plaques for the memorial which has never been set up contained names of 1,564 victims. In order to cover up this crime Croatian authorities hired two private building contractors to raze the church to the ground. The slaughter was confirmed and described in much detail by refugees whose testimonies are now kept in the SPC Museum. Some Croatian historians seek to minimize this war crime and some even deny that it ever happened. For more information on the crime see Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 9, 30; Djuro Aralica, *Ustaški pokolj Srba u glinskoj crkvi* (Belgrade: Muzej žrtava genocida; Udruženje Srba iz Hrvatske, 2010); Davidov, *Totalni genocid*, 63–76.

³² Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 9–10; 77, 87.

³³ Several urgent orders for the bells of Orthodox churches to be dismantled issued by local authorities and the NDH Ministry of Justice and Religious Affairs have survived and are now kept in the Military Archives in Belgrade (VA, NDH, 203–2/2).

³⁴ See e.g. AJ, 110–679–14, "Zapisnik od 30. kolovoza 1941. Spisan kod gradskog poglavarstva u predmetu preseljenja pokretnih stvari iz grčko-istočne crkve".

Crafts in Zagreb.³⁵ Monasteries in remote places sometimes had more luck: because of their location they were not in the direct path of the Ustasha, and later on commissaries were assigned to them to be in charge of the property, and so their libraries, furniture and artworks partially survived the war. Many buildings of the SPC in the NDH were appropriated by the Roman Catholic Church (mostly for religious services for converted Serbs), or by Croatian civil authorities and the military, in which case they were put to profane use (stables, warehouses, barracks, granaries).

The demolition of Serbian Orthodox churches in the NDH occurred on a massive scale during the autumn and winter of 1941. The Regional Vojvodina Commission for the Investigation of Crimes of Occupiers and their Collaborators established beyond doubt that there had even been an institution specifically charged with the demolition of Serbian Orthodox churches in the NDH. The Commission's investigation revealed the existence of the Office for the Demolition of Orthodox Churches (*Ured za rušenje pravoslavnih crkava*) which operated during 1941 and was shut down in April 1942.³⁶ Its premises were in Praška Street in Zagreb, and it was headed by one Dr. Dujmović, a physician from Zagreb and Ustasha officer with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. According to Dinko Davidov's research, there was no similar institution anywhere in Europe during the Second World War. The Office was responsible for arranging demolitions of Orthodox churches in Ilok, Osijek, Tenja and many other places, and left behind the correspondence with private contractors and local administration which conducted and assisted in the process.³⁷ However, the destruction of Orthodox churches cannot be linked only to this Office; such destructive acts were frequently instigated by local Roman Catholic clergy and

³⁵ A huge number of valuable religious art works and objects and objects of other types of Serbian cultural heritage were taken to the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb. The director of the Museum, Vladimir Tkalčić, played a controversial role in this enterprise. Some important and reliable sources (e.g. the statements of Prof. Radoslav Grujić and Prof. Viktor Novak given in the course of post-war investigations) described his conduct as one of honour and professional dignity, but we still do not have a full picture of his activity throughout the war years or whether he had some part of responsibility for the loss or destruction of many valuable pieces of Serbian cultural heritage which simply "went missing" never to be restored to their rightful owners or locations. Some authors blame Stjepan Gotvald, a Croatian right-wing intellectual, for plundering the SPC's possessions at the time they were in the custody of local authorities and the museum in Zagreb. For more on this see Davidov, *Totalni genocid*, 87–89; Djurić, *Golgota Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 187–190.

³⁶ The Commission's report has been discovered and partially published by Dinko Davidov, *Zlodela i gresi*, (Sremski Karlovci; Belgrade: Sremska eparhija, 1990), 77–259.

³⁷ The mentioned cases were analyzed in Dinko Davidov's studies, with several original documents published as an additional proof and illustration of the existence and operation of this Office.

Ustasha commanders. In many cases, complete destruction of churches and parish buildings coincided with campaigns for conversion to Roman Catholicism forced on the local Serb population.³⁸ Numerous records and statements of Serb refugees confirm this practice across the NDH (e.g. in Vojnić County,³⁹ Vrginmost, Novska⁴⁰ etc.).

Many orders issued by Ustasha and Croatian authorities (both state and local) concerning the demolition of buildings of the SPC contained instructions as to who should do the demolition job and what should be done with the demolition material. In many cases, churches and parish houses had to be torn down or dismantled by local Serbs or Jews, by order and under supervision of Ustasha officials.⁴¹ There are recorded cases of professionals being hired to demolish a church⁴² and of the demolition material being immediately reused elsewhere, following the order of the Ministry for Renewal or other Croatian state authorities. For instance, the material from the demolished Orthodox church in Kotor Varoš was reused for the construction of a Croatian Home (*Hrvatski dom*), while the wooden church in Timarci near Sisak (built in 1742) was dismantled and the material was reused on unknown location(s).⁴³ The Orthodox church in Osijek was demolished in stages by professional contractors and the material (mostly brick) was sold on the spot to whoever was interested in buying it.

³⁸ One of the better documented cases is that of Okučani, where Croatian authorities organized destruction of the local Orthodox church in December of 1941, followed in the first months of 1942 by a vigorous Catholic propaganda campaign for conversion to Catholicism. A missionary sent from Zagreb held numerous lectures and sermons which local Serbs were forced to attend. The purpose of his “missionary work” was to persuade the Serbs that Orthodox Christianity was sinful and that Roman Catholicism was much older and, therefore, the only true Christian faith (SPC Museum, ORG 1301/VI, Mileva Vukašinić’s statement, taken on 14 February 1942).

³⁹ SPC Museum, ORG 1301/V, Petar Zatezalo’s statement, taken on 16 May 1942. The statement mentions the demolition of the churches in Vojnić, Poloj, Primišlje, Tržić, Stobolić, Krnjak and Krstina. Actions for the forced conversion of local Serbs were described in much more detail than the actual demolition of churches.

⁴⁰ SPC Museum, ORG 1301/V, Božo Čokrić’s statement, taken on 18 May 1942.

⁴¹ Jews were used as labour force in the demolition of the Orthodox church in Okučani in December of 1941. They were forced to pull it down, and while doing it, to sing songs ridiculing the Serbs and their tradition: “Kako je čorbi bez mrkve, tako je Srbinu bez crkve [A Serb without a church is like a soup without a carrot] and “Srbin slavi svoju slavu da proširi hrvatsku državu [The Serb honours his patron saint to enlarge the Croatian state], see SPC Museum, ORG 1301/V, Milan Stanić’s statement, taken on 21 January 1942. The demolished church served as the source of building material for several different locations.

⁴² SPC Museum, ORG 1301/V, Julka Škaro’s statement, taken on 5 January 1942.

⁴³ Djurić, *Golgota Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 44–45.

Plunder and desecration of Serbian holy relics in the NDH

The various crimes committed against the Serbian people and its Church, culture and tradition in the territory of the NDH included even the plunder, desecration and destruction of holy relics. Some relics of Serbian and other Christian saints perished together with the demolished or burned down churches of the SPC in which they were enshrined. Particularly well-documented is the plunder and desecration of the holy relics which were kept in some of more than a dozen Serbian Orthodox monasteries on Mt Fruška Gora in Srem, a cluster of monastic communities which has a prominent place in Serbian culture and tradition. They had played an important role in the preservation of the culture, religion and national identity of the Serbs at the time when they had been subjects of two empires, the Ottoman and the Habsburg. The monasteries, mostly built or rebuilt in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, were active on the eve of the Second World War. Kept in them were numerous holy relics, old and rare books, manuscripts and charters from the medieval and early modern period. Between the spring of 1941 and 1942 a vast majority of the Orthodox monasteries on Fruška Gora were plundered and some of them were heavily damaged or destroyed either then or in a later stage of the war.

Having learnt about some of the most important medieval Serbian holy relics in the Fruška Gora monasteries being plundered or otherwise endangered, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs of the Milan Nedić government, a collaborationist regime in German-occupied Serbia, set up a special commission chaired by Radoslav Grujić, a prominent church historian and professor at the Faculty of Theology in Belgrade. It was charged with the task of going to Fruška Gora, retrieving the holy relics and bringing them to Serbia. A high-ranking official of the German occupying authority, Dr. Johann Albrecht von Reiszwitz, played an important role in the entire enterprise, providing protection and assistance to Grujić and his team. Grujić's report from the site has survived.⁴⁴ The team first went to the Šišatovac monastery, where they found the relics of St Stevan Štiljanović (sixteenth century) robbed of all precious and artistically valuable objects (including Štiljanović's silver crown and jewellery) and left exposed. The valuables had been taken to Zagreb by special order of Croatian authorities. The German commissioner in charge of the monastery informed Grujić that all objects had been taken to Zagreb by a special commission led by Vladimir Tkalčić, director of the Museum of Arts and Crafts. Grujić's team recorded damage to the skin of Štiljanović's hand, inflicted probably while taking a ring off his finger.⁴⁵ Their next stop was the Jazak monastery, where the

⁴⁴ VA, Srpska vlada Milana Nedića [Milan Nedić Government] Fonds, 35-53-2.

⁴⁵ The monastery's treasury was found completely empty but the library was luckily left almost intact, including very valuable manuscripts dating from the 14th–17th century (ibid).

relics of the sainted last Serbian emperor, Uroš V (fourteenth century), were kept. The commission recorded that the precious cover had been stolen and the relics moved around but without any major damage. Jazak would sustain further and more considerable damage later in the war. By the time of liberation it had been robbed of more than one thousand rare and valuable books, all religious objects made of precious metals and most valuable icons and paintings, which had been taken to Zagreb.⁴⁶ The last stop of Grujić's commission was the Bešenevo monastery, where the relics of the Serbian saint and martyr Prince Lazar Hrebeljanović (fourteenth century) had been brought shortly before the German attack on Yugoslavia. The relics were preserved but robbed of all valuables. Moreover, all valuable movable property of the monastery had been taken by the Ustashas.

Robbed of all its movable property by Croatian authorities, the Krušedol monastery, one of the most important Serbian monasteries on Fruška Gora, was used for housing Ustasha, German SS and the former Soviet General Vlasov's collaborationist troops. In the night between 24 and 25 May 1942 the monastery treasury was plundered by the Ustashas. After the war it was established that the sarcophagus of the Serbian Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta (eighteenth century) had been forcefully opened, the patriarch's remains thrown out and replaced with the heads of the Ustashas' local victims; that part of the relics of Venerable Mother Angelina (fifteenth century) had been stolen; and that one of the sarcophaguses contained bones of unknown origin.⁴⁷

A different kind of ordeal: the SPC, the Serbs and the so-called "Croatian Orthodox Church"

The focus of this paper has so far been mostly on the physical destruction of the clergy and property of the SPC. However, the picture of its ordeal would not be complete without touching upon the question of an uncanonical attack on the SPC and attempts to foment dissension among its clergy and adherents. Namely, among the numerous blows struck to the Serbian people and Church in the NDH the significance and implications should not be underestimated of the establishment of the Croatian Orthodox Church (*Hrvatska Pravoslavna Crkva*, HPC) in April 1942. For this uncanonical action, orchestrated from the very top of the Ustasha regime and with the support of the German intelligence and

⁴⁶ Archives of the SPC, Holy Synod, Records of the Holy Assembly of Bishops held in 1947, annex no. 9, p. 8, document made available to me by Dr. Radmila Radić.

⁴⁷ Mirković, *Stradanje Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 338. For official documents showing that the immovable property of the Krušedol monastery was re-registered as property of the NDH see *ibid.* 339.

diplomatic services, was supposed to be the final stage in the genocide against the Serbian people in the NDH, from assimilation to physical destruction.⁴⁸

An introductory step towards the establishing of the HPC was made by Ante Pavelić himself in a speech he gave in the Croatian Diet (*Sabor*) in February 1942. Having stated that he had “nothing against Orthodoxy”, he added, however, that the new Croatian state could not allow the existence of another nation’s national church on its soil and accused the SPC of acting against the interests and very existence of the Croatian people and state.⁴⁹ Preparations, including coordination with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a media campaign, took some time but the “Church” was established in early April 1942.⁵⁰

By April 1942 the SPC had already been in an extremely difficult situation: Patriarch Gavriilo was imprisoned by the Germans, the Holy Synod and the Metropolitan of Skoplje Josif, exiled from his diocese by Bulgarian occupation authorities, were under surveillance by the Gestapo and pressurized to support occupied Serbia’s collaborationist government. The nature of the German occupation of Serbia was such that the SPC was deprived of the right to voice its protest publicly: even though the Holy Synod made the official decision condemning the establishment of the HPC, German censorship prevented it from being published anywhere in Serbia.⁵¹ There are some indications that the Serbian collaborationist government tried to push the SPC leadership into cooperation with the HPC and that it was rejected with indignation.⁵²

⁴⁸ Viktor Novak wrote that the establishment of the Croatian Orthodox Church had in fact been the “denationalization of the Serbian people” (*Magnum crimen*, 599–604). Besides the obvious intention to turn Serbs into Croats, rewrite history and lay the foundations for an ethnically cleansed Croatian state, the HPC was created with one pragmatic goal – it was seen as an instrument of pacifying resistance movements in the NDH.

⁴⁹ *Hrvatski narod*, 26 February 1941. Pavelić’s views were shared by Ustasha officials, but also by some parts of the Catholic clergy and non-Ustasha Croat intellectuals. For more detail see Petar Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva u prošlosti i budućnosti* (Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić, 1996), 113–127.

⁵⁰ The decree was signed by Pavelić on 3 April and published four days later; see Nikica Barić, “O osnutku i djelovanju Hrvatske pravoslavne crkve tijekom 1942. i 1943. godine: primjer Velike župe Posavje”, *Croatica Christiana Periodica* 74 (2014), 137.

⁵¹ The Holy Synod’s official stance on the establishment of the HPC was formulated at its meeting of 17/30 April 1942. It was published, with a short historical introduction and comments, only after the liberation of Yugoslavia: “Odluka o t. zv. Avtokefalnoj Hrvatskoj Pravoslavnoj Crkvi”, *Glasnik SPC* 4 (1946), 52–56.

⁵² According to Metropolitan Josif’s memoirs, Velibor Jonić, Minister of Education and Religious Affairs in the Nedić government, visited him and insisted that some Serbian bishops should accept Croat nationality and go to Zagreb and take leadership of the HPC (Josif, mitropolit skopski, *Memoari*, ed. Velibor Džomić (Cetinje: Svetigora, 2006, 227). Jonić’s wartime role is quite controversial, but no other sources that could confirm these claims have so far been found.

The man who was installed as head of the HPC, Russian Metropolitan Germogen Maksimov, had spent some time in Serbian monasteries and his actions were a betrayal of good relations between the Serbian and Russian Churches. Some Serbian and Russian priests, former members of the SPC, became involved in recruiting clergy and adherents for the new Church. Two controversial persons known for their problematic behaviour even before the war, Miloš Oberknežević (or Oberknezović) and Vasilije Vaso Šurlan, spared no effort to promote the HPC.⁵³ Oberknežević drew up its Constitution (in fact made minor modifications to the SPC's Constitution) and sought to recruit refugee priests from Serbia, while Šurlan published many articles in the Croatian press glorifying the Ustasha regime and promoting the ideological construct of "Orthodox Croats".

Croatian authorities intended to transfer some of the already confiscated property of the SPC to the newly-established HPC and, what was even more harmful, started vigorous diplomatic activity for the international canonical recognition of the HPC, using political pressures, German support and the fact that some of the most important Orthodox Churches – the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA) – were under the control of German allies or collaborated, at least to some extent, with the Nazis. Surviving diplomatic documents show that this political action was orchestrated from the very top of the Croatian state – from the Poglavnik himself, and the ministries of Justice and Religious Affairs, and of Foreign Affairs.⁵⁴ Despite intense pressure, the Orthodox Churches refused to recognize the HPC canonically, but there was some unofficial collaboration between them and the new Church.⁵⁵ The Bulgarian Church assisted with the education and ordination of the HPC's clergy, while a Romanian bishop attended the ordination of bishops of the HPC. Yet, neither of the two Synods recognized the HPC, although they were under pressure to do so both by the NDH and the Germans. The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad played a different and more complex role. Although Germogen and some priests of the

⁵³ Mara Šovljakov, "Galerija likova Hrvatske pravoslavne crkve", *Spomenica istorijskog arhiva "Srem"* 9 (2010), 66–84; Radovan Pilipović, "Momčilo Djurić i Vasilije Šurlan – dva antipoda u svešteničkim mantijama", *Glasnik Udruženja arhivskih radnika Republike Srpske* 3/2011, 339–355. Oberknežević, born in Belgrade and educated at the Faculty of Law, was convicted for fraud and false representation of identity in Hungary, while Šurlan was an admirer of Adolf Hitler and his ideas and had received disciplinary punishment several times before the war.

⁵⁴ Hrvatski državni arhiv (Croatian State Archives; hereafter: HDA), MUP Fonds, 002/5, box 9, "Posveta novog pravoslavnog episkopa u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj"; "Priznanje Hrvatske pravoslavne crkve od drugih pravoslavnih crkava".

⁵⁵ For a detailed description of actions for the formal recognition of the HPC, diplomatic interventions and forms of collaboration see Djurić, *Golgota Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, 331–345.

HPC were actually members of the Russian Church they were condemned and excommunicated by the ROCA's Synod.⁵⁶ Moreover, the Synod of the ROCA stood for the interests of the SPC in communication with other Orthodox Churches, pointing to the non-canonical and political nature of the HPC and informing them about the sufferings of SPC in the NDH.⁵⁷

It is difficult to measure the magnitude of damage that the establishing of the HPC inflicted on the SPC and its interests. Most Serbs in the NDH refused to cooperate and become adherents of the new Church, but Dinko Davidov's field research conducted in the 1980s has shown that the founding of the HPC did cause some confusion in the troubled hearts and minds of local Serbs.⁵⁸ Moreover, the idea of "Croatian Orthodoxy", the perception that an Orthodox Church in Croatia must be a Croatian one (and much more importantly – must not be Serbian), has outlived the Second World War,⁵⁹ being especially manifest during the 1991–1995 war in Croatia. The HPC established by Pavelić's decree fell apart by the end of the war and was condemned immediately after the liberation.

Conclusion

During the Second World War the Serbian people and its institutions were victims of a genocide devised and conducted by the Ustasha regime and supported by a faction of the Roman Catholic clergy in the NDH. The fate intended for the Serbian Orthodox Church was annihilation: falsely accused by propaganda of historically acting against the Croatian people and state, it was robbed of its property and jurisdiction, forbidden to exist by numerous decrees issued by Pavelić and his ministers. Apart from the arrest and deportation of hundreds of its priests ordered by Croatian military and local authorities, its

⁵⁶ PA AA, RAV Belgrad 62/7.

⁵⁷ Aleksej J. Timofejev, *Rusi i Drugi svetski rat u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade: INIS, 2010), 100; Mikhail Vital'evich Shkarovskii, "Sozdanie i deiatel'nost' Horvatskoj Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi v gody Vtoroi mirovoi voiny", *Vestnik tserkovnoi istorii* 3/7 (2007), 221–262.

⁵⁸ Davidov, *Totalni genocid*, 39–42. Having witnessed a mass genocide and atrocities against their neighbours and relatives, some Serbs were prepared to accept even such an artificial creation as the HPC, just to be left in peace to pray in the same churches in which they had been baptized, married, in which they have mourned and buried their relatives – even if they were not SPC churches anymore.

⁵⁹ Savić Marković Štedimlja, "Pravoslavlje u Hrvatskoj", in Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, 72–73; Miloš Oberknežević, "Razvoj pravoslavlja u Hrvatskoj i Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva", reprint from *Hrvatska revija*, (Barcelona-Munich 1979); Ante Pavelić, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva* (Madrid: Domovina, 1984); Tomislav Vuković, "Kako su Hrvati i Slovenci postali pravoslavni Srbi", *Glas koncila – katolički tjednik* no. 10, 10 March 1991, 13; Požar, *Hrvatska pravoslavna crkva*, passim.

priests, monks and officials were being murdered in both the revolutionary terror of the Ustasas and in organized war crimes. More than 170 of them perished, many after being subjected to brutal torture and mutilation. Many churches and monasteries were burned down or razed to the ground, and almost all the rest were damaged or were confiscated and used by local authorities or the Roman Catholic Church. The annihilation of the SPC was supposed to be wrapped up with mass conversion of its adherents to Roman Catholicism and the establishment of the HPC.

The main among several conclusions that may be drawn based on the historical sources – original first-hand testimonies, photographs, diplomatic correspondence, decrees and orders of Croatian authorities – concerns the scale and intensity of a total genocide against the Serbian people in the NDH, a crime against one nation and its institutions rarely seen in the history of civilization. The SPC and its clergy was among those that suffered the most. The vicious nature of some murders, such as those of Bishop Platon, the Svinica priest Danilo Babić, and the Veljun priest Branko B. Dobrosavljević, suggests that hatred towards the Serbian Church and people must have been nurtured in several generations of Croats. The torture, rape and body mutilations provide clear evidence of the pathological aspect of the Ustasha ideology and practices. But it would be wrong and unjust to the victims to explain away the crimes against the Serbs and the SPC by attributing them to the pathology of a few individuals, for it essentially was an institutionally organized destruction which involved many perpetrators, collaborators and even more passive onlookers. An extensive logistics apparatus and many institutions were involved in the demolition of Serbian churches, the sale and reuse of the demolition material, the plunder of valuable objects and works of religious art. The fact that similar crimes, sometimes even in the same areas, took place again in the 1991–1995 war suggests a deep irrational hatred towards the Serbs and their Church.

In the eyes of the Ustasha regime the SPC was a cornerstone of Serbian national identity and strength; hence so many crimes against it. Pavelić and his associates believed that there would be no Serbs in Croatia once their Church was destroyed. His regime spared no effort to carry out the project of its destruction, with the assistance and inspiration of many members of the Roman Catholic clergy. The Second World War events in the NDH were just an episode in a much wider and long-standing effort to convert Serbs to Roman Catholicism and assimilate them into the Croat nation.

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An Order of Crime The Criminal Law of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) 1941–1945

Abstract: The system of criminal law norms passed in the so-called Independent State of Croatia (NDH) from its inception in 1941 was aimed at creating and maintaining an atmosphere of terror implemented by the Ustasha government. Although the framework of substantive and procedural rules of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was formally retained, immediately after the establishment of the NDH regulations introducing many new crimes punishable by death were enacted. Defining the “honour and vital interests of the Croatian people” as an appropriate object of criminal law protection enabled the creation of a regime of legalized repression against non-Croat populations, with an extensive jurisdiction of martial criminal justice. In addition to abuse of the court martial mechanism, the criminal character of government was also manifested in the wide application of administrative and punitive measures of sending to concentration camps as well as collective punishment. In line with Radbruch’s thought, the author denies the legal character of the system of criminal law formally established in the territory of the NDH in the circumstances of genocide.

Keywords: Independent State of Croatia (NDH), collective punishment, courts martial, genocide

The legal order of the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna država Hrvatska*, NDH) was not a subject of particular interest to the Yugoslav or, subsequently, the Croatian academic community. In the post-war period the neglect of this stage of law history served the purpose of promoting the Yugoslav policy of brotherhood and unity. But the scholarly community of the Croatian state restored in 1991 has not been too interested in examining this period of more recent Croatian legal history either. There is a similar void when it comes to the system of criminal law norms which were in force in the NDH. In most Yugoslav¹ and, subsequently, Croatian criminal law textbooks one can only find passing references to this period. Thus, P. Novoselec merely observes that “this part of Croatian penal law history is not adequately examined”.² In his otherwise

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¹ Thus e.g. the famous textbook by Franjo Bačić makes no mention of this period: *Krivično pravo. Opći dio*, 3rd ed. (Zagreb: Pravni fakultet u Zagrebu, 1986).

² Petar Novoselec, *Opći dio kaznenog prava* (Zagreb: Sveučilišna tiskara, 2004), 47.

very detailed review of the history of Croatian penal law, Ž. Horvatić³ devotes as little as a few sentences to the period of the NDH, and concludes that it was “completely contrary to the standards and traditions of Croatian law in terms of content”.⁴ More recently, a remarkable contribution is an article by Nikolina Srpak on this subject-matter,⁵ and a few papers dealing with the execution of criminal sanctions in the NDH. In any event, sporadic papers looking at the legal order of the NDH are essentially overviews of the form of the legislation in force, which certainly cannot provide a full picture of how this system of norms operated in practice.

NDH substantive criminal law

The fundamental feature of the NDH substantive criminal legislation was the incrimination of criminal offences, and other provisions of a substantive character, by secondary criminal legislation, more specifically, by decrees with the force of law (the so-called law decrees). Specifically, in the newly-created state, criminal law norms – and that was the case with other branches of law too – were not enacted by laws, as acts adopted by the legislature, but rather by decrees passed by the executive authorities (Head of State – *Poglavnik*).⁶ In the NDH, during its existence, no new criminal code was enacted and the criminal legislation continued to rely largely on the provisions of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia’s criminal law, onto which new regulations were grafted by the newly-formed government, as needed.

On 17 April 1941, a mere week after the NDH had been declared, the *Law Decree on the Defence of the People and the State (Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i države)*⁷ was adopted, as an act which laid “the legal foundations of the

³ Željko Horvatić, *Kazneno pravo. Opći dio I* (Zagreb: Pravni fakultet u Zagrebu, 2003), 106–130.

⁴ *Ibid.* 115.

⁵ Nikolina Srpak, “Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske (1941.–1945.)”, *Hrvatski ljetopis za kazneno pravo i praksu* 2 (2006).

⁶ “Law decrees shall only be passed by the Poglavnik of the Independent State of Croatia [hereinafter the NDH]. The decrees shall be the following: 1) law decrees, which have the nature of a law; 2) general, regulating issues of a general nature, which do not have the nature of a law; and 3) special, which regulate specific (individual) issues that by law may only be regulated by the Poglavnik.” See Article 1 of the Law Decree on Names of Legal and other Regulations and Regional Decisions (*Zakonska odredba o nazivima zakonskih i drugih propisa i oblastnih rješenja*), *Narodne novine* [Official Gazette of the NDH], no. 160, 23 October 1941.

⁷ *Narodne novine* no. 4, 17 April 1941.

Ustasha legislation sanctioning the terror”.⁸ Pursuant to this document, to be considered guilty of the crime of high treason was “whoever in whatever way acts or has acted against the honour and vital interests of the Croatian people or in any way endangers the survival of the Independent State of Croatia or state authority, even if the act is only attempted”. The binding interpretation of the Minister of Justice clarified that for the commission of the offence it was enough to act either against the honour or against the vital interests of the Croatian people,⁹ which probably means that some problems with its interpretation were encountered in its application. Nevertheless, the fact that the terms used in it were not authentically clarified despite their vagueness supports the conclusion that such vagueness was probably intentional and that it was exploited in practice.¹⁰ This offence was punishable by death (execution by a firing squad),¹¹ and newly-established *extraordinary people’s courts* were adjudicating upon it and trying both *civilians* and military personnel.¹² The procedure was summary, and after the adoption of the *Law Decree on Courts Martial (Zakonska odredba o prijetim sudovima)*, extraordinary people’s courts were also trying according to the procedure prescribed for courts martial.¹³

The newly-legislated crime of treason was, as we can see, utterly vaguely defined.¹⁴ While the “survival of the NDH” or “state authority” could be taken to

⁸ Narcisa Lengel-Krizman, “Prilog proučavanju terora u tzv. NDH. Ženski sabirni logori 1941–1942. godine”, *Povijesni prilozi* 4 (1985), 3.

⁹ *Narodne novine* no. 24, 10 May 1941.

¹⁰ Fikreta Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna država Hrvatska 1941–1945* (Zagreb: Liber – Školska knjiga, 1977), 159; Bogdan Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija* (Zagreb: Globus, 1980), 117.

¹¹ The Law Decree supplementing the Law Decree on the Defence of the Nation and the State (*Zakonska odredba o nadopuni zakonske odredbe za obranu naroda i države*), *Narodne novine* no. 22, 8 May 1941.

¹² See Authoritative Interpretation of the Law Decree on the Defence of the Nation and the State (*Mjerodavno tumačenje zakonske odredbe za obranu naroda i države*) of 17 April 1941, *Narodne novine* no. 68, 5 July 1941. The first such court was established in Zagreb, and soon similar courts were also set up in Varaždin, Bjelovar, Osijek, Gospić, Banja Luka and Tuzla, cf. Hrvoje Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne države Hrvatske* (Zagreb: P.I.P. Pavičić, 2002²), 68. The trial chambers had three members.

¹³ See the Law Decree amending the Law Decree on the Defense of the Nation and the State (*Zakonska odredba o promjeni zakonske odredbe za obranu naroda i države*), *Narodne novine* no. 35, 24 May 1941. “It became increasingly apparent in practice that there in fact was no essential difference between the ‘extraordinary people’s courts’ and ‘courts martial’. The difference, which under the Decree on Courts Martial was reflected in specifying a particular legal form of the proceedings, was not very manifest in actual practice” (Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna država Hrvatska*, 160).

¹⁴ Similar also in Srpak, “Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske”, 1125, 1128.

be an appropriate object of criminal law protection, regardless of the possibility for these goods to be violated “in whatever way”, the possibility for the honour or interests of the Croatian people to be violated in whatever way enabled abuse in practice. The vagueness of criminal law norms and indirect derogation from the principle of legality (*nullum crimen nulla poena sine lege*), in the form of ambiguous legal descriptions (*lex certa*), was indeed a characteristic of the criminal law of Nazi Germany as well, just implemented in a more dramatic form,¹⁵ although for a while the possibility of creative analogies also characterized post-war Yugoslav law (under the 1947 Criminal Code – General Part, Article 5, paragraph 3).

It should be noted that many behaviours were subsequently classified as falling under this Decree, based on an arbitrary assessment of the authorities. Thus, for example, just one day after its adoption, a ban was introduced on hiding and withdrawing from trade “all goods constituting basic necessities”, as well as on price increases. Anyone breaching this regulation was punished according to the procedure defined in the said Law Decree “by the strictest penalties, and if necessary, even by the death penalty” (§ 2).¹⁶ Again, the prerequisite for a case to be heard by a special court was the decision of the authorities that legal transactions “harmed vital interests of the Croatian people”, which was a matter of discretion (“if it turns out...”).¹⁷ In many subsequent law decrees, references were also made to the application of the Law Decree on the Defence of the People and the State regarding a set of behaviours (e.g. sabotage in business companies).¹⁸ It should be noted that the Croatian law-maker retained the implementation of the General part of the Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia with respect to this Decree as well,¹⁹ with the exception that its provisions on statute of limitations (Chapter IX) were not applied, and that mitigation of punishment was limited to “less serious cases”.²⁰ At the same time, the Minister of Justice was

¹⁵ The German law-maker lifted the ban on analogy in 1935 – see Thomas Vormbaum, *Einführung in die moderne Strafrechtsgeschichte* (Berlin Heidelberg: Springer, 2011²), 188 – and set forth in the Criminal Code (Article 2) that “whoever performs an action that law has criminalized, or that deserves punishment on the basis of the core idea of penal law, and according to common sense of the nation, shall be punished.”

¹⁶ *Narodne novine* no. 5, 18 April 1941.

¹⁷ Implementing Order of the Law Decree on Punishment of Concealment and Price Increases of Foodstuffs (*Provedbena naredba Zakonske odredbe o kažnjavanju sakrivanja i povisivanja cijena živeža*) of 17 April 1941, *Narodne novine* no. 8, 22 April 1941.

¹⁸ See the Law Decree on Ordinary Operations and the Prevention of Sabotage in Business Companies (*Zakonska odredba o redovitom poslovanju i sprečavanju sabotaze u privrednim poduzećima*), *Narodne novine* no. 17, 2 May 1941.

¹⁹ The 1929 Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia – Criminal Code (*Krivični zakonik Kraljevine Jugoslavije od 1929. godine – Krivični zakonik*), *Narodne novine* no. 47/1929 and 2455/1931.

²⁰ *Narodne novine* no. 17, 2 May 1941.

authorized to prescribe by order the procedure for offences against the people and the state, and to issue a binding interpretation.

As early as May 1941, the *Law Decree on Amendments to the Penal Code of 27 January 1929 and the Law on Amendments to the Penal Code of 9 October 1931* (*Zakonska odredba o promjenama u kaznenom zakoniku od 27. siječnja 1929. i zakona o izmjenama i dopunama kaznenog zakonika od 9. listopada 1931*) was enacted.²¹ It redefined crimes against the survival of the state and against its constitutional order (Chapter XII) and extended the application of the death penalty to the offences in this chapter,²² while replacing the terms used for the criminal law protection of the king and the throne by the term “protection of the Poglavnik”, and changing the characteristics of the legal description in a number of offences. And for those offences for which a relevant sentence of deprivation of liberty (imprisonment or detention) was prescribed, the penal servitude with a much longer duration was prescribed. Although the Criminal Code also prohibited membership of anti-state associations (punishable by imprisonment of up to two years or a fine, Article 161), the Penal Code punished “organizing, assisting, or becoming a member of any kind of society whose purpose would be to spread communism,²³ anarchism, terrorism or a society for the unlawful seizing

²¹ *Narodne novine* no. 19, 5 May 1941. Although the pre-war Yugoslav Criminal Code was applied, it was not named so, but it was renamed to the “Penal Code”. There were several reasons for such renaming, but the decisive one was the fact that the Croatian criminal law doctrine normally used the term “penal” law (offence, action, etc.), and the prevailing belief that the term “criminal” law had developed under the influence of the Serbian legal literature, see Juraj Kulaš, “Da li ‘kazneno’ ili ‘krivično’ pravo?”, *Mjesečnik* 1–2 (1942), 17 ff. In that context, we shall also refer to this regulation during the period of its validity in the NDH (from these amendments to the Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) as the Penal Code (PC).

²² According to the Criminal Code, the death penalty in this chapter was prescribed only for assassination or attempted assassination of the king, the royal heir to the throne or the regent (Article 91).

²³ Thus, pursuant to the decision of the Summary Court Martial of Colonel Luburić’s Headquarters in Sarajevo, 85 persons were convicted of the criminal offence under Article 98, paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the Penal Code, for their membership of the Communist Party. The convicted were allegedly ‘organizing, receiving and disseminating the communist propaganda material, giving and collecting the communist red help, procuring and transferring weapons and ammunition to partisans in the forest and organized assault strike squads of five [petorke], all with the aim to topple, by way of violence, crime and terrorism, the social and political order in the NDH, and have, therefore, committed serious punishable acts against the survival, freedom and independence of the Croatian people” (An announcement of the Summary Court Martial of Colonel Luburić’s Headquarters – Sarajevo, Court no. 6-1945 of 29 March 1945. Convictions of 5 March 1945 [Ukp no. 1/1945], 10 March 1945 [Ukp no. 2/1945], 12 March 1945 [Ukp no. 3/1945, Ukp no. 4/1945 and Ukp no. 5/1945], 13 March 1945 [Ukp no. 6/1945], 14 March 1945 [Ukp no. 7/1945], 21 March 1945 [Ukp no. 8/1945 and Ukp no. 9/1945], 24 March 1945 [Ukp no. 10/1945], and 26 March 1945

of power” – by death. Penal servitude for up to 20 years was also prescribed as a sentence for the failure to report preparations for the commission of most of the crimes in this chapter.

