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DRAGANA FILIPOVIĆ & NENAD N. TASIĆ, *Vinča-Belo Brdo, a Late Neolithic Site in Serbia* • IVAN VRANIĆ, *The Classical and Hellenistic Economy and the “Paleo-Balkan” Hinterland* • SANJA PILIPOVIĆ, *The Image of Persephone on the Upper Moesian Limes* • VALENTINA ŽIVKOVIĆ, *Medieval Concerns for Soul Salvation* • MARKA TOMIĆ DJURIĆ, *The Isles of Great Silence* • ALEKSANDRA DJURIĆ MILOVANOVIĆ, *Serbs in Romania* • SUZANA RAJIĆ, *The Russian Secret Service and King Alexander Obrenović of Serbia* • DUŠAN T. BATAKOVIĆ, *Ahmed Bey Zogou et la Serbie* • DRAGAN BAKIĆ, *The Port of Salonica in Yugoslav Foreign Policy 1919–1941* • ALEXANDER MIRKOVIC, *Grey Falcon and the Union Man* • SPYRIDON SFETAS, *The Bulgarian-Yugoslav Dispute over the Macedonian Question* • SLOBODAN G. MARKOVICH, *Dr. Djura Djurović* • MILOŠ KOVIĆ, *Imagining the Serbs* ❧





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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.



Director of the Institute for Balkan Studies  
NIKOLA TASIĆ

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## **Vinča-Belo Brdo, a Late Neolithic Site in Serbia Consideration of the Macro-Botanical Remains as Indicators of Dietary Habits**

**Abstract:** The analysis of macro-botanical remains from the late Neolithic site of Vinča-Belo Brdo has provided first information on the range of crops and wild plants present at the site, and revealed their potential role as foodstuffs. The abundance and distribution of certain plant taxa across different archaeological deposits suggests to what extent they were used within the settlement. The analysed plant remains also offer insight into the types of food consumed by Vinča residents and serve as a basis for inferring the seasonality and method of food provision/production and activities related to plant use.

**Keywords:** Vinča, late Neolithic, plant remains, diet, Serbia

### *Introduction*

Reconstructions of diet and dietary habits based on archaeological evidence have been attempted for a range of periods in human prehistory and history and across different geographical areas (e.g. Gilbert & Mielke, eds. 1985; Renfrew 1985; Sobolik, ed. 1994; Cool 2006; Vaughan & Coulson, eds. 2000; Twiss, ed. 2007; Tasić & Filipović 2011). The knowledge of what people ate at various times in the past provides a basis for understanding the methods and scale of food procurement and consumption, as well as social processes and organisation, and survival and progress of human populations (e.g. Hastorf & Popper, eds. 1989; Ungar, ed. 2007; Reitz et al., eds. 2008; Pinhasi & Stock, eds. 2011). Additionally, and supported by information from e.g. ethnoarchaeological and experimental studies, the food-evidence can reflect preferences and taste of individuals or groups of people in a given place and time, and reveal more technical aspects of cooking/food preparation (e.g. Ertuğ-Yaraş 1997; Ertuğ 2000; Wood 2001; Kreuz 2009).

The studies aimed at reconstructing past diets using archaeological data have often focused on indirect (organic and inorganic) evidence — faunal and human skeletal remains, archaeobotanical remains, food-related objects and structures. In recent years, increasing number of studies exam-

ine direct indicators of diet such as substances that form human, but also animal and plant bodies (trace elements, stable isotopes) and coprolites and gut contents (e.g. Klepinger 1984, 1990; Grupe & Herrmann, eds. 1988; Price, ed. 1989; Schoeninger & Moore 1992; Ambrose 1986; Ambrose & Katzenberg, eds. 2000; Richards 2000). In order to obtain a broad and detailed picture of human diet in the past, it is necessary to combine multiple lines of evidence and carefully integrate the results of relevant analyses. Given that different approaches use different methodologies and are of varying usefulness/reliability in reconstructions of diet of different populations, it is also crucial to evaluate critically the suitability of available data, their strengths and weaknesses, before generating any conclusions on an issue vital to human existence (Wing & Brown 1979).

Renewed archaeological excavations at Vinča (Tasić & Tasić 2003; Tasić 2005) have produced a relatively large body of data relevant to various aspects of food production and consumption. Analysis of plant and animal remains (Filipović 2004; Dimitrijević 2006; Borojević 2010), as well as of pottery and other clay materials, chipped and ground stone objects, fire installations, storage facilities and architecture (Nikolić, ed. 2008) have been carried out, providing information on aspects of life at Neolithic Vinča not (widely) considered in previous excavations (Vasić 1932).

The results of archaeobotanical analysis at Vinča have yielded information on the range of crops and wild plants present (and used) at the site. Human skeletal remains discovered at Vinča have not been examined in terms of dietary indicators (i.e. bone chemistry, dental microwear); no direct evidence of food consumption in the form of coprolites and gut contents has been found. Thus, remains of edible plants and animals found in the archaeological context constitute the main source of information on food items; additional data are available from tools and structures used in the food practices. In general, it appears that the diet of Vinča residents relied heavily on domesticated plants and animals, while wild plants and animals played an important role. Here we use some of the available results from archaeological excavations to present a preliminary picture of food intake at Vinča in the final phases of the settlement occupation. A much more extensive archaeobotanical dataset and detailed contextual analysis are required to address specific questions of plant use and crop husbandry at Vinča, such as the scale and nature of crop production, the relationship between crop and animal husbandry, the role of wild plants, the scale and methods of storage of plant products etc. Furthermore, data on animal husbandry practices and local landscape would greatly contribute to the overall understanding of human life in the Neolithic at Vinča culture sites. Insofar, the available archaeobotanical dataset allows for some general observations on the plant-based diet and some inferences on plant-based activities at the site.

*1. The site*

Vinča-Belo Brdo is the largest known Vinča culture site in Serbia (Nikolić, ed. 2008). With its 10 m high stratigraphy, the mound covers a long period of occupation, from the Middle Neolithic to the Bronze Age, whereas the medieval (Serbian) cemetery seals the cultural deposits at the site (Vasić 1932). It has been considered a key settlement in the wider region of south-east Europe for establishing the relative chronology and general understanding of the Balkan-Danubian Neolithic (Childe 1929; Chapman 1981; Garašanin 1984; Srejović, ed. 1988; Srejović & Tasić, eds. 1990). Located on the right bank of the Danube near Belgrade, it was discovered at the beginning of the twentieth century by Miloje Vasić, who organized the first archaeological excavations, which revealed a complex sequence of continuous occupation. The remains of wattle-and-daub houses, ovens and hearths, pits and storage bins, large quantity of pottery sherds and complete vessels (many of them perfectly black polished) were found. A number of small finds such as jewellery items (beads and pendants made of shell, bone, clay, malachite, ochre etc), bone tools, polished and chipped stone tools, votive items, and many more objects of unknown function were also discovered (Vasić 1909, 1932). What made the site famous, apart from this general richness in finds, were the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic clay figurines (Tasić 2008, 2012). They were found in various archaeological contexts in each habitation horizon; their style and appearance varied over time, but their role in the life of Vinča dwellers remains as yet unexplained (Gimbutas 1991, 1982; Stanković 1986; Srejović & Tasić, eds. 1990). The results of Vasić's excavations (carried out in 1908/09 and again in 1929–34) were published in four volumes, with detailed descriptions of architecture and archaeological material, numerous illustrations and photos, elaborate comments and explanations; this monograph still constitutes one of the main sources of information on Neolithic Vinča.

In subsequent excavations, conducted in the 1970s and 1980s (Ćelić, ed. 1984; Jevtić 1986; Tasić 1990, 1995; Stevanović & Jovanović 1996), upper horizons in selected non-excavated areas of the settlement were investigated, containing numerous storage pits and midden deposits belonging to the Copper and Bronze Ages; Neolithic layers were also excavated. The articles and books published since then have offered a new perspective on the site and its chronology, and the Vinča culture as a regional phenomenon was established (Whittle 1985, 1996). Many works on different archaeological materials found at Vinča have confirmed that it was a long-lasting Neolithic settlement, while absolute dating has shown that it was continuously occupied from *c.* 5400/5200 to *c.* 4700/4600 BC (Borić 2009).

## 2. *Macro-botanical remains*

Previous analysis of botanical remains from Vinča has been conducted by Russian agronomist S. Lomejko; he analysed charred grains recovered from several pottery vessels and determined the presence of few wheat species, but provided only a brief note on the results (Vasić 1936).

Since 2001, as part of the renewed investigations, soil samples for archaeobotanical analysis have been taken from each excavated unit. Macroscopic archaeobotanical remains (wood, seed, chaff, fruit, nut etc) have been extracted from the soil using flotation machine set up near the site, by the Danube, and using water from the river. Flotation is the most effective method for separating material residue that floats (mainly charred plant remains, but also light bone fragments and small molluscs) from residue that sinks in water (building material, pottery, stone, large bone etc), while the fine sediment is washed away, and the rate of recovery of archaeobotanical material is relatively high (Wagner 1988). The material that floats (light fraction) usually contains preserved plant parts, while some can also be retained within the material that sinks (heavy fraction). Over one thousand soil samples were processed, dried, bagged and stored at the site. Of those, around 100 selected light fractions from a range of archaeological contexts were sorted for macro-remains (Filipović 2004). Another group of samples, from the burnt building 01/06, was analysed in a separate study (Borojević 2010).

Macro-botanical remains at Vinča are in most cases charred, though occasional occurrence of mineralised (silicified) material was noted. Charred plant parts are resistant to natural decay and destruction by microorganisms and can potentially retain their shape and internal structure over a long period. Comparison of archaeobotanical and relevant modern specimens and published illustrations resulted in determination of some forty plant-types (family, genus and species identifications — Table 1). The botanical nomenclature follows *Flora Europea* (Tutin et al. 1964–1993); crop names are taken from Zohary and Hopf (Zohary & Hopf 2000).

### 2.1 *Crops*

Preliminary results show that crop remains are the most abundant and ubiquitous (i.e. most frequently occurring); grain and chaff of emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*) and einkorn (*Triticum monococcum*) were the most common finds. They belong to the group of hulled wheats where seed is tightly wrapped in glumes and remains enclosed even after threshing (see below). It is likely that these two wheat taxa constituted the main crop staples in Neolithic Vinča, similarly to other archaeobotanically analysed Neolithic sites in Ser-

bia (Borojević 1990, 2006). Much of the charred evidence for these two cereal types came from grain; however, mineralised remains of (light) chaff were frequently encountered in burnt building material, as well as mineralised fragments and impressions of grass-type straw, suggesting wide use of crop processing by-products as daub reinforcement.

Some of the grains and chaff remains identified as either emmer or einkorn probably belong to the “new-type” wheat (Jones et al. 2000). Occasional finds of grains of free-threshing wheat (*Triticum durum/aestivum*) and probably naked barley (*Hordeum vulgare* var. *nudum*) may suggest their status as “contaminants” of the main crops rather than being separately cultivated (Jones & Halstead 1995); both taxa have been reported at some of the early and late Neolithic sites in Serbia (Renfrew 1979; Gröger & Beug 1988; Borojević 1990, 2006). A small number of broom millet grains (*Panicum miliaceum*) in a few samples from Vinča, and other late Neolithic sites in Serbia, may constitute the earliest appearance of *Panicum* in that part of the world, as it has been suggested that the cultivation of this crop in Europe started in later periods (Hunt et al. 2008).

Apart from cereals, three (domesticated?) legume types were identified in the samples; they occur in very small numbers, lentils (*Lens* cf. *culinaris*) and bitter vetch (*Vicia ervilia*) being the most common, followed by pea (*Pisum* cf. *sativum*); they were also identified at other Neolithic sites in the region (Borojević 2006; Marinova 2007). As with most sites yielding charred material, legume-processing data were lacking since fragile legume pods are not preserved well by charring.

Seeds of single oil/fibre plant — flax — were occasionally present in the samples and, based on their average length (greater than 3 mm — van Zeist and Bakker-Heeres 1975), they most probably belong to the cultivar (*Linum usitatissimum*). Interestingly, a concentration of some 380 flax seeds was retrieved from a fire installation context (oven 01/03, sample 447) perhaps indicating local cultivation and processing of flax seeds for oil, but also fibre, as suggested by analysis of textile impressions sometimes visible on pottery sherds (Ninčić, unpublished data). Flax seeds have also been reported for some other Vinča culture sites in Serbia (Borojević 1990, 2006).

## 2.2 Wild plants

Edible fruits and seeds of several wild plants were discovered — elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*), dwarf elder (*Sambucus ebulus*), blackberry (*Rubus* cf. *fruticosus*), sloe (*Prunus* cf. *spinosa*), Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*), acorn (*Quercus* sp.), bladder cherry (*Physalis alkekengi*) and an unusual find of relatively large number of charred whole fruits of wild pear (*Pyrus* sp.). A single mineralised grape pip (*Vitis* sp.) found in a context within the top excavation



layer is probably recent; some nutshell fragments resemble water chestnut (*Trapa natans*). Majority of the fruit/nut taxa were previously identified at other Neolithic sites in Serbia (e.g. McLaren & Hubbard 1990; Borojević 2006) and most likely represent gathered source of food, eaten fresh or dried and stored for use in winter; some have potential medicinal value (i.e. *Sambucus*) which may have been recognised by Vinča settlers. It is also possible that some of the burnt fruit/nut remains arrived to the site attached to kindling or bundle of sticks used as fuel. Analysis of wood charcoal from Vinča has not been conducted within this study.

The wild seed assemblage also includes arable weeds and ruderal plants; their botanical identification was difficult due to the lack of adequate reference material and the fact that each taxon was represented by only a few seeds. Many of the wild plants are listed in ethnobotanical and ethnopharmacological accounts as potentially useful food, flavouring or medicine — for example leaves of knotweed (*Polygonum*) and dock (*Rumex*) species and roots of carrot/parsley (*Apiaceae*) species used as wild “greens”, leaves and roots of mallow family (*Malvaceae*) used as medicine (Tucakov 1986; Ertuğ-Yaraş 1997; Behre 2008). These, as well as other recovered wild plants, particularly members of grass family (e.g. *Avena* sp., *Bromus* sp., *Echinochloa crus-galli*, *Setaria viridis*) and small-seeded wild legumes (cf. *Medicago* sp., *Trifolium* sp.) may also represent crop weeds or ruderal vegetation growing on field edges and in trampled areas. Together with crop processing by-products, they would have been useful as fodder for herded animals.

### 3. Plant-based food at Vinča

Just like any other animals, humans require nutrient-rich food that supplies energy, protein and minerals. Within the available resources, people select food items that will fulfil their dietary needs and ensure successful growth and maintenance of individuals, household members, communities. Modern-time nutritional recommendations promote the consumption of a balanced mixture of foods belonging to a few general food groups: cereals, fruits and vegetables, meat and fish, and dairy products. Interestingly, the Arctic Inuit population, for example, has a quite successful native diet composed of foods belonging to only one of these groups — meat and fish (Draper 1999). In addition to the range of foodstuffs potentially consumed by Vinča residents, the information presented here also allow for assessment of basic nutritional composition of their diet and perhaps provide guidelines for examination of their overall health.

The abundance and ubiquity across the samples of two cereal types — einkorn and emmer — likely suggest their high importance in the food production system and diet at Vinča. The two hulled wheats could have



been grown, processed, stored and consumed together (Popova & Pavlova 1994; Jones and Halstead 1995; also Hillman 1981), while there are also examples of sowing of wheat-barley mixture (“maslin”) in order to reduce the risk of crop failure (Jones & Halstead 1995). On the other hand, in some areas of Anatolia where the “traditional” wheats are still grown, there is a clear separation between seed corn of emmer and einkorn, as they have different purposes (e.g. emmer is intended for fodder — Karagöz 1995; Filipović, pers. observation 2008). The analysis of a large concentration of *in situ* burnt cereal remains from building 01/06 (a burnt crop store) sheds more light on the role of different crop types (Borojević 2010).

So far, unambiguous consumption-related cereal debris is lacking from the analysed macro-botanical record and so details of the potential forms of cereal foods are not evident. Nonetheless, consumption of pounded (coarse-ground to make bulgur), ground (to make flour) or whole cooked grains can be assumed, and this is supported by the finds of grinding stones and pounders, possibly used in food preparation, though they could have been used for many grinding purposes, such as processing of wild seed/fruit or pigment preparation (Antonović 2003, 2005). The analysis of residue (e.g. starch in case of plants) and microwear on the ground stone tools, but also human teeth (i.e. grit damage on dental surface) would provide useful data on the processing of cereal (and other) food before consumption.

Whereas cereals would have provided carbohydrates — main source of energy in human nutrition — the major source of plant protein would have been domesticated legumes. Peas, lentils and the like could have been combined with cereals in porridge-type meals and gruels, added to soups and stews, or the seeds might have been roasted/baked. The status of bitter vetch in diet is ambiguous, as it is necessary to remove toxins from the seeds prior to human consumption; for this reason, the taxon has long been considered as a human food only in times of famine (Zohary & Hopf 2000). Results of archaeobotanical investigations from different parts of the world, however, show that bitter vetch might have well been a “regular” element of human diet, the toxicity diminished by soaking in water prior to cooking and mixing with, for example, wheat (e.g. Dönmez 2005; Valamoti et al. 2010). Overall, the remains of pulse indicate their potential food-role at Vinča, while both products and by-products (pulse chaff) of legume production could have been a good source of animal fodder (Butler 1992; Butler et al. 1999).

Wild fruits and nuts identified at Vinča would have been an important source of a range of vitamins and minerals, also adding different flavours to the diet. Fruit and nut have relatively high carbohydrate content; nuts are also a source of oils and can be consumed in various states. Acorns can be dried in the sun and then stored in earth pits for two-three

months where they lose astringency and can be eaten raw or boiled and, ground to flour (perhaps mixed with cereal flour) used to make bread (Mason & Nesbitt 2009). Although acorns are believed to be a food of famine, they seem to represent an important element in diet of nomadic pastoralists in the Zagros Mountains (Hole 1979), while in parts of Southwest Asia they are quite often roasted and served as snack, much like sweet chestnut (Filipović, pers. observation 2008; Mason & Nesbitt 2009). Another type of starch-containing nut recorded at Vinča — water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) — seems to have been an important food across Europe from Mesolithic onwards, and is still consumed by humans in, for example, parts of northern Italy (Karg 2006). Water chestnuts could have been used in a way similar to acorns (Karg 2006; Borojević 2009a, 2009b). K. Borojević (2006, 2009a, 2009b) identified a large number of *Trapa* fragments at late Neolithic Opovo in Vojvodina; she subsequently conducted an ethnobotanic study in the Lake Skadar (Scutari) region and discovered the use of water chestnuts until recent times as both human food and animal (pig) feed.

Among fruits, wild pears (probably *Pyrus amygdaliformis*, a wild pear native to west Turkey, the Aegean basin and the south Balkans — Zohary & Hopf 2000) were the most common finds in light fractions (see above) and in hand-collected samples; both fruits and seeds were recovered. The small fruits were probably dried after collection, which enabled their very good archaeological preservation by charring (otherwise water content of the fruit would cause bursting under high temperature). The pears (and other fruit, such as berries) could have been dried and stored for piecemeal consumption throughout the year; drying would have diminished the tannin content (which is the cause of astringency in some wild fruit) and helped preserve the fruit over a longer period (Wiltshire 1995). Dried fruit, especially berries, are not very tasty but if “rehydrated” (i.e. soaked in water prior to consumption) they regain some of their flavour. Pears have been collected long before their cultivation (and domestication) and are a common find at Neolithic sites in the region (Kroll 1991; Marinova 2007; Valamoti 2009). It has been suggested that even in the Neolithic, pear- (and apple-) tree growing areas were cleared of other vegetation and protected from browsing animals (“Neolithic orchards” — Kirleis & Kroll 2010). The relative abundance and frequency of wild pear fruit at Vinča (compared to the number of “sturdier” fruit/nut remains) may be indicative of their special “status” and perhaps their use in drink preparation — they could have been crushed to extract juice or reduced to particles for further processing (e.g. boiling).

Most observations made for wild pear apply to the other fruit taxa identified at Vinča — Cornelian and bladder cherries (rich in vitamin C), sloe, elder- and blackberries all could have been eaten raw by people

out in the landscape, and/or collected, (dried) and stored for later use. In some instances, plant parts other than fruit could have (also) been used for their medicinal properties, e.g. elderberry leaves and flowers, blackberry leaves (Jančić 1990). Other wild plants, including those also occurring as arable weeds, may have been collected and used for food or medicinal purposes (e.g. Behre 2008), the useable parts potentially including seeds, fruits, nuts, tubers/roots, stems, flowers and leaves (Jančić 1990; Ertuğ-Yaraş 1997).

It must be highlighted that the archaeobotanical record, charred material in particular, is usually an underrepresentation of the plant sources that were in actual use (Schiffer 1976, 1987; Green 1981). Preservation by charring implies that the most likely plants/plant parts to be recovered are those intended and/or used as fuel (wood, by-products of plant processing and consumption, plant parts in dung), those accidentally burnt (during food preparation or in accidental fires) or those intentionally burnt for other reasons (removing infested/diseased seed, cleaning out of storage). It also indicates human agency as the main factor to decide if and what kind of material is exposed to fire. Intended uses of a plant dictate its chances of preservation (Dennell 1974), while physical plant/plant part properties (e.g. sensitivity to thermal exposure, moisture content) and conditions of charring (temperature, length of exposure etc) are also relevant (Wright 2003). Furthermore, postdepositional events and processes of the natural environment, such as wind and water action, rodent activity and chemical weathering also act upon and potentially transform archaeological evidence (“non-cultural” formation processes — Schiffer 1987). Therefore, the analysed archaeobotanical assemblage from Vinča probably offers only a glimpse of the “original” use of plants and the range and availability of resources, and should not be understood as determinate.

#### *4. Implications for plant-related activities at Vinča*

Food provision takes up a large portion of time and energy of any population; it was central to prehistoric communities. Food-related activities from the time after the emergence/adoption of agriculture — a process constituting one of few such large-scale cultural transformations — are particularly archaeologically visible. From the Neolithic onwards, planting and tending of crops through the growing season, followed by harvesting, processing, preparation and consumption, were activities crucial to the construction of every-day life of households (and communities). The study of botanical remains from archaeological deposits provides insight into daily work tasks surrounding plant production and use, and the ways in which farmers interacted with the local landscape.

The identified macro-botanical remains from Vinča offer a preliminary basis for inferring “off-” and “on-site” plant-related activities and their seasonal round. Based on the available data on internal organization of the settlement architecture (Tasić 2008), the location and proximity of buildings, and size of external (in-between-house) spaces, it is hardly possible that any cultivation plots, however small, could have been maintained within the settlement. It is perhaps reasonable to assume that arable fields were located on the Danube banks near the settlement, depending on the river flooding regime, but also further inland, on dry hill slopes along the river. Additional/alternative arable location, pinpointed by microtopographical survey of the area, is the alluvial plain of the River Bolečica that empties itself at the foot of Belo Brdo site. The fertile alluvial soil would have offered highly productive agricultural land; moreover, the river valley(s) would have been abundant in wild resources (plants and animals). This situation would fit Sherratt’s “floodwater farming” model (Sherratt 1980), where early farmers take advantage of nutrient-rich, well-watered alluvial soils and practice small-scale non-intensive cultivation, i.e. without high labour inputs, such as tillage, hoeing, weeding etc. According to the model, crops would have been sown in early spring, to “take advantage of the short period of optimum water availability between winter floods and summer desiccation”, (Sherratt 1980, 317). Due to the lack of palaeoenvironmental investigations (of which geomorphological would be particularly useful), it is not known whether regular (spring) flooding, and hence self-renewal of the fertile soil, occurred in the two nearby river valleys in the Neolithic, nor is it possible to gauge the extent/effect of flooding. Therefore, any suggestions for the location of arable land remain speculative. Further analysis of the arable weed flora from Vinča would enable the reconstruction of, among other aspects, crop growing conditions and sowing/harvest time (for example, both einkorn and emmer can be autumn- or spring-sown), and thus potential location of crop fields (Holzner 1978; Wasylikowa 1981; Jones et al. 1999; Bogaard 2004).

“Off-site” agricultural activities would have included preparation of soil for sowing (e.g. tillage), sowing and perhaps tending of crops (weeding, hoeing), harvesting and returning of crops to the site. Harvesting could have been performed in different ways: by reaping (with a sickle, low or high on straw), and by uprooting (by hand or with blunt long-handled sickle used as a lever; Hillman 1981). In highlands of Ethiopia, where emmer is still grown and traditional cultivation methods used, emmer stems are cut about 5 cm above the ground with a sickle, while also uprooting using a sickle is sometimes practised (D’Andrea & Mitiku 2002). Ear-harvesting/plucking is an alternative method, recorded in Spain (Peña-Chocarro 1996, 1999) and is suitable for harvesting hulled wheats (e.g. einkorn and emmer) just

underneath the seed head, where the basal rachis would remain attached to the straw (Hillman 1981, 1985; Ibáñez Estévez *et al.* 2001). The action can be carried out by hand or with a tool — *mesorias* (composed of two wooden sticks attached with a string at one end) which is still used for cutting spelt wheat stems in the region of Asturias in north Spain (Peña-Chocarro 1999; Ibáñez Estévez *et al.* 2001; Filipović, pers. observation 2008). Similar to this is the action of stripping grains off a stem, in which case only ripe grains/spikelets come off, while unripe grain and basal spikelets stay on the stem (P. Anderson, pers. comm. 2008).

Post-harvest operations, that is, initial cleaning of crops (threshing, sieving, winnowing) probably occurred near the settlement or around its edges; again, the arrangement of buildings does not indicate location of threshing floor(s) within the settlement, although the existence of open space(s) for “communal” activities cannot be excluded. In general, threshing breaks ears into spikelets (in hulled wheats) or releases grain from chaff (in free-threshing cereals and pulses), winnowing removes light parts (straw if present, light chaff, awns, light seeds), coarse sieving removes unthreshed ears, straw nodes, large weed heads/pods and seeds, and fine sieving removes heavy seeds smaller than crop grain/seed (Dennell 1974; Hillman 1981, 1984). In hulled wheats, initial threshing breaks ears into individual spikelets (one or more grains enclosed by glumes) that require an additional threshing/dehusking sequence. Spikelets are dehusked by pounding and then again winnowed and/or sieved; hand-sorting of grain is also required to remove contaminants inseparable from grain by sieving, and is usually carried out as and when needed (on a daily/weekly basis — Hillman 1984; Jones 1984). Given the available evidence on the average size of rooms, it seems unlikely that anything but the hand cleaning and storage of crops could have taken place indoors. Wild plants also need basic preparation for use, and their processing could have been carried out in or around the houses.

Storage of crop and wild food probably took place indoors, in clay bins and/or clay vessels, in bags and baskets, or bundles hanging from the ceiling (cf. Chapman 1981). It would be interesting to see how storage of plant products stands against storage of animal products and whether the same rooms (“pantries”) were used for both types of food. The *in situ* burnt plant remains from house 01/06 (Borojević 2010), and any burnt plant stores potentially discovered in future excavations, will provide direct evidence for the type (and quantity) of the stored material. They will also allow investigations on the possible specialisation in plant procurement by different households, amounts of stored products per household, their purpose (e.g. food, fodder, seed corn) and so on.

As noted, the botanical dataset from Vinča is quite limited in terms of the potential for reconstruction of food consumption practices due to the lack of direct evidence. It is, however, plausible to assume certain food preparation activities and “recipes”, based on the range of available (storable) foods such as cereals, legumes, fruits and nuts. Boiling, roasting, baking were quite possibly means by which the food was prepared, in addition to eating fresh/raw fruit and greens at the time of the year when they were available. Detailed examination of cooking-related vessels and other objects (i.e. clay/stone balls, grinders) as well as fire installations can provide additional information on food preparation, presentation and consumption (e.g. Tasić & Filipović 2011).

Food provision — cultivation and collection, as well as procurement of construction materials and fuels — would have required considerable planning, organization of labour and hard work, and a degree of social co-operation within or between groups. It is likely that some off-site plant-related activities involved engagement of a group of either kin or non-related members of the community, as they were happening in the wider landscape; they would have involved social interaction among those doing the work, sharing experiences and knowledge. Some ethnographic examples show women performing winnowing, sieving, dehusking and hand-cleaning of grain, while both men and women are involved in land preparation, sowing and land maintenance (Ertuğ-Yaraş 1997; D’Andrea & Mitiku 2002). From ethnobotanical research in Anatolia we know that women are “in charge” of collecting wild plants and they have the “knowledge”; they usually work in groups and that gives them an opportunity for socialising (Ertuğ 2000). On the other hand, on-site activities such as plant food storage, food preparation and consumption could have been “private” and practised within individual households (cf. Borojević 2010); eating itself has social meanings, and family-based meals might have been of considerable importance.

#### *4.1. Seasonality of plant procurement*

Seasonality and human adaptation to seasonal changes were central to all traditional food systems (De Garine 1994). The timing of food-related activities in foraging and farming societies was largely determined by the availability/accessibility of foodstuffs over the year. In case of plant food, the resource exploitation depended upon plant lifecycle — e.g. the onset and length of germination, flowering, and the timing of fruiting/seed setting. Therefore, plant production in farming communities required careful planning on the annual basis of agricultural and wild plant gathering activities (from sowing to consumption), ensuring provision of food but also material



for fuel, construction, utensils, clothes. Apart from plant biological cycle, the seasonal scheduling also had to take into account the availability of labour force and time needed for completing the tasks, while having to avoid scheduling conflicts with, for example, animal husbandry.

The sequence of arable production starts with sowing (or, prior to it, soil preparation/tillage) which can take place in autumn (“winter crops”) or spring (“summer crops”). Arable weeds accompanying crops in the field are potential indicators of crop sowing time, and they are frequently used in archaeobotanical analysis to assess this and other aspects of crop husbandry (e.g. Wasylikowa 1981; Jones et al. 1999; Jones 2002; Bogaard 2004). The weed flora recovered so far at Vinča does not offer a firm basis for determining crop sowing time (too few seeds of arable taxa were present and often not identifiable to species level); at another Vinča-culture site (late Neolithic Opovo) autumn/winter sowing has been proposed for at least some of the identified cereals (Borojević 1998, 234; 2006). Wheat and barley are generally not suited for spring sowing as they need a long period of vernalisation (exposure to cold) to produce seed; legumes, on the other hand, have a shorter growing season and they could have been spring-sown.

If (some) sowing took place in autumn, it would have partially overlapped with the collection of wild fruit that ripe at around this time (e.g. Cornelian cherry, elderberry, and water chestnut), and probably fuel and fodder to be stored and used in winter, turning autumn into a very busy period of the year. Spring would have also been work-loaded with tasks such as tending of cereal fields (weeding, protection from grazing animals), sowing of legumes, collection of spring greens etc. It appears that the climate in the Neolithic Balkans was quite warm and wet (Willis & Bennet 1994) and so winter-sown crops would have matured by June/July or even earlier. Crop harvest and processing would have been the main activity in mid-late summer, alongside sun-drying of crops and wild fruits intended for storage as part of the preparation for winter. Winter would have been a good time for collection of reed, most likely used as building/roofing material.

The intensive plant-related activity for most of the year would have placed considerable labour demands upon the residents and would have required good organisation of time and tasks. The long-lasting occupation and stability of the site in the Neolithic points to, among other things, the existence of a successful subsistence strategy, probably based on a strong and widely accepted set of rules and traditions. The presented views of plant use at Vinča are preliminary and very general. A much more detailed research is needed on archaeobotanical and other indicators of food production and consumption practices at Vinča, as well as on natural environment throughout the history of the site, in order to fill in the gaps in our understanding of context and meaning of the plant record. It is hoped that future investiga-

tions will be aimed at producing data on “practical” issues such as logistics (e.g. provision of food, fuel, raw materials) and technology/methods of production, but also more indirect, i.e. social and symbolic spheres of life over the long history of the site’s occupation.\*

**Table 1** Plant taxa from Vinča–Belo Brdo

TAXA	plant part	wild/weed	plant part
<b>cereals</b>		<i>Amaranthus</i> sp.	seed
<i>Triticum monococcum</i>	seed and chaff	<i>Avena</i> sp.	seed
<i>Triticum dicoccum</i>	seed and chaff	<i>Bromus secalinus</i>	seed
<i>Triticum</i> , “new type”	chaff	<i>Bromus</i> sp.	seed
<i>Triticum aestivum/durum</i>	seed	<i>Chenopodium ficifolium</i>	seed
<i>Triticum aestivum</i>	chaff	<i>Chenopodium</i> sp.	seed
<i>Hordeum vulgare nudum</i>	seed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i> type	seed
<i>Hordeum vulgare vulgare</i> (?)	seed	<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i>	seed
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>	seed	<i>Galium aparine</i> type	seed
<i>Panicum miliaceum</i>	seed	<i>Galium</i> cf. <i>mollugo</i>	seed
Cerealia indeterminata	seed and chaff	<i>Galium</i> sp.	seed
<b>legumes</b>		<i>Medicago</i> sp.	seed
<i>Lens</i> cf. <i>culinaris</i>	seed	<i>Phalaris</i> sp.	seed
<i>Pisum sativum</i>	seed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	culm nodes
<i>Vicia ervilia</i>	seed	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	seed

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Leguminosae sativae indeterminatae	seed	<i>Polygonum convolvulus</i>	seed
<b>oil/fibre plants</b>		<i>Polygonum cf. persicaria</i>	seed
<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	seed	<i>Polygonum</i> sp.	seed
<b>fruits and nuts</b>		<i>Rumex</i> sp.	seed
<i>Cornus mas</i>	stone, fragment	<i>Setaria viridis</i>	seed
<i>Physalis alkekengi</i>	seed	<i>Silene</i> sp.	seed
<i>Prunus</i> sp.	stone, fragment	<i>Teucrium</i> sp.	seed
<i>Pyrus</i> sp.	fruit and seed	<i>Thymelea passerina</i>	seed
<i>Quercus</i> sp.	cupula, fragment	<i>Trifolium</i> sp.	seed
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	seed	<i>Trigonella</i> sp.	seed
<i>Rubus</i> sp.	seed	<i>Vicia</i> sp.	seed
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	seed	Apiaceae	seed
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	seed	Cruciferae	seed
<i>Trapa natans</i>	shell fragment	Malvaceae	seed
		Poaceae	seed
		Solanaceae	seed

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## The Classical and Hellenistic Economy and the “Paleo-Balkan” Hinterland A Case Study of the Iron Age “Hellenized Settlements”

**Abstract:** Dozens of similar fortified settlements exhibiting a familiarity with some Greek building techniques and traditions existed in some parts of the Balkans during the Iron Age, especially from the fifth to third century BC. The settlements are documented in a vast continental area stretching from modern-day Albania, the FYR Macedonia and south central Serbia to Bulgaria. Archaeological interpretations mostly accept that economic factors and trade with late Classical and early Hellenistic Greece were instrumental in their emergence, and the phenomenon is interpreted as Greek “influence” and local “imitation” of Mediterranean culture. Presenting the most influential interpretations of the Classical and Hellenistic economy and some perspectives in economic anthropology, this paper examines the traditional (mostly formalistic) culture-historical understanding of the Balkan “Hellenized settlements” of the mid-first millennium BC and Mediterranean interrelations. It also looks at the construction and role of status identity as a crucial social factor in shaping the Iron Age communities in the hinterland, and defines possible trade and exchange activities as only one aspect of the identity of a burgeoning elite.

**Keywords:** “Hellenized settlements”, “Hellenization” and the Balkan Iron Age hinterland, economic anthropology, Classical and Hellenistic economy, status identity, Kale-Krševica

### *Introduction: “Hellenized settlements” in the Balkan archaeological traditions*

Conducted in the last few decades, archaeological excavations in the Balkan hinterland have shown that numerous fortified settlements — often described as “Hellenized” and built “according to Greek models”, came into existence between the mid-fifth and mid-fourth century BC. In modern-day Bulgaria such sites are referred to as *Late Iron Age* settlements (Popov 2002; Archibald 1998; 2000; Theodossiev 2011); in the FYR Macedonia, as *Early Classical* (“Early Antiquity”) (I. Mikulčić 1982; 1999; Lilčić 2009; Sokolovska 1986; 2011); and in Albania, as *Urban Illyrian Phase* (Čeka 2005; Popov 2002, 181–263; Wilkes 1992). Similar, but not thoroughly investigated sites have been documented in modern-day Kosovo and Metohija and southeast central Serbia (Vukmanović, Popović 1982; Shukriu 1996; Tasić 1998). Kale, an archaeological site in the village of Krševica near the town of Vranje, stands out as a rare example of a systematically excavated “Hellenized” settlement site in Serbia (Popović 2005; 2006; 2007a; 2007b; 2007c; 2009a; 2009b;

Popović & Vranić 1998; Popović & Kapouran 2007; Popović & Vukadinović 2011). Compared to earlier and insufficiently known Early Iron Age forms, these settlements correspond to a supposed change in habitation patterns and mark a different social, political and economic milieu of “Paleo-Balkan” societies and identities from the fifth century BC onwards (Archibald 1998). The richest architectural phases and most prominent cases have been dated to the fourth and early third century BC, when most sites were abandoned — change traditionally seen as the result of “Celtic migrations” (Sokolovska 1986; 2011; I. Mikulčić 1999).

Their most conspicuous similarity to the material culture of late Classical and Hellenistic Greek centres is observable in architecture (Nankov 2008; Bitrakova-Grozdanova 2006; Archibald 1994; 1998; 2010). Some have assumed that Greek builders were instrumental in the appearance of ashlar masonry, usually observable in massive ramparts built of stone blocks, mud bricks and “Greek type” roof tiles — an intriguing phenomenon considering the settlements’ great distance from the Mediterranean (see Tsetskhladze 1998; 2000; 2009, 161–163; Archibald 1998, 140). Similarities are observable in other forms of material culture as well. A well-known example is the wheel-thrown household greyware (Sokolovska 1992; Changova 1981; Domaradski 2002; Shukriu 1996; Vranić 2009), whose shapes (kantharoi, skyphoi, oinochoai, hydriai, etc.) and style correspond to late Classical and early Hellenistic Greek household pottery (cf. Rotroff 2004; 2006; Sparkes & Talkot 1970). In the Macedonian archaeological literature these forms are commonly known as *Early Antiquity/Classical Hellenized pottery*, while Bulgarian archaeology uses the term *Thracian grey wares*. At the same time, numerous imports from the Mediterranean have been documented. Apart from abundant amphorae, which presumably attest to the distribution of olive oil and wine, mostly from Thasos and the Khalkidhiki, there are also imports from much remoter centres, such as Chios or Rhodes (see Bouzek et al. 2007; Titz 2002; Tzozhev 2009, 55–72; Popović 2007c). Commonly found within the settlements are also late Classical and early Hellenistic painted wares (e.g. Archibald 1996; 2002; G. Mikulčić 1990; 2005; Krstić 2005; Parović-Pešikan 1992) and coins (e.g. Popović 2007b).

Apart from some terminological differences, which in the Balkan archaeological traditions are mostly related to ethnicities (Thracian, Paeonian, Illyrian, etc) (see Vranić 2011), the term *Hellenized settlements* articulates the interpretative significance of contacts, and reflects the ultimate goal of most researchers, which is to “recognize” (formal) analogies with the Greek world. The still prevailing culture-historical approach sees their emergence as a result of intensified contacts between “Paleo-Balkan” communities and late Classical and early Hellenistic Greece. The usual perspective is that the settlements were built after Greek “models” and that their material culture

“imitates” shapes and technologies of the north-Aegean cities (e.g. Popov 2002; I. Mikulčić 1999; Dimitrov & Ivanov 1984; Changova 1981; Bozkova & Delev 2002; Ristov 2003; Neidinger & Matthews 2008; Neidinger et al. 2009; Sokolovska 1986; 1990; Petrova 1991). The wide distribution of Mediterranean imports is used to support the hypothesis about local social changes occurring as a result of “Hellenization” — a recognizable traditional narrative viewing the “spread” of Greek culture as an expected consequence of contact between “less developed” Iron Age communities and Classical and Hellenistic civilizations (Theodossiev 2011, 14; e.g. Papazoglu 1980).

Culture-historical epistemology<sup>1</sup> in the Balkans approaches changes in material culture from two perspectives: as the result of the appearance of a new population (**migrations**), or as the result of the “spreading of influences” (**diffusion**). It assumes that communities and individual actors were essentially static and that they had never produced change in material culture on their own. The change that took place is considered to be the result of external influences — in this case, Classical and Hellenistic Greece. Interpretations of the “Hellenized” settlements favouring the migration perspective — e.g. *Demir Kapija* and the supposed Greek presence from the fifth century BC on (Sokolovska 1978; 1986, 47–51; 2011, 13; I. Mikulčić 1999, 176–182); *Damastion* as a Greek silver-mining town (Ujes & Romić 1996; Popović 1987, 24–34; 2012; Sokolovska 1990; 2003; Petrova 1991); *Pernik* as Philip II’s stronghold (Popov 2002, 138, 141); *emporion* Pistiros (Bouzek et al. 1996; 2002; 2007) — are mostly subsidiary (and reserved for the most prominent sites) as against the prevailing idea of the diffusion of Greek cultural traits (e.g. Sokolovska 1986; Petrova 1991; Bitrakova-Grozdanova 1987). Combination of these two approaches is responsible for the construction of the narrative of the “spread” of an advanced culture, tending to overlook the issue of causes and new meanings of the “diffused” culture.

Among the many reasons for the continued existence of this theoretical perspective<sup>2</sup> is the traditional view on trade and exchange. A common thread upon which it hangs is the idea of the “superiority” of Greek culture, and of its “spreading” as an inevitable outcome. Another common thread is the use of commercial factors as a universal explanation for the motives for establishing contact. Ancient Greece is perceived as a “developed civilization” which established contacts with “Paleo-Balkan” communities because it lacked raw materials. The next step is to identify the “Hellenized settlements” as “international” trading centres and to recognize the economic ne-

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<sup>1</sup> On the importance of culture-historical archaeology in general, see Olsen 2002, 30–39; Johnson 1999, 15–20; Trigger 2006.

<sup>2</sup> On the complex development of culture-historical archaeology in the Balkans, see Palavestra 2011.

cessity of emerging “market economies” which developed as the result of the appearance of “Greek merchants”, the “demand” for raw materials and the constant supply of Greek “goods” (e.g. I. Mikulčić 1999; Domaradski 2000; Petrova 1991, 23–24; Bitrakova-Grozdanova 1987, 88–92; Srejović 2002, 32–34; Čerškov 1969, 18, 80).

Contacts between different communities and the interpretation of the supposed social changes related to these contacts are essential theoretical issues in the archaeology concerned with identity construction, but they are also economic issues in the broadest sense. In the case of contacts between ancient Greece, treated in the European intellectual tradition as the beginning of “our civilisation” (Shanks 1996; Morley 2009; Babić 2008; 2010; Kuzmanović 2011, 601), and communities in the Mediterranean hinterland, there is always the danger of a Eurocentric perspective. This paper seeks to show that it is precisely the view of the “market economy” as instrumental in the “Hellenization” process that reflects a Eurocentric perspective of modern Balkan researchers (cf. Morley 2009, 21–45; Thomas 2004; Kuzmanović 2010). It is observable in the formalistic view of the Greek economy as the “beginning” of the European capitalistic system on the one hand and, on the other, in “Hellenocentricity” — recognition of Mediterranean social characteristics in barbaric settings (e.g. Dimitrov & Ivanov 1984; Changova 1981; Bozkova & Delev 2002; Sokolovska 1986; 1990; Petrova 1991; Bouzek et al. 1996; 2002; 2007; Cohen 1995, 79–88). On this epistemological basis, it is argued, often uncritically, that besides similarities in architecture and other forms of material culture there should be expected in the hinterland socio-economic and socio-political institutions comparable to those in late Classical and early Hellenistic Greece. As a result, the Iron Age heritage, unearthed in modern Balkan countries, becomes “civilized” and more important in the contemporary political context (Vranić 2011).

#### *“Hellenized settlements” and Classical and Hellenistic economy*

Culture-historical literature is rarely concerned with interrelations of the Iron Age “Hellenized” communities and the Mediterranean world as a tangible case study on the level of individual actors, conscious social change or mechanisms leading to newly-established hybrid cultures (Hall 2002; Gosden 2004; Dietler 1997). At the same time, these interrelations are taken as the unquestionable, universal and widely-accepted cause of the appearance of the “Hellenized settlements” and of many other changes in the local cultural landscape. This interpretative paradox stems from theoretical premises.

The traditional approach to the economic aspect of the contact is taken from the modern Western evolutionary perspective. As a result, it assumes

that the “more developed” side initiated contact out of its own interests (Wilk 1996, 1–26; Adams 1974). When it comes to the emergence of the settlements, it is supposed that Greece “imported” “raw materials” (usually minerals, grains or furs) and slaves from the hinterland, and that the role of Balkan Iron Age communities was to meet the needs of the “superior” partner. Documentary sources provide some hints as to possible “Paleo-Balkan” “exports”, which archaeologists usually take for a “fact”. In the case of the central Balkans, the presumed “Paonian territory” (the Vardar valley in the FYR Macedonia and the west of modern-day Bulgaria) is known for the “export” of silver (e.g. I. Mikulčić 1999; Sokolovska 1990; 2003) and wheat (Papazoglu 1967; Petrova 1991, 23–24; Rostovtzeff 1941, 216), while the southern regions of ancient Macedonia are generally recognized as exporters of wood and resin — the materials widely used in Athenian shipbuilding (Millett 2010, 474). Some form of “profit” for the “Paleo-Balkan” side is recognized in imported objects, which are treated as “Greek goods” and, therefore, as indirect evidence for trading activity. Culture-historical authors tend to identify “Greek merchants” as the most prominent “culprits” for this form of contact — traditional discourse in the modern European archaeological and historical literature assuming the critical role of trade in Greek society, portraying the traders “caste” as free entrepreneurs who came in contact with the “barbarian world” on the principles of market economy and personal gain (Rostovtzeff 1941, 300; Boardman 1980, 162). In Bulgaria, researchers even suggest the existence of *emporía* — permanent Greek trading colonies emerging in the upper Maritza valley in the fifth century BC, as the key socio-political factor in the “Hellenization” process (Bouzek et al. 1996; 2002; 2007; Archibald 2000, 212–233; 2004, 885–899; Domaradski 2002).

In a broader theoretical sense, this interpretative concept is closest to “**formalists**” in economic anthropology and “**modernizers**” in history — perspectives that assume that trading activities in pre-capitalist economies functioned on market-based principles similar to the modern age (Plattner 1989, 1–20; Carrier 2005; Wilk 1996; Morley 2007). They focus on individuals, whose rationality and need for profits are supposedly present in all societies (past or present), and on the cross-cultural concepts of *scarcity*, *maximization* and *surplus*. Trade and exchange are considered to be just a means by which this universal human instinct, which exists beyond culture and society, is channelled with the view to minimizing the effort and maximizing the advantage (Ericson & Earle 1982, 2; Hodder 1982, 201–203).

Among the most prominent historians insisting on market economy as the fundamental cause of the “spreading of Greek influences” in the Mediterranean was M. Rostovtzeff (1941; cf. Archibald et al. 2001). His “modernizing” approach to Hellenistic monarchies is focused on the evolution of new social structures based on the hypothesis that commerce and

economic reasons led to the integration of Greek and Eastern cultures. It is predicated on the premise that the Classical and Hellenistic poleis were socio-economic units organized toward the “production” and “export” of “goods”, which generated profits that made these “producer cities” (cf. Weber 1958, 68–70) sustainable. This Eurocentric approach uncritically transfers modern capitalistic characteristics to the ancient economy, constructing the notion of the Greek socio-economic system as an important phase in the development of capitalism (Morley 2007; 2009; Kuzmanović 2010).

The archaeologists dealing with the “Hellenized settlements” in the Balkans only occasionally cited Rostovtzeff’s monumental work (e.g. Papazoglu 1957; Bitrakova-Grozdanova 1987; Petrova 1991). However, whether aware of his work or not, those who did not cite him tended to apply the same theoretical concept (e.g. Sokolovska 1986; Mikulčić 1982; 1999). Using a simplified version of the “modernizing” model,<sup>3</sup> they assume that the quantity of imported objects is in itself proof enough that trade was the overriding motive for contact. Cheap “raw materials” and the “demand” for Greek “products” led to a change in settlement patterns and to the emergence of new “trading centres”, followed by a growth of crafts within these newly-established “cities” that “imitated” Greek poleis (e.g. I. Mikulčić 1999; Petrova 1991, 23–24; Bitrakova-Grozdanova 1987, 88–92; Srejšević 2002, 32–34; Domaradski 2000; Bouzek et al. 1996; 2002; 2007). Consequently, “international trade” becomes an “obvious” and “commonsense” explanation for the “spreading of Greek influences”, without its being supported by any fundamental research into the principles of the Iron Age economy. Stylistic similarities and imported artefacts lead to drawing formal analogies with the modernizing picture of the Greek economy as a market-based system and a first step towards the emergence of the Western world. As a result, “Hellenization” is perceived strictly as a process of imitating Greek culture, of adopting the Mediterranean customs, political organization and way of life directly and without modification. However, if we acknowledge post-processual criticism, what we have here is the modern European picture of Classical and Hellenistic Greece projected onto the past and incorporated into Balkan archaeological and historical traditions (Babić 2008; 2010; Kuzmanović 2011). Pursuing this interpretative path, the culture-historical approach neglects the issue of different agencies at work within Iron Age societies which, selectively and consciously, incorporated elements of Greek culture into new social contexts of culture-specific meanings and character-

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that Rostovtzeff (1941, 216) considered economic relations with Greece a key factor in the development of ‘Paeonian’ society during the late fourth and early third century BC, highlighting the shipments of Paeonian wheat to the city of Athens.



istics. Its search, in these diverse contexts, for the same structures and institutions constructs a “Hellenocentric” notion of the same role and meaning of material culture. A good example of this ethnocentric perspective is provided by many purported “poleis” excavated in continental Thrace (Archibald 2004), or by frequent identification of grain and silver “markets” (e.g. I. Mikulčić 1999; Domaradski 2000). Quite the opposite, “Paleo-Balkan” and Mediterranean societies most certainly exhibited different social, economic or cultural characteristics and identities.

Since the beginnings of research into past economies in the nineteenth century, the formalist/modernizing approach has not been the only theoretical perspective. There have also circulated opposite (but equally Eurocentric) views, that capitalism emerged in Modernity as a structurally different economic system marked by the newly-established nineteenth-century market economy (Humphreys 1969; Morley 2007; Morris et al. 2008). For decades, “substantivists” in economic anthropology and “primitivists” in history have been meticulously developing a different theoretical and methodological approach to many economic activities that predated capitalism, highlighting that these economies were “embedded” in social and cultural structures that shaped human behaviour in ways which cannot be analyzed in terms of the capitalist concepts of “profit” or “scarcity” (Polanyi 1968a; 1968b; 1968c; Finley 1970; 1973; 1981; Hopkins 1983; Morris 2001).

As for the Classical economy, “substantivists” believe that the polis with an agricultural hinterland (*chora*) was self-sufficient and did not depend on the “import of raw materials” which, if present at all, was not defined by the market (Finley 1973; 1981; Polanyi 1968a; 1968b; 1968c). The most important socio-economic feature of the polis, according to this perspective, was subsistence economy. Consequently, Greek urbanization is perceived neither as a mercantile necessity, nor as the growth of “production centres”; but rather as the outcome of the emergence of a new form of society, characterized by the practice of “rich landowners” to live inside the newly-formed cities (Finley 1973, 123–149; Morley 2007, 50). Through taxes and other dues, these “consumer cities” (Weber 1958, 68–70) thrived at the expense of their agricultural hinterland — a feature that “substantivists” consider as the basic attribute of this city-state culture and its identity. This approach to the economy is much more concerned with the social (mostly status-related) role of city dwelling (cf. Morris 1987) than with “export” of finished products.

This approach, now also subjected to criticism,<sup>4</sup> has profoundly influenced interpretations of Greek, Roman or Iron Age economies. On the other hand, it has been completely neglected in the study of the “Helle-

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<sup>4</sup> For criticism of the “rich landlords” concept, see Hansen 2000 and 2006.

nized” settlements. Consequently, if the Greek polis was not dependent on the inflow of “raw materials” from distant sources, and if Classical society was not substantially dependent on “international trade”, then an argument could be made against the concept of “Hellenized settlements” as “trading centres”, especially in the case of fifth-century-BC inland “classical” sites such as “emporion Pistiros” in the upper Maritza valley (Bouzek et al. 1996; 2002; 2007) or Demir Kapija in the FYR Macedonia (I. Mikulčić 1999, 176–182; Sokolovska 1986, 47–51).

*The concept of pre-modern economy today: an example of Hellenistic economy*

Eventually, the “primitivist” and “modernizing” approaches found some common ground and this century-long debate has recently been put to rest with the conclusion that overgeneralizations are the basic flaw of both schools (Smith 2004; Morley 2007; Feinman & Garraty 2010; Morris 2001). For instance, most interpretations of Classical and Hellenistic Greece are focused on the Athenian economy, which was more of an exception than a rule, drawing universal conclusions from that specific context and applying them to other poleis or even Iron Age cultures in the Mediterranean hinterland. Most of the latest work points out the culture-specific role of the economy and draws attention to numerous setbacks marking all cross-cultural generalizations (see Carrier 2005; Wilk 1996; Morley 2007). Consequently, this topic is approached in the broadest sense — as complex relations between the community and its environmental and cultural landscape, taking **production, distribution and consumption** as related but very different socially constructed activities. Other important factors are climate, resources availability, demography, etc., issues neglected by previous research, which was mostly focused on distribution (substantivists) and production (formalists). At the same time, some authors question K. Polanyi’s and M. Finley’s dismissal of the forces of demand and supply which, in some, culture-specific, form probably were at work in pre-modern societies. The latest research on the social role of the humanities in the Western world shows that Polanyi and Finley, among many other important figures, overemphasized the distinction between Modernity — the period in the construction of which they participated — and every other (past or present) society (Feinman & Garraty 2010, 172–174). For instance, recent studies suggest that intra-community trade and exchange of agricultural products indeed was an important factor in the economy of a polis, while at the same time the entire polis remained self-sufficient (Hansen 2000; 2006, 69). On the other hand, the enduring “substantivist” view on the socio-political organization and group identity of the citizens still favours the concept of



culturally embedded redistribution as opposed to the market economy in the modern sense (Morley 2007, 6–9).

A step forward and away from the eternal “substantivists”–“formalists” debate has been made in the study of Hellenistic economies (Archibald et al. 2001; Parkins, Smith 1998; Davies 2001; 2006; Reger 2003). Contrary to Rostovtzeff’s view on the role of trade, Finley paid little attention to the Hellenistic economy. He accurately concluded that Hellenism conceived of as being an integrated cultural system originating from the “mixture” of Greek and Eastern ways had never existed, ultimately favouring an idea which thoroughly undermined the entire concept of a distinctive “Hellenistic economy”. Finley argued that the picture of Hellenistic monarchies as forming a single integrated socio-economic and socio-political system was a nineteenth-century construct, and claimed that two parallel systems, i.e. “Greek” and “Eastern”, had simultaneously existed throughout the period (Finley 1973, 183). Today, this Eurocentric position is also subjected to criticism. As shown by recent studies, both interpretations are overgeneralizations in the light of the fact that “Hellenistic economies” were so regionally diverse that any blanket term suggesting some form of unity, similarly to Finley’s position, is undoubtedly open to discussion (Davies 2001; 2006; Reger 2003). Also, they dismiss any strict division between “Greeks and Others” as a misleading approach to hybridization of new identities. It appears more likely that multiple and intertwined socio-economic levels (some old, others new, resulting from changes occurring in the aftermath of Alexander’s conquests) existed within the newly-created Hellenistic monarchies. Consequently, interpretations do not rely on a single interpretative framework.

The assumption that majority of the population remained small producers of agricultural crops — a subsistence-related activity defined by the **domestic economy** model — is a rare generalization on which contemporary researchers are agreed. This form of household production (and consumption) may have been connected to the outside world through the polis, a local socio-political unit emerging in the newly-conquered territories and retaining its prominent role in the Greek world, or through any other hybrid form of urban settlement. At the same time, the **royal economy**, a new form of status-defined influence in economic behaviour also played an important role in the Hellenistic world (Reger 2003, 332; Graham et al. 2006).

This complicates matters considering that Hellenism and its economy are very important for interpreting “Hellenized settlements” due to the issue of “Hellenization”, the supposed identity changes traditionally perceived as the highlight of the period (Momigliano 1971; Papazoglu 1980). Many authors still apply Rostovtzeff’s views, claiming that the socio-political context of the fourth and third centuries BC in the Balkans corresponds

to the context of “Hellenistic monarchies”, and ultimately recognizing the Odrysian, Paeonian or Illyrian kingdoms as polities organized in emulation of these characteristic political entities (Papazoglu 1967; 1988; Archibald 2000, 213). Others take a step further and argue that changes peculiar to Hellenism had taken place in the Balkans even earlier, around the middle of the fourth century BC, when Philip II conquered the region and created a short-lived “Hellenistic”-like situation with a distant Mediterranean political force ruling the local settings (Delev 1998). To complicate matters even more, the important role of Cassander and Lysimachus and their relations with “Paleo-Balkan” populations should not be overlooked either (Lund 1992; Theodossiev 2011, 10; Archibald 1998, 304–310). However, these settlements sit on the fringes of the Hellenistic world, and they most certainly constitute a different context from the Hellenistic monarchies characterized by the presence of the Greek elite. Therefore, political and social features of that ancient Macedonian society prior to Philip II’s conquests, and its differences from and similarities to Balkan Iron Age communities may be a more important question than the ethnocentric quest for “Hellenistic institutions” (cf. Archibald 2000). Latest research approaches this neglected issue from a “prehistoric” standpoint, assuming that these societies (Macedonian and other neighbouring Iron Age communities), far more than the poleis or Hellenistic monarchies, were structured according to the “warrior aristocracy” principle (Millett 2010; cf. Archibald 1998).

*Status identity and “Hellenization”: concluding remarks*

The brief introduction to the Classical and Hellenistic economy presented above shows that theoretical approaches to this topic overwhelmingly influence interpretations of relations between “Paleo-Balkan” and Mediterranean societies. It also puts forth a criticism of the culture-historical, formalist and modernizing “Hellenocentric” approach to “Hellenization” as the market-based appearance of “Greek” and “Hellenistic” institutions in the hinterland. These interrelations, however, may be approached bearing in mind the need to look into local, culture-specific Iron Age contexts and into contact-related internal changes.