Initially, the death penalty was executed by hanging, as under the pre-war law, but it was soon replaced by a firing squad.²⁴ Although these changes provided for *vacatio legis* of 30 days, the Croatian law-maker was eager to speed up their implementation, so a new Law Decree provided for an earlier entry of the amendments into force.²⁵ These amendments derogated from certain criminal law principles which were normal even for those times. For example, the statute of limitations was eliminated for offences against official duty (Chapter XXVIII) “committed after 1918”, which, contrary to the usual criminal law standards, enabled the retroactive application of criminal law to certain offences (e.g. taking bribes) that had already fallen under the statute of limitations pursuant to the then rules.²⁶

Regarding substantive legislation, subsequent decrees were mainly aimed at further intensifying repression and increasing the prescribed penalties. Thus, for example, for many offences against the state (Articles 109–110, 114 of the PC), penal servitude for life or penal servitude was replaced by the death penalty.²⁷ Apart from those decrees that were directly related to the survival of the

[Ukp no. 11/1945, Ukp no. 12/1945 and Ukp no. 13/1945], Vojni arhiv Ministarstva odbrane Republike Srbije [Military Archives of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia], Nezavisna država Hrvatska Funds [Independent State of Croatia; hereafter VA, NDH], Box 314, folder 3, document 1/1). Of the total number of people covered by these judgments, one received a prison sentence, 26 were sentenced to penal servitude (lasting between 1 and 20 years), 9 to penal servitude for life, 4 to high-security prison (lasting between 3 months and 5 years) while all the other persons (43) were sentenced to death and executed by the firing squad. By virtue of the Commander’s Decision, one person’s death sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life.

²⁴ See the Law Decree amending the Penal Code (*Zakonska odredba o promjeni kaznenog zakonika*) of 27 January 1929, *Narodne novine*, no. 111, 26 August 1941. In December 1941, however, it was allowed again for the Minister of Justice, in specific cases, to order the execution of the death penalty by hanging (see the Law Decree amending the Penal Code of 27 January 1929 (*Zakonska odredba o preinaci i dopuni kaznenog zakonika od 27. siječnja 1929.*), *Narodne novine*, no. 210, 23 December 1941).

²⁵ See the Law Decree on the Entry into Force of the Law Decree on Amendments to the Penal Code of 27 January 1929 and the Law on Amendments to the Penal Code of 9 October 1931 (*Zakonska odredba o stupanju na snagu zakonske odredbe o promjenama u kaznenom zakoniku od 27. siječnja 1929. i zakona o izmjenama i dopunama kaznenog zakonika od 9. listopada 1931.*), *Narodne novine* no. 36, 26 May 1941.

²⁶ Srpak, “Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske”, 1122.

²⁷ See the Law Decree amending the Penal Code of 27 January 1929 and the Law Decree of 3 May 1941 on Amendments to the Penal Code of 27 January 1929 and the Law on Amendments to the Penal Code of 29 October 1931 (*Zakonska odredba o promjenama u kaznenom*

new authorities in the circumstances of war, substantive criminal law for the most part was not dramatically modified. Exceptions included criminal offences of *illegal abortion*,²⁸ for which the sentence was significantly increased. Thus, for example, performing an abortion on a pregnant woman at her request was punishable by life imprisonment, while in case it was done against her will, or by a physician or a midwife (but as a repeat offence), the death penalty was prescribed. If the abortion was performed for a fee, besides the death penalty, the property of the perpetrator was confiscated and allocated to a special fund for maternity support. The penal policy on these criminal offences was rigorous, even though the pronounced death sentences were often replaced by long-term penal servitude.²⁹ It should be noted that this did not completely prevent the performance of abortions, since the same decree regulated in detail the circumstances in which a separate body (a commission) could allow abortion on an exceptional basis.

It should be pointed out that, in addition to criminal (penal) offences, in many ministerial orders, relevant misdemeanours (petty offences) were also prescribed, for which the proceedings were conducted by the administrative authorities. It was precisely through the administrative and penal proceedings that drastic measures were implemented, which far exceeded in scope the inferiority of misdemeanours as type of punishable offences. This particularly refers to the fact that, in those cases where any proceedings were conducted in the first place, deportations to concentration camps as a rule were executed in the proceedings conducted by the administrative authorities.

Activity of courts martial in the NDH

During the period of the NDH, ordinary and special courts (extraordinary and courts martial) tried in parallel in criminal matters. The functioning of the judiciary, except for military courts and the Administrative Court, was within the competence of the Ministry of Justice and Religious Affairs. With the creation of the NDH, the organization of ordinary courts did not significantly change

zakoniku od 27. siječnja 1929. i zakonskoj odredbi od 3. svibnja 1941. o promenama u kaznenom zakoniku od 27. siječnja 1929. i zakonu o izmjenama i dopunama kaznenog zakonika od 29. listopada 1931.), *Narodne novine* no. 74, 12 July 1941.

²⁸ See the Law Decree on the Prohibition and Punishment of Induced Miscarriage and Abortion and Amendments to the Penal Code of 9 October 1931 (*Zakonska odredba o zabrani i kažnjavanju uzrokovanog pometnuća i o prekidanju trudnoće, izmjenama i dopunama kaznenog zakonika od 9. listopada 1931.*), *Narodne novine* no. 49, 10 June 1941.

²⁹ See Ana Jura, "Ženska kaznionica u Požegi za vrijeme Nezavisne Države Hrvatske (1941.-1944.)", *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 3 (2013), 497–498.

except that their previous names were restored.³⁰ So, in end-April, local, district and appellate courts were replaced by “county courts” and “judicial chambers (*sudbeni stolovi*) and high courts (*banski stolovi*)”.³¹ After that, on several occasions, the areas of territorial jurisdiction of certain county courts were reorganized by merging them with other judicial chambers.³² Legal professionals were a scarce resource for the new state authorities, so on several occasions during the war, mandatory availability of “staff in the judicial profession” was extended, regardless of the existing legal rules, in terms of their potential, appointment, promotion, secondment, retirement or even reinstatement after retirement.³³

Ordinary courts in the NDH included the Chamber of Seven (in Zagreb) as the supreme judicial instance, high courts in Sarajevo and Zagreb, more than 150 county courts and, after the establishment of great districts, 19 district judicial chambers.³⁴ Nevertheless, the jurisdiction of ordinary courts in the time of war was not of crucial importance, since almost the entire criminal justice

³⁰ Davor Kovačić, “Kazneno zakonodavstvo i sustav kaznionica i odgojnih zavoda u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj”, *Scrinia Slavonica* 1 (2008), 283.

³¹ As one of the arguments that the NDH constituted a state entity in the international law sense, Tomislav Jonjić, “Pitanje državnosti Nezavisne Države Hrvatske”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 3 (2011), 690, offers the fact that the organization of power was quick and smooth: “The network of courts and administrative bodies (police, tax, traffic, etc.) and schools, universities, sports and social institutions continued to function in accordance with Croatian regulations and on behalf of the new state.”

³² Thus e.g. courts in Trebinje, Bosansko Grahovo and Kalinovik were disbanded and their jurisdiction was transferred to courts in Mostar, Livno and Foča (Article 18). See the Law Decree on Changes in Territorial Jurisdiction of Courts in the Areas Covered by High Courts in Zagreb, Sarajevo and Split (*Zakonska odredba o izmjenama prostorne sudske nadležnosti na područjima banskih stolova u Zagrebu, Sarajevu i Splitu*), *Narodne novine* no. 98, 9 August 1941. More significant changes in territorial jurisdiction of the courts also occurred after the demarcation between the NDH and the Kingdom of Italy (see the Law Decree on the Temporary Enlargement of the Territorial Jurisdiction of the High Court in Zagreb, the Judicial Chambers in Dubrovnik, Gospić and Ogulin and the County Courts in Sinj, Knin, Drniš and Omiš [Zakonska odredba o privremenom proširenju prostorne nadležnosti Banskoga stola u Zagrebu, sudbenih stolova u Dubrovniku, Gospiću i Ogulinu i kotarskih sudova u Sinju, Kninu, Drnišu i Omišu], *Narodne novine* no. 135, 24 September 1941), but similar changes were introduced later as well.

³³ See the Law Decree on Mandatory Availability of All Members of Legal Profession (*Zakonska odredba o stavljanju na raspolaganje svega osoblja pravosudne struke*), *Narodne novine* no. 76, 15 July 1941. This option was initially open until 1 November 1941 but after that it was periodically extended until 1 November 1944 (see *Narodne novine* no. 158, 21 October 1941; no. 221, 1 October 1942; no. 251, 3 November 1943; and no. 242, 26 October 1944).

³⁴ Nada Kisić Kolanović, “Ivo Politeo: povijesna stvarnost Nezavisne Države Hrvatske iz odvjjetničke pozicije”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 2 (2013), 265; Kovačić, “Kazneno zakonodavstvo i sustav kaznionica”, 283.

system was in effect transferred from ordinary to special courts.³⁵ Moreover, a question may be raised of the extent in which the activity of special courts in general (extraordinary and courts martial) was a relevant indicator of the exercise of judicial power in a situation where (as early as the summer of 1941), tens of thousands of NDH citizens were being killed without any judicial proceedings, be it before ordinary or extraordinary courts. In the majority of cases, the executions of Serbs, Jews and Roma were carried out as part of a project aimed at their extermination, so it seems that the organization of simulated trials for certain alleged unlawful acts was the choice of more conscientious representatives of some authorities to have any kind of trial in some (isolated) cases rather than a feature of the criminal justice system in the NDH.³⁶ Besides, there was less need to conceal the crimes committed in military operations on the ground by formally conducting proceedings, as opposed to urban areas, where there was a need to ensure some legitimacy for the actions of the authorities through the legal framework. In any event, in such circumstances, there in fact was no real need for a legally regulated penal procedure. This is also demonstrated by the order of the Ministry of the Croatian Home Guard of 22 November 1941, according to which “the commander [Slavko Kvaternik] ordered that, in the future, the following actions are to be undertaken when conducting operations on the ground: 1) Anyone found on the ground with weapons, who does not belong to the Home Guard, Ustasha, gendarmerie and other recognized units, shall be immediately executed. 2) Unarmed citizens who are found on land outside their villages without a special permit, and especially in forests and mountains, shall be considered as harbours of outlaws, and shall be arrested and, as such, sent to concentration camps. 3) The villages from which one was shooting at us shall be burnt down”. Similarly, “if there is an attack on members of the Home Guard or the Ustasas, on postal, road or railway communications or state institutions near a village, the village in question shall be searched, and from all homes where men/fugitives have not been found, all persons (female and male, the elderly and children) shall be taken to concentration camps as hostages. Houses, pos-

³⁵ Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna država Hrvatska*, 160; Kisić Kolanović, “Ivo Politeo: povijesna stvarnost”, 265.

³⁶ Thus, a report of the Posavje Great District Perfect states that investigations against rebels from the territory of Gradačac County were carried out “in the village of Modrič and in Gradačac, and out of 255 detained persons in Modrič, after individual interrogations 19 were found to have taken active part in the rebellion, while in Gradačac, out of 276 detained persons, 49 were kept in custody, for whom there is evidence that they have participated in the rebellion, some more than others. And these will be brought before a court martial” (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, vol. I of *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima u Prvom i Drugom svetskom ratu. Zbornik dokumenata*, ed. Slavko Vukčević [Belgrade: Vojnoistorijski institut, 1993], doc. no. 277).

sessions, wheat, and the like shall become state property.”³⁷ The population of villages captured in cleansing operations³⁸ were considered to be hostages and, as such, they were taken to concentration camps.³⁹

In most cases, mass liquidations of Serbs were not preceded by any proceedings, be it before an ordinary court or a court martial. Consequently, the criminal legislation in force was not applied to the *perpetrators* of these heinous crimes. Thus, the Report on the state of public security in Opuzen to the Prefect (*Veliki župan*) of the Hum Great District in Mostar, dated 4 July 1941 – which identifies persons arrested on various bases (for fraud, theft and other offences) in the few months from the establishment of the NDH – points out, inter alia, that “in the night of 25 June this year, the Ustashas from the Stolac County brought in 283 persons [Serb peasants from the environs of Stolac] in freight vehicles to the place called Opuzen and executed them on the bank of the Neretva river below the town of Opuzen on account of Serbianism and a Chetnik operation in the County of Stolac.” It is not surprising therefore that the Report concludes that “with respect to the act of executing the Serbs-Chetniks, this station did not conduct any investigation, nor did it take any action in that respect, since they were the same as the Ustashas who performed executions from the areas covered by other stations.”⁴⁰ Similarly, the commander of the area of the Adriatic Division states in his report that the commanders of the Italian garrisons in Gacko (General Luzano) and Nevesinje (General Napolitano) “kindly ask that all the gendarmes in the territory of the counties of Nevesinje and Gacko, who served in these areas at the time of the removal, killing and potential massacre of the Orthodox population, and participated in that either directly or just as the executors of the orders of various commissioners, be removed-transferred from the area as soon as possible. They cite as a reason the need to conduct investigations into various crimes and would not want to arrest uniformed persons and possibly punish them.”⁴¹

Formally, the fundamental regulation of a criminal procedural nature during the NDH was the *Law Decree on Courts Martial*, which, as its name

³⁷ *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 339.

³⁸ In the reports on actions of the Ustasha units, the term “cleansing” is often encountered, which denotes “killing, setting on fire and plundering committed against the population of the Greek-Eastern faith” (see e.g. *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 219, *Izveštaj krilnog oružničkog zapovjedništva Gospić od 16. avgusta 1941. godine*).

³⁹ See e.g. *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 364, Report of the Command of the Drina Brigade (Stožer Drinskog zdruga) of 19 December 1941.

⁴⁰ See *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 99.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* doc. no. 301. Later, a part of these Ustasha transferred to Bosnia also committed crimes in and around Jajce (*ibid.* doc. nos. 289; 302; 305; 313).

suggests, established *courts martial* as a form of a special justice system.⁴² After the Minister of Justice proclaimed a court martial for each individual area (area of each judicial chamber), this body was vested with jurisdiction to try certain criminal offences. These were offences related to participation in a group that committed violence (Article 154 of the PC), murders (Article 167, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the PC), arson (Articles 188 and 189 of the PC), causing danger by using explosive materials (Article 191 of the PC) or other actions posing a general threat (Article 201, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the PC), posing a threat to various forms of traffic (Articles 206 and 207, paragraph 1, and 209 of the PC), robbery and grand larceny (Articles 326–328 of the PC), failure to surrender fire arms or cold steel at the request of the authorities (Article 2, paragraph 1, item 2, of the Law Decree), as well as the hiding of persons who have committed any of the above offences (Article 2, paragraph 1, item 3, of the Law Decree). For all the above offences, the only punishment prescribed was the death penalty (by a firing squad).⁴³

The proceedings before a court martial were conducted on the motion of the state prosecutor, and under the provisions of the 1929 Code of Court Criminal Procedure. In a chamber comprising three judges, one did not have to be a lawyer, but the presiding judge had to hold a law degree. One of the members of this court had to be from among the Ustasha ranks.⁴⁴ Proceedings were public and oral, with the prescribed mandatory presence of a defence attorney, either retained or court appointed. Against the judgment of a court martial no legal remedy whatsoever was permitted, and an appeal for a pardon did not have suspensive effect. Despite the fact that defence was formally provided for, defence attorneys generally were not informed of the name of the accused and the content of the indictment before the trial.⁴⁵ At the same time, they were not able to communicate with their clients and to examine the case files and exhibits serving

⁴² *Narodne novine* no. 32, 20 May 1941.

⁴³ On the basis of this decree, and the prescribed capital punishment by firing squad for keeping firearms or cold steel without a permit to carry and hold them, citizens were ordered to surrender weapons by no later than 18 July 1941. "All those who fail to surrender weapons within the time limit set in this law decree and the weapons are found on them shall be court martialled and punished by death." The Law Decree on Surrendering Weapons (*Odredba o predaji oružja*), *Narodne novine* no. 70, 8 July 1941.

⁴⁴ Besides two professional judges, "the third judge shall be from among the ranks of the Ustasha" (see the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Sarajevo, *Narodne novine* no. 33, 21 May 1941). Similar provisions were incorporated in the proclamations of other courts martial (e.g. in Zagreb), except that in most cases the decision on the proclamation usually appointed the Ustasha members of the chambers.

⁴⁵ A similar objection was made to the Bar Association of Zagreb by the famous attorney Ivo Politeo, who was designated as a court-appointed defence counsel before the Zagreb court martial (see Kisić Kolanović, "Ivo Politeo: povijesna stvarnost", 266 ff).

as evidence,⁴⁶ so their presence at the trial was more of a cover for a defective procedure whose outcome was determined in advance.

A relevant norm was also the one that allowed the retroactive application of the *Law Decree* to the same criminal offences committed after 10th April 1941, provided that a court martial was proclaimed within three months of its adoption. The first proclaimed court martial was the one for the territory of the judicial chamber in Sarajevo, which invoked this possibility and established jurisdiction over the offences stipulated in this decree committed after 10th April, and that was also done by other courts established in that period. In addition to the court in Sarajevo, courts martial were also established in Zagreb,⁴⁷ Gospić,⁴⁸ Petrinja,⁴⁹ Tuzla,⁵⁰ Bihać,⁵¹ Travnik,⁵² Osijek⁵³ and Mostar.⁵⁴ These courts were active almost throughout the period of the NDH, although it is in the nature of similar special judicial bodies that their existence and operation is exceptional and short. *Criminal charges* on the basis of which courts martial tried were scanty in information in most cases. Thus, in his letter of 14 August 1941 (no. 338),⁵⁵ the Special Plenipotentiary of the Poglavnik for the great districts of Hum and Dubrava in Mostar complained about the deficiencies of criminal charges: "... and without any evidence of the commission of criminal offences, which causes great difficulties and delays in the operation of courts martial, whose duty is to adjudicate swiftly, because in most cases they have to postpone the scheduled hearings due to the lack of evidence and poorly prepared criminal charges."

⁴⁶ Ibid. 267.

⁴⁷ See the Ministerial Decree on the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Zagreb, *Narodne novine* no. 37, 27 May 1941.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ See the Ministerial Decree on the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Petrinja, *Narodne novine* no. 43, 4 June 1941.

⁵⁰ See the Ministerial Decree on the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Tuzla, *Narodne novine* no. 50, 11 June 1941.

⁵¹ See the Ministerial Decree on the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Bihać, *Narodne novine* no. 54, 18 June 1941. This court was disbanded in March 1943, and a mobile court martial was set up instead (see *Narodne novine* no. 56, 9 March 1943).

⁵² See the Ministerial Decree on the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Travnik, *Narodne novine* no. 59, 25 June 1941.

⁵³ See the Ministerial Decree on the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Osijek, *Narodne novine* no. 60, 26 June 1941.

⁵⁴ See the Ministerial Decree on the Proclamation of the Court Martial for the Territory of the Judicial Chamber in Mostar, *Narodne novine* no. 75, 14 July 1941. This court was disbanded by a ministerial decree of 16 July 1941 (*Narodne novine* no. 79, 18 July 1941).

⁵⁵ VA, NDH, Box 189, f. 39, doc. 1.

It is difficult to determine, in those very exceptional cases in which formal proceedings were conducted before the killing, the proportion in which the jurisdiction in criminal matters was effectively split between ordinary courts and courts martial. Several circumstances contribute to the difficulties in determining this proportion. First, one could not argue that ordinary courts dealt exclusively with “classical” crimes, and courts martial tried only political or similar criminal offences. During the war, courts martial steadily broadened their jurisdiction to include many offences which were not limited to actions against the newly-formed government, or actions that were such only in a rather broad sense; hence, from that angle, a clear line between classical and offences against the state cannot be drawn.⁵⁶ Furthermore, another problem is the fact that the activity of courts martial was bound by the mandatory imposition of capital punishment (with an option to possibly commute it through a pardon into some form of deprivation of liberty). Therefore, even those rare available analytically processed inmate case files of persons convicted in those days do not provide a true picture, since it was not possible to serve a classical sentence of imprisonment in penitentiaries if the death penalty had been previously executed, which happened as a rule. Despite these limitations, there is no doubt that the activity of courts martial outdid the activity of the ordinary criminal justice system by a wide margin. Thus, for example, in her analysis of 57 surviving case files of female prisoners in the Slavenska Požega penitentiary, Jura found that in as much as 57% of the cases the judgment (by rule the death penalty commuted through a pardon to some form of deprivation of liberty) was passed by mobile courts martial.⁵⁷ Ordinary courts (first and foremost, the judicial chambers) as a rule tried cases involving crimes against property or, for example, crimes against life and limb which exhibited no connection with the prevailing war circumstances (e.g. relative to family members).

In June 1941, the *Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial (Zakonska odredba o pokretnom prijekom sudu)*⁵⁸ introduced the possibility for *mobile courts martial* to be established by the Minister of Justice, in addition to permanent courts martial. The difference between permanent and mobile courts martial

⁵⁶ Thus e.g. in the composition of criminal cases in the jurisdiction of the court martial within the judicial chamber in Sarajevo in 1941, the bulk of a total of 466 registered cases was related to criminal offences under Article 122 (illegal possession of weapons: 112 cases), Article 167 (murder: 53 cases), Article 98 (conspiracy against the state order: 76 cases) of the Penal Code, Article 2, item 2 of the Law on Courts Martial (failure to surrender weapons within the set time limit: 14 cases) and the so-called excessive pricing (price hikes: 34 cases). Excerpt from the Kk register for the case files of the Court Martial in Sarajevo, VA, NDH, Box 87 f. 37, doc. 1.

⁵⁷ Jura, “Ženska kaznionica u Požegi”, 500.

⁵⁸ *Narodne novine* no. 58, 24 June 1941.

was only in the non-territoriality of the latter. Namely, unlike courts martial, whose jurisdiction corresponded to the jurisdiction of the district courts (judicial chambers), the territorial jurisdiction of mobile courts martial depended on the specific needs (of military operations).⁵⁹ In addition to the criminal offences over which mobile courts had jurisdiction, mobile courts martial could also hear cases involving most of the offences against the NDH and its state order (Articles 91–98, 100 of the PC), obstruction of officials in performing official actions (Article 128 of the PC) and insult of the Poglavnik (Article 307 of the PC). Subsequent decrees further expanded the list of these offences.⁶⁰ For all the offences covered by this decree, the punishment was the death penalty by a firing squad. As for the composition of a mobile court martial, the presiding judge had to be an ordinary court judge, while the other two members of the panel, by rule, were from among the ranks of the Ustashas. This circumstance was of decisive importance, because a majority vote of the members of the panel (two out of three votes) was sufficient for the guilty verdict, which practically meant the death penalty. The rules of procedure were defined in a very similar way as those of courts martial. No appeal was possible against the judgment of a mobile court martial, and an appeal for a pardon could not stay the execution. The death penalty was to be executed three hours after the pronouncement of the verdict, and it was specified that all the case files of completed proceedings had to be sent to the Justice Ministry “for archiving” The evidentiary procedure before a mobile court martial was simplified to the extreme, so its pursuance had the sole purpose of providing a formal pretext for the crimes, and in most cases it is questionable whether the killing was preceded by any summary quasi-judicial proceedings whatsoever. Still, we do come across such examples. Thus, the report of the commander of the gendarmerie squad from Petrinja describes the massacre of some 1,200 Serbian household heads in Banski Grabovac which took place on 25 and 26 July 1941 as the result of the operation of a mobile court martial, which right upon its arrival “promptly started working in the open and

⁵⁹ Thus e.g. a mobile court established by virtue of ministerial order no. 42676/1941 covered the territory of the judicial chambers in Bihać, Luka, Derventa, Sarajevo, Travnik, Donja Tuzla and Mostar (see *Narodne novine* no. 76, 15 July 1941). In addition to several mobile courts martial established in Zagreb, such courts were also set up in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Bihać, Brčko, Derventa and Višegrad (see Srpak, “Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske”, 1133). The most notorious was the mobile court martial in Zagreb, presided by Dr. Ivo Vignjević (see Rory Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation. The Ustasha Regime and the Cultural Politics of Fascism 1941–1945* [Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2013], 18).

⁶⁰ These are various criminal offences of counterfeiting (Article 225–241 of the PC). See the Law Decree supplementing the Law Decree on the Courts Martial and the Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial, *Narodne novine* no. 60, 26 June 1941; and the Law Decree amending the Law Decree supplementing the Law Decree on the Court Martial and the Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial, *Narodne novine* no. 61, 27 June 1941.

handed down convictions, which became enforceable immediately”.⁶¹ Although it is likely that the alleged sequence of actions was only fictitious, for the purpose of fulfilling the duty of preparing a proper report, there is no doubt that even if there were instances of such proceedings being really conducted, they were merely an effort to cover up the committed crimes.

Pursuant to the *Law Decree amending the Law Decree on Courts Martial and Mobile Courts Martial (Zakonska odredba o promjeni zakonske odredbe o prijekom i pokretnom prijekom sudu)* of 5 July 1941, appeals for pardons were sometimes sent by mobile courts martial to the Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs (to Zagreb). The information about the appeals was generally only communicated over the phone, but sometimes, in the case of broken telephone lines, it was also sent by telegrams, often with a supporting rationale.⁶² Thus, in two telegrams sent to this Ministry regarding persons sentenced to death for offences defined in Articles 98, item 1, and 307, paragraph 1 of the PC, a decision is requested on the appeal for clemency, where the court in one case proposed a reprieve citing his “many children and age”,⁶³ while in the other, it cited the fact that the convicted person was “disabled and a notorious alcoholic”.⁶⁴ The fact that the perpetrator was a woman could in practice also have an impact on the potential commuting of a death sentence (as a rule) to penal servitude.⁶⁵ However, in a vast majority of cases, a pardon for persons sentenced to death was not proposed by mobile courts.⁶⁶

Appeals for pardon in individual cases should be distinguished from periodic decisions of the Poglavnik to show mercy on the occasion of the NDH jubilees to an unspecified number of convicted persons based on a general criterion.⁶⁷ Although these decisions, too, were formally classified as pardons, they were actually a form of *amnesty*, granted by the executive branch in the absence of a legislative body. These demonstrations of clemency related solely to the decisions of ordinary courts, and did not apply to many explicitly mentioned criminal offences set out in the ordinary criminal legislation (murder, theft, arson, counterfeiting of money and some other offences), and the criminal offences defined in the decrees on the defence of the people and the state, and on courts

⁶¹ See *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 155.

⁶² Davor Kovačić, “Osnivanje župskih redarstvenih oblasti u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj i djelovanje višeg redarstvenog povjerenstva u Srijemu 1942”, *Scrinia Slavonica* 1 (2005), 272.

⁶³ VA, NDH, Box 308, f. 1, doc. 1/3.

⁶⁴ VA, NDH, Box 308, f. 1, doc. 1/4.

⁶⁵ See Jura, “Ženska kaznionica u Požegi”, 501.

⁶⁶ See e.g. VA, NDH, Box 308, f. 1, doc. 1/7

⁶⁷ See e.g. the Poglavnik’s Decision on Amnesty (*Poglavnikova odluka o pomilovanju*), *Narodne novine* no. 149, 10 October 1941, or the Poglavnik’s Decree on Amnesty (*Poglavnikova odredba o pomilovanju*), *Narodne novine* no. 79, 10 April 1942.

martial or on mobile courts martial. Even there one can find a vague provision which rules out pardon for all those “who committed any punishable act in order to assist in the activities of external or internal enemies of the NDH or its allies”.⁶⁸

The decisions on amnesty sometimes had the form of exemption from criminal prosecution (*abolition*). “The suspension of penal prosecution” was promised to those who “have voluntarily given up outlawry” and turned themselves in to any military, administrative or judicial authorities;⁶⁹ and it was related to the less favourable external and internal circumstances that prevailed especially from 1944. In such cases, outlaws were also offered the prospect of suspension of protective measures applied against their family members (primarily their deportation to concentration camps), based on the decree on protective measures in case of an attack and an act of sabotage against public order and security.

At the end of the day, the fundamental reason for the establishment of permanent and mobile courts martial – the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere of terror that was implemented by the Ustasha government – had a decisive influence on their activity.⁷⁰ Persons who by some chance avoided the death penalty under the decision of a court martial (who were not found guilty of offences they were charged with) did not have to be released; instead, they were sent to concentration camps. Thus, pursuant to a decision of the Mobile Court Martial in Banja Luka (no. 38/1941 of 13 February 1942), eight persons

⁶⁸ See the Poglavnik’s Decree on Amnesty, *Narodne novine* no. 184, 14 August 1943.

⁶⁹ Law Decree on Non-prosecution or on Suspension of Criminal Prosecution against Returning Outlaws and Army Deserters (*Zakonska odredba o nepovađanju odnosno o obustavi kaznenog progona protiv odmetnika i vojnih begunaca, koji se vraćaju*), *Narodne novine* no. 20a, 26 January 1944. The privilege of non-prosecution pertained to those who would turn themselves in to the authorities, at first until 26 May 1944 (see the Law Decree on the Termination of Benefits Defined by the Law Decree on Non-prosecution or on Suspension of Criminal Prosecution against Returning Outlaws and Army Deserters (*Zakonska odredba o prestanku blagodati iz zakonske odredbe o nepovađanju odnosno o obustavi kaznenog progona protiv odmetnika i vojnih bjegunaca, koji se vraćaju*), *Narodne novine* no. 107, 11 May 1944), but this deadline was later extended.

⁷⁰ Thus e.g. in a separate Extraordinary Law Decree and Command, regarding the rumours that a pogrom would occur on St. Vitus Day (28 June) 1941 against the Serb population (“with respect to one part of the population”), Poglavnik Pavelić threatened that “whoever spreads such rumours shall be court martialled” (see *Narodne novine* no. 60, 26 June 1941). Moreover, with a view to preventing this information from being used as a trigger of a larger-scale uprising, gendarmerie stations were given the order to take as hostages and temporarily detain reputable Serbs from their areas around this St Vitus Day (see *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 109). As mass pogroms against the Serb population were well underway, suppressing the dissemination of the news about these events constituted an additional measure to secure the success of the genocide.

accused of participating in the attack on the gendarmerie station in Krupa on the Vrbas river (4 August 1941) were formally released, since "it was not possible to present sufficient evidence to that effect in the conducted trial, but as they all are extremely suspicious, the Minister of Justice decided by virtue of order no. 8661/42 of 7 November 1942 that the above accused are to be handed over to the above named authority [the District Police Authority in Banja Luka] for the purpose of their deportation to the concentration camp. As a result, the above defendants are brought in with a request for your authorities to escort and hand them over to the Jasenovac concentration camp as suspicious persons."⁷¹

Not only did acquittals not necessarily result in release, but prior *suspension of criminal proceedings* against the defendant pursuant to a decision of the prosecution (mobile court) could lead to deportation to a concentration camp. Thus, in one example of the operation of the Mobile Court Martial in Banja Luka, the proceedings against a defendant for an insult of the Croatian army were suspended because he was under influence at the time of the commission of the offence, but since a similar incident was a repeat offence, he was deported to the "concentration and labour" camp Jasenovac "until the termination of all communist activity".⁷² The person concerned was first sent to the Jasenovac camp together with 19 others,⁷³ and then 14 of them were transferred (for unknown reasons), together with "15 Jews from Prijedor and three arrested persons from Sanski Most", to the camp in Stara Gradiška.⁷⁴

From February 1942, decisions on "detention or investigative arrest" had to be passed for criminal offences that were defined in the decrees on the defence of the people and the state and on courts martial and mobile courts martial.⁷⁵ Against the decisions on *detention*, issued either by judicial or administrative authorities, no appeal was possible, while the termination of detention required an order of the Grand Extraordinary Court or the Minister of Justice. Thus, according to the Register of Arrestees held in police custody in the "Black House"

⁷¹ VA, NDH, Box 173, f. 8, doc. 8/2.

⁷² Letter of the State Prosecutor's Office of the Banja Luka Mobile Court Martial no. 102/42 dated 15 June 1942, VA, NDH, Box 197, f. 4, doc. 28/1.

⁷³ See the Letter of the District Police Authority in Banja Luka no. 1878/42 of 7 August 1942, VA, NDH, Box 197, f. 4, doc. 28/5.

⁷⁴ See the Letter of the Security Police for the City of Banja Luka and the Great District of Sana and Luka in Banja Luka no. 1492/42 of 7 September 1942, VA, NDH, Box 197, f. 4, doc. 28/6.

⁷⁵ See the Law Decree supplementing the Law Decree on the Defence of the Nation and the State of 17 April 1941, the Law Decree on Courts Martial of 17 May 1941, no. LXXXII-148-Z. p.-1941, and the Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial of 24 June 1941, no. CLXXX-II-508-Z. p.-1941, with all their subsequent modifications and supplements, *Narodne novine* no. 31, 7 February 1942.

in Banja Luka, most of 78 persons held in this facility in June 1942 awaited to be deported to a camp, some awaited proceedings before the mobile court martial, and a smaller number was under investigation.⁷⁶ The length of detention, however, was determined mainly arbitrarily. Thus, in one case, the Vrhbosna Great District Prefect⁷⁷ states in his report submitted to the Ministry of the Interior in Zagreb⁷⁸ that his subordinates refuse to obey orders by arbitrarily determining the length of detention:⁷⁹ “The last paragraph of the report of the police chief is not only in obvious contradiction with the current legislation, but the police chief, in a manner of official communication which has not hitherto been usual in the communication between a lower level and the immediate superiors, also effectively denies obedience by using an inappropriate tone when he stresses that he ‘can take orders solely and exclusively from the Directorate for Public Order and Security in Zagreb, and no one else.’” Similar letters point to frequent frictions between the administrative and the Ustasha authorities, but the ministries usually ignored such complaints.

Persons were often detained completely arbitrarily. Thus, in a letter to the Ministry of the Interior, the county head in Brčko complains about the fact that members of the Ustasha camp in Brčko perform many functions that fall within the competence of the ordinary administrative and judicial authorities, including “evictions from residential premises of certain persons and families although that, too, falls within the competence of the Ministry at the proposal of the administrative authorities”, just as “arrests are made and arrested persons are held in prison for a prolonged period of time without them filing reports to that effect to the ordinary authorities for further action”.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ See VA, NDH, Box 197, f. 4, doc. 28/7/9.

⁷⁷ The administrative division of the NDH into so-called “great districts” was introduced by the Law Decree on Great Districts (*Zakonska odredba o velikim župama*), *Narodne novine* no. 49, 10 June 1941.

⁷⁸ Letter of the Vrhbosna Great District Prefect no. 892/41 of 14 October 1941, Sarajevo, VA, NDH, Box 179, f. 34, doc. 6/1.

⁷⁹ “In § 113 of the Code of Judicial Criminal Procedure, it is clearly defined in which case a suspect can be held in custody; § 116 stipulates that the police authority shall immediately, and no later than within 24 hours, interrogate the detained person; while § 119 of the same code sets out when a decision on investigative arrest is to be taken and who has the competence over it. The report also shows that there were also such persons who were arrested on the orders of the Ustasha Commission, without the material evidence of their guilt being submitted to the police, and despite that they are kept in detention. There is no doubt that in such cases one was supposed to act most rapidly and with necessary caution, and if such persons were deprived of their liberty, then they should not still be kept in prison, if nothing was submitted against them, or if there is no material evidence proving their guilt.”

⁸⁰ See *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 89.

Although the decrees on the establishment of courts martial and mobile courts martial contained a catalogue of criminal offences which these courts could try, it is obvious that this *numerus clausus* ceased being sufficient as soon as courts martial began operating, since the *Law Decree amending the Law Decree on Courts Martial and the Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial (Zakonska odredba o promjeni zakonske odredbe o prijekom sudu i zakonske odredbe o pokretnom prijekom sudu)* of 28 June 1941⁸¹ provided for the possibility given to the state prosecutor to also prosecute before those special courts anyone who committed *any other criminal offence* laid down in the Penal Code, “for whom the state prosecutor has proposed, with the approval of the Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs, to be brought before a court martial or before a mobile court martial”. Indeed, it was thus made possible for these bodies to act arbitrarily in almost any situation provided that certain formal prerequisites were met, regardless of the division of jurisdiction between the systems of ordinary and extraordinary courts laid down by the decrees.

Likewise, although the judgments of extraordinary people’s courts, and permanent and mobile courts martial, could not be set aside by legal remedies, the possibility was introduced in the meantime for “the Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs to refer back any criminal matter, which was finally settled by virtue of a conviction, or a conclusion of an extraordinary people’s court, a court martial or a mobile court martial, to the *Grand Extraordinary People’s Court*” to be heard again.⁸² Contrary to what one might think, this novelty was not introduced in order to give a possibility to wrongfully convicted persons to have their case reopened or, if the death penalty had been executed, to rehabilitate them; instead, it was done to prevent the immediate release of defendants who had received acquittals.⁸³ Grand Extraordinary People’s Courts were established in Zagreb and Sarajevo, with the possibility to hold hearings, if necessary, in other places as well. This court consisted of five judges, who tried by applying the procedure provided for courts martial. Also, in April 1942, the possibility was introduced of applying for the protection of legality (nullity appeals for law defence against final and binding convictions, or conclusions of the Grand Extraordi-

⁸¹ See *Narodne novine* no. 62, 28 June 1941.

⁸² Law Decree amending and supplementing the Law Decree on the Defence of the Nation and the State of 17 April 1941; the Law Decree on Courts Martial of 17 May 1941; and the Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial of 24 June 1941, *Narodne novine* no. 80, 19 July 1941.

⁸³ In order to prevent this, the obligation was introduced for all extraordinary courts to submit the case files after completing hearings and taking decisions to the Minister for assessment and decision (see *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 363, Letter of the Ministry of Justice and Religious Affairs of 18 December 1941). The composition of the Grand Extraordinary People’s Court also facilitated desired outcomes of the proceedings, since three out of its five members were Ustasha officials (see Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna država Hrvatska*, 160):

nary Court, an extraordinary people's court, a court martial or a mobile court martial) by the General Attorney, in the cases of violations of substantive law.⁸⁴

The jurisdiction of courts martial and mobile courts was constantly extended to include new offences.⁸⁵ Thus, under the *Law Decree amending the Law Decree on Courts Martial and the Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial* of 28 June 1941,⁸⁶ put within the jurisdiction of courts martial were also offences which were related to enemy propaganda, i.e. writing, printing, publishing or disseminating books, newspapers, proclamations, leaflets or images, or making or spreading false statements aimed against state institutions or the Ustasha movement. The breadth of its application was particularly impacted upon by a decree which provided for the punishment of those persons as well who "had on them a leaflet, a book or a newspaper whose content constitutes communist propaganda, or any other criminal offence against the survival of the state or its order, or against the state authorities, or against the Poglavnik, or against those substituting him under the constitution, or against the Ustasha movement, or against Ustasha forces."

For the purpose of maintaining the atmosphere of terror, the ban on disseminating or keeping propaganda material did not only refer to printed material. Moreover, it was not only radio broadcasts against the existing order that were "outlawed" – listening to "the news broadcast by radio stations based in countries that are in enmity with the NDH, or with any of the Axis great powers" or "which are hostile to the current order in the NDH" was also banned.⁸⁷ The death penalty was also pronounced against those who failed to report a change of residence within three days, and that obligation pertained equally to landlords, building superintendents and cotenants in whose house such a person was found.⁸⁸

The expansion of the jurisdiction of permanent and mobile courts martial was related to all aspects of social life; consequently, almost everyone was potentially under threat of capital punishment. Thus, in September 1941, a new law decree⁸⁹ criminalized a whole new range of behaviours and made them punishable by the death penalty only. So, anyone who "for foodstuffs, clothing or any item belonging to basic necessities, or for their labour needed to produce these items, re-

⁸⁴ See *Narodne novine* no. 95, 29 April 1942.

⁸⁵ Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne države Hrvatske*, 68.

⁸⁶ *Narodne novine* no. 68, 5 July 1941.

⁸⁷ Law Decree supplementing the Law Decree on Courts Martial of 17 May 1941, and the Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial of 24 June 1941, *Narodne novine* no. 72, 10 July 1941.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Law Decree on the Extension of the Jurisdiction of Courts Martial and Mobile Courts Martial (*Zakonska odredba o proširenju nadležnosti priekog suda i pokretnog priekog suda*), *Narodne novine* no. 134, 23 September 1941.

quests or charges a price in the amount which, as a general price, could undermine the well-being of the country or the population, disrupt the equilibrium of economic life or the social order” was to be brought before a court martial or a mobile court martial. This decree was almost non-implementable due to the scope of the above description, because every resident of the NDH could fall under it. A failure to hand over surplus of wheat, corn, rye, and other grains yields to the authorities, its disposal by the producer or the miller, or sale by bakers or other merchants at a higher price than the one set for bread or flour, also became punishable. Similar rules were further established for exports and illicit sales of cattle, calves, pigs, sheep, goats, horses, and processed animal products, and for taking precious metals, coins, and other valuables out of the country. And as if such a broadly defined criminal zone of illicit trade was not enough, those persons were also put within the jurisdiction of courts martial and mobile courts martial (completely vaguely) “who in any way whatsoever violate or undermine the economic well-being of the Croatian nation or the social order, even if the offence has remained an attempt” (Article 8). In addition to the punishability of an attempt, as a stage of an offence, the jurisdiction of courts martial also covered accomplices (“whoever incites, induces, or assists the commission of any criminal offence, provided for in this law decree”) in the mentioned offences (Article 9).⁹⁰

From 1944, the jurisdiction of courts martial and mobile courts martial was extended to include crimes against property committed in the circumstances of a threat of war or during the periods of air raid alarms.⁹¹ Besides direct perpetrators of these property crimes and their accomplices, the punishment also affected those hiding the stolen property (Article 2).

Collective punishment in the NDH

One of the fundamental principles of any criminal legislation is punishment based on the established individual responsibility, which prevents the punishment of an individual for offences committed by other persons. Contrary to that, the criminal justice system of the NDH provided for collective punishment as well. Collective responsibility was explicitly imposed on the Jews, based merely and solely on their ethnic and religious affiliation. Thus, the extraordinary law decree of 26 June 1941 noted that since “Jews spread disinformation aimed at

⁹⁰ In order to inform the general public about such broadly defined jurisdiction of courts martial and mobile courts martial, all daily and weekly newspapers were under an obligation to publish the text of this Decree on the front page of two consecutive issues, while the radio stations had to air it several times a day (see the Order of the Ministry of the Interior of 22 September, *Narodne novine* no. 134, 23 September 1941).

⁹¹ See the Law Decree on the Extension of the Jurisdiction of Courts Martial and Mobile Courts Martial, *Narodne novine* no. 46, 26 February 1944.

disturbing the public, and by using their well-known speculative methods hinder and obstruct the provision of supplies to the population, they shall be considered to be collectively responsible for that, and therefore proceedings shall be conducted against them, and based on their criminal liability they shall be deported to open-air detention facilities”.⁹² This decree constituted the continuation of the genocidal policies of the NDH authorities, under which the Jews had been forbidden to leave their places of residence, their movement was restricted, their assets systematically plundered, conclusion of legal transactions limited and their layoffs legalized. Pursuant to this decree with the force of law, the Ustasha authorities were making mass-scale arrests of Jews, who were temporarily brought to Zagreb, as a rule, and then, through Gospić, transported by train to camps (Jadovno, Pag, Jastrebarsko, Kruščica near Travnik and Jasenovac).⁹³ The last wave of large-scale group arrests took place in the summer of 1942.⁹⁴

There were also other decrees as well which, in terms of their scope, circumvented the (already) minimum substantive and procedural prerequisites for the operation of courts martial, and allowed the imposition of the death penalty and execution by a firing squad without any previously conducted proceedings if the perpetrator of an attack on life or property was not found. Thus, the *Law Decree on the Procedure in case of Communist Attacks, if the Offender is not Found* (*Zakonska odredba o postupku kod komunističkih napadaja, kad se počinitelj ne pronadje*) of October 1941 stipulated that “when a communist attack on life or property results in the death of one or more persons, and the perpetrator is not found within ten days of the committed act, for each person that was killed, the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate for Public Order and Security in Zagreb, shall order and carry out execution by a firing squad of ten persons from among the ranks of leading communists, as identified by the police”.⁹⁵ This decree was inspired by similar retaliatory measures implemented by the Nazis in the occupied territories, although in its application it was not restricted to communists, but was predominantly applied to the Serb population, regardless of their ideological orientation.⁹⁶ This is corroborated *inter alia* by the fact that the prerequisite for the application of this Decree was that direct perpetrators were

⁹² Extraordinary Law Decree and Command (*Izvanredna zakonska odredba i zapovjed*), *Narodne novine* no. 60, 26 June 1941.

⁹³ Lengel-Krizman, “Prilog proučavanju terora u tzv. NDH”, 8. Women and children were mostly interned in Kruščica, Lobar (near Zlatar), Gornja Rijeka (near Križevci), Tenja (near Osijek) and Djakovo.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 9.

⁹⁵ *Narodne novine* no. 142, 2 October 1941. In April 1943, the Decree was amended in such a manner that retaliation was made possible after the lapse of just three (instead of ten) days (see *Narodne novine* no. 82, 9 April 1943).

⁹⁶ See e.g. *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 329.

unknown,⁹⁷ leaving the possibility of arbitrarily including anyone into its scope. An initiative for retaliation could also come from a local command, and persons to be executed could also be selected from among those who were imprisoned on any ground (hostages).⁹⁸

This Decree was supplanted by another decree at end-1943, which equally contravened the criminal law principles, namely the *Law Decree on Protective Measures in Case of an Attack and an Act of Sabotage against Public Order and Security* (*Zakonska odredba o zaštitnim mjerama zbog napadaja i čina sabotaze proti javnom redu i sigurnosti*).⁹⁹ An administrative body, the Ministry of the Interior, Chief Directorate for Public Order and Security, could “prescribe and apply protective measures provided for in this law decree, namely in cases where public order and security are disturbed by an attack or act of sabotage in which a person was killed, wounded or abducted, or public or private property was destroyed or damaged, and all that may be undertaken if the direct perpetrator is not known or cannot be arrested” (Article 1). “Protective measures” mentioned above included the “execution by a firing squad, and in particularly difficult cases hanging, deportation to labour camps, and confiscation of property which could accompany any of the previous two measures. The prerequisite for the application of these protective measures was that persons against whom they were applied either assisted in an act of sabotage or, regardless of their contribution as accomplices in the act of sabotage, if it was established that they were “persons identified by the police as active communists or outlaws” (Article 3, paragraph 1).

It should be pointed out that these, formally speaking, were, in fact, not criminal sanctions that would be imposed based on the formally conducted criminal proceedings, although the final outcome of the sanctions as a rule was death. Similar to penal law, where the notion of “protective measures” or “security measures” is usually associated with the type of sanctions whose grounds for application imply a certain risk posed by the perpetrator of a criminal offence, and the elimination of that risk by using a specific measure, a similar motive for their introduction can also be recognized here, except that the elimination of risks was achieved solely by the physical elimination of a person. Furthermore, while in the case of “active communists or outlaws” no connection was necessary between the committed act of sabotage and the implementation of a measure, in the case of aiding an act of sabotage, too, the evidentiary process was extremely simplified, because “the police authorities were establishing whether a person assisted in the carrying out of an attack or an act of sabotage”. This Law Decree also provided for collective responsibility. More specifically, protective measures

⁹⁷ Srpak, “Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske”, 1129.

⁹⁸ See e.g. *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 345, Telegram of the Second Home Guard Corps of 28 November 1941.

⁹⁹ *Narodne novine* no. 249, 30 October 1943.

could also apply to the spouse, parents and children of aiders and abettors, and communists and outlaws, “if it has been established that they were aware, or that they should have been aware, that their spouses or children or parents were helping in the commission of the act referred to in § 1” (Article 5). Furthermore, although the punishment based on the “ten for one” proportion was abandoned in principle, the inhabitants of the places in which an act of sabotage was carried out could receive a collective fine or another pecuniary penalty. Besides, deportation to the camps was almost unavoidable, since it could also be implemented with respect to those persons “against whom there is a strong suspicion that they assisted in the performance of the acts specified in § 1” (Article 8). After all, as we shall see, deportation to concentration camps could also be used as a form of collective punishment – in relation to family members of alleged outlaws.

Execution of criminal sanctions in the NDH

When the NDH was created, it had four correctional facilities for men (in Lepoglava, Sremska Mitrovica, Stara Gradiška and Zenica), organized on a progressive (Irish)¹⁰⁰ model,¹⁰¹ and one for women (in Zagreb). After the establishment of a concentration camp in Stara Gradiška,¹⁰² the prison in that place was no longer used for serving regular sentences. Regular sentences that consisted in deprivation of liberty (prison, high-security prison, penitentiary, and penal servitude) were executed in prisons in Sremska Mitrovica, Lepoglava and Zenica when convicted persons were males, while female convicts were sent to serve their sentence in the women’s prison, which was transferred from Zagreb to Slavenska Požega a few months after the establishment of the new government.¹⁰³ Only persons sentenced to imprisonment for less than one year in a prison or a high-security prison served their sentence in the prison of the court that had handed down the first instance judgment.

At the time of the establishment of the NDH, inmates of correctional facilities included both those convicted of ordinary crimes, and persons convicted of political criminal offences.¹⁰⁴ By far the largest number of prisoners (about

¹⁰⁰ A progressive system implies a gradual improvement of the status of convicted persons serving their sentence depending on their conduct. Compared to the English variant of the system, the Irish model also included a “Department of Trusties” before release on parole (Djordje Ignjatović, *Kriminologija* 13th ed. [Belgrade: Pravni fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2016], 177–178).

¹⁰¹ Kovačić, “Kazneno zakonodavstvo i sustav kaznionica”, 288.

¹⁰² See *Narodne novine* no. 40, 18 February 1942.

¹⁰³ See the Schedule for sending convicts to correctional facilities to serve sentences of deprivation of liberty, of courts and of mobile courts martial, *Narodne novine* no. 135, 24 September 1941.

¹⁰⁴ Kovačić, “Kazneno zakonodavstvo i sustav kaznionica”, 289, states that after the establishment of the NDH there were about 1,000 inmates in Lepoglava, including about 70 per-

90 %) was sentenced to penal servitude, while the number of other types of sentences involving deprivation of liberty (except for penal servitude for life) was negligible. In terms of religion, the composition corresponded to the respective shares in the population of Roman Catholics, the Orthodox and Muslims in the territory of the NDH.¹⁰⁵ The structure of criminal offences for which sentences were served, most of the prisoners were convicted of offences against life and limb (nearly 50 %) and of crimes against property (over 40 %), while the persons deprived of liberty under the Law Decree on the Defence of the People and the State accounted for only about 1 %. This figure, of course, is not surprising, since the persons convicted pursuant to this Decree had already been sentenced to death and executed; hence it was not possible to find them in the correctional facility where a sentence of deprivation of liberty was served.

Military (Home Guard and Ustasha) criminal law

The Serbian and Yugoslav Law on the Organization of Military Courts of 27 January 1901 (as amended on 20 March 1909) was amended by the *Law Decree* of 27 June 1941, while military substantive criminal law (Military Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia of 11 February 1930, as amended on 2 December 1931) was also modified by the relevant *Law Decree*.¹⁰⁶ In both cases, relevant terms used in the Serbian and Yugoslav legislation were only replaced by corresponding Croatian terms. Essential amendments were first made to the Serbian and Yugoslav Law on Military Criminal Procedure of 15 February 1901 (as amended on 20 March 1909, 16 October 1915 and 20 March 1919)¹⁰⁷ only to introduce after that amendments to substantive military criminal law as well, which implied dramatic increases in the prescribed penalties.¹⁰⁸ *Home Guard courts* as first instance courts and the *Supreme Home Guard Court* were established,¹⁰⁹ but in late 1942 the Home Guard courts were renamed to courts of the *Armed Forces*.¹¹⁰

perpetrators of political criminal offences, largely communists. Most of the latter were soon murdered.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 293.

¹⁰⁶ *Narodne novine* no. 62, 28 June 1941.

¹⁰⁷ See *Narodne novine* no. 64, 1 July 1941.

¹⁰⁸ See the Law Decree on Amendments to the Military Penal Code of 11 February 1930 and the Law on Amendments to the Military Penal Code of 2 December 1931, *Narodne novine* no. 142, 2 October 1941.

¹⁰⁹ See *Narodne novine* no. 11, 14 January 1942.

¹¹⁰ See *Narodne novine* no. 270, 27 November 1942.

Faced with a growing number of people avoiding military duties in Home Guard units,¹¹¹ the Poglavnik introduced *Home Guard courts martial*.¹¹² In addition to the state of war, Home Guard courts martial could also be established, “on an exceptional basis, in a regular situation, but only when the military is used to quell a rebellion, unrest or disorder”. Criminal offences which entailed the imposition of the death penalty (by a firing squad) included the failure to perform Home Guard duties in the war theatre, unauthorized absence from the unit in order to avoid combat, the spreading of defeatism in the ranks, the non-execution of orders accompanied by harmful consequences, participation in a mutiny, etc. A Home Guard senior officer, “taking into account the impact of the offence on the discipline, security and general morale of the Home Guard”, issued a decision (within 48 hours) on whether a particular case was to be heard by an ordinary Home Guard court or a Home Guard court martial. The proceedings before a Home Guard court martial were regulated in much more detail compared to the other courts martial that existed in the NDH.

In July 1942, Home Guard courts were replaced by *war tribunals*.¹¹³ In terms of their basic characteristics, penal offences which these courts tried and the prescribed procedure were consistent with the rules laid down for the Home Guard courts martial. War tribunals could also only impose the death penalty (Article 13, paragraph 1), and no legal remedy was permitted against their decision. By virtue of the Poglavnik’s decision, those members of the armed forces who had committed any offence laid down by the 1930 Military Criminal Code of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, or by the basic criminal legislation, could also be brought before a war tribunal.¹¹⁴ If a war tribunal did not hand down a convic-

¹¹¹ Initially Serbs, Jews and Roma were barred from membership in the Home Guard units. Slavko Kvaternik, commander-in-chief of the NDH Armed Forces, threatened every commanding officer who should act contrary to this order with being sent to court and tried for treason, cf. Nikica Barić, “Položaj Srba u domobranstvu Nezavisne Države Hrvatske, 1941.–1945.”, *Polemos* 9–10 (2002), 163. In June 1942 the Ministry of the Home Guard established Home Guard Labour Units (DORA), which were composed of Serbs and commanded by Croats. Since these units had to perform labour rather than combat missions, their members were not armed, apart from officers and non-commissioned officers who were Croats. Members of these units were privileged in the sense that their family members could be released from concentration camps (ibid. 168).

¹¹² See the Law Decree on Home Guard Courts Martial (*Zakonska odredba o domobranskim priekim sudovima*), *Narodne novine* no. 25, 30 January 1942.

¹¹³ See the Law Decree on War Tribunals (*Zakonska odredba o ratnim sudovima*), *Narodne novine* no. 148, 6 July 1942. See also the Order of the Minister of the Croatian Home Guard of 10 July 1942 no. III-2206-1942 concerning the beginning of the operation of war tribunals, *Narodne novine* no. 158, 17 July 1942.

¹¹⁴ Law Decree amending and supplementing the Law Decree on War Tribunals (*Zakonska odredba o promjeni i nadopuni zakonske odredbe o ratnim sudovima*), *Narodne novine* no. 152,

tion in a criminal matter, the case file had to be submitted to the *Higher War Tribunal* seated in Zagreb.¹¹⁵

In mid-1943, the following courts were integrated into unitary military courts: *war tribunals*, the regional *war tribunal* and the *summary court martial*.¹¹⁶ War tribunals were established for each brigade, division, and military region. The establishment of a summary court martial in a particular case implied: that an offence was committed that deserves the death penalty, that it was necessary to adjudicate without delay, that no judicial superior as a person who, as a rule, directed judicial proceedings was available, and that witnesses and other evidence were immediately available (Article 8). Members of the panel of judges were from the armed forces. The procedure was regulated in great detail, but this was not true of the summary courts martial which, apart from the rules on the conduct of the trial and the right of the accused to be heard (Article 19, items 1–3), could define “the manner in which they are to proceed at their own discretion”.

These courts applied the relevant regulations of the pre-war military criminal legislation, which were defined for the case of war, or which pertained to the actions of military personnel on the battlefield. However, in the interest of preserving discipline and morale in the army, which were obviously undermined in the meantime, some vague incriminations were also introduced, implying stepped up repression targeting members of military units. Thus, for example, the *Law Decree amending and supplementing the Military Penal Code of 11 February 1930, with all its subsequent amendments and supplements (Zakonska odredba o promjeni i nadopuni vojnog kaznenog zakonika od 11. veljače 1930. sa svim kasnijim promjenama i nadopunama)*,¹¹⁷ allowed with respect to any committed criminal offence the “imposition of the highest measure of the defined type of penalty, by exceeding the prescribed sentence for the predicate criminal act, or the imposition of penal servitude for a prolonged period of time or for life, or the imposition of imprisonment in a penitentiary of up to 20 years, or of the death penalty, especially regarding a criminal offence against discipline or caused by cowardice,

10 July 1942. The proceedings before the war tribunals were modified more substantially by the Law Decree amending and supplementing the Law Decree on War Tribunals, *Narodne novine* no. 190, 25 August 1942.

¹¹⁵ See the Law Decree on the Higher War Tribunal (*Zakonska odredba o Višem ratnom sudu*), *Narodne novine* no. 193, 28 August 1942.

¹¹⁶ See the Law Decree on the Establishment of Unitary Military Courts (*Zakonska odredba o osnivanju jedinstvenih vojnih sudova*), *Narodne novine* no. 87, 15 April 1943, and the Law Decree on the Organization of Military Courts and on Proceedings Before Military Courts (*Zakonska odredba o ustrojstvu vojnih sudova i o postupku pred vojnim sudovima*), *Narodne novine* no. 168, 27 July 1943.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

if this proves necessary for maintaining discipline or security of the relevant military unit". Even more detailed increases in the penalties were defined by amendments to the Military Penal Code for cases of unauthorized absence from the army, desertion, and other offences harmful to the armed forces.¹¹⁸

The Ustashes were exempt from the jurisdiction of the military Home Guard courts. Specifically, the *Ustasha Disciplinary and Penal Court* was set up in Zagreb in August 1941,¹¹⁹ as a court with jurisdiction for punishing crimes and offences provided for by the criminal and military criminal legislation, perpetrated by members of the Ustasha units. This legislation also applied if a crime was committed together with members of Home Guard units. The following penalties were prescribed: the death penalty, penal servitude for life, penal servitude, penitentiary, high-security prison, prison, stripping off ranks and removal from the Ustasha ranks (Article 3). It was stipulated that the criminal (penal) legislation or military substantive criminal legislation was to apply *mutatis mutandis*, while the rules of procedure were defined in the decree itself, but in very broad terms. No legal remedy against the decision of this court was permitted either; still, the Poglavnik could commute the sentence through a pardon, or give complete or partial forgiveness. In late 1942, members of the Ustasha units also came under the jurisdiction of the courts of the armed forces, having jurisdiction over Home Guard units as well, except in cases prosecuted by war tribunals or courts martial, and following that, the Ustasha Disciplinary and Penal Court was disbanded.¹²⁰ Although it is possible to come across decisions of the Ustasha courts martial ruling on crimes of their members committed against civilians, the massive number of situations in which there was no reaction suggests that the institution of proceedings depended on moral beliefs of the unit's superior officer rather than being a standard procedure.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ See the Law Decree amending and supplementing the Military Penal Code of 11 February 1930, with all its subsequent amendments and supplements, *Narodne novine* no. 194, 26 August 1943.

¹¹⁹ See the Law Decree on the Ustasha Disciplinary and Penal Court in Zagreb (*Zakonska odredba o Ustaškom stegovnom i kaznenom sudu u Zagrebu*), *Narodne novine* no. 108, 22 August 1941. In November 1941, a new decree on the Ustasha justice system was passed. See the Law Decree on the Ustasha Disciplinary and Penal Court in Zagreb, *Narodne novine* no. 196, 5 December 1941.

¹²⁰ See the Law Decree on the Termination of Operation of the Ustasha Disciplinary and Penal Court in Zagreb (*Zakonska odredba o prestanku rada Ustaškog stegovnog i kaznenog suda u Zagrebu*), *Narodne novine* no. 48, 27 February 1943.

¹²¹ Thus, in one case, proceedings were conducted before the Ustasha court martial against a member of the 1st Lika Ust. Battalion who had committed a rape in the presence of the victim's mother, mother-in-law and sister. After the criminal report and the proceedings conducted before the Ustasha court martial, the defendant was sentenced to death and executed.

It is interesting to note that, at least in principle, *command liability* of the Ustasha commanders was also prescribed, although it is not possible to infer from the wording of the provision that the legislator had criminal liability in mind. Indeed, anyone was facing the possibility of being tried before a court martial “who has ever committed any violence whatsoever against life or property of any citizen or member of the NDH”. In this regard, it was stipulated that “all ranking officials of Ustasha organizations, and all commanders and deputy commanders of the Ustasha Militia, shall be personally responsible for any incident that would occur in the above sense, and they shall instruct all Ustasha organizations, and bodies of the Ustasha Militia that it is their duty to prevent any kind of incident in the above sense by using all available means. Any member of the Ustasha organization or Militia who is a perpetrator of such crime, shall be immediately executed by a firing squad pursuant to the decision of the Ustasha court.”¹²² In that sense, the *Law Decree on Courts Martial* and the *Law Decree on Mobile Courts Martial* were also amended so as to prescribe the (death) penalty for those who, after 10 April 1941, committed the offence of “having enlisted, or enlisting, as a member of any Ustasha unit, or of having worn, or wearing, Ustasha uniform, without having an honourable and impeccable track record required for an Ustasha.”¹²³

Deportation to concentration camps as a parapenal measure

In November 1941, the *Law Decree on Deportation of Disloyal and Dangerous Persons to Forced Confinement in Concentration and Labour Camps* (*Zakonska odredba o upućivanju nepoćudnih i pogibeljnih osoba na prisilni boravak u sabirne i radne logore*) was adopted.¹²⁴ “Disloyal individuals who are a danger to public order and security, or who could undermine the peace of mind and tranquillity of the Croatian people, or achievements of the liberation struggle of the Croatian Ustasha movement, may be subject to forced internment in concentration and labour camps. Authorized to establish such camps in certain places in the NDH shall be the Ustasha Supervisory Service” (Article 1), which, unlike the

See Letter of the Commander of the Utinja Brigade no. 300 dated 8 May 1942, VA, NDH, Box 113, f. 19, doc. 58.

¹²² Extraordinary Law Decree and Command, *Narodne novine* no. 60, 26 June 1941.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Narodne novine* no. 188, 26 November 1941. The distinction between concentration and labour camps was based on the fact that the concentration camps were intended for temporary detaining persons deprived of liberty until their transfer to the final destination, while the labour camps in practice were sites of mass execution. During 1941 and 1942 in most “labour” camps no work was organized at all (see Lengel-Krizman, “Prilog proučavanju terora u tzv. NDH”, 4).

Directorate for Public Order and Security that performed regular police tasks, performed the tasks of the (secret) police of the Ustasha movement, similar to those carried out by the German Reichssicherheitshauptamt.¹²⁵ The length of this administrative and penal measure, as stipulated by the decree, was defined as a range from three months to three years. The procedure was carried out by the Ustasha police, and no legal remedy against the decision on forced confinement was allowed. The information that someone was “disloyal” or “dangerous” was obtained from reports filed by the administrative and self-government authorities, but above all by the institutions of the Ustasha movement. The amendments to this Decree of January 1945 also introduced the possibility to confiscate movable or immovable property of persons sent to a camp (as well as of those who were already there), “provided that its value is not higher than 500,000,000 kuna”.¹²⁶

Since it was an administrative and penal measure, the deportation to concentration camps did not necessarily involve previously conducted proceedings for a committed criminal offence; the case could be about the violation of any order of the administrative authorities. This is corroborated, for example, by the *Law Decree on Placing Wheat, Corn, Leguminous Crops, and Potato Under the State Monopoly (Zakonska odredba o stavljanju žitarica, kukuruza, mahunastih plodova i krumpira pod monopolnu raspoložbu države)*,¹²⁷ under which a failure to comply with orders of the Minister of the National Economy could result, in addition to fines and prison sentences, in the implementation of the provisions of the Decree on the “deportation of disloyal and dangerous persons to forced internment in concentration camps” (Article 11, paragraph 1). The regulations of a similar nature were often accompanied, as indeed in this case, by a clause under which it was possible to arbitrarily bring an offender before a (mobile) court martial.¹²⁸ Thus, this Decree, in addition to “regular” misdemeanour sanctions for non-compliance with the issued orders of the administrative authorities in the form of fines and imprisonment for a shorter term, provides for one broadly

¹²⁵ Kovačić, “Osnivanje župskih redarstvenih oblasti”, 258, 261. Unlike the Ustasha Supervisory Service, which had virtually unlimited powers, the Directorate for Public Order and Security had limited rights (ibid. 275). These two institutions were merged in early 1943 into the Chief Directorate for Public Order and Security.

¹²⁶ *Narodne novine* no. 10, 13 January 1945.

¹²⁷ In the subtitle: “on the protection of the collection, storage and processing of agricultural products, and the punishment of acts against food security” (*Narodne novine* no. 143, 26 June 1943).

¹²⁸ “If any of these criminal acts violates public morality, because of a heavy breach of the public trust which the offender enjoys in his service, or because of official responsibility of the offender, or if that act seriously threatens important government tasks, due to the magnitude of the damage inflicted, or the danger caused to food security, such offender may be brought before a mobile court martial” (see Article 11, paragraph 3).

defined criminal offence as well, which allows punishment by the death penalty. "Any resistance to the discharge of the duty to surrender agricultural products referred to in §§ 1 and 4, and malicious acts and omissions, directed against food security, especially interfering and impeding agricultural work, unauthorized seizure, damage, destruction and burning of crops and final agricultural produce and their products, agricultural tools, machinery and equipment, damage, burning down or demolition of buildings, unauthorized removal or destruction of cattle, carts, machinery or other assets... shall be put in the jurisdiction of the mobile court martial" (Article 15). It is almost impossible to meaningfully distinguish between "any resistance to the discharge of the duty to surrender agricultural products" as a basis for launching the mechanism of the court martial, and "violations of the provisions of this law decree and provisions of the orders issued pursuant to it" as the basis for imposition of administrative and penal sanctions.

The deportation to concentration camps, as already noted, was not based on a criminal conviction. Such a penalty was not prescribed by the criminal legislation, nor was the establishing of guilt in a conducted criminal proceeding a prerequisite for deportation. Moreover, since the regular outcome of the conducted proceedings before courts martial and mobile courts martial was the imposition of the death penalty, and if, exceptionally, the proceedings before the above courts ended in any other way, at the end of the day it was difficult for defendants to avoid the death penalty, because a defendant could be sent to a concentration camp as a *suspicious* person. Thus, for example, in one case the defendant was accused of shouting "Long live the King, long live Queen Mary and down with Pavelić" while passing by the post office building in Omarska on 24 December 1941. At the hearing held on 16 October 1942 before a mobile court martial the defendant was acquitted, "because the act was committed in the state of drunkenness". However, the Minister of Justice, by virtue of his decision of 27 November 1942 (no. T. 890/1942.-2), ordered the court to hand over the acquitted to the District Police Authority "in order to send him to a concentration and labour camp as a suspicious person".¹²⁹ We can find an identical sequence of actions in the document of the mobile court martial in Banja Luka of 13 February 1942, according to which eight persons were exempt from responsibility "for participating in the attack on the gendarmerie station in Krupa on the Vrbas on 4 August 1941, and cutting telegraph wires in the village of Rekačica. The evidence presented in the conducted hearing was not sufficient to prove that but since all of them were extremely suspicious, Mr. Minister of Justice decided, by order no. 8661/42 of 7 February 1942, for the above accused to be handed over to the aforementioned institution for the purpose of their transfer

¹²⁹ VA, NDH, Box 162, f. 8, doc. 1/3.

to a concentration camp”.¹³⁰ Sometimes suspects were transferred to camps even before any hearing whatsoever was conducted. Thus, in one case two persons were “extremely suspicious of having attached to the window of the inn at the railway station in Piskavica 1 a communist leaflet addressed to the soldiers and officers of the Croatian army. They have not been not tried at all but, pursuant to the order of Mr. Minister of Justice dated 11 February 1942 no. 9220/42-VII-140-1942, they are to be transferred as suspicious to the concentration camp Jasenovac”.¹³¹

Alleged communist activities were often invoked as the grounds for deportation to concentration camps, although the fact that this mainly affected Serbs and Jews raises the question of the actual motives for such actions. Thus, under the order of the Directorate for Public Order and Security for the NDH dated 30 July 1941, all great districts were instructed “in the interest of public security, to deport to the concentration camp of the District Police Directorate in Gospić all Jews (Christianized or not) and Serbs (who have converted to Catholicism or not) who have been detained under suspicion of communism and against whom no evidence is otherwise available so as to bring them before a court martial”.¹³² On the other hand, when it comes to other nationalities, sympathizing with the communist ideology was not always enough to send someone to a concentration camp,¹³³ although the Ustasha government generally did not have much understanding for the Croats or Muslims who were sympathizers of the communist movement.

Deportation to a concentration camp did not have to be based on the suspicion that the deported had committed a criminal offence; instead, as we have seen, by applying the model of collective responsibility, it was enough to be a *family member* of the accused. This was facilitated by the *Law Decree on Combating Violent Criminal Acts against the State, Individual Persons or Property* (*Zakonska odredba o suzbijanju nasilnih kažnjivih čina proti državi, pojedinim*

¹³⁰ Letter of the President of the Mobile Court martial (no. 38/1941), VA, NDH, Box 161, f. 4, doc. 25/1.

¹³¹ Letter of the State Attorney of the mobile court martial in Banja Luka (no. 303/41), VA, NDH, Box. 161a, f. 1, doc. 32. Until their transfer to concentration camps, the mentioned persons were kept in detention (Order on detention no. 5293 of 18 February 1942, VA, NDH, Box 161a, f. 1, doc. 31/5).

¹³² See *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. nos. 170 and 178.