Exponents of the processual approach, which profoundly influenced European Iron Age studies in the 1980s, were the first to try to go beyond the diffusionist model of culture-historical archaeology and scrutinize the supposed economic relations with the Mediterranean world, highlighting the role of long-distance trade and exchange in the process (e.g. Wells 1980; Collis 1984; for a bibliography in Serbian see Palavestra 1984; 1995; Babić 2002; 2004), and offering the first models for the emergence of status identity as the key characteristic of the entire period, a topic which

still remains very significant in recent theoretical perspectives (Babić 2005; Gosden 2004). Within processual archaeology, the *World System Theory*, an approach originally developed for modern colonial encounters (see Wallerstein 2004), was recognized as the most appropriate theory. Similarly to the modern European colonial empires, Mediterranean communities of the first millennium BC are seen as the centre, while Iron Age communities in the interior of the continent are conceived of as being the periphery of one interrelated “global” system (Champion 1989; Rowlands 1998). Therefore, authors closer to the “formalists” in anthropology explored, through various statistical models, the role of *entrepreneurs* in pursuit of personal gain and the role of “profit” in the emergence of status differences (Wells 1984, 25–37). On the other hand, “substantivists” believed that status differences and the elite’s competition in the Iron Age had existed before possible trading contacts with the Greeks (Frankenstein & Rowlands 1978, 76–77). Therefore, imports are not necessarily indicative of the existence of commercial activity and “profits” in the modern sense, but should rather be ascribed to the complex system of status-related trade and exchange, very different from the modern market economy. The *World System Theory* approach and models of Iron Age societies were an important step forward in specifying the targets of research. Today, they may also be criticized as Eurocentric and as a “masked” form of diffusionism (Gosden 2004, 8–18).

Another step towards even more specific questions came with post-processual archaeology<sup>5</sup> and its quest for individual agency (Insoll 2007; Diaz-Andreu et al. 2005; Graves-Brown et al. 1996; Rowlands 2007). Post-processual interpretation does not focus strictly on the economic aspects of identities construction, but on the *biographies* of objects (or people) and the active role of material culture in the construction of culture and identity (Kopitoff 1986; Appadurai 1986; Gosden 2005; Buchli 2002). Even though not necessarily related to trade and exchange, this approach, by assuming the active role of materiality and the different and changing meaning of objects within different contexts (past or present), takes interpretation even further away from the principles of market economy. Various active roles of material culture in identity construction are expected in cultural, political or economic contexts of the circulation, consumption and discarding of a particular object (its biography), where its different social meanings may be manifested, and archaeologically documented (Earle 2010, 211). Consequently, demand, supply and consumption are defined by culture, but at the same time their constant re-enactment within the culture produces change, repeatedly constructing new cultural patterns.

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<sup>5</sup> On the complex development of post-processual archaeology, see Olsen 2002, 30–39; Johnson 1999, 15–20; Trigger 2006.

Today, the work that continues the traditions of processual archaeology, but acknowledges criticisms arising from material culture studies, proposes the existence of two different levels of economic contexts — **political**<sup>6</sup> and **domestic** economy (Earle & Kristiansen 2010; Kristiansen 2010; 2011). Through the production, circulation and consumption of material culture, these separate but interrelated levels of activity were critical for the construction of various identities. In pre-modern societies, marked by the household food production (domestic economy), it was the relationship of inter-household reciprocity that provided the economic base and essential context for family-based social organization. Political economy, on the other hand, constituted a different level where the elites, through organizing communal activities and mobilizing the labour force, constructed their status identity within the redistributive economy. Therefore, long-distance trade and exchange, even though important politically, had minor importance for the group's subsistence (Tainter 1988, 24; cf. Trigger 2003, 279–314). At the same time, these activities may have been decisive for status identity construction and social stratification (D'Altroy & Hastorf 2002; Earle 1997).

Status identity is recognized by archaeologists as a very important social feature in the Balkans in the sixth and fifth centuries BC, an Early Iron Age period prior to the first appearance of “Hellenized settlements”.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, this type of identity is a quite neglected topic in the context of the emergence and existence of these settlements (e.g. Bouzek et al. 1996; 2002; 2007; I. Mikulčić 1999; Sokolovska 1986). Only few studies discuss a different type of “warrior aristocracy” which emerged during the fifth century, and assumed the most prominent social role in the fourth and third centuries BC. Archibald (1994; 1998) points to the new practice of hiring barbarian mercenaries for Classical and Hellenistic armies as the crucial factor in the process, arguing that this new aristocracy and their vibrant social role caused an “important change” in the fifth century BC. The active role of mercenaries allows a very plausible interpretation for the substantial

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<sup>6</sup> The term *political economy* has multiple meanings. It is a theory and a field of interdisciplinary studies in social sciences concerned with relations between politics and economy in the broadest sense. This approach in anthropology and archaeology becomes more prominent due to its theoretical position that allows the possibility of studying institutions and their emergence as related to the economy (mostly production) (Robotham 2005, 41). On the other hand, the term also refers to status-related **activity** which demonstrates the power and active role of individuals within society, especially within societies that show some level of “complexity” (e.g. D'Altroy & Hastorf 2002; Earle 1997; Earle & Kristiansen 2010).

<sup>7</sup> On Iron Age status identity and the case of “princely graves” in the Balkans, see Palavestra 1984; 1995; Babić 2002; 2004; 2005.

change in material culture termed “Hellenization”. The role of mercenaries in the Mediterranean became more prominent from Philip II’s campaign onwards (Trundle 2004; Miller 1984). In a very short time, this new context allowed considerable contact with the Mediterranean cultures and set the stage for the subsequent construction of new and many “Hellenized” status groups. Social communication of this new type of identity gave a boost to the consumption of Mediterranean material culture and, even more importantly, encouraged many changes on the regional level, manifested in the appearance of a similar material culture and, eventually, of numerous “Hellenized settlements”. The identity of active and retired soldiers was a hybrid social group, probably constructed as an amalgamation of the identity of the already existing Iron Age aristocracy and the acquired identity of Classical and Hellenistic mercenaries. This new elite was the most dynamic agency in recomposing identities in the Balkans. The “Hellenization” of these status groups had a profound effect on entire communities and their identities through the active role of material culture, creating the characteristic “Greek” or, what should probably be a more appropriate term, “Mediterranean” features in the Balkan hinterland.

Recent post-processual work approaches “Hellenization” as a research topic through studying the role of contacts with the Greek world in the construction of new identities, defined on different and culture-specific bases (Dietler 1997; cf. Papazoglu 1980). Bearing that in mind, dozens of similar settlements in the Balkan hinterland should not be perceived as “international” trade centres and Greek *emporion*, but as a manifestation of a changing form of social structures and identities characterized by different behaviour, way of life and socio-economic organization. These changes were manifested in the consumption of “Greek” material culture and the subsequent hybridization of Mediterranean and continental identities. This process of change, characteristic of the entire Mediterranean hinterland, constitutes the conscious construction of new identities with different meanings within different local contexts (Gosden 2004; 2007; Goff 2005; Hurst & Owen 2005; Hingley 2000). The appearance of a similar material culture, imports and numerous “Hellenized settlements” in a vast area of the Balkans speaks more of local socio-political interrelations than of direct contact with the Greeks. The appearance of “Hellenized” material culture should be seen as a culture-specific characteristic which neither “proves” Greek migrations and the critical role of “market economy”, nor widens the territory where the identity changes labelled as “Hellenicity” took place (cf. Hall 2002). It represents the construction of different local cultures in the Mediterranean hinterland on the fringes of the late Classical and early Hellenistic world. Contacts between the settlements and the consumption

of hybrid material culture are the outcome of political economy<sup>8</sup> of local elites — a process that began during the Bronze and Iron Ages and built complex status, regional and cultural interrelations (cf. Earle & Kristiansen 2010). The domestic sphere, on the other hand, probably remained local and mostly unaffected.

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<sup>8</sup> Peer Polity Interaction model, as a slightly older theoretical perspective, can still be appropriate for the interpretation of this sudden appearance of a similar material culture, Renfrew & Cherry 1986; Renfrew 1996).



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## The Image of Persephone on the Upper Moesian Limes A Contribution to the Study of Ancient Cults

**Abstract:** The ways in which Persephone was depicted in the Roman province of Upper Moesia may help understand the significance the goddess had for the inhabitants of the Upper Moesian limes, notably Viminacium and Ratiaria, where the discussed archaeological material was discovered.

**Keywords:** Persephone, Ceres, Dis Pater, Viminacium, Ratiaria, Upper Moesia, limes

Depictions of Persephone or inscriptions dedicated to her do not seem to have been very frequent in Upper Moesia or in the neighbouring provinces of the Roman Empire. The known Upper Moesian representations and an inscription dedicated to Dis Pater and Persephone all come from the Danubian area of the province, with the exception of a Kore intaglio whose find-spot is unknown.<sup>1</sup>

The Upper Moesian archaeological material shows the following representations: the Abduction/Rape of Persephone, Persephone and Pluto, Kore's Return from the Underworld, and a portrait of Persephone. So far, Kore and Persephone are not known to have been depicted together. It is interesting to note that some coins minted in the Balkans usually depict Persephone together with Demeter.<sup>2</sup>

The Abduction of Persephone, the central relief on the marble stele of Marcus Valerius Speratus from Viminacium (fig. 1) dated to the second

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<sup>1</sup> Studying the cults of Persephone and Demeter, A. Jovanović, *Ogledi iz antičkog kulta i ikonografije* (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet, 2007), 81, suggests that not only the depictions of the goddesses but also some artefacts recovered from graves should be related to their worship: wreaths of wheat ears, a ram's head, a snake, and bracelets in the form of a snake. This paper discusses only the figural representations of deities, and not individual elements of their symbolism precisely because of their complexity and their possible attribution to other members of the Greco-Roman pantheon.

<sup>2</sup> The two are shown together on coins minted at Odessus in the late second and early third century for Septimius Severus (N. Mushmov, *Antichnite moneti na Balkanskiat poluoströv i monetite na bulgarskite tsare*, Sofia 1912), no. 1595; Elagabalus, no. 1624; Alexander, no. 1628; and Gordian III Pius, no. 1658. The abduction of Persephone was depicted on coins minted at Alexandria, in Lydia and in Phrygia (*LIMC* IV, s.v. Hades: no. 100a – Alexandria, no. 102 – Lydia, and no. 103 – Hierapolis, Phrygia).

or the early third century,<sup>3</sup> reveals a complex iconographic type. In addition to the central couple, Hades and Persephone in a horse-drawn chariot, the composition characterized by narrativeness and attention to detail also includes Hermes and Athena.

Persephone and Hades/Pluto (Dis Pater) form a badly damaged sculptural group from Viminacium (figs. 2 and 2a) dated to the late second or early third century. The two figures, whose heads are now missing, are shown seated on a double throne, Pluto in a chimation, and Persephone in a chiton and mantle, with a still recognizable animal at their feet. The back-side of the throne is decorated with the letter "S". The group was first identified by Vulić as Persephone and Pluto with Cerberus lying at their feet.<sup>4</sup>

A third Upper Moesian representation occurs on a glass-paste intaglio (fig. 3) dated to the same period.<sup>5</sup> The orange intaglio in imitation of carnelian shows a standing figure of Kore/Persephone with her hair gathered up into a *nodus*, and holding a torch in each hand. Given its large size, the intaglio might have been fitted into a medallion or adorned some other object.

The last known depiction of Persephone is a gilt bronze relief decorating a mirror from Viminacium (fig. 4), also dated to the late second or early third century. Persephone, wearing a "melon" hairstyle, is shown in profile. The portrait, enclosed in a laurel wreath and facing a myrtle branch (*myrtus communis*), was identified as Persephone by D. Spasić-Djurić,<sup>6</sup> who

<sup>3</sup> J. Brunšmid, "Nadgrobní spomenik Marka Valerija Sperata iz Viminacija", *Vjesnik Hrvatskog arheološkog društva* 1 (1895), Pl. 1; *CIL* III, 12659; *RE* IV, 1901, col. 242; A. von Domaszewski, *Die Rangordnung des römischen Heeres* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1967), 34; A. Hekler, "Forschungen in Intercisa", *Jahrshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen institutes in Wien* 15 (1912), 184, fig. 123; *Actes VIIIe Congr.*, Pl. 90/4; H. Devijver, *Prosopographia militarium equestrum quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum* II (Leuven 1977), 831, no. 38; J. M. C. Toynbee, "Greek myth in Roman stone", *Latomus* 26 (1977), 402; M. Mirković, *Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure*, vol. II *Viminacium et Margum* (Belgrade: Faculté de Philosophie, 1986), 130–131, no. 110; S. Pilipović, "Divine rape as a funerary motif: the example of the stela from Viminacium", *Balcanica XXXII–XXXIII* (2003), 61–88, and, of the same author, *Mit i ljubav* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2007), cat. no. 1.

<sup>4</sup> The sculpture was identified as Persephone and Pluto by F. Ladek et al., "Antike Denkmaler in Serbien II", *Jahrshefte* 4 (1901), 122, no. 12; N. Vulić et al., "Antički spomenici u Srbiji", *Spomenik SKA XXXIX* (1903), 65, fig. 8; Mirković, *Inscriptions*, 137, fn. 6; uncertain identification: M. Tomović, *Roman Sculpture in Upper Moesia* (Belgrade: Archaeological Institute, 1993), 120, no. 209, Pl. 47/6–7; Lj. Zotović, "Das Paganismus in Viminacium", *Starinar* XLVII (1996), 128.

<sup>5</sup> N. Kuzmanović-Novović, "Antička gliptika na teritoriji Srbije" (PhD thesis, Belgrade University, 2005), cat. no. 167

<sup>6</sup> D. Spasić-Djurić, "Reljefna ogledala iz Viminacijuma", *Viminacium XII* (2001), 175.

studied the emergence of the myrtle motif and its connections with the goddess.

We should also mention two stone sculptures, one from Singidunum,<sup>7</sup> the other from Scupi,<sup>8</sup> which have tentatively been identified as Persephone or Demeter.<sup>9</sup> Ratiaria has yielded an inscription dedicated to Proserpine and Dis Pater by an *augustal*.<sup>10</sup>

Persephone, the Greek goddess of the underworld and nature, Demeter and Zeus' daughter and Hades' wife, was a central figure of the Eleusinian mysteries.<sup>11</sup> She reigned in her husband's kingdom, but she also managed to secure her return into the world of the living, where she spent a part of the year.<sup>12</sup> Since Hellenistic times, Hades had been associated with the inevitability of death, and Persephone with renewal. Proserpine, the Roman goddess of the underworld and the mistress of the world of the dead became assimilated to Persephone. On the advice of the Sybilline Books, Demeter, Kore and Dionysus began to be worshipped as early as 496 BC,

<sup>7</sup> Tomović, *Roman Sculpture*, cat. no. 50, suggests that it might be Ceres or Persephone, while S. Krunić, "Dve mermerne skulpture iz Singidunuma", *Godišnjak grada Beograda XLVII-XLVIII* (2003), 51–65, believes it to be a fragment of a funerary composition.

<sup>8</sup> Tomović, *Roman Sculpture*, cat. no. 52; V. Sokolovska, *Antička skulptura vo SR Makedonija* (Skopje: Muzej na Makedonija, 1988), no. 122

<sup>9</sup> To be mentioned as well are two iconographically complex votive emblems from Tekija, Serbia, which have also been variously interpreted. Drawing on Mano-Zisi, *Nalaz iz Tekije* (Belgrade: Narodni muzej, 1957), 37, and bearing in mind different interpretations of the deities depicted on them (Serapis, Dis Pater–Pluto and Heracles, Cybele, Magna Mater, Demeter etc.), A. Jovanović, "Prilog proučavanju srebrnih amblema iz Tekije", *Glasnik Srpskog arheološkog društva* 6 (1990), 29 ff, suggests that one might be Heracles in his syncretistic manifestation with Jupiter Heliopolitanus, and the other Persephone. On different interpretations of the emblems, and on the possibility that they depict Sabasius and Cybele, see S. Pilipović, *Kult Babusa na centralnom Balkanu* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2011), 122–124.

<sup>10</sup> *Diti Patri et Proser | pinae Regin(ae) | Q(uintus) Sab(inius) Vital(is) pr(imus) Augus | talium: CIL III, 12646; CIL III, 8081; E. Kalinka, Antike Denkmäler in Bulgarien* (Vienna: Holder, 1906), 131–132, no. 141; cf. M. Mirković, *Rimski gradovi na Dunavu u Gornjoj Meziji* (Belgrade: Arheološko društvo Jugoslavije, 1968), 137; R. Duthoy "Les Augustales", *ANRW* 16/2 (1978), 1254–1309. 1978, 1281, fn. 217.

<sup>11</sup> M. Djurić, *Istorija helenske etike* (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1976), 4 ff.

<sup>12</sup> C. G. Jung & C. Kerényi, *Essays on a Science of Mythology* (Princeton University Press, 1973), 109. A third-century-BC inscription praises a certain Erina as a new Kore, see *Anthologia Palatina* VII, 13; cf. also R. Turcan, *Messages d'outre-tombe: l'iconographie des sarcophages romains* (Paris: De Boccard, 1999), 12. For the symbolism of the abduction of Persephone, with an overview of the earlier literature, see Pilipović, *Mit i ljubav*, 28–34, 62–67.

and subsequently other cults were also introduced, such as those of the Dioscuri, Apollo, Asclepius, etc.<sup>13</sup> The exact mechanism of transcribing Greek cults into Roman cultural contexts is difficult to unravel, because of the continued presence of earlier autochthonous cults. At times, it was elements of these earlier cults that led to innovative amalgamations. For example, Ceres, the ancient Italic deity associated with the plebs and worshipped from the fifth century BC, came in the mid-third century BC in contact with another cult, known to the Romans as the “Greek cult” of Ceres.<sup>14</sup> Rituals in which women now came to play an important role began to spread from southern Italy, and groups of matrons and young girls participating in processions, singing and offering sacrifices to Ceres and Proserpine, mother and her young daughter, were mentioned for the first time.<sup>15</sup> Apart from the Vestal virgins, who were an exception to many a rule of Roman society, women had not played any significant role in Roman public worship. Proserpine retained a role in the further evolution of worship, and played it together with Dis Pater, who became the third member of a mythic triad (Proserpine/Daughter, Dis Pater/King of the Underworld, and Ceres/Mother). This in fact was a prelude to a new type of secular games. As recorded by Varro in 249, at the time of the First Punic War, Dis Pater was worshipped in Tarentum together with Proserpine (*Ludi Tarentini*). The games in honour of the two deities held in Tarentum subsequently grew into a celebration marking the end of a *saeculum* (*Ludi Saeculares*).<sup>16</sup> The cult of Dis Pater saw a revival towards the end of the pagan era.

Persephone was frequently depicted in the visual arts where, regardless of her various iconographic types, she always stood as a symbol of triumph over death and an allegory of human fate. Persephone's fate offered the hope of rebirth to the mortals facing the darkness of the grave.<sup>17</sup> She embodied a double relationship: as a daughter, with her mother, she symbolized life, and as Hades' wife, death.<sup>18</sup> Apart from this basic meaning, her figure may have had a more concrete meaning, as an allegory of women's fate.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>13</sup> G. Foot Moore, *Storia delle religioni* (Bari: Laterza, 1929), 619.

<sup>14</sup> Beard et al., *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 70, fn. 225.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. fn. 227.

<sup>16</sup> According to Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* III, 18, it was a nocturnal celebration held around an altar in Tarentum.

<sup>17</sup> F. Cumont, *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1942), 95–97.

<sup>18</sup> Jung & Kerényi, *Essays*, 108.

<sup>19</sup> The borders of Hades' realm could have functioned as a metaphor for the border between girlhood and womanhood. As the ruler of the world of the dead, Hades could

As we have seen above, the known Upper Moesian representations of Persephone encompass the Abduction of Persephone, Persephone and Pluto, Kore's Return from the Underworld, and a portrait. Given that the depictions are done in different media, their analogies should be looked at in a broader culturological framework. The Abduction of Persephone from the stele of Marcus Valerius Speratus has no closer analogies in Upper Moesia or even in the neighbouring provinces. Examples of the scene can be found in distant parts of the Empire: in Rome — on some sarcophagi;<sup>20</sup> in a black and white mosaic from the cemetery under the church of St Peter;<sup>21</sup> among the murals decorating the tomb of the Nasonii<sup>22</sup> — and in the paintings adorning tombs in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria.<sup>23</sup> The Viminacium scene, of a complex iconography and stylistic richness, is an exquisite work of art with its skilfully carved figures, harmony in composition and wealth of detail. Its realist rendition may perhaps be compared only with the Upper Moesian relief of Helen and Menelaus from the stele of Gaius Cornelius Rufus.<sup>24</sup> The stele itself finds analogies in the best examples of funerary art from the provinces of Noricum and Pannonia.<sup>25</sup>

Unlike the stele, the sculptural group of Persephone and Pluto from Viminacium is a piece of provincial art. Its closest artistic analogy is a relief from Ostia, now in the Vatican Museums, which also shows the two seated on a double throne with Cerberus at their feet,<sup>26</sup> but which contains two

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have been an allusion to the earthly husband, and the abduction of the bride, to death, see Turcan, *Messages*, 47; C. Sourvinou-Inwood, "The young abductor of the Locrian pinakes", *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 20 (1987), 139; E. Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 131–132. For arguments in support of this interpretation found in epitaphs and the visual arts, see Cumont, *Recherches*, 102; *LIMC* IV, s. v. Pluto, no. 31; Pilipović, *Mit i ljubav*, 28–34, 62–67.

<sup>20</sup> H. Sichterman & G. Koch, *Griechische Mythen auf römischen Sarkophagen* (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1975), nos. 59–61.

<sup>21</sup> *LIMC* IV, s. v. Hades, fig. 76b.

<sup>22</sup> E. Winsor Leach, "G. P. Bellori and the Sepolcro dei nasonii Writing a 'Poets' Tomb", in A. Barbet, ed. *La peinture funéraire antique* (Paris: Ed. Errances, 2001), 69.

<sup>23</sup> Western Hermopolis in Egypt, Tyre in Lebanon, and Massayif in Syria; see M.-T. Olszewski, "La langage symbolique dans la décoration à scènes mythologiques et son sens dans les tombes peintes de l'Orient romain. Nouvelle approche", in Barbet, ed. *La peinture funéraire*, Pls. 27/5, 27/6 and 28/7.

<sup>24</sup> Mirković, *Inscriptions*, no. 73.

<sup>25</sup> The complex architecture of the stele and its relief decoration find their closest analogies in the funerary art of Noricum and both Pannonias; see Pilipović, "Divine rape", 73 ff, as well as her *Mit i ljubav*, 50, 109–110, and "La scena di caccia: motive di decorazione delle stele funerary della Moesia Superior", *Starinar* LVI (2008), 337–352.

<sup>26</sup> *LIMC* IV, s. v. Pluto, no. 54.

more figures. Geographically nearer to the Viminacium sculpture is a relief from Konstanza, Romania, now in Bucharest, with waist-length portraits of Persephone and Pluto.<sup>27</sup> The central couple used to be flanked by two figures, of which the one on the left side is damaged beyond recognition, while the other may be identified as Demeter.

The glass-paste intaglio, whose find-spot is unknown, shows the classical type, i.e. the standing figure of Kore/Persephone holding a lit torch in each hand. This iconographic type had been in use since Hellenistic times, either independently or incorporated into various compositions.<sup>28</sup>

The Viminacium mirror with the representation of Persephone and a myrtle branch may find analogies in Thrace, but especially in North Africa and Asia Minor, where many similar relief mirrors come from. Persephone was depicted on them with a laurel or olive branch, with flowers reminiscent of poppies, or with a laurel wreath and wheat ears.<sup>29</sup> Myrtle, however, was a plant dedicated to Persephone and thus associated with the world of the dead.<sup>30</sup> The question of provenance of this particular mirror cannot be easily resolved. It could have been imported from the abovementioned regions, but it could also have been crafted in some of the Viminacium workshops. The other precious-metal mirrors made using the same technique discovered at Viminacium are decorated with the reliefs of Dionysus and Ariadne, Venus and the Three Graces, Venus and Amor, and Apollo.<sup>31</sup>

The inscription from Ratiaria dedicated to Proserpine and Dis Pater is the only such discovered in the province. The epithet *Regina* conferred upon the goddess is a reminiscence of the Orphic hymn that describes Persephone as the queen of the underworld and the keeper of its gate in the depths of the earth.<sup>32</sup> In Upper Moesia, and elsewhere, this epithet was usually associated with Juno.<sup>33</sup> The cultic association of Dis Pater and Proserpine has also been attested in inscriptions from Napoca and Sarmisegetuza

<sup>27</sup> *LIMC* IV, s. v. Pluto, no. 1a. Cf. G. Bordenache, "Temi e motivi della plastica funeraria d'età romana nella Moesia Inferior", *Dacia* VIII (1964), 171, no. 10.

<sup>28</sup> Two Hellenistic reliefs from the National Museum of Athens show Persephone holding a torch in each hand, see G. Günther, "Persephone", in *LIMC* IX, cat. nos. 22 and 71.

<sup>29</sup> G. Zahlhaas, *Römische Reliefspiegel* (Kallmünz 1975), cat. nos. 5–7, 16–17.

<sup>30</sup> M. Blech, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen*. Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 38 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1982), 94 ff.

<sup>31</sup> Spasić-Djurić, "Reljefna ogledala", 161 ff.

<sup>32</sup> Orph., *Hymn in Proserp.*, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> *IMS* II, 25; *IMS* IV, 24; *IMS* IV, 25; *IMS* VI, 8; *IMS* VI, 9; *IMS* VI, 213; *AE* 1992, 1500; *ILJug* 1393; *ILJug* 1427.



in Dacia,<sup>34</sup> from Carnuntum in Upper Pannonia,<sup>35</sup> and in the province of Raetia.<sup>36</sup> As for the inscriptions dedicated to Persephone and Pluto, there is one from Raetia,<sup>37</sup> two from Lower Germania,<sup>38</sup> and two from Lower Moesia.<sup>39</sup> Mirković even suggests that the votive monument bearing the dedicatory inscription from Ratiaria might have stood in a shrine of the two deities.<sup>40</sup>

The question as to who the worshippers of Persephone on the Upper Moesian limes might have been is not easy to answer, given the scantiness and heterogeneity of the archaeological material. The most concrete information is provided by the inscription on the stele with the relief of the Abduction of Persephone. Lucia Aphrodisia set up the stele to herself and her husband, M. Valerius Speratus, during their lifetime. Marcus Valerius was a veteran of Legion VII *Claudia*. Honourably discharged from the army, he served as a decurion of the municipium of Viminacium, and then re-entered military service, and as prefect of the Cohort I *Aquetanorum*, participated in a campaign against Britain. Marcus Speratus was probably a Romanized inhabitant of Upper Moesia, possibly originally from a Celtic-inhabited area — Upper Moesia, Pannonia or Noricum.<sup>41</sup> His wife bore a non-imperial gentile name, which suggests that she probably came from a family which had moved to Upper Moesia and Viminacium from some other part of the Empire.<sup>42</sup> The sculpture of Persephone and Pluto provides no clue as to who commissioned or owned it. Likewise, little can be said about the person who owned the Kore/Persephone intaglio, probably worn as a medallion. Even though the fact that the adornment was made of glass paste in imitation of carnelian does not add to its value, its size and quality carving suggest that

<sup>34</sup> Napoca: *CIL* III, 7656; Sarmisegetuza: *IDR* 3, 2, 199, fig. 160.

<sup>35</sup> *AE* 1988, 914.

<sup>36</sup> *CIL* III, 11923.

<sup>37</sup> *CIL* III, 5796.

<sup>38</sup> *AE* 1939, p. 74 s. n. 235.

<sup>39</sup> For one, see *ILBulg* 140, Pl. 25, 140, and for the other, *ILBulg* 39; Pl. 9, 39 (B); Jovanović, *Ogledi*, 66, draws attention to the existence in the Middle Danube and Dacia of monuments showing Dis Pater, as well as to his association with Persephone in that region, and suggests that the finds in the Danube area of Lower Pannonia (at Surčin, Batajnica, Zemun and Židovar) of fibulae in the form of a double, Gallic, mallet, an attribute of Dis Pater, indicate that his worship was widespread in the region.

<sup>40</sup> Mirković, *Rimski gradovi*, 137.

<sup>41</sup> S. Ferjančić, *Naseljavanje legijskih veterana u balkanskim provincijama* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2002), 162 ff, no. 367. Cf. Mirković, *Rimski gradovi*, 58 ff, no. 110.

<sup>42</sup> Ferjančić, *Naseljavanje*, 164.



it was not at all inexpensive, and allow us to presume that its owner was a well-to-do woman. To the same social class of Viminacium must have belonged the female owner of the relief mirror, considering the costly material and the use of the technique of casting and matrix hammering. The dedicant of the inscription from Ratiaria was an augustal.

It appears from the above that Persephone was not worshipped in association with Ceres in Upper Moesia, even though it is in the Danubian part of the province that the cults of both have been attested most convincingly. The provenance of two inscriptions dedicated to Ceres which were reused for the medieval walls of Smederevo Fortress<sup>43</sup> is still a matter of debate, and some suggest that they might have been brought from Viminacium.<sup>44</sup> There is also an inscription dedicated to Ceres from Ratiaria.<sup>45</sup> The Belgrade City Museum has in its collections a bronze statuette of Ceres from an unknown site,<sup>46</sup> and the goddess is also identifiable in three intaglios (from Guberevac, Kostolac, and an unknown site respectively).<sup>47</sup> To be mentioned again are two sculptures inconclusively identified as Persephone or Demeter, one from Singidunum, the other from Scupi.<sup>48</sup> A pseudo-cameo casting mould, discovered at Ravna, has also been tentatively identified as Domitia or Demeter.<sup>49</sup>

The Upper Moesian representations of Persephone come from the area of the Empire's Danube frontier, namely the area of the province that saw the earliest and fullest process of Romanization as a result of the fact that sections of the road through the barely passable Iron Gates Gorge had been completed as early as the 30s AD, and that permanent military camps were set up soon.<sup>50</sup> Concurrent settlement from other parts of the Empire,

<sup>43</sup> *IMS* II, 3 and *IMS* II, 4.

<sup>44</sup> In the medieval period the ruins of Viminacium served as a source of building material. E.g. many gravestones from the cemeteries of larger nearby settlements such as Viminacium, Margum and Aureus Mons were reused for the walls of medieval Smederevo, see V. Kondić, "Sepulkralni spomenici sa teritorije rimske provincije Gornje Mezije" (PhD thesis, Belgrade University, 1965), 268; Mirković, *Rimski gradovi*, 98.

<sup>45</sup> *CIL* III, 8085.

<sup>46</sup> B. Petrović, "Rimska božanstva", in *Antička bronza Singidunuma*, ed. S. Krnić (Belgrade: Muzej grada Beograda, 1997), 35, cat. no. 9.

<sup>47</sup> Kuzmanović-Novović, "Antička gliptika", cat. no. 164-166.

<sup>48</sup> Tomović, *Roman Sculpture*, cat. nos. 50 and 52.

<sup>49</sup> A. Jovanović, "Prilozi proučavanju antičkih kultova u Gornjoj Meziji", *Zbornik Narodnog muzeja Niša* 3-4 (1987), 82-84.

<sup>50</sup> During the six centuries of Roman and early Byzantine domination in the Balkans these military settlements became one of the Empire's vital lines of defence, see Mirković, *Rimski gradovi*, 21 ff; P. Petrović, "Rimski put u Djerdapu", *Starinar* XXXVII (1986), 41-55.

however, produced an ethnic mix-up,<sup>51</sup> which gave rise to various combinations of different cultural traditions, such as Roman, Hellenistic, Thracian, oriental and native. At the same time, the area of the Upper Moesian limes saw the introduction of Greek and Roman cults. More precisely, at the time the representations of Persephone and inscriptions dedicated to her appeared for the first time there, Greek and Roman religions had already been very much identified with one another, i.e. the principal deities of the Roman pantheon were equated with the Greek.<sup>52</sup> Roman monuments with themes from Greek mythology, such as the stele of Marcus Valerius Speratus, reflect the process of Romanization combined with a revival of Greek themes and stylistic models.<sup>53</sup> This particular monument was created in the tradition of the best works of funerary art of Noricum and Pannonia, which developed under the influence of Aquileia. On the other hand, influences from the eastern provinces of the Empire, well-known for their rich tradition of metalwork, are observable in the relief mirror of high workmanship.<sup>54</sup>

The contexts in which the representations of Persephone occur are heterogeneous. Persephone from the stele of Marcus Valerius Speratus expressed a clear funerary context. Here the Greek myth was placed in a new sepulchral context, acquired a specific meaning and, thus transformed, expressed new Roman ideas. A funerary aspect is present in the scene of the Return from the Underworld on the glass-paste intaglio,<sup>55</sup> an expression of intimate beliefs of the woman who probably wore the medallion,<sup>56</sup> and it is

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<sup>51</sup> Inscriptions attest to the presence of Illyrian, Thracian and Celtic names, but they also provide evidence for names of Gallic, Italic, Macedonian, Greek and Syrian origin, see A. Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1974), 70, 124; Mirković, *Inscriptions*, 58–59.

<sup>52</sup> For the finds of Archaic Greek products on central-Balkan sites, including the large amount of jewellery and luxury vessels discovered at Novi Pazar, see S. Babić, *Poglavarsvo i polis* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2004).

<sup>53</sup> R. Turcan, “Bilan et perspectives”, in Section “Mito greco nell’arte romana”, *Atti del IX Congresso della F.I.E.C.* (Pisa 1989), *Studi italiani di filologia classica* 10 (1992), 1087–1102.

<sup>54</sup> G. Karović, “Srebrno ogledalo sa reljefnom predstavom iz Viminacijuma”, in *Radionice i kovnice srebra. Silver Workshops and Mints*, eds. I. Popović et al. (Belgrade: National Museum, 1995), 223.

<sup>55</sup> The importance of Persephone’s role as a symbol of death is illustrated by a well-known anecdote from Nero’s life (Suetonius, *Nero* 46, 4): shortly before his death, Nero summoned haruspices, and on that occasion, Sporus, his favourite, presented him with a ring whose gemstone was carved with the abduction of Persephone.

<sup>56</sup> On intaglio signet-rings and amulets (*amuletum*), and on intaglios as adornments, see H. B. Walters, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems and Cameos, Greek, Etruscan and Roman, in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1926), 1 ff.

emphasized in the mirror with Persephone's portrait and a myrtle branch, a plant associated with the world of the dead. In the ancient world, the dead and their tombs were decorated with myrtle, golden myrtle wreaths were laid into graves, and the plant was also a symbol of the Eleusinian mysteries.<sup>57</sup> Persephone and Pluto enthroned in the sculpture from Viminacium were also deities of the underworld. On the other hand, Mirković puts forth another possible interpretation of the sculpture: Persephone may have played the role of an agrarian goddess, like Ceres, the Earth Mother, Liber, and Libera and Silvanus.<sup>58</sup> Mirković supports her interpretation by the fact that it was that part of the Danube frontier, notably the plains on the western side of the Danube and Ratiaria on its eastern bank, that provided propitious conditions for agriculture, and that it is there that the worship of agrarian deities has been attested.

Briefly, the entire known material comes from the area of the Upper Moesian limes, i.e. from Viminacium and Ratiaria, and is roughly dated to the late second and early third century. In that area, Persephone was associated with Hades/Pluto and Dis Pater, and not with her mother, Demeter/Ceres. The artefacts suggest that the worshippers of Persephone were members of well-to-do classes. This seems to be a reliable conclusion for the dedicants of the marble stele and the owner of the relief mirror, and possibly also for the owner of the glass-paste intaglio. The representations of Persephone from Viminacium and the inscription from Ratiaria may be seen as an expression of the belief in the afterlife and in the deities of the underworld, even though the agrarian aspect of the goddess should not be overruled either. The fact that the archaeological record contains scanty evidence of the cult of Persephone in the Balkan provinces of the Empire confers greater weight upon the representations and inscriptions discovered in the area of the Upper Moesian Danube limes.

*UDC 904-03(497.11):73.04(37)*  
*255-5 Persephone*

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<sup>57</sup> C. Eichberger et al., "Trees and shrubs on Classical Greek vases", *Boccone* 21 (2007), 121-123.

<sup>58</sup> Mirković, *Inscriptions*, 37.



Fig. 1 *Abduction of Persephone*, marble relief from the stele of Marcus Valerius Speratus, Viminacium (photo I. Stanić)



Fig. 2 *Persephone and Pluto*, marble, Viminacium (detail)

Fig. 2 *Persephone and Pluto*, marble, Viminacium (photo I. Stanić)

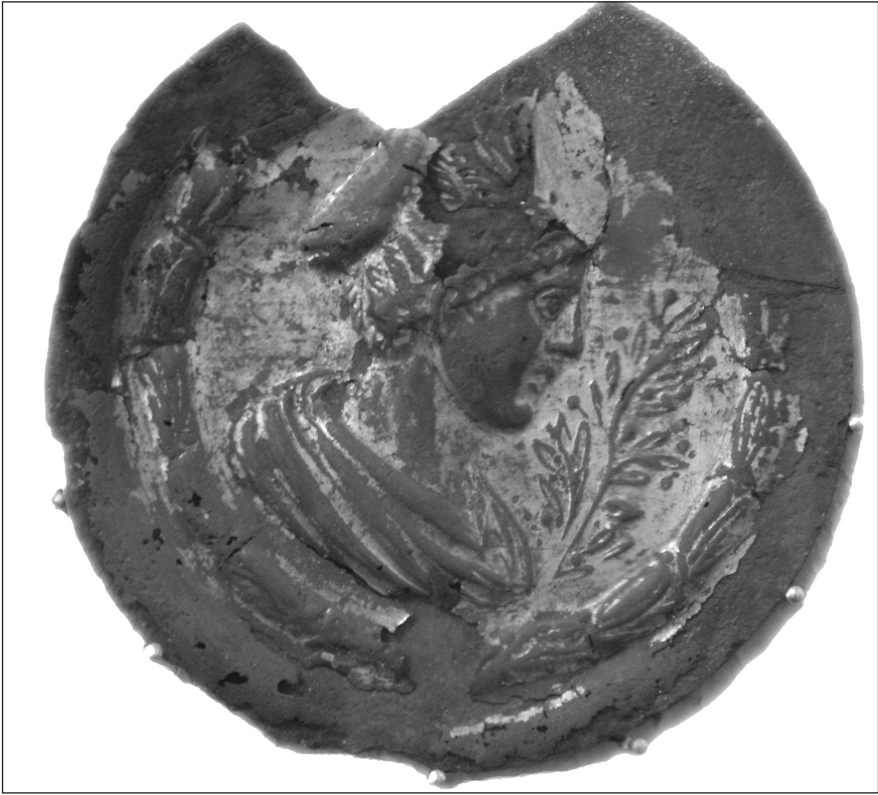


Fig. 3 *Persephone*, glass paste intaglio (photo National Museum, Belgrade)



Fig. 4 *Persephone*, relief mirror  
made from precious metals,  
Viminacium  
(photo I. Stanić)



## Abbreviations

<i>AE</i>	<i>L'Année épigraphique</i> , Paris
<i>Actes VIIIe Congr.</i>	<i>Actes du VIIIe Congrès International d'Archéologie Classique</i> 1963, 1965
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
<i>IDR</i>	<i>Inscriptiile Daciae Romanae (Dacia Superior)</i> III/1–III/4, Bucharest 1977–1988
<i>ILJug</i>	A. et J. Šašel, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae quae in Iugoslavia inter annos MCMXL et inter annos MCMLX et inter annos MCMLX et MCMLXX et inter annos MCMII et MCMXL repertae et editae sunt</i> , Ljubljana 1963, 1978, 1986
<i>IMS</i>	<i>Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure</i> , I, II, III/2, IV, VI, Belgrade 1976–1995
<i>ILBulg</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae in Bulgaria repertae</i> , Sofia
<i>LIMC</i>	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> , I–VIII, Zurich, Munich, Düsseldorf 1981–1997; Supplement IX, Düsseldorf 2009
<i>RE</i>	A. Pauly & G. Wissowa, <i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>

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## Medieval Concerns for Soul Salvation Testamentary Bequests to the Franciscan Order in Kotor (Cattaro) 1326–1337

**Abstract:** Analysis of the testamentary bequests that Kotor citizens made to the Franciscans *ad pias causas* between 1326 and 1337 shows that the most common type was that of pecuniary bequests for saying masses *pro remedio animae*. The Franciscan played a prominent role in the shaping of devotional practices of the faithful and acted as their closest helpers through performing commemorative rites for the salvation of the soul after death.

**Keywords:** wills, Franciscans, Kotor (Cattaro), bequests *ad pias causas*

In the middle ages the last will and testament was a notarial-judicial document stating the testator's last will concerning the disposal of his or her property after death, which included pious and other bequests.<sup>1</sup> The practice of putting wills down in writing and certifying them notariially began to spread with the rise of urban communities and the accompanying development of communal institutions, different types of commerce and business, and the urban way of life at large in the high and late middle ages. In the eastern Adriatic communes, the practice, accepted by persons from all social strata, becomes continually traceable from the second half of the thirteenth

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<sup>1</sup> Wills have recently been given a more important place in the study of the past, and researchers increasingly face challenges arising from their systematic analysis and comparison. For a detailed critical overview of the relevant literature, see Ž. Ladić, "Oporučni legati pro anima i ad pias causas u europskoj historiografiji. Usporedba s oporukama dalmatinskih komuna", *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 17 (2000), 17–29. For wills as a source for a variety of research topics, see an overview by J. Murray, "Kinship and Friendship: The Perception of Family by Clergy and Laity in Late Medieval London", *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 20/3 (Autumn 1988), 369–385. To be set apart is the work of Samuel K. Cohn Jr., which is based on the analysis of wills in medieval Italian cities, esp. his *Death and Property in Siena, 1205–1800. Strategies for the Afterlife* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988); "Le ultime volontà: famiglia, donne e peste nera nell'Italia centrale", *Studi Storici* 32/4 (Oct.-Dec. 1991), 859–875; and *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death. Six Renaissance Cities in Central Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

century, prominently from the first half of the fourteenth.<sup>2</sup> The practice is also observable in Kotor, a coastal town in the Gulf of Kotor (modern Montenegro), where even the earliest surviving corpus of documents produced by the commune's notaries (1326–37) contains wills.<sup>3</sup> The corpus — dating from the period when Kotor formed part of the Serbian realm (1185–1371) ruled by the Nemanjić dynasty — has been published and it includes seventy-four wills (forty by women and thirty-four by men).<sup>4</sup>

The interest in studying the practice of making testamentary bequests to the Franciscans as a separate topic, based on the documentary material created in Kotor between 1326 and 1337, has arisen for two reasons. One is the overall influence of the mendicant orders as a result of the widening inclusion of the laity in various aspects of religious life and, consequently, their influence on the everyday life of the faithful in high and late medieval cities. These general changes in Western Christian beliefs and practices, whose main agents were the mendicant orders, played an important role in introducing the almost mandatory practice of will writing among all social strata. The other is the local situation, i.e. the role of the Franciscan Order

<sup>2</sup> On the genesis and distinctive features of the wills drawn up in the communes in Dalmatia, see N. Klaić, "Problem najstarije dalmatinske privatne isprave", *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 13 (1971), 57–74; Z. Janeković Römer, "Na razmedji ovog i onog svijeta. Prožimanje pojavnog i transcendentnog u dubrovačkim oporukama kasnoga srednjeg vijeka", *Otium* 2 (1994), 3–15; Z. Ladić, "Legati kasnosrednjovjekovnih dalmatinskih oporučitelja kao izvor za proučavanje nekih oblika svakodnevnog života i materijalne culture", *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 21 (2003), 1–28; M. Karbić & Z. Ladić, "Oporuke stanovnika grada Trogira u arhivu HAZU", *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti Hazu u Zadru* 43 (2001), 161–254; D. Romano, "I mercanti Ragusei e le crociate del tardo medioevo. Finanziamenti per la guerra e lasciti pro anima: ...ad pasagium turchorum seu saracenorum, et aliud super patarenos Bosnie", *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 38/2 (2008), 867–883; G. Ravančić, "Oporuke, oporučitelji i primatelji oporučnih legata u Dubrovniku s kraja trinaestoga i u prvoj polovici četrnaestog stoljeća", *Povijesni prilozi* 40 (2011), 97–120.

<sup>3</sup> On the origin and evolution of notary practice in Kotor, see N. Fejić, "Kotorska kancelarija u srednjem veku", *Istorijski časopis* 27 (1980), 5–62; and his "Isprave kotorskih notara iz XV stoljeća", *Miscellanea* 8 (1980), 9–90; N. Bogojević Gluščević, "Forme testamenta u srednjovjekovnom kotorskom pravu", *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta u Podgorici* 8 (1982), 46–58; M. Antonović, *Grad i župa u Zetskom primorju i severnoj Albaniji u XIV i XV veku* (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik & Istorijski institut SANU, 2003); Dj. Bubalo, *Srpski nomici* (Belgrade: Vizantološki institut SANU, 2004), *passim*; N. Bogojević Gluščević, "Porijeklo i ustanovljenje notarske službe u srednjovjekovnim istočnojadranskim gradovima", *Boka* 27 (2007), 7–15.

<sup>4</sup> *Monumenta Catarensis. Kotorski spomenici. Prva knjiga kotorskih notara od god. 1326–1335* [hereafter MC I], ed. A. Mayer (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1951), 5–11; *Kotorski spomenici. Druga knjiga kotorskih notara god. 1329, 1332–1337* [hereafter MC II], ed. A. Mayer (Zagreb 1981).

in shaping the faith and many other aspects of public and private life in the medieval commune of Kotor.

The analysis of the testamentary bequests to the Franciscan Order made in the 1320s and 1330s provides a singular insight into how widely and in what ways the Franciscans were accepted and involved in the religious life of Kotor. This stems from the very nature of wills as distinctive historical sources. The distinctiveness is reflected in the dual character of the will. Namely, it is a written source communicating a person's private will, but communicating it in the official and public form of a notarized document. Private and public (communal) elements are usually closely intertwined, which causes difficulties in studying the private and public spheres if the two are looked at in isolation from one another. The fact that the spheres elude clear demarcation necessarily directs the methodological approach towards viewing wills as a source for understanding different but interconnected and interdependent structures of society. It therefore seems much more appropriate to look at the wishes of a person as stated in his or her will from the perspective of the prevailing social and especially religious trends in the period under study. This intertwining of private wishes and emotions of persons facing looming death with the requirements placed on them by the Church is particularly observable in the portions of the wills relating to charitable, commemorative, funerary and liturgical bequests or, in other words, all bequests made *ad pias causas*, for the salvation of the testator's soul. On the soul's road to salvation after death,<sup>5</sup> as it was mapped out by the Church, it was members of the mendicant orders, Franciscans and Dominicans, who offered themselves to the faithful as their closest helpers.

From their founding in the first half of the thirteenth century, the mendicant orders centred their activities on providing spiritual guidance and on instilling piety in the faithful in the cities, which Christian teaching saw as places where people were most easily led into sin. In late medieval cities, the Franciscans and Dominicans assumed the role of spiritual guides and assistants. Fostering a relationship of closeness and friendship with believing families, they were in a position to exert an immediate influence on their everyday life, moral values and devotional practices. Apart from

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<sup>5</sup> J. de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, vol. 2 (Princeton University Press, 1993), 282, 284, cites four ways in which the souls of the dead may be delivered from the torments of purgatory: through prayers of believers and friends; almsgiving; masses; and fasting. Through offerings and prayers for them, the souls of the dead are provided some comfort and relief in purgatory. The *Legenda aurea* speaks of a connection between the living and the dead and of the hopes the testators place in the power of prayer. This connection grew stronger and was particularly upheld within confraternities and families, while purgatory became an instrument of the Church's power and a source of its income, see, e.g. Janeković Römer, "Na razmedji", 3–15.

preaching, which reached broader publics, the Franciscans and Dominicans also encouraged confession, thereby building a personal and intimate relationship with their clients.<sup>6</sup>

The change in devotional practices, which had been largely brought about by the Franciscans and Dominicans, was reflected in testamentary practices as well. Moreover, the adoption of the concept of purgatory gave rise to essential changes in *post mortem* practices, making bequests *ad pias causas* an obligatory part of a will. The urban way of life, commerce and banking, inevitably entailed a greater involvement of people in the material world, which not infrequently meant circumventing the teachings of the church and departing from the established Christian virtues; hence the popularity of the practice of pecuniary bequests, and religious vows, to ensure absolution and atonement on the Day of Judgment. Known as “legacy hunters” in the late middle ages, the mendicant orders encouraged and spread the belief in purgatory. Their ideal of poverty made them quite agreeable to most inhabitants of medieval cities. The Franciscans acted as their guides in their preparations for a good death, providing comfort and reassurance that their bequest, however small, would help deliver their souls from the torments of purgatory.<sup>7</sup>

From the second half of the thirteenth century, the written will, once a prerogative of the elite, became accepted by all social strata. On the other hand, the very form and contents of the will, as well as the beneficiaries of pious bequests, underwent many changes. The most conspicuous change was the multiplication of bequests *ad pias causas*. Before these changes, and the “democratization” of the practice of will writing, the usual bequest for the salvation of the soul was a substantial gift of money or a piece of immovable property (land and buildings) bequeathed by members of the nobility to the church, Benedictine monasteries or the highest church ranks. The adoption of will writing by all, even the poorest social strata led to a profound change in the number, type and value of bequests *pro remedio animae*. Although the middle and lower classes did not abandon the practice of bequeathing gifts of money, land and buildings for soul salvation, various types of smaller bequests *ad pias causas*, such as clothes, textiles, furniture, jewellery or books, became increasingly frequent. Also, as a result of changes in devotional practices brought about by the activity of the mendicant or-

<sup>6</sup> On the role of the Franciscan Order in urban environments and its influence on major trends in the devotional practice of the Western Church, see R. N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215 – c. 1515* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

<sup>7</sup> J. Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981), after the Serbian edition: Ž. Le Gof, *Nastanak čistilišta* (Sremski Karlovci & Novi Sad: Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, 1992), 235–236, 299, and *passim*.

ders, the poor, widows and the sick increasingly became beneficiaries of charitable bequests, and so were poor girls, for whom a dowry (or a part of it) was provided. At the same time, testamentary gifts to the Franciscans and Dominicans, as promoters of the new teaching, were also growing in number.<sup>8</sup>

A source for the role of Friars Minor in testamentary practices in the eastern Adriatic communes is the encyclical of Pope Alexander IV addressed in 1256 to the archbishops of Bar, Dubrovnik, Split and Zadar, the bishops of Kotor, Budva, and Scutari, and all other ecclesiastical authorities in Dalmatia and Sclavonia, instructing them how to treat the Friars Minor. The Franciscans sent to those parts had reported to the Pope on the increasingly frequent practice of bequeathing goods to the Order, such as liturgical books, vestments and objects, and emphasized that the believers on their deathbed expected that God would reward such acts of charity. The papal intervention was caused by the fact that the ecclesiastical authorities in the listed dioceses were in the habit of taking a half, a third or a fourth of the bequeathed goods as a *portionis canonice*. Describing this habit as utterly inhuman and injurious to the Franciscans, given that they live a life of utmost poverty and depend on charity, the encyclical warns that the faithful intent on bequeathing goods to the Franciscans are greatly upset by this practice, and not only strictly forbids it, but also orders the authorities to set apart a portion of church goods for the Franciscans so as to relieve their life of poverty.<sup>9</sup> From their arrival in Kotor from Dubrovnik in 1265, the Franciscans relentlessly spread their teaching, eliciting great respect and trust from the faithful. The role that the Order had in Kotor was so significant that a comprehensive insight into it is frequently central to understanding the history of the Bishopric of Kotor and late medieval Kotor society in general.<sup>10</sup> The

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<sup>8</sup> On changes in the form and contents of wills, such as the emergence of new types of bequests *pro anima* and *ad pias causas* as a result of the “democratization” of the practice of will writing and “social Christianity”, based on a detailed analysis of wills from several medieval Dalmatian communes, see Z. Ladić, “O nekim oblicima brige za siromašne i marginalne pojedince i grupe u dalmatinskim komunama u kasnom srednjem vijeku”, *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 20 (2002), 1–28, as well as his “Legati”.

<sup>9</sup> The document, kept at the Vatican Archives, is available in *Arhiepiskopija barska*, vol. IV/1 of *Monumenta Montenegrina*, ed. V. D. Nikčević (Podgorica: Istorijiski institut Crne Gore, 2001), 373.

<sup>10</sup> Bogdan and Picineg, sons of Dragon de Sclepo, donated to the Friars Minor, who had come to Kotor from Dubrovnik in 1265, a house outside the city walls, cf. I. Stjepčević, *Katedrala sv. Tripuna u Kotoru* (Split 1938), 62. The first Franciscan monastery, with a church dedicated to St Francis, was built in 1288, probably on the same site. Sources refer to Queen Helen of Anjou, wife of King Stefan Uroš I of Serbia, as its founder. The



influence of the Franciscans on testamentary practices between 1326 and 1337 was reflected in the contents of the wills. In keeping with the general trend in testamentary practices, these wills reveal an increasing number of individual bequests. The wills of members of all social strata itemized several smaller bequests. Proportionate to their wealth, the bequests of nobles and well-to-do citizens were usually more numerous and had greater monetary value than those bequeathed by members of the middle and lower classes. By way of illustration, we shall look at the wills of the *Glauacti* (Glavati) brothers, *Nicolaus* (Nikola) and *Johannes* (Jovan), distinguished nobles and businessmen.<sup>11</sup> Nikola's will is shorter than his brother's and itemizes some twenty gifts. That of his brother Jovan stands out by the large number of valuable bequests *ad pias causas*. His first bequest to the Franciscans, their monastery and individual friars is followed by more than thirty itemized bequests for the salvation of the soul.

The Glavati brothers' legacy of several *ad pias causas* gifts to the Franciscans of Kotor and Dubrovnik is not much different from most wills drawn up in Kotor between 1326 and 1337. The primacy of the Franciscans as beneficiaries of testamentary bequests in Kotor is statistically verifiable: of a total of seventy-four testators, twenty-five bequeathed gifts to the Franciscans, as opposed to only five testators (two men and three women) leaving legacies to the Dominicans. All of the latter five, however, left legacies to the Franciscans as well. With the exception of *Theodorus Giga*, who bequeathed four dinars to the Dominicans and three to the Franciscans,<sup>12</sup> the other testators bequeathed larger sums to the Franciscans. *Dompce, uxor Mathei Saranni* bequeathed the Franciscans as many as twenty *perpers* for saying masses, as opposed to no more than three to the Dominicans (for the same commemorative purpose, i.e. for saying masses for the salvation of the soul).<sup>13</sup> Gifts of money were also bequeathed to the Dominicans by *Peruoslawa, uxor Pauli Petri Symonis* (two *perpers* to the friars of St Paul's),<sup>14</sup> by *Johannes Marini Glauacti* (to the Dominicans of Dubrovnik for one thou-

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same year, she founded Franciscan monasteries in Bar, Scutari and Ulcinj, which were under the custody of the Franciscans of Dubrovnik. The information on the construction of the Franciscan monastery can be found in D. Farlati, *Illyricum sacrum* VI, 440; and VII, 12, 13, 44, 59, 188 and 309. On the role of Helen of Anjou as a founder of churches or monasteries in the coastal region of the Serbian kingdom, see G. Subotić, "Kraljica Jelena Anžujaska – ktitor crkvenih spomenika u Primorju", *Istorijski glasnik* 1–2 (1958), 138–140.

<sup>11</sup> MC I, 338 (20/4/1327); MC II, 1042 (15/4/1336).

<sup>12</sup> MC II, 1436 (20/1/1337).

<sup>13</sup> MC II, 23 (16/6/1332).

<sup>14</sup> MC I, 825 (26/11/1331).

sand masses for the salvation of his soul),<sup>15</sup> and by *Jelena, filia condam ser Medosii* (to the Dominicans of Dubrovnik for *missas VC*).<sup>16</sup> The largest sums bequeathed the Franciscan *ad pias causas* by citizens of Kotor occur in the wills of Basilius Mathei, Johannes Glauacti and Jelena Drago.

Especially significant from the standpoint of Kotor's ecclesiastical history in general and the role of the Franciscan Order in particular is the will of Basilius Mathei, which is explicit about the excommunication of the Kotor clergy and implicit about the interdict that Kotor incurred in 1327.<sup>17</sup> This interdict, unknown to historians until recently,<sup>18</sup> immediately preceded the well-known clash between the commune of Kotor and the pope in 1328 (over the appointment of *Sergius Bolica* as bishop) and the known interdict declared in 1330.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, Basilius Mathei's will reveals the role played by the Franciscans in ministering the sacraments in the city under interdict and with its clergy excommunicated. The city church was barred from celebrating the liturgy, but also from celebrating masses for the dead. The ban, however, did not apply to the mendicant orders. Thus testators necessarily turned to the Franciscans and Dominicans to make sure that

<sup>15</sup> MC II, 1042 (15/4/1336).

<sup>16</sup> MC I, 1132 (3/4/1333).

<sup>17</sup> MC I, 438 (22/10/1327).

<sup>18</sup> On this penalty of 1327, in the light of the abovementioned will, see V. Živković, "Pretnje kaznom izopštenja u Kotoru (XIV–XVI vek)", *Istorijski časopis* 60 (2011), 123–138.

<sup>19</sup> The citizens of Kotor, in compliance with the provision of the Statue stipulating that no native of Kotor could be appointed bishop in his native town, accepted as their bishop John of Viterbo, appointed by the archbishop of Bari, who acted in accordance with the practice of a bishop being nominated by the canons of the cathedral chapter and the archbishop under whose jurisdiction the nominated bishop was. However, in 1328, pope John XXII, respecting the primacy of the Holy See, nominated and appointed Sergije Bolica, a native of Kotor, as bishop. The citizens of Kotor rose in defence of their city's legal autonomy and, defying the pope's order, forbade Sergije to enter the city. Cf. T. Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae* (Zagreb 1911), vol. IX, nos. 344, 360, 361, 362, 423–426, 448, 449 and 455. On the historical circumstances surrounding the clash between Kotor and the pope, and the papal interdict against the city, see S. Čirković in *Istorija Crne Gore* 2/1 (Titograd: Redakcija za istoriju Crne Gore, 1970), 92–93; J. J. Martinović, *Crkvene prilike u Kotoru prve polovine XIV vijeka* (Perast 2003); L. Blehova Čelebić, *Hrišćanstvo u Boki 1200–1500* (Podgorica 2006), 47–50, and *passim*; J. J. Martinović, "Papinski interdikt i ekskomunikacija Kotorana u prvoj polovini 14. vijeka", in *Hrvatsko-crnogorski dodiri/crnogorsko-hrvatski dodiri: identitet povijesne i kulturne baštine Crnogorskog primorja*, ed. L. Čoralić (Zagreb 2009), 147–155. The trial of Kotor over the disputed statutory provision concerning the origin of the bishop, from which the clash had arisen, was resumed in Dubrovnik in 1337; see Smičiklas, *Codex diplomaticus*, vol. X, nos. 330–339.

their burial instructions would be honoured and masses *pro remedio animae* said.<sup>20</sup> Basilius drew up his will — *Basilius Mathei infirmus jacens, sanam habens memoriam et loquellam, hoc ultimum testamentum meum de rebus meis dispono* — in accordance with the funeral practices established under the circumstances produced by the interdict. First of all, not wishing his ancestors to rest unremembered — *In primis volo ad hoc, ut mei defuncti non jaceant sine memoria* — he entrusted his children with the task of paying, from the income from the vineyards, for vigils (*vigilias*) to be held by two Franciscans, one on the day of his father's death, the other on the day of his mother's death. Also, from the same income, two Franciscans were to hold vigil on the day of his death and that of his wife. Then, he left the Franciscans forty *perpers* for *aliquod signum in ecclesia* and ten *perpers* for saying masses. Seven *perpers* were to go to the *ecclesie sancte Marie de Gurgite* (named after Gurdić, the submarine spring rising by the city's southern wall), which was under Franciscan custody. Ten *perpers* were left to the Franciscans *de Antibarō* (modern Bar, Montenegro) for saying masses. Basilius Mathei emphasized: *Item volo, quod cuilibet sacerdoti, cui Catere, dentur sex (dentur) pro missis, sed tum quando reconciliati erunt de istis excommunicationibus*. It should be noted that none of the *epitropoi* named by Basilius was a priest, even though it was common practice in Kotor wills. It should probably be seen as yet another expression of Basilius' compliance with the penalty excommunication incurred by the Kotor clergy. After naming the *epitropoi*, Basilius states his last wish for Franciscans to attend him to his grave: *Item volo, quod si deus de hac vita iuxerit animam meam transire, fratres minores corpus meum cum cruce eorum consocient, et ad locum suum ferant, et nullus clericorum huius ciuitatis officium suum super corpus meum faciant*. Such an explicit wish for a funeral to be performed by the Franciscans and for the funeral service not to be held by a city priest, reveals how funerals were performed and masses for the dead said at the time Kotor was under interdict.