¹³³ “All Communists who are Roman Catholics, Muslims and Evangelicals who are in prisons in those areas, should not until further notice be sent to concentration camps without the permission of this Directorate but are to be kept in prisons” (Circular of the Directorate for Public Order and Security of 14 August 1941), *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 214.

osobama ili imovini) of July 1942.¹³⁴ “Certain family members of persons who, on their own or as part of armed groups, violate public order and security, or threaten the peace of mind and tranquillity of the Croatian people, or commit a violent criminal act against the state, individual persons or property, as well as family members of persons who have fled their homes, may be sent to forced confinement in concentration camps” (Article 1). Family members were understood to mean the spouse, parents, children, and siblings who lived in the same household. Initially, the decision on the transfer to the camps was made by the Ministry of the Interior, Directorate for Public Order and Security, and then (as early as August the same year) by the Ustasha Supervisory Service.¹³⁵ A report had to be filed by the administrative authorities and institutions of the Ustasha movement, while the administrative and penal procedure was conducted by the police authority. No legal remedy or complaint to the administrative court was permitted against this decision. The length of detention in concentration camps could be set within the range from six months to three years. Family members sent to the camps could be deprived of “all their movable and immovable properties in favour of the NDH” (Article 7). Thus, in one case, family members of the “fugitive and notorious Chetnik leader Rade Radić from Jošavka”, namely his wife and children (high school students), were sent to the camp. “There was no real evidence against them to prove that they had taken part in a Chetnik operation, but since their husband and father was a leader of the Chetniks, Mr. Minister of Justice ordered their transfer to the Jasenovac concentration camp as his family members, until the surrender of their husband and father Rade Radić to the authorities, or until it has been unequivocally established that he was killed or died.”¹³⁶

Deportation to a concentration camp could be based on the violation of a whole range of regulations. Thus, the *Law Decree on Extraordinary Measures*

¹³⁴ *Narodne novine* no. 162, 22 July 1942.

¹³⁵ See the Law Decree amending and supplementing the Law Decree on Combating Violent Criminal Acts against the State, Individual Persons or Property (*Zakonska odredba o promjeni i nadopuni zakonske odredbe o suzbijanju nasilnih kažnjivih čina proti državi, pojednim osobama ili imovini*), *Narodne novine* no. 174, 4 August 1942. After disbanding of the Ustasha Supervisory Service, its tasks were taken over by the Command of the Poglavnik's Bodyguard Brigades – security service (see the Law Decree on the Disbanding of the Ustasha Supervisory Service (*Zakonska odredba o ukidanju Ustaške Nadzorne Službe*), *Narodne novine* no. 17, 22 January 1943). Members of this newly-established service were tried by the special court of the Poglavnik's Bodyguard Brigades according to the procedure that was in force for unitary military courts (see the Law Decree on the Establishment of the Court of the Poglavnik's Bodyguard Brigades (*Zakonska odredba o osnivanju Suda Poglavnikovih tjelesnih združenja*), *Narodne novine* no. 115, 21 May 1943).

¹³⁶ Letter of the State Attorney of the mobile court martial in Banja Luka no. 180/41, VA, NDH, Box 160, f. 10, doc. 25.

for the Protection of Supply and Nutrition (*Zakonska odredba o iznimnim mjerama za zaštitu obskrbe i prehrane*)¹³⁷ vested the power to supervise the application of all regulations governing food products, raw materials and semi-finished goods with the State Commissioner for the Protection of Supply and Nutrition, who could take any case over from the ordinary administrative authorities and impose by virtue of his decision confiscation of all or part of assets in favour of the state, prohibition to work for a defined period or forever (Article 4), or send the offender “by virtue of his decision, for a period of time which may not be longer than 3 years, to forced confinement or forced labour in concentration and labour camps” (Article 5).

Confiscation of property as a parapenal measure

The repressive unlawful character of the NDH's criminal legislation was not reflected only in the high penalties prescribed for certain criminal offences, or in the frequency of prescribing capital punishment as the only sanction that could be imposed by courts martial. Similar penal effects were also accomplished by other legal consequences, which were not necessarily exactly legislated for the criminal offence in question. That was the case with the penalty of *confiscation of entire property*, which was introduced at the turn of 1941 and 1942, as a legal consequence of breaches of public order and peace, i.e. as a criminal sanction. More specifically, “against persons convicted because they violated public peace, and because they committed a crime against the existing state system, or the constitutional order, or against the NDH armed forces, on their own or as members of armed groups, the court shall in principle stipulate, in the conviction for the mentioned offence, that the property of such persons is to be confiscated in favour of the NDH.”¹³⁸ It was possible to carry out confiscation even without conducting criminal proceedings, only based on a decision of the first instance administrative authority, if a person was out of the reach of the authorities. The decision on the confiscation of property was sent to the State Directorate for Renewal, which managed the property thereafter. No remedy was allowed against this decision either.

However, the most drastic form of infringement on property rights had already been introduced, under the provisions of the racial legislation, shortly after the establishment of the NDH. The NDH racial legislation was modelled, with slight differences, upon racial legislation of Nazi Germany and Fas-

¹³⁷ See *Narodne novine* no. 165, 25 July 1944.

¹³⁸ The Law Decree on Confiscation of Property of Persons Who Violate Public Peace and Order (*Zakonska odredba o oduzimanju imovine osobama, koje narušavaju javni mir i poredak*), *Narodne novine* no. 213, 30 December 1941.

cist Italy,¹³⁹ so regulations targeting Jews and their property were adopted in the early days of the NDH.¹⁴⁰ Thus, *inter alia*, a regulation entitled *Law Decree on the Safeguarding of the Croatian National Property* (*Zakonska odredba o sačuvanju hrvatske narodne imovine*) was promulgated, which declared null and void “all legal transactions between Jews, and between Jews and third parties, concluded in the period of two months before the proclamation of the NDH”, provided that the value of the transaction exceeded the amount of 100,000 dinars. Furthermore, it was prohibited to dispose of real estate and encumber it by legal transactions,¹⁴¹ with the obligation to include the information on one’s religion in the application for approval of sale or encumbrance.¹⁴² Just a few days later, special commissioners were appointed in Jewish-owned companies, while signs banning access to Jews were displayed in shop windows. In parallel to the restrictions on legal capacity, *contributions* became a common method of extorting Jewish (movable) property. Although these were formally “voluntary” contributions in gold, jewellery, or securities supposed to ensure the release of Jews deprived of liberty and their preferential treatment, it in fact was organized extortion aimed at the wealthy members of the Jewish community.¹⁴³

Also, concealing the property belonging to Jews or Jewish businesses was criminalized (being punishable by imprisonment of one to five years and confiscation of assets).¹⁴⁴ The same decree also covered the conclusion of legal transactions for the account of Jews, by hiding from a Contracting Party the fact that the legal transaction was concluded for the account of Jews. In order to enable tracing down their assets, the Jews were ordered to report them to

¹³⁹ Robert Blažević and Amina Alijagić, “Antižidovstvo i rasno zakonodavstvo u fašističkoj Italiji, nacističkoj Njemačkoj i ustaškoj NDH”, *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Rijeci* 2 (2010), 903.

¹⁴⁰ *Narodne novine* no. 6, 19 April 1941.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Implementing Order to the Law Decree of 18 April 1941, no. 19181-1941 on the Prohibition of Sale and Encumbrance of Real Estate (item 4) (*Provedbena naredba zakonske odredbe od 18. travnja 1941. broj 19181-1941. o zabrani otudjivanja i opterećivanja nekretnina (točka 4)*), *Narodne novine* no. 14, 29 April 1941.

¹⁴³ See e.g. Zlata Živaković-Kerže, “Podržavljenje imovine Židova u Osijeku u NDH”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 1 (2007), 100.

¹⁴⁴ See the Law Decree on the Prevention of Concealment of Jewish Assets (*Zakonska odredba o sprečavanju prikrivanja židovskog imetka*), *Narodne novine* no. 44, 5 June 1941. A special time limit was set subsequently for reporting hidden money (2 August 1941), regardless of the origin of its owner (see the Law Decree on the Duty to Report the Concealment of Money [*Zakonska odredba o dužnosti prijave prikrivanja novca*], *Narodne novine* no. 90, 26 July 1941), with severe penalties prescribed for a failure to comply with the decree.

the Ministry of the National Economy.¹⁴⁵ In such a manner, any disposal of these assets was actually placed under control, because the Ministry had to approve any sale thereof “that exceeds regular household needs,” i.e. in the case of assets of a company, any disposal that exceeded a “regular scope of business” (Article 2). A failure to declare property, or hiding a portion of it, entailed penal servitude (from one to ten years) and seizure (confiscation) of property. On the other hand, in the case of sale of property contrary to the established rules, in addition to its confiscation, the proceedings were also laid down under the *Law Decree on the Defence of the Nation and the State* (Articles 3 and 4). The management of confiscated assets was entrusted to the newly established State Directorate for Economic Renewal,¹⁴⁶ which then delegated the management of revenues collected from the confiscated immovable property to the town and county authorities in whose territory the respective residential buildings and properties were located.¹⁴⁷ Following the declaration of Jewish assets, they were taken away, which was enabled by the *Law Decree on the Nationalization of Assets Belonging to Jews and Jewish Companies* (*Zakonska odredba o podržavljenju imetka Židova i židovskih poduzeća*), since the State Directorate for Renewal was authorized to nationalize by virtue of its decision “the assets of every Jew and each Jewish company, with or without compensation, in favour of the NDH.”¹⁴⁸ This scenario of plunder was common for the whole of the NDH. While this at first only existed as a possibility, on 30 October 1942 a Decree was passed under which “all the assets and all property rights of persons, who in terms of item 3 of the *Law Decree on Racial Affiliation* (*Zakonska odredba o rasnoj pripadnosti*) of 30 April 1941 ... are considered to be Jews, and all the estates of such persons who died after 10 February 1941, with the promulgation of this Decree shall become the property of the NDH.”¹⁴⁹ Essentially, this decree was merely legalization of previously carried out confiscations, which preceded the taking of Jews to execution sites.¹⁵⁰ In order to prevent the possibility of a part of Jewish

¹⁴⁵ See the *Law Decree on Mandatory Declaration of Assets Belonging to Jews and Jewish Companies* (*Zakonska odredba o obveznoj prijavi imetka židova i židovskih poduzeća*), *Narodne novine* no. 44, 5 June 1941.

¹⁴⁶ See the *Law Decree supplementing the Law Decree on the Establishment of the State Directorate for Economic Renewal* (*Zakonska odredba o nadopuni zakonske odredbe o osnutku Državnog ravnateljstva za gospodarstvenu ponovu*), *Narodne novine* no. 114, 29 August 1941.

¹⁴⁷ See the *Decree on the Administration of Jewish Residential Buildings* (*Odredba o upravi židovskih stanbenih zgrada*), *Narodne novine* no. 115, 30 August 1941.

¹⁴⁸ *Narodne novine* no. 149, 10 October 1941.

¹⁴⁹ *Law Decree on the Nationalization of Jewish Property*, *Narodne novine* no. 246, 30 October 1942.

¹⁵⁰ Živaković-Kerže, “Podržavljenje imovine Židova,” 106.

property remaining unconfiscated through being transferred to third parties, the *Law Decree on Verification of the Origin of Assets and Confiscation of Assets Acquired in an Unlawful Manner* (*Zakonska odredba o izpitivanju podrijetla imovine i o oduzimanju imovine, stečene nedopuštenim načinom*)¹⁵¹ was also passed, which enabled the examination of the origin of assets of all those “for whom there is a reasonable suspicion in their environment that they have acquired the assets in an unlawful manner”.

Assets were also confiscated from Serbs on a massive scale.¹⁵² The property owned by Serb institutes and institutions in Sremski Karlovci – the Grammar School, the Stefaneum and the Ecclesiastical Education Fund¹⁵³ – whose name, meanwhile, was changed to Hrvatski Karlovci,¹⁵⁴ became the property of the NDH.¹⁵⁵ The first blow was aimed at the Serbs colonized in the twentieth century. Only a week after the establishment of the NDH, by virtue of the *Law Decree on Real Estate of the so-called Volunteers* (*Zakonska odredba o nekretninama t. zv. dobrovoljaca*), Pavelić confiscated the land which had been allocated to Serbian Army volunteers (Macedonian front) after the First World War, by declaring it to be the property of the Croatian people, without the possibility for the former owners to exercise the right to compensation.¹⁵⁶ This land was distributed to Croat members of the Ustasha movement and others who “played

¹⁵¹ *Narodne novine* no. 137, 26 September 1941.

¹⁵² In addition to the confiscation of property, the *revocation of citizenship* was also used for the purpose of solving the “Serbian question”. More specifically, “persons who emigrated from the territory of the NDH, or left that area for racial or political-ethnic reasons, shall lose their citizenship and national affiliation to the NDH” (see the *Law Decree on the Loss of Citizenship and State Affiliation of Persons Who Emigrated or Left the NDH Territory* (*Zakonska odredba o gubitku državljanstva i državnog pripadništva osobe, koje su se izselile ili napustile područje NDH*), *Narodne novine* no. 178, 9 August 1942). Revocation of citizenship was decided by the Minister of the Interior, and wives and minor children of persons who had left the NDH could also lose their citizenship even if they had remained in its territory.

¹⁵³ Several months later, the scope of this decree was extended to include other immovable property and other assets of Serb institutions in Karlovci (see *Narodne novine* no. 143, 3 October 1941).

¹⁵⁴ All place-names which contained the adjective “Srpski [Serb]” were changed. Thus, e.g., the village of Suho Polje Srpsko became Suho Polje Donje, while Kalenderovci Srpski became Kalenderovci Gornji (see the *Order on the change of names of some places in the counties of Gradačac, Derventa, Doboj and Sarajevo*, *Narodne novine* no. 132, 20 September 1941).

¹⁵⁵ *Law Decree on Taking Over Assets of the “Serb Institutes and Institutions” in Hrvatski Karlovci into the Ownership of the NDH* (*Zakonska odredba o preuzimanju imovine “srbskih zavoda i ustanova” u Hrvatskim Karlovcima u vlastništvo NDH*), *Narodne novine* no. 132, 20 September 1941.

¹⁵⁶ See *Narodne novine* no. 6, 19 April 1941.

a prominent role” in the first days of the coup.¹⁵⁷ According to the data from end-July 1941, 28,000 persons were displaced from Srem alone (predominantly to the other bank of the Sava River).¹⁵⁸

In those cases where it was established that a person had been expelled or left the territory of the NDH, their assets became the property of the NDH.¹⁵⁹ This Decree particularly adversely affected the Serbs who had taken refuge from the Ustasha persecution in Serbia. “The State Directorate for Renewal in Zagreb shall institute a procedure in each case where it has been established that there is movable or immovable property of a person who has left the territory of the NDH, in which a decision shall be taken on that property [...] The State Directorate for Renewal in Zagreb may also initiate such a procedure with regard to the assets of persons who have left the territory of the NDH with the approval of the authorities.”¹⁶⁰ At the same time, in June 1941, the *Order on the Duty of the Serbians to Register (Naredba o dužnosti prijave Srbijanaca)* was issued,¹⁶¹ requiring the Serbs who had moved to the territory of the NDH after 1 January 1900, and were staying in the territory of the NDH, to register with the responsible authorities. The duty pertained to their descendants as well. “Those from among the abovementioned who fail to respond to this call for registration within the set time limit shall be considered prisoners of war and shall be taken to a prison camp” (Article 1, paragraph 4), and the same applied to the failure to report Serbs who were hiding. Furthermore, the *Law Decree on Vacating and Occupying Residential and Commercial Premises for the Reasons of Public Security (Zakonska*

¹⁵⁷ See e.g. the Order of the Command of the Army (Naredba Zapovjedništva kopnene vojske) of 27 May 1941 to the Command of the Slavonski Brod Garrison Battalion (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 38). Thus, under the Circular of the State Directorate for Renewal of 9 July 1941, the Camp Officer was expected to supply the Directorate with the answers to the questions such as: “How many Serb estates have so far been vacated or abandoned and where?”; “How many Serb monasteries are there in your territory?”; “How big are their residential and other buildings?”; and “How many Serb priests, monks and other officials of that type are there in your county?” (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 105).

¹⁵⁸ Marica Karakaš Obradov, “Migracije srpskog stanovništva na području Nezavisne Države Hrvatske tijekom 1941. godine”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 3 (2011), 814.

¹⁵⁹ Agricultural estates were assigned to the Institute for Colonization in Zagreb, while other types of real estate were transferred to the State Directorate for Renewal or the State Directorate for Economic Renewal. See the Law Decree on the Assets of Persons Expelled from the Territory of the NDH (*Zakonska odredba o imovini osoba izseljenih s područja NDH*), *Narodne novine* no. 96, 7 August 1941.

¹⁶⁰ See the Law Decree on the Assets of Persons Who Left the Territory of the NDH (*Zakonska odredba o imovini osoba, koje su napustile područje NDH*), *Narodne novine* no. 158, 21 October 1941.

¹⁶¹ *Narodne novine* no. 46, 7 June 1941.

odredba o ispražnjenju i naseljenju stambenih i poslovnih prostorija iz razloga javne sigurnosti) allowed the eviction from immovable properties of “dangerous and disloyal persons” for the reasons of “public order, peace and security”.¹⁶² Persons who had to move out were under the obligation to leave the premises no later than noon the next day. Conditions for eviction were therefore identical to those for deportation to a concentration camp.

Criminal offences under racial legislation

We have already noted that racial legislation was also passed in the NDH, with relevant supporting provisions in criminal law.¹⁶³ The provisions of a racial character were incorporated in a number of enacted decrees. Thus, a citizen of the NDH was defined as “a state national of Aryan origin who has proved by his actions that he did not work against the liberation aspirations of the Croatian people and who is willing to readily and faithfully serve the Croatian people and the NDH”.¹⁶⁴ And a person of Aryan origin was “an individual of Aryan descent who descends from ancestors who are members of the European racial community or descends from ancestors belonging to that community outside of Europe.” This is the initial definition of the *Law Decree on Racial Affiliation*,¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² *Narodne novine* no. 42, 3 June 1941.

¹⁶³ With a view to pursuing the racial policies, a special Racial-Political Commission was set up (see the Order on the Organization and Purview of the Racial-Political Commission (*Naredba o ustrojstvu i djelokrugu rada rasnopolitičkog povjerenstva*), *Narodne novine* no. 43, 4 June 1941). Its competences included, inter alia, the “enlightenment of the nation” and drafting of regulations that “deal with racial biology, racial policies and racial hygiene or eugenics”, as well as maintaining relations “with similar institutions in other countries”. In early 1942, the tasks of the Racial-Political Commission were assigned to the Ministry of the Interior (see the Law Decree on Competence for Resolving the Jewish Question (*Zakonska odredba o nadležnosti za rješavanje židovskog pitanja*), *Narodne novine* no. 15, 19 January 1942). All civil servants and holders of academic degrees were required to submit to their superiors declarations of their racial origin and the origin of their spouses (see the Order on the Establishment of Racial Affiliation of Civil Servants and Employees of Self-Governments and Holders of Academic Titles in Liberal Professions (*Naredba o utvrđivanju rasne pripadnosti državnih i samoupravnih službenika i vršitelja slobodnih akademskih zvanja*), *Narodne novine* no. 44, 5 June 1941). Suspicious declarations were forwarded to the Ministry of the Interior and the Racial-Political Commission.

¹⁶⁴ Law Decree on Citizenship (item 2) (*Zakonska odredba o državljanstvu (točka 2)*), *Narodne novine* no. 16, 30 April 1941. A very similar provision, which in fact served as a model, had existed in German law (Reichsbürgergesetz vom 15. September 1935, § 2). See Karl Olfenius, *Die Lösung der Judenfrage im Dritten Reiche (Die wichtigsten Bestimmungen aus der Judengesetzgebung)* (Langensalza: Julius Beltz, 1937), 5.

¹⁶⁵ *Narodne novine* no. 16, 30 April 1941.

which incorporated into the legal order of the NDH, with certain differences,¹⁶⁶ the racial legislation of Nazi Germany.¹⁶⁷ These rules regulated in detail the conditions under which a person was to be considered an Aryan or, conversely, a “Jew” or a “Gypsy,” in terms of their origin and ancestry. At the same time, the *Law Decree on the Protection of the Aryan blood and Honour of the Croatian People* (*Zakonska odredba o zaštiti arijske krvi i časti Hrvatskog naroda*) was enacted, introducing a ban on marriages of Jews and other non-Aryans to persons of Aryan origin. This decree also provided for the crime of desecration of the race, punishable by imprisonment in a prison or penitentiary (without defining the length of imprisonment), if a male non-Aryan had a sexual intercourse with a female of Aryan origin.¹⁶⁸ These rules were intended to prevent the creation of the offspring that would have the same percentage of Jewish blood from parents, up to one quarter. That is why this decree also covered those whose one ancestor up to the second degree was a Jew. On the basis of this decree the Order was also passed prohibiting the employment of females in non-Aryan households, which prevented the engagement of females of Aryan descent “in households of Jews or other persons of non-Aryan origin”¹⁶⁹ if men of non-Aryan origin aged between

¹⁶⁶ The Croatian decree was more lenient in the sense that the Poglavnik could exceptionally recognize to the Jews (and their family members) who had earned credit with the Croatian people before the creation of the NDH, the rights pertaining to persons of Aryan descent (for more detail see Blažević and Alijagić, “Antižidovstvo i rasno zakonodavstvo”, 905 ff). However, only a small number of non-Aryans were recognized such a status by the Ustasha regime; see Nevenko Bartulin, *The Racial Idea in the Independent State of Croatia. Origins and Theory* (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2014), 149.

¹⁶⁷ After the NDH joined the Tripartite Pact (between Germany, Italy, and Japan) on 15 June 1941, the persons of German nationality in the NDH were recognized a special legal status. “The members of the German ethnic group shall be guaranteed indefinite maintenance of their German nationality and freedom to profess their national-socialist view of life, and undisturbed development of their authentic German folk life and free establishment and maintenance of national and cultural relations with their parent country Germany” (Law Decree on Temporary Legal Status of the “German Ethnic Group in the Independent State of Croatia” (*Zakonska odredba o privremenom pravnom položaju “Njemačke narodne skupine u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj”*) [Article 6], *Narodne novine* no. 56, 21 June 1941.

¹⁶⁸ According to Lengel-Krizman, “Prilog proučavanju terora u tzv. NDH”, 14, this criminal offence had its application in practice too, and (probably) the rapist was a member of the guard in the women’s camp Lohor, although the crime was qualified as desecration of the race. Although in this case, contrary to the characteristics of the offence as specified by the decree, the offender was of Aryan descent and the victim was non-Aryan, the court sentenced the guard member to six months in prison by applying the analogy (Srpak, “Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske”, 1138).

¹⁶⁹ *Narodne novine* no. 16, 30 April 1941.

14 and 65 resided or stayed there. The purpose of this decree was to demonstrate that Jews would no longer be able to “exploit” Croats.¹⁷⁰

Although at first glance Serbs were not covered by racial policies and racial laws under the said Decree, they were put in the same category as Jews in many decisions which introduced discrimination.¹⁷¹ Thus, for example, all Serbs and Jews who lived in designated parts of Zagreb were required to move to other parts of the city within eight days, and a night curfew order was also issued prohibiting movement of Serbs.¹⁷² The Ustasha propaganda persistently insisted on there being close ties between Jews and Serbs, claiming that the Jews supported Serbian hegemony and the Karadjordjević dynasty.¹⁷³ On the other hand, such claim did not fit into the non-European origin pattern, so the racial legislation could not be directly applied to the Serbs. Yet, animosity towards the Serbs was the quintessence of the Ustasha ideology, and in that context anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsyism were inferior to the animosity towards the Serbs.¹⁷⁴ In effect, in addressing the “Serbian question,” Pavelić considered Serbs to be flawed Aryans. This view is based on the ideas of the Croatian historian Ivo Pilar, and his 1918 paper “Die südslawische Frage”. He claimed that the Serbs had tainted their Aryan origin by mixing with the indigenous Balkan Vlachs and Roma.¹⁷⁵ Consequently, the Serbs were seen as disturbing the social harmony of the states in which they lived, “a race of bandits” and “destructive nomads” who had come to the Croatian regions “with Turkish troops, as plunderers, as the dreg and garbage of the Balkans.”¹⁷⁶ This was the reason underlying the use of methods on Serbs – who, unlike Jews, were really perceived as a people who “polluted” the living space intended for Croats – which were in fact similar to

¹⁷⁰ Živaković-Kerže, “Podržavljenje imovine Židova”, 100.

¹⁷¹ Nevenko Bartulin, “Ideologija nacije i rase: ustaški režim i politika prema Srbima u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj 1941–1945.”, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 1 (2007), 227 n. 53.

¹⁷² Davor Kovačić, “Redarstvo Nezavisne Države Hrvatske uvodi red na zagrebačkim ulicama 1941. godine”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 2 (2012), 325.

¹⁷³ Boško Zuckerman Itković, “Funkcija protužidovske propagande zagrebačkih novina u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj od travnja do srpnja 1941. godine”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 1 (2006), 374.

¹⁷⁴ Alexander Korb, *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs* (Dissertationsschrift, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2011), 374.

¹⁷⁵ Ustasha propaganda persistently underlined that the Serbs had a considerable admixture of “Gypsy” or “Vlach” blood, see Bartulin, *The Racial Idea in the Independent State of Croatia*, 152; Mark Biondich, “Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia: Reflections on the Ustasha Policy of Forced Religious Conversions”, *Slavonic and East European Review* 1 (2005), 87.

¹⁷⁶ Bartulin, “Ideologija nacije i rase”, 219 and 227.

those applied for “solving the Jewish question”, except that in the case of Serbs it was more habitually done outside the legal framework.¹⁷⁷

The ban on marriages between Jews and persons of Aryan origin also had its direct criminal law consequence. The *Law Decree supplementing the Penal Code of 27 January 1929 (Zakonska odredba o nadopuni kaznenog zakonika od 27. siječnja 1929)* defined the conclusion of a marriage in contravention of the rules laid down by the Law Decree on the Protection of the Aryan Blood and Honour of the Croatian People as a new criminal offence (Article 291a),¹⁷⁸ punishable by at least six months in high-security prison, together with the loss of citizenship. The decree also provided for the punishment of officials who participated in the conclusion of such a marriage. According to the rationale that supported the adoption of these amendments, the reason for their adoption were cases of alleged circumvention of the regulations on the protection of Aryan blood by Jews converting to Roman Catholicism or Islam.

Meanwhile the Jews were also forbidden to participate in any way in the work of organizations and institutions “of social, youth, sports, and cultural life of the Croatian people in general, especially in literature, journalism, the fine arts and music, town planning, theatre, and film”.¹⁷⁹ Furthermore, they were ordered to change their surnames back to the previous ones¹⁸⁰ in order that mistakes as to the identity and origin of business owners were avoided. As a result, every Jewish shop or another business was supposed to display a special sign on a sheet of yellow paper “16 × 25 cm, with clearly visible words ‘Jewish firm’ in black ink along its length”. Besides, special rules were introduced for external signs to be worn by persons of Jewish descent. “Jews by race older than 14 years of age shall wear, when outside of their homes, a Jewish sign in the form of a round brass plate, 5 cm in diameter. The plate must be painted in yellow with the capital letter Ž [standing for “Židov”, meaning “Jew” in Croatian] in its middle, 3 cm long and 2 cm wide, written in black ink. This sign shall be worn on the left side of the chest, in a visible place”.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ Blažević and Alijagić, “Antižidovstvo i rasno zakonodavstvo”, 903, note that while “in the spring and summer of 1941 people in many Serb villages were killed on a mass scale, almost at their very doorstep, most often without even an effort being made to find some legal justification for the killings, the genocide against the Jews took place more gradually and ‘more rationally’, in several phases”.

¹⁷⁸ See *Narodne novine* no. 162, 25 October 1941.

¹⁷⁹ *Narodne novine* no. 43, 4 June 1941.

¹⁸⁰ See the Order on the Change of Jewish Surnames and on Labelling Jews and Jewish Businesses (*Naredba o promjeni židovskih prezimena i označivanju Židova i židovskih tvrtka*), *Narodne novine* no. 43, 4 June 1941.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.* Article 8, paragraph 2.

Criminal offences set out in the NDH racial laws basically corresponded to the criminal offences laid down by the German racial criminal legislation, with slight differences in the prescribed penalties. Other effects of racial laws in the subject-matter of criminal law in Nazi Germany were related to: restrictions on abortion, homosexual relationships, allowing castration of sexual offenders and wide-ranging security measures against dangerous and antisocial habitual offenders, prone to repeating their offences.¹⁸² Especially these latter measures enabled the deportation of “antisocial elements” of society to concentration camps, but deportations to camps as a rule occurred, similarly to the situation in the NDH, on the basis of decisions by the administrative (police) authorities.

Although racially based law decrees were generally not passed in relation to the Serb population, as was the case with the Jews, the Ustasha government often ordered local authorities to undertake similar measures restricting certain rights of both Serbs and Jews based on the ethnic criterion. Thus, the Order of the Ustasha headquarters in Mostar of 23 June 1941 stipulated that “more than two Serbs or Jews shall not be allowed to move around the city together”, that “Jews and Serbs in general shall not be permitted to walk together or meet socially”, that “after 8 o’clock in the evening, Serbs and Jews must be in their homes”, that “Jews and Serbs, when shopping, shall have to wait in stores until the Croats have met their needs, and then shop” that “Serbs and Jews shall not be allowed to go to the promenade, nor shall they be allowed to sit in Freedom Square”, and that “Serbs and Jews shall not be allowed to dance in public places”.¹⁸³ In some municipalities, the Ustasha authorities introduced an obligation for the Orthodox population, under the threat of the strictest punishment, “not to leave their village without a white stripe on their left arm, on which PRAVOSLAVAC [Orthodox Christian] has to be written in the Latin alphabet”.¹⁸⁴

A few days before the fall of the NDH, the Law Decree on the Equalization of Members of the NDH in Terms of Racial Origin (*Zakonska odredba o izjednačenju pripadnika NDH s obzirom na rasnu pripadnost*),¹⁸⁵ pragmatically terminated the validity of racial laws, in an attempt to ensure the survival of the NDH under the auspices of the Western Allies.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸² See Siegfried Boschan, *Nationalsozialistische Rassen- und Familiengesetzgebung. Praktische Rechtsanwendung und Auswirkungen auf Rechtspflege, Verwaltung und Wirtschaft* (Berlin: Deutscher Rechtsverlag, 1937), 193–200.

¹⁸³ See *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 71.

¹⁸⁴ Command of the Ustasha Headquarters for Požega of 12 May 1941 to the municipal government of Velika (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 26).

¹⁸⁵ See *Narodne novine* no. 100, 5 May 1945.

¹⁸⁶ Zuckerman Itković, “Funkcija protužidovske propagande zagrebačkih novena”, 367 n. 63.

Genocidal policies as the negation of the legal order

It is questionable whether it is even possible to speak of the order based on law if its foundations were built on rules which bear the stamp of a project aimed at the persecution, religious conversion (Catholicization) or extermination of a large part of the population who happened to reside within the borders of the NDH. It is difficult to accept the view that "NDH legislation did not at all have the character of law" because the NDH, as a creation of the occupation powers, was not a state in the first place.¹⁸⁷ Although the functioning of a legal entity in the circumstances of war, regardless of whether we shall recognize any features of formal sovereignty in that entity or not, is subject to possible restrictions on the rights of its citizens, some respect for their minimum rights has to be found even in such changed circumstances. Despite the fact that certain norms were taken over from the legislation of the Third Reich, the thesis that the legal system was in a way imposed from the outside is inconsistent with the unequivocal support that the Ustasha movement, as the perpetrator of the criminal activity, enjoyed with the majority of the population.¹⁸⁸ In any case, the validity of a regulated system of norms applicable to the population in the territory of a given entity can hardly be viewed in isolation from the policies pursued vis-à-vis the citizens of that entity who by force of circumstance came under its mechanism of coercion.

This is particularly relevant to the issue of the legal status of the Serbs in the NDH because they accounted for a sizeable portion of the total population. According to German sources of May 1941, in the territory¹⁸⁹ where the NDH was established there were 3,300,000 Croats, 1,925,000 Serbs, 700,000 Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims, 150,000 Germans, 40,000 Jews and about 170,000 members of other nationalities (Hungarians, Slovenians, Czechs and

¹⁸⁷ Srpak, "Kazneno pravo u doba Nezavisne Države Hrvatske", 1143.

¹⁸⁸ In the initial wave of national enthusiasm, by the end of 1941, the Ustasha movement had 150,000 newly-registered members (Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation*, 12). The objectives and organization of the Croat "Ustasha" movement were regulated in detail by the Rules on the Mission, Organization, Operation, and Guidelines of the "Ustasha" – Croatian Liberation Movement (*Propisnik o zadaći, ustrojstvu, radu i smjernicama „Ustaše“ – hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*), *Narodne novine* no. 181, 13 August 1942.

¹⁸⁹ Law Decree on the Eastern Border of the NDH considered as NDH territory the area "from the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers and upstream the Sava to the confluence of the Sava and Drina rivers; from that confluence upstream the Drina river, and along its easternmost backwaters so that all the islands in the Drina belong to the NDH, to the confluence of the Brusnica Brook and the Drina east of the village of Zemlice; from the Brusnica Brook the border of the NDH runs over land east of the Drina, exactly along the old border between Bosnia and Serbia, such as it was until 1908" (*Narodne novine* no. 47, 8 June 1941). Only Zemun, on the basis of an agreement "with the Great German Reich remains militarily occupied by the friendly German army until the end of the war".

Slovaks).¹⁹⁰ Before the Second World War, Serbs accounted for a relative majority (44 %) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. From the very creation of the NDH, the Serb, Jewish and Roma populations were subjected to terror. The policy of the NDH leadership vis-à-vis the Serbs was not uniform: it ranged from biological extermination (genocide), to spiritual annihilation (forced Catholicization), to physical expulsion from the territory (deportation to Serbia).¹⁹¹ The initial form of solution to the Serbian question, which the government implemented in an organized manner, especially in the first months following the creation of the NDH, was the extermination of Serbs in the territory controlled by the government.¹⁹² The NDH is the only satellite of the Axis powers which killed more non-Jews than Jews during the Second World War.¹⁹³

The policy of *resettlement* for the Serb population to Serbia was implemented by the State Directorate for Renewal. Their deportation was the result of German-Croatian agreements¹⁹⁴ which involved concurrent resettlement of

¹⁹⁰ Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna država Hrvatska*, 106. Karakaš Obradov, "Migracije srpskog stanovništva", 802, speaks about 1,800,000 inhabitants of the Orthodox faith in the territory of the NDH at the time of its establishment, which roughly corresponds to the 1931 census data.

¹⁹¹ Bartulin, "Ideologija nacije i rase", 225–226 and 233. "Although the doctrine of the so-called thirds was never expressed in writing (to exterminate a third of Serbs, to convert another third to Catholicism and to expel a third), the principles were implemented in practice" (Peter Macut, "Prilog raspravi o vjerskim prijelazima u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj na primjeru katoličkog tiska", *Croatia Christiana periodica* 77 (2016), 183).

¹⁹² Minimization of the number of Serb victims, and justification of the committed pogrom by alleged prior crimes of the Serbs against the Croatian population, prevails in recent Croatian historiography. Thus, Jure Krišto ("Navodna istraga Svete Stolice o postupcima hrvatskoga episkopata vezanima za vjerske prijelaze u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj", *Croatia Christiana periodica* 49 (2002), 166) emphasizes that "Orthodox propaganda went hand in hand with the propaganda of the Yugoslav government-in-exile. The Yugoslav Ambassador to the Holy See, on the order of his government, asked the Vatican as early as May 17 to 'intervene against the Ustasha massacres'; hence, at the time when, even according to the information available to the Serb circles, there still was no persecution on a massive scale, but there were the Serb insurgency and related crimes. Minimizing the number of Serb victims, and denying the genocidal plan and the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Church also characterizes the more recent doctoral dissertation of a German author (see Korb, *Im Schatten des Weltkriegs*, 18 and 24).

¹⁹³ Jonathan Steinberg, "Types of Genocide? Croats, Serbs and Jews, 1941–5", in *The Final Solution. Origins and Implementation*, ed. D. Cesarani (London – New York: Routledge, 1996), 175.

¹⁹⁴ It was agreed at these meetings that the first from among the Orthodox population to be expelled should be the former Salonika Front (WWI) volunteers, the Serbs originally from Serbia and priests, and then politically unsuitable and affluent individuals; see Karakaš Obradov, "Migracije srpskog stanovništva", 808.

Slovenians to the NDH (in similar numbers),¹⁹⁵ while quotas were negotiated for the number of deportees. The persons designated for resettlement were taken to special resettlement camps, which differed from the concentration camps run by the Ustasha Supervisory Service, and they were allowed to take with them up to 50 kg of luggage and a small amount of money.¹⁹⁶ By 22 September 1941, 118,110 persons had been deported to Serbia,¹⁹⁷ the vast majority of whom was expelled illegally, outside the agreements reached. Soon afterwards, the organized resettlement of Serbs to the territory of Serbia was discontinued, because the German authorities in occupied Serbia assessed that any further enlargement of the population would pose security risks, encouraging an uprising in Serbia.

Another type of the genocidal policies besides physical elimination was the wiping out of Serb *cultural identity*. One of the first measures taken by the Ustasha authorities was the prohibition of the Cyrillic script in the whole territory of the NDH.¹⁹⁸ The use of Cyrillic in public and private life was suspended, as was the printing of books in the Cyrillic script, while all “public signs written in the Cyrillic alphabet have to be removed [...] within three days.”¹⁹⁹ At the same time, under the *Law Decree on the Croatian Language, its Purity and Orthography (Zakonska odredba o hrvatskom jeziku, o njegovoj čistoći i o pravopisu)*,²⁰⁰ it was forbidden to give non-Croatian names and titles to the stores, businesses, institutions, associations and other establishments. It was also forbidden “in pronunciation and spelling to use words²⁰¹ that do not correspond to the spirit of the Croatian language and, as a rule, foreign words, borrowed from other, even similar languages”, and the purpose was to remove Serbianisms from the lan-

¹⁹⁵ The Ustasha government made the forced migration of Slovenians from Gorenjska and South Styria to the NDH conditional upon deportation of an appropriate number of members of the Serbian population.

¹⁹⁶ All valuables and foreign cash were taken away from deportees, except for wedding rings. Reports on the seizure, drawn up in three copies, were intended to create the impression that the seized valuables would be returned one day, but that did not happen; see Karakaš Obradov, “Migracije srpskog stanovništva”, 808–809.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. 806 and 822.

¹⁹⁸ Law Decree on the Prohibition of the Cyrillic Script (*Zakonska odredba o zabrani ćirilice*), *Narodne novine* no. 11, 25 April 1941.

¹⁹⁹ Implementing Order of the Ministry of the Interior to the Law Decree on the Prohibition of the Cyrillic Script (*Provedbena naredba ministarstva unutarnjih poslova zakonskoj odredbi o zabrani ćirilice*), *Narodne novine* no. 11, 25 April 1941.

²⁰⁰ *Narodne novine* no. 102, 14 August 1941.

²⁰¹ By stipulating that the Croatian official and literary language was the Shtokavian dialect of the Jekavian or the Iekavian variant, the long Ikavian “i” shall be pronounced and written as “ie” (Article 4).

guage for political reasons.²⁰² The Ministry of Education set up a special office (a commission) tasked with removing the words that do not correspond to the spirit of the Croatian language and foreign words, and replacing them with local words.²⁰³ Teaching the Cyrillic script in class was subject to punishment.²⁰⁴ “All Serb denominational primary schools and kindergartens” were disbanded after the end of the school year 1940/41 (on 3 June). All school funds “named after Serbian rulers, princes and other representatives and prominent figures of Serbian covenant thought, which was desirous of spreading throughout the Croatian regions” were terminated or renamed.²⁰⁵

At the same time, Serbs were also removed from the civil service. Apart from dismissing practically all Serbs originally from Serbia and Montenegrins from the service, “even those Serbs who remained in the service cannot be in ranking positions and the reasons for their keeping in the service should be accurately and precisely cited, substantiated by evidence of their worthiness and the need for them.”²⁰⁶ The same was done with the Serb and Jewish teachers,²⁰⁷ the plan for the teachers of Serb origin being to send them to concentration camps.²⁰⁸

The elimination of the Serb element in the NDH also involved the obliteration of its *religious identity*. Due to the inability to positively identify the Serb population based on ethnic and racial criteria, the Orthodox faith and the Serbian Orthodox Church were taken to be the fundamental markers of Serb ethnic identity.²⁰⁹ A large number of Serb priests were deported and killed as early

²⁰² Alan Labus, “Politička propaganda i kulturna revolucija u ‘Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj’”, *Informatologia* 3 (2011), 216.

²⁰³ See *Narodne novine* no. 170, 5 November 1941.

²⁰⁴ See e.g. *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 336.

²⁰⁵ Changing the titles of school funds, the Ministry of Education, no. 18682/1941, *Narodne novine* no. 74, 12 July 1941.

²⁰⁶ Command of the NDH Government Envoy in Sarajevo of 13 May 1941 to the commissioners of the Poglavnik in Sarajevo, see *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 28.

²⁰⁷ Statement of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Education of 16 May 1941 to the education department of the Commission for Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 29).

²⁰⁸ “In the Independent State of Croatia, there still are 2,204 male and female teachers of the Greek-Eastern faith, so the Ministry of Education suggests that they be transferred to concentration camps” (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 160).

²⁰⁹ As a way of abolishing the authority of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the collection of the Patriarchate tithe, 10% surtax on the income of the Orthodox population, “from members of the Greek-Eastern faith” was discontinued in the territory of the NDH. See the Order on discontinuing the assessment and collection of the patriarchate tithe at tax offices (*Naredba*

as July 1941,²¹⁰ while in August the same year an order was issued to detain all remaining monks and priests (Serbs and the Montenegrins who considered themselves Serbs), and to deport them, together with their families, to the Caprag camp near Sisak.²¹¹ The Orthodox Church property and places of worship were subjected to total devastation and plunder. Thus, for example, the head of the Croatian State Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb sent a letter to the Vrhbosna Great District Prefect with the request “to take from all the Greek-Eastern churches and church buildings in your great district, prior to their destruction, all portable religious objects, iconostases, icons and other church accessories, and to store them in a safe place.”²¹²

A set of similar measures which the Ustasha government wanted to adopt in the first month of its rule also included the *Law Decree on Conversion from one Religion to Another (Zakonska odredba o prelazu s jedne vere na drugu)*.²¹³ It repealed all previous regulations that governed the formalities of converting from one religion to another, which each convert had to fulfil before a cleric of his former religion. Under this decree, for conversion to another faith to be valid, it was sufficient for the person who was changing his or her faith to submit a written application to the administrative authorities, to obtain a certificate of filing, “and to fulfil the religious regulations of the recognized religion to which the applicant has converted”. This certificate of “personal integrity” could generally be obtained only by members of the peasantry. Namely, different ways of solving the “Serbian question” were intended to be applied to the members of the Serb population identified as a possible factor of disturbance – “Greek-Eastern teachers, priests, merchants, rich craftsmen and peasants, and the intelligentsia in general”.²¹⁴ If the convert was a minor between 7 and 18 years of age, initially the parents’ statement was required for the conversion,²¹⁵ but after that, in

o ukidanju razreza i naplate 10% patrijaršijskog prireza po poreznim uredima), *Narodne novine* no. 59, 25 June 1941.

²¹⁰ Bartulin, “Ideologija nacije i rase”, 229. See e.g. Filip Škiljan, “Prisilno iseljavanje Srba iz Moslavine 1941. godine”, *Historijski zbornik* 1 (2012), 155.

²¹¹ See *Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 201.

²¹² See *ibid.* doc. no. 235. Similar letters were probably sent to other officials as well, cf. Nikica Barić, “O osnutku i djelovanju Hrvatske pravoslavne crkve tijekom 1942. i 1943. godine: primjer velike župe Posavje”, *Croatica Christiana periodica* 74 (2014), 138.

²¹³ *Narodne novine* no. 20, 6 May 1941.

²¹⁴ See the Circular of the Ministry of Justice and Religious Affairs of 30 July 1941 (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, doc. no. 169). The purpose of targeting the intelligentsia was the physical elimination of the Serb elite in order to plunder their possessions or to prevent their potential campaigning against the policy of Catholicization (Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, 120).

²¹⁵ Instructions for Conversion from one Religion to Another, *Narodne novine* no. 37, 27 May 1941.

the case of the father's death or "absence", the consent of the mother sufficed.²¹⁶ From August 1941, the intensity of forced conversion was stepped up, and it was soon to become an important factor of state policies, following the establishment of the Religious Section with the responsibility for activities related to conversion to the Catholic, Protestant and Islamic faiths.²¹⁷ As the name of the Serbian-Orthodox religion was no longer "in line with the new state system", it was officially replaced by the term "Greek-Eastern faith".²¹⁸ The figures regarding the number of converted Serbs vary, and range from about 100,000²¹⁹ up to about 240,000 persons.²²⁰ In most cases the main motive for conversion to Roman Catholicism was the hope of avoiding physical destruction.²²¹

Conversion of Serbs to Roman Catholicism was also supported by the fact that Roman Catholic priests appointed to parishes received a monthly aid of 3,000 kuna from government funds on account of those who had converted to Roman Catholicism faith.²²² Later on, a special arrangement was made for the payment of state aid to the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic clergy of Croat nationality.²²³ The Ustasha policies were not only passively supported by

²¹⁶ Law Decree supplementing the Law Decree on Conversion from one Religion to Another (*Zakonska odredba o dopuni zakonske odredbe o prielazu s jedne vjere na drugu*), *Narodne novine* no. 170, 5 November 1941.

²¹⁷ Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne države Hrvatske*, 70.

²¹⁸ Ministerial order on the name of the "Greek-Eastern faith" no. 753/1941 (*Ministarska naredba o nazivu "grčko-istočne vjere"*), *Narodne novine* no. 80, 19 July 1941.

²¹⁹ Bartulin, "Ideologija nacije i rase", 230; Biondich, "Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia", 91 and 111.

²²⁰ Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna država Hrvatska*, 177.

²²¹ Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne države Hrvatske*, 69. It should be mentioned that a more recent Roman Catholic theological interpretation of the reasons for conversion also refers to "the response to Orthodoxization of Croats in the 1918–1941 period", "theological reasons", "Orthodox believers brought up in the Catholic spirit" and "historical reasons – returning to the faith of the fathers (Grgo Grbešić, "Prijelazi Židova u katoličku crkvu u Đakovačkoj i Srijemskoj biskupiji od 1941. do 1945.", *Croatica Christiana periodica* 52 (2003), 156 n 7).

²²² Law Decree on State Aid to the Clergy of Parishes and Parish Branches Established for Settlers and Converts to the Catholic Faith (*Zakonska odredba o državnoj pomoći dušobrižnicima župa i župnih izpostava, osnovanih za naseljenike i prelaznike na katoličku vjeru*), *Narodne novine* no. 188, 26 November 1941. This amount was later topped up by a special allowance (see the Order on the Payment of the Special Allowance to the Clergy of Parishes and Parish Branches Established for Settlers and Converts to the Catholic Faith, *Narodne novine* no. 102, 8 May 1942).

²²³ "By virtue of a special order, on an exceptional basis aid shall also be granted to foreign nationals of different ethnicity" (see the Order on the Payment of Aid to the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic Clergy (*Naredba o izplati pomoći rimokatoličkom i grkokatoličkom svećenstvu*), *Narodne novine* no. 24, 29 January 1942).

the Roman Catholic clergy, but part of the Croatian clergy also took direct part in massacres.²²⁴

For those Serbs who were not Catholicized there was a project of the *Croatian Orthodox Church*. It was established in April 1942²²⁵ and its Constitution was passed by the Poglavnik on 5 June the same year.²²⁶ The Croatian Orthodox Church “is one and autonomous (autocephalous). The dogmatic and canonical tenets of Holy Orthodoxy shall apply to it” (Article 1). The first patriarch and bishops of the Croatian Orthodox Church were appointed by the Poglavnik, while in the next election for Patriarch the Poglavnik chose among three nominated candidates-bishops, at the proposal of the Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs. As provided for by this act, the Electoral Council consisted of the bishops of the Croatian Orthodox Church, the dean of the Orthodox Theological Faculty in Zagreb, the head of the Orthodox Section at the Ministry, and five members of the Croatian Orthodox Church appointed by the Poglavnik. All bishops and priests of the Croatian Orthodox Church had to take an oath of allegiance to Croatia and the Poglavnik. Aid similar to the special state aid provided to the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic clergy who ministered to the converts to Roman Catholicism, was also provided to the priests of the Croatian Orthodox Church.²²⁷ The project of the Croatian Orthodox Church, however, turned out to be a failure in view of the negligible number of Orthodox priests who joined it.

It should be noted that, following the model of Nazi Germany, totalitarian forms of salutation were adopted in the school system and the public administration. Thus, the school disciplinary regulations for high school students,²²⁸ setting out student rules of conduct towards adults, imposed a way in which familiar adults and teachers were to be greeted. “The way of greeting from now on shall be as follows: both male students (without taking their caps off) and female students shall greet by raising their right hand in a forward move to the eye level, with fingers outstretched. When the greeted person says in response to

²²⁴ Biondich, “Religion and Nation in Wartime Croatia”, 80.

²²⁵ See *Narodne novine* no. 77, 7 April 1942.

²²⁶ See *Narodne novine* no. 123, 5 June 1942.

²²⁷ See the Order of the Ministry of Justice and Religious Affairs of 30 July 1942, no. 1810-Z-1942 on the Payment of State Aid to the Croatian Orthodox Church Priests, Their Widows and Their Orphans (*Naredba Ministarstva pravosuđa i bogoštovlja od 30. srpnja 1942. broj 1810-Z-1942 o izplati državne pomoći svećenicima Hrvatske pravoslavne crkve, njihovim udovicama i njihovoj siročadi*), *Narodne novine* no. 169, 30 July 1942.

²²⁸ School disciplinary regulations for students of classics-program and general-program grammar schools, teacher-training and civil schools, *Narodne novine* no. 137, 26 September 1941. A similar regulation was also introduced for students of secondary vocational schools (see *Narodne novine* no. 158, 21 October 1941).

the salute: 'For the homeland!' a male student shall answer: 'We are ready!', and so shall a female student: 'We are ready!'" (Article 38, paragraphs 3 and 4).²²⁹ With the establishment of the Ustasha Youth (modelled on the Hitlerjugend), the entire Croatian youth aged from 7 to 21 years became its integral part.

Concluding considerations

Considering all the above-described effects of the genocidal policies pursued by the Ustasha regime against the Serbs, Jews and Roma, the biological survival of persons belonging to these groups was threatened throughout the NDH. The form of the criminal law norms built into this system of (non)values certainly contributed to this. The fact that the "honour and vital interests of the Croatian people" were also defined as *objects of criminal law protection* determined the fate of the Serbian people in particular, which due to its being a sizeable population was recognized as a foreign body posing a threat to the Croatian living space. Vital interests of the Croatian people did not include coexistence with the Serbian people, unless persons belonging to it renounced their national, religious and cultural identity, thus becoming "acceptable" fellow citizens. At the same time, their status of citizens was called into question unless there was a will from their part to readily and faithfully "serve" the Croatian people, and if no actions against its "liberation aspirations" were undertaken. The decree which recognized citizenship only to persons of Aryan descent also contributed to this. To the extent in which such origin was denied to persons belonging to the disputed nations (Jews and Roma), or to the contested one (Serbs), state policies implemented Catholicization, or measures for biological and physical removal from the territory of the NDH.

The enforcement of the Criminal law of the NDH was characterized by heavy reliance on the operation of the special judiciary, especially of permanent and mobile courts martial, which could only impose the death penalty. Yet, even these quasi-judicial bodies operated in just a small number of cases, despite the fact that one of their members had to be from among the Ustasha ranks. Most of the mass executions of civilians that took place in the territory of the NDH, committed by the Ustasha members – although this circumstance could not

²²⁹ This type of salutation also applied to all departments and institutions within the public administration. "All civil servants regardless of their status, in the office and outside the office, shall use a single greeting and a response to the greeting: (We are) ready! In addition to the loud greeting in the office and outside the office, all civil servants shall salute each other by concurrently raising the right arm at an angle of 45°, i.e. so that the outstretched arm makes half of the right angle with the horizontal line. The hand must be fully extended with fingers and thumb pressed together" (see Instructions on Salutation by Civil Servants, *Narodne novine* no. 28, 4 February 1942). Finally, the duty to raise his right hand was imposed on every man passing by a soldier on sentry duty (see *Narodne novine* no. 77, 7 April 1942).

possibly convalidate the perpetrated crimes – were not the executions of capital punishment previously imposed by a court martial in some kind of conducted proceedings – they were just plain murders. Organized pogroms of Serbs, Jews and Roma, as well as of communists and political opponents of the regime, were also committed by way of deportation to concentration camps. Although it formally was an administrative and penal measure, in terms of its nature and consequences it was a security measure in disguise, justified by the threat posed by “disloyal and dangerous persons”. Confiscation of assets in terms of its effects also constituted a parapenal measure which could be imposed both as a measure of administrative authorities and as a criminal sanction.

The question of the possibility that a system of legal rules is not founded on the idea of justice and the equality of citizens constitutes one of the central themes of the twentieth-century philosophy of law, and a topic of interest to criminal law, especially from the perspective of a possible conflict between the principles of legality and legitimacy. This question was discussed, especially from the perspective of possible justification for crimes committed during Nazi Germany, by the German philosopher and professor of criminal law Gustav Radbruch. Addressing the question of the duty to apply unjust positive law in his 1946 article “Statutory Non-Law and Supra-Statutory Law”, Radbruch wrote the following: “The conflict between justice and legal certainty may well be resolved in this way: The positive law, secured by legislation and power, takes precedence even when its content is unjust and fails to benefit the people, unless its conflict with justice reaches such an intolerable degree that the statute, as ‘flawed law’, must yield to justice. It is impossible to draw a sharper line between cases of statutory lawlessness and statutes that are valid despite their flaws. One line of distinction, however, can be drawn with utmost clarity: Where there is not even an attempt at justice, where equality, the core of justice, is deliberately betrayed in the issuance of positive law, then the statute is not merely ‘false law’, it lacks completely the very nature of law. For law, including positive law, cannot be otherwise defined than as a system and an institution whose very meaning is to serve justice.”²³⁰ Extreme non-law that negates any equality among citizens – is no law at all. The lack of respect for fundamental rights and the genocide against own population render the criminal law order established in the NDH devoid of any legal character, regardless of the fact that the violence was committed in

²³⁰ For more detail see Gustav Radbruch, “Gesetzliches Unrecht und übergesetzliches Recht”, in B. Spaić, ed., *Pravo i pravda. Hrestomatija*, 2nd ed. (Belgrade: Pravni fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, 2017), 113–120. The so-called Radbruch formula was applied by the German Supreme Court in many cases concerning Nazi Germany’s law. Thus, for instance, in one case this court found that a German officer who had shot and killed a soldier who had been a fugitive from the firing squad could not invoke (Himmler’s) authorization, under which any armed soldier could shoot a deserter without a trial, and characterized his action as objectively unlawful.

an organized manner by the state authorities. For that reason, it cannot really be characterized as a (criminal) law order, but as an order founded on crime and criminal injustice.

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Elena Ceaușescu's Personality Cult and Romanian Television

Abstract: Elena Ceaușescu, spouse of the Romanian communist leader Nicolae Ceaușescu, generated in the 1980s a gigantic homage industry, as she was the object of a personality cult as strong as that of her husband's. This paper briefly outlines the origin and elements of Nicolae Ceaușescu's personality cult, to focus then on Elena Ceaușescu's cult: how at first it was merged with the cult of her husband, her being a mere companion of the head of state, and then grew to the point of paralleling that of Nicolae Ceaușescu during the last years of communist rule in Romania. The second part focuses on the evolution of Romanian state television and its crucial role in the diffusion of her personality cult, showing how this state institution became completely subordinated to the presidential couple in the 1980s, and pointing to a paradox of the period: the shorter Romanian television's daily broadcasting time, the larger the amount of programming on Ceaușescu. Finally, the paper shows how January was infused with anniversary dates meant to consolidate the personality cult of the presidential couple and to reinvent communist traditions.

Keywords: personality cult, Elena Ceaușescu, Nicolae Ceaușescu, Romania, communism, television, media studies

Even though we usually associate dictators, tyranny and personality cult with men, it has not prevented some women from understanding the mechanisms of power just as well. As a rule neglected by historians, the women who stood at the side or in the shadow of dictators often had real political power themselves. Considered as authentic tragic heroines by a few authors, resembling "those of Racine in their pride or of Flaubert in their silliness" (Ducret 2013: 10), they were generally demonized by their people and their memory was most of the time kept only orally. Antipathy towards these women was, and is, often much greater than towards their male partners-in-crime, which may be a reason for the relative lack of scholarly interest. Elena Ceaușescu, wife of the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, was one of the few spouses of communist leaders to have a high political profile of her own, being deeply involved in party administration. All through the 1980s, until their execution in December 1989, she was the second most influential Romanian, after Ceaușescu himself, and was the object of a personality cult as intense as that of her husband. In her craving for power, in her cynicism and cruelty, she was similar to Nexhmije Hoxha, spouse of the Albanian leader Enver Hoxha, or Margot Honecker, wife of the GDR head of state, Erich Honecker. She shared most in common with Jiang

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Qing, wife of Mao Zedong, Chairman of the Communist Party and Paramount leader of China, who impressed and inspired her deeply during the 1971 visit of the Ceaușescu to the People's Republic of China.

And yet, Elena Ceaușescu distinguished herself from the other wives of communist leaders. Tons of published *Omagiu* (homage) in her honour, thousands of radio and TV broadcast hours praising the “Mother of the Nation”, lies about her age and education, the charade about her scientific accomplishments (from a doctoral degree in chemistry to the title of academician) trying to conceal her abysmal ignorance and infinite vanity, a whole gigantic homage industry built around Elena Ceaușescu set her apart in the pantheon of communist first ladies. Perhaps in no other totalitarian system with a cult of the leading lady did adulatory practices reach such proportions as in Romania. Practically, the two presidential spouses enjoyed two parallel worship structures, which intersected at certain points.

The demonization of Elena Ceaușescu after the Romanian Revolution of December 1989 was reflected in staggeringly high disapproval ratings. Public opinion polls conducted more than twenty years after the fall of communism showed that 87 % of Romanians saw her negatively, whereas only 45 % felt the same about Nicolae Ceaușescu.¹ Today, almost thirty years after her death, with her fading in collective memory, she still seems to be a taboo topic for researchers, which translates into a silence “based on moral and pseudo-cognitive reasons” (Olteanu 2004). While books about Nicolae Ceaușescu, his dictatorship and personality cult are still being written, Elena is hardly ever mentioned.

Nicolae Ceaușescu's personality cult

From today's perspective, the personality cult of the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu belongs into one of the most fascinating and horrifying chapters of Romanian history, and it has attracted considerable scholarly attention.² In the post-Stalin era, in this part of Europe, Ceaușescu's systematic and theatrical cult can only be compared to that of Enver Hoxha's in communist Albania; on the global contemporary scene, it has similar features to that of the Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong, who greatly inspired the Romanian dictator.

Nicolae Ceaușescu was probably the most celebrated Romanian of all times, if we consider the masses of people involved in manifestations dedicated

¹ According to a poll conducted by INSCOP Research in November 2013 (<http://www.inscop.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/INSCOP-noiembrie-ISTORIE.pdf> [retrieved 1st August 2017]).

² See e.g. Fischer 1989; Burakowski 2011; Cioroianu 2004, 2010; Durandin 1990. For a critical analysis of the books on the personality cult of Nicolae Ceaușescu signed by foreign or Romanian authors, see Marin 2016, 22–25.

to him, the hundreds of congratulatory telegrams from ambassadors and heads of state, the parties organized and the gifts received, but also the huge space allotted to him in the mass-media (Avram 2014). In the beginning it was the printed press but later, after the introduction of television, this medium also came under the control of the Romanian dictator and helped expand the eulogy industry to absurd proportions.

As it was effectively put in an article on the dictator's career trajectory, *Ceaușescu's life started at 50* (ibid.). More exactly, his personality cult started rising from that date on. His birthday, 26th January, was forcefully and suddenly brought to public attention in 1968, when he turned 50, a month after he became President of the State Council of the Socialist Republic of Romania. On 26th January 1968, *Scântea*, the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) newspaper, featured the headline "Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu turned 50", with the piece signed by the RCP Central Committee, the State Council and the Council of Ministers

Expectedly, Nicolae Ceaușescu's birthday was celebrated with greater pomp at round figures. After 1968, the first major celebration was in 1973, when he turned 55, after the 1971 visit to China and North Korea. From 1973 until the end of his life, he would go on working visits to different regions of the country or factories in Bucharest on the eve of his birthday, and homage texts and congratulations would start arriving and being published a few days before and would cease a few days after 26th January. After 1973, Romanian intellectuals and writers also engaged in the homage charade with their letters and odes to "the first man of the country", and later also to his wife. Tons of publications under the title *Omagiu* will forever remain "evidence of unimaginable human degradation, partly imposed, partly voluntary", as "moral mud was the vital substance of the Golden Age" (Tismăneanu 2015).

In the late 1960s, when Ceaușescu's personality cult started off, it also played a role in putting up resistance to Moscow. Its main source was the Stalinist tradition, as Ceaușescu gradually replaced Stalin in the political imagery of the RCP, but it also had roots in the Romanian national tradition, since Ceaușescu sought to emulate King Carol II of Romania. Finally, after his 1971 visit to China and North Korea, Ceaușescu, deeply impressed by the *dynastic communism* of the Asian countries, also adopted the Asian model (Cioroianu 2010 (1)). Despite its diverse sources of inspiration, Ceaușescu's cult had distinctive features, directly connected to the very nature of original Romanian communism³: Byzantine imperial glorification rituals were fused with Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy claims. The scenery was grotesque and delusional but, as ironic as it may seem, it was

³ Tismăneanu (2012, 466) defines Ceaușescu's socialism as "totalitarianism Romanian-style, a combination of Stalinism, Third World-ism, and Byzantinism", which "could never fully overcome its pariah genealogy".

this ubiquitous and sultry personality cult that enshrined Ceaușescu for eternity in the history of Marxist beliefs (Tismăneanu 2015).

Ceaușescu was depicted simultaneously as “the main doctrinaire, the visionary genius, and the ‘architect of national destiny’” (Tismăneanu 2012, 468). Words, colours and images built a Nicolae Ceaușescu with several mythic facets: he was the revolutionary, the theoretician of a new world order, the champion of peace, the architect of a new Romania, the hero of independence, the guarantor of national unity, the most beloved son – or father – of the nation etc. (Cioroianu 2010 (2)).

But this grotesque cult of personality in no way contributed to the credibility of the Romanian leader. On the contrary, it may be described as a textbook example of political ineffectiveness: if Ceaușescu was a popular and credible leader in Romania at the end of the 1960s, after his brave move in 1968 (condemning the Warsaw pact and the military intervention in Czechoslovakia), the next twenty years only reinforced the impression that the man whom Romanians had genuinely trusted was transforming into a mere caricature. Not surprisingly, at the climax of his personality cult in the late 1980s Nicolae Ceaușescu was much less popular in Romania than before he had become the object of this blind idolatry (Cioroianu 2010 (1)). Instead of bringing him closer to the people, this “ephemeral, shaky and questionable” construction (Tismăneanu 2015) of a Messianic leader fenced Ceaușescu off the Romanian people and in the gloomy 1980s made him one of the most hated figures, probably second in notoriety only to his wife, Elena Ceaușescu.

In December 1989, only a month after he was unanimously re-elected as head of the RCP, he and his wife were turned over to a firing squad and executed. The architects of the cult of Nicolae Ceaușescu had in fact worked against him and against an initially very promising situation. In the end, Ceaușescu was intoxicated by power, more and more convinced of the reality of their artificial and absurd construction and unable to divorce himself from it.

Elena Ceaușescu’s rise to power and glorification

In the beginning Elena Ceaușescu was just the wife of the Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party. Her presence at his side was meant to strengthen the belief of the people that the head of the party, apart from being a patriot, was also a family man. As the wife of a communist leader, Elena Ceaușescu seemed to the Western eye more down-to-earth and relaxed than her counterparts, a possible sign of normalization: “When Ceaușescu announced his policy of international opening, the public appearance of Elena Ceaușescu, clumsy and uncultured as she was, was felt like a sign of normalization; in comparison with the symbolic bachelorhood of the Stalinist era, the new masters’ matrimony seemed auspicious. Between Khrushchev’s stumpy wife and elegant

Raisa Gorbachev, Ceaușescu's wife seemed to mark a new political style, more relaxed and attentive to individual values" (Petre 1995, 265).

Moreover, she made a break with tradition: she was selling the idea that she succeeded owing to her professional competence, creating the illusion of a ruling elite being recruited based on merit. The political and economic emancipation of women formed part of the mythic history of socialist women fabricated during the Ceaușescu regime, and Romania's transformation could not happen without a New Woman, whom Elena was now embodying. Consequently, the propaganda campaigns promoting the inclusion of women in the labour force and politics after 1973 were motivated, according to some authors, by two main factors: the demand for additional labour force and the need to legitimize the scientific career of Elena Ceaușescu (Kligman 1998, 129).

By 1979, when her personality cult entered a new, absolutist, phase, Elena Ceaușescu had accumulated a solid symbolic capital, being presented as a person who harmoniously combined the qualities of a wife, a mother, a revolutionary, a scientist and a politician (Olteanu 2004). By 1979, she turned from a mere background presence into an important social figure. However, before her legend could be created, the gaping void in her legitimacy had to be filled, at least at a discursive level. Her husband had already been a legitimate leader when he became head of the party; her cult, by contrast, depended both on external and on internal factors: firstly, her scientist image floated on the quicksand of falsehood, duplicity and ignorance; secondly, she had to come second to the leader. Since every personality cult is in fact a mythology, the Ceaușescu couple fitted perfectly into a coherent and hierarchical mythological system: "Nicolae Ceaușescu was the supreme almighty god, and his wife was a demigod" (ibid.).

In spite of the fact that her formal education was basic – she did not have a college degree, and her ignorance was appalling⁴ – Elena was presented as a scientist, and she was awarded a PhD in chemistry. In the early 1960s she was secretary of the party committee of the Bucharest-based Central Institute for Chemical Researches and, when her husband assumed leadership of the party in March 1965, she became head of the Institute. The same year she was elected a member of the newly-established National Council of Scientific Research and a year later, in 1966, she was awarded the Order of Scientific Merit First Class. In 1974 she became member of the Romanian Academy's Section for Chemical Sciences. During the period when her husband ruled Romania, Elena received many honorary awards for scientific achievement in the field of polymer chemistry. Every international visit of Nicolae Ceaușescu brought an international scientific title for her. Thus, official propaganda tried to sway the nation into believing that Elena Ceaușescu was a pioneer of Romanian chemistry (more in

⁴ As it came out after the fall of the communist regime, all her scientific papers had been penned by others.

Olteanu 2004), and the label “scientist of world renown” (Rom. *savant de renume mondial*) was automatically attached to her name.

Even though she frequently accompanied her husband on his official visits abroad, it was not until 1971 and their visit to the People’s Republic of China that she began to engineer her own political rise. For Elena, this journey, during which she had the chance to see how Jiang Qing, Chairman Mao Zedong’s wife, exerted control over many of China’s political institutions, including the media and propaganda, was a real *political epiphany* which accelerated her political rise (Ducret 2013, 158). In 1972 Elena Ceaușescu became a full member of the Romanian Communist Party Central Committee and a year later, in 1973, she was elected to the party’s Executive. In 1975, she was elected to the Grand National Assembly, the country’s national legislature, and in 1980 she was made First Deputy Prime Minister, a title invented just for her, which she bore until she was executed in 1989.

Having successfully implemented the lessons she learned from Jiang Qing in 1971 and fascinated by her political jargon, Elena apparently decided to follow in the steps of another woman of power in order to polish her image, Isabel Peron. Hence she took a trip to Buenos Aires in 1973, where she was struck by the life path of this former dancer who became vice-president alongside her husband in the September 1973 election (ibid. 161). She adopted from Peron the image of a compassionate mother to become the “Mother of the Nation” herself. Thus, perhaps as a result of these encounters, or because the propaganda architects became aware of the artificiality of two previously promoted aspects of her image (politician and scientist), they introduced a unifying, human component: a woman, a mother, even a daughter of the nation (as Nicolae Ceaușescu was “the most beloved son of the nation”), adding to all these the attribute of exceptionalism. From the 1980s, Elena Ceaușescu becomes omnipresent at public events; in widely-distributed official photographs she is usually dressed in white and surrounded by children and doves. Television cameras covering the couple’s official visits to villages or factories record an immutable ritual: children welcoming them with bread and salt, Elena thanking them and caressing them lovingly. More and more, she becomes holy Elena, mother of the Romanian fatherland and of all Romanian children (ibid. 163).

Marry Ellen Fischer, a US expert on Romania and keen observer of Ceaușescu’s leadership, pointed out that Elena, unlike her husband, lacked credibility in the country: “Despite the praise heaped upon her by the Romanian press, Elena Ceaușescu is not a popular personality in most of the country. She does not project the practical competence and concern of an Eleanor Roosevelt or the mystical charm and beauty of Eva Peron. Although Nicolae Ceaușescu’s image has become extremely ostentatious and lacking in credibility, it remains more palatable than hers; at least, Romanians say, he *earned* his high office, rising to the pinnacle of power through hard work and political skill. She, on the other

hand, is regarded as the undeserving beneficiary of his generosity. She does have the revolutionary credentials as a textile worker and communist activist in the 1930s, but those activities are not as documented as her extravagant use of furs and designer fashions in the 1970s and 1980s" (Fischer 1989, 172).