Worthy of attention among the other wills making gifts to the Franciscans *ad pias causas* is that of a noblewoman, *Jelena, filia condam ser Medosii de Drago*.<sup>21</sup> Jelena left her house on St Trophym's Square to her sister to live there until her death, and thereof to the Franciscans of the Kotor monastery. The garden located *super Puteo* (a spring outside the south city wall) was also left *imperpetuo* to the Franciscans *ut illuminent candelam*. The Franciscans

<sup>20</sup> On various consequences of interdicts, see Swanson, *Religion and Devotion*, 296–298. For excommunication and individual examples, see B. A. Pavlac, “Excommunication and Territorial Politics in High Medieval Trier”, *Church History* 60/1 (March 1991), 20–36; R. H. Helmholz, “Excommunication in Twelfth Century England”, *Journal of Law and Religion* 11/1 (1994–95), 235–253.

<sup>21</sup> MC I, 1132.

were left a bequest for saying one thousand masses for her soul, and each Franciscan of Kotor was bequeathed a tunic. The Franciscans of Dubrovnik were also left a legacy for a thousand masses for her soul. Finally, *fratri Petro de Scutaro* and *fratri Laurentio de Cataro* were to receive a gift of ten *perpers* each.

Johannes Marini Glauacti left most of his bequest for the salvation of the soul to the Franciscans.<sup>22</sup> The Franciscan monastery in Kotor was the beneficiary of his major legacy (*In primis volo et praecipio*), one thousand *perpers*, of which three hundred were intended for saying masses in the monastery, one hundred for crafting a chalice, and two hundred for *paramentum unum completum, una planeta dalmatica consueta*. He left a tunic and a pair of shoes to each Franciscan attending his funeral, six *perpers* to a Franciscan, twenty-five *perpers* for a breviary to *fratri Stephano lectori*, and to *fratri Laurentio de Catharo*, twenty *perpers* for a book. For repairs to be done on the Franciscan church he left two hundred *perpers*, while the remaining twenty-five *perpers* were intended for a black liturgical vestment, *planeta nigra in ecclesia fratrum minorum*, for the Franciscan church. He then returned to the Franciscans of Dubrovnik, bequeathing them one hundred *perpers* for repairing the church, and forty *perpers* for saying masses, and he also remembered the *sororibus sancte Clare de sancto Blasio*.

Like Basilius, Johannes Glauacti's wish was to be buried next to his father on the cemetery of the Franciscan monastery by the spring Gurdić outside the city walls.<sup>23</sup> It seems quite likely that Jelena Drago also wanted to be buried there. Namely, giving instructions for the decoration of her burial place, she mentioned the chalice she bequeathed to the Franciscans: *Item ubi iacet dicta Jelena, fiat totum paramentum pro altari completum, scilicet unum de calicibus supradictis, misale et paramentum*. The largest bequests *ad pias causas* made by Basilius Mathei, Johannes Glauacti and Jelena Drago

<sup>22</sup> MC II, 1042.

<sup>23</sup> Many citizens of Kotor were buried in the large monastery churchyard. The surviving documents and the gravestones carved with family crests and epitaphs show that many aristocratic families had their tombs in the cemetery. The Franciscan cemetery was also the resting place of tradesmen, whose gravestones display symbols of their trades (such as scissors, hammer, axe, socks, hide scraper etc). Cf. P. Mijović, "O kasnoantičkim i ranosrednjovekovnim grobljima Kotora", *Boka* 15–16 (Herceg Novi 1984), 171. On the architecture of the church, see V. Korać, *Graditeljska škola Pomorja* (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1965), 75–78; D. Djurašević Miljić, "Gotika u arhitekturi Kotora", *Istorijski zapisi* LXIV/1–2 (1991), 14–17. The chapel of St Catherine added on the north side of the church of St Francis was for the first time referred to in 1397 as torn down and rebuilt at the expense of a Venetian merchant in Kotor, Marco Nigro, cf. Stjepčević, *Katedrala*, 59 (according to: Historical Archives of Kotor [IAK], Judicial-notarial Documents [SN] II, 400).

were intended for the Franciscans, and thus their wish to be buried in the Franciscan cemetery does not come as a surprise.

Analysis of Kotor citizens' testamentary gifts to the Franciscans suggests two basic conclusions. Firstly, the testators intended most of these gifts for the saying of masses for the salvation of their own souls and the souls of their closest relatives. The frequency of this practice seems to allow us to subsume under the same category the legacies whose purpose was not specified. Two testators (the notary of Kotor, *Marcus clericus, filius condam Petri Viti*, and *Dome, relicta condam Nuce de Gonni*) made pecuniary bequests to the Franciscans to pray for their souls. Only two testators, one male, the other female, intended their bequests to the Franciscans to procure tunics and shoes, and one woman bequeathed linen cloth for friars' habits. One testator (*Johannes Marini Glauacti*) left the money to the Franciscans for liturgical vestments, to two Franciscans for procuring books, and a bequest for repairs (*pro opere*) to the Franciscan monastery.

The other general conclusion pertains to the role the Franciscans played in Kotor and the trust they enjoyed as assistants to people anxious to ensure the salvation of their souls after death. About thirty-three percent of all wills drawn up between 1326 and 1337 contain bequests to the Franciscans, in contrast to only about six percent to the Dominicans. Moreover, the will of Basilius Mathei reveals the continuation of sacramental practices during the period when the Kotor clergy were under the penalty of interdict and excommunication. Under such circumstances, members of the Franciscan Order were the closest assistants to the faithful in arranging proper funerals and in performing a commemorative programme for the salvation of the soul.

Testator	Date	Source	Beneficiary	Bequest	Purpose
<i>Maria Pecleri</i>	10/7/1326	MC I, 13	Franciscans	20 <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Pale</i>	12/11/1326	MC I, 190	Franciscans	1 <i>perper</i>	
<i>Scime, filius quondam Sabe</i>	31/12/1326	MC I, 260	Franciscans	30 <i>perpers</i>	<i>pro missis</i>
<i>Nicolaus condam Marini Glauacti</i>	20/4/1327	MC I, 338	Franciscans of Dubrovnik; Franciscans of Kotor		<i>pro centum missis cantandis; pro aliis centum missis</i>
<i>Syrana</i>	23/7/1327	MC I, 365	Fra Luke; Franciscans	4 <i>perpers</i> ; 5 <i>perpers</i> and <i>linTEAMEN</i>	to have a tunic sewn

<i>Basilius Mathei</i>	22/10/1327	MC I, 438	Franciscans of Kotor	from the income from the vineyard; 40 <i>perpers</i> ; 10 <i>perpers</i>	for holding <i>vigilias</i> ; for making <i>aliquid signum in ecclesia</i> ; for saying masses
<i>Marcus clericus, filius condam Petri Viti</i>	30/6/1331	MC I, 680	Franciscans of the Kotor monastery	15 <i>perpers</i>	<i>ut rogentur deum pro me</i>
<i>Francius condam Marcii Basillii</i>	28/9/1331	MC I, 732	his <i>patrino</i> , Francis, lector of the Friars Minor; to each Franciscan	20 <i>perpers</i> ; one <i>perper</i> each	
<i>Peruoslaua, uxor Pauli Petri Symonis</i>	26/11/1331	MC I, 825	to the friars at Šuranj	3 <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Dompce, uxor Mathei Saranni</i>	16/6/1332	MC II, 23	Franciscans	20 <i>perpers</i>	for saying masses
<i>Dyaconus Grube Abrae, abbas ecc. Sancte Marie de flumine</i>	2/8/1332	MC II, 57	<i>Cuilibet fratri minori, qui inuenietur in conuentu illo tempore, Fra Laure de Stanecna</i>	unus <i>perperus</i> 10 <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Mathe Sgalio</i>	11/8/1332	MC II, 65	Church of St Francis	12 dinars	
<i>Mare, uxor condam Marini de Gamba</i>	8/10/1332	MC II, 129	Franciscans	5 <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Presbyter Marcus Stanopoli, clericus sancte Marie de Antibaro</i>	9/2/1333	MC II, 279	Franciscans	8 <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Jelena, filia condam ser Medosii de Drago</i>	3/4/1333	MC I, 1132	Franciscans; each Kotor Franciscan; Fra Peter de Scutaro, <i>patruo Jelene</i> , Fra Laurentius of Kotor	house on St Trophym's Square and the garden above <i>Puteus</i> ; a tunic each; 10 <i>perpers</i> each	for 1000 masses by the Franciscans of Dubrovnik and 1000 masses by those of Kotor

<i>Nycola, frater condam magistri Thomassi</i>	30/6/1333	MC II, 394	Franciscans	10 <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Rade, filia Draschi Çoie</i>	18/11/1333	MC II, 521	Franciscans	half the income from the vineyard from the dowry	for saying masses
<i>Marislaua, uxor condam Nicolai de Crise</i>	20/11/1333	MC II, 523	Fra Gausolo de Maxi	3 <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Dome, uxor Martini de Pançi</i>	11/11/1334	MC II, 646	Franciscans	17 dinars	
<i>Buda, uxor Pasce</i>	11/11/1334	MC II, 647	Franciscans	money from the [sale] of tableware, textiles and furniture	for masses
<i>Dome, relicta condam Nuce de Gonni</i>	24/7/1335	MC II, 1142	Kotor Franciscan monastery		500 masses for her soul
<i>Mice de Bise</i>	29/2/1336	MC II, 1604	Franciscans	ten <i>perpers</i>	
<i>Johannes Marini Glauacti</i>	15/4/1336	MC II, 1042	monastery of Kotor Franciscans; the Franciscans attending the funeral; fra Stephano lector; fra Laurentio; the Franciscans of Dubrovnik	1000 <i>perpers</i>	for masses; for a chalice; for a vestment; for a tunic and shoes to each; for a breviary; <i>pro libro uno</i> ; for church repairs
<i>Matheus condam Triphonis Iacobi</i>	30/4/1336	MC II, 1726	Kotor Franciscans		1000 masses for the souls of his parents and brother
<i>Theodorus Gige</i>	20/1/1337	MC II, 1436	Franciscans	2 dinars	

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## The Isles of Great Silence Monastic Life on Lake Scutari under the Patronage of the Balšićs

**Abstract:** At the time Zeta was ruled by the local lords of the Balšić family, in the late fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century, the islets in Lake Scutari (Skadarsko jezero) in Zeta were lively centres of monastic life. The paper looks at the forms of monastic life as suggested by the spatial organization and architecture of the monastic complexes founded by the Balšićs, and by the surviving written sources. The most important documentary source is the correspondence between Jelena Balšić and her spiritual father, Nikon, preserved in the manuscript known as *Gorički zbornik* (Gorica Collection). The letters show that Lake Scutari was a centre of monasticism touched by hesychast-inspired spirituality where both the eremitic and coenobitic ways of life were practised.

**Keywords:** Lake Scutari, monasteries, monasticism, Jelena Balšić, Nikon the Jerusalemite, Gorica Collection (*Gorički zbornik*)

The Balšić family's architectural legacy on Lake Scutari comprises three monastic complexes in the islets of Starčeva Gorica (also known as Starčevo), Beška (also known as Gorica or Brezovica) and Moračnik.<sup>1</sup> The oldest monastery, with the church dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin, was built in Starčeva Gorica in 1376–78 under Djuradj (George) I Balšić.<sup>2</sup> The monastic complex in Beška includes two churches: one, earlier,

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<sup>1</sup> For the activity of the Balšićs as *ktetors* on Lake Scutari, see V. J. Djurić, "Balšići. Arhitektura", in *Istorija Crne Gore*, vol. II/2 (Titograd: Redakcija za istoriju Crne Gore, 1970), 413–439, and his "Srpski državni sabori u Peći i crkveno graditeljstvo", in *O knezu Lazaru*, eds. I. Božić & V. J. Djurić (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet, 1975), 105–122; G. Radović, "Crkve i manastiri na Skadarskom jezeru", *Izgradnja* 56: 12 (2002), 409–414. The monasticism on Lake Scutari has not received much scholarly attention so far. For one of the few exceptions, see D. Popović, "Pustinjsko monaštvo u doba Brankovića", in *Pad Srpske despotovine 1459. godine*, ed. M. Spremić (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2011), 123–124.

<sup>2</sup> For the dating of the monastery, see Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. I (Belgrade: 1902; fasc. ed. by Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Matica Srpska, National Library, 1982), no. 149, 48. For architectural analysis, see Dj. Bošković, "Izveštaj i kratke beleške sa putovanja", *Starinar* ser. III, vol. VI (1931), 159–161; V. Petković, *Pregled crkvenih spomenika kroz povescnicu srpskog naroda* (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1950), 44–45; A. Deroko, *Monumentalna i dekorativna arhitektura u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji* (Belgrade: Naučna knjiga, 1953), 244; Djurić, "Balšići. Arhitektura", 418–422; P. Mijović, "Vječno na krajini", in *Virpazar, Bar, Ulcinj*, ed. N. Gažević (Cetinje–Belgrade: Obod,



The Balšić dynasty ruled Zeta from 1360 to 1421 from Scutari (Alb. Skhoder, Serb. Skadar), and subsequently from Ulcinj in Lower Zeta.<sup>8</sup> Their reign was marked by a rapid political rise. At the assembly of secular lords and church leaders summoned at Peć in 1375, Prince Lazar and Djurdj I Balšić emerged as the most powerful of local lords competing for power in the disintegrating Serbian Empire after the death of the last Nemanjić ruler, Emperor Stefan Uroš V, in 1371. One of the decisions of the assembly was to encourage monks from Mount Athos and other Orthodox centres to settle in the Morava Valley, the realm of Prince Lazar, and in Zeta. As a result, numerous monastic communities arose in these regions.<sup>9</sup> The assembly decision becomes understandable in the light of the fact that the religious situation in Zeta had been marked by the presence of both Roman Catholic and Orthodox populations. The political position of Djurdj II Stracimirović and his son and heir Balša III was marked by the effort to preserve the integrity of their realm against the Venetians, the Ottomans and the Hungarians, who all struggled for control over the coastal areas whose strategic centre was Lake Scutari.<sup>10</sup> Venetian expansion had begun in the late fourteenth century. More frequently than their predecessors, young Balša III and his mother, Jelena Balšić, acted before the Venetians as protectors of the jurisdictional powers of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its Metropolitanate of Zeta. Even after the widowed Jelena remarried the Grand Duke of Hum, Sandalj Hranić, and moved to Bosnia (1411), her son's political agenda for Zeta included its close alliance with the Despotate of Serbia and counted on the support of his uncle, Despot Stefan, in resisting Venetian pressure. Zeta and northern Albania were densely covered with Roman Catholic bishoprics,<sup>11</sup> but, according to an agreement reached

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Marković & Vujičić, *Spomenici kulture Crne Gore*, 109–110; Petković, *Kulturna baština Crne Gore*, 87–88.

<sup>8</sup> J. Jelčić, *Zeta i dinastija Balšića* (Podgorica: Matica crnogorska, 2010) = G. Gelcich, *La Zedda e la Dinastia dei Balšidi* (Spalato 1899); *Istorija Crne Gore* II/2, 1–120; *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. II, texts by D. Bogdanović and R. Mihaljčić (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1994); J. V. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans. A Critical Study from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> Djurić, “Srpski državni sabori”, 105–122.

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed study on the ecclesiastical situation in fifteenth-century Zeta, see M. Spremić, “Crkvene prilike u Zeti u doba Nikona Jerusalimca”, in *Nikon Jerusalimac*, ed. J. Čulibrk, 73–108. See also I. Božić in *Istorija Crne Gore*, II/2, 86–99; J. Kalić, *Srbi u poznom srednjem veku* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1994), 89–92.

<sup>11</sup> The bishoprics were seated in: Kotor (Cattaro), Budva (Budua), Ulcinj (Dulcigno), Skadar (Scutari), Drisht (Drivasto), Danje (Dagnum) and Lezsha (Alessio), cf. Spremić, “Crkvene prilike u Zeti,” 77.

in 1426 between Despot Djuradj Branković and Francesco Quirin, the Venetian Captain of Scutari, the Metropolitan of Zeta continued to exercise jurisdiction over all Serbian Orthodox churches on Lake Scutari, including those on Venetian soil.<sup>12</sup> By 1435, when Jelena Balšić, a widow once more, returned to Zeta, negotiations had been well underway on union between the Western and Eastern churches. Despot Djuradj Branković declined the invitation to attend the Council held in Florence in 1439.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, the Council was attended by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Cattaro, Contarini, who must have championed the union upon his return from Florence. Such a situation had its ramifications in Zeta, as evidenced by the fact that the Orthodox monastery of the Most Pure Virgin of Krajina (*Prečista Krajinska*), on the southwest shore of Lake Scutari, became the seat of a union-supporting archbishop instructed to gather the Orthodox in Zeta and northern Albania under the jurisdiction of the Pope, and was increasingly frequented by like-minded prelates of Greek or Albanian origin.<sup>14</sup> Under such circumstances, the activity of Jelena Balšić, such as the renovation of the church of St George, the building of her funerary church in the islet of Beška and the effort to draw together a circle of Orthodox monks, the most distinguished of whom was the learned hesychast monk Nikon, resulted in the creation of a centre of monastic spirituality in Zeta.

The choice of the site for a monastery, taking into account its natural surroundings, was an important consideration in the spatial organization of the monastic complexes in the lake isles.<sup>15</sup> In medieval Byzantine and Serbian sources, such as foundation charters, *typika* and hagiographies, the founders of monasteries frequently describe the natural setting they chose for their foundations or give reasons for their choice. Monastery site selec-

<sup>12</sup> G. Valentini, ed., *Acta Albaniae Veneta saeculorum XIV et XV*, Pars II, Tomus XII (1971), 286–291.

<sup>13</sup> M. Spremić, “Srbi i florentinska unija 1439. godine”, *ZRVI* XXIV (1986), 413–421.

<sup>14</sup> I. Božić, “Albanija i Arbanasi u XIII, XIV i XV veku”, *Glas SANU* CCCXXVIII, Od. ist. n. 3 (1983), 88.

<sup>15</sup> On the natural surroundings of monastic settlements, see A. Bryer, “The Late Byzantine monastery in town and countryside”, in *The Church in Town and Countryside*, Studies in Church History 16, ed. D. Baker (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), 219–241; N. Bakirtzis, “The creation of a sacred landscape in Byzantium: taming the wilderness of Mount Menoikeon”, in *Hierotopy. Studies in the Making of Sacred Spaces*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow: Radunitsa, 2004), 97–99, and his “Hagios Ioannis Prodromos Monastery on mount Menoikeon: Byzantine monastic practice, sacred topography and architecture” (PhD thesis, Princeton University, 2006), 81–116; S. Popović, “Dividing the indivisible: the monastery space – secular and sacred”, *ZRVI* XLIV (2007), 62–63.



tion, often a result of divine providence, is a *topos* of medieval hagiography,<sup>16</sup> including Serbian.<sup>17</sup> Correspondence between Jelena Balšić and her spiritual guide, Nikon the Jerusalemite, contained in the manuscript known as the *Gorica Collection* (*Gorički zbornik*, 1441/2),<sup>18</sup> provides information about two churches in the islet of Beška. In his reply to Jelena's third letter, Nikon describes the site of the church of the Annunciation, Jelena's foundation, and that of St George's in its immediate vicinity (86a): **ПАКЫ ЖЕ ВЪЗВѢЩАЕТЬ НАМЪ Х(РИСТО)ЛЮБИЕ ТВОЕ, ТАКО СЪЗДАНЫИ ТОВОЮ ХРАМЪ ЕПАИОНЪ ОБИТѢЛИ С(ВЕТА)ГО И ГЛАВНАГО ВЕЛИКО М(ОУЧЕ)НИКА ТРОПЕШФОРА ГЕОРГІА ВЪ МѢСТѢ РЕКОМѢМ ГОРИЦА** [Once more, you have shown us your love of Christ, like the temple you built next to the glorious community of the holy great-martyr and vanquisher George, in the place known as Gorica]. On the other hand, such locations for the foundations of the Balšićs ensured the necessary safety to the monastic communities. The lake islets formed a naturally sheltered spatial whole, which played a role in the architectural shaping of the monastic complexes. Namely, unlike the strongly fortified contemporary monasteries in the northern Serbian realm encompassing the basin of the (Velika) Morava River and therefore informally termed Moravian Serbia, the lake monasteries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were simply enclosed by massive walls and had no more than one tower, which virtually never served a defensive purpose.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> A.-M. Talbot, "Founders' choices: monastery site selection in Byzantium", in *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries*, ed. M. Mullett (Belfast Enetprises, 2007), 50–52; S. Mojsilović, "Prostorna struktura manastira srednjovekovne Srbije", *Saopštenja* 13 (1981), 127–146, and "Byzantine influences in the architecture of monastery sites and buildings in medieval Serbia", *XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Akten II/4* (1982), 491–500; S. Popović, "Shaping a monastery settlement in the Late Byzantine Balkans", in *Shaping Community: The Art and Archaeology of Monasticism*, ed. S. McNally (BAR, 2001), 129–146, as well as her "Dividing the indivisible", 47–65, and "The Byzantine monastery: its spatial iconography and the questions of sacredness", in *Hierotopy: Studies in the Making of Sacred Space*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow: Indriki, 2006), 170.

<sup>17</sup> E.g., the Serbian archbishop Danilo (Daniel) II (ca 1270–1337), author of the *Lives of the Serbian Kings and Archbishops*, says the following of the Banjska monastery church of St Stephen (1313–17) in Kosovo, a foundation of King Stefan Uroš II Milutin: "You are a blessed and virtuous Christ-loving king, because you found a peaceful place for yourself and the memory of you will live on forever": Arhiepiskop Danilo II, *Životi kraljeva i arhiepiskopa srpskih* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1935), 114.

<sup>18</sup> The manuscript is kept in the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Belgrade, under no. 446.

<sup>19</sup> Popović, *Krst u krugu*, 228–229.



The monasteries in the area of Lake Scutari are popularly known as the Holy Mount of Zeta.<sup>20</sup> Their organization undoubtedly emulated the Holy Mount of Athos.<sup>21</sup> Similar monastic communities arose in other parts of medieval Serbia: the Koriša area,<sup>22</sup> the Mount of Lesnovo,<sup>23</sup> the environs of the monastery of Treskavac,<sup>24</sup> the gorges of the Crnica and the Mlava.<sup>25</sup> These communities were frequently quite complex, as they practised both the coenobitic and eremitic ways of life in appropriate architectural settings: monastic enclosures, churches, *kellia* and hermitages.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Djurić, "Balšići. Arhitektura", 422. See also the section titled *Krug Zetske Svete Gore* of the volume *Nikon Jerusalimac*, ed. J. Čulić, 33–151; V. Balj, "Ideje isihazma u prepisci Jelene Balšić i Nikona Jerusalimca", in *Šćepan Polje i njegove svetinje kroz vijekove*, ed. G. Tomović (Berane: Svevidje, 2010), 133. For the holy mountains in Byzantium, see A.-M. Talbot, "Holy Mountain", in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. II (English Oxford University Press, 1991), 941, and her "Les saintes montagnes à Byzance", in *Le sacre et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzance et en Occident. Etudes comparées*, ed. M. Kaplan (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2001); Panel papers VI.6, *Monastic Mountains and Deserts*, Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Vol. II, Abstracts of Panel papers (London 2006), 218–225; P. Soustal, ed. *Heilige Berge und Wüsten, Byzanz und sein Umfeld* (Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> A. Bryer & M. Cunningham, eds. *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996); M. Živojinović, *Istorija Hilandara*, vol. I (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1998). On different types of monasticism on Mount Athos, see M. Živojinović, *Svetogorske kelije i pirovici u srednjem veku* (Belgrade: Viyantološki institute SANU, 1972); D. Paphrisantu, *Atonsko monaštvo, počeci i organizacija* (Belgrade: Društvo prijatelja Svete Gore Atonske, 2004); M. Živojinović, "Aton – pojava opštežića i počeci osobenožića", in *Sedma kazivanja o Svetoj Gori*, eds. M. Živojinović & Z. Rakić (Belgrade 2011), 31–52.

<sup>22</sup> D. Popović, "The Cult of St Peter of Koriša: Stages of Development and Patterns", *Balcanica XVIII* (1997), 181–212.

<sup>23</sup> S. Gabelić, "Nepoznati lokaliteti u okolini Lesnovskog manastira", *ZLUMS* 20 (1984), 163–174, and *Manastir Lesnovo* (Belgrade: Stubovi kulture, 1998), 239–245.

<sup>24</sup> S. Smolčić Makuljević, "Sakralna topografija manastira Treskavca", *Balcanica XXXV* (2004), 287–322, as well as her "Two models of sacred space in the Byzantine and medieval visual culture of the Balkans: the monasteries of Prohor Pčinja and Treskavac", *JÖB* 59 (2009), 191–203, and "Sakralna topografija svetih gora: Sinaj–Aton–Treskavac", in *Sedma kazivanja*, 183–236.

<sup>25</sup> S. Popović, "The last Hesychast safe havens in late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century monasteries in the northern Balkans", *ZRVI* 48 (2011), 217–257; T. Starodubcev, "The formation of a holy mount in Late Middle Ages: the case of the River Crnica Gorge", in *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, vol. III, *Abstracts of Free Communications* (Sofia 2011), 93–94.

<sup>26</sup> D. Popović, "Pustinje i svete gore srednjovekovne Srbije. Pisani izvori, prostorni obrasci, graditeljska rešenja", *ZRVI XLIV* (2007), 253–274; S. Popović, "The architectural transformation of *laura* in Middle and Late Byzantium", in 26th Annual Byzan-

The building activity of the Balšićs and the organization of their foundations on Lake Scutari followed the monastic ideals established in Moravian Serbia and Mount Athos.<sup>27</sup> In terms of architecture, this inspiration is recognizable in the use of the Athonite trefoil (or triconch) plan for the foundations which were modest in size and continued the architectural tradition of Zeta in style. Stone was the main construction material, while the shapes of vaults, arches, windows and bell-towers followed the then prevailing Gothic style.<sup>28</sup> In addition to Starčeva Gorica, Beška and Moračnik, the monastery of the Most Pure Virgin of Krajina should also be noted, as they all taken together constitute the westernmost group of the Athonite-inspired trefoil churches.<sup>29</sup>

The oldest monastic complex and the prototype of the Balšić trefoil churches is the monastery church of the Dormition of the Virgin in Starčeva Gorica, one of the three largest islands.<sup>30</sup> It is widely accepted that its construction followed the earliest use of the trefoil plan in Serbia, which did not begin until after the Assembly at Peć in 1375.<sup>31</sup> An inscription made in a Prologue written between 1368 and 1379 (now in the State Library in Berlin, no. 29), says that the Prologue was written under Djuradj I Balšić: **Сн светы прологъ съпїнса сѣ оу Горници свѣтаго старца Макариа въ дны благочстываго господина Гоурга Бальшыка не мазде радїи, нь благословенїа радїи** [This holy prologue was written in the Gorica of the holy man Makarije in the days of our virtuous sire Djuradj Balšić, not for

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tine Studies Conference, Abstracts of Papers, Harvard University (2000), 61–62, and her “*Koinobion or laurion*: a question of architectural transformation of the Late Byzantine monastery in the Balkans”, in *XX<sup>e</sup> Congrès international des études byzantines*. III. *Communication libres*, Paris (2001), 339–340.

<sup>27</sup> Djurić, “Srpski državni sabori”, 105–122. The popularity of monastic and ascetic themes in the literary works created in Zeta also attests to contact between Zeta and Mount Athos, cf. D. Bogdanović, “Gorički zbornik”, in *Istorija Crne Gore*, vol. II/2, 372–380, as well as his *Istorija stare srpske književnosti* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1980), 222–225.

<sup>28</sup> Djurić, “Balšići. Arhitektura”, 414, and his “Srpski državni sabori”, 117–118 (with earlier literature on Athonite architecture).

<sup>29</sup> G. Babić-Djordjević & V. J. Djurić, “Polet umetnosti”, in *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. II (Belgrade 1994), 161, 163.

<sup>30</sup> See note 2 herein.

<sup>31</sup> *Danilovi nastavljaji. Daniloov učenik. Drugi nastavljaj Daniloovog zbornika* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1989), 132–133; N. Radojčić, *Srpski državni sabori u srednjem veku* (Belgrade: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1940), 162–165; Djurić, “Srpski državni sabori”, 105–122.

the sake of reward but for the sake of good].<sup>32</sup> The same inscription suggests that the island was named after the holy man or abba Makarije (Makarios), Starčeva Gorica literally meaning the “old man’s islet”. Popular tradition associates the founding of the monastery with this highly revered ascetic who supposedly lived on the island. Systematic archaeological investigations carried out in 1984/5 provide a clearer picture of the chronology and organization of the monastery.<sup>33</sup>

The *katholikon* dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin, built on a trefoil plan, is quite small in size (6.5 m long by 3.5 m wide).<sup>34</sup> The dome rests on a circular drum, while the façades are utterly simple, exhibiting neither pilasters nor any architectural mouldings or sculpture. The interior space is divided by a system of niches. Topographic evidence suggests that the monastery was enclosed with a wall, except on the south side, which is bounded by a precipitous rock. The north side of the church abuts the rock face or, in other words, it did not occupy the centre of the enclosure. Appreciation for the Nemanjić foundations in terms of layout was achieved by setting the entrance to the enclosure south-west of the entrance to the church.<sup>35</sup> The complex comprised dormitories on the south-west side, a paved path from the landing-place to the monastery’s gate, and a flight of stairs between the gate and the church. A narthex with an open porch, surviving in traces, was subsequently added at the west end of the church. A chapel with an apse,<sup>36</sup> surviving to the height of roof cornice, was added at the south side, and a small oblong room abutting the rock was added on the north. Its purpose is not quite clear, but it has been assumed that it was there that Makarije pursued his ascetic path.<sup>37</sup> The room suffered damage as a result of a rock fall two years ago, which caused its roof system to col-

<sup>32</sup> Lj. Stojanović, *Stari srpski zapisi i natpisi*, vol. I, 48, no. 149; the name Djuradj Balšić in the inscription refers to Djuradj I Balšić (r. 1373–78), given the use of the patronymic. Makarije must have died by the time the Prologue was written, given the epithet *holý* attached to his name, cf. I. Ruvarac, *Kamičići – priložici za drugi Zetski dom* (Cetinje 1894), 478.

<sup>33</sup> Pejović, *Manastiri na tlu Crne Gore*, 120–122; Marković & Vujičić, *Spomenici kulture Crne Gore*, 121–122.

<sup>34</sup> Bošković, “Izveštaj i kratke beleške”, 159–161.

<sup>35</sup> Popović, *Krst u krugu*, 229.

<sup>36</sup> On the side chapels of Byzantine and Serbian churches, see G. Babić, *Les chapelles annexes des églises byzantines* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1969); S. Čurčić, “Architectural significance of subsidiary chapels in Middle Byzantine churches”, *JSAH* 36 (1977), 94–110; S. Popović, “Raspored kapela u vizantijskim manastirima”, *Saopštenja* 27/28 (1995/96), 23–37.

<sup>37</sup> Marković & Vujičić, *Spomenici kulture Crne Gore*, 121.

lapse.<sup>38</sup> A good reputation of the monastery of the Virgin as a manuscript copying centre lived into the sixteenth century, as evidenced by the fact that the famous Serbian printer Božidar Vuković was buried, according to his own wish, in the abovementioned south chapel (1539).<sup>39</sup> Unlike the other Balšić foundations, the church of the Dormition of the Virgin abutted a rock, which allows us to think of the possibility that the site had originally been a natural anchoritic abode. Even though there is no reliable evidence to support such an assumption, other examples of similar monastic communities seem to confirm that the possibility is worthy of being taken into account. Analysis of the spatial pattern of eremitic abodes located in the vicinity of churches shows that coenobitic communities usually grew out of informal gatherings of followers around the cave abode of a revered hermit.<sup>40</sup> The most prominent examples of this community formation pattern in the Balkans are the shrines of St Peter of Koriša<sup>41</sup> and St John of Rila.<sup>42</sup> In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, spatial association of the church building and a rock<sup>43</sup> is found in the case of the church of St Michael the Archangel in Berat, Albania (about 1300),<sup>44</sup> the Virgin Agiagaloussena in

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<sup>38</sup> This was the situation I found in July 2012. I am much indebted to Fr. Gregory for his hospitality and for his information about the north room.

<sup>39</sup> *Istorija Crne Gore*, vol. II/2, 418–421.

<sup>40</sup> Popović, *Krst u krugu*, 102; D. Popović, “Monah pustinjak”, in *Privatni život u srpskim zemljama srednjeg veka*, eds. D. Popović & S. Marjanović Dušanić (Belgrade: Clio, 2004), 555.

<sup>41</sup> Popović, “Cult of St Peter of Koriša”.

<sup>42</sup> I. Dujčev, *The Saint from Rila and his Monastery* (Sofia 1947; repr. Centre for Slavo-Byzantine Studies Prof. I. Dujčev, 1990); see also the volume edited by S. Kuiumdzhieva, *Kulturnoto nasledstvo na Rilskiiia manastir – Sustoianie i perspektivi na prouchavaneto, opazvaneto i restavriraneto mu* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2011). For examples in Palestinian monasticism, see J. Patrich, *Sabas, Leader of Palestinian Monasticism. A Comparative Study in Eastern Monasticism, Fourth to Seventh Centuries* (Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, 1995); for Mount Athos, see R. Morris, “The Origins of Athos”, in Bryer & Cunningham, eds. *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism*, 37–46.

<sup>43</sup> On the symbolic and functional aspects of this spatial pattern, with examples from the early and middle Byzantine periods, cf. S. Čurčić, “Cave and Church. An Eastern Christian hierotopical synthesis”, in *Hierotopy. The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. A. Lidov (Moscow: Indrik, 2006), 216–236.

<sup>44</sup> G. Koch, ed. *Albanien. Kulturdenkmäler eines unbekanntes Landes aus 2200 Jahren* (Marburg 1985), 56–57; A. Meksi, “Tri kisha Byzantine të Beratit”, *Monumentet* (1972), 73–95. The former role and function of this rock is an insufficiently studied question, cf. Čurčić, “Cave and Church”.

Chios (thirteenth or fourteenth century),<sup>45</sup> and the Virgin Perivleptos in Mistra (third quarter of the thirteenth century).<sup>46</sup> Proximity between the rock and the church in Starčeva Gorica may be looked at in the broader framework of Orthodox monastic architecture. The practice of constructing churches in the immediate vicinity of rocks, observable from the earliest examples in Palestinian monasticism until the late Byzantine period, is also documented by numerous examples in Serbia,<sup>47</sup> Macedonia,<sup>48</sup> Bulgaria<sup>49</sup> and Greece.<sup>50</sup>

Monastic life in the islet of Starčeva Gorica unfolded in an epoch marked by hesychast influences. The arrival of Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek monks from Mount Athos and Bulgaria in the Morava Valley and Zeta

<sup>45</sup> Ch. Bouras, *Chios* (Athens: National Bank of Greece, 1974), 70.

<sup>46</sup> A. S. Louvi, "L'architecture et la sculpture de la Perivleptos de Mistra" (Thèse de doctorat de IIIe cycle, Université de Paris, Panthéon, Sorbonne, Paris 1980); Ćurčić, "Cave and Church", 224.

<sup>47</sup> The question of cave churches in medieval Serbia has been most thoroughly studied by D. Popović in a number of texts, e.g. "Pećinske crkve i isposnice u oblasti Polimlja – dosadašnji rezultati i pravci daljeg proučavanja", *Mileševski zapisi* 5 (2002), 47–60; "Pešterni spomenici u srednjovekovnoj Srbiji. Rezultati i pravci istraživanja", *Glasnik DKS* 26 (2002), 105–109; "Pustinje i svete gore srednjovekovne Srbije", *ŽRVI XLIV* (2007), 253–274; (with M. Popović), "An Example of Anchoritic Monasticism in the Balkans: the Monastery Complex at Kaludra near Berane", in *Archeologia Abrahamica. Studies in archaeology and artistic tradition of Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. L. Beliaev (Moscow: Indriik, 2009), 313–331; "Pustinjsko monaštvo u doba Brankovića", 117–134; "Dečanska pustinja u okvirima vizantijskog i srpskog eremitskog monaštva", in D. Popović et al., *Dečanska pustinja. Skitovi i kelije manastira Dečana* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2011), 153–223.

<sup>48</sup> Gabelić, "Nepoznati lokaliteti", 163–174, and *Manastir Lesnovo*, 239–245; M. Radujko, "Dradnjanski manastirić Svetog Nikole (I. Nastanak i arhitektura)", *Zograf* 19 (1988), 49–61, and "Dradnjanski manastirić Svetog Nikole (II. Živopis)", *Zograf* 24 (1995), 25–37; Smolčić Makuljević, "Sakralna topografija manastira Treskavca", 287–322; G. A. Angeličev Žura, *Pešternite crkvi vo Obridsko-prespanskiot region (R. Makedonija, R. Albanija, R. Grcija)* (Struga 2004).

<sup>49</sup> L. Mavrodinova, *Ivanovskite skalni curkvi. Bulgarskiat prinos v svetovnoto kulturno nasledstvo* (Sofia 1989).

<sup>50</sup> D. Nicol, *Meteora. The Rock Monastery of Thessaly* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1963); N. Nikonanos, *Meteora: a complete guide to the monasteries and their history* (Athens: Athenon, 1987), and "The Mountain of Cells", in *Routes of Faith in the Medieval Mediterranean. History, Monuments, People, Pilgrimage, Perspectives*, ed. E. Hadjistryphonos (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2008), 290–295; E. Kollias, Πάτμος (Athens: Melissa, 1986); A. Külzer, "Das Ganos-Gebirge in Ostrakien (İşiklar Dagi)", in *Heilige Berge und Wüsten*, ed. P. Soustal, 41–52.

gave a strong impetus to eremitism.<sup>51</sup> Patriarch Ephrem — the most distinguished spiritual authority of the period and a man of remarkable achievement in the ecclesio-political sphere, twice at the head of the Serbian Church (1375–78 and 1389–92), belonged to an ascetically-minded monastic elite himself.<sup>52</sup> According to the most comprehensive source for his biography, the *Life of the Holy Patriarch Ephrem* penned by Bishop Mark, Ephrem spent most of his life in the *hesychasteria* of the monastery of Dečani, the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć and the Holy Archangels of Prizren.<sup>53</sup>

Under the Lazarević and Branković dynasties, eremitic and kelliotic monasticism developed in craggy landscapes around natural caves and rocks.<sup>54</sup> The last hesychast abodes in the northern Balkans before the final Ottoman conquest were set up in the canyon of the Crnica and, further north, in the Mlava river gorge.<sup>55</sup> They were organized as *lavrai*, with a coenobitic monastery functioning as their administrative seat and individual *kellia* scattered in its immediate vicinity.<sup>56</sup>

The other group of Balšić foundations is situated in the islet of Beška. The monastic complex includes two churches of different dates: St George's, presumably built in the last two decades of the fourteenth century by Djurađ II Stracimirović Balšić,<sup>57</sup> and the funerary church of Jelena Balšić, constructed in 1439 and dedicated to the Annunciation.<sup>58</sup> Having returned to Zeta after the death, in 1435, of her second husband, Duke Sandalj Hranić, Jelena Balšić set out to build her funerary church in the immediate vicinity of the foundation of her first husband, Djurađ II Stracimirović. She did not take monastic vows, but she spent her last years in Dračevica near Bar and on the islet, looking after the Serbian Orthodox monasteries in her realm

<sup>51</sup> Jeromonah Amfilohije (Radović), "Sinaiti i njihov značaj u životu Srbije XIV i XV veka", in *Manastir Ravanica. Spomenica o šestoj stogodišnjici* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1981), 101–134; Djurić, "Srpski državni sabori", 106–107.

<sup>52</sup> On Patriarch Ephrem as a historical figure and his saintly cult, see D. Popović, "Patrijarh Jefrem – jedan poznosrednjovekovni svetiteljski kult", *ZRVI XLIII* (2006), 111–125.

<sup>53</sup> Marko Pečki, "Žitije svetog patrijarha Jefrema", in *Šest pisaca XIV veka*, ed. D. Bogdanović (Belgrade: Prosveta & Srpska književna zadruga, 1986), 166–168.

<sup>54</sup> Popović, *Krst u krugu*, 101; Popović, "Pustinjsko monaštvo u doba Branković", 119 and *passim*.

<sup>55</sup> M. Brmbolić, "Mala Sveta Gora u klisuri reke Crnice", *Saopštenja XXX–XXXI*[1998–99] (2000), 99–112; Popović, "The last hesychast safe havens"; Starodubcev, "Formation of a Holy Mount", 93–94.

<sup>56</sup> Popović, "Last hesychast safe havens", 248, 252, 253.

<sup>57</sup> See notes 3 and 5 herein.

<sup>58</sup> See notes 4 and 6 herein.



and living her life very much like a nun. The remarkable political and cultural role she played in Zeta has been given much scholarly attention.<sup>59</sup>

The layout of the complex follows a different pattern from the one in Starčeva Gorica. Unlike the church abutting the rock face in Starčeva Gorica, these two churches are free-standing structures. Archaeological excavations carried out in 1986 have shown that the monastery was enclosed with a stone wall and that it was not furnished with fortifications. It was accessed from the east by a paved causeway leading from the landing-place to the gate. The surviving structural remains include a stone building on an oblong plan north of the church of the Annunciation, which was observably constructed in phases.<sup>60</sup> The church of St George is a trefoil in plan, has a dome resting on protruding pilasters, and a circular drum common to all island churches of the period. The long and low church building is screened by a massive bell-gable in front of its west side. In the church, next to the south wall, is a tomb, presumably of the founder, Djuradj II Stracimirović Balšić. The Annunciation church differs from the rest of the group in plan: a longitudinal building with an eastern apse and no aisles, possibly as a result of a stylistic shift in the architecture of Zeta under the Crnojević dynasty. In the church, next to the south wall, is the tomb of the founder, Jelena Balšić.

<sup>59</sup> The most exhaustive bibliography on Jelena Balšić is provided by S. Tomin, "Bibliografija radova o Jeleni Balšić", *Knjiženstvo* 1 (2011). On Jelena's banking activities in Dubrovnik and Kotor, and her court office that managed her finances, see Dj. Tošić, "Sandaljeva udovica Jelena Hranić", *ZRVIXLI* (2004), 423–440. See also Z. Gavrilović, "Women in Serbian politics, diplomacy and art", in *Byzantine Style, Religion and Civilization*, ed. E. Jeffreys (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 81–83. On the aristocratic women's patronage in Byzantium and Serbia, see *Female founders in Byzantium and beyond: an international colloquium*, Vienna 2008, eds. M. Mullet, M. Grünbart & L. Theis (forthcoming): [http://www.univie.ac.at/femalefounders/abstracts\\_files](http://www.univie.ac.at/femalefounders/abstracts_files), and therein especially A. Vukovitch, "The Epistles of Princess Jelena Balšić, an example of the role of the noblewomen as patrons in late medieval Zeta"; see also S. Tomin, "Ktitorke poznog srednjeg veka. Prilog poznavanju", *Letopis Matice srpske* 482/5 (Nov. 2008), 1121–1142; N. Gagova, "Knigite na yuzhnoslavjanskia vladatel'ski suprugii v XIV i XV v. i sustavitel'skata kontseptsia na Bdin'skia sbornik", *Vladeteli i knigi. Uchastieto na yuzhnoslavjanskia vladetel v proizvodstvoto i upotrebat na knigi prez srednovekovieto (IX–XV v.): retseptsiyata na vizantijskia model* (Sofia: PAM, 2010), 182–204; A.-M. Talbot, "Building activity in Constantinople under Andronikos II: the role of women patrons in the construction and restoration of monasteries", in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday life*, ed. N. Necipoglu (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 329–343; E. Koubena, "A survey of aristocratic women founders of monasteries in Constantinople between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries", in *Women and Byzantine Monasticism*, eds. J. Y. Perreault et al. (Athens: Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens, 1991), 25–32.

<sup>60</sup> Popović, *Krst u krugu*, 229.



Chapels were added on the north and south sides. Burial pits have been archaeologically attested in the south chapel as well.<sup>61</sup>

The earliest reference to the monastic complex with the church dedicated to the Virgin in the island of Moračnik is found in the charter of Balša III Djurdjević issued in 1417, where his donation of a salt pan to the monastery suggests that he might have been its founder.<sup>62</sup> Archaeological excavations carried out in 1984 make it possible to give a more reliable account of the original appearance of the complex and the date of its individual parts.<sup>63</sup> The monastery was enclosed with a wall, and a paved path led from the landing-place to the gate.<sup>64</sup> The church is an abbreviated trefoil in plan (7.5m by 4m) with two quite low apses at the sides. The architectural type, dedication and function point to the practice of Balša III's predecessors of the Balšić family. The church had a narthex and an open porch. A chapel with an apse was added on the south side of the church. South of the church was a refectory and north of it a cluster of cells. Between these two buildings was a four-level tower with a chapel on the top floor.<sup>65</sup>

Apart from the surviving structural remains, an important source for creating a picture of the monastic life on Lake Scutari is the already mentioned *Gorica Collection*, which contains letters exchanged between Jelena Balšić and Nikon the Jerusalemite,<sup>66</sup> a manuscript created in 1442/3. Especially relevant to our topic are Jelena's thoughts on spiritual matters, her interest in monastic literature and in the organization of life in a monastery. The manuscript attests to an important local feature of late medieval spirituality, i.e. to the influence of learned refugee monks active in the area

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<sup>61</sup> Pejović, *Manastiri na tlu Crne Gore*, 116.

<sup>62</sup> See note 7 herein. Balša accessed to power in 1403, which places the construction of the church into a period between 1404 and 1417.

<sup>63</sup> The archaeological investigation was carried out by the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Montenegro. The excavation report was published by Marković, "Manastir Moračnik", 9–18.

<sup>64</sup> Pejović, *Manastiri na tlu Crne Gore*, 130; Popović, *Krst u krugu*, 229.

<sup>65</sup> Marković, "Manastir Moračnik", 13–16, also reports on a small one-room church, with walls preserved to roof cornice height, discovered at the highest point of the island. As there is no reference to it in the documentary sources, it may only be assumed that it was intended either for use by the monks when the monastery was at its peak or as a funerary church of a noble person. In terms of ground plan and building method, it finds its closest analogy in the funerary church of Jelena Balšić in Beška. The tower apparently formed part of a broader fortification system of Lake Scutari and its construction preceded the other structures of the monastic settlement.

<sup>66</sup> For a bibliography on Nikon, see B. Bojović, *L' idéologie monarchique dans les hagiographies dynastiques du Moyen Age serbe* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1995), 209–300; see also the volume *Nikon Jerusalimac*, ed. Čulibrk.

or even at the courts of local lords.<sup>67</sup> The text belongs to the question-and-answer genre<sup>68</sup> and has the form of an epistolary dialogue.<sup>69</sup> The manuscript consists of two letters of Jelena Balšić and three letters of her spiritual father. Thematically, the *Collection* may be described as an encyclopaedic compilation, a flourishing literary genre in late medieval Slavic and Byzantine environments. These miscellanies were intended for communal reading, which means that they served educative purposes. The choice of topics and the entire contents of the *Gorica Collection* give some idea of what were the concerns of a highborn woman,<sup>70</sup> while her inclination towards hesychast spirituality was the result of the influential role of her learned spiritual father, Nikon,<sup>71</sup> whose letters contain references to biblical and patristic texts. The *Collection* makes use of quotations and paraphrases of hagiographic-historical, canonical, devotional, apocryphal, patristic, cosmological and geographical literature.<sup>72</sup>

Letters of spiritual guidance were not too frequent in Byzantine tradition, as evidenced by only a few surviving examples of this form of communication between Byzantine aristocratic women and their spiritual

<sup>67</sup> S. Radojčić, "Ideja o savršenom gradu u državi kneza Lazara i despota Stefana Lazarevića", *Zograf* 32 (2008), 8.

<sup>68</sup> T. Subotin Golubović, "Pitanja i odgovori", in *Leksikon srpskog srednjeg veka*, eds. S. Ćirković & R. Mihaljčić (Belgrade: Knowledge, 1999), 517. The Byzantine question-and-answer genre in an epistolary form was not unknown to Serbian literature. It was used by St Sava (Sabas) of Serbia in Chapter 58 of his *Nomocanon*, where he brought a translation of the letter of Niketas, Metropolitan of Heraklia, in reply to the questions posed by Bishop Constantine. The Archbishop of Ohrid replies to King Stefan Radoslav's fourteen liturgical and canonical questions. The Patriarch of Constantinople, Gennadios Scholarios, answers to the fifteen questions posed by Despot Djuradj Branković, cf. Dj. Trifunović, *Azbučnik srpskih srednjovekovnih književnih pojmova* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1990), 246.

<sup>69</sup> From the ample literature on epistolography, see e.g. T. V. Popov, "Vizantijska epistolografija", in *Vizantijska literatura* (Moscow: Nauka, 1974), 181–229; S. Tomin, "Epistolarna književnost i žene u srpskoj srednjovekovnoj kulturi", in *Žanrovi srpske književnosti*, vol. 2, eds. Z. Karanović & S. Radulović (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 2005), 89–97; M. Mullett, *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

<sup>70</sup> On the literacy and education of Byzantine upper-class women in Palaiologan times, cf. Angeliki E. Laiou, "The role of women in Byzantine society", *JÖB* 31 (1981), 255–257; A.-M. Talbot, "Bluestocking Nuns: Intellectual Life in the Convents of Late Byzantine", *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 604–618.

<sup>71</sup> Balj, "Ideje isihazma", 123–142; Jeromonah Jovan (Ćulibrk), "Nikon Jerusalimac i isihastičko predanje", in *Sveti Grigorije Palama u istoriji i sadašnjosti* (Srbinje 2001), 151–160.

<sup>72</sup> Bogdanović, "Gorički zbornik", 372–380.

guides. In the ninth century, Theodor the Studite maintained correspondence with a wide circle of women, including empresses, aristocratic women and nuns, who sought his advice on spiritual and other matters.<sup>73</sup> Of the correspondence maintained from 1142 to 1151 between the sevastokratorissa Irene Komnene and her spiritual guide, the monk Iakovos, now only survive forty-three letters written by the monk.<sup>74</sup> The Serbian and Byzantine examples show a measure of similarity in contents and structure. Nikon's spiritual guidance as offered in the *Gorica Collection* concerns the practice of bowing before the icons, the church ritual (l. 77–85b), prayer, charity, sin (l. 42b), and fasting,<sup>75</sup> while Iakovos' advice to Irene mostly concerns her must reads.<sup>76</sup> In doctrinal terms, both cases are focused on the dogma of the Holy Trinity. The nature of the Holy Trinity in Iakovos' letters is explicated in his text *On Faith*,<sup>77</sup> while Nikon's *Profession of Faith* speaks of his own experience of the Holy Trinity through the mysteries of baptism and the Eucharist (271b – 272a).<sup>78</sup> Nikon's hesychast beliefs are confirmed

<sup>73</sup> *Theodori Studitae Epistulae*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, vol. XXXI/1, ed. G. Fatouros (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991); A. P. Kazhdan & A.-M. Talbot, "Women and Iconoclasm", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 84/85 (1991/92), 396.

<sup>74</sup> The letters are available in *Iacobi Monachi Epistulae*, Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca 68, eds. E. Jeffreys & M. Jeffreys (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009). Towards the end of her life, the sevastokratorissa Irene, widow of Manuel I Komnenos' elder brother Andronikos, was accused of being Manuel's political enemy and arrested, cf. E. M. Jeffreys & M. J. Jeffreys, "Who was the sevastokratorissa Eirene?", *Byzantion* 64 (1994), 40–68; V. Vasilevsky, "O sevastokratorisse Irine", *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshchenia* 285 (1983), 179–185; E. Jeffreys, "The sevastokratorissa Eirene as literary patroness: the monk Iakovos", *JÖB* 32/33 (1982), 63–71. The monk Iakovos is known for his literary work, which includes homilies to the Virgin, preserved in two manuscripts (Par. Gr. 1208 and Vat. Gr. 1162, PG 127, cols. 544–700).

<sup>75</sup> Nikon's reply with his advice on personal, moral and spiritual perfection was a compilation of quotations from the Scripture (1a – 10b, 10a), cf. Dj. Trifunović, "Dve poslanice Jelene Balsić i Nikonova 'Povest o jerusalimskim crkvama i svetim mestima'", *Književna istorija* 18 (1972), 291–293; N. Gagova, "Gorichkiyat Sbornik v konteksta na yuzhnoslavjanskite vladatelski sbornitsi ot 14 i 15 v.", in *Nikon Jerusalemac*, ed. Ćulibrk, 207–210.

<sup>76</sup> *Iacobi Monachi Epistulae* XXXVII.

<sup>77</sup> *Iacobi Monachi Epistulae*, XXXVIII.

<sup>78</sup> In the view of A. Jevtić, "Ispovedanje vere Nikona Jerusalemca", in *Nikon Jerusalemac*, ed. Ćulibrk, 256, Nikon's assertion of his belief in the Holy Trinity, without addressing the question of the begetting of the Son and the proceeding of the Holy Spirit, suggests a fear of Islam rather than of the Latins; J. Purić, "Trojična terminologija Ispovedanja vere Nikona Jerusalemca", in *Nikon Jerusalemac*, ed. Ćulibrk, 269–279.

by his affirmation of the faith in the Holy Trinity, the central theme of all hesychasts.

Epistolography was an important vehicle for inspiring a sense of shared values among the Constantinopolitan aristocratic class resurging after 1261. The culture of exchange, collection, publication and (public) reading of letters played an influential role in the self-representation of aristocratic intellectual circles in the Palaiologan age.<sup>79</sup> Undoubtedly one of the most remarkable among the scholarly women in the reign of Michael III and Andronikos II was Theodora Raoulaina (c. 1240–1300), a writer, collector and patron of art and learning.<sup>80</sup> About 1284, she founded the monastery of St Andrew in Krisei in Constantinople, with a scriptorium where some fifteen manuscripts were written and illuminated.<sup>81</sup> That context can explain the fact that the focus of her correspondence with Gregory of Cyprus, Patriarch of Constantinople (1283–89), was the “education” of an aristocratic woman rather than spiritual instruction.<sup>82</sup> Patriarch Gregory’s twenty-nine surviving letters provide his recommendations for reading classical writers.<sup>83</sup> From the fourteenth century date the letters exchanged between Irene Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina, daughter of Nikephoros Choumnos and wife of Despot John Palaiologos, and her anonymous spiritual guide.<sup>84</sup> After her husband’s death in 1307, she founded the convent of Christ Philanthropos in Constantinople, to which she retired as a

<sup>79</sup> A. Riehle, “Rhetorik, Ritual und Repräsentation. Zur Briefliteratur gebildeter Eliten im spätbyzantinischen Konstantinopel (1261–1328)”, in *Urbanitas und Asteiotes. Kulturelle Ausdrucksformen von Status, 10.–15. Jahrhundert*, eds. K. Beyer & M. Grünbart (forthcoming).

<sup>80</sup> D. M. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family Kantakouzenos ca. 1100–1460* (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1968), no. 14, p. 16–18; A. Riehle, “Theodora Raulaina als Stifterin und Patronin”, in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, 25–26.

<sup>81</sup> On the group of manuscripts illuminated there under the patronage of Theodora Raoulaina, see R. S. Nelson & J. Lowden, “Palaeologina Group: Additional Manuscripts and New Questions”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 45 (1991), 59–68.

<sup>82</sup> C. N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Nicosia: Cyprus Research Centre, 1982), 43–45.

<sup>83</sup> E. B. Fryde, *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance (1261–c. 1360)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 181.

<sup>84</sup> Parts of the correspondence are available in V. Laurant, “La direction spirituelle à Byzance. La correspondance d’Irène-Eulogie Choumnaina Paléologine avec son second directeur”, *REB* 14 (1956), 48–86. It can be found in its entirety in *A Woman’s Quest for Spiritual Guidance: The Correspondence of Princess Irene Eulogia Choumnaina*, ed. A. Constantinides Hero (Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1986).

nun until her death in 1355.<sup>85</sup> This correspondence reflects the spiritual and intellectual ferment which spurred dissension between humanist and Palamite circles and touched the Byzantine aristocracy in the mid-fourteenth century. Even though the assumption that Eulogia's spiritual advisor was a hesychast should be taken with caution,<sup>86</sup> the letters express high esteem for the spiritual authorities such as Theoleptos of Philadelphia and Athanasios I, Patriarch of Constantinople,<sup>87</sup> whose writings bore relevance to the hesychast teaching of Gregory Palamas.<sup>88</sup>

The *Gorica Collection* shows that the late-medieval Serbian aristocracy draw on Byzantine literary traditions in its intellectual and spiritual pursuits. That the patronage of literary work was cultivated among South-Slavic aristocratic women as well, is shown by *Bdinski Sbornik* (Collection) written in 1360 for Anna, wife of the Bulgarian tsar of Vidin, John Stratsimir.<sup>89</sup> The compilation revolves around monastic themes: lives of female

<sup>85</sup> A.-M. Talbot, "Philanthropos: *Typikon* of Irene Choumnaina Palaiologina for the Convent of Christ Philanthropos in Constantinople", in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, III, eds. J. Thomas et al. (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2000), no. 47, 1383–1388; A. Hero, "Irene-Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina, Abbess of the Convent of Philanthropos Soter in Constantinople", *Byzantinische Forschungen* IX (1985), 119–146; V. Laurent, "Une princesse byzantine au cloître: Irène-Eulogie Choumnos Paléologine, fondatrice du couvent de femmes του Φιλανθρώπου Σωτήρος", *Echos d'Orient* XXIX (1930), 29–60; R. Janin, "Les Monastères du Christ Philanthrope à Constantinople", *Revue des Etudes byzantines* IV (1946), 135–162; idem, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin. Première partie, Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat œcuménique. Tome III, Les églises et les monastères*, 2nd ed. (Paris 1969), 527–529.

<sup>86</sup> The anonymous advisor states his love of solitude and quietness (ἡσυχία) more than once, but J. Meyendorff, in his "Introduction" to *A Woman's Quest for Spiritual Guidance*, 18, suggests that it does not necessarily imply a hesychast monk, but may also imply a life outside the usual monastic community.