If Nicolae Ceaușescu's life "started at 50", Elena Ceaușescu's public (and, we could add, mythical) life started at 60. It should be said, however, that she had the year on her birth certificate changed from 1916 to 1919, so as not to be older than her husband who was born in 1918 (Avram 2014). On the occasion of her first nationwide birthday celebration, on 7th January 1979, when she actually turned 63, the press stated that Comrade Elena was celebrating 60 years of life and 40 years of revolutionary activity (Olteanu 2004). After this date, her age was not to be mentioned any more. Her real age and appearance, as much as his, were to be concealed by using anniversary paintings or carefully retouched photographs in the printed press, or by shooting her from a distance and favourable angles, so her face could not be clearly discernible. Every image of hers was meticulously scrutinized before being approved for consumption by the wide audience.⁵

The 1980s were inaugurated by the advent of co-management of the Ceaușescu couple. By 1979, Elena Ceaușescu's cult had become merged with her husband's, and she was not referred to as his wife, but as a "genius" scientist in her own right. Lucian Boia finds the origins of Elena's cult in her and Nicolae's poor background. Linking their personalities together, their backgrounds exacerbated their frustrations and transformed them into megalomania, "which they fed and stimulated in each other" (Boia 2001, 127–128). Everything from the pharaonic style of buildings to the construction of cities which were supposed to completely replace "backward" villages had been symptoms of the presidential couple's complexes and their belief that history was somehow obligated to reward their efforts. Boia's paradigm regarding the presidential couple can be summarized as follows: megalomaniac leaders driven by their background-

⁵ Dana Mustata quotes the former news desk deputy chief editor at Romanian television, Teodor Brateș, who recalls the Ceaușescu couple watching the broadcast of a meeting between Bulgarian President Zhivkov and Ceaușescu: "After they saw the televised images on their home screen, a scandal blew up as they found themselves looking old, wrinkled and gesticulating inappropriately. Those involved in filming the event were threatened with the most severe sanctions. However, a screening of the filmed materials held at the public broadcaster showed the opposite: the dictatorial couple had been filmed from a distance, from favourable angles and were by no means misrepresented. Upon closer investigation, it eventually turned out that the images watched by the dictatorial family on their home screen belonged to Bulgarian television, and their confusion had been exacerbated by the fact that towards the end of their regime the two were interested only in images, wanting to look good and to be admired by the masses, and therefore muted the sound on their television sets" (Mustata 2013a: 117).

related pathology and sustained by the Romanian historical and cultural legacy of passivity (Grec 2016, 53).

Romanian television as a propaganda medium

Mass-media were instrumental in making the Ceaușescu into idols. There were several vehicles for the propagation of their personality cult, such as homage volumes, gramophone records, films, TV and radio programmes, events around 23th August and homage events in the country and abroad (Marin 2016), but it was the printed press and television which had a decisive role. By the 1980s, both the printed media and television propagated their personality cult more than anything else. Paradoxically, this led to their detachment from the social reality in the country as well as from the growing civil hostility towards them (Mustata 2013a: 111).

The Romanian state television (TVR) was launched on 31st December 1956 (and at that point was combined with radio). The period from the mid-1960s until the end of the 1970s was the golden age of Romanian television: investments in equipment and personnel were made, genres greatly diversified, television reporting and investigative journalism developed, a second channel was added. However, at the end of the 1970s TVR entered its dictatorial phase, which lasted throughout the 1980s. Programmes became politicized and were made to please the dictator Ceaușescu; the diversity of genres was reduced to political programming alone and broadcast content became scarce. The second channel, added in 1968, was shut down in 1985, as were the TVR local stations. Being aware of the enormous potential of television, power holders cut down broadcast hours to a minimum, which in the second half of the 1980s amounted to two hours a day. In that way the censorship and propaganda departments were able to take full control over television content (more in Mustata 2013a; Matei 2013).

The exceptionalism of Romanian television among the other socialist televisions in Europe transformed it, in the second half of the 1980s, into the most absurd mass-media institution on the continent. It broadcast 20–30 hours a week (less than in 1965), most of which was black and white (a unique case in all of Europe) and devoted to the activity of the presidential couple. Even if the rise of Ceaușescu's personality cult, which peaked in the 1980s, was probably the main trigger for this dictatorial phase of Romanian television, the economic crisis the country was experiencing at the time should not be underrated either (Mustata 2013a, 107). However, with its outdated equipment, enormous delay in introducing colour broadcasting, and dull programming, TVR faced stagnation or even regression long before the Romanian economic crisis broke out.

The last decade of totalitarian power in Romania was characterized by television and other media being under the personal control of Nicolae and

Elena Ceaușescu themselves. Towards the end of the 1980s, television had only one role: to trumpet the Ceaușescus' invincibility and support their idolization. In line with this, broadcasts made systematic use of visual codes and clichés that underlined their personality cult. Be it the coverage of one of Ceaușescu's work visits, the celebration of a national event or the inauguration of a new factory, a common denominator for most broadcasts was the presence of masses of people made up of tiny, undifferentiated human figures paying homage to the heroes, waving scarves in the colours of the Romanian flag and singing patriotic songs (Mustata 2013a, 115). Through the use of such visual representation, the two Ceaușescus were identified as beloved leaders, cherished by all and distinguished for their personal and social merits.

As the video archives of Romanian television are still difficult to access, my findings are based on the analysis of the TVR Sunday to Saturday listings magazine, *Tele Radio*.⁶ As Elena Ceaușescu was born on 7th January, I shall focus on the week in January containing this day to determine at which point in time and to which extent the homage TV shows broadcast for her birthday influenced state television programming. I shall also examine the other January days infused with meaning in the new communist calendar, and the treatment they were given in the printed press.

A shift in orientation and intensified communist propaganda meant to support Ceaușescu's personality cult can be detected even by analysing the front page of the TV listings magazine. If between 1968 and 1975 it mainly featured photographs of famous entertainers, people of culture, TVR newscasters or just artistic images, in the second half of the 1970s the front cover was monopolized by photographs of industrial or agricultural workers. From 1983 on, text prevails: slogans and incentives to peace and work or previews of the ever more numerous TV programmes boosting the cult of personality of the two Ceaușescus. This is also the year when Nicolae Ceaușescu's portrait was first featured on the front cover on his birthday, 26th January.⁷ It should be noted that Elena Ceaușescu's portrait never appeared on the front cover, only inside the TV magazine.

The adulation lavished on Ceaușescu's was ubiquitous in TVR programmes, with the exception of its entertainment content which, however, was almost non-existent in the last years of communist rule. On Sundays, when the daily broadcasting time was the longest, the first programme, *Lumea copiilor* (Children's world), featured a "literary-musical-choreographic show" called *Suntem copiii Epocii de Aur* (We are the children of the Golden Age) or an editorial titled *Cutezători, pășim pe drumul de glorie* (We bravely march on the road of glo-

⁶ Initially a radio listings magazine, it was called *Programul de radio*, and then, with the advent of television, *Programul de radio și televiziune*. Between 1968 and 1982, its name was *Radio-TV*, and after this date it became *Tele Radio*.

⁷ Personal communication of Vasile Isache, <http://tvarheolog.wordpress.com>.

ry), which were mainly devoted to praising the leader. There followed two short shows of 15–20 minutes, *Sub tricolor la datorie* (On duty under the tricolour) and *Viața satului* (Village life), both containing moments devoted to the directives of comrade Ceaușescu, which did not leave too much time for the nominally announced topics. The afternoon show *Album duminical* (Sunday album) featured patriotic songs, poems or choreographies, ending the first part of the Sunday programmes. After a four-hour break, programmes resumed with the first news bulletin (*Telejurnal*), which invariably started with Nicolae Ceaușescu's activities: work visits, receptions of ambassadors, congratulatory telegrams, or record agricultural production per hectare etc. The prime-time show was *Cântarea României* (Singing of Romania), a cluster of cultural events organized by the Council for Socialist Culture and Education with the aim of promoting mainly folk art and artists, but also choral music. In the second half of the 1980s, the slogan of this show was *Omagiu țării și conducătorului iubit* (Homage to the country and its beloved leader): each administrative region of Romania prepared such a show once a year, as a present to the presidential couple.

Apart from Sundays, however, tribute shows to Ceaușescu were aired all the other days as well: Monday – *Ce-ți doresc eu ție, dulce Românie* (What I wish for you, sweet Romania), patriotic and revolutionary songs; Tuesday – *Țara îți făurește visul* (The country is fulfilling your dream), patriotic and revolutionary songs; Wednesday – *Trăim decenii de împliniri mărețe* (We live in decades of great accomplishments), a 30-minute “literary-musical-choreographic show”, and *Tę cântăm, iubită țară!* (We sing of you, beloved country), Romanian popular music; Thursday – presenting the winners of the national festival *Cântarea României*; Friday – *Copiii cântă patria și partidul* (Children singing of the homeland and the party); Saturday – *Țara sub tricolor, sub roșu steag* (The country under the tricolour flag, the red flag). The two hours of broadcasting per day in the second half of the 1980s would also squeeze in 15-minute documentaries (the average length of a TV show in this period) on the builders of the Golden Age, the beauty of the homeland, Romanian glorious history, the Nicolae Ceaușescu era – an era of great revolutionary accomplishments, Romanian education, research and production, Romania in the world etc.

Elena Ceaușescu's personality cult in the month of January

Expectedly, the personality cult would gain in intensity around the birthdays of the two Ceaușescus, the national holidays – 23rd of August (marking the 1944 overthrow of the pro-fascist government of Marshal Ion Antonescu) and 1st of May (Labour Day) – and the RCP congresses.⁸ As for Elena Ceaușescu, she also

⁸ The propagandistic delirium reached its culmination in November 1989, on the occasion of the 14th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party. For whole seven days, TVR broad-

confiscated 1st and 8th March, days honouring mothers and women. After 1983, almost the whole month of March was dedicated to the “Mother of the Nation”, honoured through the *Omagiu* TV shows (music or poetry shows meant to glorify her qualities as a woman, mother and wife, but also as the foremost scientist of the country and a remarkable politician). The printed media were even more crammed with echoes of the birthday, as the available print space remained more or less the same,⁹ while the broadcast hours were drastically reduced. If March, traditionally women’s month, was confiscated by Elena Ceaușescu, January was monopolized by both Ceaușescus. It is remarkable, however, how the communists seized this month, on TV and in the mass-media in general.

The public observance of Christmas, the most important religious holiday in Romania alongside Easter, was tacitly banned in the communist period when concepts such as religion or Jesus Christ were erased from the vocabulary. As atheism became state religion, the birth of Jesus was replaced by the New Year’s Eve; the Christmas holidays – by the winter holidays; Christmas carols – by patriotic songs; *Moș Crăciun* (Father Christmas) – by his communist counterpart, *Moș Gerilă* (Grandfather Frost), who arrived not on 24th December, but on 1st January, which also became the new date for decorating not the Christmas tree, but the winter tree. However, in spite of official discourse, the tree was usually decorated ahead of time in almost every home, but kept away from the window, lest someone see it, and the family would reunite around the Christmas table, in accordance with tradition. Christmas was a silent holiday, still celebrated but behind closed doors. To compensate for this erasure of traditional holidays and for emptying this season of symbolic substance, the New Year’s Eve was magnified and made into the most important day of the winter season. As it provided an opportunity to list the accomplishments of the Party and set new goals for the upcoming year, it was propagandistically exploited to the maximum. As far as television goes, though, the three days around the turn of the year offered a densely packed programme which included not only politi-

cast only internal news bulletins, homage shows, documentaries and coverage of the huge communist meeting, meant to celebrate the great socialist victories in Romania. No art film, no theatrical production, no entertainment, no cartoons were broadcast in their traditional Saturday or Sunday time slots, making Romania look more like a country in mourning than in a celebration mode (personal communication of Vasile Isache, <http://tvarheolog.wordpress.com>).

⁹ For example, the *Scântea* issue of 8th March 1984 was a festive one meant to celebrate the mothers and women of Romania, but there was only one object of the panegyrics: Elena Ceaușescu, the woman. She was celebrated on all the pages of the newspaper: her scientific contribution, her worldwide renown, her books published in the country and abroad, her qualities as an ideal woman, mother, daughter of the country (personal communication of Vasile Isache, <http://tvarheolog.wordpress.com>).

cal but also entertainment content. In the 1980s, these three days were the apex of RTV programming, practically the only days RTV was worth watching.

Admittedly, January was the month with the biggest potential for inventing communist traditions. Being the first month of the year was heavily significance-laden in itself. With Christmas having been pushed aside, after the grand celebration of the New Year's Eve, the communist year could begin, commitments for the following months could be made. As far as anniversary dates are concerned, January abounded in them. First, there still were echoes of the declaration of the People's Republic of Romania from the end of December,¹⁰ both in the printed press and on TV. Second, an important date that the communists appropriated and included in their new calendar was 15th January, the birthday of Mihai Eminescu, a Romantic poet often regarded as the greatest Romanian poet. Third, and most important, the birthdays of both Ceaușescu were in January, which fitted perfectly into this new system of measuring (new) time.

If in the beginning the communists were hesitant regarding Mihai Eminescu, by the middle of the 1960s the poet had become a perfect symbol for the communist ideals to cluster around. After truncating the poet's work and eliminating from it fragments that lacked anti-capitalist overtones, after erasing references to the poet's anti-Semitic views from the *History of Romanian literature* and republishing his sanitized poems together with numerous volumes of praising literary critics, Eminescu's position as the supreme representative of Romanian spirituality was secured. After 1965, the universal character of the poet was strongly emphasized; it is not a coincidence that this offensive took place at exactly the same time as the large-scale campaign of promoting Romania at a global level which Ceaușescu undertook (Boia 2015, 165).

Like all other commemorations of important people, mainly rulers, from Romanian history, Eminescu's also had only one aim: to glorify Nicolae Ceaușescu and secondly, but not less notably, his wife, through a primitive method of mythological transfer: "All heroes of the nation were called, by turn, to warrant for and to support the most famous of them all, the one who was fulfilling the entire Romanian history" (ibid. 168). One of the literary figures in service of the communist government, Geo Bogza, in an acclamation to Mihai Eminescu, posed a rhetorical question: "How about starting counting the year, our year, from January 15?"; probably a subversive suggestion, as the birthdays of the two Ceaușescus were also in January (ibid. 164).

Nevertheless, the day of the poet's birth (and death), as it was commemorated on TV, did not have anything special in comparison to those of the presidential couple. After the drastic reduction of TV broadcast hours in the

¹⁰ The People's Republic of Romania was declared on 30th December 1947, after the forced abdication of King Mihai I of Romania. The country bore that name until 1965, when it was changed to the Socialist Republic of Romania.

first half of the 1980s, there was not much time for anything anyway: generally, Mihai Eminescu's commemoration would last 30 minutes. But, from November 1988 every Monday evening TVR broadcast 15 minutes of patriotic poems and songs under the title *Ce-ți doresc eu ție, dulce Românie* (What I wish for you, sweet Romania), Eminescu's line which became emblematic of the communist credo. This is also the moment when TVR programmes are re-extended to 3 hours per day.

After the country became the Socialist Republic of Romania in 1965, which put an end to the January commemoration of the declaration of the People's Republic of Romania, the first month of the year was further inflated, symbolically and propagandistically, on the small screens and in the printed press by adding one more celebration, which was to remain in the communist calendar until 1989: 26th January, Nicolae Ceaușescu's birthday. But it was not until the beginning of the 1980s that this new calendar became complete, by adding one more date: 7th January, Elena's birthday.

A comparison between the TV listings for the same day but different years, 1977 and 1987, shows the extent of the impact of her personality cult on TV programming (fig. 1 and fig. 2). As we can see, in 1977 TVR had two television channels (TV₁ and TV₂) and two radio channels. The 7th of January was a weekday that year, Friday. TV₁ started broadcasting at 10:00 with *Teleşcoală* (TV school), as school children had their winter holiday. At 11:00, *Matineu de vacanță* (Holiday matinee) featured a Romanian movie for children followed by a five-minute news magazine with which the first part of programmes ended, at 12:25. The afternoon part started at 16:00 with a half hour of TV school, followed by a half hour of the French language course and by a 105-minute-long German language programme. There followed the 10-minute lotto draw, a music show of 25 minutes, and *1001 de seri* (1001 evenings), a children show of 10 minutes broadcast every evening between 1970 and 1980, featuring the *Mihaela* cartoons by the famous Romanian cartoonist and director Nell Cobar. The evening news, *Teledjurnal*, scheduled for 19:30, lasted half an hour, and was followed by 10 minutes of economic news. The evening movie, a French-Italian co-production, was followed by *Revista literar-artistică tv* (A literary-artistic TV review), world news and local news. The evening programming closed at 23:00. On the same day between 17:00 and 23:00 TVR's second channel featured Romanian folk and classical music, comedy, travel documentary, music, cartoons, news magazine, opera, moments from the history of Romanian science and the portrait of a Romanian painter. Elena Ceaușescu was nowhere to be mentioned on TV on her birthday in 1977.

The following year, 1978, broadcasting hours were already reduced: although 7th January was a Saturday, broadcasting started at 12:00, and not at 10:00 as it had before, but there still were no shows connected to Elena's birthday celebration. In 1979 we can notice the first attempts to put together a TV

Fig. 2 Romanian TV listings for Wednesday, 7 January 1987 (courtesy of <http://tvarheolog.wordpress.com>)

TELEZIUNEA | Miercuri 7 Ianuarie 1987

20.00 Telegazetă

20.20 **OMAGIU**
Documentar

20.40 **DIN INIMĂ CÎNSTIRE**
SPECTACOL LITERAR-MUZICAL-COREGRAFIC

21.35 ROMANȚE ȘI MELODI ÎNDRĂGITE

21.50 Telegazetă

22.00 Închiderea programului

RADIO

6.00 **RADIOPROGRAMUL DIMINEȚII**
• Muzică de seară
6.30 **R. A. ORIENTEA ZILEI**
• Radioteatrul din județ
7.00 **RADIOJURNALUL**
7.30 Anul doi al cîmășăriei și
• Proiecte ale "prinderii cuprinsă
• Emisiunea în direct...
8.00 Serviciu de știri
8.15 Flori de cântec românesc
8.30 Publicitate
9.00 Buletin de știri
9.05 **RADIOFONIA**
• ACULTĂȚIILOR
10.00 **Buletin de știri**
10.05 Flori în cântec (știri)
• Program muzical
10.45 Publicitate
11.00 Buletin de știri
11.25 Lăsați și spiritele voștre
• Pentru cunoașterea, încrederea și
aplicarea în viața a beneficiilor de
partie și a legilor statului
• Încălziți-vă din Duminică
11.25 Cîntec pentru oamenii zilelor
noastre
11.30 Buletin hidrologic
12.00 Buletin de știri
12.05 **Săptămîna nouă**
• Chemarea din demnitate de știri
al revoluției și a demnității revoluției.
• Emisiune realizată în **ACEȘCHIM**.
• Redactor: Florin Dumitrescu
12.30 **DRAĞOȘTE SUPREMĂ, ROMÂNIA!**
• Emisiune de versuri
12.45 Din cântecul țării
• Măsură dimbovită
13.00 **DE LA 1 LA 3**
• **RADIOJURNAL**
• Radioteatrul românesc
• "Căminul nostru"
• "Căminul nostru"
• "Căminul nostru"
13.15 Operațiunea "Răspuns" de Florin
Căminul (muzică)
13.40 **MICRIȚA**
• Revista de antropologie și folclor
"Pădurea de aur" a lumii de înțep-
turi
• Versuri ale scriitorilor săraci, la-
vorarii și Pădurea de aur
• Căminul Românesc
• Redactor: George Astoi
16.40 **RADIOJURNAL**
16.45 Publicitate
16.25 Epoca Nicolae Ceaușescu, om
de pace și încredere. Cîntec poli-
tic și revoluționar
16.40 Muzică bună românescă
17.00 Buletin de știri
17.05 **COORDONATE ECONOMICE**
• Noua revoluție științifică-
tehnologică și apărarea eficientă economiei.
• Contribuții ale revoluției științifi-
ce în dezvoltarea economiei.
• Perfectionarea organizației și me-
todologiei producției.
• Redactor: Lucia Băduș

1988, the show lasted 70 minutes, and on 7th January 1989, Elena Ceaușescu's last birthday was celebrated with a 70-minute TV show, this time titled *Vibrant omagiu* (Vibrant homage). We can notice that the shorter the daily broadcasting time, the longer and more suffocating the homage shows devoted to Elena Ceaușescu.¹¹ In addition, more and more space in the TV magazine was allotted to the framed text which announced the show combined with a painted portrait of the Ceaușescu couple.

If at first no attention was paid to the way in which the names of Nicolae and Elena were printed, it later became a rule to print their names in capital letters and ensure that they were not split at the end of a line in order to avoid the risk of funny wordplays being made. From the first colour issue of the TV listings magazine in 1968 until the end of the 1970s, all colours were used, but from 1979, apart from black, only red and blue remained, probably to symbolize the Romanian flag (red, yellow and blue). The use of colours was only allowed for

¹¹ As Anikó Imre notices, unlike television in the United States which explicitly favoured the housewife receptive to advertising, socialist TV "targeted the man or masculine worker, who plops down on the sofa after a long day at the factory" (Imre 2016, 191). In the 1980s, however, Romanian television developed a strong propaganda agenda to promote the ideal socialist woman, modelled by Elena Ceaușescu: "*Noi, femeile* and *Universul femeilor* discussed agricultural work, the working woman, women leaders in different professions, the revolutionary woman and the many virtues of Elena" (ibid. 192). It must be said that these programmes are definitely older than the 1980s, but their agenda drastically changed these years.

the Monday, Wednesday and Friday pages. If Nicolae's or Elena's birthday were not on one of those days, the editors would squeeze two weekdays on the black and white pages, omitting several show titles, so that the greetings and the special birthday programme could be printed on a colour page.¹² If 23rd August or 1st May did not fall on a colour page day, then the whole magazine was printed in black and white.¹³ From the autumn of 1988, colour disappeared completely from the inside pages, and only remained on the magazine cover.

As TVR in the 1980s was reduced to a medium of broadcasting (for Nicolae and later Elena Ceaușescu, with abundant representations of worship, shrunken broadcast hours, duller and duller programmes and no entertainment, the Romanian audience lost all interest in TVR and watching foreign televisions became a mass phenomenon (Mustata 2013b; Sorescu-Marinković 2010; 2012). The dictatorial couple became the directing figures behind TV programmes, the main actors on the small screen and, more than that, the target audience of TVR. As Radio Free Europe stated in 1985: "Romanian television has the rare privilege of being a private television, a state television representing the viewing taste of one family" (Mustata 2013a, 116).

After a decade of watching the seemingly forever young Ceaușescu couple on TV every evening, in December 1989 Romanians were taken aback to see how old the two looked on their last, unretouched, live appearance. The whole country watched dumbstruck Nicolae Ceaușescu's embarrassingly poor improvisation when he addressed the masses in Bucharest, a clear sign that the end of the "golden age" was drawing near. Symbolically, it was December, Christmas day, when they were executed.

Concluding remarks and implications

Elena Ceaușescu's personality cult developed alongside her husband's during the 1970s, taking an independent turn from the beginning of the 1980s. However, unlike him, she lacked legitimacy and credibility, and her cult was built on shaky ground. The propaganda apparatus tried to compensate for this by an aggressive glorification campaign. The Romanian television played a crucial role in the dissemination of her personality cult, after this institution became completely subjugated to the presidential couple and lost all of its functions, except as a propaganda medium. With its daily broadcasting time reduced to a minimum, the content of TV programmes was easy to control and the Ceaușescu couple

¹² In 1983, for example, the *Scântea* issue of 8th January echoes Elena Ceaușescu's celebration from the previous day by presenting two specialist volumes signed by her. In the following years, the headings and illustrations devoted to her on pages 1, 3 and 6 were in red ink.

¹³ Vasile Isache calls this situation "colour jealousy" (personal communication).

was an everyday presence on the small screens of all Romanians, completely monopolizing TV on anniversary dates.

On the other hand, the symbolic appropriation of the first month of the year by the communists may be seen as a model of inventive and efficient propaganda. Elena's birthday was preceded by the New Year's Eve and followed by two other important celebrations: the birthdays of Romania's national poet Mihai Eminescu and Nicolae Ceaușescu, which automatically included her among the most famous Romanians. After the Revolution of December 1989 which marked the fall of the Romanian communist regime, January as the month of invented communist tradition was disestablished and Elena, whose celebration was short-lived, was sent directly to the dustbin of history. Significantly, Mihai Eminescu's statue appeared on the cover of the first issue of the TV listings magazine printed after the fall of communism, and the head title read: "On the centenary of the death of the national poet, the Romanian people was born again".

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IN MEMORIAM



Nikola Tasić
(1932—2017)

I can speak of the recently late Nikola Tasić, an archaeologist and balkanologist of international renown, a member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, in several capacities: as his friend, as his collaborator on many projects of the Institute for Balkan Studies of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, as his successor as director of the Institute. Nikola Tasić came from a distinguished family originally from the town of Vranje, and was a nephew of another member of the Academy, Djordje Tasić. Archaeologist by education, he spent most of his active career in the Institute for Balkan Studies: he was among the first members of the Institute's scholarly staff after its reestablishment in 1969, its scholarly secretary, deputy director and, finally, its director, from 1989, with short breaks, until the end of 2012. Even when he pursued other important activities – as director of the National Museum in Belgrade (2001–2003), professor at the University of Novi Sad (from 1986), secretary-general (2003–2007) and vice-president (2007–2016) of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts – Nikola Tasić was in the daily habit of coming to the Institute to meet his colleagues and friends, to enquire about the affairs of the day and the progress of the projects and, when needed, to offer advice and support.

I first met Nikola Tasić in 1984, during preparations for the Congress of the AIESEE in Belgrade, where he, as deputy of the director of the Institute, Radovan Samardžić, carried most of the organizational work load. As one of the congress secretaries, I was in daily communication with him, which gave me the opportunity to notice not only his great organizational skills but also his rare gift of communicating with his colleagues, senior as well as junior, both warmly and competently. A natural gentleman, self-possessed but affable, he won everybody with his graciousness. With Nikola Tasić, whatever matter was in hand, even the most complex one, was solved with unusual ease, without tempers flaring, and so was every problem, however big, as has been the tradition at the Institute for Balkan Studies established by his predecessors, Vasa Čubrilović and, especially, Radovan Samardžić.

Along with pursuing his own scholarly interests, Nikola Tasić used his organizational and communicational skills for expanding the network of friends and partners of the Institute at home and abroad. Owing to his commitment, our contacts and bilateral and multilateral projects with related institutes in Sofia, Bucharest and Thessaloniki grew in number and international collaboration intensified. The established ties proved to be firm and steady. They were not completely severed even in the difficult last decade of the twentieth century, when Serbia was under cultural and scientific sanctions. Nikola Tasić's office was visited by a number of scholars of different profiles. Unwilling to break scientific collaboration with Belgrade, they came to express solidarity or to propose projects which would start once the sanctions were lifted. It was on his initiative that an important conference of the directors of the institutes for Balkan studies from the region was held in Belgrade in 1995, setting the course for future bilateral and multilateral cooperation. His political engagement in the struggle for democracy in Serbia in murky times was a shining example of an intellectual effort to contribute to the common good and recuperate democratic traditions of Serbian society. This brave engagement earned him further repute in the public eye both at home and internationally.

Nikola Tasić was a member of many national and international committees and associations: Committee on Archaeological Research of Vinča; Committee on the Encyclopaedia of the Visual Arts; Gallery of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts; Centre for Balkan Studies of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Matica srpska; Institute for the History of Vojvodina; National Committee of the AIESEE; International and Inter-Academic Committee on the Prehistory of the Balkans (Heidelberg); National Committee of the International Union for Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences (UISPP); International Association for the Study and Dissemination of Slav Cultures (MAERSK); International Council of Thracology.

Lastingly concerned with the Balkan dimension of our past, from archaeology to anthropology to history and art history, Nikola Tasić insisted in his

communication with renowned foreign institutions on international and, whenever possible, multidisciplinary projects of the Institute for Balkan Studies. Owing to his high personal reputation and good connections in the academic world not only in the Balkans but also in Europe at large, he was able to secure funding for various research projects and for many scholarly conferences that the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts hosted during his directorship of the Institute for Balkan Studies. He was always willing to rely on personal acquaintances among archaeologists and balkanologists made in the course of the work on bilateral projects for establishing or deepening the Institute's collaboration with similar research institutions in Austria, the Czech Republic (Czechoslovakia), Poland, Russia, Georgia, Hungary, Germany, Italy, France, Macedonia. Moreover, always supportive of junior researchers, he provided them with letters of recommendation which almost unfailingly ensured funds for study stays abroad or foreign scholarships.

Opposed to any kind of mythomania, Nikola Tasić was always measured and moderate in his thought and action, free from even a tingle of academic jealousy and, even more importantly, he felt a commitment to the common good, so rare nowadays. Nikola Tasić in fact had a special mission: to make it possible for all people he worked with to reach their maximum scholarly potential, to be given the opportunity to prove themselves and gain recognition in whatever their field. The unwavering support, advice and assistance he provided both as director and as a mentor in usual and especially in critical situations meant so much to those who had just embarked on the uncertain path of doing scholarly work.

Nikola Tasić insisted on having the Institute's more important publications published in foreign languages or at least as bilingual editions in order for the results of domestic scholarship to become accessible to the international academic community. As editor-in-chief of the Institute's multidisciplinary annual journal *Balkanica*, on the other hand, he insisted on having as many renowned foreign contributors as possible in order to enhance its quality and diversity and further its international visibility and reputation.

Owing to Nikola Tasić, seemingly incompatible disciplines could team up on a major national or international project with a view to coming up with a broader, more layered and, if possible, more comprehensive picture of the Balkan past. Therefore, his scholarly staff recruitment policy was focused on maintaining the multidisciplinary character of the Institute for Balkan Studies and on strengthening individual disciplines for long-term projects.

Even when burdened with other responsibilities, as two-term vice-president of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, Nikola Tasić continued to keep a protective, fatherly eye on the work and progress of the Institute. As chairman of its Scientific Board, and then, until his death, of its Management Board, Nikola Tasić contributed to its work with his experience, expertise and advice, ever will-

ing to help to renew or expand bilateral agreements with related institutes from Moscow to Sofia, or to procure funding for one or another project.

To me, personally, it was a great privilege to be able to gain not only his trust but also his friendship in the twenty years of our working together, from 1992, when I joined the Institute for Balkan Studies. To him, the Institute for Balkan Studies was something of an extended family which he watched over caringly, open to its members' personal fates and dilemmas. And this feeling of trust was reciprocal: he frequently shared with us, his colleagues, the importance of the lifelong support of his wife Vera, his pride in his son Nenad, who follows in his footsteps, and words of praise for his grandchildren, Lenka and Nikola, who no doubt were the light of his life.

Dušan T. Bataković

IN MEMORIAM



Dušan T. Bataković
(1957–2017)

Dušan T. Bataković was a historian and a diplomat with a wide range of interests; from rock and roll – he played in a rock band in his youth, to modern painting – he made his residence as Serbia’s ambassador in Paris into something of a gallery, to journalism – he used to be the editor of various Belgrade journals and reviews in the 1980s. But first and foremost, he was a man of firm convictions and they had decided his life’s path. Throughout our many conversations and discussions over the thirty odd years since we first met at the Historical Institute where we both started our careers as historians, he maintained that one should choose profession in accordance with one’s profound inner beliefs as that is the only way in which one’s work can attain its full meaning. His most profound inner belief was his patriotism, a term and concept which nowadays, in the era of globalisation, tends to have a negative connotation. Dušan sincerely and deeply loved his native country and its people. He believed that Serbia which he loved and for which he worked all his life both as a historian and as a diplomat should be a democracy based on the legacy of the Golden Age of the Serbian parliamentary system (1903–1914) and an integral part of Europe of sovereign nations.

His patriotism led him to state his views on politics and history clearly and publicly, laying aside all consideration for the established views on the political scene and in historiography. He considered it to be his duty to speak up against erroneous political decisions and to point out the inconvenient truths and inconsistencies in the national narrative. His judgements and opinions were always based on scrupulous respect for the methodology of historical research.

Following the path traced by his professors Dimitrije Djordjević and Radovan Samardžić, Dušan chose the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century history of Kosovo as the main subject of research, one of the most challenging topics in Serbian history. In the course of this research the concern for the Serbian population and Serbia's medieval cultural heritage in Kosovo became a genuine calling for Dušan. His books, *The Dečani Question* and *Kosovo and Metohija in the History of Serbia*, published in the 1980s, offered a new and well-documented history of the Southern Serbian province. While preparing his doctoral thesis at the Sorbonne in Paris in the 1990s, he published *Kosovo. La spirale de la haine* (1993) and *L'histoire de la Yougoslavie* (1995), trying courageously to challenge the predominant narrative which presented Serbia and Serbs as the only culprits for the bloody breakup of Yugoslavia.

His research on the nineteenth-century history of Serbia led him to conclude that Serbia, in its search for a model to look up to, had turned to France. In doing so he followed the logic that had been the basis for the famous "Nacher-tanie", the programme of Serbian national policy analysed in one of his books. It had been said there that Serbia should look for models beyond the surrounding absolutist empires, i.e. the Austrian, Ottoman and Russian empires. His work on the Serbian youths who pursued their higher education in Paris and, upon returning to Serbia, became opinion-makers as government ministers and university professors popularly known as "Parisians" at the time, as well as his articles on bilateral relations acquired their full importance in his PhD thesis on the French sources of parliamentary democracy in Serbia, which was subsequently published by the CNRS.

I remember a conversation we had in Paris after he had received his PhD. He told me that he had no doubts about what he should do next. The opportunity to teach at French universities that he was offered had no real appeal to him. His mind was made up: he was going to return to Serbia where his research could have its full importance. Once back in Serbia in the late 1990s, he immediately joined the ranks of opposition to Milošević's regime, putting in practice his beliefs that Serbia should be a true democracy based on European models.

Dušan wrote his papers with the same passion with which he fought the communist power holders in Serbia. He wrote for long hours, mostly at night, convinced that he should do all that was in his power to rectify the unfounded but dominant narrative which made Milošević the personification of contemporary Serbian history. His relentless efforts took a toll on his health. Even so,

after the fall of Milošević and the democratic turn in the country, he accepted to serve as Serbia's ambassador first in Athens, and then in Ottawa and Paris. As a historian he had spent years reading diplomatic correspondence. Now he found himself in a position to write it himself, only to conclude that it necessarily revealed only an incomplete picture of reality. He wrote his correspondence with the utmost attention of a historian fully aware that it would not be read only by his superiors but also by the generations of historians to come, fully aware that the most important information cannot and must not be committed to writing. Dušan's encounter with the diplomatic world was a source of disillusionment for him; he found out that bureaucratic complacency was more common than personal initiative. A man of Dušan's temperament and convictions could not have felt at ease in such an environment, but his ambassadorship at Athens, Ottawa and Paris was considered a success both by his hosts and the Ministry in Belgrade.

As Serbia's ambassador in Paris (2009–2012) Dušan was able to continue and crown his research on relations between the two countries and on the French influences in Serbia, while trying to foster closer cooperation between two societies. It was through his effort that Serbia was given a prominent place in the museum dedicated to the memory of the Great War in France. He organised, since his predecessors could not or would not, a commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia in Marseilles. Dušan as ambassador in Paris, with the authority of an expert on Kosovo, defended the territorial integrity of Serbia.