<sup>87</sup> The young monk who acted as Eulogia's spiritual guide also authored a few compositions in honour of Patriarch Athanasios I, the copies of which were kept in Xerolophos, the monastery founded by Athanasios I and an important hesychast centre in Constantinople. On Theoleptos, see A. Constantinides Hero, *The Life and Letters of Theoleptos of Philadelphia* (Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1994); R. E. Sinkewicz, *Theoleptos of Philadelphia. The Monastic Discourses. A Critical Edition, Translation and Study*, ser. Studies and Texts CXI (Toronto: Pontifical Institute for Mediaeval Studies, 1992); S. Salaville, "Un directeur spirituel à Byzance au début du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle: Théolepte de Philadelphia. Homélie sur Noël et la vie religieuse", in *Mélanges Joseph de Ghellinck*, Museum Lessianum. Section historique XIV, vol. II (Gembloux: J. Duculot, 1951), 877–887.

<sup>88</sup> Meyendorff, "Introduction", 18–19.

<sup>89</sup> *Bdinski Sbornik, Ghent Slavonic Ms 408, A.D. 1360*, facsimile edition with a presentation by I. Dujčev (London: Variorum Reprints, 1972).

saints, excerpts from the *Miterikon* and accounts of the holy places in Jerusalem.<sup>90</sup> It is believed therefore to have been intended for novices or to a female monastery which enjoyed Anna's patronage.<sup>91</sup> A similar miscellany commissioned by an aristocratic woman is the *Theotokarion* (State Historical Museum, Moscow, no. 3484) compiled in 1425 for the wife of Lješ Crnojević, Mara. It contains sermons for the feasts of the Virgin and the miracles of the Virgin,<sup>92</sup> and is believed to have been intended for the monastery of the Dormition of the Virgin in the isle of Kom, a foundation of the Crnojević family.

Although the *Gorica Collection* still awaits a comprehensive critical edition, it has been the object of many studies looking at it from literary, philological, historical and theological perspectives.<sup>93</sup> The questions posed

<sup>90</sup> M. Petrova, "A picture of female religious experience: Late-Byzantine anthologies of women saints", in *Kobieta w kulturze sredniowiecznej Europy* (Poznan 1995), 195–200; eadem, "The Bdinski Sbornik: a case study". *Otium. Časopis za povijest svakodnevnice* 4/1-2 (1996), 1–11; N. Georgieva-Gagova, "Sustavitelskata kontseptsia na Bdinski Sbornik, vprost za obrazovanite vladetelski supругi i tehните knigi", in *Medievistika i kulturna antropologija. Sbornik v chest na 40-godishnana tvorcheska deynost na prof. Donka Petkanova* (Sofia 1988), 258–281.

<sup>91</sup> Gagova, "Gorichkiyat Sbornik", 218.

<sup>92</sup> K. Ivanova, "Sbornik na Mara Leševa – neizvesten pametnik na srbskama knižnina ot XV vek", in *Slovensko srednjovekovno nasledje. Zbornik posvećen profesoru Djordju Trifunoviću*, eds. Z. Vitić et al. (Belgrade 2001), 211–229.

<sup>93</sup> For the studies of literary perspectives see N. Radojčić, "Dve istovetne prepiske iz XV veka, jedna srpska i jedna vizantijska", *Glasnik SANIV*, 1 (Belgrade 1952), 177–178; Dj. Sp. Radojčić, "O smernoj Jeleni i njenom Otpisaniju bogoljubnom", *Delo* 4 (Belgrade 1958), 590–594, as well as his "Tri Vizantinca kao stari srpski književnici", *Tvorci i dela stare srpske književnosti* (Titograd: Grafički zavod, 1963), 247–250; Bogdanović, "Gorički zbornik", 372–380; Trifunović, "Dve poslanice", 289–326; S. Tomin, "Otpisanije bogoljubno Jelene Balšić. Prilog shvatanju autorskog načela u srednjovekovnoj književnosti", in *Naučni sastanak slavista u Vukove dane*, vol. 30/2 (Belgrade 2002), 73–82; Gagova, "Gorichkiyat Sbornik", 205–214; T. Jovanović, "Putovanje u Svetu zemlju u srpskoj književnosti od XIII do kraja XVIII veka", in *Sveta zemlja u srpskoj književnosti od XIII do kraja XVIII veka*, ed. T. Jovanović (Belgrade 2007), 14. For philological studies see D. Bogdanović, "Inventar rukopisa manastira Savina", in D. Medaković, *Manastir Savina. Velika crkva, riznica, rukopisi* (Belgrade 1978), 89–96; M. Grković, "Poslanice Jelene Balšić", *Naučni sastanak slavista u Vukove dane* 23/2 (Belgrade 1995), 195–200; N. Sindik, "Kodikologija Goričkog zbornika", in *Nikon Jerusalimac*, ed. J. Čulibrk, 185–200; N. Dragin, "O povesti Nikona Jerusalimca u Goričkom zborniku", *Zbornik Matice srpske za filologiju i lingvistiku* 44 (2001), 137–143. For the historical studies see S. Ćirković, "Metrološki odlomak Goričkog zbornika", *ZRVI XVI* (1975), 183–189; N. Radošević, "Kozmografski i geografski odlomci Goričkog zbornika", *ZRVI XX* (1981), 171–184; M. Ikonomu, "Gorički zbornik – poreklo, sadržaj o kosmogoniji", *Cyrrillomethodianum V* (Thessaloniki 1981), 187–196; Spremić, "Crkvene prilike u Zeti", 73–110; B. Bojović,



by Jelena Balšić and Nikon's answers address the issue of the organization of monastic life as well. Already in the second section titled *God-Loving Reply* (14a – 48b), Jelena speaks about her wavering between living a charitable life in the world on the one hand and a life in the monastery on the other. She asks her spiritual father to tell her something about both the communal and the solitary ways of life, in the light of the ongoing debate on spiritual matters in which some argue that Basil the Great praised coenobitism, as opposed to those who suggest that he advocated a life in solitude and silence (17a).<sup>94</sup> In the third and longest section, Nikon makes mention<sup>95</sup> of Jelena's funerary church in the island of Gorica (85b): **А оно еже гл(агол) еши мнѣ тако тако изволисе во(г)оу и намъ създати м(оли)твенныи храмъ въ каменнѣе и гробъ, нъ въ мѣсто анкомъ безмалвнокъ снм же и въ в тоцѣ...тако въ земли дѣоклитстѣи тамо, въ ездѣрѣ, рьсавском соу острови мнози. Мѣста ключима скѣтѣномъ пѣстынкъ. паче жеи монастыри велици зданныи же о т прѣждъ [You say that you desired to build a house of worship in stone, for God and for us, and a grave in a quiet place on the island ... in the land of Dioclea, on Rosava Lake, there are many islands, places which happen [to be] sketic deserts, moreover, great monasteries, erected long ago]. As we can see, apart from the information about the location of the church,<sup>96</sup> Nikon describes lake islands as places of sketic deserts. The next page contains the already quoted reference to Jelena's church and the church of St George, followed by the Old Testament episode about Moses delivering the Jewish people from bondage and their joy in the desert (86a): **Слыши и вьнемли штвѣть. Исранатѣне егда прѣсташе шт работу егѣпскихъ и вьселише се въ поустыню [The Jews ceased being Egyptian slaves and rejoiced in the desert]. Further down on the same page (86b), Nikon describes the desert as the abode and place of temptation of the prophet Elijah, Job and St John the Baptist: **илїа же прѣж(д)е и ю(а)ннъ семоу послѣдоваше законѣ. И швъ оубо въ кармили бє(з)малвїа прохож(д)******

“Nikon le Hiéorosolymitian, Le Recueil de Gorica”, *L' idéologie monarchique dans les hagiographies dynastiques du moyen age Serbe* (Rome 1995), 209–220. For the studies of theological perspectives see E. Economou, “Some observations on the Hesychast Diaspora in the fifteenth century”, *Studi sull' Oriente Cristiano* 2/2 (Rome 1998), 103–110; M. Lazić, *Isihazam srpske knjige* (Niš 1999), 138–141, 215–217, 223–225; Jevtić, “Isповедanje vere Nikona Jerusalimca”, 255–268; Purić, “Trojična terminologija”, 269–278; A. Radović, “Hristolikost i bogorodičnost čovjeka i čovjekovo stanje poslije smrti prema Nikonu Jerusalimcu”, in *Nikon Jerusalimac*, ed. Čulibrk, 279–292; Balj, “Ideje isihazma”, 123–142.

<sup>94</sup> Trifunović, “Dve poslanice”, 291; Balj, “Ideje isihazma”, 137.

<sup>95</sup> Gagova, “Gorichkiyat Sbornik”, 210, briefly refers to Nikon's portrayal of the island of Gorica as a desert.

<sup>96</sup> Nikon makes mentions four times of Jelena's church, cf. Gagova, “Gorichkiyat Sbornik”, 210.



лаше по(д)внго себе присваае. веже въ поустыни пр(ѣ)бывае... [Elijah, and John before him, abided by the law. And Job, too, dwelling in the desert, went to quiet places to pursue ascetic labours].

Nikon calls the lake islets a desert and likens them to Old and New Testament examples.<sup>97</sup> The complex notion of the desert, central to Eastern Christian monasticism, as a rule refers to places intended for supreme forms of asceticism.<sup>98</sup> The use of biblical metaphors suggests that the author felt it important to underscore that the practices were in fact the imitation of Scriptural models. Central biblical figures, such as Moses, the prophet Elijah and John the Baptist, pursued an ascetic life in the desert, and it was in the desert that Christ experienced his first temptation by the devil.<sup>99</sup> In medieval Serbian texts, the word *desert* had a range of meanings.<sup>100</sup> In the *Gorica Collection*, given the hesychast nature of the sources that Nikon drew from,<sup>101</sup> the term *desert* was used to denote the habitat of a hermit, the place of his ascetic labours.

Our most important source for the issue of the organization of monastic life — *The Rules of Sketic Life* — is Nikon's third letter (177a – 257b).<sup>102</sup>

<sup>97</sup> On the use of biblical quotations in describing *holy mountains*, see D. Popović, “Pustinje i svete gore srednjovekovne Srbije”, 263; Gagova, “Gorichkiyat Sbornik”, 211–212.

<sup>98</sup> On the notion of the *desert*, see *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 1, s. v. “Desert”, by J. A. T(hompson) & A. C(utler), 613. On the Early Christian notion of the *desert* documented in Byzantine written sources, see C. Rapp, “Desert, City and Countryside in the Early Christian Imagination”, *Church History and Religious Culture* 86:1/4 (2006), 93–112. On the terminology of eremitic monasticism, see Popović, “Dečanska pustinja u okvirima vizantijskog i srpskog eremitskog monaštva”, 163–223. See also her “Desert as Heavenly Jerusalem: the imagery of sacred space”, in *Making New Jerusalems. The Translation of Sacred Spaces in Christian Culture*, ed. A. M. Lidov (Moscow 2009), 35–37; “Pustinje i svete gore srednjovekovne Srbije”, 253–274; “Pustinožiteljstvo Svetog Save srpskog”, *Liceum* 7, Kult svetih na Balkanu II (2002), 61–79; as well as N. Gagova & I. Špadijer, “Dve varijante anahoretskog tipa u južnoslovenskoj hagiografiji (Teodosijevo Žitije svetog Petra Koriškog i Jevtimijevo Žitije svetog Jovana Rilskog)”, in *Slovensko srednjovekovno nasledje*, 159–175.

<sup>99</sup> Popović, “Desert as Heavenly Jerusalem”, 151; A. Guillaumont, “La conception du désert chez les moines d’Égypte”, *Aux origines du monachisme chrétien* (Bégrolles-en-Mauges: Abbaye de Bellefontaine, 1979), 67–87.

<sup>100</sup> Popović, “Dečanska pustinja”, 163–166, and “Pustinje i svete gore”, 258.

<sup>101</sup> E.g. John Climacus, Simeon the New Theologian, Gregory Sinaites, Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, cf. Trifunović, “Dve poslanice”, 256.

<sup>102</sup> The text is titled: Прѣдана оуставомъ иже кромѣ монастирскаго оустава живоуцихъ сирѣчь скытнѣмъ, правило въседньневно иже мы прѣхуемъ въ штьць нашихъ иже и зде да изложимъ произволѣющимъ, D. Bogdanović, *Katalog ćirilskih rukopisa manastira Hilandara* (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti & Narodna biblioteka Srbije, 1978), 124.

Nikon laid down the *typikon* for the “church and *kellion*” of the Annunciation monastery at Jelena’s order,<sup>103</sup> prescribing the rules of daily prayer for the *kellion* and the rules for the Great, Apostles’ and Dormition fasts.<sup>104</sup> The *typikon* also contains sayings of the Fathers and instructions for the spiritual struggle against evil thoughts.<sup>105</sup> It also prescribes that a hesychast monk must not have any possession other than his own *rasa*. As Nina Gagova rightfully observes, the *Gorica Collection* is unique among the manuscripts commissioned by South-Slavic rulers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in that it lays down the rule for a funerary church and its *kellia*. In the above-cited account of Jelena’s church, Nikon speaks of other lake islands as places where monastic life observes the sketic rules of fasting and silence (85b, 86a): *We have heard, and indeed now we can see with our own eyes, that there, in the land of Dioclea, on Rosava Lake, there are many islands, places which happen [to be] sketic deserts, moreover, great monasteries, erected long ago. And you say that the life of the monks in them is praiseworthy and that they live in love, filled with the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and in fasting, and in great silence; and celebrating God’s mercy, with their mind set on the autocrat and king through the words of God; and therefore without loving any of earthly things, true piety is in those who have known the truth.*<sup>106</sup> In his answer to Jelena’s question about the coenobitic and eremitic ways of life, Nikon, ten pages later, changes the addressee and says: **ВЫ ЖЕ, О(Т)ЦИ И БР(А)ТІА** [you, fathers and brethren], which, unless it is an orthographic error, suggests that Jelena was surrounded by a monastic community. Nikon’s words: **ОВИТЪБЛИ С(ВЕТА)ГО И ГЛАВНАГО ВЕЛНКО М(ОУЧЕ)НИКА ТРОПЕШФОРА ГЕВРГІА** [the community of the holy and glorious great-martyr vanquisher George], attest to the presence of a monastic community around the church of St George (86a). Briefly, Nikon’s letters seem to suggest that Jelena required a sketic *typikon* in order for the already established small monastic communities on Lake Scutari to be able to operate under a single set of rules.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Bogdanović, “Gorički zbornik”, 372–380; Trifunović, “Dve poslanice”, 294–295; Gagova, “Gorichkiyat Sbornik”, 214–215.

<sup>104</sup> The *Typikon* prescribes that half the Psalter should be read in one night and day, which is half the amount prescribed by the *Typikon* for the Karyes Kellion or the *Typikon* for Observing the Psalter, both laid down by St Sava, cf. L. Mirković, “Skitski ustavi Sv. Save”, *Brastvo* 28 (1934), 63–67.

<sup>105</sup> Trifunović, “Dve poslanice”, 294.

<sup>106</sup> Quoted from the translation from Old Slavonic into modern Serbian by hieromonk Jovan (Ćilibrk), “Uloga duhovnog očinstva u vaspitanju po Nikonu Jerusalimcu” (BA thesis, Duhovna akademija Sv. Vasilija Ostroškog, 2003), 29.

<sup>107</sup> Fifteenth-century sketic *typika* have survived in Russia, where they were brought by Nil Sorskii, founder of anchoritic monasticism in Russia, cf. E. V. Romanenko, *Nil*

The lack of documentary sources makes it difficult to keep further track of the monastic life in the isles of Lake Scutari, but the monasteries' economic history may be partly reconstructed from Ottoman imperial tax registers (defters).<sup>108</sup> According to the earliest Ottoman imperial tax register, of 1485, the monastery in Starčeva Gorica was a taxpaying entity.<sup>109</sup> According to the one of 1570/1,<sup>110</sup> the vineyards and crop fields owned by the monastery "since the days of old" were now recorded as monastic property.<sup>111</sup> The surviving sources suggest that the monastery in Starčeva Gorica stood out as the wealthiest of all in the sanjak of Scutari.<sup>112</sup> A Cattaran, and Venetian aristocrat, Mariano Bolizza (Marin Bolica), in his account of the sanjak of Scutari written in 1614, described Starčeva Gorica as one of the active monasteries in the lake islets.<sup>113</sup> According to the Russian ethnographer and historian Pavel Rovinsky (1831–1916), in the early twentieth century it was unknown when exactly the church in Starčeva Gorica fell into disuse.<sup>114</sup> The monasteries of St George (Beška) and of the Virgin (Moračnik) occur together in the Ottoman defters of 1570/1 and 1582.<sup>115</sup> The defters show that

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*Sorskii i tradicii ruskogo monashestva* (Moscow: Pamyatniki istoricheskoi mysli, 2003), as well as her "Nil Sorskii i tradicii ruskogo monashestva – Nilo-Sorskii skit kak unikal'noe yavlenie monastyrskoi kul'tury Rusi XV–XVII vv", *Istoricheski vestnik* 3–4 (1999), 89–152.

<sup>108</sup> O. Zirojević, *Posedni manastira u Skadarskom sandžaku* (Novi Pazar: DamaD, 1997), 63–65.

<sup>109</sup> S. Pulaha, *Defter-i mufassal Liva-i Iskenderiyye sene 890*, vol. II (Tirana 1974), 5.

<sup>110</sup> The defter of 1570/1 was created at the time the Ottoman central authority confiscated all church and monastic real property in the Balkans, and then resold it to the original owners. For more detail about the process and reasons for it, see A. Fotić, "Konfiskacija i prodaja manastira (crkava) u doba Selima II (problem crkvenih vakufa)", *Balcanica* XXVII (1996), 45–77.

<sup>111</sup> The monastic land holdings are listed in O. Zirojević, *Posedni manastira*, 63–64: in the village of Srbska, two fields; in the village of Grle (Grlje), one field; in the village of Berislavci, twelve fields and a half of one more field; in the village of Goričani, two fields and the area of land called Radunov laž; in the village of Gostilje, three fields; in the village of Kadrun, four vineyards and ten *dönüms* of fields; in the village of Krnica, two vineyards and the area of land [known as] Čiptač; and in the village of Mesa, two vineyards.

<sup>112</sup> Zirojević, *Posedni manastira*, 64.

<sup>113</sup> M. Bolica, "Opis sandžakata skadarskog iz 1614. godine", *Starine* XII (Zagreb 1880), quoted in P. Rovinski, *Crna Gora u prošlosti i sadašnjosti*, vol. I (Cetinje: Izdavački centar & Centralna narodna biblioteka; Sr. Karlovci/Novi Sad: Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, 1993), 579.

<sup>114</sup> Rovinski, *Crna Gora*, vol. IV, 443.

<sup>115</sup> Zirojević, *Posedni manastira*, 20 and 48–49.

both monasteries regained full ownership of their former possessions,<sup>116</sup> and that they owned vineyards and land in the same villages.<sup>117</sup> As has been said above, Bolizza described both monasteries as active in 1614.<sup>118</sup>

Conclusions suggested by this research concern several aspects of the monastic life of the island communities on Lake Scutari. What we have been able to learn of the organization of monastic life from the material and written sources is that there were in the islands both *sketae* and smaller coenobitic communities and, very likely, recluses as well. Given that the monastic foundations of the Balšićs observed hesychast practices, it seems reasonable to assume that small monastic communities of the type could have been formed outside the monastic enclosures as well. Therefore, archaeological field surveys in the area of Lake Scutari appear to be the logical next step in researching this topic. Apart from providing an insight into the monastic lifestyles pursued by the island communities, the sources also permit a glimpse into their spiritual life. Remarkably important to this topic is the Gorica Collection, a literary work created in response to the spiritual needs of Jelena Balšić and the community in whose midst she spent a part of her life. The content and purpose of the manuscript shows that, in the spiritual climate of the period, strongly marked by hesychast beliefs and values, the island monasteries on Lake Scutari in Zeta were worthy protagonists of Serbian culture and spirituality. In the area of the activity of the Balšićs as monastic founders and patrons, the greatest credit should be ascribed to Jelena Balšić. A founder and renovator of two churches in the island of Beška, and patron and sponsor of the *Gorica Collection*, she may be considered a relevant representative of late medieval court culture.

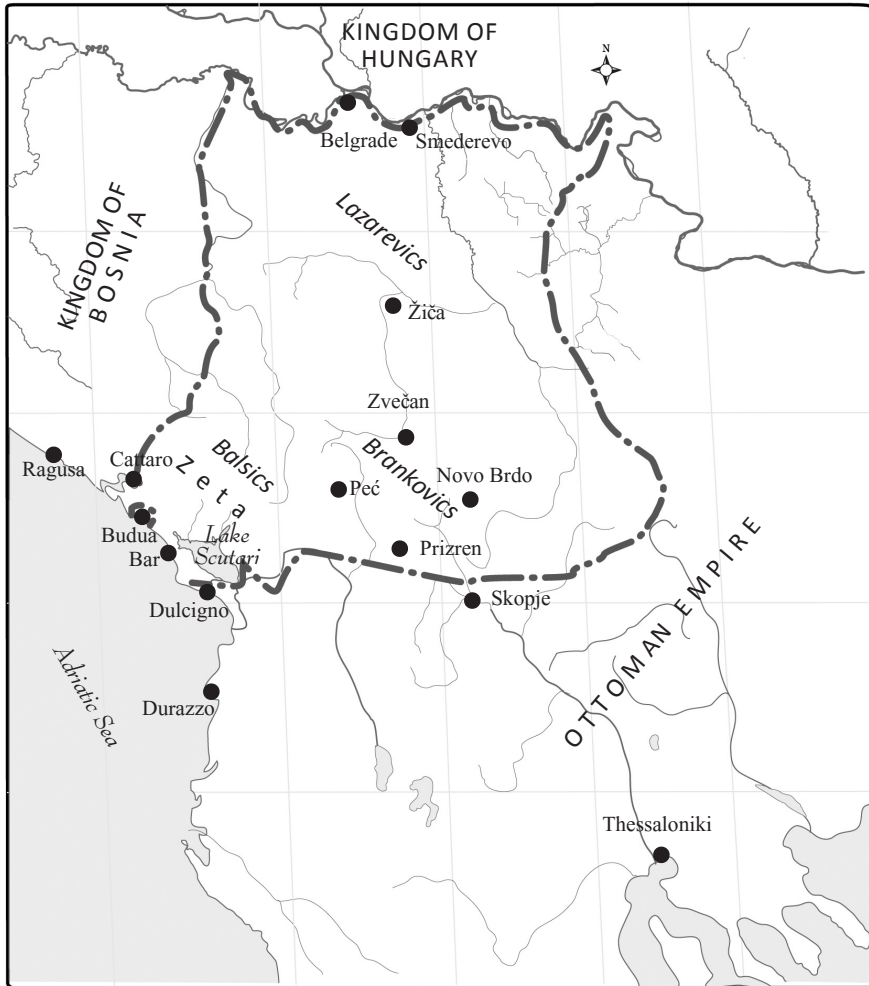
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<sup>116</sup> According to the defter of 1485, the monastery of St George owned three houses, and that of the Virgin (Moračnik), only one, cf. Pulaha, *Defter-i Mufassal 890*, 5; Zirojević, *Posedi manastira*, 20.

<sup>117</sup> Beška and Moračnik had land holdings in the villages of Kadrun (Skadar area), Bes (Krajina), Gostilje (Žabljak), Bobovište (Krajina). For a detailed list of their estates, see Zirojević, *Posedi manastira*, 21 and 49.

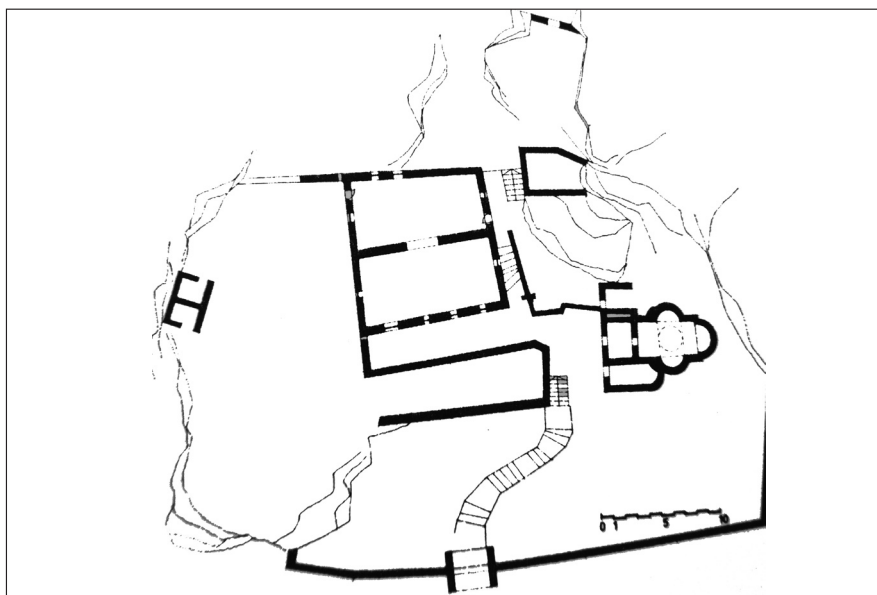
<sup>118</sup> Rovinski, *Crna Gora*, vol. I, 579.



Despotate of Serbia in 1423



Lake Scutari. Monastery in Starčeva Gorica with the church of the Dormition of the Virgin (1376–78)

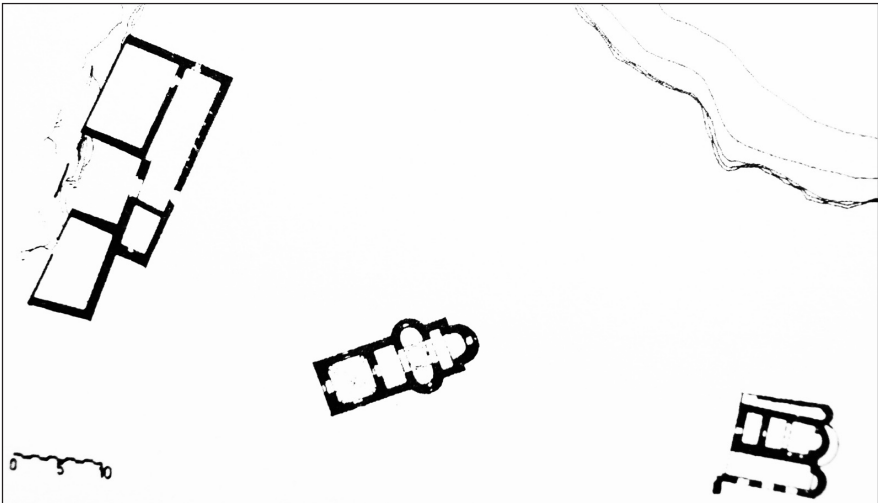


Lake Scutari. Monastery in Starčeva Gorica: ground plan





Lake Scutari. Monastic complex in Beška: churches of St George (last two decades of the fourteenth century) and of the Annunciation (1439)

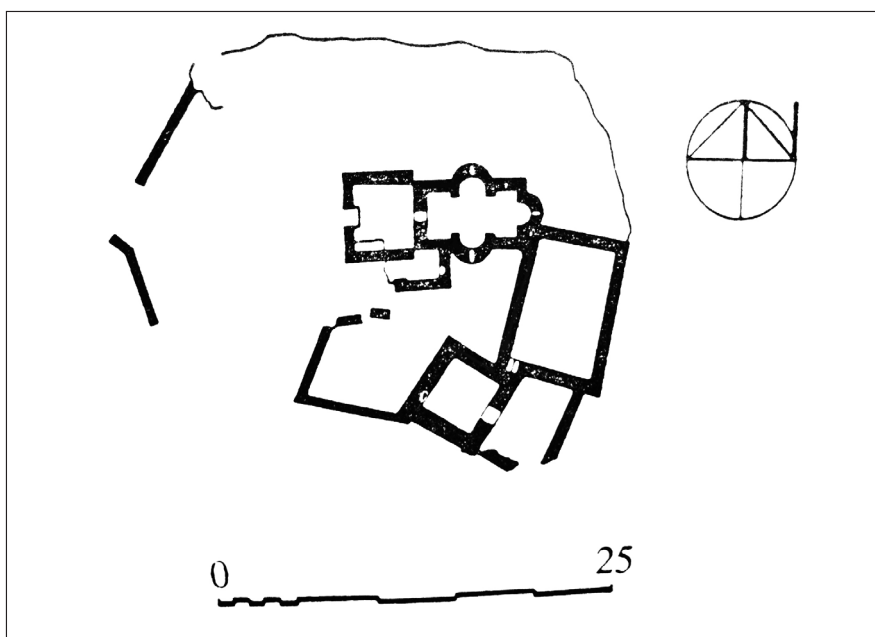


Lake Scutari. Monastic complex in Beška: ground plan





Lake Scutari. Monastery in Moračnik with the church dedicated to the Virgin (fifteenth century)



Lake Scutari. Monastery in Moračnik: ground plan

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## Serbs in Romania Relationship between Ethnic and Religious Identity

**Abstract:** The paper looks at the role of religion in the ethnic identity of the Serbs in Romania, based on the fieldwork conducted in August 2010 among the Serbian communities in the Danube Gorge (Rom. *Clisura Dunării*; loc. Ser. *Banatska klišura*), western Romania. A historical perspective being necessary in studying and understanding the complexities of identity structures, the paper offers a brief historical overview of the Serbian community in Romania. Serbs have been living in the Banat since medieval times, their oldest settlements dating back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Today, they mostly live in western Romania (Timiș, Arad, Caraș-Severin and Mehedinți counties), Timișoara being their cultural, political and religious centre. Over the last decades, the community has been numerically declining due to strong assimilation processes and demographic trends, as evidenced by successive census data (34,037 in 1977; 29,408 in 1992; 22,518 in 2002). The majority belong to the Serbian Orthodox Church (Diocese of Timișoara), but a number of neo-Protestant churches have appeared in the last decades. The research focuses on the role of the Orthodox religion among the Serbian minority in Romania and the role of new religious communities in relation to national identity. The role of the dominant Serbian Orthodox Church in preserving and strengthening ethnic identity is looked at, but also influences of other religious traditions which do not overlap with any particular ethnic group, such as neo-Protestantism. With regard to the supranational nature of neo-Protestantism, the aim of the study is to analyze the impact of these new religions on assimilation processes among the Serbs in Romania and to examine in what ways different religious communities influence either the strengthening or the weakening of Serbian ethnic identity.

**Keywords:** Serbs in Romania, Serbian Orthodox Church, neo-Protestants, Baptists, ethnic and religious identity, assimilation

### *1. An historical overview*

The history of the Serbs in what now is Romania may be divided into several distinctive periods: medieval, Ottoman, Habsburg, Austro-Hungarian, world wars, communist and post-communist. After the first settlers who had come in medieval times, Serbian immigration continued throughout the Ottoman period, which began with the Ottoman conquest of southern Hungary, more precisely, of the Banat in 1522 and Crișana in 1566. Most Serbs in Hungary settled in the course, or as a result, of the Ottoman invasion and subsequent wars (Aleksov 2010, 46). The most massive were two of these migrations, known as “great”, one led by Patriarch Arsenije III in 1690, the other, by Patriarch Arsenije IV in 1739. From the

early sixteenth century until the end of the eighteenth, Serbs settled more intensively and founded new settlements in Banat areas north of Timișoara (Cerović 2000, 21). From the sixteenth century they also began to settle in the southern Banat, in the *Clisura Dunării* or Danube Gorge.

Ottoman rule ended in 1717, when the Banat was seized by the Habsburgs. In order to give an economic and demographic impetus to its newly-conquered territories, the Habsburg Monarchy began organized colonization, land was cleared for agriculture and settlements developed. This planned resettlement carried out in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries included German, Magyar, Slovak, Czech, Bulgarian, Romanian and other settlers (Tejlor 2001, 10–24). After the Military Frontier was established in the early eighteenth century, Orthodox Christian Serbs from Buda, Komárom and Esztergom<sup>1</sup> moved to the Tisza-Mureș section of the Frontier, but there was also an inflow of Serbs into the Crișana region, north of the Banat (Panić 2003, 27). The central institution of the Serbian population in the Habsburg Monarchy, in religious as well as political terms, was the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Serbs were perceived as part of a broader Orthodox entity, given that collective identifications were powerfully influenced by religion. In 1790, the Serbs in Hungary, aware of their distinctiveness in ethnic and political terms, convened a momentous political rally, the Assembly of Temesvar/Timișoara,<sup>2</sup> which came up with the first Serbian national programme (Pavlović 2011, 33). The Assembly put forth economic, political, educational and cultural demands, which were a strong encouragement for the development of the Serbian community. Moreover, the Assembly called for territorial autonomy, a demand which, however, was not met (Pavlović 2005, 97). After the Revolution of 1848, the imperial decree of 1849 established the *Woiwodschaft Serbien und Temescher Banat* or the Duchy of Serbia and Temesvar Banat (abolished in 1860), the Austrian crown land seated in Timișoara, within which a reform of Serbian schooling and culture could begin.<sup>3</sup> Under the terms of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, the Serb-inhabited areas came under Hungarian administration. The period between 1867 and 1918 was marked by a strong Magyarization pressure on the non-Magyar population, including the Serbs as one of the numerically strongest ethnic group in southern Hungary (Aleksov 2010, 40–46).

After the First World War, the Banat was partitioned: Romania obtained the city of Timișoara and many Serb-inhabited settlements, and the

<sup>1</sup> The Serbs had been settled there since the migration under Arsenije III Čarnojević in the late seventeenth century (cf. Panić 2003).

<sup>2</sup> For more on the Assembly, cf. Gavrilović & Petrović 1972; Gavrilović 2005.

<sup>3</sup> On the archival sources for the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history of the Serbs in Romania, cf. Gavrilović 1994.

Serbs in Romania were granted national minority status (Pavlović 2003, 342). Under the terms of the Paris Peace Conference, some 50,000 Serbs distributed in about fifty settlements found themselves within the borders of Romania. The status of the Serbian minority in Romania was regulated by international agreements between the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the Kingdom of Romania. The Banat was divided into Serbian, Romanian and Hungarian, and the international borders were confirmed by the Treaties of Versailles (1919) and Trianon (1920).<sup>4</sup> In the interwar period, the Serbs in Romania had the right to their own schools, church and cultural organizations. Political changes as an outcome of the Second World War had their effect on the Serbian minority as well. It was soon exposed to various forms and levels of assimilation, culminating after the Resolution of the Cominform (1948). This unfavourable situation, which continued until 1989, had its harshest ramifications in the area of religion. In 1948 the entire education system in Romania was nationalized and placed under state control, and all Serbian confessional schools were shut down. The early communist period was marked by strong assimilation pressures, including the deportation of the Banat Serbs to the Baragan Plain near the Danube delta in 1951.<sup>5</sup> The period between the enactment of the Romanian Constitution of 1965 and the collapse of communism in 1989 was marked by the normalization of relations between Yugoslavia and Romania (Pavlović 2003, 343). The post-communist period has seen the introduction of several new legislations concerning minority issues, and the Constitution of 1991 has to a great extent ensured protection of minority rights (ethnic, religious, linguistic), and enabled the Serbian and other ethnic communities to have their representatives in parliament. Thus, the position of the Serbian community is undergoing a change, experiencing a revival of tradition and religion, the establishing of community organizations (such as the Union of Serbs in Romania) and the re-establishing of former institutions. For the Serbian minority in Romania, the last ten years have been a period of improvement both in terms of creating institutions whose purpose is to further the preservation of their language, traditions and customs and in terms of support extended from various institutions in Serbia.

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<sup>4</sup> An informative volume on the Serbian Banat (eds. Matić & Jović) published in 2010 offers an historical overview from prehistoric times, looking at the colonization of the Banat, the period of Ottoman rule, the Ottoman-Habsburg War of 1683–99, Habsburg rule (1716–1918), the Assembly of Temesvar, the division of the Banat and the 1921 Constitution of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, as well as a look at cultural and literary life in the Banat, with special reference to great Serbian authors associated with the Banat in one way or another (Dositej Obradović, Jovan Sterija Popović, Miloš Crnjanski and Vasko Popa).

<sup>5</sup> For more on the deportations, see Milin & Stepanov 1996.



## 2. Serbs in Romania: current situation

According to the 2002 census, the Serbian community in Romania numbers 22,562 persons, which makes it the eighth in numerical strength among Romania's twenty national minorities. The census shows that Serbs are distributed in all counties, but mostly in those of Timiș (13,273), Caraș-Severin (6,082), Arad (1,217) and Mehedinți (1,178).<sup>6</sup> The area with the highest concentration of Serbs is the Banat, where they mostly live in ethnically mixed environments, accounting for more than eighty percent of the population in only four settlements in the Danube Gorge: Belobreșca, Divici, Cralovăț and Radimna. Demographically, the Serbian community in Romania shows low birth rates and an ageing population. The presence of Serbs in the Banat involves the areas of Muntenegrul bănățean (*Banatska Crna Gora*), Clisura Dunării (Danube Gorge) and highland areas east of Timișoara. Their numbers in Muntenegrul bănățean and the northeast Banat rapidly decreased after the Romanian Orthodox Church became independent from the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Karlowitz (Karlovci) in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> A large number of Serb-inhabited settlements then came under the Sibiu Metropolitanate, which exercised jurisdiction over the Orthodox Christian Romanians (Cerović 2000, 34).

Today, the largest number of members of the Serbian minority lives in settlements in the Danube Gorge, which stretches along 142 km from Baziaș to Drobete-Turnu Severin. In thirteen of its settlements, Serbs have been living since medieval times: Radimna, Moldova Veche, Zlatița, Lescovița, Liubcova, Socol, Divici, Svinița, Câmpia, Măcești, Belobreșca, Pojejena, and Baziaș (Tomić 1989). Research suggests that Baziaș was founded in the thirteenth century and is the oldest settlement in the Danube Gorge, followed by Radimna, Zlatița, Lescovița, and Svinița; there were Serbian families in almost all settlements in the area, and Moldova Nouă is known to have had a Serbian church and priest in 1877 (Tomić 1989, 18). In most settlements, the Serbian children attend classes in their mother-tongue, but due to the decreasing number of pupils, often as the result of migration from villages to cities, more and more of them begin to attend classes in Romanian.

Although Serbian is a vanishing language in this region nowadays, the presence of various Serbian institutions, schools and the Church has helped its survival. The current sociolinguistic situation is markedly characterized by

<sup>6</sup> For more statistical data for the Serbs in Romania, see Stepanov 2007.

<sup>7</sup> On Serbian-Romanian church relations, see e.g. Lupulovici 2009; Bokšan 1998; Bugarski 1994; Hitchins 1977.

bilingualism and, in certain cases, by majority language monolingualism. The role of Serbian is not important only within the Serbian Orthodox Church, as its language of worship, but also in the Serbian neo-Protestant communities, given that language constitutes an important marker of ethnic identity of non-Orthodox Serbs as well. The Serbian children attend eleven four-year schools with about 500 pupils, and two eight-year schools with classes taught both in Serbian and in Romanian. There is a Serbian high school (gymnasium) in Timișoara (“Dositej Obradović”), as well as university departments for Serbian studies in Timișoara and Bucharest. The schools in the Serbian language, however, are evidently fading away; in certain places there are classes in the mother tongue only for the first four years, and there are an increasing number of bilingual children coming from mixed marriages, who tend to proceed to higher levels of education in Romanian.

Serbs in Romania are organized into the Union of Serbs founded in 1989 with the aim of preserving their cultural and religious identity. The Serbian press, considerably richer in the past,<sup>8</sup> today is centred round the daily *Naša reč* (Our Word), the magazine *Književni život* (Literary Life), and the weekly *Timișvarski vesnik* (Timișoara Herald) started in 2009. What appears to be imminent for the Serbian community in Romania, and for the other Serbian diaspora communities, is a process of assimilation and acculturation, with religion and language playing a key role in the process.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Religious identity of the Serbs in Romania

Historically, the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church was important in the formation of national identity, since the Serbs in Romania tend to base their ethnic identity on religion and language. Thus the Serbs who do not speak Serbian and are not members of the Serbian Orthodox Church are often perceived as not being “true Serbs”. The Serbian Orthodox Church is doubtlessly the keeper of the tradition, language and customs of the Serbs in Romania today. However, the role of the church in modern societies has been changing in response to the changing socio-historical circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The beginnings of the Serbian press in today’s Romania can be traced back to 1827, when Dimitrije P. Tirol launched the *Banatski almanah* (Banat Almanac), followed by the political paper *Južna pčela* (Southern Bee) in 1851, the literary paper *Svetovid* in 1852, *Sloga* (Concord) in 1918. Later on a number of different literary magazines sprang up such as the almanacs *Život* (Life, in 1936) and *Novi život* (New Life, in 1957).

<sup>9</sup> For a more detailed account of different forms of acculturation and assimilation among the Serbs in Timișoara, see Pavlović 2005.

<sup>10</sup> A recent study of the Serbian Orthodox theologian and philosopher Radovan Bigović (2010, 14) points to the changed role of the church in modern society, and emphasizes

Religious pluralism poses an ever greater challenge for modern societies, both for religious communities and for governments. Under communism, the Serbian community, and Orthodox Christianity in general, were primarily characterized by secularization, manifest in a decline in churchgoing and in the number of public religious festivals and gatherings. According to the ethnologist Mirjana Pavlović (2008, 135), in reference to the Serbs in Timișoara, “religion was not forbidden by law, but it came to be seen as undesirable and retrograde, while the practice of religion was normatively strictly privatized and confined to the family circle and places of worship”. After the fall of communism, many East-European countries have experienced a religious revival, but also the emergence of new ways of experiencing and displaying religious feelings: “Particular shape and form of this religious growth and structural changes of the religious mentalities occurred in the process of transition from a closed, ideologically monopolized society to pluralist one” (Gog 2006, 37). However, “mainline churches in Eastern Europe find themselves in a complex situation. On the one hand, they have recovered from spiritual and institutional segregation. On the other hand, they have to come to terms with the new social realities they face and respond to the new challenges, the greatest of which is perhaps that of religious pluralism” (Merdjanova 2001, 281). It should be noted, however, that the presence of Roman Catholics, Greek-Catholics and Protestants, primarily in the Banat and Transylvania, makes religious diversity a phenomenon of a much earlier date in Romania. The predominant religion of the Serbian community in Romania, Orthodoxy, does not differ from that of the majority nation. There are in Romania Serbian Orthodox churches in almost every place where Serbs live. The eparchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Romania is seated in Timișoara and has three churches in the city itself. The Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Timișoara comprises 57 parishes within 56 church communities, with 67 parish and monastery churches and chapels. There are five monasteries of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which are very important in the history and spiritual tradition of the Serbs in Romania: Baziaș (Bazjaš), Zlatița (Zlatica), St.Gheorghe (Sv. Djuradj), Bezdin and Cusici (Kusić).<sup>11</sup> As observed by the Serbian Ortho-

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that the functioning of modern societies is independent of ecclesiastical authorities, religious doctrines and church canons.

<sup>11</sup> The founding of the Serbian monasteries in what now is Romania began at the time of St Sava of Serbia in the early thirteenth century (Zlatița), and continued until the Ottoman conquest in the sixteenth century (Baziaș, Cusici, Bezdin). Tradition has it that Zlatița was founded by the Serbian archbishop Sava (St Sava), of the Nemanjić dynasty, in 1225; he endowed it with estates and appointed its first abbot; the monastery suffered damage under Ottoman rule. For more, see Kostić 1940, 65.

dox Bishop of Timișoara Lukijan (Lucian), speaking about the preservation of the identity of his church in Romania: “There is a centuries-long tradition of cooperation and mutual respect with the Romanians and the Romanian Orthodox Church, especially because Romanians, the same as Serbs, are an Orthodox people, which means that we share the same religion, the same baptism, the same Eucharist. That is the greatest wealth of Christianity” (Pantelić 2008, 7).

According to the abovementioned census, there are among the Serbs in Romania about 21,000 Orthodox and 284 Roman Catholic,<sup>12</sup> the rest being members of neo-Protestant communities, the most numerous of which are Baptists, Pentecostals, Nazarenes and Seventh-Day Adventists. Living in ethnically and religiously heterogeneous areas, the Serbs in Romania came into more direct contact with German and Hungarian missionaries who began to spread neo-Protestantism in the mid-eighteenth century. The term neo-Protestantism primarily refers to religious communi-



Serbian Orthodox monastery  
of Baziaș, Romania

<sup>12</sup> The data for Roman Catholics most probably refer to Krashovans/Karaševci, who are Catholics but declare themselves variously as Serbs, Croats or Karašovani. The issue of Krashovan identity has been studied the most by the linguist Milja Radan (2002). According to the Serbian historian Ljubomir Cerović (2000, 38), it has been assumed that Krashovans are Serbs who converted to Roman Catholicism at a time of one of the most massive conversions of Serbs to Catholicism in the east Banat carried out by Rome in 1366. The Krashovans have kept many elements of Orthodoxy, including the Julian calendar. In the view of the distinguished Serbian ethnologist Jovan Erdeljanović, the Krashovans constitute the oldest Serbian ethnic layer in the Banat, while the geographer Jovan Cvijić argues that they had come to the Banat from the area of the Crna Reka, a tributary of the Timok, in the late fourteenth century, and that they converted to Roman Catholicism in their new environment. Radan specifies the Krashovan-inhabited settlements in the valley of the Karaš/Caraș in the south-west Romanian Banat: Karaševo, Vodnik, Jabalče, Klokotić, Lupak, Nermidj, Ravnik. The Krashovans lived in the southern Serbian Banat in the following settlements: Banatski Karlovac, Izbište, Uljma, Gudurica and VelikoSredište. In May 2010, researches of the Institute for Balkan Studies of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Biljana Sikimić and Aleksandra Djurić-Milovanović) conducted a short field research with descendants of the Krashovans in Uljma and Izbište. The results of this research await publication.

ties that arose from some of the branches of the Reformation, most often from Anabaptists, Pietists and Mennonites, during the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century.<sup>13</sup> In the Habsburg Monarchy, neo-Protestant communities began to be established in ethnically mixed environments, while the first missionaries were Germans and Hungarians. The largest neo-Protestant communities, Nazarene, Baptist, Adventist and Pentecostal, recruited followers from many ethnic groups in the Banat. Although conversion to another religious tradition was less frequent among Orthodox Serbs than among Germans, Magyars or Slovaks, i.e. members of some of the Protestant churches, during the twentieth century neo-Protestantism found a certain number of followers among Orthodox believers as well. The Baptist movement, on which this paper is primarily focused, began to spread from Germany in the nineteenth century, reaching Denmark, Austria, Poland and Hungary, and, to an extent, parts of the Balkans and Russia.<sup>14</sup> The constant source of missionaries was the Hamburg theological school and a driving force behind the missionary undertaking was one of the founders of the modern German Baptist movement, Johann Gerhard Oncken (Bjelajac 2010, 92). At first the Baptist missionary work in the Habsburg Monarchy was targeted on the German-speaking population, but later on Baptist pastors also began to preach in Magyar, Slovak, Romanian and Serbian. The first independent Baptist church was founded in Novi Sad in 1892, and Baptist communities were also founded among Romanians and Slovaks in the Banat. The first Romanian converts in 1917, Mihai Grivoi and Gruia Bara, were coal miners at Reșița. This is a valuable piece of information, since many of the subsequent Serbian converts were also workers in this and other mines (Bjelajac 2010, 103). The Baptists were recognized as a religious community only in 1944, but the recognition did not much improve

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<sup>13</sup> For a very detailed chapter on Protestantism in Eastern Europe, see McGrath & Marks 2004. As far as Serbian authors are concerned, Branko Bjelajac has offered, in several of his studies (notably Bjelajac 2002), a detailed historical overview of the founding and development of Protestant communities in Serbia.

<sup>14</sup> A Baptist doctrine was first formulated in the early seventeenth century by the English Puritans John Smyth and Thomas Helwys. It spread to other parts of Europe in the nineteenth century, at first to Germany, later on to Scandinavia. Baptist theology is evangelical, and the Baptists' most important mission is evangelization. Today, Baptist denominations across the world share the following dogmatic principles: the Holy Scripture as the supreme authority on the issues of faith and life; a local church as an autonomous community of believers answerable to no one but the Lord, Jesus Christ; every reborn believer has direct access to the God's throne and shares in Christ's royal priesthood (priesthood of all believers); individuals are sovereign in matters of faith; only adult persons can be baptized, and by submersion. For more detail on the Baptists in Serbia and Romania, see Bjelajac 2010; Popovici 2007.

their position.<sup>15</sup> They were not allowed to perform baptism or to preach in public, and Bible distribution was limited. In the post-communist era, some neo-Protestant communities which had been operating “underground”, or had not been recognized by law, were granted a different status. In what Paul Mojzes calls the “religious topography of Romania” after the fall of communism, different neo-Protestant communities have seen a significant numerical growth. Thus, with about 129,000 members, the Baptist Union of Romania, a member of the Baptist World Alliance, is among the largest Baptist bodies in Europe; it is followed by the quite large Pentecostal body (Mojzes 1999). Many neo-Protestant churches have been built in the Romanian Banat since 1989, and with considerable financial support from Romanian immigrants in the United States of America, Canada and Western Europe. With new forms of religiosity now becoming part of a new cultural identity in contemporary societies, it appears worthwhile to examine what kind of changes are taking place in the process of formulating the ethnic identity of members of some minority communities.

#### *4. Serbs in the Danube Gorge: ethnographic material*

##### *4.1. Baptists in the Serbian settlements in the Danube Gorge*

This paper is based on the qualitative-oriented field research conducted in August 2010 in the Serbian settlements of Radimna (481), Pojejena (321), Moldova Veche (1423), Divici (296) and Liubcova (412).<sup>16</sup> It encompassed both Orthodox and Baptist Serbs, the latter being the most numerous neo-Protestant group in the region.<sup>17</sup> Based on semi-guided interviews, participants’ life stories and participant observation, we have sought to get as complete a picture as possible of the relationship between the Serb adherents to two different Christian traditions, and of the ways in which they articu-

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<sup>15</sup> The position of neo-Protestant communities under communism in Romania, with special reference to the Baptist communities in Cluj-Napoca, has been discussed by Denisa Bodeanu (2007), in a study covering the period of 1948–1989. Apart from the archival material, she has included more than forty interviews with members of Baptist communities active in the period.

<sup>16</sup> The figures in the brackets refer to the total number of Serbs according to the census of 2002.

<sup>17</sup> I wish to express my gratitude to the Eparchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Timișoara, the Union of Serbs in Romania, the Baptist pastors from Radimna, Liubcova, Pojejena, Moldova Veche and Coronini, and last but not least, to all interviewees, for helping me to collect material for this paper. I also wish to express my particular gratitude to the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Romanian Academy of Sciences (Timișoara Branch) whose project cooperation has made this research possible.



late their religious and ethnic identities, assuming that such an insight may help us understand how a community builds its identity and alterity. One of the goals of the fieldwork was to collect the material in the settlements with largest communities of Baptist Serbs. Namely, interviewees participating in a research on the neo-Protestant Romanian communities in Serbia (conducted from 2007) often mentioned their contacts and cooperation with both Romanian and Serbian communities in Romania. This cooperation has been intensified since the recent start of a partnership programme between the Baptist Union of Romania and Baptist churches in Serbia, which includes monthly visits of Baptist pastors and missionaries to Baptist churches in Serbia. The Bucharest-based Baptist Union of Romania is a legally recognized religious organization. The most numerous and largest Baptist communities can be found in the Romanian Banat, especially in the cities of Oradea, Arad and Timișoara. As our research has shown, unlike the situation in the Danube Gorge settlements, among the Serbs in the northern Banat, i.e. Muntenegrul bănățean, Baptist communities are not many.

Nazarenes were the first neo-Protestants to appear among the Banat Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy in the late nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> Through the activity of German and Hungarian missionaries, Nazarene beliefs spread in many settlements with an Orthodox population. As a result of their pacifist beliefs, many Nazarenes were imprisoned during both world wars, and many emigrated from Romania. Due to their marked insularity and non-proselytism, as well as the emergence of other neo-Protestant communities, the number of Nazarenes in Romania has been steadily decreasing, so that today they are no more than 1000 (with the seat in Arad). Nazarene Serbs lived in the areas of Arad, Timișoara and in settlements along the border. Today, the Nazarene community in Timișoara has about fifty members, including a few Serbs. According to the field data, there are several families of Nazarene Serbs in the Danube Gorge settlements. However, lacking their own local place of worship, they gather once a month in the town of Moldova Nouă. In the memory of Orthodox priests and believers, Nazarenes usually evoke the existence of their separate cemeteries, the singing of hymns at their gatherings, families with many children, and their uprightness and discipline. However, there where Nazarenes were present in larger numbers, Baptists were few or none at all. Baptist beliefs spread among the

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<sup>18</sup> In 2006 the historian Bojan Aleksov published a more detailed study on Nazarenes, *Religious Dissent between the Modern and National: Nazarenes in Hungary and Serbia 1850–1914*. Aleksov gives an account of the Nazarene community from the late eighteenth century until the First World War, looks at Nazarene influences on the movement of *Bogomoljci* (Devotionalists) and the strengthening of nationalism within the Serbian Orthodox Church. For an article on Nazarene Romanians in Serbia from an anthropological perspective, see Djurić-Milovanović 2010.



Serbian settlements in the Danube Gorge

Serbs of the Danube Gorge settlements by Nazarene Romanians, but they were more reluctant to adopt them than Romanians (Budimir 1994, 60). The first appearance of the Baptist faith in these areas is associated with the arrival in 1878 of German colporteurs of the Bible Society from Budapest. It was first embraced by Germans, later on by Romanians, while the first Serbian Baptist communities were founded in some Serbian settlements in the Danube Gorge in the early twentieth century. The first conversions to Baptist Christianity took place about 1919 in Moldova Nouă and Coroini, which soon became missionary centres with preachers spreading the Baptist faith to other nearby settlements (Popovici 2007, 167). It should be noted that in some cases it was Nazarenes who converted to Baptist Christianity and then spread it in their native places: “In Moldova Veche it was the Nazarene Iva Stefanović who introduced the Baptist faith to the village” (Budimir 1994, 86). In 1936 two Serbian families in Pojejena Sârbă converted to Baptist Christianity, but the first baptisms, in the river Radimna, were not performed until 1948. It was only in 1975 that the church in Pojejena Sârbă obtained permission and started to offer worship services in the Serbian language. In one of the oldest Danube Gorge settlements, Radimna, the first Baptist baptism was performed in 1954, and the newly-converted Baptists used to gather in a private home. In the following years, the Baptist Serbs, lacking a place of worship of their own, attended ser-

vices in a neighbouring place three kilometres away. After many difficulties with authorities, a Serbian Baptist church was founded in Radimna in 1988. The largest single baptism was performed in 1993, involving some twenty people, and with the attendance of “two brothers from Yugoslavia [who] gave sermon in the Serbian language” (Budimir 1994, 73). In several Serbian villages (Divici, Baziaș, Belobreșca, Zlatița), Baptist communities, however few, emerged only after the 1989 Revolution. The growth of Baptist communities has come as a result of Baptist missionary work, greater number of theologically educated preachers, and the status of its being a legally recognized denomination. Farther south in the Banat, more precisely in the Danube Gorge, there are several settlements where Serb members account for more than one half of the Baptist community, and in some of them worship services are performed in Serbian, which primarily goes for the Serbian village of Radimna, whose Baptist community numbers some seventy members. The village of Pojejena Sârbă, with its earliest Serbian Baptist community in Romania, nowadays does not have more than thirty-five believers. In Moldova Veche, the Baptist community comprises both Serbs and Romanians, and services are performed in Romanian. The southernmost settlement included in our research is Liubcova, although Baptist Serbs are quite few and worship services are performed in Romanian. Our interlocutors generally speak poor Serbian. In the case of older generations, one of the reasons may be mixed marriages, while younger generations increasingly attend classes in Romanian language. The only fully competent in using the Serbian language is the oldest generation, the middle generation uses Serbian to communicate with the older generation, while the youngest use their mother tongue very rarely.<sup>19</sup> The process of acculturation and assimilation is in many cases spurred and accelerated by mixed marriages.

#### 4.2. “Us” and “Others”: Orthodox Serbs and Baptist Serbs

One of the focuses of our field research, and this paper, is the perception of the religious Other within one ethnic group, i.e. how Orthodox Serbs perceive themselves in relation to non-Orthodox Serbs, and how Serbs belonging to a minority religion articulate their religious identity and build relations with the confession accepted by the majority.<sup>20</sup> To examine the

<sup>19</sup> Sociolinguistic situation characterized by the loss of the mother tongue in diaspora communities has also been described by Tanja Petrović (2009) for the Serbs in Bela Krajina (Slovenia).

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that field data suggest that Serbs, in contrast to Romanians, hardly ever convert and that therefore we cannot speak about a large number of Baptist Serbs in general, but only of their not negligible presence in certain geographical areas.

role of religion in the forming and strengthening of the ethnic identity of a diaspora community is a complex and demanding research task.

The field research was conducted in the form of interviews in the interviewees' mother tongue, Serbian, based on a semi-guided questionnaire, and with the use of participant observation strategies. The topics included everyday religious practices, conversion, family histories, mixed marriages, but also attitudes towards the "religious other" in local communities. Orthodox interviewees described the number of Baptist Serbs as very small, except in Radimna, where the Serbian Baptist community is numerically the strongest. Almost all Baptist interviewees pointed to the year 1989 (revolution in Romania) as a turning point for the numerical growth and overall improvement of the position of their Baptist community:

[1] In 1975–1988 there were no baptisms, then three women converted from the Orthodox Church; we were baptized in 1989 and in 1993 the church had twenty members; we had evangelization, we organized baptism in the river, twenty [people] from Radimna alone. A lot of young people were there. That was the largest baptism. Then we began to build a new church. (GD; B; Radimna)<sup>21</sup>

[2] There was no church in our village. In 1975 I started to go to the church in Pojejena, the Romanian Pojejena. We went there on foot, then [we started to go] to Şuşca. After the revolution we were given the opportunity to build a church. (GŽ; B; Radimna)

[3] Believers from Radimna had been going to Pojejena and to Şuşca for thirty years, until 1988. After the revolution, a church was established here. (IC; B; Radimna)

A majority of the Baptist interviewees are the first or second generation of believers, as compared to the already second or third generation of believers in the Baptist communities in Serbia (the Serbian Banat). Conversion was inspired by the example of their Romanian Baptist neighbours and Baptist missionary activity. Our interlocutors spoke about the first encounters with Baptist Romanians, who sang religious songs, preached and read the Bible while working in the mine in Moldova Veche. Although the founding of the first Baptist communities is generally placed in the 1960s and 1970s, the eighties and the post-communist period have seen a significant growth: congregations began to build their houses of prayer, so that

<sup>21</sup> Given in the brackets at the end of every fragment are the initials of the interviewee, the letter B for Baptist or O for Orthodox, and the name of the place where the interview was recorded. For the purpose of clarity, the interviewer's questions are italicized, and the interview fragments designated with numbers. The English translation of the transcribed fragments, selected from the audio corpus containing 15 hours of recorded material, demanded minor alterations in order to be understandable to non-Serbian speakers.

now they no longer have to gather in private homes. They all took part in the building of churches with the help of their fellow believers from abroad. Most Baptist Serbs previously went to a Serbian Orthodox church, or come from Orthodox families. Few of our interlocutors were born into a Baptist family, which indicates the recentness of the conversion process. Although Radimna is the largest Serbian Baptist community, worship services are partly held in Serbian, and the sermon is preached in Romanian. In other settlements worship services are mostly bilingual.