At the end of his diplomatic career, Dušan re-joined the Institute for Balkan Studies where he spent most of his scholarly career and which he led as director from 2005 to 2007 and again from 2012 until his death. Dušan's firm conviction that Serbia is a part of Europe and that, consequently, its history is an integral part of European heritage, inspired him to do his best to demonstrate it by putting in place, from 2005 onwards, a publication policy of the Institute aimed at enhancing its and the nation's visibility in the academic world by publishing in French and English. The Institute's journal *Balkanica* has been published in English and French since 2006. Until 2017, during the period when he was editor-in-chief, even while he served as ambassador, the Institute for Balkan Studies published fifteen collections of conference papers in English and French. He considered it necessary to acquaint the international audience with the work that was being done in the Serbian humanities since it was largely unknown due to its publications being almost exclusively in Serbian. In the same period the Institute under his guidance published thirty-four books in Serbian.

On his initiative the Institute has begun the process of developing international cooperation on the regional and European level. During his term in office, the Institute took part in four international projects, concluded ten cooperation agreements with related institutions from France, Russia and Italy,

and organised four international conferences. He was also vice-president of the International Association for South-Eastern European Studies (AIESEE).

Even though he may have seemed to be a strict, at times quick-tempered person who would not refrain from stating harsh truths regardless of the effect it may have on his interlocutor, Dušan was a warm person who had a profound empathy for his colleagues and friends. He tried his best to help whoever he could and put much effort into helping the younger colleagues at the Institute to find their way in their research.

Dušan was convinced that a life has a meaning only if lived to the full. He devoted his life to the well-being of Serbia as he understood it. Serbia that cherishes its Orthodox roots and is respectful of its history. Serbia that upholds its democratic traditions and takes care of the well-being of its citizens both at home and in the diaspora. As a historian, he did his best in his lectures, papers and books in order for the present generations not to lose national consciousness. As a diplomat, he fought as hard as he could to prevent Serbia from losing parts of territory and, above all, to prevent it from losing its self-esteem.

The enormous and generous efforts Dušan put into accomplishing his various scholarly and patriotic objectives, the fights he fought in defence of the integrity of the historian and history, and those he fought as a historian in politics took a serious and irreparable toll on his health. His departure has left an immense and irreplaceable void for his family, friends, colleagues, and for all those who respect his life's work. He left leaving us richer for the moments we had the privilege to share with him. The Institute for Balkan Studies will dedicate the following issue of the *Balcanica* to the memory of Dušan T. Bataković.

Vojislav G. Pavlović

REVIEWS

IRENA ŠPADIJER, *SVETI PETAR KORIŠKI U STAROJ SRPSKOJ KNJIŽEVNOSTI* [ST PETER OF KORIŠA IN OLD SERBIAN LITERATURE]. BELGRADE: ČIGOJA ŠTAMPA, 2014, 413 p.

*Reviewed by Danica Popović**

Irena Špadijer, professor of medieval literature at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade, is very well known to all those concerned with medieval Serbian and other Slavic literatures. Apart from her many and noted studies, her two recently published books have attracted the particular attention of the academic community: *Svetogorska baština. Manastir Hilandar i stara srpska književnost* [Athonite Heritage. Monastery of Hilandar and Old Serbian Literature], and the one that is the subject of this review, *Sveti Petar Koriški u staroj srpskoj književnosti*.

The book is devoted to an exceptional literary character which is grounded in historical reality, Peter of Koriša who, sometime in the late twelfth century, pursued a solitary ascetic life in the wilderness of Koriška Gora near Prizren (Metohija). Today the main guardian of the memory of this unusual ascetic figure is the monastery of Crna Reka (southwest Serbia). The cult of the saint still lives in the distinctive, almost medieval setting of this cave monastery. Its focal point is the saint's relics, known far and wide for their miraculous and healing

powers. Peter's original shrine in Koriša, where monastic life died out centuries ago, has been subjected to deliberate devastation and eradication of memory, as are other Serbian monuments in Kosovo and Metohija. The site itself is barely accessible.

The focus of Irena Špadijer's attention, however, is neither this and similar realities nor the issues relating to legends and oral traditions about the life and ascetic pursuits of the Koriša recluse. Nor is the book concerned with issues that fall in the domain of disciplines such as cultural history, ascetical theology, hagiology or even psychology, although its frame of reference involves to some extent all of them. It is important therefore to keep in mind the author's own remark made in her concise and substantive introduction: the subject of her study is a literary, i.e. linguistic work of art, and her method belongs to philology understood in the broadest possible sense – as a discipline that combines linguistic, textological, literary-historical and theoretical perspectives. It

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seems obvious therefore that this book will be a must-read for the historians of medieval literature both for its methodology and for the conclusions it puts forth. Moreover, it will be of interest to other disciplines of medieval studies because it provides a reliable philological and literary basis for a more comprehensive approach to phenomena as complex as the cult of St Peter of Koriša. It is exactly this aspect that this review is concerned with. Without going into issues specific to the domain of the history of medieval literature, I restrict myself to pointing to the relevance that the proposed conclusions have to a more comprehensive understanding of the emergence, content and function of the cult of St Peter of Koriša in the context of medieval Serbian and, more generally, Eastern Christian cultic practice.

Consistently adhering to the philological method, Irena Špadijer begins by addressing textological questions, i.e. by examining the entire manuscript tradition of the literary texts intended for cult purposes. In the research she undertook she had few predecessors to guide her and few firm points of reference to rely on. This is the reason why the first two chapters (“St Peter of Koriša in Old Serbian ecclesiastical poetry” and “St Peter of Koriša in Old Serbian hagiography”) embark on a detailed study of the hymnographic and hagiographic works devoted to the Koriša recluse, i.e. of the compositions belonging to the genres of ecclesiastical poetry and hagiography. This time-consuming and highly complex task, which involved the examination of the relationship among the different copies and variant versions of the texts, and the identification of their models, proved worthy of the effort put into it. Apart from enabling the publication of the texts themselves (“Sources in Old Slavonic”) – which are appended at the end of the book along with the “Images of the manuscripts” – the effort came up with some very important conclusions.

Irena Špadijer reliably established the existence of two different services for St

Peter of Koriša, which survive in three copies. Her analysis of the relationship between the services is central to understanding the distinctiveness of the glorification of saints in medieval Serbia, which lies in a saint's cult being built in stages and chiefly with liturgical means. The original Service for St Peter of Koriša composed sometime in the early decades of the thirteenth century is particularly important because it is, among other things, one of the earliest works in this genre in Serbian literature, chronologically quite close to the Service for St Symeon penned by Sava of Serbia. One of the author's important observations is that this service has, as it were, documentary value – which lies in the factual data it contains, in recurring information about the grave and relics of Peter of Koriša, and in the immediacy of the description of the hermit's ascetic deeds. This original composition was used a few decades later by the illustrious Serbian writer Teodosije (Theodosius) of Hilandar, whose Service for St Peter of Koriša, as Irena Špadijer demonstrates, is much more abstract in its poetic expression and more universal both in motifs and in messages. Irena Špadijer's observations and conclusions strongly support the view that a spontaneously developed local cult was subsequently codified and reshaped in accordance with the highest standards of the genre, and transposed into a broader, both universally Christian and national, framework. I have no doubts that these observations and conclusions will resound strongly among the researchers concerned with the complex phenomenon of Eastern Christian “canonization”, the process of a person's inclusion among the saints.

The hagiographic literature devoted to the Koriša anchorite – two vitae, a shorter and a fully developed one – is discussed with the same scrupulousness in an extensive chapter which brings many new and interesting findings. Irena Špadijer pays particular attention, and with good reason, to the saint's *Life* written by Teodosije of Hilandar.

How influential his literary masterpiece was among later copyists may be seen from the fact that a relatively large number of surviving copies offer the same version of the text in Teodosije's readily recognizable literary style. Without going into the question of literary heritage or Teodosije's poetic expression, which will certainly continue to be an inspiring topic for scholars of Old Serbian literature, I shall point to only some of Irena Špadijer's important findings concerning the cult of St Peter of Koriša. It should be emphasized straight away that her findings will be of great interest not only to Serbian scholars but also to all those who focus their research on the cults of the holy anchorites of the Eastern Christian world.

Searching for literary and historical models which may have influenced the shaping of the cult of St Peter of Koriša, Irena Špadijer carefully examines its South-Slavic context. One of her particularly consequential observations is that the historical figure of Peter of Koriša chronologically and geographically follows four illustrious anchorites (Sts John of Rila, Prochorus of Pčinja, Joachim of Osogovo and Gabriel of Lesnovo) who had lived in the area between Mt Rila and Kosovo between the second half of the tenth century and the end of the twelfth century. On the other hand, her comparative literary-historical analysis of their biographies shows that Teodosije of Hilandar did not look for models for his *Life of Peter of Koriša* in local South-Slavic authors, but in quite another place. Namely, he chose to follow the supreme example set by the *Life* of the founder of eremitism, St Anthony the Great, which has already been identified as the prototype. It is interpreted mostly from the standpoint of chosen hagiographic *topoi* which cover all types of radical ascetic practice as the prescribed road to attaining sanctity. These interpretations show that Teodosije's portrait of St Peter of Koriša, as a whole and in every detail, is so shaped as to conform to the example of the most radical ascetic set by the early Egyptian

hermits. Irena Špadijer's contribution to our understanding of this particular topic consists in her use of a distinctive perspective appropriate to the philological method: a comparative analysis of the structure of the characters of St Anthony and St Peter with respect to literary motifs and composition. A significant contribution to specialist hagiological-hymnological studies is made by the examination of the biblical context of Teodosije's *Life of St Peter of Koriša* where psalms, indicatively, account for two-thirds of all biblical quotations. Drawing on contemporary medieval literary studies, Irena Špadijer convincingly demonstrates that Teodosije's *Life* strongly confirms the view that New Testament quotations functioned as a dogmatic-theoretical, "supratextual" framework of a literary work, while psalms were an expression of the human yearning for attaining virtue and a vehicle for a profoundly personal communication with God.

The literary-theoretical and philological approach also proved productive in the examination of the structure of Teodosije's *Life of Peter of Koriša*, which encompasses the questions of composition, literary characters and types of their discourse, and the symbolism of space. These brilliantly written sections of the book reveal the depth, the understanding and, I would dare say, the remarkable intuitiveness with which Irena Špadijer deciphers Teodosije's idiosyncratic literary expression and manner. On this occasion, I shall only call attention to two important questions. One concerns the conception of space in medieval literature which, as is well known, is never real, but rather iconic and serving the narrative. The symbolism of space in Teodosije's *Life of St Peter of Koriša* is reflected in the way in which the process of the hermit's spiritual perfection is described in terms of, let me quote the author, "topographical relocation" which consists in abandoning the world and withdrawing into the desert, a space intended for higher, ascetic forms of the monastic way of life. Teodosije describes the hermit's

gradual attainment of holiness using concepts such as the hut, the desert, the mountain, the cave, the rock. In addition to being real space references, they are also symbols indicating a particular stage in the hermit's ascetic endeavour with more precision, and Teodosije uses them with fine, spiritually layered nuances of meaning.

Irena Špadijer's lucid analysis of the characters and their discourse in Teodosije's *Life of St Peter* brings to light the hagiographer's literary virtuosity and individuality. Certainly the most striking passages are those of Peter's exchange with the demons that tempt him. They are a consummate example of the ability of literature to describe the abysses and dark alleys of the human soul, to point to the measure of human weakness and the limits of human endurance, but also to the possibility of conquering evil. Such a powerful literary rendition is what distinguishes the Koriša hermit's biography from similar eremitic hagiographies of the Orthodox world and, as Irena Špadijer puts it, makes it transcend its time.

The discussion part of the book ends with the chapter devoted to the attempt to establish dates both for St Peter of Koriša and for his biographer, Teodosije of Hilandar ("Issues of chronology"). The Koriša hermit has hitherto been roughly placed in the twelfth/thirteenth century based on various criteria and arguments. Irena Špadijer relies on her philological examination and

on the analysis of the oldest surviving frescoes in Peter's hermitage to push the life of the Koriša hermit further back into the past, sometime at the end of the twelfth century. As for Teodosije of Hilandar, she proposes the view that the writer flourished in the last decades of the thirteenth century. This view seems to be gaining ground even though the question of arguments for dating remains a matter of controversy: unlike the widely accepted arguments that rest on the analysis of the manuscript tradition, the relevance of certain events and historical context in establishing chronology has been, and apparently will continue to be, the subject of an interesting and inspiring debate.

Irena Špadijer's book is one of those works that will be of enduring relevance and inspiration to researchers. Not only because it addresses some of the big and exciting topics of Old Serbian literature in particular and medieval studies in general, but also because it is exemplary for the thoroughness and scrupulousness of the research method applied. In that sense, it has already provided many of us with a number of firm points of references. But this book has yet another quality, quite rare nowadays, which I feel obliged to mention with particular appreciation. Written with an evident literary talent, a distinctive sensibility and reflectiveness, the book is read with great enjoyment and inner engagement.

ELENA DANA PRIOTEASA, *MEDIEVAL WALL PAINTINGS IN TRANSYLVANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES: ICONOGRAPHIC SUBJECTS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT*. BUCHAREST: EDITURA ACADEMIEI; CLUJ-NAPOCA: MEGA, 2016, 376 p., 139 ill.

Reviewed by Jovana Kolundžija*

Elena Dana Prioteasa of the Institute of Archaeology and History of Art in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, focuses her research on iconography and medieval painting in Transylvania. It may be interesting to note

that, after a career as a medical doctor and specialist in laboratory medicine, she enrolled in the studies of Art History at the

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“Babeş-Bolyai” University in Cluj-Napoca, from which she received her BA and MA degrees, earning her PhD degree (2012) from the Department of Medieval Studies of the Central European University in Budapest. The book reviewed here, *Medieval Wall Paintings in Transylvanian Orthodox Churches*, is a part of her doctoral dissertation and it is about how particular wall paintings reflect the social, political and religious situation of Orthodox Christians in one part of the Hungarian kingdom in medieval times. Apart from an introduction, eight chapters and a conclusion, it contains a catalogue of churches, a list of abbreviations, a bibliography, a map, an index and 139 illustrations of very good quality.

The medieval wall painting of Transylvanian Orthodox churches has a rich history of previous research published both in general studies and in articles devoted to individual monuments. The main authors who have dealt with the paintings in different ways are Ion D. Ştefănescu, Virgil Vătăşianu, Vasile Drăguţ, and Marius Porumb. Ştefănescu has researched the iconography, style and technique of wall painting in many medieval Transylvanian churches in a book devoted to religious painting in Wallachia and Transylvania up to the nineteenth century. There are many studies discussing particular Transylvanian churches, the most prolific authors being Vasile Drăguţ and Ecaterina Cincheza-Buculei.

All the paintings discussed in this book date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and are fragmentarily preserved. As Elena Dana Prioteasa says, “many are still in a poor state of conservation or partially uncovered”, and “they contain Slavonic inscriptions and display a variety of styles: Gothic, Palaiologan, and a category that combines the Byzantine tradition with some Western influences as many others in this area at that time”.

Elena Dana Prioteasa chose to focus her attention on the wall painting of eight churches: the church of St. George in

Streisângeorgiu (Hu. Sztrigyszentgyörgy); the church of the Dormition of the Virgin in Strei (Hu. Zeykfalva); the church of St. Nicholas in Densuş (Hu. Demsuş); the church of St. Nicholas in Leşnic (Hu. Lesnyek/Lesnek); the Reformed church in Sântămăria Orlea (Hu. Óraljaboldogfalva); the church of the Dormition of the Virgin in Crişcior (Hu. Kristyor); the church of St. Nicholas in Ribiţa (Hu. Ribice); and the church of the Dormition of the Virgin in Hălmagiu (Hu. Nagyhalmagy). In medieval times, these churches were situated in two neighbouring counties: Hunyad, in the Transylvanian voivodate, and Zaránd. The subject matter of the paintings selected for research is interpreted in relation to their social, political, and religious context.

The first chapter, “The social, political and religious life of the Romanians in late medieval Hungary” is devoted to the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century history of both Christian Churches, the Latin and the Orthodox, and the Romanian elite. The population of Hungary at the time was diverse in terms of ethnic origin and religious affiliation (Romanians, Germans, Slavs). Most Romanians lived in rural areas and their leaders, known as *kenezii* and *voivodes*, had judicial, administrative and military attributes. The second chapter, “Historical data on the researched churches and their donors” is concerned with links between particular details of wall paintings and the patrons of churches. Based on the painted portraits it is possible to identify the rulers and the time they lived in as well as the places. The chapter “Lay portraits and inscriptions” approaches each of the eight churches dealt with in the book to analyze the inscriptions and the lay portraits, provides information on the history of the church, the social and financial status of the patrons and their spiritual aspirations. In all of those paintings, the portrait of the donor is incorporated into a votive composition which depicts the donor presenting the model of the church to the patron saint, or individuals are depicted

separately, usually in a posture of prayer. The fourth chapter, "The military saints", is concerned with the portraits of holy warriors, because of their prominent presence in Transylvanian Orthodox churches. They are accorded an important, sometimes unusual, place in the church, such as the sanctuary or the upper register in the nave. Their depictions or scenes include St. George fighting the dragon, St. Theodor Tyron, St. Theodor Stratelates, St. Demetrius and Theodore.

The following chapter, "The holy kings of Hungary", focuses on the portraits of three holy kings of Hungary (Stephen, Emeric and Ladislas) painted in two medieval churches: the church of the Dormition of the Virgin in Crişcior, and the church of St. Nicholas in Ribiţa. The chapter on "The Exaltation of the Holy Cross" describes in detail the wall paintings in the churches in Crişcior and Ribiţa, and deals in particular with the depictions of St. Constantine and Helena in the iconography of the West and the East, or medieval Hungary. The cult of Sts Constantine and Helena was widespread in the middle ages because Constantine was celebrated as the first Christian ruler and founder of a Christian state.

The seventh chapter, "Orthodoxy of Faith, the Greek Rite, and the Latin Church in the Paintings at Hălmaġiu and Ribiţa", focuses on iconography in the churches at

Hălmaġiu and Ribiţa. The iconographic programmes of the two churches are similar, the only significant difference being observable on the south wall of their sanctuaries. Those paintings are expressive of adherence to Eastern liturgy and emphasize the orthodoxy of its theological content. The last chapter, "Saints Bartholomew and Thomas in the churches at Hălmaġiu and Densuş", discusses differences in the representation of the two saints in Western and Byzantine iconography, and looks at the manner in which they were depicted in medieval Hungary.

The book *Medieval Wall Paintings in Transylvanian Orthodox Churches* is very relevant for understanding the medieval culture of that part of Europe. Some iconographic motifs occurring in the churches under study have been interpreted in their social, political and religious context. The paintings have been regarded as a means of communication whose messages can be understood to the extent in which their historical background can be reconstructed.

A particular quality of this book rests in its excellent colour photographs, which are a precious source for all historians, and historians of art and literature interested in this period of the medieval past. The book is written in a simple style which makes it accessible even to a wider public.

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF THE HISTORY OF NATIONALISM, ED. JOHN BREUILLY.
OXFORD: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2013, xli + 775 p.

Reviewed by Dušan Fundić*

The Oxford Handbook of the History of Nationalism edited by John Breuilly, Professor of Nationalism and Ethnicity at the London School of Economics and Political Science, assembles texts by 35 contributors, offering a global overview of the history of the

phenomenon.¹ It examines many aspects of nationalism in terms of ideas, sentiments

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¹ Since his *Nationalism and State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press and Manchester:

and, most of all, a view on politics of nationalism from various research angles.

The opening chapter, Introduction: Concepts, Approaches, Theories, is preceded by a detailed list of authors followed by a useful comparative chronology of selected political events involving nationalist movements, arranged by region with relevant maps. An introduction by the editor, John Breuilly, states three main premises on which the book is predicated: it should offer a history of nationalism, "... not nationalism as an aspect of history of nations or nation states"; the history of nationalism is perceived primarily as history of politics and political ideology and social elements and states that uphold it; concluding with the third premise that "such nationalism is specific to modern era".

The book is divided into six parts which can actually be seen as covering two large themes. The first one is a chronological history of nationalism from its emergence through histories of particular regional nationalisms. In the opening chapter of the first part Nationalism and Vernaculars, 1500–1800, Peter Burke argues against crude binary terms in researching pre-modern national identity sentiments, although he does not challenge the modernist approach but insists on different continuities before and after 1800 as a time of the Great Divide. On the other hand, Erica Benner examines intellectual origins of nationalism by comparing the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Johann Gottfried Herder and their utilization throughout the nineteenth century, while John Hutchinson offers a study of aspects of nationalism as a cultural movement. Particularly interesting is Andreas Eckert's text on anti-Western doctrines of nationalism which challenges the common view that non-European communities were formed only as a Western import.

Manchester University Press, 19932) Breuilly has become one of the leading scholars on the subject of nationalism.

The second part, The Emergence of Nationalism: Politics and Power, presents an account of nationalism after the American and French revolutions in different regions of Europe, Asia, and Africa.² It also includes the chapter written by Breuilly that offers an interesting view on the term of national unification in nineteenth-century Europe emphasizing that pan-nationalism implies unsuccessful unification attempt while unification nationalism implies successful pan-nationalism. Also, in this part of the book David Henley in his *Origins of Southeast Asian Nations: The Question of Timing* seeks to elucidate the reasons why there are three different nation-states in former French imperial Indochina but a single Indonesian state from the time of Dutch colonialism. By using this wider theoretical framework, Henley underlines the importance of French decentralized system versus Dutch centralized imperial rule. Also, the French conquest took place deep in the nationalist era while pre-Indonesian states were conquered during the previous period. Inside those repertoires of imperial power, local populations ended up in differently imagined nation-states.

The third part starts with John Darwin's discussion on the relationship between nationalism and imperialism between about 1880 and 1940 and serves as an introduction to the essays on Nationalism in Post-colonial Africa, Latin America, Nineteenth-Century USA, interwar European Nationalism while being rounded up with the Arab World, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia and Southeastern Europe

² This also includes the texts on nationalism in the Habsburg and Ottoman empires written by Miroslav Hroch, and on Separatist Nationalisms in the Romanov and Soviet Empires, in the Middle East, 1876–1945, India, 1857–1947, East Asia, 1839–1945, Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa, and Anti-Colonial Nationalism in Sub-Saharan Africa.

throughout the second part of the twentieth century.

Roughly speaking, the aforementioned parts provide an overview of the history of nationalism from its emergence until the beginning of the twenty-first century. The texts are organized with an ambition to cover the global history of nationalism and can be deemed successful in that respect. The regional approach is applied to suppress methodological nationalism which puts nation-state as the ground principle of analysis that offers much more precise analysis of various nationalist movements.

The next three parts cover the second theme of the book aimed at exploring relations of nationalism and its place in a world dominated by the paradigm of the nation-state. The fourth part comprises chapters dealing with the relationship between nationalism and state sovereignty, self-determination, international interventions, fascism, racism and its role in everyday life. These thematic chapters offer an insight into the contemporary role of nationalism in the world today. The two concluding parts are dealing with various challenges that nationalism faced or is facing. It particularly concerns socialist internationalism, religion, pan-nationalisms, pan-Islamism, and globalization. Cemil Aydin addresses the Pan-Nationalism of Pan-Islamic, Pan-Asian

and Pan-African Thought. Jürgen Osterhammel's chapter on Nationalism and Globalization argues that nationalism has been challenged but not replaced by globalization as an emotional counterpart, and that it nonetheless "has lost its prestige as a form of politics that was 'natural' and unaccountable to any higher authority".³

The final part of the book *Nationalism and Historiography* is actually a single chapter that deals with the relationship between nationalism and history writing. Its author Paul Lawrence underlines the important connection between the emergence of historical profession as such and the appearance of nationalism in world history.

In its scope, the book is an impressive project. Global research range, although it must be said there are expected omissions, offers the most worthy undertaking promised by the editor in the introduction. Nevertheless, it can be recommended to all who are interested in the studies of nationalism, even more so because this is the first single-volume book on the history of nationalism.

³ Osterhammel states that national sovereignty is no longer absolute as it has been undermined by "humanitarian" interventions, "... although in many other cases regimes were left undisturbed to commit crimes against their own population".

ULF BRUNNBAUER, *GLOBALIZING SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE: EMIGRANTS, AMERICA, AND STATE SINCE THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY*. LANHAM, MD.: LEXINGTON BOOKS, 2016, 357 p.

*Reviewed by Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović**

Migration from Southeastern Europe to the New World is hardly a new phenomenon. The historian Ulf Brunnbauer, Director of the Institute for East and Southeast European Studies and Chair of Southeast and East European History at the University of Regensburg, points to the continuity of

migration from this part of Europe in his most recent book published by the renowned publishing house Lexington Books. Brunnbauer offers a comprehensive analysis

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of the historical and socio-political circumstances which have often been the cause of migration, and of different migration policies. His book is a unique case study which is of interest for scholars studying migration from different disciplinary perspectives. Owing to several years of extensive archival research, Brunnbauer's well-documented book includes material from major archival centres of Southeastern Europe. Continuing the tradition of other Western scholars interested in migration history, such as Tara Yehra, Nancy Green, Adam McKeown, and Theodora Dragostinova, the book spans the period from the late nineteenth century to the late 1960s.

The book opens with an introduction, followed by six chapters and a conclusion. The author describes his book as an attempt to put emigration from Southeastern Europe into a broader socio-economic and political context, arguing that it has had a significant influence on migration policies in the region. In his view, "Southeastern Europe's past cannot be understood without exploring the experience of migration" (p. 2). From the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire to the newly-created independent states, migration has ever been present in the lives of various ethnic groups both in the multiethnic empires and, later, in multiethnic states. The main focus of this book is not the identity of migrants or the migration history of any one particular ethnic group, but rather the relationship between migration, state-building and nationalism in Southeastern Europe. Going beyond "methodological nationalism" in migration studies, Brunnbauer's perspective on development and migration processes demonstrates an innovative approach both in theoretical and in methodological terms.

The first chapter, "Overseas Emigration from the Balkans until 1914", provides a detailed introduction to the main research questions and explains the socio-economic context of the early phase of overseas migration. Southeastern Europeans began to

emigrate at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but the biggest wave occurred between 1880 and 1914. The beginning of migration across the Atlantic was mainly economic. In the first chapter, the author provides details on the book's methodology, framing it in terms of the social history of emigration and the history of public responses to and perceptions of emigration. Therefore, this study is not just one more history of the "diaspora" of a particular Southeastern European ethnic group. Contextualizing early emigration history across the Atlantic, the author points to the tradition of so-called seasonal labour migration (*pečalba*, *gurbet/kurbert*), which was very much present in the Balkans.

"To Make a Living in America – and at Home" is the title of the second chapter which seeks to answer the following questions: How many people left? Why did they leave? By what means did they leave? (p. 27). Brunnbauer offers a valuable quantitative aspect of overseas emigration and its geographical variation. Following the First World War, the flow of immigrants lessened: along with the literacy requirement issued by Congress in 1917, the Quota Act of 1921 marked a turning point in American immigration policy. After large waves of immigrants before the Great War, after 1918 US immigration policy became more selective and restrictive. However, emigration had a strong impact on Southeastern European societies because transnational links existed from the early migration phase.

The third chapter, "The Politics of Emigration", starts with the experience of coming to the United States and disembarking on Ellis Island, followed by immigration control. An emigrant's journey did not end with the arrival on Ellis Island; it continued as a long encounter with a new life and culture, and with various challenges. The author focuses on the areas which had relevance for transnational connections: economic conditions and emigrant self-organization. Emigrant conditions in America

had a significant impact on the solicitation of further migrants from their home regions (p. 28). Brunnbauer seeks to provide an answer to the question: What were the socio-economic and cultural effects of emigration for their “home” countries? Arguing that emigration was not a one-way process, the author stresses “because emigrants were socially important for their native societies, they became a matter of political concern [...]. Emigrants were addressed by their home countries with certain policies that tried to ascribe dominant ideologies and identities” (p. 135). Policy makers discovered that emigration could be useful for economic development and foreign policy. In an effort to increase state intervention in emigration processes, governments established a new group of professionals – emigration agents. The most significant change in the interwar relationship between the state and migrants was the creation of a loyal diaspora among emigrants and the strengthening of their national identity.

The relationship between nationalism and emigration is analysed in the fifth chapter, “Nationalism, the State, and Migrants in the Interwar Period”. Focusing on the interwar period (more precisely, on the creation of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1918; from 1929 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), the author argues that it was an idiosyncratic country. He shows that “Yugoslav policy makers and emigration activists devoted substantial thought to how to turn the – in their estimate – more than one million *Yugoslav* emigrants abroad into a useful resource of the new state” (p. 30). It was a complex period of nation-building and of creating a new Yugoslav identity, since the state was predominantly South Slavic but also included sizable non-Slavic minorities. The most significant change in emigration patterns, according to the author, was a shift to European countries, which became prime destinations in the early 1930s because of the difficulties associated with settling in North America (p. 217). Return migration has not

been neglected in this study. The number of returnees significantly increased after the First World War. Therefore, Yugoslav governments set up specialized institutions in order to establish control over emigration and return. In 1921, the Law on Emigration imposed strict regulations on the transportation of emigrants (licensed transportation agencies, etc.). One interesting conclusion of this chapter is that the “the goal of building a Yugoslav diaspora helped to translate nationalism into a program of global outreach, while at the same time linking emigration with internal nation building” (p. 247).

The sixth chapter, “The Emerging Communist Emigration Regime”, is concerned with the communist era, especially the 1960s and 1970s. The author notices that despite the ubiquity of the migration phenomenon, there is no comprehensive analysis of the Yugoslav *Gastarbeiter* experience. This chapter focuses on the first two decades of communist rule in Yugoslavia and the dynamic period of “open” border emigration policies that emerged in the 1960s. *Gastarbeiter* migration, according to Brunbauer, can be seen as a “revival of nineteenth century migration patterns” (p. 30). In this process, transnational links had a significant role in terms of continuity and networks that encouraged emigration in the communist period as well. Applying a similar pattern of emigration policy in order to strengthen political ideology through diaspora communities, Yugoslav policy makers gained important insights into how migration functioned (p. 31). Facilitating the positive effects of labour migration, the significant shift in migration policy was towards the liberalization of emigration and the establishment of associations in the Yugoslav republics to maintain contacts with emigrants.

In the “Conclusions”, Brunnbauer underlines once again how Yugoslav communist-era migration represented continuity with the old waves of migration that were a significant part of the history of Southeastern Europe. Offering a comparative perspective

with Greece, Bulgaria, Albania and Romania, he summarizes the impact of migration on these societies in the dynamic period of nation-building and border changes. Using Peggy Levitt's concept of transnational village, he argues that "Southeastern Europe is a transnational village on a large scale". The relevance of migration for the region is both from the diachronic and from the synchronic perspective. Choosing the region of Southeastern Europe as "a perfect laboratory for migration studies research", the author offers a detailed analysis of migration and its

social, political and economic dimensions for "home" societies. Observing migration and its long-term consequences for such societies, Brunnbauer's book provides a new transnational perspective on migration and the role of the nation-state in building "diasporas" across the Atlantic. Including Southeastern Europe in a much larger context of global migration history, Globalizing Southeastern Europe is a pioneering work and a valuable case study in the modern history of immigration into the United States.

JOHN PAUL NEWMAN, *YUGOSLAVIA IN THE SHADOW OF WAR. VETERANS AND THE LIMITS OF STATE BUILDING 1903–1945*. CAMBRIDGE: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015, 287 p.

Reviewed by Anja Nikolić*

John Paul Newman, lecturer in Twentieth-century European History at Maynooth University, states in the "Preface" to his *Yugoslavia in the Shadow of War. Veterans and the Limits of State Building 1903–1945* that "this book is a study of consequences of the Great War on the people who fought it and on the states to which they returned once the fighting was over". Newman's main focus is on interwar Yugoslavia, which he has chosen because it "was formed in the aftermath of a protracted period of conflict during which many of its subjects had been mobilized in opposition to each other" (p. 2). He further explains that there were in interwar Yugoslavia tens of thousands of men that had served in the Serbian army and also tens of thousands of men that had been soldiers of the Austro-Hungarian army. The author centres his book on patriotic organizations and veterans' associations, and the story of them is used in describing "the downfall of liberal state". As the author himself puts it, "this book uses Yugoslavia as a case study in how and why liberal institutions, installed throughout the new states of central and eastern Europe at the end of the war,

collapsed almost uniformly in the years after 1918". A second important topic for the author is the remobilization of South-Slav war veterans in the Second World War. Newman is aware that only a minority of those who had served and fought in the Great War returned to the battlefield in 1941. However, he argues that "those that did played a pivotal role in the establishment and ideological organization of groups contested the civil war in Yugoslavia from 1941 to 1945" (p. 3). He finds it important to explain the motivations behind the decision of former Austro-Hungarian officers of Croat descent to make an important contribution to the programme of the Croatian fascist Ustasha movement. In the same context Newman writes about "nationalist veterans of Serbia's wars from 1912 to 1918" who "would radically restate their nationalizing agenda in the "Yugoslav Army in the Homeland [...] after 1941". Putting them in the same context completely misses the point of the two phenomena.

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Newman points out two important phenomena for interwar veterans' organizations in Europe and in Yugoslavia – “cultural demobilization” and the political role of veterans' organizations. The phenomenon of “cultural demobilization” led to the birth of a “culture of victory” and a “culture of defeat”. While Great Britain and France cultivated the “culture of victory” which celebrated the achievements and sacrifices of their soldiers in the First World War, countries such as Austria, Germany and Hungary had the “culture of defeat”, which insisted on revisionism. The author claims that the “culture of victory” was an integral part of the diplomatic agenda of the states that emerged as successors of Austria-Hungary, such as Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia and – Yugoslavia. Newman describes that the largest number of war veterans in Yugoslavia came from the Serbian army and “that the Yugoslav culture of victory was based on achievements of Serbian army that liberated South Slavs from imperial rule and unified them into a common state at the end of the war”. For the author, the central position accorded to Serbian army veterans marginalized Austro-Hungarian army veterans and caused clefs. For the author, the story told in his book is the story “of a state formed in the rubble of a conflict which pitted its subjects against one another, a state whose national institutions were too fragile to carry out the necessary work of post-war reconstruction and reconciliation, especially in regard to former soldiers of both the Entente and the Central Powers” (p. 17).