[4] *In what language are worship services?* At first everything was in Serbian. Now we do it more in Romanian; more pastors are educated in Romanian, that's why. (ŽG; B; Radimna)

[5] We spoke Serbian for ten minutes in Pojejena. There was evangelization in the courtyard, the pastor from Pojejena [was] from Langovet, we said everything in Serbian. (SB; B; Pojejena)

[6] Today services are in Romanian; there are not many Serbs any more, and now every Serb speaks Romanian. (SM; B; Liubcova)

Neo-Protestantism has been embraced by Romanians more widely than by Serbs, but even so, the latter do not tend to convert easily. Our interviewees mentioned only very few Nazarene Serbs, while Baptists are the most numerous neo-Protestant group among the Serbs in Romania, above all in the Danube Gorge area. In the discourse of our interlocutors about their baptism, i.e. conversion, the reaction of their broader community, their family and the Orthodox Church occupied a central place:

[7] The priest was against it, he went to the police to complain about us. We are like sectarians, we do not believe in the cross, we do not celebrate the *slava*<sup>22</sup> on Mitrovdan [St. Demetrius' Day], on Petkovača [St. Petka's Day]. (ŽG; B; Radimna)

[8] *What do your neighbours say?* They say, You do as you please, I'll go where my parents are. They don't want to leave their dead, to not have memorial service held for them, their graves censed. (PI; B; Radimna)

[9] My father said to me, I'm ashamed to show my face because of what you did, you went over to the Pocaiti.<sup>23</sup> (ND; B; Moldova Veche)

[10] It's the greatest sin to change from one faith to another. And I say, It's one God. Me, abandoning my faith, I didn't abandon my faith, I believe in Lord Jesus. (GI; B; Radimna).

<sup>22</sup> The celebration of the family (or village church) patron saint's feast day is specific to Orthodox Christian Serbs, who consider it a peculiarity of their culture. Every household observes one or two family saint's days a year and the custom is passed on from father to son.

<sup>23</sup> *Pocait*, pl. *pocaiti*, "penitent", is the Romanian word for neo-Protestants, in this case, Baptists.



[11] It was a heavy cross to bear for us because of our sister. Nobody liked us being in this faith. We were driven out of our home twice. We suffered a lot because of the faith. My mother was not against it, but the whole family was. (SM; B; Radimna)

[12] They started to agitate my husband. At first, they said, Some penitent you are, what you did is a sin. They say our faith is imaginary... But I believe in the same God as you do. (AL; B; Divici)

The Baptists are admitted into the community of the faithful through baptism. As they reject infant baptism, only adults can be members of the community. Most of our interlocutors had been baptized (usually at an early age) into the Orthodox Church. Through being re-baptized, now as adults, they were admitted into a new community of faith. Bible reading is an essential topic in the discourse of our Baptist interlocutors, both as a moment of “revelation”, and as one of the ways in which Romanian missionaries acquainted Serbs with Baptist beliefs:

[13] *How did you convert?* How did I convert? I converted, in fact I read the Holy Scripture. You don't become Protestant if I convince you to, but when the Bible comes into your hands. A man who has become Protestant can explain the Holy Scripture by himself. Not everybody becomes Protestant. The Bible must be given to people the way it is written, to be available as it is written; it's better not to give them any biblical study at all... (ND; B; Moldova Veche)

[14] Then I look at them, and they sing, talk of the Bible, talk of church work. They pray, and I say to my wife, They are praising the Lord. They pray at meals, how nice it is, a nice life... I go to work with them ... they propose to give me a Holy Scripture. They have the Holy Scripture in Serbian ... they prayed in Romanian, they were Romanian. Our village, few people, nobody know who believers are, some [are] poor. (SM; B; Radimna)

[15] *Are there any Baptists among the Serbs?* Here, no, only [among] Gypsies. Among Romanians, yes, there are. They are very active. Elsewhere, there's not a single village without at least a few. Not many, but they are there. If not Baptists, then Nazarenes, if not Nazarenes, then Pentecostals, or Jehovah Witnesses. (VP; O; Moldova Veche)

Both Baptist and Orthodox Serbs say that the number of Serb members of Baptist churches is small, but there are some in most villages. The conversion process is met with the strong reaction of the convert's environment, which sees it as an unacceptable behaviour, often as a result of the stigma attached to Baptist Serbs by the Orthodox majority:

[16] There were very few Serbs in the Baptist Church before, and this hasn't changed. Very rarely do Serbs give up their faith. If you're born in this faith, you stay in this faith, you don't change it. It's very different from Orthodoxy. (*Do you believe in the same God?*) I don't know how much they believe in God and how much in customs. (KK; B; Liubcova)



[17] I was shocked by the question of a Serb from Timișoara. He's Orthodox. We're talking and so, talking, we think of having a drink. I take a non-alcoholic one. And he says to me, You are Serb by name, but you're not Serb. Why? I ask. Well, he says, You're not Orthodox. Well, my Serb brother, the way you see it, Serbs are very few. How's that?, he says. The way I see it, there are much more Serbs. There are Serbs who are Orthodox, then those who are Protestant, but they all are of Serbian stock. Let's not diminish Serbs that much; they are much bigger in my eyes than they are in yours. When I said that, he said nothing in reply. If someone's converted from Orthodoxy to another faith, he loses his Serbianness. We're tightening the belt of Serbdom, we're limiting it. (ND; B; Moldova Veche)

[18] (*There are not many Pocaiti Serbs?*) Not many. (*What about Nazarene?*) No, it's not like that now. Two brothers, Nazarenes, died and there'd been a feud between them, and they died and they hadn't spoken to each other. So, what kind of a Nazarene is that! They say, Love your neighbour as you love yourself. So, how can that be, if you don't speak to your brother. God is one, there's no other. One God only, Lord is one. [There is] No Nazarene God. (Lj.M; O; Moldova Veche)

During interviews, our interlocutors, regardless of their religious affiliation, emphasized elements of their ethnic affiliation, above all their mother tongue:

[19] For me, Serbia remains the greatest state in the world. I can't call myself a Serb and lie. This is my Serbia, I'm Serb and I live here. (VP; O; Moldova Veche)

[20] If you're [married to] a Serb, you should be able to speak Serbian. That's what I said to my wife. (SM; B; Moldova Veche)

[21] I'm Serb like you, but I was born in Romania by mistake. (ST; B; Moldova Veche)

[22] My mother tongue is Serbian, a teacher from Užice. We are Serbs, my great-grandfather was Serb, my father, my mother... now everybody's mixing ... their children are half-blood. (ŽG; B; Moldova Veche).

It is observable from the quoted interview fragments that the Serbian language plays the role of a key marker of Serbian identity, regardless of confession. Language is a distinctive element that differentiates them from Romanians, ties them together into one, ethnically distinct community of Serbs, determines their position in society (as members of the Serbian diaspora in Romania), affects their sense of belonging and how they declare themselves. On the other hand, what is characteristic of Baptist as well as of other neo-Protestant groups is the emphasis on the supranational nature of the body of believers, i.e. primacy of religious identity over ethnic:

[23] *Does it make any difference in the church if you are Serb or Romanian?*  
There's no difference in the church, what's important is that we're believ-

ers; nor does the Lord care about that, the Lord cares about the heart. One flock, one shepherd. (ŽG; B; Moldova Veche)

[24] There's no difference; you can be Serb even if you're not Orthodox. (MH; B; Moldova Veche)

That there has been a long-standing social distance between Romanians and Serbs may best be seen from the virtually non-existent cases of mixed marriages until recently. Mixed marriages have apparently been perceived as an unacceptable form of social behaviour, as illustrated by the following interview fragments, where the loss of the Serbian mother tongue is emphasized:

[25] *Do Serbs marry Romanians?* It's not a problem for younger generations, and, to tell you the truth, that's the advantage of Romanian citizenship. How shall I put it, a Serb marries a Romanian woman, she adopts the Serbian name, the children will speak Serbian; but if a Serbian woman marries a Romanian man, then that's the end of it. (ND; B; Moldova Veche)

[26] My husband said, From Sviņița to Zlatița, there can only be Serbs. I don't want to see any Vlachs.<sup>24</sup> He wouldn't let any daughter marry a Romanian; no, another nation is out of question. And, they didn't dare (MN; O; Moldova Veche)

[27] Children don't speak Serbian. I was born here; I know not only who my parents are, but also my great-grandfathers. There's this mentality that, if we live in Romania, we should know Romanian, it's where we'll get a job. And his surname is Djurković. But they won't know Serbian, and their family name's Djurković. They won't speak Serbian in his family. (VP; O; Moldova Veche)

[28] If the wife is Romanian, the children speak Serbian, and if a Romanian marries a Serbian wife, only Romanian. (AL; B; Divici)

It is the increasing number of mixed Serbian-Romanian marriages that indicates the shrinking of social distance. Mixed marriages, however, are much more numerous in neo-Protestant communities, which are religiously endogamous.

[29] I was born in Moldova Veche; my grandfather, my grandmother, they were Serbs. I took a Romanian wife. You won't find Serbs among the Baptists. No, they want the Orthodox faith, the people's [faith]. (SM; B; Moldova Veche)

Describing the settlements in the Danube Gorge, Tomić (1989, 17) observes that Serbs are not too manifestly pious, that they respect the church and priests, perpetuate old customs and celebrate festivals, the most important of which are the feast days of the family patron saint and the patron saint of their village church. There is no doubt that the communist

<sup>24</sup> The term for Romanians widely used by Serbs in Romania.

regime considerably contributed to the decline in active participation in the religious life of the community. The role of the Orthodox Church and religion has, however, been slowly restored over the past few years, including the activities of Serbian Orthodox communities occasioned for the greatest religious feast days, such as Christmas Eve, Christmas, Easter and the village patron saint's day. At the Serbian monasteries of Zlatița and Baziaș summer camps are organized for children, where active dialogue in Serbian fostered between children and priests provides an opportunity to talk about Orthodoxy, tradition and customs. At schools, Orthodox religious instruction classes are attended by children from Baptist or other neo-Protestant families as well, since Baptist religious instruction has not been instituted.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, the children of Baptist parents sing in Orthodox choirs together with the children from Orthodox families. Both Baptist and Orthodox Serbs celebrate the Christian holidays according to the Julian calendar, unlike the Romanians, who adopted the Gregorian calendar. This indicates that Baptist Serbs perpetuate some elements of their previous faith, even though they do not explicitly figure in their teaching:

[30] We celebrate the New Year Serbian style, on 13 January. (SM; B; Pojejena)

[31] The church in Liubcova exists since 1993. It has about twenty-five members, mostly Romanians. We hold services according to the old calendar, Serbian style, Christmas [on] January 7th, the New Year [on] January 13th. (SM; B; Liubcova)

These facts seem to be very important to the Serbian community as a whole, since our interlocutors referred to the activities jointly organized by Orthodox and Baptist Serbs for the occasion of important Christian holidays (such as the singing of Christmas carols, or choir and other performances), as well as their generally improved relations in the post-communist period:

[32] As neighbours, we have good relations, everything is as it was. When they go around carolling, all doors are open. We do the carolling more, they do their own; they don't sing ours. (SH; B; Radimna)

[33] *What are your relations with the Serbian Orthodox Church?* Relations depend on the priest. Generally, they are much more open now; it was different before, now we have the same rights. (GD; B; Radimna)

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<sup>25</sup> Since the Baptists reject infant baptism, the children of Baptist parents are not active members of the community. Once they come of age, they are free to decide whether they will be baptized into the Baptist or some other community. Some were even baptized into the Orthodox Church. For an interesting article addressing the issue of the children of Baptist parents in the Romanian educational system in 1984–89, see Bodéanu 2009.

The fact that the *slava* is not observed by the Baptists frequently causes an adverse reaction of the Orthodox:

[34] *Baptists do not observe the slava?* No. They don't. They'll forget who they are. If you have no past, you can't have a future either. These customs remind us of what we were. Slavas are observed. On the *slava* day, it's compulsory to light a candle. (VP; O; Moldova Veche)

Although the Baptist Serbs do not observe the *slava* or go, as is customary, to the *slava* celebration of those who do, they remember that the practice was observed before and often mention it in their discourse:

[35] *Do you go over to your neighbours on the day of their slava?* On their family *slava*: We practised that before, when we were Orthodox. But now, in these Evangelical cults, you don't observe anything that doesn't come from Jesus Christ, the birth, the resurrection and the ascension, and not Saint Elias or Saint Nicholas. It would be to deny our faith. We don't go to a *slava*, or where censing is done or food eaten for the dead. (MH; B; Moldova Veche).

[36] *Was the slava observed in your home?* Yes, Saint John's Day, 20 January, that's the family *slava*, a priest used to come, back then he attended school in Yugoslavia. I remember him. He was quite well prepared theologically. He graduated from two faculties. (SM; B; Moldova Veche)

An important theme in almost all interviews was the cemetery, especially in the context of the relationship with the Serbian Orthodox Church. Previously all cemeteries were church-owned, and they were partitioned in such a way that all neo-Protestant Serbs had a separate part of the cemetery, which may be seen as an indicator of their marginalization within the majority Orthodox community. Today, cemeteries are municipal and contacts with the Serbian Orthodox Church have intensified with regard to cemetery maintenance, since Baptists do not attend services for the dead commonly held by the Orthodox:

[37] I go to the cemetery to tidy up, to weed. (ŽG; B; Radimna)

[38] They wouldn't let us [in] before, no Pocaiti to be buried on this cemetery. When they call for something, we're the first to show up to tidy up. (GJ; B; Radimna)

[39] The cemetery's not partitioned, although there are separate ones. Cemeteries are municipal, not the church's. (MH; B; Moldova Veche)

Although the number of Baptist Serbs is quite small compared to the Orthodox majority, their presence in the Danube Gorge indicates that the two religious traditions, now occupying much more "public space" than they did under communism, intermingle. On the other hand, the social stigma attached to neo-Protestant communities, regardless of their legal status, has resulted from the previous long-standing unfavourable position of the

communities as a whole, and from the marginal position of their members themselves, as they usually came from poorer and educationally underprivileged backgrounds. Today, both the Baptists and the Orthodox have well-developed theological educational systems, which means that ministers are much better equipped to provide pastoral care and guidance to their communities.

##### *5. Relationship between religious and ethnic identities*

Over the past few decades, the concept of identity has come to occupy a central place within several disciplines concerned with humans and human societies. Two identity types specified as the most important are personal and collective. Personal identity may be understood as “the awareness of oneself as different from any other”. Collective identity, on the other hand, “joins origin and history, past and future, roots of tradition and rituals practised in collective festivities and celebrations, which strengthens the sense of belonging and solidarity in symbiosis with others” (Golubović 1999, 21). With identity being a sum of components, each of these can shape a different type of identity: ethnic, cultural, religious, regional etc. Rather than static, identity is a dynamic category that adjusts to change and is defined in relation to the “other”. Ethnic boundaries are very elastic; they tend to bend in response to internal and external pressures, and different social mechanisms. They are the product of subjective selection processes, which in turn depend on a given historical context and social structure. Since ethnicity is based both on similarities and on differences, every community is defined in relation to what it is not. An ethnic group is defined through its relations with other groups, it is formed by its boundary, and the boundary itself is a social product whose importance may vary and which may change with time. The boundaries of a group are not necessarily ethnic-based; they can also be drawn along cultural or religious lines. Thus, for example, an invisible but recognizable boundary between Orthodox Serbs and Baptist Serbs indicates that each group defines its identity and distinctiveness in relation to the other one. According to A. Smith (1993, 6), “religious communities, where they aspire to be Churches, have appealed all sectors of a given population or even across ethnic boundaries. Their message is either national or universal. ... Religious identities derive from the sphere of communication and socialization. ... They have therefore tended to join in a single community of all the faithful all those who feel they share certain symbolic codes, value systems and traditions of belief and ritual”. Religious identities are often closely related to ethnic identities. In contrast to “world religions”, which have sought to cross or even abolish ethnic boundaries, most reli-

gious communities tended to coincide with ethnic groups, and many ethnic minorities retain strong religious ties and emblems even today.

Even though ethnic identity has distinctive characteristics differentiating it from other identities, including religious, these two identities frequently overlap. If we take language as a criterion for drawing up an ethnic boundary, we can see that it plays a major role in preventing assimilation and constitutes the stable core of an individual's sense of belonging to his or her ethnic group, regardless of religious affiliation. In the discourse of our interlocutors, language functions as a universal category, tying all Serbs together regardless of their religious community: [20] *If you're [married to] a Serb, you should be able to speak Serbian.* [22] *My mother tongue is Serbian... We are Serbs.*

Their sense of belonging to the ethnic community of Serbs has not changed with the change in religious affiliation, and their ethnic identity is primarily based on language. However, the question is whether the sense of belonging to the Serb ethnic community that is based on linguistic identity, rather than on the Orthodox religion and tradition, will be as strong in the third or fourth generation of Baptists, where the "memory" of the religion of their Serbian ancestors or their mother tongue might be lost. Ethnic identity is built and manifested around a number of ethnic symbols which are seen as more or less representative of a community. Symbolism is in fact an important characteristic of ethnic identity. In the discourse of our interlocutors, there figures a selection of religious symbols as important elements of ethnic distinctiveness, such as, for instance, the custom of celebrating the family or village patron saint's day, or the practice of observing religious holidays according to the Julian calendar: [30] *We celebrate the New Year Serbian style, on 13 January;* [31] *We hold services according to the old calendar, Serbian style, Christmas [on] January 7th, the New Year [on] January 13th;* [34] *These customs remind us of what we were. Slavas are observed;* [35] *We practised that before, when we were Orthodox.*

"Slipping" from one identity, or identity type, into another is situationally determined and depends on the preservation of the boundary (ethnic or religious), i.e. it becomes important when the boundary is exposed to pressure. Conversation about the "other", about a religiously different member of the same ethnic community in the diaspora, brings the problem of negative tagging and rejection by the community to the surface: [7] *The priest was against it, he went to the police to complain about us;* [9] *My father said to me, I'm ashamed to show my face because of what you did, you went over to the Pocaiti;* [10] *It's the greatest sin to change from one faith to another;* [11] *It was a heavy cross to bear for us because of our sister. Nobody liked us being in this faith. We were driven out of our home twice;* [17] *You are Serb by name, but you're not Serb ... Well, he says, You're not Orthodox ... There are Serbs who are*



*Orthodox, then those who are Protestant, but they all are of Serbian stock. ... If someone's converted from Orthodox to another religion, he loses his Serbianness.*

The majority of the interviewees, both Baptist and Orthodox, emphasized the Serbs' reluctance to convert: [16] *There were very few Serbs in the Baptist Church before, and this hasn't changed. Very rarely do Serbs abandon their faith. If you were born in this faith, you stay in this faith, you don't change it.*

Adherence to the "predominant" religion of an ethnic group as a whole may be particularly strong among members of ethnic minorities living in the immediate neighbourhood of the "mother country". Brubaker (1995, 7) defines it as "triangular relationship between national minorities, the newly nationalizing states in which they live and the external national 'homelands' to which they belong, or can be construed as belonging by ethnocultural affinity though not, ordinarily, by legal citizenship". This definition seems to apply to the Serbian minority in Romania as well. Their adherence to Orthodoxy and membership of the Serbian Orthodox Church provides a sense of historical continuity and tradition, and ties the ethnic community with the religion that predominates in the mother country.

Over the centuries, Serbs in Romania have been able to preserve their linguistic (Serbian) and religious (Orthodox) identity primarily owing to the community's strict rule of endogamy. Assimilation processes, especially pronounced over the last twenty years, are indicated by the increasing number of Serbian-Romanian marriages. Ethnically mixed marriages reflect also on the use of mother tongue, as well as on affiliation to the majority confession. Apart from influencing the attitude towards the mother tongue, the selection of the spouse of the same or different nationality may frequently be a significant indicator of the attitude towards the idea of national identity (Pavićević 2005, 430). On the other hand, contacts with Romanians, many of whom belong to the Baptist Church, result in mixed marriages: [22] *now everybody's mixing ... their children are half-blood;* [29] *I took a Romanian wife. You won't find Serbs among the Baptists.* The very emphasis on (ethnic) equality in supranational neo-Protestant communities, as an element underpinning religion-based cohesion, plays a key role in the expansion of Evangelical communities and their universal messages. [23] *There's no difference in the church, what's important is that we're believers.* By laying emphasis on religious identity, Baptists emphasize that ethnic identity is irrelevant in community membership, and that, therefore, it is religion and not ethnicity that is seen as central in defining "sameness" and "otherness". However, despite the supranational orientation of Baptist churches, Baptist Serb believers seem to feel the need to "symbolically" emphasize their ethnic affiliation, as may be seen from the inscription on the church building in Radimna: The Serbian Baptist Church. An

adverse attitude of the majority of Orthodox Serbs, although much less pronounced than it was in the past, at the time when the first Baptist communities were founded, may be observed in the use of the negatively connotated Romanian word *pocaiti* (“penitents”) to refer to those who converted to the Baptist faith. However, mutual respect and dialogue between Orthodox Serbs and Baptists with regard to local community issues is growing. Religious pluralism poses a great challenge, both for societies and governments on the one hand, and for religious communities on the other. The diaspora issue and diaspora studies are directly related to the issues of ethnic identity, while religious affiliation certainly plays an important role in building the identity of diaspora communities. The intertwining of religious and ethnic identities raises numerous questions, and studies of diaspora communities and of their modes of adaptation may provide valuable insights into general patterns of religious change.



Serbian Baptist Church in Radimna,  
Romania

### 6. Concluding considerations

In studying diaspora communities, processes of assimilation and integration are closely related to the issues of identity of given groups, whether ethnic or religious. Since the preservation of a minority's identity always depends on the policies of a society, the government's institutional support at different levels may encourage productive differences through continuous cultural interaction of both ethnic and religious minorities. In that sense, the extent to which diaspora communities would preserve their ethnic identity primarily depends on institutional programs, legislation, the presence or absence of minority institutions.<sup>26</sup> Over time, Serbs in Romania have kept a sense of belonging to the Serbian community, but they have also developed a sense of belonging to Romanian society. Over all that time, the Orthodox

<sup>26</sup> The Union of Serbs in Romania supports various cultural events during the year, the Days of Serbian Culture in Timișoara being but one of them. For the calendar of cultural events, see <http://savezsrba.ro/kultura-umetnost/akcije/>

faith has been instrumental in the preservation of tradition and language. However, the presence, within the Serbian ethnic group, of communities of Protestant origin indicates that the encounter with different religious traditions has led to changes which are taking place in many diaspora communities. In a certain number of cases, the adoption of a different set of religious beliefs by Serbs in the Danube Gorge came as a result of their contact with the ethnic communities which introduced neo-Protestantism in the Banat, but also with Romanian missionaries who had well-organized and developed Baptist churches. The numerical growth of neo-Protestant communities in post-communist Romania is a good indicator of strong processes of social change and of the so-called religious revival that has swept ethnic minorities in Romania. The studying of identity dynamic may prove central to understanding the processes taking place in diaspora communities, with a special emphasis on preservation of cultural individualities in a multiethnic environment such as the Serbian and Romanian parts of the Banat. The issues of complex identities, double minorities and religion in diaspora communities require a continuous research process which, with time, should show whether the numerically small group of Baptist Serbs will influence the assimilation processes in any way, what kind of changes in cultural identities will take place among members of supranational religious communities, as well as whether such changes will influence ethnic identities.

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## The Russian Secret Service and King Alexander Obrenović of Serbia (1900–1903)

**Abstract:** The period of 1900–1903 saw three phases of cooperation between the Russian Secret Service (Okhrana) and King Alexander Obrenović of Serbia. It is safe to say that the Secret Service operated in Serbia as an extended arm of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, i.e. of its diplomatic mission in Belgrade. Its goal was to fortify the position of Russia in Serbia after King Alexander's wedding and the departure of his father, ex-King Milan (who abdicated in 1889 in favour of his minor son), from the country. The Serbian King, however, benefitted little from the cooperation, because he did not receive assistance from the Secret Service when he needed it most. Thus, the issue of conspiracy against his life was lightly treated throughout 1902 until his assassination in 1903. In the third and last period of cooperation, from the beginning of 1902 until the King's assassination on 11 June 1903,<sup>1</sup> the Russian ministries of Internal and Foreign Affairs forbade the agents to receive money from the Serbian King and relieved them of any duty regarding the protection of his life.

**Keywords:** King Alexander Obrenović, Serbia, Russia, Russian Secret Service, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Germany's interest in King Alexander Obrenović's marriage arrangements in 1900 precipitated not only the King's decision to marry Draga Mašin, a former lady-in-waiting to his mother, but also Russia's decision to forestall the consequences of King's prospective marriage to a German princess. The issue of the King's wedding with Princess Alexandra of the German House of Schaumburg-Lippe, in the summer of 1900, was almost settled. A preferred choice of the King's father, Princess Alexandra had the advantage of being related to both the German and the Habsburg Court.<sup>2</sup> This marriage would have raised the question of a long-term German influence in Serbia and the Balkans. It would have also strengthened the position of former King Milan, which would have certainly been an unwelcome outcome for Russia. Therefore, Russia kept a watchful eye on the course

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<sup>1</sup> New Style dates are used in the text body, unless otherwise specified.

<sup>2</sup> Urgings from Berlin and Vienna that the young King got married became more and more frequent in early 1900. The King claimed that marriage arrangements were nearly completed and that his father would finalize them during his visit to Vienna that summer. V. Djordjević, *Kraj jedne dinastije*, 3 vols. (Belgrade: Štamparija D. Dimitrijevića, 1905–1906), vol. 3 (1906), 457–464, 560, correspondence between Djordjević and Milan Bogičević dated April and May 1900; Arhiv Srbije [Archives of Serbia, hereafter AS], V.J. Marambo Papers, f. 78, Č. Mijatović to V. Djordjević, 04/16 January 1900.



of events and stepped in at a decisive moment. Without Russian support, the King would have hardly been able to carry through his intention to marry Draga Mašin. Namely, this marriage, widely deemed controversial and inappropriate, was not unlikely to throw the country into international isolation.<sup>3</sup>

During former King Milan's stay in Serbia, from October 1897 to July 1900, it could be inferred from Russia's conduct that no agreement on the division of the Balkans into spheres of influence between Russia and Austria-Hungary had been reached. Milan was the cause of friction between the two great powers, all the more so as Russia believed him to be an Austrian agent. This made it extremely difficult for the King to conduct foreign affairs, since his foreign policy relied upon both great powers and their agreement of 1897 on joint activity in the Balkans.<sup>4</sup> The ministers of foreign affairs of the two great powers spoke of the former King as an obstacle to their mutual relations, but neither of them abandoned his own viewpoint.<sup>5</sup> Russia used various forms of pressure on Serbia, but failed to "drive" the King's father out of the country.<sup>6</sup> St. Petersburg did not con-

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<sup>3</sup> Draga Mašin, neé Lunjevica (1866–1903), was a widow and had no children from her previous marriage. From 1892 to 1897 she served as a lady-in-waiting to Queen Natalie, King Alexander's mother.

<sup>4</sup> The agreement rested on the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans. In case of change, a special agreement was to be concluded on the basis of the following principles: Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Sanjak of Novi Pazar would be annexed to Austria-Hungary; the creation of a new state of Albania, as an obstacle to Italy's territorial aspirations towards the Adriatic Coast; the rest of the Balkans would be divided among Balkan countries by a special agreement. Peace in the Balkans and a consensual approach to the region were considered as guiding principles by both parties. With this agreement, Russia was given free rein to pursue its imperialistic policy in the Far East, while Austria-Hungary protected itself against Italy's aspirations and Serbia's tendency to expand at the expense of the Ottoman Empire and achieve a dominant position in the Peninsula. Still, the lack of more precise provisions concerning the Balkans caused the signatories to distrust one another. The Agreement is published in M. Stojković, ed. *Balkanski ugovorni odnosi*, vol. I (Belgrade: Službeni list SRJ, 1998), 219–220.

<sup>5</sup> *Die grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1924–1927, XIII, 194, 212; XIV, 232.

<sup>6</sup> One of the first forms of pressure was the so-called diplomatic strike, i.e. the recall of the diplomatic representative Iswolsky and the military agent Taube from Belgrade in 1897. It was followed by Russia's demand for immediate repayment of Serbia's debt of 5.5 million francs; moreover, in agreement with its ally, France, Russia was preventing Serbia from obtaining a loan on favourable terms on European financial markets, which it needed for building the railways and for procuring military equipment. Russia's dissatisfaction with former King Milan's presence in Serbia was reflected in the absence of its support for Serbian national interests at the Ottoman Porte, on the one hand,

ceal dissatisfaction over Vienna's carrying on intrigues with the former King, claiming that the example of Serbia best demonstrated Austria-Hungary's failure to honour its agreement with Russia. In the late summer of 1900, European diplomatic circles expected the breakdown of the alliance between the two great powers, allegedly postponed due to the Paris World Exposition.<sup>7</sup> A change in Russia's favour in Serbia's policy took place at the last moment. When Emperor Nicholas II endorsed the King's marriage with Draga Mašin, Alexander realized his intention with breathtaking speed.

King Alexander had sought to establish contact with the Russian court as early as late 1899 and early 1900. In March 1899, Russia recalled its Belgrade-based diplomat Valery Vsevolodovich Zadovsky on account of his use of crude methods "unworthy" of a Russian diplomat,<sup>8</sup> and appointed Pavel Mansurov as acting official.<sup>9</sup> In one of his first reports, Mansurov wrote: "I can tell you that the whole country is waiting to see how relations between the imperial government and the Serbian court, where King Milan also resides, will be established." Mansurov reported that King Alexander was willing to improve relations with Russia, and warned that estrangement

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and its marked support for Bulgarian aspirations towards the Ottoman European territories, notably Macedonia. There is no evidence for Russia's involvement in the failed assassination of King Milan on 6 July 1899, but there are some indications that the dissatisfaction caused by his stay in the country was deliberately stirred. For more detail, see S. Rajić, *Vladan Djordjević. Biografija pouzdanog obrenovićeveca* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2007), 167–227.

<sup>7</sup> *Die grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette XVIII*, 105. This finds corroboration in the sources of Russian provenance, cf. A. Radenić, *Progona političkih protivnika u režimu Aleksandra Obrenovića 1893–1903* (Belgrade: Istorijski arhiv Beograda, 1973), 803, 807. British Prime Minister informed the Serbian diplomatic representative that the 1897 agreement between Vienna and St. Petersburg had faded away to the point that its former colours could hardly be recognized, and added that, three years later, it became obvious that the agreement was untenable, since the two parties schemed against each other, and used every means to acquire prestige in solving Balkan issues. Britain denied to both powers the right to make decisions regarding the Balkans on their own "because in the East other powers are interested as well", AS, V. J. Marambo Papers, f. 78, London report of 17/29 August 1900.

<sup>8</sup> Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii [State Archives of the Russian Federation, hereafter GARF], V. Lambsdorf Personal Fonds, f. 568, op. 1, d. 60, l. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Pavel Borisovich Mansurov (1860–1932) was the son of the distinguished Russian statesman, senator and member of the State Council, Boris Pavlovich Mansurov. He was close to members of the so-called Moscow Circle (*Kruzhok moskvičei*), such as Samarin, Khomiakov, Stepanov and others. Due to his father's high office, he was well-respected at the imperial court.

between Serbia and Russia was inevitable should St. Petersburg keep up its pressure on Serbia.<sup>10</sup>

Towards the end of 1899, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Muravyov<sup>11</sup> stated that it was important for Russia to have better and more orderly relations with Serbia. He proposed that a new diplomatic representative be urgently appointed from among the Ministry's "best diplomatic officials", and that his diplomatic skills should be utilized to improve relations with Serbia. Muravyov justified his proposal by the fact that Austria-Hungary was taking advantage of the poor state of Serbian-Russian relations to strengthen its position in Serbia. Muravyov's first choice for the post was Nikolai Valeryevich Tcharykow,<sup>12</sup> on account of the fact that he had already proved his agility and capability in the process of improving relations with Bulgaria in 1896.<sup>13</sup> From 1900, King Alexander's foreign policy became increasingly and more clearly orientated towards St. Petersburg.

In January 1900, the King tried, through an intermediary (Alimpije Vasiljević), to find out what the Russian Court would make of his marrying an Orthodox Christian bride.<sup>14</sup> The renewed possibility of the King's marriage with a Russian princess perhaps served as an excuse for him to marry Draga Mašin: if he could not have an Orthodox Russian princess, he would choose a fiancée of Orthodox faith from Serbia. In this way, he would satisfy Russia and secure its support for his intention. Therefore, he entrusted

<sup>10</sup> Arkhiv vnesnei politiki Rossiskoi Imperii [Archives of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire, hereafter AVPRI], Politarkhiv [Politarchiv], f. 151, op. 482, d. 485, 1899, l. 131-132, 159-162; AS, Ministarstvo inostranih dela, Političko odeljenje [Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Department; hereafter MID, PO], 1899, A21, f. 1, d. 6, 7.

<sup>11</sup> Mikhail Nikolayevich Muravyov (1845-1900), Russian statesman, diplomat in Paris, Berlin and Copenhagen, Minister of Foreign Affairs (1897-1900).

<sup>12</sup> Nikolai Valeryevich Tcharykow (1855-1930), Russian diplomat, State Councillor, Senator, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Russian ambassador to Turkey, renowned philosopher, historian and member of the Russian Historical Society.

<sup>13</sup> AVPRI, Sekretnyi arkhiv ministra [Secret Archive of the Minister], f. 138, op. 467, d. 179a, 1899, l. 14-18.

<sup>14</sup> A presbyter from St. Petersburg close to the Tsar's uncle, Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich, initiated a conversation with him about the contents of Vasiljević's letter. Duke Vladimir said that he shared the hope of the Serbian people that King Alexander would marry an Orthodox wife and that it would be to their mutual advantage if the future queen were a Russian. Still, the presbyter remained vague as to whether Duke Vladimir and his wife found it acceptable for their daughter, Grand Duchess Elena Vladimirovna, to marry the Serbian King. Grand Duke only intimated to his interlocutor that the time for negotiations was not really favourable, referring to the troubled relationship between the King's parents. See AS, Pokloni i otkupi [Gifts and Purchases, hereafter PO], box 102, doc. 154.

General Jovan Belimarković with the task to re-establish contacts with the Russian diplomatic mission, which had been virtually severed after the attempted assassination of the former King Milan on 6 July 1899 (St John the Baptist's Day and therefore known as the *Ivandan* assassination attempt), and to relay his ideas to the Russian diplomat without the Prime Minister's and ex-King Milan's knowledge. The King offered to please Russia and reduce prison time for those found guilty of the assassination attempt, even to grant amnesty to some. He justified his decision by the need for a shift in foreign policy, in the light of the fact that all political parties and prominent military officials favoured good relations with Russia. Russia did not want to miss the opportunity to achieve what it had been trying to achieve since 1893 — the year Alexander overthrew the regency and accessed the throne as sole ruler — to restore and strengthen its influence in Serbia and thus block out not only the influence of Austria-Hungary, which had been intriguing with Milan and ignoring its agreement of 1897, but also of Germany, which had set foot in Serbia in financial terms. The majority of state bonds were pledged in the German market as security for the raised loans, and Serbia was purchasing German rifles for its army because of the joint French and Russian boycott.<sup>15</sup>

From February 1900, Russia embarked upon a more moderate policy towards Serbia. After a conversation he had with the new Austro-Hungarian diplomatic representative in Serbia, Baron Heidler, Pavel Mansurov concluded that Austria-Hungary did not consider it useful to harmonize its activity in Serbia with Russia, that it highly valued its friendly relations with Milan Obrenović, and that its new diplomatic representative, in his address to King Alexander, stated that he would strictly respect Serbia's independence and support the King's policy.<sup>16</sup> This was understood by St. Petersburg as a signal to act in Serbia unrestricted. Mansurov was probably aware of the King's marriage plans as early as March 1900, and the Emperor was acquainted with the intended turn in the King's foreign policy. The King had been preparing the ground for that turn: he kept insisting that he could no longer pursue a foreign policy that no one in the country supported, and that he, being born and bred in Serbia, perfectly understood what

<sup>15</sup> *Progoni političkih protivnika*, 824–828. Baron Heidler, the Austro-Hungarian diplomatic representative, tried to convince Mansurov that Serbia was of secondary importance to Russia, in contrast to the Habsburg Monarchy, for which Serbia was a matter of “life and death” (ibid. 820). Germany's penetration into the Balkans and further, into Asia Minor, was the cause of great concern in Russia. The arming of the Bulgarian and Ottoman armies posed a serious threat to Serbian interests. See M. Vojvodić, *Srbija u međunarodnim odnosima krajem XIX i početkom XX veka* (Belgrade: SANU, 1988), 257.

<sup>16</sup> *Progoni političkih protivnika*, 817–818, 820 and 826.

the nation needed, and intended to act accordingly. "I found myself faced with the alternative: either *Papa* or Russia," the King used to say after his engagement, justifying his rapprochement with Russia by the well-proven fact that, without the support of that great power, Serbia was unable to solve even as minor a question as the appointment of a metropolitan bishop in the Ottoman Empire, let alone substantial issues inevitably lying in store for the country.<sup>17</sup>

Intent on marrying Draga Mašin, King Alexander waited for a convenient opportunity — for his father to leave the country. Milan left for Vienna on 18 June 1900 to finalise negotiations about the marriage proposal to Princess Alexandra, and the Prime Minister, Vladan Djordjević, followed him shortly afterwards.<sup>18</sup> On 20 July, however, the King announced his engagement to Draga Mašin, and the next day the engagement announcement appeared in *Srpske novine* [*Serbian Newspaper*].<sup>19</sup>

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The rift between father and son caused by this marriage was a perfect opportunity for the latter to finally become independent of the former, and for Russia to present itself as his protector in the process. In his reports, Pavel Mansurov expressed his opinion that, for Russia, the King's non-political marriage with a Serbian woman was much more opportune than his political marriage with a German princess. The Emperor concurred with this opinion, as evidenced by his hand-written comment added to Mansurov's report. It was also endorsed by the newly-appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Vladimir Nikolaevich Lambsdorf,<sup>20</sup> who had already argued that Russia should use the issue of the King's marriage to improve relations

<sup>17</sup> AS, Stojan Novaković Personal Fonds [hereafter SN], 2.126. After the demission of Vladan Djordjević's cabinet, the King blamed his father for poor relations with Russia. He argued that he had no other way of defying him but to let foreign policy be reduced to absurdity, cf. *Progoni političkih protivnika*, 827–828; D. K. Maršićanin, *Tajne dvora Obrenović. Upraviteljeve beleške (od veridbe do smrti kralja Aleksandra)* (Belgrade: Štamparija D. Dimitrijevića, 1907), vol. 1, 38–40.

<sup>18</sup> Djordjević, *Kraj jedne dinastije* 3, 457–464, 560.

<sup>19</sup> A. S. Jovanović, *Ministarstvo Alekse S. Jovanovića. Podatci o političkim događajima u Srbiji od 8. jula do 21. marta 1901. godine* (Belgrade: Štamparija Todora K. Naumovića, 1906), 126; *Srpske novine* no. 150, 9/21 July 1900.

<sup>20</sup> Vladimir Nikolaevich Lambsdorf (1844–1907), Russian statesman, minister of foreign affairs 1900–1906. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1866 after graduating from the Corps of Pages and St. Petersburg's School of Law. He served as assistant minister to ministers de Giers, Lobanov-Rostovsky and Muravyov, and after Muravyov's death became minister of foreign affairs himself (1900). The exhaustive diary Lambsdorf left behind has been almost entirely published.

with Serbia. After all, Mansurov could have hardly been able to express his view to the Tsar without Lambsdorf's knowledge and approval. The King promised to grant amnesty to the Radicals involved in the *Ivandan* assassination, and to prevent his father from returning to the country. St. Petersburg accepted his offer and promised "the Emperor's forbearing attitude" towards the occurrences in Serbia, if the King kept his word.<sup>21</sup>

The Emperor ordered that Mansurov represent him in the capacity of best man at the King's wedding with "gracious lady Draga, née Lunjevica". Alexander Obrenović immediately broke the news to the deputations of his countrymen arriving to express congratulations. Mansurov reported that the news had put an end to all public doubts and dilemmas, and added that the Tsar's gesture to act as best man was seen in Serbia as an extraordinary expression of Russia's favour and regard. At the wedding dinner, the King stated that Serbian foreign policy should be guided by the traditional feelings and needs of the Serbian people, apparently alluding to the maintenance of friendly relations with Russia. An official communiqué to that effect was published in the *Srpske novine*.<sup>22</sup>

On 25 July 1900, five days after the engagement was announced, the Russian Chargé d'affaires Pavel Mansurov was the first to congratulate the King on behalf of the Emperor. Yet, Russia took care not to publicize its attitude towards the King's marriage too overtly, even though it had backed and approved it. The Emperor's personal congratulations card did not arrive until 25 August, but it was published in the official newspapers, whereby claims that the Tsar merely wished the King happiness in life rather than properly congratulated him were repudiated. At the wedding, the King and Queen were presented with a sumptuous imperial gift.<sup>23</sup> The official news-

<sup>21</sup> AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 2 861, 1900, l. 2, 10, 11 and 15.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. l. 34, 46 and 51; AS, PO, box 110, doc. 6; *Srpske novine* no. 156, 15/27 July 1900. On 17/29 July 1900, Mansurov told the King that Russian Emperor Nicholas II accepted to be his best man. See *Srpske novine* no. 166, 26 July/7 Aug. 1900.

<sup>23</sup> The Tsar's greeting card reads as follows: "Dear Sire and my Brother, I received with great satisfaction the letter whereby Your Majesty was kind to inform me of his wedding with Lady Draga, the daughter of the late Panta Lunjevica and granddaughter of Duke Nikola Lunjevica. Due to the ties of friendship and spiritual kinship between Your Majesty and myself, I have taken active part in this happy event and I hasten to offer you my sincere congratulations on your marriage. Adding to this my wishes for the happiness of Your Majesty, as well as for the happiness of Her Majesty the Queen, I kindly ask of you to let me assure you once more of my high esteem with which, my dear Sire and Brother, I remain Your Majesty's good brother Nicholas. Peterhof, 13 August 1900", *Srpske novine* no. 192, 26 Aug./7 Sept. 1900; S. Jovanović, *Vlada Aleksandra Obrenovića*, 2 vols. (Belgrade: BIGZ, Jugoslavijapublik & SKZ, 1990), vol. II, 175. Apart from the Tsar, congratulations were offered by the Austro-Hungarian Heir



papers stressed that the Emperor's congratulations to the Serbian royal couple meant that the lack of "certain" conventionalities in the King's choice of fiancée did not have any consequences for the reputation of the royal house and the international position of the country.<sup>24</sup>

This moment signalled a new era in Serbian-Russian relations. Count Lambsdorf praised King Alexander's "considerateness" and ascribed him the credit for the significant turn in foreign policy, a turn that would make it possible for Serbia to face, side by side with Russia, all dangers, "however substantial they may be and wherever they may come from". Quite tactful and cautious, Lambsdorf expressed his doubts about the power of diplomacy to maintain peace, given that the Balkans was "vulcanised", relations in the Far East extremely strained, and the interests of great powers conflicting. He believed that a "great war" lay ahead, if not at the door, and assuring the King that his change of course would bring immediate and favourable results for Serbia, he proposed the conclusion of a military alliance between Russia and Serbia to "consecrate" the new era in the relations between the two countries. The King's response to this message was the mission of a special envoy, General Jovan Mišković, on 14 August 1900. Mišković had both oral and written instructions which show that the King had in mind important state reasons for improving relations with Russia, and that therefore the claims that he was motivated by private interest alone are not tenable. Once the foundations for Serbian-Russian relations were successfully laid, the King requested that Russia raise the rank of its diplomatic representative in Belgrade to ministerial level, and Lambsdorf granted the request.<sup>25</sup>

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Presumptive Franz Ferdinand, Montenegrin Prince Nikola and Sultan Abdul Hamid II. See AS, PO, box 110, doc. 6.

<sup>24</sup> AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 2861, 1900, l. 15; Arhiv Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti [Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts], No. 7242, "Beležnica Jovana Miškovića" [hereafter "Beležnica"], notebook 34, 7/19 Aug. 1900; *Srpske novine* no. 155, 14/26 July 1900, and no. 156, 15/27 July 1900.

<sup>25</sup> "Beležnica", nb. 34, 2/14-16/28 Aug. 1900. According to the report from the Serbian Chargé d'affaires in St. Petersburg, Lj. Hristić, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Lambsdorf, did not conceal his satisfaction at the fact "that such significant political turn was made in relations between Serbia and Russia", and at the very beginning of his term. When informed by Hristić that the King would send a special envoy to Russia, "Count Lambsdorf jumped to his feet, took my hands, looked me straight in the eye, and said: 'I hope that the established bond between Serbia and Russia will be a permanent bond', and how worthwhile for both countries it is, time will tell us soon, the serious days that lay ahead, the days which we perhaps do not expect, and cannot even predict despite everything". See AS, V.J. Marambo, f. 78, Report from St. Petersburg of 26 July/7 Aug. 1900.

Almost half a year elapsed before the Russian diplomatic representative arrived in Serbia, which suggests that the Tsar was not completely convinced that the King's turn towards Russia was a heartfelt one.<sup>26</sup> However, an increasing rapprochement between the two countries after the King's wedding was reflected in the cordial reception with which Serbia's newly-appointed diplomatic representative was met in St. Petersburg. The King appointed the "best Serbian statesman", Stojan Novaković, which demonstrated the importance he attached to the strengthening of Serbian-Russian relations. Indeed, King Alexander and Serbia featured ever more frequently in Lambsdorf's reports to the Tsar.<sup>27</sup>

King Milan's accusations against Draga Mašin that she was a Russian agent were exaggerated. Her ten-year companionship with Russo-phile Queen Natalie was quite enough for her to become pro-Russian herself. In fact, Serbian public opinion was prevailingly sympathetic for Russia. Her visits to Russia in her capacity as the Queen's attendant — on one occasion, in Livadia, she was even introduced to the imperial couple — could only have fortified her leanings. During the 1890s, Queen Natalie maintained close relations with the Russian diplomatic mission in Belgrade, in particular with the military agent Taube. Her lady-in-waiting must have known about these contacts and connections. There are records which suggest that Draga was instructed by Queen Natalie herself to lobby distinguished politicians against the ex-King's return to Serbia in 1897, and the Russian diplomatic representative Izvolsky's<sup>28</sup> involvement in the matter.<sup>29</sup> After Queen Natalie's departure from Serbia, Draga ap-

<sup>26</sup> M. Vojvodić, *Srbija u međunarodnim odnosima*, 311; A. Stolić, *Kraljica Draga* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2000), 83.

<sup>27</sup> GARF, f. 568, V. N. Lambsdorf, op. 1, d. 62, l. 1-3, 13, 14, 36, 41, 49; AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 2861, l. 2, 10-11; and op. 482, d. 497, 1902, l. 499, 500; AS, SN, 2126; Simo Popović, *Memoari*, eds. J. R. Bojović and N. Rakočević (Cetinje: Izdavački centar Cetinje, Podgorica: CID, 1995), 383; Mihailo Vojvodić, *Petrogradske godine Stojana Novakovića (1900-1905)* (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 2009), 16.

<sup>28</sup> Alexander Petrovich Izvolsky (1856-1919), Russian statesman, ambassador in *Vatican*, *Belgrade*, *Munich*, *Tokyo* (from 1899), and *Copenhagen* (from 1903), Minister of Foreign Affairs (1906-1910), and then as Russian ambassador to France.

<sup>29</sup> At the request of Queen Natalie, Draga Mašin paid a visit to the Radical politician P. Mihailović and his wife, and spoke of ex-King Milan and the inability of ex-Queen Natalie and King Alexander to prevent him from returning to the country. For that reason, it was suggested to the Radical government to find a way to do that. According to Mihailović, the Radicals were backed by the Russian diplomatic mission, and made an agreement with Izvolsky by which he committed himself to support and assist them. See P. Mihailović, *Dnevници*, ed. J. Milanović (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik, 2010), 121-122.

parently continued to maintain close contact with the Russian diplomatic personnel; moreover, she had the King involved as well. This is confirmed by the conversation that Izvolsky had with the King and Queen in Meran in 1899. After the King's marriage, Mansurov's reports praised the Queen for her intelligence and perceptiveness, spoke of the influence she had with the King, and above all of her pro-Russian orientation. In doing so, he gradually thawed out St. Petersburg's reservations. In Russian reports, Queen Draga was portrayed as a person favourably disposed towards Russian interests.<sup>30</sup>

It is true that Mansurov had not immediately drawn the attention of his government to the age-gap between the King and his fiancée, or to Draga Mašin's unusual past, potentially an obstacle to her becoming a queen. This information reached the Emperor belatedly. The Queen Mother claimed that she had been informed from reliable sources that the Tsar had intended to decline the role of best man, but that Mansurov warned him that the rejection would leave a bad impression in Serbia. Suggestions that certain hesitation on the part of Russia after the King's wedding was caused by Queen Draga's "unsavoury past" should be re-examined.<sup>31</sup> The Tsar's tendency to treat King Alexander with reserve had a lot to do with former King Milan's residing in Vienna, since the summer of 1900. Mansurov, however, sent very convincing daily reports that reconciliation between father and

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<sup>30</sup> AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 15 I, op. 482, d. 286 I, 1900, l. 15; d. 489, 1900, l. 240; *Progoni političkih protivnika*, 828–831; Jovanović, *Vlada Aleksandra Obrenovića II*, 144 (based on Djordjević, *Kraj jedne dinastije* 2, 567) observed that ex-King Milan's accusation against Draga for being a Russian agent was possible because Milan claimed to have in his possession the letters exchanged between Draga and Taube; Jovanović believed that it could not be inferred from this correspondence that Taube encouraged Draga to resort to the assassination of the ex-King, but he thought it likely that she had been advised to put pressure on the King to have his father removed from the country. These assumptions were based on an analogy with the developments in Serbia between the *Ivan-dan* assassination attempt in 1899 and the King's wedding in 1900. Another piece of evidence of Draga's involvement in the assassination was mentioned by Jovan Žujović, who allegedly was about to present it, but it remains unknown if he did. Cf. AS, Jovan Žujović Personal Fonds, 55; P. Todorović, *Ogledalo: zrake iz prošlosti*, ed. Latinka Perović (Belgrade: Medicinska knjiga, 1997), 86. Todorović (ibid. 628–629) also claimed that on the occasion of his last meeting with the former King Milan in Vienna, after Alexander's wedding, he had held in his hands a "short, but precious" letter which, according to Milan, was the best piece of evidence of what "Russian honour" was like. Milan was adamant that the papers in his possession showed beyond any doubt that the murderous knife intended for the Obrenović dynasty was held by "the northern brother" rather than by King Alexander.

<sup>31</sup> AS, SN, 1891; Jovanović, *Vlada Aleksandra Obrenovića II*, 173–175.

son was impossible and that the King believed the success of his marriage depended exclusively on his father's absence from the country.<sup>32</sup>

That St. Petersburg looked at the new situation in Serbia with caution is evidenced by the instructions the new Russian diplomatic representative in Serbia, Nikolai Valerievich Tcharykow, received on 29 January 1901. The last of the three surviving drafts of the instructions betrays much greater restraint than the previous two: the Emperor crossed out all lines in which mention was made of Queen Draga's sympathetic attitude towards Russia, of King Milan and his attitude towards Russia in the past, of the weakening of Austria-Hungary's political and economic influence in Serbia, and of the 1897 agreement between the two empires. On 20 January, the Tsar wrote down his approval of the version that placed the strongest emphasis on "strict non-interference in the internal affairs of the Balkan states", of which Russia expected to pursue the policy of "national independence", free from foreign influences and underpinned by common interests of the Balkan peoples. During Tcharykow's first audience with the King, on 28 February, the Tsar's greetings he relayed orally were much more cordial than those which he had been given in writing.<sup>33</sup>

Vienna's reaction to the improvement in Serbian-Russian relations was not sympathetic. Particularly upsetting was the news that the Tsar had stood as best man by proxy at the wedding. The German ambassador in Vienna reported to the Chancellor that the marriage of King Alexander caused dissatisfaction among all politicians in Austria-Hungary because it undermined the Monarchy's "dictatorial" position in the Balkans. The situation appeared even worse because the change took place at the moment when Austrian statesmen self-confidently believed that they were holding the "reins of East Europe" in their hands. They admitted defeat in the political field, but intended to exert pressure on Serbia in the economic field, and perhaps even start an economic war. The German reigning houses found the withdrawal from the nearly completed negotiations on the King's marriage insulting, and Serbia was openly described in Vienna as a state ship drifting on the political high seas without a compass.<sup>34</sup>

Vienna did not put up with its loss of influence in Serbia. The anti-dynastic campaign against King Alexander orchestrated on Austria-Hun-

<sup>32</sup> AVPRI, f. 151, Politarchive, op. 482, 1900, d. 489, l. 61, 64; and d. 2861, l. 85.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. d. 2839, 1901, l. 1-8 (first draft of the instructions to Tcharykow); l. 9-15 (second draft); l. 16-19 (third draft).

<sup>34</sup> AS, V. J. Marambo Papers, f. 78, Berlin report, 27 July/8 Aug. 1900; Vienna Report, 16/28 Aug. 1900; *Documents diplomatiques français* [hereafter DDF], ser. 2, vol. I, 94; *Die grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette XVIII*, 115-116; 140, 173-174; Vojvodić, *Srbija u međunarodnim odnosima*, 315.

gary's soil was ignored, and the Viennese press scathingly wrote about the situation in Serbia with a view to making it difficult for Serbia to negotiate a new loan and settle its finances. In the summer of 1901, the export of livestock cattle into the Habsburg Monarchy had to be suspended, and the King, anxious to protect himself against dangers, was falling deeper and deeper into Russia's embrace. He entrusted his own safety and that of the Queen to the Russian Secret Police (Okhrana).

The head of the Russian Secret Service for the Balkans, Colonel Alexander Budzilovich alias Grabo, met with the King in Smederevo in early September 1900, and offered his services to help arrange the King's meeting with the Emperor. The King accepted the proposal, actually an idea of the *Chargé d'affaires* Mansurov, who was praised by the King for the "favours done to Serbia" and to him personally. The praise indicates close ties of this member of the Russian diplomatic mission both with the Serbian ruler and with the head of the Russian Secret Service for the Balkans. In the first decade of October 1900, the King's trip was postponed until next year, purportedly because the Tsar and Tsarina would not return from their own journey until mid-November. In early November, the Serbian ruler tried through Mansurov to set another date, but Mansurov was unable to do anything, although he had warned his superiors that the King might turn to Austria-Hungary if he felt he was being kept at a distance by Russia. In mid-November 1900, Mansurov received vague information on the visit of the royal couple. The Russian diplomatic mission remained unclear on what it was that the Foreign Ministry wanted. The Foreign Minister Lambsdorf wrote that the Emperor was still favourably disposed towards the Serbian royal couple and willing to receive them, but that he was not in a hurry to do so. Mansurov reported, from "reliable sources", that it was believed in Serbia that the dynasty lacked Russia's support and should therefore be deposed. He suggested that the royal couple's visit to the Tsar would be the most effective way to put an end to such rumours and preserve peace in the country. Mansurov concluded that a negative reply from St. Petersburg would spell the end of the Obrenović dynasty.<sup>35</sup>

At the abovementioned meeting between Colonel Budzilovich and the King in Smederevo in early September 1900, the King asked if the Russian Secret Service would take on the protection of his and the Queen's safety. Grabo assured him of a positive answer, but nothing concrete was ar-

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<sup>35</sup> Maršićanin, *Upraviteljeve beleške* I, 67; *Progoni političkih protivnika*, 836. Mansurov's letter to Count Lambsdorf of 20 Oct./2 Nov. 1900 shows that Grabo was backed by Mansurov, who wrote for him letters of recommendation to the highest official circles in St. Petersburg so that a visit of the Serbian royal couple could be prepared and realised.

ranged. On 29 September 1900, the Colonel received the King's invitation to visit him at his Belgrade residence. It took more than a month before the Russian authorities and the Tsar gave their consent to the meeting, which was a clear indication of St. Petersburg's reluctance. Mansurov assured the authorities that the King had definitively severed all ties with his father. He urged that a security service for the protection of the King be established, which would reinforce the ties between Serbia and Russia. In October, Alexander Vaisman, a Secret Service agent, was sent to Serbia to examine the situation. The King expressed his fears for the safety of his wife, and concerns that his father might take steps to prepare his return to Serbia. It seems that Mansurov and Grabo purposely fomented the King's distrust of his father, despite his information to the contrary. Aleksandar Katardži, a close relative of the Obrenovićs, intended to come to Belgrade in order to mediate between father and son to bring about reconciliation. He claimed that the King's father had no intention of undertaking any action against his son. The King obviously did not believe Katardži's claims, because, on 2 December 1900, Grabo received another request for a meeting "regarding arrangements about a special favour concerning His Majesty King Milan". A week later, the King's request was forwarded to the Tsar, who was staying in Yalta. On his superiors' orders, Grabo declined the request on the pretext of not having enough men for organising a Russian Secret Police branch as it existed in Romania and Bulgaria, but he put two agents at the King's disposal — Alexander Vaisman and Mikhail Vasilevich Jurkevich, and a few of their aids. For that purpose, the King allocated 80,000 francs for the period from 1 January 1901 to 1 January 1902.<sup>36</sup> That was the beginning, i.e. the first phase of cooperation between King Alexander and the Russian Secret Service. It lasted briefly, until the death of the King's father early in 1901.

The question of the King's visit to Russia was quite urgent for as long as the ex-King was alive, and Count Lambsdorf promised that he would go out of his way to make it happen as soon as possible. Milan's sudden death on 11 February 1901, however, lowered the level of its urgency. In April, due to the changed circumstances, the King was offered services at a lower cost: 300 francs a month to each agent, four months in advance, as of 1 May 1901. However, the services were not defined as personal protection of the royal couple. Grabo expressly said that his assignment was over with

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<sup>36</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi Departamenta politsii na Balkanskom poluostrove [Head of the Police Department Agency in the Balkans; hereafter Zaveduiushchii agenturoi], op. 1, d. 127, l. 11; AVPRI, f. 151, Politarchive, op. 482, d. 489, 1900, l. 251, 332–336; AS, King Alexander Papers, Report from Bucharest of 15/27 Oct. 1900, on the arrival of A. Katardži in Belgrade; Maršičanin, *Upraviteljeve beleške* 1, 66–71.



Milan's death, which suggests that the original assignment of the Secret Service was to protect the son and his wife from the father, former King Milan.<sup>37</sup> After his father's death, the King requested that the Secret Service focus on monitoring anti-dynastic activities whose source was in Austria-Hungary. Thus, the Russian Secret Service assumed the role of the King's intelligence service, because such a service had not yet been instituted in Serbia.<sup>38</sup> However, now the personal protection of the King and Queen was outside its area of competence and, for that reason, the cost for its operation was much lower. Mansurov advised Grabo to accept the King's proposal with the proviso that it should not include spying on the King's subjects in the country. An agreement was reached along these lines. Russian agents operated independently and without cooperation with the Serbian police. The Austrian Intelligence Service put a tail on the Russian agents. Activities of the Russian Secret Service as described above lasted until the end of 1901. On his superiors' instructions, the Russian diplomatic representative Tcharykow supported such engagement of the Russian Secret Service as very useful for Russia. Besides Tcharykow and Mansurov, the Russian diplomatic representative in Sofia, Yuri Petrovich Bahmetev, and the Russian military agent Leontovich were also familiar with the activities of the Russian Secret Service in Serbia.<sup>39</sup>

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Before it became known, in May 1901, that the Queen's Draga pregnancy was a false one, the Russian Secret Service had discovered that Austria-Hungary had no intention of recognising the child as the King's rightful heir on account of the Queen's suspected premarital pregnancy. The King assured the Russian diplomatic representative that such suspicions were absurd, but the Russians were concerned that the request for the Tsar's godfatherhood might put the Emperor in a disagreeable situation. Yet, in the autumn of 1900, Grabo, as instructed by Lambsdorf, informed King Alex-

<sup>37</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi, op. 1, d. 127, l. 14, 20–21, 34.

<sup>38</sup> In 1900, a special department (Fifth) of the Directorate of the City of Belgrade – under the authority of the Ministry of Interior – was established for the purpose of curbing anti-dynastic activities and protecting the King and members of the royal house. It was supposed to be a classical secret police (such as the Minister of Interior, Genčić, had tried, and failed, to establish in 1899), the aim of which was to strengthen and institutionalise a network of professional agents. Although the Department operated until the Coup of 1903, the King, fearing that it might add to his unpopularity, never made its work legal and professional. See V. Jovanović, "Pravila o tajnoj policiji u Beogradu 1900. godine", *Miscellanea XXIX* (2008), 141–152.

<sup>39</sup> GARF, f. 505, op. 1, d. 76, l. 3, undated; d. 127, l. 20–21.

ander that the Tsar accepted to be the godfather of the future heir to the Serbian throne, and that the Russian government would always support the Obrenović dynasty.<sup>40</sup>

The happy event was due to occur in early May 1901. In early April, the Russian physicians Snegirev and Gubarov arrived in Belgrade. The latter was believed to be a member of the Russian Secret Police, and his arrival was thought to be related to the possible request to the Tsar to be the godfather to the “changeling”, as Queen Mother had been quick to warn the relevant persons in St. Petersburg. After it had become known that there would be no child, the Queen’s already tarnished reputation was further undermined. The King’s efforts, made through Grabo, to arrange an urgent audience at the Russian court soon became the main task of the Russian Secret Service. The King and Queen had not made a single official visit abroad since their wedding, which provided the political opposition in the country with an argument to challenge their legitimacy. It was believed that the King’s best man could help the royal couple to break their isolation. However, the news that there would be no heir made Russia reconsider its stance.

The representatives of all major powers in Belgrade were aware of St. Petersburg’s unenthusiastic attitude towards the Obrenović royal couple, but they were not quite sure what to make of it. Mansurov confided to his French colleague that the King’s visit to Russia had been discussed immediately after the wedding, and that he had been under impression that the idea met resistance from some members of the imperial family, the Grand Duchesses in particular. He did not mention their names, but his contemporaries named the daughters of Prince Nikola Petrović of Montenegro, Milica, married to the Grand Duke Peter Nikolaievich, a grandson of Nicholas I, and Anastasija (Stana), as staunch opponents to Alexander and Draga’s visit to Russia. The King learned from his diplomatic representative in Russia, Novaković, that

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid. d. 127, l. 14–17, 25. Shortly before the childbirth was due, Austro-Hungarian authorities got in touch with the former mistress of King Milan, Artemiza Hristić, and offered her to permanently settle in the Monarchy with her son; to sell, for the price of half a million francs, the photographs of Milan’s letters in which he recognised his illegitimate son Djordje; offered her the title of Countess and financial means for the education of her son whom, once he came of age, Austria-Hungary would nominate as candidate for the Serbian throne. Grabo advised King Alexander to buy the aforesaid letters from Mrs Hristić, and suggested that Djordje should be enrolled in the Russian Page Corps in order to become lastingly tied to Russia. Unwilling to compromise himself, the King rejected this idea. The Serbian diplomatic representative in Constantinople, Sava Grujić, knew that Artemiza had tried, in vain, to arouse Russia’s interest in her son as potential heir to the throne. Grujić believed that Austria-Hungary seized the opportunity and enrolled Djordje in Theresianum in order to have one more “bogey” for Serbia at hand. Information about Djordje’s scholarship for Theresianum has not been documented. See Mihailović, *Dnevnići*, 329–330.

there was in St. Petersburg a “revolt” against his and the Queen’s visit. He began to doubt if the visit would take place at all, for word to that effect was reaching him from Berlin, Vienna and Rome. A Serbian diplomat accredited to Italy learnt that German pressure was channelled through the Russian Tsarina, who vigorously opposed the visit. The adverse attitude was shared by Prince Nikola Petrović’s daughters, including the Italian Queen, Jelena. At long last, on 13 June 1901, the Tsar’s office released the official announcement of the royal couple’s visit, but not even then was the exact date set. In order to forestall further political intrigues, Tcharykow, Mansurov and Lambsdorf gave the green light to the publication in the semi-official *Dnevnik* [Daily Chronicle] of the official letter of visit approval. Agent Jurkevich reported that the news of the royal couple’s trip to Russia put an end to the agitation against the government and the Queen, and in a flash appeared in the press throughout Europe.<sup>41</sup>

The King demanded from his diplomatic representative in St. Petersburg to find a way to neutralize the Austro-German influence on the Emperor. After Tcharykow returned from his leave of absence in late November 1901, the King visited him and, enquiring about the exact date of his journey, tried to explain the reasons for his suspicions, but he was given repeated assurances as to the Tsar’s good will. The King did not doubt that Russian diplomacy was in earnest about his visit, but felt that there was “some hurdle” that diplomats were cognisant of but unwilling to talk about, and that it was in order to prevent the “Russian side” from renegeing that they had publicized the news about the visit. A semi-official newspaper had repeatedly to deny rumours that the trip would never take place.<sup>42</sup>

While Russia prolonged the uncertainty about the King’s audience with the Tsar, a plot against the royal couple was taking shape in Serbia. The reports of the Russian Secret Service, however, contained no information about it. What kind of information did the King receive from the agents? A typical example was reports on the anti-Obrenović activities of Serbs living in the Habsburg Monarchy. The physicians Jovan Grujić and Miša Mihailović from Novi Sad, Stevan Popović Vacki, Stevan Pavlović, the editor of *Naše doba* [Our Times], the lawyer Djordje Krasojević, and a group of Radicals gathered around Jaša Tomić and the newspaper *Zastava* [Flag]

<sup>41</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi Departamenta politicii na Balkanskom poluostrrove, op. 1, d. 127, l. 34; *Dnevnik* no. 36, 7/20 June 1901; no. 46, 17/30 June 1901; no. 115, 25 Aug./7 Sept. 1901.

<sup>42</sup> DDF, vol. I, ser. 2, doc. 336, 497, 451, 601, 653, 654; AS, SN, 172, 1135, 1242–1244; Vojvodić, *Petrogradske godine*, 22. Novaković’s comments on the delay of the royal visit to Russia suggest that he was unaware of the intrigues set in motion to thwart its realisation.

were earmarked as ringleaders of a campaign against the King and Queen. It should be noted that even the British diplomatic representative suggested, though quite vaguely, that the “Austrian element” was strong enough to stir “possible trouble” in Serbia. According to the Russian Secret Service’s reports, it was publicly spoken in cafes of Novi Sad that King Alexander would have to cede the throne to a Karadjordjević since he was alone and the Karadjordjevićs were many, an entire family. It was also reported about the efforts of Austria-Hungary to establish contact with King Milan’s illegitimate son with a view to using him as a lever against King Alexander.<sup>43</sup> The reports also informed about the activity of the Social-Democratic Club based at 20 Queen Natalie Street, monitored its contacts with Bulgarian socialists, and the movements of Serbian anarchists who were not permanent residents of Serbia but allegedly forged plots against the King’s life. Faced with increasingly frequent reports on threats to his life, the King expressed his profound dissatisfaction with the fact that the date of his audience in Russia had not yet been set, and reproached the Secret Service for having brushed this question aside.<sup>44</sup>

Grappling with a growing sense of insecurity, the King was prepared to do whatever it takes to get his audience with the Tsar, and so he asked Grabo to go to St. Petersburg in person. The King believed that Grabo would more effectively counter intrigues against him through unofficial channels and “behind the scenes”. On 6 November 1901, Grabo, supplied with the King’s detailed instructions and Mansurov’s letters of recommendation, informed Rataev, Director of the Police Department, that he was about to go to St. Petersburg to relay a message from the Serbian King to Count Lambsdorf. Before his departure, however, Grabo intimated to the King that the reply to his request would quite likely be negative. He drew the King’s attention to reports from his agents that the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary, Goluhovsky, was prepared, in case the royal couple was granted audience at the Russian imperial court, to disclose compromising documents about the Queen. He warned of the Austrian police operations against the Queen, carried out not only in Austria, but also in Germany, Italy and Bulgaria. A brochure published in 1901 in Switzerland and translated into Bulgarian later that year, dubbed Draga an “evil spirit” of Serbia, and called all well-wishers of Serbia to fight against her influence. The King’s message that Grabo was to relay to the Foreign Minister Lambsdorf was

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<sup>43</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi, op. 1, d. 127, l. 23–25; AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, 1901, d. 492, part I, l. 109; Lj. P. Ristić, “Velika Britanija i Srbija (1889–1903)” (PhD thesis, University of Belgrade, 2007), 488.

<sup>44</sup> GARF, V. Lambsdorf’s Fonds, f. 586, op. 1, d. 845, l. 52–53, 54, 56; GARF, f. 505, op. 1, d. 127, l. 29–30, 42–43.

that he was perfectly aware of his dynasty's difficult position and of the fact that his only way out of the predicament would be to present a solid proof of Russia's support for the dynasty to his people. If the Emperor did not grant him an audience, the King expected a revolution and his dethronement.<sup>45</sup>

However, Grabo's mission was cut short by his sudden death in December 1901. His death marked the end of the second phase of the King's cooperation with the Russian Secret Service, which lasted from May to December 1901. The King's position in 1902 was growing weaker, and for this reason Russian authorities acted reservedly and evaded granting the King's principal request for continuing cooperation and preparing the ground for his audience with the Tsar. The question of the King's visit to Russia had to be opened anew.<sup>46</sup>

From the beginning of 1902 King Alexander was trying to get in touch with the new head of the Secret Service, Vladimir Valerianovich Trzeciak, in order to ensure the continuation of their cooperation on the basis of the previous agreement. He did this through Jovan Djaja, a Radical politician and Serbia's diplomatic agent in Sofia who, with the King's knowledge, worked for the Russian Secret Service.<sup>47</sup>

When Trzeciak reported to Tcharykow upon his arrival in Belgrade, he learnt that the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had already informed its mission in Belgrade that the Okhrana's engagement in the Serbian King's service had been terminated on 1 January 1902, and that Russia could not take the risk and re-assume responsibility for his safety. This was the beginning of the third period in relations between the Serbian ruler and the Rus-

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<sup>45</sup> GARF, f. 505, op. 1, d. 127, l. 40, 41: according to Grabo's findings, a brochure entitled *Draga i njeno delovanje u Srbiji* was printed in Sofia in 1901. It was a translation from German of *Draga und ihre Umtriebe in Serbien* (Zürich 1901) and signed by "a Serbian man of the state". In addition to a portrayal of the King and Queen in the worst possible light, it also accused the Russian diplomat Mansurov and the interpreter of the Russian diplomatic mission in Belgrade Mamulov of purposely ignoring the irrefutable proof of the Queen's barrenness, of which both German and French diplomats were aware; it was Russia alone that feigned ignorance, using Draga to get Milan removed from Serbia forever in order to reinforce its influence there (l. 43a-143c).

<sup>46</sup> AS, SN, I.245.

<sup>47</sup> The ties between the Russian Secret Service and Jovan Djaja do not seem to have been insignificant. As a rabid Radical, he was recruited by the Russian Secret Service on Trzeciak's recommendation. Being the King's trusted person, he was familiar with his every move, and reported it to the Russian Secret Service. According to Secret Service reports, the King recalled him from Sofia in May 1902 and appointed him head of his Privy Council. Djaja suggested that the King, if he turned to Austria-Hungary again, should be dethroned and replaced by a person loyal to Russia. See GARF, f. 505, *Zave-duiushchii agenturoi*, op. 1, d. 75, l. 11-12; d. 76, l. 1, 5-6; d. 127, l. 34.

sian Secret Service, which lasted until the King's assassination. Accordingly, Trzeciak told the King that he had no authority to decide on the matter, and that the King's request should be addressed to the Russian government. The King expressed hope that his request would not be misunderstood, and Trzeciak promised to refer it to his superiors. The audience ended on that note. This meeting took place at a time when members of the conspiracy against the King consolidated their ranks, established contact with the rivaling Karadjordjević dynasty, and sounded out diplomats in Belgrade and Vienna about the possible reaction of the great powers in case of a dynastic change in Serbia. At the same time, in February 1902, Franz Ferdinand, heir presumptive to the throne of Austria-Hungary, left for St. Petersburg. The King needed the services of the Russian Secret Police more than ever before.<sup>48</sup>

During 1902 warnings about the King's life being in danger were coming from all quarters, including Serbia's diplomatic missions.<sup>49</sup> Danger seemed to lurk around every corner and the King was unable to put his finger on its source. Some claimed that it was the Army, some pointed at supporters of the Karadjordjevićs, and others suspected Austria-Hungary. The King sought protection from the Russian Service anew, but Russia kept a distance due to discouraging news about the King's position in the country. On Tcharykow's suggestions, Russia was careful not to bring discredit on itself by supplying its own men for the King's protection. Prior to his meeting with the King, Tcharykow was instructed by Trzeciakov to present himself as a person officially charged with curbing revolutionary-anarchistic movements in the Balkans. Trzeciak shared Tcharykow's view that any further involvement of Russian agents in the King's protection would discredit Russia, and that the King's request should be delicately declined. The King, on the other hand, wanted to keep Tcharykow in the dark as to his negotiations with Trzeciak, since he had learnt that Tcharykow was opposed to his request. On 27 February 1902, Trzeciak was received in audience. The King enquired about Grabo's sudden death and the results of his mission to Lambsdorf and the Tsar, and then brought up the question of his personal security. Trzeciak stated that he was neither sufficiently informed nor authorized to decide about such a serious matter. The Russian ministries of Foreign and Internal Affairs had agreed that the reputation of the Secret Service might be seriously damaged should it kept receiving money from the Serbian King. Trzeciak reported to his superiors that a Russian network of agents for monitoring anarchists and revolutionaries could be organised in Serbia, as it had been in Bulgaria, at a cost of about

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* d. 127, l. 50, 52–53, 60; AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 497, 1902, l. 20.

<sup>49</sup> AS, MID, PO, 1902, P1, D. VI, F. VIII; and 1903, A7, B I, F I.



60,000 francs, and claimed that it would be quite useful for the operation of the Secret Service in the Balkans.<sup>50</sup> His proposal was not accepted, on account that it would further irritate Austrian intelligence agents, who kept a watchful eye on their Russian counterparts. On 4 May 1902, as ordered by the Police Director, Trzeciak told the King that the Secret Service could not take on responsibility for the security of a person of such a high rank, but added that he was ordered to “take all measures to avert dangers to the King commensurate with the forces and resources of the Secret Service”. This, to all intents and purposes, was a No. The King’s request was declined, while the Secret Service agents still benefited from his permission to move freely across Serbia, and they even were well-received and assisted by local police authorities.<sup>51</sup>

Still hoping that his trip to Russia would take place, the King continued to shower Russian agents with presents and honours. In mid-April 1902, he rewarded members of the Russian Secret Police with 7,000 francs, and decorated the head of the special section of the Police Department with the Order of St. Sava First Class.<sup>52</sup>

From March to October 1902, the King, having completed all preparations for the trip to Russia, waited for the exact date to be set. As he let it be known that he wished to pay visits to the Sultan and the Romanian King on his journey home from Russia, both courts began to enquire about the date of his arrival. August came to a close, and the deadline for announcing the date and itinerary of his journey was fast-approaching.<sup>53</sup>

The King had acquiesced in being received in audience in St. Petersburg together with Bulgarian Prince Ferdinand. However, the Bulgarian Prince was received by the Emperor in June 1902, as well as Prince Nikola of Montenegro, in late 1901. The Serbian King was the only one who was still waiting to be granted audience. The fact that Bulgaria once more came before Serbia on the list of Russian priorities in the Balkans, and the cordial

<sup>50</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi, op. 1, d. 127, l. 47–48; d. 76, l. 1, 3; and d. 81, l. 1–2.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. op. 1, d. 127, l. 61–64; Trzeciak’s report of 18/31 May 1902 (ibid. op. 1, d. 75, l. 11) reads: “Despite the fact that the Police Department did not allocate resources to the Secret Service in Serbia, it continues to be met with very broad cooperation on the part of authorities.”

<sup>52</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi, op. 1, d. 127, l. 54–55. The list of more prominent persons who were given money included Trzeciak, the Vaisman brothers, Alexander and Simon, Yuriy Petrovich Bahmetev, Mikhail Jurkevich, Jovan Djaja, and two others who received smaller sums (ibid. op. 1, d. 75, l. 10).

<sup>53</sup> GARF, V. Lambsdorf’s Fonds, f. 586, op. 1, d. 63, l. 23, 27, 38–40; AVPRI, Sekretnyi arkhiv, f. 138, op. 467, d. 209/210, 1902, l. 27–28.

reception of Prince Ferdinand in St. Petersburg, gave the King another serious cause for concern. He told the Russian military agent that, had he gone to St. Petersburg, he would have persuaded the Russian government to give preference to the Serbs instead of treating them as an abstract number.<sup>54</sup>

In June 1902, Tcharykow asked his superiors for some information about the Serbian King's prospective visit. When reporting to the Tsar on 23 June, Lambsdorf wrote on the piece of paper with Tcharykow's question concerning the date of the visit: "This autumn in the Crimea." No sooner had Tcharykow reported back that all preparations for the trip had been made in Serbia than Lambsdorf informed him, in a telegram of 14 September, and a letter of 17 September, that due to Tsarina's poor health there would be no audiences for foreign royalty in Livadia, but he added that it did not mean that the Tsar's sentiments towards the Serbian royal couple had changed in any way.<sup>55</sup>

The King was kept in the dark for almost a month. It was not until 10 October that he learnt that his visit had been called off. It is interesting to note that the Serbian diplomatic representative to Russia, Novaković, did not relay Lambsdorf's formal note of 17 September that the visit would not take place in 1902 to the King. The telegram that the King received almost a month later, on 10 October, did not contain Lambsdorf's message which essentially said that the visit was postponed. Lambsdorf deemed Novaković's report to be "tactless". The King was devastated by the news, and Tcharykow thought that the sharp and tactless tone of Novaković's telegram made it sound even worse. Tcharykow reported that during his audience with the King, Alexander had seemed discouraged and distraught. To make things worse, the unpleasant news spread throughout the country like wildfire. The King was outraged when he found out that Tcharykow had kept him in suspense for almost a month. The cancellation of the visit caused sensation and turmoil on the domestic political scene, but the Russian Foreign Ministry kept up with its lulling tactics, dangling the prospect of a visit upon the Tsarina's recovery. From Yalta, the Emperor authorised Lambsdorf to instruct the Russian diplomatic representative to pass on the expressions of his favour to the King for he had abided by Russian counsel in both internal and foreign policy. The Tsar said he was not able to set the date of the King's visit yet, which implied it was delayed rather than cancelled altogether.<sup>56</sup> From that mo-

<sup>54</sup> DDF, vol. II, ser. 2, 381.

<sup>55</sup> GARF, f. 586, op. 1, d. 63, l. 23; AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 497, 1902, l. 562.

<sup>56</sup> AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 495, part II, 1902, l. 220–221; d. 496, 1902, l. 193–196, 217, 229; AVPRI, Sekretnyi arkhiv, f. 138, op. 467, d. 209/210, year 1902,

ment on, the Secret Service kept a watchful eye on the King's moves in order to assess if Russia should still rely on him in her Balkan plans, and tried to found out Austria-Hungary's secret plans in the region.<sup>57</sup>

The "terrible" impression that the whole affair had made in Serbia prompted Tcharykow to ask for detailed instructions with the view to repairing the damage it caused to the Russian influence in Serbia. Acting on the instructions received on 21 October 1902, Tcharykow said to the King that St. Petersburg had been supporting him for almost three years and would continue to do so; should the King, however, take a non-national course — which, in fact, meant a pro-Austrian one — Russia would be forced to get involved.<sup>58</sup>

Of the Secret Service agents from Grabo's times only Vaisman and Jurkevich were left, but the former was subordinate to Tcharykow, while the latter withdrew in 1902 over a disagreement with Vaisman. Russian agents were on the move from Bucharest, Sofia, Constantinople and Belgrade to Vienna, mostly monitoring the movements of Macedonian Committee members (advocating the autonomy of Macedonia in the Ottoman Empire) and the activities of Austrian intelligence agents. This situation continued into 1903 as well. In his report of 23 April 1903 Trzeciak stated again that the provision of security services to the Serbian King had terminated with Budzilovich's death, but that Russian agents often stayed in Belgrade for the purpose of monitoring the distribution of nihilistic literature in Serbia.<sup>59</sup>

After the King's coup d'état of 6 April 1903, Russian agents informed their superiors about rumours of an organisation in southern Macedonia planning the assassination of the King and Queen. In late April 1903, they reported that the Service had established the existence of a conspiracy against the King in Belgrade and that Tcharykow had been informed about it, unlike the King, from whom the information was withheld for one whole month.<sup>60</sup>

The first serious warning about the conspiracy that reached the King came from his aunt, Queen Natalie's sister who lived in Romania. The

1. 20–21; Lambsdorf instructed Tcharykow to carefully break to the King the news that the visit of the royal couple had to be postponed because of the Tsarina's sudden weakness, but that it did not mean that the Tsar's sentiments towards the royal couple changed. See AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 497, 1902, l. 562.

<sup>57</sup> GARF, f. 505, op. 1, d. 76, l. 10.

<sup>58</sup> AVPRI, Sekretnyi arkhiv, f. 138, op. 467, d. 209/210, 1902, l. 30–31; Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 495, part II, 1902, l. 1–2; d. 496, 1902, l. 217.

<sup>59</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi, op. 1, d. 76, l. 14–15

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. d. 75, l. 6–7; and op. 1, d. 76, l. 12–13; AVPRI, Politarchive, f. 151, op. 482, d. 498, 1903, l. 185.

warning was given at the explicit order of King Carol of Romania, who had learnt of it from a representative of the Viennese government.<sup>61</sup> The Russian Secret Service did not send Vaisman to inform the King about the conspiracy until 7 June 1903, only three days before his assassination. At that point the King had already known what was going on, as he had been warned by Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria as well. The Prince heard of it from his secretary, who, in turn, had received information from none other than the Russian Secret Service. On the same day, 7 June, at the order of the Police Department, Trzeciak withdrew all his men from Serbia, and Vaisman left for Sofia. On 10 June, however, he was sent back to Belgrade, allegedly on some police business. Thus, on 11 June 1903, at four o'clock in the morning, an hour after the murder of the King and Queen, the agent of the Russian Police arrived in the Serbian capital and, summoned by Tcharykow, proceeded urgently to the Russian mission.<sup>62</sup>

A day later, 12 June, Tcharykow sent a confidential telegram to the Russian Police Department requesting that agent Vaisman be allowed to stay in Belgrade to ensure liaison between the Russian mission and the provisional Avakumović government until the official establishment of bilateral relations between Russia and Serbia, that is, until the Russian Emperor recognised the change on the Serbian throne and the new King, Peter Karadjordjević. On 15 June, Serbian Parliament proclaimed Peter Karadjordjević king, who had already been acclaimed king by the Army. The Tsar was the first head of a great power to recognise the new situation in Serbia as soon as the next day. Tcharykow then introduced the freshly-arrived Trzeciak to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Ljubomir Kaljević, presenting him as a “representative of the Russian foreign revolutionary secret service”. Tcharykow proposed that, on the arrival of Peter Karadjordjević in Belgrade, Trzeciak be introduced to the new King as well, and that talks be initiated about the establishment of a Secret Service branch in Serbia. His proposal was postponed until September 1903, when it was brought up again on the strict understanding that services provided to King Peter would be confined to antirevolutionary activities without encroaching upon the political sphere.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> V. Kazimirović, *Nikola Pašić i njegovo doba*, 2 vols. (Belgrade: Nova Evropa, 1990), vol. I, 611.

<sup>62</sup> GARF, f. 505, Zaveduiushchii agenturoi, op. 1, d. 76, l. 37, 39.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* l. 30, 38, 39, 49, 50.

*Conclusion*

Between 1900 and 1903 there were three phases of cooperation between the Russian Secret Service and King Alexander of Serbia. In the first phase, from December 1900 to February 1901, the King paid substantial sums for the services that involved the protection of his and the Queen's life. After ex-King Milan's death in February 1901, more precisely from May, the second phase of cooperation began during which the Secret Service was relieved of the duty of providing security for the King and instead gathered intelligence for him, at a much lower price, and endeavoured to prepare the ground for the visit of the Serbian royal couple to the Russian court. Until the end of 1901, the Secret Service supplied the King with intelligence that mainly concerned anti-dynastic activities on Austro-Hungarian soil, and lobbied in Russian official and semi-official circles for the King's audience with the Tsar. During the third period of cooperation, from the beginning of 1902 until the King's assassination on 11 June 1903, Russian agents were forbidden, by the joint decision of the Russian ministries of Internal and Foreign Affairs, to receive money from the Serbian King and were relieved of any duty regarding the protection of his life. The Russian Secret Service promised to provide assistance to the King "commensurate with the forces and resources of the Secret Service", and made it clear that its task in the Balkans was to counteract revolutionary-anarchistic movements. Correspondence between all officials involved in the matter, including the Russian diplomatic representative in Belgrade Tcharykow, shows that consensus was reached in Russia that the Secret Service should not discredit itself by having its agents on a foreign sovereign's payroll. Such a decision was influenced not only by the pessimistic prognoses about the survival of the last Obrenović on the throne, but also by the agreed upon programme of reforms in the Ottoman Empire whose realisation Russia and Austria-Hungary were to ensure. In order not to undermine its agreement with Austria-Hungary, Russia kept a passive attitude towards the developments in Serbia. The Secret Service withdrew all personnel from Serbia just three days before the King's assassination; when it finally warned the King about the conspiracy, he had already been informed from other sources.

It seems safe to say that the Secret Service in Serbia operated as an extended arm of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, i.e. its diplomatic mission in Belgrade. Its task was to fortify Russia's position in Serbia after King Alexander's wedding and ex-King Milan's departure from the country. The person who acted as a liaison between the King and the Secret Service was the Russian Chargé d'affaires, Pavel Mansurov, who was close to Slavophile circles in Russia. The success of the Secret Service operations in Serbia in the long run should not be underestimated. Russian agents were able to be

more efficient in their work because they enjoyed the confidence of the Serbian King, as they frequently noted themselves. The cooperation, however, was not life-saving for the Serbian King as he was not provided with the services of Russian agents when he needed them most. A conspiracy against him went on unhampered throughout 1902 and the first half of 1903.

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## Ahmed Bey Zogou et la Serbie Une coopération inachevée (1914–1916)

**Résumé :** Dans la première phase de la Grande Guerre, les relations entre la Serbie et l'Albanie furent tendues, marquées par les conflits et les disputes territoriales ainsi que par la rivalité avec les autres puissances, surtout l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Turquie, dans l'Albanie, en tant que nouvel État balkanique. Afin de dépasser les conflits et de rétablir l'influence politique de la Serbie en Albanie le Président du Conseil serbe, Nikola P. Pašić, établit les liens proches et stratégiques avec le puissant chef d'Albanie centrale Essad Pacha Toptani. En vue d'élargir le réseau des chefs claniques amicaux à travers les émissaires spéciaux en Albanie, Pašić recruta Ahmed bey Zogou, le chef de la région des Mati et le neveu d'Essad Pacha. Cette étude démontre les différentes phases, avec les résultats mitigés, d'une coopération entre la Serbie et Ahmed bey Zogou, chef de la région Mati (futur roi d'Albanie Zog Ier entre-deux-guerres), destinée d'apaiser l'inimitié des clans albanais contre la Serbie et de créer un cadre de coopération bilatérale plus stable et plus durable.

**Mot-clé :** Serbie, Albanie, Grande Guerre, Ahmed bey Zogou, Nikola Pašić, Essad Pacha Toptani, relations serbo-albanaises, 1914–1916.

### *Le chef de clan de Mati*

Ahmed Bey Zogou [Ahmet Muhtar Bej Zogolli], fils de Djemal Pacha Zogou et de Sadija Hanem Toptani, naquit en 1895 en Albanie du Nord, à Burgajet, chef-lieu de la province de la région de Mati.<sup>1</sup> Il fit des études à Constantinople au Lycée de Galatasaray avant de revenir en Albanie à la mort de son père en 1911. Après avoir évincé son frère aîné, Djemal Bey, il devint chef du clan de Mati et, lors de la création de l'Albanie en novembre 1912, il se jeta activement dans le combat politique.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> La version serbe de ce texte, plus courte que celle-ci, intitulée *Ahmed beg Zogu i Srbija*, fut publiée dans le recueil des travaux *Srbija 1916* [La Serbie en 1916] (Belgrade: Institut d'Histoire 1987), 165–177.

<sup>2</sup> *Biographisches Lexicon zur Geschichte Südosteuropa*, vol. IV (Munich: Oldenburg 1981), 497–502. Ahmed Bey était un descendant de Djemal Pacha Zogou qui, au milieu des années 1860, avait négocié avec la Serbie la levée d'une insurrection commune contre les Ottomans. Cf. G. Jakšić et V. J. Vučković, *Spoljna politika Srbije za vlade kneza Mihaila. Prvi balkanski savez* [La politique étrangère de la Serbie sous le prince Michel. La première alliance balkanique] (Belgrade : Institut d'histoire 1963), 241–245, 339–341, 415–416.

Le premier chef du gouvernement albanais à Valona Ismail Kemal Bey (en albanais : Ismail Qemali) fut un protégé de l'Autriche-Hongrie, et, par conséquent, un ennemi acharné de la Serbie, en conflit avec les Albanais après ses succès militaires dans la Première guerre balkanique. Les Serbes, afin de resserrer l'étau de l'Autriche-Hongrie, cherchaient un accès à la mer Adriatique, dans le territoire albanais. Sous la forte pression de Vienne à la Conférence des ambassadeurs à Londres, les troupes serbes furent obligées de se retirer de l'Albanie, où elles occupaient une grande partie dans les zones septentrionales et centrales, avec le port de Durazzo [Durrës].<sup>3</sup>

Afin de renforcer son influence, l'Autriche-Hongrie, parvint en décembre 1913 à imposer Guillaume de Wied, un aristocrate prussien, parent de la reine de Roumanie, comme le prince d'Albanie, à l'issue d'une bataille dans laquelle l'Italie et la Turquie avaient également leurs candidats. Le gouvernement serbe vit dans ce choix un nouveau pas vers la réalisation du plan de Vienne qui visait à encercler la Serbie par l'entremise de l'Albanie, la Bulgarie et la Roumanie, les satellites de la Double Monarchie.<sup>4</sup>

L'arrivée sur le trône albanais d'un prince allemand, Guillaume de Wied [Wilhelm von Wied], en mars 1914, témoignait de l'influence prépondérante de l'Autriche-Hongrie sur le nouvel État balkanique. La commission internationale de contrôle contraignit Essad Pacha Toptani,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> D. Djordjević, *Izlazak Srbije na Jadransko more i konferencija amabasadora u Londonu 1912* [Le débouché de la Serbie sur l'Adriatique et la conférence des ambassadeurs à Londres en 1912] (Belgrade : chez l'auteur, 1956), 83–85 ; S. Skendi, *Albanian National Awakening* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1967), 460–463 ; Dj. Mikić, « Albanci u balkanskim ratovima 1912–1913 godine » [Les Albanais dans les guerres balkaniques 1912–1913], *Istorijski glasnik* 1–2 (Belgrade 1986), 55–80 ; Dj. Dj. Stanković, « Nikola Pašić i stvaranje albanske države » [Nikola Pašić et la création de l'État albanais], *Marksistička misao* 3 (Belgrade 1985), 157–169.

<sup>4</sup> Djordjević, *Izlazak Srbije na Jadransko more*, 149.

<sup>5</sup> Essad Pacha Toptani (Tirana 1863 – Paris 1920) était issu d'une des plus riches familles féodales albanaises, qui possédait une grande propriété dans la région de Tirana. Il occupa de hautes fonctions dans l'armée et la gendarmerie turques. Il fut, entre autres, le commandant de la gendarmerie de la province de Jannina. Il soutint le mouvement jeune turc de 1908 et représenta Durazzo au parlement ottoman. En 1909, au nom des officiers jeunes-turcs, il remit au sultan Abdul-Hamid II [1876–1909] le décret qui le destituait. Après l'assassinat de Hassan Reza Pacha, perpétré dans des circonstances jamais élucidées, en janvier 1913, en tant que commandant de la gendarmerie de la province, il dirigea la défense de la ville de Scutari. Cf. *Biographisches Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas* IV, 340–342. Jovan M. Jovanović, le haut fonctionnaire serbe, dans son récit de voyage en Albanie en 1908 : Inostrani [J.M.J.], « Beleške o Arbaniji » [Notes sur l'Albanie], *Srpski književni glasnik* XXV/7 (1910), 518, dit d'Essad Pacha et de ses orientations politiques : « Le commandant de la gendarmerie de la province, Essad Pacha, un Albanais de Tirana, un fonctionnaire et un homme riche et cupide, jouit d'une

l'ancien général ottoman et le seigneur albanais le plus puissant, à former un gouvernement unique avec le Prince (le *mbret*). Essad Pacha se vit confier deux postes-clés : le ministère de la Guerre et celui de l'Intérieur.<sup>6</sup> Dans une Albanie majoritairement musulmane (environ 70 % de la population totale), le choix d'un prince chrétien [« giaour »] suscita la révolte de la population traditionaliste de confession musulmane, qui, conduite par des chefs claniques et des officiers jeunes-turcs, réclamait que soit maintenue une administration de type ottoman et qu'un prince ottoman monte sur le trône d'Albanie. Cette révolte, due non seulement au fanatisme musulman mais aussi au mécontentement paysan face à la question agraire non résolue, ne fit que renforcer la fracture existant au sein du pays.<sup>7</sup> Le programme politique des insurgés était le suivant : un souverain musulman, un drapeau et une forme de gouvernement ottomans. En tant que le plus puissant des chefs musulmans en Albanie centrale, Essad Pacha Toptani soutint cette insurrection contre le prince Guillaume de Wied, considérant qu'il était lui-même en droit de monter sur le trône albanais.

Cherchant un soutien en Albanie du Nord où les Guègues musulmans s'insurgeaient contre le prince chrétien imposé par les puissances germaniques, Essad Pacha voulut s'appuyer sur son neveu, le jeune Ahmed Bey Zogou, qui disposait dans son clan de plusieurs centaines d'hommes armés. Selon les renseignements des émissaires serbes en Albanie, Essad Pacha Toptani promit au jeune Ahmed Bey Zogou d'en faire son héritier, si celui-ci soutenait sa candidature au trône, puisqu'il n'avait pas d'enfant

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grande influence de Scutari à Durazzo, et même dans toute l'Albanie. Ce propriétaire de bois de hêtres et de chênes et des meilleures terres d'Albanie du Nord, que je rencontraï à la douane de Scutari, est un grand ami des Italiens et on l'écoute volontiers à Yildiz [palais royal du sultan Abdul Hamid II à Constantinople]. À parler avec lui, on a l'impression qu'il est favorable aux idées de progrès — construction de routes, ouverture des marchés, renforcement de la force économique des Albanais —, que c'est naturel et qu'il doit en être ainsi, et que les Italiens ont l'intelligence d'œuvrer en ce sens en Albanie. Comme on le dit, il a déjà beaucoup œuvré pour son propre compte, il a bien vendu ses bois ; il achète des mines, s'empare de fournitures commandées et pour, une belle somme, les revend secrètement. » Pour plus de détails voir : D. T. Bataković, « Essad-paša Toptani i Srbija 1915. godine » [Essad Pacha Toptani et la Serbie en 1915], in *Srbija 1915* [La Serbie en 1915] (Belgrade : Institut d'Histoire, 1986), 299–327.

<sup>6</sup> *Historia e popullit shqiptar* [Histoire du peuple albanais], ed. A. Buda (Prishtine : Enti i teksteve dhe i mjeteve mësimore i Krahinës socialiste autonome të Kosovës, 1979), 403–404.

<sup>7</sup> M. Ekmečić, *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914* [Les buts de guerre de la Serbie en 1914] (Belgrade : Srpska književna zadruka, 1973), 375–376 ; voir aussi J. Swire, *Albania. The Rise of a Kingdom* (Londres : Williams & Norgate 1929), 183–240.

mâle.<sup>8</sup> Selon les sources serbes « le chef de Mati est Ahmed Bey, le neveu d'Essad Pacha, et il contrôle tout le fief. Il soutient Essad [Pacha] ; il n'est pas partisan du prince von Wied mais du prince Burhadedin » [un prince de la maison royale ottomane].<sup>9</sup>

L'Albanie grouillait d'agents étrangers, essentiellement des officiers jeunes-turcs et austro-hongrois. Dans ces circonstances, Essad Pacha, qui avec l'arrivée au pouvoir de Guillaume de Wied était en train de perdre la confiance de la population musulmane, soutint dans un premier temps les insurgés, avant de se tourner vers l'Italie afin de contrecarrer les plans austro-hongrois et de lutter contre les partisans du Prince. Après avoir affronté les partisans de Guillaume de Wied à Durazzo, Essad Pacha dut émigrer en Italie le 19 mai 1914. Ahmed Bey avait, semble-t-il, sans succès tenté de pousser la population musulmane de Tirana à soutenir Essad Pacha.

Selon les sources disponibles, rien n'indique que Zogou ait eu à l'époque des contacts directs avec la Serbie. Néanmoins, une fois la menace de guerre écartée, Zogou prit de plus en plus d'importance aux yeux des agents du gouvernement serbe en Albanie. Après la mort d'Arif Hikmet à l'été 1914, Ahmed Bey Zogou était l'un des rares chefs de clan albanais importants prêts à coopérer avec la Serbie voisine.

#### *Les premiers contacts avec la Serbie*

Le gouvernement serbe suivait avec beaucoup d'inquiétude le développement de la situation en Albanie. Dès la fin du printemps 1914, le Premier ministre serbe, Nikola P. Pašić, envoya à plusieurs reprises — par l'intermédiaire du chef du district d'Ohrid, le préfet Jovan Ćirković — de l'argent à des chefs de clan albanais, afin de s'assurer leur collaboration dans les provinces frontalières avec la Serbie. Cela eut peu de résultats tangibles car les quantités d'or et de munitions fournies aux chefs albanais, en comparaisons des sommes considérables distribués par les agents d'Autriche-Hongrie, étaient faibles. Jovan Ćirković, l'homme de confiance de Premier ministre serbe, s'employait ardemment à ce que la collaboration avec les Albanais en Albanie du Nord, limitrophe à la Serbie, se poursuive « car ces va-nu-pieds albanais qui ont faim iront à ceux qui leur donneront du pain et l'Autriche les attend à bras ouverts ». Ses prévisions se réalisèrent assez rapidement.

<sup>8</sup> B. Hrabak, « Muslimani severne Albanije i Srbija uoči izbijanja rata 1914. godine » [Les musulmans de l'Albanie du nord et la Serbie à la veille de la guerre de 1914], *Zbornik za istoriju Matice srpske* 22 (Novi Sad 1980), 52.

<sup>9</sup> *Dokumenti o spoljnoj politici Kraljevine Srbije 1903-1914* [Documents sur la politique étrangère du Royaume de Serbie, 1903-1914], vol. VII-1 (Belgrade : Académie serbe des sciences et des arts, 1981), doc. n° 330.

À la fin juin 1914 Ahmed Bey Zogou reçut de grosses sommes d'argent des mains des émissaires de l'Autriche-Hongrie. Il convoqua alors tous les chefs du clan de Mati, rassembla un bataillon de près de 2 500 hommes et se rangea aux côtés du prince Guillaume de Wied.<sup>10</sup>

Cela n'inquiétait pas particulièrement le préfet Ćirković qui estimait que Zogou, s'il restait aux côtés du prince « giaour », perdrait rapidement son influence sur la majeure partie de son territoire clanique. Il s'avéra bientôt qu'il avait raison. Quand ils surent que Zogou avait reçu de l'argent de l'Autriche-Hongrie (près de 20 000 napoléons) par l'entremise de Prenk Bib Doda, le chef du clan catholique des Mirditë au nord d'Albanie, les deux tiers des combattants musulmans de Mati le quittèrent, refusant résolument de se battre contre les « Ottomans » — les insurgés musulmans pro-ttomans conduits par Hadji Qamil Feiza, un officier jeune-turc originaire d'Elbassan. Ahmed Bey fut même obligé d'envoyer une lettre d'excuses au chef des insurgés pro-turcs pour avoir conduit une armée clanique contre lui, justifiant son comportement par la crainte que la Serbie et la Grèce ne profitent de l'insurrection des « Ottomans » pour occuper certaines parties de l'Albanie.<sup>11</sup> Après s'être retiré sans combat de la scène politique, Ahmed Bey ne conserva qu'environ 400 fidèles partisans. Il vit son influence à Mati, peuplé des Albanais musulmans, brutalement chuter et il souffrit pendant un certain temps de l'ostracisme des autres chefs albanais de sa région pour avoir soutenu le prince chrétien Guillaume de Wied.

L'attentat de Sarajevo du 28 juin 1914, la crise européenne et la menace de la guerre mondiale poussèrent la Serbie à consacrer plus d'attention à sa frontière toujours instable avec l'Albanie, où l'influence de la Double Monarchie ne cessait de croître. Le Président du Conseil serbe Pašić, par l'intermédiaire de son émissaire spécial, Djemal Bey Ljubović, un officier

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<sup>10</sup> « Ahmed Bey [Zogou] a reçu une grosse somme d'argent de la part de l'Autriche dimanche dernier, le 8 de ce mois, et le lundi 9 il a convoqué tous les chefs et ses gens de Mati pour leur distribuer l'argent. Et le lendemain matin, le mardi, il s'est mis en route avec 2 500 hommes pour Kravina et Çafama-riz. À Mati, le crieur public a annoncé que ceux qui ne partiraient pas avec Ahmed Bey verraient leurs maisons incendiées et leur maisonnée battue. Désormais tout Mati est du côté du prince Wied. Nos émissaires n'ont pas vu Ahmed Bey car ils sont arrivés seulement mardi après-midi. Ils disent qu'aucun homme sur place ne veut entendre parler du prince turc et tous expliquent que Wied est turc et qu'ils n'en ont pas besoin d'un autre. [...] Ma conviction est que, si Ahmed Bey reste aux côtés de Wied, nous pourrions lui prendre la moitié de Mati car nous en avons les moyens. », cf. dépêche de Jovan Ćirković au Ministère des Affaires étrangères serbe, publiée dans *Dokumenti o spoljnoj politici Kraljevine Srbije 1903-1914* [Documents sur la politique étrangère du Royaume de Serbie, 1903-1914], vol. VII-2, doc. n° 271.

<sup>11</sup> Hrabak, « Muslimani severne Albanije i Srbija », 60-62, 74.



de l'armée serbe qui agissait en Albanie sous le pseudonyme de « Mladen » (Stamatović ?), travaillait — avec la complicité du chef du district serbe d'Ohrid — à gagner à sa cause les chefs albanais pour sécuriser la frontière de la Serbie avec l'Albanie. Depuis les guerres balkaniques (1912–1913), les régions limitrophes avec l'Albanie, dans les zones du fort peuplement albanais, furent souvent la cible des incursions armées des hors-la-loi (*kaçak*) albanais, financés et organisés par les agents austro-hongrois et les émissaires jeunes-turcs, visant d'élargir les frontières de l'Albanie, et de créer une Grande Albanie, avec les territoires récemment incorporés à la Serbie : Kosovo, Metohija et la Macédoine du nord-ouest (régions de Skoplje [Uskub], Tetovo, Gostivar, Debar [Dibra], Bitolj [Monastir] et Ohrid). Début juin 1914, le représentant serbe en Albanie Ljubović et son sous-chef à Ohrid, le préfet Jovan Ćirković, parvinrent à attirer du côté de la Serbie Ahmed Zogou, toujours politiquement isolé, dans son fief à Mati. Le gouvernement de Belgrade lui versa près de 4 000 dinars, soit un cinquième des sommes allouées aux puissants chefs de clans de l'Albanie du Nord.<sup>12</sup>

Cependant, le chef de Mati n'arrivait pas à retrouver son influence auprès des musulmans fondamentalistes de l'Albanie septentrionale et centrale. Quand il demanda leur appui aux chefs de Mallessia de Dibra (en serbe : *Debarska Malesija*), ceux-ci refusèrent, le traitant de « traître à l'ottomanisme et de vendu ». <sup>13</sup> Pendant un certain temps, il n'est pas fait état d'Ahmed Zogou — dont le pouvoir demeurerait neutralisé puisqu'il s'était discrédité en étant ouvertement à la solde de l'Autriche-Hongrie — comme d'un acteur important dans les plans du gouvernement serbe en Albanie. Néanmoins, dans la mesure où la Serbie avait d'une certaine manière recueillie Ahmed Zogou après l'échec de son combat politique contre les « Ottomans », il est probable qu'elle ait continué à soutenir Zogou pour que, le moment voulu, il participe à un projet politique.

Après l'attentat de Sarajevo, la Double Monarchie, en collaboration avec les officiers jeunes-turcs et les comitadjis bulgares infiltrés en Albanie, organisa de nouvelles incursions sur le territoire serbe. Des agents austro-hongrois approvisionnaient les chefs albanais émigrés du Kosovo — Issa Boletini, Bajram Curri, Hassan Bey Prishtina et autres — en armes et argent, en laissant des officiers jeunes-turcs conduire les actions qui devaient ouvrir un second front contre la Serbie.<sup>14</sup> Dans les dépêches confidentielles serbes relatives aux incursions albanaises en août et septembre 1914 sur le

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 64.

<sup>13</sup> De ce fait, Jovan Ćirković proposa que le restant de l'argent soit partagé entre les chefs de Mati qui étaient restés fidèles à Ahmed Bey (ibid., 68).

<sup>14</sup> A. Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu* [La Serbie dans la Première guerre mondiale] (Belgrade : Srpska književna zadruga, 1984), 219–223, 228.

territoire au sud de la Serbie (Kosovo, la Macédoine slave), le nom d'Ahmed Zogou ne fit pas mentionné.

Le départ définitif du prince Guillaume de Wied d'Albanie en septembre 1914, après sa défaite contre les « Ottomans » de Hadji Qamil Feiza, rouvrit la question du pouvoir en Albanie, déchirée par les conflits d'ordre religieux et clanique.<sup>15</sup> Essad Pacha Toptani, avec l'aide du gouvernement serbe — avec lequel il avait préalablement conclu un accord secret de coopération à Niš — revint dans son pays, s'empara du pouvoir en Albanie centrale et se proclama à Durazzo souverain d'Albanie, chef du gouvernement et commandant suprême des armées.<sup>16</sup> Dès sa prise de pouvoir, Es-

<sup>15</sup> Voir plus dans : D. Heaton-Armstrong, *The Six Month Kingdom. Albania 1914*, eds. G. Belfield & B. Destani (Londres : I. B. Tauris, 2005).

<sup>16</sup> Un accord secret, signé avec Essad Pacha à Niš le 17 septembre 1914, régula en 15 points cette aide et les relations entre la Serbie et l'Albanie. L'accord prévoyait : (1) d'instaurer une paix et une amitié durables entre les deux pays ; (2) de ne pas conclure d'accord avec un autre État qui menacerait les intérêts d'un des signataires ; (3) que la Serbie contribuerait à rétablir l'ordre en Albanie selon les traditions locales et les besoins du peuple albanais ; (4) que la Serbie aiderait à la création d'un conseil législatif du peuple albanais, composé de représentants de tous les clans ; (5) que le souverain d'Albanie serait désigné par la Grande assemblée du peuple albanais, composée de deux représentants par clan ; (6) que toutes les parties reconnaîtraient le souverain désigné par l'Assemblée ; (7) qu'Essad Pacha s'engageait à créer, en collaboration avec la Serbie, des représentations communes auprès des pays étrangers et à organiser une défense commune et des transports communs ; (8) que serait constitué un corps commun chargé de veiller sur ce partenariat et les institutions communes ; (9) qu'Essad Pacha mettrait un terme à l'agitation anti-serbe sur son territoire et accorderait aux chrétiens la liberté de culte et les autoriserait à avoir un enseignement dans leur dialecte ; (10) qu'une commission mixte serbo-albanaise, qui serait formée ultérieurement, déciderait du tracé des frontières entre la Serbie et l'Albanie ; (11) qu'Essad Pacha ne s'opposerait pas à la construction d'un chemin de fer adriatique jusqu'à Durazzo et que le royaume de Serbie dédommagerait les propriétaires des terres confisquées pour la construction ; (12) que, pour réaliser cet accord, la Serbie paierait à Essad Pacha 50 000 dinars par mois jusqu'à ce qu'il soit élu souverain d'Albanie, à la suite de quoi serait conclu un autre accord définissant un nouveau montant de rémunération ; (13) que les armées des deux parties ne pourraient franchir la frontière que sur l'invitation de l'autre partie ; (14) que l'accord serait ratifié par les souverains de Serbie et d'Albanie une fois ce dernier désigné ; (15) qu'Essad Pacha s'engageait à ne rien entreprendre qui aille à l'encontre de cet accord et qu'il collaborerait étroitement avec le représentant du royaume de Serbie en Albanie, quelle que soit la personne nommée à ce poste. Comme l'expliqua par la suite Nikola Pašić, cet accord avait été conclu « uniquement pour nous prémunir des attaques venues de ce côté, le temps que la guerre finisse ». Il est cependant incontestable qu'il constituait un cadre pour les relations à venir avec l'Albanie. Voir plus dans : Sh. Rahimi, « Marevshjet e qeverisë serbe me Esat pashë Toptanit gjate viteve 1914-1915 » [Les relations du gouvernement serbe avec Essad pacha Toptani], *Gjurmime Albanologjike* VI (1976), 117-143 ; D. T. Bataković, « Serbian Government and Esad-Pasha Toptani », in *Serbs*

sad Pacha fit cesser les attaques des unités irrégulières albanaises à la frontière serbe. Ahmed Zogou n'est pas cité comme un acteur politique avant le retour d'Essad Pacha en Albanie ni tout de suite après. Cependant, il est certain que la région de Mati ne se soumit pas à l'autorité d'Essad Pacha Toptani.<sup>17</sup>

Dès le 3 août 1914, Nikola P. Pašić exprima le point de vue du gouvernement serbe dans ses instructions au chef de district d'Ohrid concernant une éventuelle collaboration politique avec les musulmans d'Albanie septentrionale et centrale: « Nous pouvons laisser chaque clan s'administrer, mais que tous les clans forment un Sénat qui dirige et adopte les lois. Qu'ils forment une union politique et douanière avec la Serbie pour se défendre contre l'ennemi commun. Qu'ils nous laissent construire un chemin de fer jusqu'à la mer. La situation la plus claire serait une union personnelle et douanière et qu'à l'intérieur ils se gouvernent selon leurs coutumes. Il faudrait obtenir un accord avec plusieurs chefs importants, puis qu'ils décident dans une de leurs assemblées de nous inviter à former une communauté — une union personnelle ou réelle, etc. — pour que nous ayons une armée, une douane et des moyens de transport communs. »<sup>18</sup>

L'entrée en guerre de la Turquie aux côtés des puissances centrales, début novembre 1914, raviva le mouvement insurrectionnel en Albanie. Essad Pacha, allié de Serbie, fut déclaré « traître à l'islam » et les partisans de Hadji Qamil se retournèrent contre lui les armes à la main. La position d'Essad Pacha, très fort dans l'Albanie centrale, avec son siège à Durazzo, avant le *djihad* proclamé contre lui à Constantinople, s'affaiblissait progressivement, à cause de l'aide fournie aux insurgés musulmans pro-ottomans par l'Autriche-Hongrie et le régime de Constantinople. Simultanément, les attaques des *kaçaks* contre la Serbie, à partir du territoire albanais, reprirent, mettant ainsi la défense de la Serbie méridionale en danger constant. Les forces militaires serbes, après les deux victoires spectaculaires contre les armées austro-hongroises en août et novembre 1914, restèrent majoritairement déployées au nord et nord-ouest de la Serbie, sur la longue frontière avec la Double Monarchie sur les rivières de Danube, la Save, et la Drina.

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*and Albanians in the 20th Century*, ed. A. Mitrović, Scientific Conferences, vol. LXI, Department of Historical Sciences, vol. 20 (Belgrade : Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 1991), 57–78.

<sup>17</sup> Pour plus de détails voir : Bataković, « Essad Pacha Toptani et la Serbie », 305–307 ; B. Hrabak, « Stanje na srpsko-albanskoj granici i pobuna Arbanasa na Kosovu i Makedoniji » [La situation à la frontière serbo-albanaise et la révolte des Albanais au Kosovo et en Macédoine], in *Srbija 1915*, 63–93.

<sup>18</sup> Hrabak, « Muslimani severne Albanije », 76–77.

De peur que les insurgés pro-ottomans, s'ils mettaient fin au régime d'Essad Pacha Toptani avec le soutien financier et militaire de l'Autriche-Hongrie, n'ouvrent un nouveau front sur les frontières de la Serbie méridionale, le Premier ministre Pašić ordonna en mai 1915 une intervention militaire en Albanie, malgré la désapprobation des gouvernements des Alliés. Trois détachements serbes de Drim, Prizren et Ohrid (*Podrimski, Prizrenski, Ohridski odred*), soit près de 20 000 soldats, pénétrèrent en Albanie septentrionale par trois côtés. Les troupes serbes, sous le commandement du colonel Dragutin Milutinović, brisèrent rapidement, en une dizaine de jours, la résistance des « Ottomans », s'emparèrent de Tirana et Elbassan et libèrent Essad Pacha, déjà assiégé dans son fief de Durazzo. Les chefs des « Ottomans » dont Hadji Qamil Feiza, Moussa Effendi et le mufti de Tirana, furent capturés par les Serbes et livrés à Essad Pacha qui les fit pendre à Durazzo.<sup>19</sup>

### *La question de Mati*

Les habitants de Mati, partisans de Zogou, ne résistèrent pas aux troupes serbes, supérieures en nombre. Grâce au lieutenant Mladen Stamatović, émissaire de Pašić en Albanie, Ahmed Bey obtint du colonel Milutin Mišković, commandant du détachement de Drim (*Podrimski odred*) à Dibra, et du général Damnjan Popović, commandant des troupes des Nouvelles Provinces (*Komandant Trupa Novih Oblasti*) comprenant la Vieille Serbie [ancien *vilayet* du Kosovo] et la Macédoine slave [*vilayet* de Monastir], d'être nommé chef de l'administration serbe du district de Mati. Les autorités militaires serbes n'avaient pas, semble-t-il, une grande confiance en Essad Pacha et confièrent même à Zogou un canon, qu'ils avaient installé à Lise-Burgajet, « tout cela pour que nos autorités militaires protègent Ahmed Bey d'Essad [Pacha] ».<sup>20</sup>

Une fois une administration serbe mise en place dans les régions occupées du nord ainsi que dans l'Albanie centrale, le commandant des troupes serbes en Albanie, le colonel Dragutin Milutinović, s'efforça de mettre un terme aux désaccords existants entre Essad Pacha et Ahmed Zogou afin de prévenir de nouvelles confrontations entre les cousins devenus rivaux. Panta Gavrilović, le représentant du gouvernement serbe auprès du gouvernement d'Essad Pacha, attira l'attention du colonel Milutinović sur le fait qu'Essad

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<sup>19</sup> D. T. Bataković, « Sećanja generala Dragutina Milutinovića na komandovanje albanskim trupama 1915 » [Mémoires du général Dragutin Milutinović, commandant les troupes albanaises en 1915], *Miscellanea (Mešovita Gradja)* XIV (Belgrade : Institut d'Histoire, 1985), 117–119, 128.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

Pacha était très mécontent de l'attitude des militaires serbes envers le chef clanique de Mati. Le chef d'Albanie centrale rappelait en permanence ses alliés serbes qu'Ahmed Bey Zogou avait trompé les Serbes en affirmant que la région de Mati était complètement désarmée. Selon Essad Pacha, il y avait encore près de 3 000 mitraillettes et c'est chez Zogou, sous la protection des autorités serbes, que les opposants à la Serbie et au régime d'Essad Pacha — les Mirditès catholiques insurgés — avaient mis en lieu sûr leurs familles et leurs biens. Pour ces raisons, le chef du gouvernement albanais, rappelant à Pašić ses promesses, insistait pour que Mati lui soit remis. Il fit cette même demande à colonel Milutinović quand il le rencontra à Durazzo. Le chef des troupes serbes en Albanie lui proposa alors de servir d'intermédiaire pour le réconcilier avec son neveu Ahmed Bey et obtint aussitôt son assentiment.<sup>21</sup>

Dès son retour à Dibra, sur le territoire serbe, le colonel Milutinović convia Zogou à un entretien. Il lui exposa rapidement la situation en Albanie et les relations entre la Serbie et Essad Pacha. Il l'invita à se réconcilier avec son oncle « pour qu'il puisse se rendre à Durazzo avec ses hommes et se soumettre à celui qu'aujourd'hui la Serbie considère comme le chef de l'Albanie ». Milutinović lui garantit sa sécurité s'il se soumettait, mais Ahmed Bey refusa catégoriquement cette offre, invoquant son profond désaccord avec la politique d'Essad Pacha.

D'après Zogou, Essad Pacha n'obéissait qu'à ses intérêts et non aux besoins du pays et du peuple albanais. Il nommait à des postes de direction uniquement ses affidés qui étaient des incapables et des illettrés. Zogou présenta à Milutinović l'Italie et l'Autriche-Hongrie comme des puissances susceptibles de venir en aide à l'Albanie. L'Italie, selon Zogou, italianiserait la population — mais il ne fallait rien attendre de bon de la Double Monarchie dans laquelle vivaient une quinzaine de minorités nationales. Ainsi, il ne restait plus que les États balkaniques vers lesquels les Albanais pussent se tourner et comme la plus longue frontière de l'Albanie était avec la Serbie, il était naturel qu'elle s'appuyât sur cette dernière. Personnellement, rappela Zogou, il ne pouvait pas lier le destin de son pays à un timonier aussi peu fiable qu'Essad Pacha, même s'il était momentanément l'allié de la Serbie, car sa politique était fluctuante.<sup>22</sup>

Ahmed bey avertit le colonel serbe aussi qu'Essad Pacha se montrerait sous son vrai jour quand la Serbie serait occupée ailleurs. Faisant valoir que tout Albanais devait être guidé par l'axiome « Les Balkans aux peuples des Balkans », le chef de Mati souligna qu'Essad Pacha « serait le premier à mettre à mal cet axiome ».