John Paul Newman's book consists of eight chapters preceded by a preface and an introduction. It is structured into three main parts. In the first part, which comprises chapters 1, 2 and 3, the author seeks to explain the clash between the civil and military authorities in Serbia which culminated in the “Salonika Trial”. He is also focused on the establishment of patriotic and veterans' organizations in the 1920s, particularly on the Association of Reserve Officers and

Warriors and the National Defence. Newman is aware of the complexity of their position as they were trying to reconcile Serbian and Austro-Hungarian veterans. The celebration of the Serbian army and its victories that had led to liberation and unification was very difficult to reconcile with veterans that had fought in the army of the Dual Monarchy. The last chapter of the first part of the book is titled “Resurrecting Lazar” and, according to the author, it “analyzes the ‘medievalization’ of Serbia's war victory in the ‘southern territories’ of Kosovo and Macedonia, lands which were newly associated with Serbia after 1918”. For Newman, Kosovo and Macedonia are “the so-called ‘classical south’ of Serbia”. Both regions were, according to him, put under the process aimed to “impress a Serbian character upon them” (p. 82) even though the author himself admits that “much of Serbia's ecclesiastical heritage was located here” (p. 83). In this chapter, Newman focuses on the role of veterans, especially Chetniks, in the programme of internal colonization, the fight against “a-national” elements, and the founding of national institutions”. He pays some attention to charitable and humanitarian organizations, especially those that organized welfare for disabled war veterans and orphans; but it seems unnecessary and out of context to insist that The Circle of Serbian Sisters, a humanitarian organization, did not take part in the battle for women's suffrage (p. 91).

The second part of the book also comprises three chapters. It is focused on Austro-Hungarian veterans and their way of remembering the war. Newman claims that Austro-Hungarian veterans of South-Slav origin were perceived as a single homogenous group which belonged to the defeated enemy, whereas in reality they were divided amongst themselves as they had vastly different experience of serving under the Habsburg eagle. The author's contention that the veterans of the Dual Monarchy were marginalized in the Serbian-dominated

Yugoslav army is debatable. Another topic discussed in this part of the book concerns patriotic and paramilitary organizations which consisted of veterans but also of members of the “war youth generation”. Newman discusses in detail the *Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists* (ORJUNA) and its extremism and violence. He also writes about the *Serbian Nationalist Youth* (SRNAO) but fails to mention the *Croatian National Youth* (HANA O). He describes the conflict between ORJUNA and SRNAO seeking to point out its importance in the creation of the atmosphere of violence in Yugoslavia, but the reader cannot find a single word about the no less important conflict between ORJUNA and HANA O.

The third part of the book consists of two chapters and it addresses individuals and organizations mentioned in the first two parts now on the eve of and during the Second World War. While reading the first two parts of this book, one may notice some imbalance in the author’s approach to violence in interwar Yugoslavia and identification of those responsible for it. This last part of the book shows a marked lack of even-handedness. Newman’s account of the Second World War on Yugoslav soil is a biased one. He discusses the Nedić state, the Chetniks and their leader Dragoljub Mihailović, the Ustashe, and the Partisans. The author tries to explain that the Chetniks tried to “maintain the culture of victory” and that “this course seemed like the logical continuation

of the battles that had been fought by Serbia during the years 1912–1918” (p. 250). Newman claims that “violence against non-Serb, which was characteristic of the Chetniks’ fighting” (p. 251) had a political goal in sight – “an expanded and unified Serbia”. He insists on violence against non-Serbs while describing the Nedić state, and yet, while writing about the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and the Ustasha regime, he fails to mention the Jasenovac concentration camp or, for that matter, any other concentration camp formed on NDH soil. Newman observes that the Ustasha regime brought “a pleasing change of fortunes for many former Austro-Hungarian officers” (p. 256). Even though he provides examples of former Austro-Hungarian officers joining the fascist Ustasha regime, he states that the Ustasha programme was far too radical for former officers of the Dual Monarchy and that the study of their role has had mixed results.

Tremendous amount of archival research was done in preparation for writing this book. Newman researched his subject in the Archives of Yugoslavia, the Croatian State Archives, and the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. It should be noted, however, that the literature used lacks some relevant more recent titles. This book has its faults, but it offers an important study into veterans’ organizations and paramilitary violence during the interwar period.

ADAM TOOZE, *THE DELUGE: THE GREAT WAR AND THE REMAKING OF GLOBAL ORDER 1916–1931*. LONDON: PENGUIN BOOKS, 2015, 644 p.

Reviewed by Miloš Vojinović*

The Great War, with its aftermath, stands as the beginning of many narratives depicting the history of the contemporary world. Looked at from the European perspective, it was, in the words of Ian Kershaw, the beginning of the continent’s trip “To Hell and

Back”. Charles de Gaulle’s claim that it was just the first episode of a second European Thirty Years’ War has found many followers.

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The Great War marked the moment when industrialized societies unleashed, for the first time, all of their murderous potentials. As Tony Judt noted, it distorted employment, destroyed trade and devastated whole regions. Great enfranchisement in Europe which followed the war introduced social questions that would be crucial in political debates in the coming decades. Nineteenth-century ideologies were remodelled and reshaped to respond to the concerns, fears and expectations of women and men of the twentieth century. But the war was not only European. Many empires collapsed, and all were shaken in their foundations. The chronically unstable Middle East is still in the conundrum of problems of 1918. As David Fromkin has lucidly noted, the peace that supposed to end all war, for the Middle East was the peace that ended all peace. New research stresses that even South America felt the impact of this global conflict strongly and clearly, and more than previously thought.¹

By 1991 there were more than 25,000 articles and books written about the Great War, and the last quarter of the century saw a growing interest of historians.² The Great War was without doubt a momentous event, which profoundly shaped the course of twentieth-century history. However, the question arises: what is there left to be told? In plain English, do we need another overview of the Great War and its consequences? On the pages of his book, which is a demanding read in dense narrative form, Tooze attempts to convince his audience that the answer is yes. Therefore, he offers a sweeping revision of many widely held historiographical conclusions.

¹ See S. Rinke, *Latin America and the First World War* (Cambridge 2017).

² J. W. Langdon, *July 1914: The Long Debate 1918–1990* (Oxford 1991), 51; J. Winter and A. Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies – 1914 to the Present* (Cambridge 2005), 16–17.

Tooze is an economic historian, whose previous work dealt with the history of the German economy.³ Bearing that in mind, it does not come as a surprise that economic arguments weigh strongly in his latest book. The book starts, rather unusually, not with 1914, but with 1916, when it became obvious to all belligerents that the war had become one of attrition, and when the relationship between Wall Street and the Entente began to loom heavily over the outcome of the war. The book ends with the first economic measures of Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration. The centrality of economic argument is, perhaps, not surprising, for ever since Keynes's *Economic Consequences of the Peace* historians of the period have been forced to deal with the financial aspect of the war's outcome. Tooze argues that it was precisely in that period that the world order, and the way in which it was created and understood, underwent a complete and revolutionary reconstruction whose significance has not yet been understood properly.

If we would pick up the daunting task of summing up more than 500 pages in just one paragraph, it would go like this: the crucial figure and the crucial country in this "deluge" of world order are the United States and Woodrow Wilson. The end of the war and its immediate aftermath brought about a twofold change. First, power transition happened, with the US emerging so powerful that everyone else was forced to pivot on it. There was no regional or continental political aspiration that did not take this new reality into account. Second, a new kind of world order emerged. The nascent world order was unlike the previous, where the

³ The *Deluge* is his third book. It is preceded by *Statistics and the German State, 1900–1945: The Making of Modern Economic Knowledge* published by Cambridge University Press in 2001, and the widely acclaimed *Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* published by Allen Lane in 2006.

only power was hard power. In other words, Tooze argues that the power of Victorian Britain in its heyday cannot compare to the leverage the US had over its rivals during the closing stages of and after the Great War. Tooze writes that "this new asymmetrical financial geometry signalled the end to the great-power competition that had defined the age of imperialism" (p. 211). The US was so powerful that no historical comparison can be made. What was new in this era was the fact that unlike previous decades, or centuries, there could be no more separation between foreign and domestic politics. "Architects of the new 'world organization' were quite consciously playing the game of revolutionaries," Tooze argues (p. 9). The new order, embodied in the rise of the US, was multifaceted; the importance of old-style military power was still undiminished, but now it was interwoven with economic supremacy and a new economic model, on the one hand, and a kind of moral and political authority, on the other. Wilson is not portrayed as an idealistic preacher, whether that description be understood as apologetic or as critical. In his figure we can see a leader determined to establish a firm global leadership of the US. A new age required new methods, and Wilson was determined not to draw the US into great-power relations where the rules were set by empires of the old world. Therefore, when discussing Wilson's famous 14-point speech of 8th January 1918, Tooze shows that what Wilson was actually doing with this speech was not just about presenting his ideological worldview. Tooze finds that the speech is vague, that it does not contain key terms associated with Wilsonian internationalism, and that crucial for understanding it is the fact that it was prepared as a reply to Lloyd George's speech of 5th January, in which the British Prime Minister had tried to position Britain centrally in the alignment of the emerging world order. Wilson is remembered as an internationalist, but "the world he wanted to create was one in which the exceptional

position of America at the head of world civilization would be inscribed on the gravestone of European power" (p. 54).

The foundation of Tooze's argumentation is unusual and yet persuasive: he combines a lot of advanced statistics and economic data with sources more often seen in histories of international relations: diplomatic dispatches, minutes of government meetings, diaries and memoirs. Even though material preconditions and economy provide the solid background of the narrative, we can clearly see individuals and their own agency. His argumentation is not deterministic in any sense. When he speaks about the differences and conflicts between Clemenceau and Wilson, he explains them through different personal stories of the actors. A changing world acts as a stage of global politics, and this change provokes both Wilson and Clemenceau to try to adapt to it as well as they can. However, concepts of the future they envision hinge on their individual personalities, their education, life experience and political beliefs.

Tooze argues that there are two main schools of interwar history, the "dark continent" school, and the "failure of liberal hegemony" school. He offers revision and seeks to find a synthesis of the two. Sailing through the main events of the period his book covers, from Verdun and the Somme, the October Revolution and the Versailles negotiations, and through the French occupation of the Ruhr, the Locarno Treaty, the Kellogg-Briand pact and the Great Depression, Tooze is not just enumerating events. Instead, he tries to demonstrate that the changes that took place can best be understood if we assume that historical actors faced an unprecedented historical situation. That is why those who expect just another classical account of American isolationism will end up empty handed. Isolationism does not play an important role in Tooze's interpretation. Positioning himself against the historiography which sees the period as the moment when British power yielded to

American, Tooze concludes that, "This was not a succession. This was a paradigm shift" (p. 15). When it comes to Tooze's contention that the problems faced by decision-makers were unprecedented, it should be noted that the argument is not completely new. Zara Steiner in her 2005 book *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919–1933*, has clearly stressed the uniqueness of the 1920s in this sense.⁴

Tooze's argument about the significance of a new relationship between foreign and domestic politics for global order can best be seen in the pages that deal with the question why the Entente survived the war. He claims that "Neither the military nor the economic effort would have mattered if the Entente Powers had not maintained their political coherence" (p. 173). Throughout the book Tooze demonstrates that decision-makers were aware of the new fact that actions in foreign policy cannot be separated from domestic affairs. We can see how German policy towards Russia from February 1917 to March 1918 was always shadowed by the question of what would happen with German political life. Inner German discussions before the Brest-Litovsk talks were not just about German policy in the East; they were even more about Germany's own political future, since it became more and more obvious that it was not possible, despite the German military victory in the East, to destroy the Tsarist regime and keep an autocratic regime at home (p. 115). Along the same lines, we can see that the true motivation behind Wilson's disarmament proposals was not his idealism, but his goal to avoid the Prussianization of America itself (p. 54).

It must be noted that Tooze's view of the world order is a top-down perspective. It is not like Erez Manela's *Wilsonian Moment*, where we can see the relevance of Wilson, and Wilsonianism, around the globe, and

where we can observe the world order also from the bottom of its hierarchy. Both historiographical schools that Tooze attempts to synthesize are essentially focused on interwar Europe. Therefore, even though Tooze claims that the aim of the book is to trace the ways in which the world came to terms with the new central position of the US (p. 7), the core of the book is devoted to the parts of the world most relevant for the US, the westernmost parts of Eurasia and the Pacific.

A century ago Tomáš Masaryk argued that the Great War was a World Revolution. *The Deluge*, a meticulously researched, well-argued and stimulating book, clearly demonstrates that Masaryk was right, perhaps even more than he knew. Tooze convincingly shows that the change brought about by the war was not just about what was defined in the peace treaties, furthermore, the change in the world order, its rules and performance, was intangible and yet omnipresent. The book opens with a quotation from Lloyd George's 1915 Christmas speech, which deserves to be re-quoted. "The war, he warned them, was remaking the world. 'It is the deluge, it is a convulsion of Nature... bringing unheard-of changes in the social and industrial fabric. It is a cyclone which is tearing up by the roots the ornamental plants of modern society... It is an earthquake which is upheaving the very rocks of European life. It is one of those seismic disturbances in which nations leap forward or fall backwards generations in a single bound'"

⁴ Z. Steiner, *The Lights That Failed: European International History 1919–1933* (Oxford 2005), esp. 602, 609, 630.

FRANZISKA ZAUGG, *ALBANISCHE MUSLIME IN DER WAFFEN-SS: VON „GROSSALBANIEN“ ZUR DIVISION „SKANDERBEG“*. PADERBORN: FERDINAND SCHÖNINGH VERLAG, 2016, 347 p.

Reviewed by Rastko Lompar*

In a book on international volunteers fighting for Franco during the Spanish Civil War, Judith Keene has sought to pinpoint what drove hundreds of people from France, Britain, Ireland, Romania and all of Europe to join the cause of the Spanish nationalists. She claims that they saw the Spanish Civil War not as an internal struggle of the Spanish people, but as a continuation of the Manichean battle between Left and Right beginning in 1917 and continuing into the twentieth century.¹ Therefore many of those who had supported Franco later continued the “crusade” and joined the Waffen-SS to fight the “reds” on the Eastern front. The nature of their motives has been a matter of debate. Was this engagement an example of transnational fascist solidarity, which challenged the solidarity monopoly of the Left, as the French right-wing philosopher Alain de Benoist claimed,² a result of personal pragmatic interests or a deliberate collaboration aimed at furthering own national goals?

The question of motivation is central to Franziska Zaugg’s book *The Albanian Muslims in the Waffen-SS*. In this monograph the author strives to answer a plethora of questions, such as what motivated Albanian Muslims to join the SS, what techniques were employed by the Germans to bolster their ranks with Albanian recruits, and what was the image of Albanians in contemporary German public opinion and military assessments. Although the book is

primarily about Albanian enlistment in the Waffen-SS, the author chose the subtitle *From “Greater Albania” to the “Skanderbeg” division*, since without Albanian irredentism and bloody inter-ethnic violence the SS would not nearly have had such an appeal. The book is divided into three main parts, the first being an extended introduction to interwar Albanian history, the subsequent Italian occupation, the Second World War and, finally, the German occupation. The second part of the book revolves around the SS division “Skanderbeg”, and the third focuses on the image of Albanians in contemporary German discourse. One is impressed with the breadth of Zaugg’s research. This book is based on German, Italian, Yugoslav and Albanian documents, as well as the relevant literature in English, German and Italian. The use of Albanian documents is all the more important since they were sealed until 1990 and therefore virtually unknown to the majority of readers.

The introduction (pp. 33–40) outlines the developments in Albanian history from the earliest days to the Italian occupation. It is followed by the chapters on the Italian (pp. 40–87) and German (pp. 88–132) occupations. Zaugg shows how the very utility of the occupation was a controversial question for the Italian ruling elites given that Albania was, as Vittorio Emanuele III put it, mere “four rocks” (pp. 47–48). In the end, the fascist regime followed its imperial ambitions and Albania was quickly occupied. From that moment Zaugg follows the main dichotomy of Albanian society, namely the one between collaboration and resistance. She shows that regional and

¹ Judith Keene, *Fighting for Franco: International Volunteers in Nationalist Spain during the Spanish Civil War* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2001), 2.

² Alain de Benoist, *Komunizam i nacizam: 25 ogleđa o totalitarizmu u XX. stoljeću* (Zagreb: Naklada Zlatka Hasanbegovića, 2005), 54.

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confessional differences among the Albanians played a key role in making one or another choice. Northern Roman Catholic tribes were more eager than their southern compatriots in collaborating with the Italian occupiers. Likewise, the North remained virtually immune to the allure of communism, which was much more common in south and central Albania due to the suspicious "Slavophilia" of the new doctrine (p. 68). The Italians set the example, which was later followed by the Germans, in recruiting the Blackshirt militia. They successfully instrumentalized the inter-ethnic struggle, and focused on Albanians from the fringes of the newly established "Greater Albania". They were trained to be ruthless in fighting their neighbours, and they knew that the demise of the occupying force would spell doom for their hopes of unification into a greater Albanian state. The German reports on the Italian battles on the Greek and Yugoslav fronts are a testimony to the ruthlessness of the new recruits. After the occupation of Yugoslavia a puppet-state of "Great Albania" was created, and both the Italians and Germans aimed at gaining the support of the Albanians. The northern part of Kosovo, which was occupied by the Germans, became a safe haven for all anti-Italian nationalistic Albanians. Also, the Germans had a clear reason for turning a blind eye to the pogroms of Serbs committed by their new allies, since they rightly saw numerous Albanian Muslims in Kosovo as a potential source of manpower.

With the Italian capitulation and the subsequent German occupation the situation only slightly changed. The Germans promised that Albania would be more self-governed and sought to out together a new Albanian government. Zaugg offers a detailed overview of the key German occupying authorities and their mutual conflicts and quarrels, which also plagued the German occupiers in Serbia and elsewhere. She highlights the primarily economic interests in the occupation and concludes that

Kosovo was indeed better integrated into the German economic domain than Albania. Zaugg also points to the occupiers' fear that poor economic conditions in Albania might bolster the ranks of the emerging communist movement, and to their assessments that this situation resulted from the "lazy nature" of Albanians (p. 115).

The next chapter (pp. 135–192) looks at the activities of high-ranking Albanian nationalists such as Xhaver Deva and Rexhep Mitrovica, who were instrumental in the process of recruiting Albanian Muslims to the Waffen-SS. They had been active since 1941 in oppressing the Serbian population by "massacres and plunder" (p. 143). In organizing the Waffen-SS "Skanderbeg", the Germans were aware of the shortcomings of a similar project, namely the Waffen-SS division "Handzar". They realized that Albanians and Bosnian Muslims could not be successfully integrated into a military unit and, more importantly, that deploying such a unit away from its homeland would inevitably result in mutiny and low morale. Therefore the SS "Skanderbeg" was created as an all Albanian, all Muslim unit to be used only in Kosovo and the surrounding regions. The key motivation for joining the unit was inter-ethnic hatred and the dream of living in a single ethnic state. Therefore, the fear of reprisals by Chetnik and Partisan forces was often employed in German propaganda, as were the sufferings of fellow Muslims in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro. The book contains a very detailed description of the division and its strength, both in manpower and in equipment. There is also a list of major military operations in which it participated. A special place is accorded to the establishment by the unit of the concentration camp in Priština.

The third part of the book (pp. 293–310) shows how propaganda and ideology clashed with cultural prejudice in the depiction of the Albanians by German writers, journalists and soldiers. Starting her overview of the image of Albanians from

Karl May's *Durch das Land der Skipetaren* to the last military reports at the end of the Second World War, she convincingly shows how the initial euphoric portrayal of the Albanians as "natural born warriors" and a noble and freedom-loving people makes way to the less favourable reports of late 1944. In them, the Germans, faced with desertions and the inefficiency of SS "Skanderbeg", bitterly brand the Albanians as undisciplined Oriental tricksters who see war merely as plunder.

Answering the initial question of motivation, Zaugg concludes that Muslim Albanians were drawn to the SS because they believed that German victory in the war would be the only way to "accomplish the Greater-Albanian project". Their reasons, therefore, were more pragmatic than ideological. They did, however, share some values with the Germans, namely anticomunism, which, however, was somewhat "instinctive" and stemmed from traditional conservatism.

Despite all its strengths the book somewhat suffers from an oversimplified view of ethnic/state relations in the Balkans, which is inherited from the sources the author used. For instance, the author draws an ethnic distinction between Serbs and Montenegrins while the distinction at that time was purely regional. Likewise, Zaugg classifies all inhabitants of the Bulgarian occupation zone of Yugoslavia as Bulgarians. An example of this unfortunate choice is the description of one victim of Albanian terror as a "Bulgarian of Serbian decent".

In conclusion, *The Albanian Muslims in the Waffen-SS* is a valuable addition to the scholarship about the SS division and volunteers in the Balkans. It points out the key aspect of both the Italian and German occupation, and presents the dilemmas of both occupiers. It highlights the intensity of inter-ethnic violence and its aftermath. Zaugg provides the readers with a thorough and balanced overview of the Waffen-SS division "Skanderbeg".

BORIS MILOSAVLJEVIĆ, SLOBODAN JOVANOVIĆ – *TEORIJA* [SLOBODAN JOVANOVIĆ – *THEORY*]. BELGRADE: BALKANOLOŠKI INSTITUT SANU, 2017, 651 p.

Reviewed by Vojislav Pavlović*

Most years since the beginning of the twenty-first century the Institute for Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, pursued its publishing activity under the committed and caring guidance of Dušan T. Bataković. Among the last monographs he signed as editor before his premature death was a book by Boris Milosavljević devoted to Slobodan Jovanović.

The title of this book does not quite reveal all that it has in store for the reader. The author was not inclined to the contemporary practice of turning book titles into short abstracts and chose a terse one instead. But awaiting inside its covers is a journey into a world long gone but not forgotten by its aficionados. Tracing the roots of the

Jovanović family, the author writes about the cities of Ruma, Novi Sad, Šabac, Belgrade, about leaders of the First Serbian Uprising (1804), merchants, catechists, civil servants, high state officials, army officers, professors bound together by kinship, patriotism and earnest concern for the well-being of their country and society. It is a world which is no doubt familiar to the author, he feels respect and appreciation for it, and seeks to evoke it for the readers with exemplary scrupulousness; one might even say that he hopes his readers will grow fond of that relatively small, close-knit Serbian milieu.

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French historiography has for decades now called for studying the complexities of social interrelatedness, of social networks. In a clear and precise style, the author portrays a milieu where family ties, intra-generational connections and intellectual kinship were features of an elite which led Serbia forward in an incessant struggle to bridge the cultural, political and social gap which separated it from its European models.

Not only does the author feel an affinity for the past milieu he writes about; he also opts for the thoroughness of study which was characteristic of those times but has become almost inappropriate in our times of hectic flow of information. History Professor Radovan Samardžić used to teach his students at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade that a monograph should contain all information necessary for understanding it, i.e. that the readers must not be forced to read a bunch of other books to be able to understand the one at hand. The monograph of Boris Milosavljević is no doubt written with the intention to provide comprehensive information without taking anything for granted, and it patiently lays out its conceptual apparatus and terminology, and the historical context of the subject.

Milosavljević's book is concerned with the intellectual history of Vladimir and Slobodan Jovanović's family and, by extension, with the history of a part of the Serbian elite. Tracing the formation of the conceptual and moral bases on which the deepest convictions of Slobodan Jovanović and his father rested, the author in fact describes the process of formation of the liberal wing of the Serbian elite within a span of almost one hundred years from the Constitutionalists (*Ustavobranitelji*), whom Vladimir had known in person, to communist power-wielders who forced his son Slobodan into exile, trying all along, but in vain, to exile him for good from Serbian culture as well. Writing about nineteenth-century Serbia, the author makes a particular effort to sensitise the reader to the narrow-mindedness

of the materialistic interpretation of history which is due as much to an ideological view of the world as to ignorance about Serbian history. Stressing, *inter alia*, the damagingly misleading trend of interpreting the nineteenth century from the perspective of our present, using our present-day standards and ideological moulds, he puts extra effort into shedding a clear light on the standards, values and relations of nineteenth-century Serbian society which had a logic and justification of their own.

From the perspective of twentieth-century experience, the personal history of Vladimir Jovanović strikes us as almost unreal. Vladimir travels alone and then with his family from Novi Sad to Belgrade, to Geneva, London, Paris. A prominent member of liberal circles, considered the fiercest opponent of Prince Michael Obrenović, one of those whom the architects of the assassination of the Prince saw as a leading figure in a changed political situation that would ensue, he, only ten years later, during the Great Eastern Crisis, held the office of finance minister under the same dynasty. Nineteenth-century Serbia was able to value its elite and would not let it drown in the mud of political bickering. That was the formative setting of Vladimir's son, whose name, Slobodan (Free), was something of a political statement. One of Vladimir's life priorities was the education of his children, Slobodan and Pravda (Justice), and the family changed the place of residence in accordance with their educational needs. The education of new generations was a project on which the state and its elite worked together, and Vladimir was not an exception: Slobodan was granted a government scholarship for only a year, and his studies took more than four years. The award of government scholarships was based on merit, their recipients were best students. Nineteenth-century Serbia perhaps understood the world that surrounded it better than it would in the twentieth century, if for nothing else then because former government

scholarship holders would, as a rule, become the backbone of government and institutions; but, it should be noted, of the Serbian, and not foreign, governments and institutions, because most of them returned home after graduation abroad.

One of the strengths of this monograph is an entire gallery of portraits of little- or well-known historical figures, such as the president of the Consistory of the Eparchy of Bačka, priest of the Orthodox cathedral and catechist of the Grammar School (Gymnasium) of Novi Sad, Konstantin Marinković, Slobodan's Jovanović's maternal great-grandfather; Dimitrije Matić, his relative, professor at the Lyceum in Belgrade; Stojan Novaković, his superior at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; and Ljubomir Nedić, professor of philosophy and literary critic. The book also provides a comprehensive picture of Slobodan Jovanović's generation, his friends and schoolmates, to mention but Pavle Marinković, the brothers Pavle and Bogdan Popović, Boško Čolak-Antić and Živojin Perić; in fact a few generations of Belgrade Gymnasium alumni who were going through life together, setting the tone of Serbian culture and politics.

To those knowledgeable about the history of Serbia of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, this gallery of portraits demonstrates Slobodan Jovanović's divergence from the direction pursued by his father. Liberally-minded, one of the ideologues of the United Serbian Youth and the

Liberal Party, Vladimir Jovanović was more spontaneously a liberal than his son. Much less a politician than his father and much more inclined to theoretical thinking about political systems, Slobodan Jovanović began his career at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs surrounded by Progressives such as Stojan Novaković. The political scene in Serbia was dominated by the Radicals, whose understanding of democracy was alien to him or, to put it in today's language: he considered them demagogues. In his search for a political system which would ensure that the principle of check and balances was applied, Slobodan Jovanović gave precedence to the British bicameral system – in which the upper house played the key role as a corrective to the populist aspirations of the articulated popular will – over the French parliamentary tradition, the preferred model for Milovanović and Pašić's Radicals. Yet, his bicameral system was not a mere copy of the British one. Among other things, the upper house he called for would not have been a hereditary but elected or appointed body; it reflected his genuine conviction that the popular will needed a corrective intervention by a patriotically-minded elite.

It should be noted that this monograph devoted to theory is only the first in a series which will elucidate the work of Slobodan Jovanović in its entirety.

For this book, Milosavljević was awarded the prestigious (2017) Vuk Foundation Award for Science.

ALIN CIUPALĂ, *BĂTĂLIA LOR. FEMEILE DIN ROMÂNIA ÎN PRIMUL RĂZBOI MONDIAL* [LEUR BATAILLE. LES FEMMES DE ROUMANIE DANS LA PREMIÈRE GUERRE MONDIALE].

IAȘI: POLIROM, 2017.

Par Florin Țurcanu*

Le livre d'Alin Ciupală, professeur à l'Université de Bucarest, est une première historiographique qui doit être saluée d'autant plus que l'histoire de la participation des femmes à la Grande Guerre et de la

condition féminine pendant ce conflit sur le territoire de la Roumanie n'a pas fait

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jusqu'ici l'objet de recherches assez nombreuses pour délimiter un domaine d'études distinct et suffisamment mûr. A la différence d'autres historiographies, l'historiographie roumaine, déjà relativement peu intéressée après 1989 par la Grande Guerre elle-même, a donné encore moins d'importance à une histoire au féminin de cet événement.

Pourtant, l'ouvrage d'Alin Ciupală n'est pas une simple introduction à un domaine de recherche qui a jusqu'ici peiné à se démarquer. L'auteur est un spécialiste reconnu de l'histoire des femmes en Roumanie – il est entre autre l'auteur d'un livre sur *La femme dans la société roumaine du XIXe siècle*, paru en 2003, et ce nouveau volume, intitulé *Leur bataille*, apparaît comme le résultat d'une recherche experte, opérée sur de nombreux paliers et au bout de laquelle nous disposons d'une œuvre de référence pour les années à venir. Alin Ciupală n'a pas pu s'appuyer sur un important corpus préalable d'études de cas et ceci explique aussi, en partie, la variété et la richesse remarquables des sources qu'il a exploité et qui n'ont jamais ou très peu attirés jusqu'ici l'attention des historiens roumains.

La recherche, comme l'indique l'auteur lui-même, privilégie les femmes du milieu urbain dans un pays peuplé par une très forte majorité paysanne. Bien que les aperçus sur les femmes et les jeunes filles du monde rural roumain ne manquent pas, le livre se penche surtout sur les milieux de l'aristocratie et des classes moyennes roumaines, ainsi que sur les femmes issues de minorités enracinées dans les villes – Juifs, Allemands, Hongrois, etc.. Les sources actuellement disponibles et l'état général de la recherche expliquent la faible présence des paysannes dans les pages de l'ouvrage – une réalité qui contraste avec l'origine paysanne de plusieurs figure féminines héroïques de la Grande Guerre, à commencer par le sous-lieutenant Ecaterina Teodoroiu, issue d'une famille paysanne d'Olténie, tuée à l'ennemi en août 1917 et qui devint une véritable Jeanne d'Arc roumaine.

Majoritairement d'origine urbaine, les femmes qui font l'objet du livre sont étudiée

à travers la diversité des situations qu'elles croisent et des rôles qu'elles assument, de force ou de gré. En Roumanie, comme dans d'autres pays en guerre, l'univers féminin a été vu pendant le conflit comme étant une partie du terrain où se déroulait l'affrontement entre nations et où la preuve pouvait être faite de la supériorité morale sur l'ennemi. Nous rencontrons ici, remarque l'auteur, la tendance de l'imaginaire des Roumains, pendant et après le conflit, à mesurer de cette manière aussi, la résilience ou les faiblesses de leur société durant la guerre. Ceci explique l'attention donnée aux conduites et aux attitudes qui sont à l'origine d'une riche typologie des hypostases féminines, cristallisée dès l'époque de la Grande Guerre et qui devait passer ensuite dans l'histoire et dans la légende de cet événement.

Alin Ciupală ne se plie en partie à cette typologie que pour mieux l'analyser et l'interroger. Tous les cas sont richement documentés, depuis la passivité d'une majorité de femmes soucieuses d'assurer leur propre survie et celle de leurs familles sous l'occupation ou dans le refuge, en passant par la collaboration, réelle ou supposée, avec l'ennemi dans le sud occupé de la Roumanie pour arriver aux « résistantes » de la haute société dans le territoire administré par l'ennemi et au « combat » des infirmières et des membres des sociétés de charité du début des opérations militaires jusqu'au cœur de l'épopée sanitaire de l'année 1917, marquée par l'épidémie de typhus et les grandes batailles du « réduit moldave ».

La faiblesse poussée parfois jusqu'à la trahison est associée dans les territoires occupés avec les femmes issues de la minorité juive et les sujettes austro-hongroises qui furent alors globalement désignées comme faisant bon accueil à l'occupant. A elles s'ajoutent les femmes « de mauvaise vie » ou des demi-mondaines qui font usage de la présence des armées étrangères mais aussi des « collaboratrices » d'un tout autre acabit, poussées par des partis pris politiques ou par des ambitions personnelles.

Aux lâchetés ou aux ambiguïtés s'opposent au plus haut degré les figures des « combattantes » et des « héroïnes ». La figure de l'héroïne culmine avec celle qui s'implique directement dans les actions armées, l'exemple suprême étant celui, déjà mentionné, d'Ecaterina Teodoroiu ou celui de la jeune paysanne de douze ans, Maria Zaharia, tuée en remplaçant l'observateur, tombé au combat, d'une batterie d'artillerie roumaine et qui est le seul enfant à être enterré dans le grand mausolée de Mărășești.

Une figure féminine distincte, dont la légende s'est forgée au cours de la guerre et qui restera associée avec la mémoire des effondrements et des triomphes collectifs des années 1916–1919 est celle de la Reine Marie à laquelle l'auteur dédie un long chapitre. La densité des interrogations que le livre accumule autour de la biographie et de l'image de la Reine pendant cette période est à la mesure de l'importance du mythe de la souveraine, puissamment cultivé dans l'entre-deux-guerres – y compris en dehors de la Roumanie – et ressuscité dans ce pays après 1989. La Reine, âme de l'engagement de la Roumanie dans la guerre et âme de la résistance dans le « réduit moldave » de 1917, la Reine – infirmière dont la présence physique au chevet des blessés est devenue emblématique, la Reine, Mère de la Nation qui accomplit son unité en 1918 – autant de rôles qui sont mis en évidence et analysés avec finesse sans que soit oubliées les accusations des germanophiles roumains, pour qui elle a représenté – durant l'éphémère paix de 1918 avec les Puissances Centrales qui semblait leur donner raison – « le principal coupable, le grand malheur du pays ».

La démarche de l'auteur, bien que centrée sur les différentes hypostases de la femme aux prises avec les réalités de la guerre est souvent une voie d'accès vers une histoire approfondie de différents milieux, institutions et phénomènes directement liés à la dynamique du conflit qu'il s'agisse du fonctionnement du service sanitaire de l'armée roumaine, du régime d'occupation des Puissances Centrales dans le sud de la Roumanie, des relations entre alliés Roumains,

Russes et Français sur le front de Moldavie en 1917 ou des forces idéologiques et morales à l'œuvre dans les milieux de l'aristocratie et des classes moyennes roumaines confrontés avec les épreuves et les choix qu'impose le déroulement de la guerre.

L'histoire des femmes impliquées dans les services sanitaires est une partie de l'histoire de l'arrière-front et les témoignages des infirmières qu'utilise Alin Ciupală donne accès à l'existence et, parfois, au vécu le plus intime, des militaires blessés, estropiés ou mourants qui sont les autres oubliés de l'histoire de la Grande Guerre tel que pratiquée en Roumanie jusqu'aujourd'hui. Sur le front de Moldavie, en 1917, qui, avec la présence de Russes, de Français, de Britanniques, voire d'Américains est « une Tour de Babel » comme l'observe l'historien Jean-Noël Grandhomme, les infirmières participent à ce phénomène propre aux fronts multinationaux de la Grande Guerre – qui favorisent la circulation des hommes, venus parfois de l'autre bout de l'Europe, leur mise en contact, les transferts d'expériences et de pratiques diverses y compris sur le terrain des logiques sanitaires et des soins médicaux.

Quant à l'histoire de la morale et des représentations attachées à la condition féminine et aux relations entre les sexes, l'histoire des corps, masculins et féminins, exposés aux violences, aux contraintes parfois symboliquement connotées comme le port des uniformes par les infirmières, mais aussi aux privations affectives et sexuelles – le 2^e chapitre du livre allie la multitude d'exemples à une réflexion qui singularise, une fois de plus, son auteur dans le champ historiographique roumain.

Le livre d'Alin Ciupală qui s'inspire de manière heureuse des recherches traditionnellement plus développées autour de ces thèmes dans les historiographies française, britannique et américaine, est une contribution de premier plan à une histoire non seulement roumaine mais européenne des femmes dans la Grande Guerre.

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