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 134, 136–138.

<sup>22</sup> Ekmečić, *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914*, 394–395.

En effet, Zogou affirmait constamment à Milutinović qu'Essad Pacha n'était pas un ami sûr de la Serbie, qu'il n'avait pas le soutien du peuple et que, dès que l'armée serbe se retirerait de Tirana et Elbassan, il serait confronté à l'énorme majorité de la population albanaise. Répétant que, selon l'accord avec le colonel Milutinović, « Mati était coalisé avec la Serbie », là où il était lui-même chef de district — et où chaque commune s'était vue adjoindre un soldat serbe — Ahmed Bey soulignait qu'il avait le premier inauguré la politique d'appui sur la Serbie :

« De prime abord, Essad Pacha était d'accord ou, mieux, montrait qu'il était d'accord, mais quand, moi, j'ai envoyé à M. Pašić, sur la base de l'accord passé avec lui, une délégation qui heureusement a effectué sa mission et est revenue, Essad Pacha a été le premier à s'opposer à l'accord obtenu à Belgrade, clamant devant le peuple que celui qui tenterait de faire quoi que ce soit avec la Serbie est un traître, parce que la Serbie détient les centres albanais incontestés que sont Dibra, Peshkopi, Prizren, etc. Et maintenant la Serbie attend que Mati se livre au bon ou au mauvais gré d'un tel homme. »<sup>23</sup>

En l'absence d'autres données sur les envoyés de Zogou à Belgrade et leurs pourparlers avec le Premier ministre Pašić, ces propos — que Zogou tint à Milutinović avec une arrière-pensée politique indéniable — sont pour l'instant notre seule source, bien que peu fiable.

Lors d'une conversation ultérieure, le colonel Milutinović tenta encore de convaincre Zogou de se soumettre à Essad Pacha qui lui donnerait le poste qu'il demanderait. Mais Ahmed Bey refusa, soulignant que, dans tous les cas, il serait fait comme la Serbie en déciderait car sans l'aide de celle-ci Essad Pacha ne pourrait soumettre Mati. À la fin, Zogou précisa : « Pour nous Essad Pacha n'existe pas. Ceci étant, avant que ne soit prise la décision finale concernant le sort de Mati, je vous prie de m'offrir la possibilité de me présenter devant le Président du Conseil, M. Pašić, et le ministre de l'Intérieur, M. [Ljubomir] Jovanović ». <sup>24</sup>

Cette entrevue avec Milutinović témoignait de la profonde méfiance existant entre Zogou et Essad Pacha, méfiance qui trouvait sa source dans la lutte pour le pouvoir auprès des Albanais de confession musulmane. Le colonel Milutinović en conclut que Zogou était versatile et dissimulateur, mais il n'était pas en mesure de saisir toutes les raisons de son opposition à Essad Pacha. Jeune, ambitieux et habile en politique, Zogou n'avait pas as-

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<sup>23</sup> Arhiv Vojno-istorijskog instituta, Beograd [Archives de l'Institut d'histoire militaire, Belgrade], dossier 3, volume 59, Dragutin Milutinović à Damnjan Popović, vol. 30, 08/12/1915, note confidentielle no. 256 (la dépêche a été envoyée au Commandement suprême).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. ; voir aussi Ekmečić, *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914*, 395.



sez d'influence sur la population albanaise pour pouvoir, à l'instar d'Essad Pacha, poser sa candidature pour diriger le pays ou monter sur le trône d'Albanie, mais il veillait à ne pas lier son destin au régime de son oncle en l'avenir duquel il ne croyait pas. L'affirmation d'intentions amicales de Zogou à l'égard de la Serbie était visiblement calculée pour conserver une position ne dépendant pas d'Essad Pacha et, comme l'armée serbe avait le contrôle complet sur l'Albanie centrale, conserver son soutien et sa confiance.

Ahmed Bey resta plus de trois semaines dans le territoire serbe, à Dibra. Puis, début octobre 1915, avec l'aide du lieutenant serbe Mladen Stamatović, il se rendit à Niš, la capitale serbe depuis le début de la Grande Guerre, en vue de négocier directement avec les représentants du gouvernement de Pašić.<sup>25</sup> L'absence des documents disponibles sur cette entrevue, excepté une dépêche ultérieure de Stamatović à Pašić portant sur son travail de plusieurs mois auprès de Zogou, ne permet pas d'entrevoir les contours de l'accord en question et de suivre les agissements futurs du chef de Mati.

Bien qu'étant un officier de renseignement expérimenté, Stamatović, semble-t-il, avait une totale confiance en Ahmed Zogou, car il tenait presque toutes ses déclarations pour exactes et réglait sa conduite sur elles. Les dépêches de Stamatović donnent à penser que Zogou le consultait régulièrement sur les questions les plus importantes, mais ne se fiait pas, bien évidemment, totalement à ses avis. Néanmoins, en l'absence d'autres sources sur l'activité de Zogou à cette période-là, les dépêches de Stamatović, en dépit d'une certaine partialité et d'un horizon réduit, dû à son travail de conspiration, constituent une source historique importante.<sup>26</sup>

La coopération de Nikola P. Pašić avec Ahmed bey Zogou fut, semblait-il, une politique complémentaire du gouvernement serbe envers Albanie où il fallait rallier le plus grand nombre de chefs de clans et repousser l'influence de l'Autriche-Hongrie et de la Turquie, toujours très fortes. En plus, Pašić, espérait que par l'intermédiaire de Zogou, les révoltes armées des Albanais contre Essad Pacha n'eussent pas lieu. Par conséquent, la frontière vulnérable serbe serait assurée des attaques des tribus voisines albanaises.

<sup>25</sup> Bataković, « Sećanja generala Dragutina Milutinovića », 141. Le 11 septembre 1915, Zogou adressa à Pašić un mémorandum dans lequel il demandait à la Serbie de réduire son aide à Essad Pacha, arguant de son hypocrisie et de son faux patriotisme. Malgré cela, Pašić conseilla à Ahmed Bey de se réconcilier avec Essad Pacha. Cf. Sh. Rahimi, « Bashkëpunimi i Ahmet Muhtarit nga Mati me Serbinë me mospajtimet e tij me Esat pasha, Toptanit gjate vitit 1915 », *Gjurmime Albanologjike* 11 (1981), 196-215.

<sup>26</sup> Arhiv Srbije, Beograd, Ministarstvo inostranih dela, Političko odeljenje [Archives de Serbie, Belgrade, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Département politique], fasc. 1, 1916, « Alb. », M. Stamatović à N. Pašić, Corfou, 2 (15) février 1916, no. 2044.

Apparemment le Premier ministre serbe, Nikola Pašić parvint à un compromis avec Ahmed Bey Zogou : celui-ci permettrait l'entrée de l'armée d'Essad Pacha dans la région de Mati, l'autoriserait à y désarmer les habitants ; soit le seigneur de Mati se réfugierait en France, soit il resterait à Mati pour diriger l'administration régionale d'Essad Pacha.

Après sa visite à Niš, Zogou retourna à Mati avec l'intention de partir pour la France, conformément à l'accord passé avec Stamatović. Il voulait faire ses adieux aux siens et leur expliquer les raisons de son départ d'Albanie. Mais il changea d'avis après les nouveaux développements politiques et militaires. La Bulgarie était entrée en guerre contre la Serbie, ouvrant un nouveau front aux frontières orientales de la Serbie. L'offensive que menaient conjointement les troupes allemandes et austro-hongroises au nord de la Serbie depuis octobre 1915 repoussait graduellement l'armée serbe vers le sud, au Kosovo, vers la frontière serbe avec l'Albanie, ce qui influa Ahmed Bey de rester à Mati. Il proposa à Stamatović, vraisemblablement de façon purement formelle, de conduire ses 12 000 hommes à la rescousse de la Serbie contre les troupes bulgares en avance vers la ville stratégiquement importante de Skoplje. Cette offre irréaliste de Zogou fut prise au sérieux et transmise aussitôt à l'État-major des troupes des Nouvelles Provinces. Stamatović reçut l'ordre de se rendre à Durazzo auprès d'Essad Pacha pour lui demander l'autorisation qu'Ahmed Bey et ses volontaires se portent au secours de l'armée serbe. Essad Pacha déclara au lieutenant Stamatović, qui parvint à Durazzo le 6 novembre 1915, qu'il fallait d'abord trancher la question de Mati. Il fallait que ses habitants déposent les armes et reconnaissent son pouvoir à Durazzo, quand cela serait fait, il pourrait être question de l'aide des volontaires albanais à la Serbie.<sup>27</sup> De retour à Mati, Stamatović eut une entrevue avec Ahmed Bey durant laquelle il fut décidé de rassembler ses chefs tribaux pour leur expliquer la nécessité de l'entrée des troupes d'Essad Pacha sur leurs territoires.

Entre-temps, le 13 novembre 1915, de nombreux seigneurs d'Albanie méridionale, septentrionale et centrale s'étaient rassemblés dans le village proche de la résidence d'Ahmed Bey. Parmi eux se trouvait Bajram Curri, un chef de clan du Kosovo qu'il avait fui, et l'influent prêtre catholique Joseph d'Oroshi. Ils proposèrent de profiter de la situation difficile dans laquelle se trouvaient les troupes serbes sur les différents fronts face aux armées bulgares, allemandes et austro-hongroises pour appeler à une insurrection contre la Serbie. Le plus ardent partisan de l'insurrection était l'abbé Joseph qui avait reçu de l'argent du ministre austro-hongrois à Athènes ainsi que les instructions précises afin de soulever les Mirditès contre la Serbie. Lors du rassemblement, Joseph d'Oroshi essaya d'enflammer les autres chefs alba-

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

nais : « la Serbie doit être détruite et nous les Albanais, si nous nous soulevons, nous pourrions arriver jusqu'à Skoplje et l'Albanie sera beaucoup plus grande que maintenant. »<sup>28</sup> Joseph d'Orosi était soutenu par le fameux Hassan Bey qui avait voulu empêcher l'armée serbe de faire retraite par l'Albanie et qui proposa de confier le commandement de l'insurrection à Ahmed Bey Zogou.

Selon les informations fournies par le lieutenant Stamatović, Ahmed Bey, après avoir remercié de la confiance qui lui était témoignée, demanda deux jours pour conférer avec les chefs de clan. Après avoir pris conseil auprès de Stamatović, Zogou déclara aux chefs rassemblés « qu'il est vain de mener un combat sans programme », que les Albanais devaient savoir quelle était politique des grandes puissances, et, à partir de là, déterminer contre qui elles faisaient la guerre. Zogou souligna qu'il savait que la politique de la Serbie à ce moment-là « ne menaçait pas l'existence de l'Albanie ». Pour cette raison, Ahmed bey Zogou demandait aux chefs de clan de lui accorder du temps pour examiner les intentions politiques des États qui s'intéressaient à l'Albanie avant de prendre ensemble la décision finale. Une part des chefs acceptèrent et rentrèrent chez eux tandis que les autres, essentiellement les chefs de Mirditës, restaient sur leur idée première, concernant la nécessité de se soulever contre les Serbes. Leurs unités attaquèrent l'armée serbe qui se repliait de Scutari à Durazzo ; elles cherchaient à frapper Tirana et Alesio (Lezhë) où des garnisons serbes étaient stationnées.

Entre-temps, l'armée d'Essad Pacha avait désarmé les hommes de Mati, sans rencontrer de résistance. Ahmed Bey passa la frontière afin de trouver refuge à Zrdjane, en territoire serbe. Un peu plus tard, début décembre, la gendarmerie d'Essad Pacha se disloqua d'elle-même et quitta Mati. Stamatovic, malade du typhus, n'eut pas de contact direct avec Zogou pendant près d'un mois. Après que les Bulgares soient entrés dans Debar (Dibra), le lieutenant Stamatović passa par Drim (Drim) pour se rendre à Mali Brat, où Ahmed Zogou l'attendait avec 2 000 de ces hommes. Ce dernier l'informa alors que les chefs de l'ensemble de la Malessia l'avaient mandaté pour négocier en leur nom avec les représentants des armées étrangères qui approchaient des frontières d'Albanie. Tout d'abord il avait l'intention de se rendre à Dibra, d'y faire flotter le drapeau albanais et avertir les Bulgares de ne pas franchir la frontière albanaise. Il voulait se renseigner auprès des officiels civils et militaires, bulgares et austro-hongrois, sur leurs intentions politiques à l'égard de l'Albanie.

Le lieutenant Stamatović écrivit aussitôt au commandant bulgare de Dibra pour l'informer que, si ses troupes passaient en Albanie, elles tomberaient sur une résistance farouche. Le commandant bulgare — ne

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

souhaitant pas d'intermédiaire — convia Ahmed Zogou à des négociations directes. D'après ce que Stamatović put apprendre, à la question de savoir quelles étaient les intentions de la Bulgarie à l'égard de l'Albanie, il fut répondu au chef de Mati qu'on lui donnerait une réponse après consultation des autorités compétentes. À la demande du commandant bulgare, Zogou resta dix jours à Dibra, avant de se rendre fin décembre à Louma (Ljuma) où il rencontra le commandant des forces allemand venu de Prizren. Ensuite, il fit la tournée de plusieurs clans en Albanie du Nord. Au début janvier 1916, Ahmed Zogou retourna à Mati où il revit Stamatović.

L'émissaire serbe nota minutieusement ce qui lui dit Zogou de ses entrevues avec les commandants militaires, bulgare et allemand. Zogou insista sur le fait qu'il n'avait pas reçu de réponse favorable des Bulgares. Il lui avait été dit que la Bulgarie désirait un débouché sur l'Adriatique à Durazzo mais que l'armée bulgare s'était arrêtée en chemin puisque des négociations se tenaient à Salonique entre l'Albanie, d'une part, et les représentants austro-hongrois, allemands et turcs, d'autre part. Le commandant turc avait proposé à Ahmed Bey de chasser, avec son aide et ses troupes, l'armée serbe hors d'Albanie et avait demandé quelles étaient les relations entre Serbes et Albanais au cours de la retraite de l'armée serbe à travers l'Albanie en hiver 1915.<sup>29</sup> Le commandant allemand lui avait reproché avant tout le fait que les Albanais avaient autorisé la retraite de l'armée serbe à travers l'Albanie et proposé de chasser les forces serbes avec des unités communes.

Comme il ignorait la situation générale sur les fronts et les rapports de force entre les États belligérants et les États neutres, Zogou s'enquit du point de vue de la Roumanie, de la Grèce et de l'Italie, de la force militaire de l'Allemagne en mer, du temps qu'on prévoyait que la guerre allait durer et si les Allemands allaient avoir un problème d'approvisionnement en nourriture. Cependant il est impossible de savoir à partir des réponses qu'il fit à Stamatović, comment le chef de Mati avait réagi aux offres qui lui avaient été faites.

À l'issue de l'entretien avec l'émissaire serbe, Zogou émit l'idée que l'armée serbe ne devrait pas quitter l'Albanie puisque ça ne ferait que faciliter la tâche des troupes allemandes, austro-hongroises et même bulgares. Il pria Stamatović de s'enquérir de l'avis du gouvernement serbe sur les intentions politiques de l'Italie, de la Grande-Bretagne et de la France envers l'Albanie et de l'en informer, car il avait entendu dire que leurs troupes dé-

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<sup>29</sup> Voir plus dans : Henri Barby, *L'épopée serbe. L'agonie d'un peuple* (Paris : Berger-Levrault, 1916) ; Louis Thomson, *La retraite de Serbie (octobre – décembre 1915)* (Paris : Hachette, 1916).

barquaient sur la côte albanaise.<sup>30</sup> Il demanda tout particulièrement que les représentants serbes interviennent auprès d'Essad Pacha afin que celui-ci soit bienveillant à son égard et que l'Albanie subsiste. Alors que Stamatović allait prendre congé, Zogou et son secrétaire et interprète, Nikola Ivanaj, lui déclarèrent « qu'ils consentiraient volontiers à ce que le prince serbe, Georges (Djordje), soit le souverain de l'Albanie, aucun Albanais ne pouvant l'être car même le plus fruste des Albanais n'y consentirait ».<sup>31</sup>

D'où venait l'idée de faire du prince Georges Karadjordjević — ex-héritier du trône serbe — le souverain de l'Albanie, cette dépêche ne permet pas de le savoir. Le fait qu'Essad Pacha ait annoncé au colonel Milutinović dès le début du mois de septembre 1915 que Mladen Stamatović discutait à Mati « des partis [politiques] en Serbie et que l'un d'eux souhaite qu'un prince serbe soit leur souverain » est très caractéristique.<sup>32</sup> Il est peu probable que l'idée du prince Georges émise par Zogou et Ivanaj — et citée dans la dépêche de Stamatović — soit la leur. Soit Pašić et Zogou en avaient parlé à Niš, soit, — si ce n'était pas une idée de Pašić que Stamatović, son émissaire personnel, avait suggéré, ce qui est facile à croire en raison de la mauvaise opinion qu'avait Pašić de l'ex-héritier du trône —, il n'est pas à exclure qu'il se soit agi d'un plan de la société secrète « L'union ou la mort » (plus connue comme « La main noire ») à laquelle appartenaient plusieurs commandants militaires serbes en poste en Albanie, y compris le général Damnjan Popović, qui dirigeait les Troupes des Nouvelles Provinces. Néanmoins, la question d'où vient cette proposition reste ouverte.

Le lieutenant Stamatović quitta Zogou le 20 janvier 1916 et partit pour Durazzo où il se mit à la disposition du général Ilija Gojković, qui, à la tête de l'Armée du Timok (*Timočka vojska*), commandait les troupes qui protégeait la retraite de l'armée serbe et son embarquement pour l'île de Corfou. Sur l'ordre de général Gojković, Stamatović se rendit ensuite à Tirana, d'où il maintint des contacts avec les Albanais le long du front de défense, et notamment avec Zogou, vraisemblablement par le biais d'un intermédiaire. Grâce à l'intervention de Stamatović, les forces de Zogou ne combattirent pas l'armée serbe, épuisée par la famine et le froid de l'hiver rude dans les montagnes albanaïses neigeuses, alors que certains membres des clans de Mati, en particulier dans les territoires frontaliers avec Mirditës,

<sup>30</sup> L'aspect diplomatique dans : Frédéric Le Moal, *La France et l'Italie dans les Balkans, 1914-1919. Le contentieux adriatique* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2006).

<sup>31</sup> Arhiv Srbije, Beograd, Ministarstvo inostranih dela, Političko odeljenje (Archives de Serbie, Belgrade, Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Département politique), fasc. 1, 1916, « Alb. », M. Stamatović à N. Pašić, Corfou, 2 (15) février 1916, no. 2044.

<sup>32</sup> Bataković, « Sećanja generala Dragutina Milutinovića », 137.

attaquaient, volaient et tuaient les soldats affamés ainsi que les nombreux réfugiés civils serbes dans leur retraite pénible vers la côte adriatique.<sup>33</sup>

### *L'offre de coopération*

Débarqué à Corfou, début 1916, le lieutenant Stamatović conclut son compte-rendu à Pašić sur l'idée que l'armée serbe n'aurait pas dû quitter l'Albanie ; mais comme c'était déjà fait, il conseillait au chef du gouvernement serbe : « il faut envoyer tout de suite par Valona ou Durazzo un comité constitué d'Albanais, en particulier des chefs de clan, et de personnes connaissant bien l'Albanie pour travailler à la concorde entre Serbes et Albanais et la maintenir ».<sup>34</sup>

Les propositions de Stamatović trouvèrent un certain écho, comme en témoigne son travail par la suite. Il continua autant que possible, vraisemblablement à la demande de Pašić, de maintenir le contact avec les Albanais de Mati et des régions voisines, qui étaient bien disposées envers la Serbie. En juillet 1916, Stamatović reçut à Corfou deux émissaires d'Ahmed Bey Zogou, Kaplan Bey et Salet Krosom, qui apportaient une longue lettre et demandaient à ce que le chef du gouvernement serbe soit informé de son contenu.

La lettre d'Ahmed Zogou — en l'absence d'autres sources largement citée ici —, laisse à penser que le chef de Mati n'avait pas encore décidé quel parti prendre et qu'il était encore intéressé par l'idée de se lier à la Serbie et, par l'entremise de ce pays aux puissances de l'Entente. Zogou demandait

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<sup>33</sup> À la mi-janvier 1916, Mladen Stamatović informa le commandant du détachement de Mati (*Matski odred*) « que Ahmed Bey est en ce moment à Čermenika ; il n'attaquera pas l'armée serbe ; il est venu à Čermenika pour protéger ses amis d'Elbassan de l'armée bulgare au cas où celle-ci attaquerait la ville ; Ahmed Bey a laissé une partie de ses gendarmes quitter Čermenika pour rentrer chez eux ; près de 460 de nos soldats, qui fuyaient, et dont la plupart ont été tués par un avant-poste bulgare et le reste par les Albanais sont passés par Mati ; la rumeur qu'Essad Pacha allait conduire l'armée serbe contre Mati s'est répandue — ce qui a révolté les habitants de Mati — et que sur la route de Kljosa à Bastar il y a des bandits albanais ». Cf. Vojno-istorijski institut, Beograd (Archives de l'Institut d'histoire militaire, Belgrade), vol. 3, boîte 59, Ilija Gojković au Commandement suprême, Durazzo, 3(16) janvier 1916, no. 2010 ; voir aussi la documentation correspondante dans *Veliki rat Srbije za oslobodjenje i ujedinjenje Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca* [La Grande Guerre de la Serbie pour l'unification des Serbes, Croates et Slovènes], vol. XIV [1916] (Belgrade : Izdanje Glavnog Djeneralštaba, 1928), 207.

<sup>34</sup> Arhiv Srbije, Beograd, Ministarstvo inostranih dela, Političko odeljenje (Archives de Serbie, ministère des Affaires étrangères, Département politique), fasc. 1916, « Alb », M. Stamatović à N. Pašić, Corfou, 30 juillet (12 aout) 1916, no. 10714.



à nouveau qu'on lui fasse parvenir le plus rapidement possible les informations qu'il avait demandées sur les intentions politiques des Alliés.

Afin de démontrer ses intentions amicales envers la Serbie, le chef de Mati décrivait de façon détaillée la situation en Albanie après le retrait des troupes serbes : « Les nouveaux venus, les Germano-Bulgares, je peux vous le dire, sont nos ennemis, tout autant que les vôtres, à vous Serbes ; ils se battent politiquement entre eux pour l'Albanie et nous leur souhaitons d'en venir aux armes. »<sup>35</sup> Après la chute de Durazzo, selon Zogou, les Autrichiens demandèrent aux 15 000 Albanais rassemblés à Lushnjë de chasser les Italiens de Valona avec l'aide des forces austro-hongroises. Les Albanais réclamèrent alors qu'après cela « Les Austro-Bulgares évacuent l'Albanie. C'est à quoi les Autrichiens ont répondu qu'ils ne seraient pas venus en Albanie si nous n'avions pas laissé entrer les Serbes sur notre territoire, nous ne sommes donc pas parvenus à un accord et les Albanais se sont dispersés. » D'après Zogou, à l'été 1916, près de 10 000 soldats austro-hongrois — deux régiments à Durazzo et deux à Scutari — étaient prêts à marcher sur Valona : « Cette armée qui, en majorité, parle serbe, est malade et j'ai vu qu'elle n'était pas en état de combattre. »

Décrivant de façon détaillée l'état d'esprit qui régnait chez les chefs albanais, les problèmes d'approvisionnement, l'opposition de certains chefs aux autorités austro-hongroises et bulgares, Ahmed Bey s'appesantissait particulièrement sur l'avenir de l'Albanie. Il informait Pašić que le prince monténégrin Mirko [Petrović-Njegoš] avait une fois évoqué l'idée suivante : « Il faut que des émissaires albanais, monténégrins et serbes, désignés par leur pays, se rendent à Vienne, sous la houlette du prince Mirko. A Vienne, il s'agira de former un État dans les Balkans à partir de morceaux de la Serbie, de l'Albanie, du Monténégro, au trône duquel le prince Mirko peut prétendre. Quand je lui fis remarquer que son père était vivant, le prince Mirko me répondit : Je me suis mis d'accord avec mon père [le roi Nikola I<sup>er</sup> Petrović Njegoš] ; si l'Entente gagne, mon père [exilé en Italie] reprendra sa place. [...] Les Italiens, par l'entremise de leurs émissaires, assurent les Albanais que le mieux pour eux est de vivre en bonne entente avec les Italiens. [...] La Grèce, par l'entremise de ses émissaires sous la houlette du métropolite de Durazzo (Jacob) assurent les Albanais que le mieux est qu'un prince grec devienne le souverain albanais et que Bitolj [Monastir], Ohrid, Dibra deviennent grecs. Enver Pacha [chef des jeunes turcs] a envoyé des émissaires porter le message suivant : tout Albanais et musulman, capable de combattre, doit se rendre tout de suite à Edirne où il recevra un fusil et des munitions et combattrait avec ses frères de l'armée turque pour relier l'Albanie à Salonique et Constantinople, il prendra le train gratuitement et c'est leur sultan,

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

sa Majesté, qui l'ordonne. Les Bulgares, par l'entremise de leurs nombreux émissaires, affirment que le seul salut pour les Albanais est de vivre en bonne entente avec la Bulgarie et que le prince bulgare devienne le souverain de l'Albanie. [...] Fournitures et argent ont été distribués à certains chefs albanais et il leur a été dit que c'est un cadeau que leur envoie le prince [bulgare] Cyrille qu'ils doivent reconnaître comme souverain de l'Albanie.»<sup>36</sup>

Dans sa lettre à Pašić, Zogou expliquait également que les Autrichiens et les Bulgares se disputaient leur influence auprès des Albanais. Quand les Albanais menaient des négociations avec les Bulgares, aussitôt les Autrichiens intervenaient comme si « ils disposaient de droits sur l'Albanie ainsi que sur la Serbie et le Monténégro ». Ahmed Bey soulignait également que les Autrichiens ne tenaient guère au prince Wied qui, lui, n'avait pas renoncé à l'idée de revenir en Albanie.

À la fin de la missive, le chef de Mati exposait sa position. Il disait qu'à cause du toast qu'il avait porté à Dibra — alors qu'il revenait de Niš — durant une soirée chez le commandant serbe, toast qui condamnait l'expansion allemande dans les Balkans et célébrait l'amitié entre les peuples balkaniques, il avait eu de sérieuses difficultés car sa déclaration avait été publiée dans un journal serbe de Bitolj. Soulignant qu'il avait toujours été un ami de la Serbie, il condamnait également ce qu'écrivait la « Grande Serbie » (*Velika Srbija*), un journal serbe publié à Salonique et qui ne cessait de faire de lui un agent de la Bulgarie, rappelant à cette occasion que la presse belgradoise l'avait auparavant taxé d'être un homme du prince Wied. Dans sa lettre, Zogou se justifiait auprès de Pašić pour sa défaillance au cours de la retraite de l'armée serbe à travers l'Albanie : « J'ai quitté Elbassan avant, à cause de dissensions internes et non à cause de l'armée serbe, et j'espère qu'à l'avenir les affaires albanaises s'amélioreront et que les animosités personnelles disparaîtront et que je n'aurais plus à quitter mon pays natal.»<sup>37</sup>

Il n'y a pas de sources disponibles si, après avoir pris connaissance du contenu de la lettre, le chef du gouvernement serbe fit parvenir sa réponse et les conseils à Ahmed Zogou. Quelques mois plus tard, le chef de Mati se rendit à Vienne et, au retour, fut nommé commandant des volontaires albanais au sein de l'armée austro-hongroise.

### *Conclusion*

Ahmed Bey Zogou, chef de Mati, fut un des chefs de clan albanais qui, lors de la situation chaotique en Albanie, exacerbée par l'éclatement de la Grande Guerre, s'efforcèrent de conserver leur autorité sur leur territoire

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

clanique et d'influer sur le destin de leur pays. Il n'en reste pas moins que les errances politiques, la perpétuelle ingérence des Alliés sont à mettre au compte des chefs albanais qui s'associaient avec différents centres de pouvoir, choisissant la plupart du temps la partie prête à payer plus, faisant passer ainsi leurs intérêts personnels ou claniques avant les intérêts de la nation et de l'État albanais.

À l'instar d'Essad Pacha Toptani, son neveu Ahmed Bey Zogou fut un chef de clan à la grande intuition politique. Comme lui, il tenta de concilier ambitions personnelles et intérêts de l'Albanie, de se déterminer dans les situations critiques, de maintenir les contacts permanents avec tous les acteurs politiques importants dans les pays voisins ainsi que dans les autres États des Balkans. Le lien qu'il entretenait avec la Serbie, ses négociations avec Pašić (sur lesquelles de données ne sont pas disponibles) et son étroite collaboration avec l'émissaire permanent serbe en Albanie, le lieutenant Mladen Stamatović, montrent qu'Ahmed Zogou n'était pas seulement partisan en paroles du principe « Les Balkans aux peuples des Balkans ». Lors des grandes épreuves que connut l'armée serbe lors de sa retraite épique à travers l'Albanie en hiver 1915-1916, Ahmed Bey Zogou fit apparemment un effort pour apaiser le sentiment anti-serbe des clans du nord de l'Albanie. Après le transfert des troupes serbes de la côte albanaise à Corfou sur les navires français et italiens, Zogou s'efforça de maintenir le contact indirect avec le chef du gouvernement serbe. Le transfert ultérieur de l'armée serbe à Salonique en printemps 1916 ainsi que la perspective d'une offensive des forces alliées sur le Front d'Orient poussèrent Zogou à continuer à se tourner vers la Serbie, sans laissant les autres options politiques, concernant les relations proches établie avec l'Autriche-Hongrie.

À la différence d'Essad Pacha Toptani, que la Grande-Bretagne et la France reconnurent à Salonique comme chef du gouvernement albanais en exil, Zogou restait une personnalité de moindre calibre qui n'était rien pour les puissances de l'Entente. L'insuffisance des sources rend impossible une conclusion plus approfondie. Cependant, il n'est pas exclu que ce soit la reconnaissance d'Essad Pacha à Salonique comme l'allié de la Quadruple Entente et le silence probable de Pašić en réponse à l'offre de collaboration de Zogou en 1916, qui poussèrent le chef de Mati, aux ambitions politiques grandissantes, à faire allégeance à l'Autriche-Hongrie contrôlant une grande partie d'une Albanie occupée.

Cependant, Ahmed Zogou fut le chef de clan albanais qui, mieux que ses contemporains, déchiffra la situation dans laquelle se trouvait sa patrie. D'ailleurs, ce petit chef de clan de Mati, malgré sa collaboration avec la Double Monarchie, fut nommé le colonel, puis envoyé à Vienne où il resta jusqu'à la fin de la Grande Guerre. Néanmoins, dans l'entre-deux-guerres, Zogou, après l'assassinat d'Essad Pacha à Paris (juin 1920), renouvela, dans

une situation favorable, sa coopération avec le Royaume des Serbes, Croates et Slovènes, le successeur du Royaume de Serbie depuis décembre 1918. Il fut deux fois premier ministre, le président et finalement le roi d'Albanie, sous le nom de Zog I<sup>er</sup> (1928–1939).<sup>38</sup>

UDC 327:94](497.11:496.5)»1914/1916»  
929-058.12(-18)] *Ahmed bey Zogou*

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## **The Port of Salonica in Yugoslav Foreign Policy 1919–1941**

**Abstract:** This paper explores the importance of the Greek port of Salonica (Thessaloniki) for Yugoslav foreign policy-makers during the interwar period. It suggests that, apart from economic interests, namely securing trade facilities in the port and transport facilities offered by the Ghevgheli–Salonica railway connecting the Yugoslav territory with Salonica, there were security considerations which accounted for Belgrade's special interest in this matter. These stemmed from two reasons — Serbia's painful experience from the Great War on which occasion the cutting off of the route for Salonica had had dire consequences for the Serbian Army and the post-war strategic situation whereby Yugoslavia was nearly ringed by hostile and potentially hostile neighbours which was a constant reminder of the immediate past and made both political and military leadership envisage a potential renewed need to retreat to Salonica in a general conflict. The events prior to and during the Second World War seem to have vindicated such preoccupations of Yugoslav policy-makers. All the Great Powers involved in the conflict in the Balkans realised the significance attached to Salonica in Belgrade and tried to utilise it for their own ends. Throughout these turbulent events Prince Paul and his government did not demonstrate an inclination to exploit the situation in order to achieve territorial aggrandisement but rather reacted with restraint being vitally concerned that neither Italy nor Germany took possession of Salonica and thus encircled Yugoslavia completely leaving her at their mercy.

**Keywords:** Salonica (Thessaloniki), free port, Yugoslavia, Greece, Balkans, railway, security, World War

**D**uring the interwar period the port of Salonica (Thessaloniki) was often mentioned in the foreign ministries of Greece and Yugoslavia as well as Great Powers. The concessions that Athens was prepared to grant to Belgrade in the matter of transit of goods and trade facilities was an important item in the bilateral relations between the two countries. Moreover, the arrangements in connection with Salonica had wider ramifications affecting Balkan politics and thus drawing the attention of and interference from the interested Great Powers. For that reason, the nature of Yugoslav interest in Salonica and the place it had in Belgrade's foreign policy is an issue that deserves a study of its own. So far it has been discussed in a thesis which made use of both Serbian/Yugoslav and Greek sources covering the four agreements on Salonica signed prior to and during the first decade following the Great War, but lacked the sustained analysis of foreign policy im-



plications.<sup>1</sup> Another study focuses on the economic aspect of the Yugoslav free zone in this Aegean port.<sup>2</sup> This paper looks beyond trade interests and examines security considerations that Salonica, or more specifically a free and unrestrained communication between the Yugoslav territory and that port, had for Yugoslav foreign policy. It suggests that these considerations were of paramount importance and informed that policy.

To fully grasp the issue of Salonica it is necessary to review the history of its place in Serbo-Greek relations prior to the Great War. The economic importance of Salonica for the pre-war landlocked Serbia grew in prominence since 1906 when she found herself engaged in a customs war with her powerful northern neighbour Austria-Hungary. In order to survive economic pressure applied by Vienna, Serbia had to find an alternative outlet for her export trade and she found it in the port of Salonica. After the First Balkan War (1912), Serbia hoped to gain access to the sea through the conquered Albanian territory, but Austria-Hungary thwarted her aspirations by the creation of an independent Albanian state. No wonder then that at the time when new borders in the Balkans had not yet been decided, an economic expert, Milan Todorović, wrote a booklet in which he expounded the economic and political reasons for which Salonica should be granted to Serbia. “For Bulgaria and Greece”, Todorović argued, “this port would be — if I may use this expression — a luxury: they would possess one more port, but would not utilise it; for Serbia, on the other hand, Salonica is a dire necessity, a requisite for her economic independence.”<sup>3</sup> It was not, however, until the acquisition of Serbian Macedonia (nowadays known as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), as a result of the Balkan Wars, that Serbia’s southern border nearly reached Salonica; Serbian territory now constituted a large part of the port’s hinterland and their interdependence grew accordingly. In fact, the deliberations of the London Peace Conference after the First Balkan War had still not been concluded when the Serbian delegate, Stojan Novaković, acting on instructions from his government, enquired of his Greek colleague, Eleftherios Venizelos, if Serbia could count on a free transit of goods, “livestock and war materiel” included, through Salonica and the railway connecting that port with Serbia, and received a suitable assurance provided Greek sovereignty over

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<sup>1</sup> A. Papadrianos, “Slobodna zona u Solunu i grčko-jugoslovenski odnosi 1919–1929. godine” (MA thesis, University of Belgrade, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> L. Kos, “Jugoslovenska slobodna luka u Solunu i njena ekonomska problematika” (PhD thesis, University of Belgrade, undated).

<sup>3</sup> M. Todorović, *Solun i balkansko pitanje* (Belgrade: Štamparija “Simeun Mirotočivi”, 1913), 60–61.

it was confirmed.<sup>4</sup> It was not long before Greece and Serbia signed, on 1 June 1913, a defensive alliance treaty for the purpose of keeping in check Bulgarian aggressive designs on the territories they acquired at the Ottoman expense.<sup>5</sup> On the basis of article 7 of that treaty Greece committed to guaranteeing full freedom of Serbian import and export trade through Salonica for 50 years provided Greek sovereign rights were not violated. In May 1914, the so-called Athenian convention was concluded stipulating the establishment of a free zone for Serbian trade in Salonica but it was never ratified due to the outbreak of the First World War.

The war transformed Serbia into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia) with about twelve million inhabitants, which was marked for the position of a regional power in the Balkans. The new country had a long Adriatic coast and its most important trade partners were Italy and Austria in the north. In the circumstances, Salonica could not be of the same significance for the newly-founded Kingdom as she had been for pre-war Serbia. Nevertheless, the port still was a natural outlet for those parts of Yugoslavia which gravitated towards the ancient transport route down the Morava and Vardar valleys, namely for Southern Serbia. The war, the devastation it brought in its tail, the break-up of the old economic patterns, and the new and as yet unsettled administration on both sides of the Yugoslav-Greek border caused a number of difficulties which hindered the free flow of goods between the two countries. The British Consul in Salonica, W. A. Smart, observed that due to the administrative incompetence and centralised nature of Greek authorities “the transit trade to Serbia has suffered severely... This obstruction has exasperated the Serbs and it is the

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<sup>4</sup> Arhiv Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti [Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, hereafter ASANU], Milan Antić Papers, 14387/10367, Pašić to Novaković, 9 Jan. 1913, confidential no. 141; 14387/10369, Novaković to Pašić, 11 Jan. 1913, confid. no. 148.

<sup>5</sup> H. Gardikas-Katsiadakis, “Greek-Serbian Relations 1912–1913: Communication Gap or Deliberate Policy”, and A. I. Papadrianos, “Greco-Serbian Talks towards the Conclusion of a Treaty of Alliance in May 1913 and the Beginning of Negotiations for the Establishment of a Serbian Free Zone in Thessaloniki”, both in *Balkan Studies* 45 (2004), 23–38, and 39–44 respectively. For more detail on Serbo-Greek relations during the Great War, see D. V. Dontas, “Troubled Friendship: Greco-Serbian Relations, 1914–1918”, in *The Creation of Yugoslavia, 1914–1918*, ed. D. Djordjević (Santa Barbara: Clio Books, 1980), 95–124; M. Milošević, *Srbija i Grčka 1914–1918: iz istorije diplomatskih odnosa* (Zaječar: Zadužbina Nikola Pašić, 1997); D. T. Bataković, “Serbia and Greece in the First World War: An Overview”, *Balkan Studies* 45 (2004), 59–80.

despair of the Salonica merchant, who looks back regretfully to the facilities enjoyed in the days of Turkish rule.”<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, during and after the disastrous war against Kemal Atatürk’s forces in Asia Minor in 1919–1922, Greece found herself in a precarious state and many observers were doubtful whether she would be capable of holding on to some of her European provinces as well. Aegean Macedonia was predominantly populated by Slavs and could therefore be claimed on the basis of the nationality principle by either Yugoslavia or Bulgaria or both. The nationality principle could be compounded by economic benefits of reaching the Aegean littoral. “It is difficult to believe that the vigorous Slav populations of the interior will permanently acquiesce in economic exclusion from the Aegean by a narrow strip of Greek coastland”, Smart ruminated in his report.<sup>7</sup> He believed that the further decline of Salonica as an emporium and transit port for the Balkans might account “for the possibility that the Slav flood... may one day burst through unnatural economic dams and, descending to the Aegean, impose violently on Greece abdication of sovereignty”.<sup>8</sup>

Consequently, the question of Salonica must be viewed in the light of the alleged aspirations of Yugoslavia towards Greek Macedonia in the wake of the war. There is some evidence that Serbian statesmen did not lose sight of the possibility, however remote it might have been, that this province could be absorbed in view of its ethnic composition. Nikola Pašić, the head of the Yugoslav delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, discussed with his Greek counterpart Venizelos relations between the Serbian and Greek Orthodox churches, which also involved educational facilities for their respective minorities. In this connection, he noted that “our people live in villages covering a large area around Salonica and, if Serbian schools and Slav liturgy were secured to them, they would be able to preserve [their identity] and wait for the time when they could join Serbia.”<sup>9</sup> Yet, there is no credible evidence that Pašić and his People’s Radical Party ever pursued a definite policy which aimed at snatching the port from the Greeks. On the other hand, Vojislav Marinković, one of the leading figures of the Radicals’ rival Democratic Party and the future Foreign Minister (1924, 1927–1932),

<sup>6</sup> H. Andonov-Poljanski, “An Account of the Situation in Salonica and Coastal (Aegean) Macedonia in 1920 [facsimile of Smart to Granville, 25 March 1920]”, *Godišen zbornik na Filozofskiot fakultet na Univerzitet vo Skopje* 23 (1971), Annex, 15.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 24.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 25.

<sup>9</sup> M. Milošević & B. Dimitrijević, eds., *Nikola Pašić – predsedniku vlade: strogo poverljivo, lično, Pariz, 1919–1920: Pašićeva pisma sa Konferencije mira* (Zaječar: Zadužbina Nikola Pašić, 2005), no. 55, Pašić to Prime Minister, 11 Nov. 1919, confid. no. 4455, 136.

seems to have contemplated a more assertive policy towards Greece. In his notes on the general tasks of Yugoslav foreign policy he included a need to “reduce Greece to her real ethnographic frontiers”.<sup>10</sup> His foreign policy programme is not dated but it is highly likely to have been made before the expulsion of the Greek population from their ancient homeland in Asia Minor as a result of the war and atrocities committed during the fighting against the Turkish nationalists and its resettling in the European parts of Greece. Hundreds of thousands of Greek refugees found their new home in Aegean Macedonia and thus considerably changed the ethnic structure of that region. Claims that Greece’s neighbours could have raised on the basis of the nationality principle thus irreversibly lost much of their strength.

In addition, the minority question in regard to Macedonia entailed a controversy between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Both countries obtained a part of Macedonia after the successful war against the Ottoman Empire in 1912 but the division of spoils became a matter of dispute. Bulgaria was deeply dissatisfied with the extent of territory accorded to her and tried to redress her grievances by force of arms on two occasions — first by attacking Serbia and Greece and thus initiating the Second Balkan War in 1913, and again during the First World War when she joined the Central Powers in their renewed aggression against Serbia in 1915. Both aggressions ended in a dismal defeat, but Bulgarian ambitions were not suppressed. In the post-1918 period, Sofia regarded Macedonian Slavs as Bulgarian national minority, requested from Belgrade and Athens to officially recognise them as such, and turned a blind eye to the terrorist campaign of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO) which constituted something of a state within a state in the southern region of Bulgaria, from where Bulgarian neighbours were raided. The Bulgarian thesis clashed with that of Serbia, which claimed that Macedonian Slavs were of Serb origin. For that reason, Pašić was weary of the prospect of an agreement between Athens and Sofia whereby the former would “allow the opening of Bulgarian schools in Serbo-Slav municipalities”.<sup>11</sup> Such development would not just serve Greece to skilfully manoeuvre between the stronger Yugoslavia and the weaker Bulgaria but would also undermine, before the League of Nations and world public opinion, the position of the former in its dispute with the latter. In a similar vein, and again pointing to vague aspirations towards the Salonica hinterland, Živojin Balugdžić, Yugoslav Minister in Athens, contended that Yugoslavia had to be recognised as a natural guardian of the Greek Slavs and cut the link between them — as well as Yugoslav

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<sup>10</sup> ASANU, Vojislav Marinković Papers, 14439/434, “A plan for a state policy”, in manuscript and undated.

<sup>11</sup> See note 9.

Macedonians — and Bulgaria; otherwise, that population would seek its liberation “from the likes of [IMRO’s leader Todor] Aleksandrov rather than us”.<sup>12</sup> The Greeks were fully alive to and weary of the potential irredentist agitation which could be utilised against them and thus declined to recognise their “Slavophone” population as either Yugoslav or Bulgarian national minority.<sup>13</sup> This anxiety accounted for the permanent fear in Athens that Yugoslavia, either alone or in alliance with Bulgaria, might invade the Aegean littoral, the former to occupy Salonica and the latter Dedeagatch and Kavalla.

There was another consideration of an essentially strategic nature which determined Belgrade’s policy in regard to Salonica. It was derived from the painful experience of the Great War, more specifically from the retreat that the Serbian Army had to undertake in the fall of 1915 after having been exposed to the combined offensive of the much stronger Austro-Hungarian, German and Bulgarian forces. As it became clear that the retreating army would be driven out of Serbia, the plan was to withdraw southwards down the Vardar valley and join the Franco-British troops which had occupied Salonica and its surroundings.<sup>14</sup> The Bulgarian attack in the rear cut the envisaged fallback route and compelled the Serbian army, accompanied by a considerable number of civilians, to retreat over the inhospitable Albanian mountains under difficult winter conditions. The Serbs suffered heavy losses until they reached the coast and were transported by the Allied shipping to the Corfu island. This traumatic collective memory was termed the “Albanian Calvary” and remained alive in the minds of policy-makers after the war. The recuperated Serbian Army launched, along with its French and British allies, an offensive from Salonica which ended not just in the liberation of Serbia, but was also a decisive campaign of the war. “The Salonica front in the First World War left such a deep impression... in our army that it became an integral part of our struggle for liberation and unification and its history. Salonica entered into strategy and became an integral part of operational necessity of our army in defence of the country.”<sup>15</sup> Such an impact was amplified by the strategic position of the new Yugoslavia which was surrounded from the west, north and east by hostile or potentially hostile revisionist neighbours. The only frontiers that seemed safe were those

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<sup>12</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9099, Balugdžić to Ninčić, 24 Jan. 1923, confid. no. 21, subject: “Our schools in Greece”.

<sup>13</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9109, Vukmirović to Ninčić, 29 Aug. 1925, confid. no. 485.

<sup>14</sup> A. Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu* (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1984), 252–253.

<sup>15</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/8662, undated Antić’s note.

with the allied Romania and Greece. In addition, as early as during the Paris Peace Conference, Italy, the most dangerous neighbour, made sustained efforts, later to be continued and crowned with success, to entrench herself in Albania at Yugoslavia's flank. From the strategic point of view the Yugoslavs were frightened of the peril of the Italians "joining hands" from Albania with the Bulgarians across the Vardar valley in Serb Macedonia, thus cutting off the vital Belgrade–Salonica railway in much the same fashion as the Bulgarian army had done in 1915.<sup>16</sup> This consideration was central to Yugoslav strategic thinking and military planning. At the time of considerable tension in relations with Rome, Major Berthouart, French Military Attaché in Belgrade, was told by the Assistants of the Chief of the Yugoslav General Staff that neutralisation of Bulgaria would be a primary goal of the army in case of a general war even at the price of a temporary withdrawal at the western front against Italy.<sup>17</sup> Another Military Attaché, Von Faber du Faur from Germany, was of opinion on the eve of the Second World War that Yugoslavia viewed Greece as a bridge to Britain which she did not want to burn and it was this consideration that informed the attitude towards Salonica.<sup>18</sup> He was without doubt accurate in his assessment of the Yugoslav frame of mind.

After the downfall of Venizelos, at the end of 1920, who demonstrated good will to address Belgrade's demands concerning better facilities in a free zone in Salonica, the Yugoslav government consulted the French Minister in Belgrade if it would be opportune to press Athens regarding that matter and transport between the port and the Yugoslav border on the basis of an international administration of the railway or territorial corridor. The French were favourable to facilitating economic intercourse with the Mediterranean but made sure to discourage Yugoslavia from resorting to more forward policy.<sup>19</sup> In November 1922, the French Supreme War Council examined the strategic importance of Salonica in war and peace,

<sup>16</sup> *Jugoslovenska država i Albanci*, eds. Ljubodrag Dimić & Djordje Borozan, 2 vols. (Belgrade: Službeni list SRJ, Arhiv Jugoslavije & Vojnoistorijski institut, 1998), vol. II, no. 14 [Foreign Minister] Dr Trumbić's expose at the meeting of the allied Prime Ministers on 10 and 12 January 1920.

<sup>17</sup> M. Bjelajac, *Vojaska Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca/Jugoslavije, 1922–1935* (Belgrade: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije), 220–221.

<sup>18</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, 2 vols. Vol. I, ed. Dušan Gvozdenović (Belgrade: Vojnoistorijski institut, 1969), vol. I, doc. 65, Report of the German Military Attaché in Belgrade of 21 July 1939 on the military-political situation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1 Oct. 1935 to 1 July 1939.

<sup>19</sup> D. Todorović, *Jugoslavija i balkanske države 1918–1923* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1979), 148.



and reached the conclusion that French interests coincided with those of Yugoslavia inasmuch as the realisation of the request for a free zone in that port would secure a corridor for France to supply military equipment not just to Yugoslavia but also to the other Little Entente countries and Poland.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps it was not a coincidence that at about the same time the Yugoslav government raised the question of a Salonica convention and made a draft agreement. On that basis Živojin Balugdžić embarked on negotiations which resulted in the conclusion of the new convention about the “Serbian free zone in Salonica” on 10 May 1923.<sup>21</sup> Just like ten years earlier, this agreement was part of a wider political understanding; it was accompanied by the renewal of the 1913 alliance treaty. However, neither the convention nor the treaty proved to be effective and long-lived. As for the practical application of the former, there was a number of disputes over the unsettled questions such as the territorial enlargement of the zone, the interpretation of Yugoslavs rights in it, the exploitation of the railway connecting Salonica with Ghevgheli in Yugoslavia and technical issues pertaining to customs, veterinary control, telegraphic and docking services etc. One of many Serbian export-traders, for example, who suffered from transport delays and difficulties on the Salonica–Ghevgheli railway — it took 10 to 15 days for wagons loaded with goods to traverse a distance of 77 km — complained to the Yugoslav Trade Chamber in Salonica about “a chaos in which a complete indolence on the part of the respective Greek railway authorities towards our trade interests is manifested”. The request was forwarded to the Athens Legation which appealed to the Greek government to secure the improvement of transport facilities.<sup>22</sup>

On 14 November 1924, Yugoslavia denounced the alliance pact with Greece. This action was a result of the accumulated dissatisfaction in Belgrade: aside from the Free Zone and the Salonica–Ghevgheli railway issues, there were grievances over the expropriation of the Serbian Hilandar monastery’s land, the status of a number of former Serbian/Yugoslav subjects in Salonica and their properties, but most of all over the act of concluding

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 181.

<sup>21</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9083, Antić’s memorandum on “Salonica zone”, 30 Nov. 1923.

<sup>22</sup> Arhiv Jugoslavije [Archives of Yugoslavia, hereafter AJ], Fond 379, The Legation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in Greece, Athens, fascicle 2, file “Emigrants and Transport”, Bogdanović to the Chamber of Commerce of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, 6 Sept. 1924; Stojanović (General Consulate) to Athens Legation, 10 Sept. 1924; Stojanović (General Consulate in Salonica) to Athens Legation, 16 Oct. 1924, no. 1734; Athens Legation to General Consulate, 4 Nov. 1924, no. 993. A note of the Athens Legation and the reply of the Greek government are attached.

the Greco-Bulgarian protocol on minorities of 29 September 1924. By that convention Greece “made our political position in the Balkans more difficult in favour of Bulgaria against which our defensive alliance had been concluded”.<sup>23</sup> More specifically, in reaching this agreement with Sofia, Greece conceded to regard the Slavs in Greek Macedonia, and by implication those in Yugoslav Macedonia, as ethnic Bulgarians and, in doing so, directly undermined the Serbian thesis as to the origin of the Macedonian Slav population which was central to Yugoslavia’s claim in her dispute with Bulgaria and the struggle against the IMRO. Facing Belgrade’s bitterness on account of the treaty, Athens denounced it although it had been filed with the League of Nations. As for Yugoslavia, she viewed the denounced alliance treaty with Greece as a practically unilateral obligation on her part, firstly because she did not truly believe that the unsettled Greece was capable of providing military support and secondly, because she even less believed that Athens would be willing to do so. In this connection, policy-makers in Belgrade never forgot how the Greeks had failed to fulfil their obligation under the 1913 treaty to come to the aid of Serbia when she had been attacked by Bulgaria in 1915. In their view, if Yugoslavia were to guarantee Greek territory, she should obtain tangible concessions in return.

The question of the Salonica free zone and the Ghevgheli–Salonica railway were reopened. Additional privileges were requested for the exploitation of the zone in terms of the reduced control of Greek authorities over the transit trade in the port while ex-territorial rights were demanded for the railway administration.<sup>24</sup> In the words of Foreign Minister, Momčilo Ninčić, since the possibility of utilising the free Salonica zone, paralysed to a large extent by the building of a Greek free zone around it, depended on the manner of exploitation of the Salonica–Ghevgheli railway, “we have asked for guarantees for the free transit on that railway insofar that its exploitation during a certain period of time would be transferred to the hands of our Railway Direction and thus achieved an administrative unity on the Belgrade–Salonica railway which per se presents a single traffic unit.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9043, Ninčić to Gavrilović (Athens), 10 Nov. 1924, no. 9652.

<sup>24</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9056, Minutes of the plenary session held on Friday, 22 May 1925, between the Yugoslav and Greek delegations; 14387/9057, Minutes of a plenary session held on 1 June 1925.

<sup>25</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9053, Ninčić to Paris, London, Rome, Warsaw, Bucharest, Prague, Athens and Sofia, 8 June 1925. To facilitate the takeover of the railway the Yugoslav government strengthened its hand by buying off the shares from the previous concessioner, the French Oriental Railways. See Antić Papers, 14387/9092, Ninčić to Paris, Warsaw and Bucharest Legations, 25 Nov. 1924.

Not surprisingly, Greece found these demands objectionable on account of their infringing on the sovereignty of the country. Ninčić expounded to the French Minister the reasons for Greek anxiety and Yugoslav policy in these terms:

The Greeks are always afraid, and do not hide their fear, that one day we might come to an agreement with the Bulgarians and take away Salonica and Kavalla respectively. If by getting the administration of the Salonica railway in our hands we completely secure our transit through our Salonica zone, Greece will be able to believe that we would not have any second thoughts in the future since we get from Greece what we really need, and we do not need new territories as we have them enough.<sup>26</sup>

To make things more complicated, Yugoslav-Greek bickering became a part of the larger diplomatic initiative in the mid-1920s. In the wake of the Locarno agreement of October 1925, Britain promoted the conclusion of an agreement between the Balkan countries on the lines of that procured by Sir Austen Chamberlain between France and Germany.<sup>27</sup> Greece tried to utilise this initiative to subsume the matters of dispute with Belgrade into the conclusion of a Locarno-like arbitration treaty arguing that a more friendly atmosphere created thereby would be conducive to the easier solution of all problems. The Yugoslav approach, on the contrary, was to resolve all the outstanding questions with Athens as a prerequisite for the successful conclusion of an arbitration treaty.<sup>28</sup> On the occasion of a parliamentary debate about the conclusion of a "Balkan Locarno", Ninčić explained why he insisted to dispose of all bilateral questions prior to it: "The question of transit of our goods from Ghevgheli to Salonica is not a small matter for us. It is a question of our security and it is of first-rate importance and our requesting to have this question settled previously is not an excuse."<sup>29</sup>

Although the Foreign Minister did not enlarge on security implications, his utterance, in view of Yugoslav strategic considerations, was not an over-exaggerated statement. Yugoslavia was concerned to have an

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<sup>26</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9052, Ninčić to Gavrilović, 20 June 1925, strictly conf. no. 140.

<sup>27</sup> For more detail, see Dragan Bakić, "Must Will Peace: the British Brokering of 'Central European' and 'Balkan Locarno', 1925-1929", forthcoming in *Journal of Contemporary History*.

<sup>28</sup> AJ, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, 334-9-29, Gavrilović to Ninčić, 9 Jan. 1926, conf. no. 20.

<sup>29</sup> Momčilo Ninčić, *Spoljna politika Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca: u god. 1925-1926: govori, odgovori i ekspozice u Narodnoj skupštini* (Belgrade: Makarije, 1926), A speech prior to voting on the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the 79th session on 26 March 1926, 69-82 (79).

absolutely secured route to Salonica along which she could transport war supplies on which she depended in case of war. The Great General Staff argued as late as November 1940 that the development of a war industry was a necessity with a view to overcoming dependence on foreign supplies, especially given the “great sensitivity of our only war communication link with abroad (through Salonica) which can be quickly cut due to the vicinity to the border front.”<sup>30</sup> In fact, in the mid-1920s Belgrade had military conventions stipulating that the railway branch leading to Salonica would be utilised for the transport of war supplies not just for Yugoslavia but, if need be, also for her Little Entente allies, Romania and Czechoslovakia, and even Poland. It should be noted that these plans bore the mark of the French military analysis of November 1922, which had suggested the usefulness of a Yugoslav-controlled corridor for such purposes. Milan Antić of the Foreign Ministry left no doubt on this score: “As far as the transit of ammunition and war materiel is concerned, in peace and war, it is necessary to insist to have such transport carried out without any Greek control and, in doing so, we could secure the functioning of the ammunition transit convention with Czechoslovakia, Poland and Romania.”<sup>31</sup> This request, in fact, constituted the chief reason behind the Yugoslav demand that all the goods in transit through Salonica be exempted from their custom declaration; in this way, war materiel could be obtained without Greek control.<sup>32</sup> Sensing that the issue of war materiel transit was what perhaps most mattered to Belgrade, the Greeks argued that the best way to secure it in case of war was to make an alliance treaty between the two countries, as opposed to Yugoslav negotiators who insisted on settling the outstanding questions prior to the conclusion of a treaty. There is yet another indication that security concerns were not less important than those pertaining to trade interests. The economic importance of Salonica for Yugoslavia as a whole, with the noted exception of Southern Serbia, should not be overestimated. Statistical data for the 1921–1931 period showed that Greece took a fifth or sixth place (eighth in 1922) in the Yugoslav export and around twelfth place in the import trade. During those years the Greek share of the export trade never reached 10 percent while the maximum import from Greece fell short of 6 percent.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 25, Report of the General Staff of 20 Nov. 1938 to the Minister of Army and Navy on unpreparedness of the armed forces and the necessity to grant additional material assets for the country's preparation for war.

<sup>31</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9691, Antić to Ninčić(?), 7 July 1926.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> R. Perović, *Solun i njegovu prirovdni i saobraćajno-trgovinski značaj za Jugoslaviju* (Bi-tolj: Prosveta, 1932), 33–34.

On the Yugoslav side the negotiations were conducted by Antić, Panta Gavrilović, the Minister in Athens and Ranislav Avramović, a technical expert, but did not yield much result. As the Yugoslavs realised that the idea of putting the Salonica–Ghevgheli railway under direct control of Yugoslav administration was not likely to be materialised, they fell back on the reserve solution to form a mixed Yugoslav–Greco–French commission to administer it as it was expected that a French arbiter would be generally favourably disposed to Belgrade.<sup>34</sup> France had, however, plans of her own and wanted to have full control over the railway and internationalise the Salonica dockyard. Antić was not happy with such alternatives for they could, notwithstanding the usefulness of French presence in the Balkans for Yugoslavia, “reduce our liberty of action” and make more difficult “penetration in the direction of south in the future.”<sup>35</sup> Other proposals encompassed various forms of exploitation ranging from the administration of a private company, Greek exploitation with the guarantees of Great Powers to the League of Nations’ control over it.<sup>36</sup>

On 17 August 1926 the agreement between Greece and Yugoslavia was finally reached, comprising a political treaty of understanding and friendship and a set of conventions covering railway and transit questions, including the administration of the Ghevgheli–Salonica Railway, the Yugoslav free zone in Salonica and a minority convention. The Greek dictator General Alexander Pangalos’ generous concessions which satisfied all Yugoslav demands made this arrangement possible. Pangalos gave in as part of his strategy to settle relations with Yugoslavia in order to have free hands to re-conquer Thrace from the Turks. If this was his grand scheme, it would appear to have been thoroughly miscalculated, as Ninčić, according to the firsthand account of Antić, in March 1926 had asked the senior officials of the French Foreign Ministry whether it would be possible for Yugoslavia to attack Greece if she invaded Turkey without abrogating the League of Nations’ Pact.<sup>37</sup> However, there was no use of Papagos’ concessions. Just a few days after the signature of the agreement with Yugoslavia, the dictatorship of General Pangalos was overthrown in a revolution, and the new Greek government never ratified the agreement. The negotiations were resumed

34 ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9110, Avramović to Ninčić, subject: Ghevgheli–Salonica railway, 6 Nov. 1925; 14387/9680, Antić’s note, 4 July 1926; 14387/9691, Antić’s memo, 7 July 1926.

35 ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9028, Antić’s note, 17 Nov. 1925.

36 ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9018, Antić’s note, 26 Dec. 1925; 14387/9782, Avramović to Ninčić, 10 May 1926.

37 ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/8993, undated Antić’s note. See also H. Psomiades, “The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos, 1925–26”, *Balkan Studies* 13 (1972), 1–16.

with the new regime of Pavlos Kountouriotis, which made the dispute with Belgrade a national cause, and led nowhere. In such an atmosphere a memorandum on Yugoslav–Greek relations concluded on a pessimistic note: “In the relations between us and the Greeks there is the psychosis of a fear of our descent on Salonica and the sensitivity that we do not respect the Greeks them being a small and weak state.”<sup>38</sup>

It fell to Ninčić’s successor, Vojislav Marinković, to break the deadlock. He was remembered as Foreign Minister who had denounced the treaty with Greece in 1924 during his brief first term in office. On several occasions the Greeks offered the conclusion of a special convention which would secure a transit of war materiel but Marinković did not show much enthusiasm. The sharp deterioration in relations with Italy after Mussolini had concluded the first Pact of Tirana with the Albanian President, Ahmed Zogu, in November 1926, weakened Yugoslavia’s position in the Balkans. By contrast, Venizelos, once more in office in mid-1928, signed the agreement with Mussolini in September that year thus breaking Greece’s diplomatic isolation. On French urgings to settle the difficulties with Greece, Marinković at first replied that he wanted to either come to terms with Italy or conclude a pact with France previously.<sup>39</sup> He apparently did not want to negotiate from the position of weakness. Although he had his pact with France in November 1927, it did not make any difference in regard to the negotiations with the Greeks. Moreover, Venizelos energetically refused to allow transport of war supplies for Yugoslavia as such provision would contravene his agreement with Italy. In the ensuing conversations between technical experts the “main” idea on the Yugoslav side was “to find a formula which would allow an import of our war materiel through the [Salonica] zone.” France advised Markinković to conclude an agreement with Greece even at the price of considerable “sacrifices on our part.”<sup>40</sup> Finally, the pact of friendship between Yugoslavia and Greece was concluded on 27 March 1929 in Belgrade and accompanied by a protocol settling the outstanding questions in accordance with the Greek point of view. The dispute was off the table, Yugoslav–Greek relations were improved and Salonica would not be on the lips of statesmen for the next ten years until Italian aggressive designs in the Balkans brought it back in focus.

Since late April 1938, Mussolini and Ciano started preparing the ground for the annexation of Albania. In order to realise their plans, it was

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<sup>38</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/8779, Memorandum by Antić, 30 Dec. 1926, fol. 10.

<sup>39</sup> AJ, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, 334-9-29, Memorandum on the negotiations with Greece, fols. 6–7, undated, author unknown.

<sup>40</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/8996, Antić’s letter to an unknown person, undated; 14387/8992, undated Antić’s note.



deemed necessary to obtain the consent, or even complicity, of Yugoslavia the good will of which had carefully been nurtured since Ciano had signed the Pact of Belgrade with the Yugoslav Prime Minister, Milan Stojadinović, on 25 March 1937. The cooperation between the two countries, in the Italian view, was regarded as a valuable lever for withstanding German pressure in the direction of the Adriatic in case of Anschluss and consequently seen as having potential to be a fundamental factor in the Danube and Balkan region. For these reasons, Stojadinović had to be approached and won over for the Italian plan, and the mission was to be undertaken by Ciano himself who had much personal sympathy for and a close working relationship with the Prime Minister. The Duce thought of an additional inducement for Stojadinović — the port of Salonica.<sup>41</sup> Just three days before Ciano's departure for Yugoslavia, the final decision was made "that it would not pay to gamble with our precious friendship with Belgrade to win Albania"; in order to attain an amicable consent of Yugoslavia, a fairly generous offer was prepared: "increase at the Yugoslav borders, demilitarisation of the Albanian borders, military alliance, and the absolute support of the Serbs in their conquest of Salonica."<sup>42</sup>

On 19 January 1939, Stojadinović and Ciano met at the Belje estate for a confidential conversation. The latter referred to the hostile attitude that Greece had taken towards Italy during the application of the League of Nations-imposed sanctions on account of the Italian aggression against Abyssinia which Rome would never forget. This was an opening to advance claim that Yugoslavia was in need of an access to the Aegean Sea and "she should take Salonica." Moreover, Ciano proclaimed, "for that purpose, [Yugoslavia] can count on the full support of Italy: moral, political and military, if needed."<sup>43</sup> In a summary report sent to Prince Regent Paul, Stojadinović did not reproduce his answer to Ciano's suggestion. In his memoirs, however, he recorded his stiff reply:

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<sup>41</sup> *Ciano's Diary, 1937–1943: the Complete Unabridged Diaries of Count Galeazzo Ciano, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1936–1943* (London: Phoenix, 2002), entry on 6 Dec. 1938, 164; 8 Jan. 1939, 174–175.

<sup>42</sup> *Ciano's Diary*, entry on 15 Jan. 1939, 178. Ciano had already spoken to Boško Hristić, the Yugoslav Minister in Rome, encouraging Yugoslav action towards Salonica, "the natural outlet of the Yugoslavs to the [Aegean] sea." See entry on 24 Nov. 1938, 160.

<sup>43</sup> AJ, Prince Paul Papers, Stojadinović to Prince Paul, private, 20 Jan. 1939, Belje [digitised] reel 4, 534–541 [range of scans]. Ciano made no reference to Salonica in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, ed. Malcolm Muggeridge, transl. Stuart Hood (London: Odhams Press Limited, 1948), "The Report on my Journey to Yugoslavia and of the Conversation with the Prime Minister, Stoyadinovitch, 18th–23rd January, 1939 – XVII, 267–272.

The taking of Salonica from the Greeks would not constitute any sort of assuagement in the eyes of Yugoslav public opinion for the undertaking of the proposed operation in Albania. On the contrary, Greece is an ally of Yugoslavia, Serbo-Greek friendship was proven by the blood-shedding on the battlefields in the Balkan Wars as well as the World War. In the area [stretching] from Ghevgheli to Salonica, Greek governments settled pure Greek element, the refugees from Asia Minor... In the port of Salonica there is a free Yugoslav customs zone which functions well... All this speaks against the idea regarding Salonica.<sup>44</sup>

According to Stojadinović, the Yugoslav military was of opinion that no effort should be spared to prevent Italy from subduing Greece; if, however, a war became inevitable and a victorious Italy got hold of Salonica, it was necessary to prevent her, “either by means of an agreement or at the cost of war”, from maintaining control of the port for such contingency would amount to “the collapse of the economic lung through which Yugoslavia breathes i.e., a free sea route.”<sup>45</sup> In the end, nothing of these Italo-Yugoslav exchanges materialised. Prince Paul removed Stojadinović from the office which brought about the end of an era of friendly relations between the two Adriatic neighbours. Italy decided to proceed with the annexation of Albania without regard to, and if necessary against, Yugoslavia. Indeed, on 7 April 1939, Italian troops disembarked on the Albanian coast and occupied the whole country. In the circumstances, there was no question of any compensation for Belgrade in Albania or still less at the expense of Greece. Nor was such compensation in the realm of practical policy, given the attitude of Prince Paul who would never enter any combination with Mussolini if it meant becoming an accomplice in the latter’s aggressive enterprises.

This was not the end of the troubles caused by Rome, however, and Yugoslavia would soon again find herself in a strategically dangerous situation. On 28 October 1940, Mussolini attacked Greece and spread the theatre of the Second World War to the hitherto peaceful Balkans. One of the primary objectives of the Italian offensive was to take possession of Salonica and it was this consideration that most alarmed Belgrade. On the very day the war started, the Crown Council held a meeting to decide on the attitude to be adopted. Prince Paul spoke first and set the tone of the discussion when he put forward a proposal to mobilise troops in the south in the vicinity of the Greek border. “We cannot allow Italy to enter Salonica. This [situation] cannot be endured any more... It is better to die than loose

<sup>44</sup> M. Stojadinović, *Ni rat ni pakt: Jugoslavija između dva rata* (Rijeka: Otokar Keršovani, 1970), 518.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

honour”, the Regent was agitated.<sup>46</sup> The Prime Minister, Dragiša Cvetković, supported Prince Paul’s view and expressed willingness to fight at any cost, and to withdraw if necessary, although he did not specify in which direction the army might retreat. On the other hand, the Foreign Minister Aleksandar Cincar-Marković was not in favour of heroic solutions. He asked what would become of those left behind the retreating army and declared himself against rash decisions, including mobilisation. Cincar-Marković underlined that Germany stood by Italy and concluded: “We cannot wage war against them.” The Minister of War, General Milan Nedić, thought that the main question was what the German attitude would be and warned that a partial mobilisation might lead the country to war. Finally, Milan Antić, now the Minister of Court, was the most outspoken and diplomatically cautious: he advised the wait-and-see attitude as the further course of war in Greece and Germany’s stance could largely depend on “English support and Turkey’s attitude”. Prince Paul seemed “very depressed” but there was no final decision. During the conversation with Antić the next day, the Regent revealed his inner torments when he stated that he could not be requested to attack the country of his wife, Princess Olga, who was a granddaughter of King George I of Greece. Antić had to calm him down and explain the rationale behind the Yugoslav policy: “No one thinks of attacking Greece, but we are all in agreement that we cannot have Italy in Salonica. In the final instance, it is better for Greece herself to have us instead of Italy in Salonica.”<sup>47</sup> Cincar-Marković was then called to join their discussion and it was decided to entrust Milan Perić, the director of the news agency *Avala*, with the mission of soliciting the views of Walter Gruber of the German agency *Deutsches Nachrichten Büro* in Belgrade and Josef Hribovsek-Berge, the German press attaché. An informal communication with these men — who apparently performed important intelligence operations — had been going on for some time, and, in fact, Gruber had phoned General Nedić on the day Italy had declared war on Greece informing him that the Yugoslavs would be invited to descend on Salonica. According to Perić, Gruber suggested that “[we] should moot the question of Salonica in Berlin. He asks [us] what we are waiting for?” On the basis of Perić’s information, Cincar-Marković and General Nedić were to prepare a telegram for the Military Attaché in Berlin, Colonel Vladimir Vauhnik, and instruct him to sound out the opinion in the highest German military circles. It was also decided

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<sup>46</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 293, Minutes by the Minister of Court, Milan Antić, on 28 and 31 Oct. and 1 Nov. from the meeting of the Crown Council in connection with the question of Salonica.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

to concentrate additional troops at the Greek border.<sup>48</sup> The meeting was concluded with Prince Paul's remark "that he should be understood, that he sacrifices himself for the interests of the country, although he find it difficult to conceive that he has to work against his wife's country, which is also an ally."<sup>49</sup> The decisions reached were acted upon. By 6 November 1940, nine infantry divisions were mobilised for the purpose of advancing to Salonica, if ordered so, and securing this operation from the direction of Bulgaria.<sup>50</sup>

It is clear from the information provided by Perić that the initiative for Salonica's passing to Yugoslav hands came from the German side. Furthermore, the pro-German Minister for Physical Education in the Cvetković Cabinet, Dušan Pantić, had an interesting conversation over dinner with two distinguished German diplomats, Ambassador in Rome, Ulrich Hassel, and Minister in Belgrade, Viktor von Heeren, which threw some light on the reasons which might have guided Berlin in its prodding of Belgrade's aspirations in the port's direction. The former diplomat underscored that the Third Reich considered the Vardar valley together with Salonica to be "the aorta artery of Yugoslavia, and the Serbian part of the people in particular" and expressed German willingness to transfer Salonica with its hinterland to Yugoslavia. Pantić had an impression that "our eventual taking of the territory, even provisional, would be a guarantee for the German Reich against the eventual creation of a Salonica front on the part of England and that in such case Germany would even remain an observer of the Italo-Greek conflict and regard it as a local war conflict."<sup>51</sup> He had no doubt that Hassel's and Heeren's suggestions were authorised by their superiors. Pantić discussed this matter with Prince Paul the next day and

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. See also ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/8509, 8512, undated Antić's notes implying that General Nedić may have overstepped a simple indication to the Germans as to the military-strategic importance of Salonica for Yugoslavia.

<sup>49</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 293. It should be noted that the editor has commented (n. 8), in blatant disregard for the content of this document, not to mention the wider context of Yugoslavia's situation, but typical of the biased view of communist Yugoslav historiography, that Prince Paul decided to "traitorously attack Salonica justifying such an action by the alleged interests of the country".

<sup>50</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 294, Order of the Minister of Army and Navy of 2 Nov. 1940 for the activation of war regiments for the purpose of eventual occupation of Salonica; doc. 296, Directive of the Minister of Army and Navy of 5 Nov. 1940 to the Chief of the General Staff which authorises in principle the project of mobilisation and concentration of forces for an attack on Salonica and orders further measures for the realisation of this project; doc. 297, Order of the Minister of Army and Navy of 6 Nov. 1940 for the activation of all as yet unactivated units, commands and facilities of the Third Army's area of responsibility and some units from the Fifth Army's area.

<sup>51</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 293, n. 8.

made plain his view that the time had come to definitely arrange relations with Germany. He proposed a diplomatic initiative in Athens to obtain a voluntary cession of Salonica at least until the end of the war in order to prevent the spreading of the conflict in the Balkans.<sup>52</sup> He did not record Prince Paul's reply to his suggestion but it is safe to assume that the latter was not receptive to it.

Colonel Vauhnik carried out his orders discussing the Salonica issue with two high-ranking officers and reported them to have been rather evasive. They waited for further Italian military operations in Greece and promised to provide an answer in a few days. Vauhnik added that he found the Germans "disinterested in the Italo-Greek conflict and even pleased that things were going badly for the Italians."<sup>53</sup> After the resignation of General Nedić on 6 November 1940, Vauhnik informed the Germans that he had dropped the Salonica matter and was not likely to raise it again.<sup>54</sup>

At about the same time, there was another seemingly unofficial sounding of German position as to Salonica. Danilo Gregorić, Director of the *Vreme* newspapers known for his pro-German leanings, was received in the German Foreign Ministry. He talked of rapprochement between Berlin and Belgrade, their intense economic cooperation, and hinted at the importance of the Greek port which in the hands of Italians would be "a noose around the neck of Yugoslavia".<sup>55</sup> The origins of Gregorić's meddling in this matter

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., n. 6 which contains the transcripts of the two telephone conversations with Colonel Vauhnik on 4 and 5 Nov. 1940 relaying the content of his discussions with German military officials. These transcripts were originally published in Radoje Knežević, "Kako se to zbilo", *Poruci* 4-5, pp. 6-7, published by an emigrant organisation in London. In his memoirs, V. Vauhnik, *Nevidljivi front: Borba za očuvanje Jugoslavije* (Munich: Iskra, 1984), 164-168, has revealed that he thought that the order he received from Belgrade was a manoeuvre on the part of an informal group of officers, perhaps without the knowledge of the Minister of Army and in conjunction with certain civilian circles, which could saddle the country with "a political adventure." He even doubted that it could be made a part of a deal whereby Yugoslavia would have to adhere to the Tripartite Pact and cede Slovenia (Vauhnik was Slovenian) to the Reich in exchange for Salonica. Therefore, Vauhnik made enquires in the German headquarters in such manner as to underscore that, despite feelers put out by some of his countrymen, Yugoslavia did not make any sort of claim on the port although she insisted that it did not pass to anyone else, and least of all Italy. He, in fact, sabotaged what he believed to be a shady business of an irresponsible clique in Belgrade.

<sup>54</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 304, Report of an official of the Political Department of 11 Nov. 1940 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany about Yugoslav aspirations towards Salonica.

<sup>55</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 305, Report of Dr. Smith of 12 Nov. 1940 to Ribbentrop on conversation with Danilo Gregorić.

are not clear. Whereas he confessed to his German interlocutor that he had had a long conversation with Cvetković and Cincar-Marković before his departure for Berlin and thus created an impression of acting upon instructions from his government, the latter flatly denied it to the Reich Minister in Belgrade.<sup>56</sup> Yet, Gregorić went to Berlin again less than two weeks later and was this time received by Ribbentrop himself, which suggests that he did not act without authorisation.<sup>57</sup> Gregorić later confided to Antić that Cvetković had also conversed with von Heeren about Salonica and promised to meet all German demands in return for a favourable solution of this question, but it remained unclear if the Regent had been familiar with it.<sup>58</sup> In Antić's view, such initiative was incompatible with Yugoslav foreign policy which, once forced to accept negotiations for joining the Tripartite Pact, endeavoured to extract maximum concessions from the Germans with a view to securing the independence, integrity and neutrality of the country. The Salonica matter came under discussion "without Cvetković's intervention, in a hypothetical form, for the purpose of defending the vital interests of our country, in case of Central Powers' [*sic*] victory, so that Italy, Bulgaria did not enter Salonica, or an unfavourable international solution for us was imposed", Antić explained.<sup>59</sup>

Von Heeren closely observed the mood of the government in Belgrade and found that the Salonica issue was revived due to the Italo-Greek war and the consequent uncertainty as to the future territorial extent of Greece. In his analysis, "earlier, this old political objective was silenced over, and only because it is in contradiction with the anti-revisionist attitude in principle for which the official Yugoslav foreign policy always stood for, and also because it seemed bearable to have Salonica in the hands of the Greek partner in the Balkan Entente".<sup>60</sup> Italian conquest of the port would be regarded as the completion of a military encirclement of Yugoslavia and

<sup>56</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 318, Heeren's Report of 24 Nov. 1940 to Ribbentrop relating to the impending visit of Cincar-Marković to Germany.

<sup>57</sup> D. Gregorić, *Samoubistvo Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Luč, 1942), 105–129. If Antić's recollection can be trusted, Gregorić, whom he met in a prison of communist Yugoslavia after the war and found him superficial, garrulous and too close to Germans, had been chosen for a mission to Berlin by Cvetković, while Cincar-Marković unsuccessfully tried to oppose his meddling in the ongoing negotiations. See ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/9545, Antić's notes, fols. 81–82, 167.

<sup>58</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/8509, 8512, undated Antić's notes.

<sup>59</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/8512, undated Antić's note.

<sup>60</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 307, Report of the German Minister in Belgrade of 14 Nov. 1940 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the increased interest of Yugoslavia for an outlet to the Aegean Sea through Salonica.



resisted with force of arms, if necessary, and provided Germany did not interfere. Von Heeren predicted that Belgrade would hesitate even to speak about the possession of Salonica as long as it remained Greek, but would disinterest itself in the fate of Greece if both Axis powers recognised the Yugoslav right to have Salonica which had previously been detached from Greece. Furthermore, he believed that a promise to that effect could be decisive for the permanent soothing of relations between the Serbs and their Italian and Bulgarian neighbours.

Von Heeren's views and the Yugoslav soundings in Berlin apparently made impression on Hitler himself. While discussing with Ciano the position in the Balkans in relation to the Italo-Greek war, he asked for Italy's consent to neutralise Yugoslavia by offering her a territorial guarantee and Salonica; after having consulted Mussolini, Ciano agreed.<sup>61</sup> Hitler then turned to make a deal with the Yugoslavs. He received Cincar-Marković and tried to wring from him Yugoslav adherence to a non-aggression pact with both Axis powers.<sup>62</sup> The Führer exploited the animosity between Rome and Belgrade, and insisted that the moment was extremely favourable for the latter to define its relations with the Axis and secure a place in the new European order. Germany was presently capable of demanding Italy's respect for such an arrangement on account of the military help he was prepared to provide in the Balkans following the Italian failure in the Greek campaign. Moreover, Yugoslavia's access to the Aegean would reduce the tension in the Adriatic where Italy was very sensitive for military reasons. Hitler's offer of Salonica did not meet with an enthusiastic response on the part of Cincar-Marković. On the contrary, he seems to have attempted to dissuade Hitler from involving himself in the Balkans by pointing out that the formation of a Salonica front by the British was a mere rumour not to be taken seriously.<sup>63</sup>

The Yugoslavs maintained their reserved attitude towards the Axis and thus remained an unknown quantity for them in relation to the campaign in Greece that the Wehrmacht planned for the spring. "It cannot be predicted whether Yugoslavia would join a German attack reaching for Salonica", read an estimate of the German Supreme Command of the Armed

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<sup>61</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 312, Minutes of the conversation between Hitler and Ciano on 18 Nov. 1940 in Obersalzberg about the situation in the Mediterranean and the Balkans; doc. 314, Minutes of the conversation between Ciano and Hitler on 20 Nov. 1940 in Vienna about combinations with Yugoslavia due to the Italo-Greek conflict.

<sup>62</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 323, Minutes of the conversation between Hitler and Cincar-Marković in the Berghof on 29 Nov. 1940.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

Forces.<sup>64</sup> The Belgrade government was, however, far from contemplating any such action. On the contrary, it refused Italian and even German requests to permit military transports for Italian forces in Albania across Yugoslav territory and, moreover, secretly supplied hundreds of thousands of hand grenades, artillery fuses and horses for the Greek cavalry.<sup>65</sup> In doing so, Yugoslavia helped Greece defeat the Italians and drive them back to Albania. Nevertheless, Italian debacle made German military intervention inevitable. With it, Belgrade fully realised it would be faced with the onerous demands on the part of Germany. In order to pre-empt German request for Yugoslavia's adherence to the Tripartite Pact, a special emissary of Prince Paul, Vladislav Stakić, a lawyer of the Italian Legation in Belgrade, visited Rome twice during February 1941 to find out whether it would be possible to reach some arrangement with Italy and obviate German pressure. Mussolini proposed a new alliance pact between the two countries and offered Yugoslavia the port of Salonica once again as well as the exchange of population — the Yugoslav minority in Istria for the Albanian minority in Kosovo — but his offers were declined.<sup>66</sup> In his memoirs, Stakić recorded how Mussolini had even warned him that the Germans would take Salonica unless Yugoslavia had it, and specified that the negative answer had been given due to Prince Paul's adamant stance against taking part in the partition of an allied country.<sup>67</sup> Besides, at this point it became clear that if an agreement counted for anything, it had to be made with Berlin.

In mid-February 1941, German pressure was mounting. Both Prime Minister Cvetković and Foreign Minister Cincar-Marković were invited to Salzburg to meet Hitler and Ribbentrop. The Yugoslavs were interested in mediating for the purpose of liquidating the Italo-Greek war and then creating a diplomatic instrument which would oblige all Balkan countries to resist any foreign power to use their territories for military operations. They were not too hopeful as to Hitler's reception of such a proposal and struggled to fathom German intentions. Cincar-Marković concluded:

But one thing is beyond any doubt: a descent of the Germans southwards across Bulgaria means a mortal danger for us because the natural, shortest and best route between Germany and the coast of the Aegean Sea leads through our country. Therefore we cannot consent to any suggestion which would give Salonica to the Germans. Once they obtain Salonica, they will

<sup>64</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. I, doc. 332, Information of the German Supreme Command of the armed forces of 21 Dec. 1940 on German military preparations in the Balkans.

<sup>65</sup> J. B. Hoptner, *Yugoslavia in Crisis, 1934–1941* (New York: Columbia University Press), 190–192.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* 208–209, 211–212.

<sup>67</sup> V. Stakić, *Moji razgovori sa Musolinijem* (Munich: Iskra, 1967), 99–100, 105.

strangle us completely. It is better for us if they directly attack us rather than torment us isolated. For even if our end would be the same in both cases, the path would not be the same. In case of an attack and resistance our honour would be saved and that will mean something at the moment of a liquidation of this war.<sup>68</sup>

It is difficult to find a more obvious and straightforward statement as to the vital strategic importance attributed to Salonica by high-ranking Yugoslav officials. In the event, Cincar-Marković and Cvetković were requested to sign the Tripartite Pact but did not accept it. They were asked to relay an invitation to the Prince Regent to come and see Hitler. This visit took place in Berghof on 4 March 1941. Prince Paul was clearly given to understand that Yugoslavia was requested to join the Tripartite Pact in order to provide evidence of her loyal attitude. Hitler also dangled a prospect of granting Salonica to Yugoslavia at the end of the war.<sup>69</sup> Two days later, the Crown Council met in Belgrade to make a decision. It was decided to open negotiations with the Germans but to insist on the maintenance of Yugoslavia's armed neutrality and the exclusion of Yugoslav territory from transit of troops.

When Cincar-Marković secured the acceptance of these conditions, another meeting of the Crown Council was convened on 12 March. At this point, the Minister of Court, Milan Antić, knowing that the Salonica issue had already been mooted by General Nedić with the German military (and still not knowing about Cvetković's conversations on this subject) and aware of the Italian ambitions voiced by the fascist press, which ran contrary to the vital Yugoslav interest not to tolerate an entrenchment in the port of any other power except Greece, raised the matter of Salonica.<sup>70</sup> In the ensuing discussion Ivo Perović, a co-Regent of Prince Paul, was the most determined and professed that Salonica would be worth a war with Italy. Finally, it was decided to discuss the fate of Salonica with the Germans in

<sup>68</sup> AJ, Ministerial Council of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, 138-1-526, Cincar-Marković's memorandum of 13 Feb. 1941 prepared for Cvetković, published online in V. Djurić-Mišina, *Kraljevina Jugoslavija 1941*, downloaded from [http://27march.org/images/File/Veljko\\_Djuric\\_Kraljevina\\_Jugoslavija\\_1941\\_lat.pdf](http://27march.org/images/File/Veljko_Djuric_Kraljevina_Jugoslavija_1941_lat.pdf).

<sup>69</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. II, ed. Antun Miletić (Belgrade: Vojnoistorijski institut, 1987), doc. 53, Report of the German Foreign Minister to the Minister in Belgrade of 7 March 1941 on the conversation between Prince Paul and Hitler in the Berghof.

<sup>70</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/10487, Antić's note, undated. Hoptner, *Yugoslavia in Crisis*, 228–229, claims that Cincar-Marković and Antić consulted on the matter. Allegedly, the latter was emotionally attached to Salonica because of his role in the negotiations of 1925–26 and the former exceeded Cvetković's instructions when he insisted in his talks with the Germans on a territorial link with Salonica rather than on a free access.

case it did not remain under Greek sovereignty after the war. Following another round of negotiations, the Germans, having procured Mussolini's consent, agreed to provide assurances to Belgrade as to Salonica. According to Antić, Cincar-Marković submitted a draft note to the Crown Council which found it "not clear and precise enough" and the Foreign Minister was instructed to ask for another redaction, "always hypothetical and only in the case [Salonica] cannot not stay in Greek hands after the war."<sup>71</sup> Cincar-Marković carried out his instructions successfully. The final text of the secret note reads as follows: "On the occasion of a new delimitation of borders in the Balkans the interest of Yugoslavia for a territorial link with the Aegean Sea and the extension of her sovereignty to the town and port of Salonica will be taken into account."<sup>72</sup> Prince Paul still had doubts about the wording of the Salonica note and Antić reassured him that it was not directed against Greek interests which could be endangered by the belligerents alone. The Regent's crisis of conscience was all the more striking in the light of Hitler's interpreter Paul Schmidt's impression that "the Yugoslavs seemed to have no special interest in Salonica, with which Germany had baited the hook."<sup>73</sup> The note constituted one of the four notes which accompanied the text of the Tripartite Pact signed by Yugoslavia on 25 March 1941. The note on Salonica remained secret, that on Yugoslavia's abstention from military operations was not to be published without the prior consent of both sides, whereas the notes pertaining to the guarantee of Yugoslavia's integrity and sovereignty and the exclusion of her territory from transports of troops and war materiel were announced.

It is interesting to note that the Salonica affair during those fateful days became a matter of bitter dispute between the Serb emigrants after the war. Deprived of the possibility of returning to the now communist Yugoslavia, they were sharply divided into the defenders of Prince Paul and his regime and the supporters of the 27 March coup d'état. Radoje Knežević, one of the political architects of the putsch, and thus having a vested interest in denouncing Prince Paul, went as far as accusing the Regent of signing the Tripartite Pact in a simple exchange for Hitler's promise to let Yugoslavia have Salonica. This accusation, equally groundless as that of Yugoslav communist historiography, was vehemently refuted by Dragiša Cvetković.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> ASANU, Antić Papers, 14387/10487, Antić's note, undated.

<sup>72</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. II, doc. 114, Note of the German government of 25 March 1941 to Dragiša Cvetković guaranteeing the extension of sovereignty to the town and port of Salonica.

<sup>73</sup> Hoptner, *Yugoslavia in Crisis*, 239, n. 67.

<sup>74</sup> R. L. Knejevitch, "Prince Paul, Hitler, and Salonica", *International Affairs* 27/1 (Jan. 1951), 38–44; the reply is given in Dragiša Tsvetkovitch, "Prince Paul, Hitler, and

His friend, Časlav Nikitović, wrote him a letter informing him of the historian Jacob Hoptner's difficulties to ascertain the Yugoslav attitude towards Salonica in view of the Croat leader Vlatko Maček's differing accounts and Count Ciano's note of what transpired between the government and the Germans as to the port's fate. Nikitović thought that it was necessary to explain that the Crown Council had endeavoured to ensure free access to the Aegean, which Yugoslavia had already enjoyed under the existing arrangement with Greece, rather than to take the city from the Greeks.<sup>75</sup> Božidar Purić, a former high-ranking diplomat, was also engaged in fighting off Knežević's accusations regarding Salonica in the pages of the Serb émigré journal *Kanadski Srbobran*, and kept Prince Paul up to date on this matter.<sup>76</sup> He compounded the classic strategic reason of holding Salonica in order to keep Italy out of it by another calculation which, according to him, was not far from the thoughts of Yugoslav officials at the time: "After the experience of Czechoslovakia's and Romania's fate following the Vienna meeting [Awards], it had to be clear to us that, in case of German victory, the question of Croatia, Slovenia and Dalmatia would be resolved in favour of Germany's and Italy's interests, and that Salonica would be a sole outlet to sea for us."<sup>77</sup> This argument, which had never been previously mentioned in documents or by the participants in the events, points out to an exclusively Serbian concern based on the worst case scenario of Yugoslavia's dismemberment through detaching Croatian and Slovenian, to a great extent coastal, areas which would reverse the position of Serbia to that of the pre-1914 landlocked state. In Purić's view, it justified Antić's initiative for the German assurance with regard to Salonica. The whole post-war controversy as to what was Yugoslav stance in those critical moments, he believed, was caused by Cvetković's inconsistent claims relating to Salonica — whether it had been offered to and imposed on the Yugoslavs or demanded by them from Berlin.

As the German pressure mounted in March 1941, Yugoslavia was also faced with the British endeavours to enlist her to the anti-German camp. This was a change in attitude that had been taken since the outbreak of the war. During the "phoney war" phase, France, and in particular General Maxim Weygand, the commander of the French forces stationed in Syria, was bent on the creation of a Salonica front in the Balkans which he believed, no doubt invoking the successful French-led campaign in the previous war, to have potential to decisively contribute, provided that Bal-

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Salonica", *International Affairs* 27/4 (Oct. 1951), 463–469.

<sup>75</sup> AJ, Prince Paul Papers, 7/737–741, Nikitović to Cvetković, 9 May 1958.

<sup>76</sup> AJ, Prince Paul Papers, 8/764, Purić to Prince Paul, 4 April 1963.

<sup>77</sup> AJ, Prince Paul Papers, 8/758–761, Purić to Prince Paul, 22 Jan. 1962 (?).

kan nations sided with the Allies, to the final German defeat.<sup>78</sup> To this end, the French military maintained regular contacts with the General Staffs of Yugoslavia, Greece and Romania. The British, however, discouraged Weygand's schemes: they could have brought about the end of the Italian non-belligerence which was, in view of London, a more valuable asset than the vague prospect of a Salonica front.<sup>79</sup> Instead, Britain promoted the idea of a neutral Balkan bloc in which Bulgaria would forego her territorial aspirations and show solidarity with her neighbours organised in the Balkan Entente formed in 1934 and which would perhaps be led by the still neutral Italy. Politically unrealistic, such combination clearly indicated the paramount importance accorded to Rome, and at least was not as divorced from the military realities on the ground as Weygand's plan. With the French military disaster in May–June 1940 and Italy's entry into war, both strategies were put to rest.

In March 1941, Britain was preoccupied with the precarious situation of Greece which was about to be invaded by Hitler. Without resources to provide effective help himself, Churchill tried to organise a new variant of a Salonica front which would consist of Yugoslav, Greek and Turkish forces with only a token British participation. In order to realise this plan, the British exerted all the influence they commanded on the Anglophile Prince Paul. The Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, strove to persuade him that the Germans were about to encircle Yugoslavia and so seal her fate. "As we see it, Germany's objective in the Balkans is to subdue Greece and to immobilise Turkey. If Germany could achieve these dual objects and in the course of so doing occupy Salonica and dominate the straits, Yugoslavia would be at Germany's mercy."<sup>80</sup> In fact, this was the only concrete strategic reason that Eden could provide as to the necessity for Yugoslavia of taking up arms and resisting Hitler; the rest was but a pathetic appeal to "the soul of a people... splendid traditions and brave deeds" and the prospect of facing "the future with the greater courage and hope".<sup>81</sup> Barely a fortnight later, Eden prodded the Prince Regent to withstand German pressure and even suggested that the Yugoslav Army should take initiative and attack the Italian forces in Albania — which would soon be defeated — captur-

<sup>78</sup> A. Papagos, *Grčka u ratu* (Belgrade: Vojno delo, 1954), 51–52, 99, 105.

<sup>79</sup> E. Barker, *Britanska politika prema jugoistočnoj Evropi u Drugom svjetskom ratu* (Zagreb: Globus, 1978), 28–35 — a Serbo-Croat translation of *British Policy in South-East Europe in the Second World War* (London: Macmillan Press, 1975); V. Vinaver, "Vojno-politička akcija fašističke Italije protiv Jugoslavije u jesen 1939. godine", *Vojnoistorijski glasnik* 3 (1966), 73–94, esp. 76–78.

<sup>80</sup> AJ, Prince Paul Papers, 2/28–33, Eden to Prince Paul, 4 March 1941.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*



ing large quantities of war supplies in the process.<sup>82</sup> The Salonica card was also emphasised in a communication made by the British Minister, Ronald Campbell, to Prime Minister Cvetković. Realising the imminence of an agreement between Belgrade and Berlin, the former requested from the Yugoslav government to insist on Germany's obligation to refrain from attacking the port. "Such an assurance can easily be valueless, but if Germany gives it and later menaces Salonica, Yugoslavia will be fully justified to cross her borders", Campbell argued.<sup>83</sup> This was another, albeit more subtle, attempt to recruit Yugoslavia as bulwark to German descent on Greece. If it proved ineffective, which might have seemed highly likely to the British, it could have provoked Berlin to resorting to more forward measures and consequently brought Belgrade in the conflict. Just like Germany, Britain used the bait of Salonica to make Yugoslavia do its bidding. London encouraged Prince Paul's government to revive the Salonica front presenting it as the only way for Yugoslavia to preserve her independence.

Despite all British warmongering and his personal feelings, Prince Paul had to acknowledge political and military realities and Yugoslavia signed the Tripartite Pact on 25 March 1941 but without the military clauses which for all practical intents and purposes left Belgrade in the position of a neutral. Two days later, the irresponsible group of high-ranking officers abused the anti-German sentiment of Serbian population and carried out a putsch against Prince Paul and his government. Hitler promptly responded by attacking Yugoslavia and destroying her as a country. In the short-lived April War, the strategic significance of the Vardar valley leading to Salonica was once more demonstrated — though being far from a decisive moment — since German troops made it one of their primary objectives to cut this line of communication and thus prevent the Yugoslav Army from withdrawing down that route and making contact with Greek forces.

In conclusion, this review of Yugoslav policy towards the Salonica issue argues that, along with economic interest, and perhaps more than that, Belgrade viewed the free communication with the Greek port from a military-strategic standpoint. With the experience from the Great War during which the Salonica front became ingrained in the collective memory of the Serbian Army and people, the port remained central to operational thinking and military planning of the Yugoslav armed forces. This was facilitated by the strategic situation of Yugoslavia which, although a bigger and stron-

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<sup>82</sup> AJ, Prince Paul Papers, 2/34-45, Eden to Prince Paul, 17 March 1941.

<sup>83</sup> *Aprilski rat 1941*, vol. II, doc. 89, Letter of the British Minister in Belgrade of 20 March 1941 to Dragiša Cvetković on the insistence of the British Government to include a clause that Germany will not attack Salonica in the text of an agreement on the adherence of Yugoslavia to the Tripartite Pact.

ger country than pre-war Serbia, seemed to find herself in a similar position in that it was to a large extent encircled by hostile or potentially hostile neighbours. In times of peace, the unimpeded exit to Salonica was needed to secure a free flow of the military equipment which Yugoslavia could not produce herself, whereas in times of war it could also serve as a retreat route to a fallback position where a contact could be made with and material help received from her (old) allies. Such significance of Salonica was convincingly demonstrated during the turbulent times on the eve of and during the Second World War. Italy, Germany and Britain in turn tried to use Salonica as a bait in order to win Yugoslavia over for their intended actions in the Balkans. There was, however, no enthusiasm in Belgrade for those offers which incited the lust for territorial aggrandisement. To be sure, Yugoslavia did strike a deal on Salonica with the Germans, but it was somewhat tentative and only meant as reassurance so that the port would not fall in the hands of some other hostile or potentially hostile power. In fact, Yugoslavia's behaviour during those perilous times provides evidence that for her the Greek port was indeed, as Ninčić once described it, a matter of security.

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**Grey Falcon and the Union Man**  
**Miloje Sokić Collection of the Clippings from the American Press**  
**1941–1945**

**Abstract:** Miloje Sokić, a journalist whose family owned the *Pravda* newspaper, spent war years in the United States, where he gathered a collection of press clippings that illustrate well American attitudes towards the war in the Balkans. The collection reveals enthusiastic support for the Chetniks in the first two years of the war, and then the pendulum swung toward Partisans. In these clippings one can follow two immigrant groups. The one around Konstantin Fotitch, the Yugoslav Ambassador, nurtured the image of heroic Serbian resistance as illustrated by Rebecca West and Ruth Mitchell. The other, around Luis Adamić, presented Yugoslav Partisans as a piece of a progressive multi-cultural America in the Balkans. Adamić's strategy won because it was politically more astute, but also because the immigrants from the former Habsburg lands outnumbered those of Serbian origin at a ratio of 3 to 1.

**Keywords:** Miloje Sokić, Konstantin Fotitch, Luis Adamić, Ruth Mitchell, Rebecca West, Second World War, Resistance movements, American press, Royal Yugoslav Government in Exile, Partisans, Chetniks, image of women

Most historians are aware of the concept of public diplomacy, the effective communication strategies pursued by various branches of government and special interest groups, practiced in order to influence public opinion on foreign affairs abroad and at home. Public diplomacy often figures in influencing or preparing the ground for formal, official decision-making on subjects ranging from diplomatic initiatives and international agreements to military interventions. In recent years several studies have won recognition from specialists in the field of diplomatic history, such as Jon Davidann's, *Cultural Diplomacy in U.S.-Japanese Relations, 1919–1941*. This work, which traces changes in public opinion in the US and Japan before Pearl Harbor, was praised by the doyen of Asian diplomatic historians, Akira Iriye, who wrote that, "while there exist numerous studies of 'the origins of Pearl Harbor' and of mutual images across the Pacific, this book makes a new contribution by examining how these images influenced one another."<sup>1</sup> Such successes in writing on public diplomacy are often based on the discovery or use of document sets, particularly newspaper collections.

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<sup>1</sup> Jon Thares, *Cultural Diplomacy in U.S.-Japanese Relations, 1919–1941* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).



Recently, from a Serbian immigrant family here in the United States, I have received a dozen of flawlessly organized scrapbook volumes of press-clippings, all related to the course of the Second World War in the Balkans.<sup>2</sup> These volumes seem to have been organized in the same way in which intelligence officers would prepare newspaper clippings for government use. The press-clippings I received cover the whole course of the Second World War in the Balkans and even extend into the post-war era (1946), when the immigrant community was still hoping that the Communist victory was neither final nor irreversible. Covering the day-to-day news reports of the actions of the resistance movements, this collection presents a unique view of the war in the Balkans from the American perspective. The clippings include newspaper articles from the *New York Times* and *Post, Life* and *Time* magazines, extensive excerpts from the *Daily Worker*, the organ of the Communist Party of USA, as well as numerous articles from the local American press from Pittsburg and Chicago. All kinds of articles figure in the collection, including simple reports from the front, in-depth analysis pieces written by experts, gossip columns about the lives of princes and princesses, adventure journalism of Americans and British who ventured to visit the resistance fighters, as well as interviews and biographies of the protagonists. This unique resource lends insight into American views of a part of the world. For traditional historians, often obsessed with the meaning of every document which diplomatic historians study, this collection offers a different view of the war. It emphasizes the role of the Yugoslav immigrants in the United States and how they saw the events in the home country. I hope to present here this unique view of the chaotic mess that was the Second World War in the Balkans.

The author of this collection of newspaper clippings was the famous Serbian journalist and politician, Miloje Sokić (1897–1963). Sokić came from a large family which owned *Pravda* newspaper.<sup>3</sup> There were seven Sokić brothers and three sisters, most of them active in the family newspaper whose first issue came out on September 1st, 1904. *Pravda* was a left-of-center newspaper, which during the period between the two world

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<sup>2</sup> This collection is currently being catalogued by the Hoover Archives on campus of Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. The name of the collection will be *The Miloje Sokić Collection*. It contains 9 scrapbook volumes with glued clips from various national and local newspapers, chronologically organized for the period of 1941–46 and stamped with the date and the name of the publication. While the collection is being catalogued, scholars could check the press clippings directly from the news source cited.

<sup>3</sup> “Sokići čekaju pravdu”, *Glas Javnosti*, Belgrade, July 30, 2001. This information was verified through the conversation with Miloje Sokić’s descendants currently living in the United States.

wars became associated with the Democratic Party of the popular leader Ljuba Davidović. Miloje Sokić, the person who had put this collection of scrapbooks together, was a member of the Yugoslav National Assembly. He entered the political life of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the very difficult period after the personal rule of King Alexander, imposed from 1929 to 1931 after the blunt assassination of a prominent Croatian deputy in the National Assembly. On September 3rd, 1931, the King ended the constitutional vacuum and issued a new constitution, allowing for elections to be held. Old national political parties, such as Radicals, Democrats, and the Croatian Peasant Party, were prohibited from running. Only the super-national Yugoslav parties were permitted, and the democratic life in Yugoslavia took several years to recover. Two new Yugoslav political parties emerged: on the center-right there was the Yugoslav Radical Union (known as JeReZa—*Jugoslovenska Radikalna Zajednica*) and on the center-left the Yugoslav National Party. Official minutes of the Yugoslav National Assembly indicate that Miloje Sokić was elected representative both in the elections held in 1931 and in 1935 on the list of the Yugoslav National Party.<sup>4</sup> His political role in this period was not very prominent. Miloje considered himself a journalist, first and foremost. In the post-war period, the Communist publications tried to present him as one of typically corrupt politicians in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.<sup>5</sup> Needless to say, such accusations were very hurtful to a patriot who was exiled, whose family newspaper, *Pravda*, was shut down and whose owners were not allowed to return to Yugoslavia after the war.

After the defeat of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the April War of 1941, like many other prominent politicians and journalists, Miloje Sokić left the occupied country in order to continue resistance abroad, as this had been done during the First World War. After many detours Sokić ended in New York City, where the Royal Yugoslav Government had its information office. He could not know that he would never see his homeland again and would spend the rest of his life on the American East Coast, moving between New York, Pittsburg, Washington and Boston until his death in 1963. After the war, scarred by the imprisonment of his brothers in Belgrade by Tito's regime, Miloje stayed in the United States, even though he was entitled to return to Yugoslavia and to rejoin the National Assembly. Miloje then, after the Communist takeover in Yugoslavia, became the editor of *American Srbobran*, a Serbian newspaper based in Pittsburg, PA.

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<sup>4</sup> *Stenografske beleške Narodne skupštine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, year 1, vol. 4 (Belgrade 1932) and year 4, vol. 1 (Belgrade 1935).

<sup>5</sup> Zvonimir Kulundžić, *Korupcija i politika u kraljevskoj Jugoslaviji* (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1968), 165–171.

The Yugoslav National Party, of which Miloje Sokić was a member, was a party created to foster Yugoslav unity in the aftermath of the bloody incident in the National Assembly. There was a good deal of resentment and animosity between the ruling Radicals (JeReZa) under Milan Stojadinović and the opposition Yugoslav National Party. In the United States, the traditional Serbian political parties, Radicals and Democrats, not the newly-formed Yugoslav parties, had their own independent organizations. Yet, because of the war, the traditional Serbian organizations in the United States, such as the Serbian National Defense Council or the Serb National Federation, together with the newly-arrived émigrés of 1941, began to work for the same cause, the cause of liberating the fatherland from Nazi occupation.

Contrary to the claims often made by many popular histories in the Communist Yugoslavia, the life of the Yugoslav émigrés during the war was not all fun and games.<sup>6</sup> For the most part, Miloje Sokić's activities were actually dedicated to organizing help for the resistance movements in Yugoslavia and winning over public opinion in the United States. The newly-arrived emigrants were officially classified as immigrants "deriving from the enemy territory" and were thus fairly strictly followed and observed. All political figures, such as Sokić, were interviewed and observed by the Foreign Nationalities Branch, a part of the Office of Strategic Services (the future CIA).<sup>7</sup> Yugoslav exiles even tried to organize military units from volunteers in the United States. This activity had to stop once the United States entered the war on December 8th, 1941.<sup>8</sup> In fact, during this period between April and December of 1941, members of the Royal Yugoslav Government in Exile were only allowed into the United States after they first established residence in Canada which, as a part of the British Empire, had officially been at war with the Axis.<sup>9</sup> There is a possibility that Sokić was putting together this collection of scrapbooks as a volunteer for the emerging intelligence services (Office of Strategic Services or the intelligence offices of the State Department). It is well known that during the war an army of immigrants-volunteers scanned the press regularly for the purpose of making the "best use of resources and the consolidation of victory."<sup>10</sup> At this point I have not been able to confirm this intriguing suggestion.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., Mihailo Marić, *Kralj i vlada u emigraciji* (Zagreb: Epoha, 1966).

<sup>7</sup> Lorainne M. Lees, *Americans and National Security during World War II* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 6–12.

<sup>8</sup> Bogdan Krizman, *Jugoslovenske vlade u izbeglištvu* (Zagreb: Globus, 1981), 147.

<sup>9</sup> Constantin Fotitch, *The War We Lost: Yugoslavia's Tragedy and the Failure of the West* (New York: Viking Press, 1948), 115. Fotitch is the way the ambassador's name is spelled in the American press and I will use this form throughout the article.

<sup>10</sup> Lees, *Americans and National Security*, 90.

By looking at the Sokić Collection, the coverage of the Yugoslav resistance was very positive in the American press. However, further and more detailed analysis reveals the existence of two clear political, public relations, or even propaganda, strategies of the belligerent resistance groups. Both resistance movements, the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, commonly known as the Chetniks, and the People's Liberation Army, known as the Partisans, had a clear strategy of how to present themselves to the Allies. Underscoring this need was the ideological fracture lines and strategies which would come to define the two groups. The Chetniks were Yugoslav patriots, organized predominantly in Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia, politically supporting the Royal Yugoslav Government in Exile and the political order as it had been before the Second World War. The Partisans, however, were otherwise a reverse mirror-image of the Chetniks: left-leaning, dedicated to fighting the Nazis, but also planning for the future Socialist Yugoslavia, intensely loyal to Moscow, and operating primarily in Croatia and Bosnia, though also Yugoslav in orientation. The Partisans also included a large number of Serbs living in the so-called Independent State of Croatia, the population that was subjected to genocide by the Croatian Nazis called the "Ustashe" and eager to join any resistance movement. Relations between these two resistant movements were complex and mutual accusations abounded. The Chetniks accused the Partisans of cooperating with the Croatian Nazis, the Ustashe. The Partisans were accusing the Chetniks of cooperating with the Italian occupational authorities and the Serbian quislings. These two movements had their own American spokespersons, the Ambassador Konstantin Fotitch for the Chetniks and the Royal Yugoslav Government in Exile, and Louis Adamic, a Slovenian-American journalist, author and social activist, working for the Partisan movement. One can follow the duel between these two political campaigns being fought on a daily basis on the pages of Miloje Sokić's collection of scrapbooks. In that duel, the American press had to take sides, and it was often split down the middle.

The community of Yugoslav immigrants, that is, those who had already been in the United States, and the new émigrés, those who arrived after the April War of 1941, stood far apart. First there were the traditional ethnic divisions between Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bosnians, and others, which plagued the Yugoslav history from the creation of the state to its final destruction in the Balkan wars of the 1990s. According to the available estimates, the immigrants from the former Habsburg lands in Yugoslavia outnumbered the immigrants from Serbia and Montenegro by a ratio of 3:1.<sup>11</sup> It should not be forgotten that from 1903, *Unione Austriaca* had steamships running regularly between Trieste and New York and, for some time, also

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<sup>11</sup> Fotitch, *The War We Lost*, 110.

between Trieste and New Orleans. Second there were political divisions. On the one side were the supporters of the Royal Yugoslav Government in Exile, under the leadership of Ambassador Fotitch. On the other side were the left-leaning elements, consisting mostly of the old immigrants. Louis Adamic (1898–1951) came to the United States in 1913, from Austria-Hungary. Adamic was actually expelled from high school and briefly jailed for his nationalist pro-Yugoslav activities and, running away from home, he simply boarded one of the *Unione Austriaca* liners to New York. Louis Adamic and Ambassador Fotitch were politically on the opposing sides of the spectrum, but they also belonged to a different social class. Fotitch was appointed ambassador by the government of the Radical leader Milan Stojadinović. He was a conservative, who naturally leaned toward the members of the Republican Party, but who, as a gentlemen and a professional, also had many friends in the Roosevelt administration.

The man who directed the campaign of the National Liberation Front, Louis Adamic, was an old immigrant and his political leanings were far to the left. He saw himself as if he came out of the famous working-class immigrant novel by Thomas Bell *Out of This Furnace*. The novel depicts three generations of Slovak immigrants who penniless settled around the steel mills of Pittsburg, worked hard, made very little money, fought with the unions for better pay, endured the management retaliation over their union activities, and faced a good deal of discrimination from ordinary working Americans who had arrived to the steel mills before them. Similarly, arriving in the country at the age of fifteen, Adamic embodied the American Dream. He started as a manual laborer in California. Then he became an American soldier and fought in the First World War in France. After the war he became a professional journalist, working for many newspapers and periodical in the New York City area, including the famous left-leaning magazine, the *Nation*. All of his writings were colored by his labor experiences, even though he became and remained a noted journalist and writer, having a comfortable lifestyle of the American urban middle class. In a way, he was a typical immigrant from Central Europe; hard-working, patriotic, loyal to the local labor union and the local immigrant community. To this day he remains one of the darlings of the left in the United States.<sup>12</sup> During the war Adamic not only became the spokesperson of the Partisan Resistance in the United States, but a symbol of antifascist struggle of the western parts of Yugoslavia.

Overall, Adamic was much more successful in his efforts than the circle around Ambassador Fotitch to which Miloje Sokić belonged. Today

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<sup>12</sup> Dale E. Peterson, "The American Adamic: Immigrant Bard of Diversity", *The Massachusetts Review* 44 (1/2), 233–250.

it is common to find an opinion, even among experienced State Department officials, that the Partisan Resistance was predominately supported by the antifascist Croats and Slovenes.<sup>13</sup> Adamic knew how to play dirty and did not withhold some hits below the belt. For example, he often insinuated that Fotitch was in fact a Nazi sympathizer because he had a cousin who was related to the Serbian quisling General Milan Nedić. While it was hard to believe that the Yugoslav ambassador in Washington was a crypto-Nazi, Adamic repeated this accusation often. Adamic also claimed that the Yugoslav Government in Exile maintained secret contacts with the Nedić government in Serbia.<sup>14</sup> Fotitch, on the other hand, never tired of insinuating that Adamic was a Communist sympathizer. These words, however, had a much more damaging effect after the war, during the McCartney era, than during the war.<sup>15</sup>

During the first half of the resistance struggle, between May 1941 and the middle of 1943, the Chetnik forces of General Mihailović were praised widely and at length. A legend of Mihailović was created, and eventually made into a major feature film, called *The Chetniks, the Fighting Guerillas* (1943). The image of Mihailović thus created was that of a comic book superhero, resisting the Nazis in the completely occupied Europe, a glimmer of hope and heroism in the darkest hour (fig. 1). While based on reality, the image was superficial. The troublesome tactics of Mihailović's forces on the ground, the difficulties of conducting resistance operations in the middle of occupied Europe, especially the brutal German retributions on the scale of one hundred executed civilians for every German soldier killed, were rarely, if ever, mentioned. In the early days of the war and throughout 1942 even the *Daily Worker*—the Communist organ—praised Mihailović.<sup>16</sup> From that point Mihailović had nowhere to go but down.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> E.g., Philip J. Cohen an amateur historian published a book which was peer-reviewed by Texas A&M University Press in which he falsely claimed that, "Overall, from 1941 to 1945, the Partisans of Croatia were 61 percent Croat and 28 percent Serb." Philip J. Cohen, *Serbia's Secret War: Propaganda and the Deceit of History* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996), 95. This book was then positively reviewed by Stephen W. Walker, a former State Department official.

<sup>14</sup> Lees, *Americans and National Security*, 156–157.

<sup>15</sup> Peterson, "The American Adamic", 233–250.

<sup>16</sup> *Miloje Sokic Collection*, "Night and Day Slav Partisans Hit Back", *Daily Worker*, July 5, 1942.

<sup>17</sup> This enthusiasm in the press and popular culture was of some concern even for ambassador Fotitch. See, Fotitch, *The War We Lost*, 165.



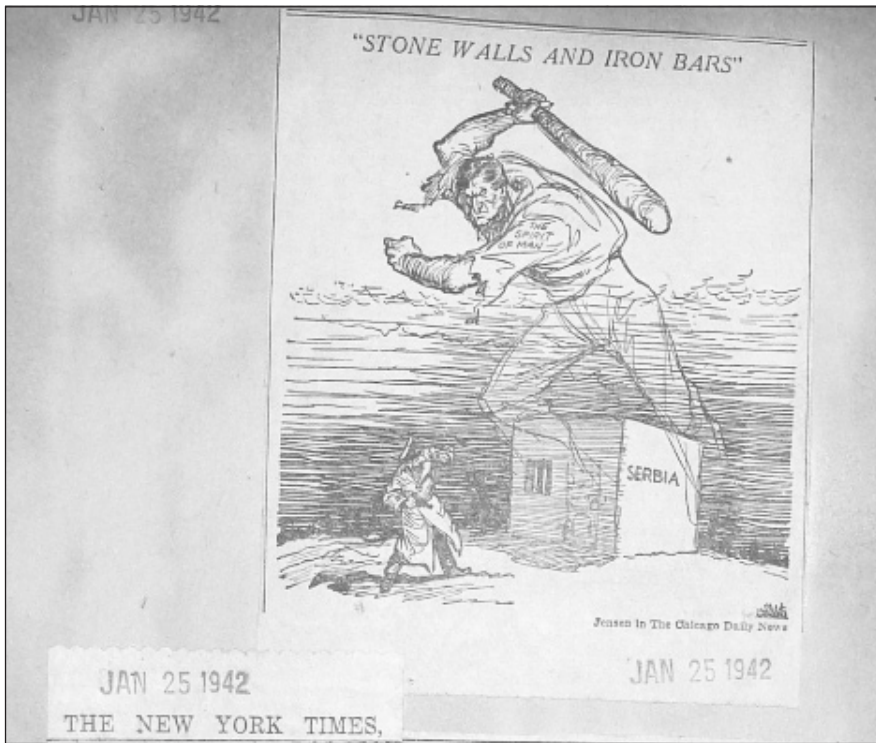


Fig. 1 Early depictions of the heroism of the Chetniks in *Chicago Daily News* of January 25, 1942

In mid-1943, especially after the Allied landing in Italy, western Yugoslavia of former Habsburg lands and its Adriatic coast became of a much greater strategic importance than relatively isolated, landlocked Serbia, either as a ground for a possible Allied landing in the Adriatic, or as a decoy for possible Allied landings elsewhere. Suddenly, media reports shifted their attention to the Yugoslav resistance in Croatia and Bosnia. Tito became the central heroic figure of the media narrative. At first a mysterious figure, this leader of resistance in Croatia was not even known by name. Eventually, an image as well as emerged. Tito was created as essentially an antifascist democrat, admittedly with some Communist leanings. He was not made into a super-human hero like Mihailović, but into a strong-willed but sensitive figure, who often played chess, very much in tune with the dreams and aspirations of modern America, especially the newly-liberated American women. In a style that would today be labeled as demeaning and sexist, the Partisan forces were depicted as full of beautiful, strong Partisan women, which would make any man wish to join the resistance (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 Tantalizing picture of Tito's female partisans in the *New York Sun* of August 8, 1944

The liberation of Yugoslavia, however, did not come as a result of the Allied landing in the Adriatic, but as a result of the push by the Red Army through Serbia. Once installed in Belgrade with the help of the Red Army, Tito changed his attitudes, and became much more aggressive toward the Western Allies, even threatening the Allied positions in northern Italy toward the end of the war. Warnings about Tito, present from the beginning, now filled the pages

of the press. Yet, the prevailing attitude was that of silent acceptance. There was rarely any regret expressed about the switching of allegiance, and of the betrayal of the ally Mihailović. That was swept under the rug. The pretense continued that Tito essentially was a man that America can do business with, although he was occasionally and often violently anti-Western. The unexpected way out from this unpleasant and, for journalists, challenging situation was offered suddenly in 1948, when Stalin criticized and excommunicated Tito. The press could again declare Tito as America's friend in the Balkans, ignoring any smoldering injustice that the political right saw him imposing on the Yugoslav people.

Thus a pattern appeared that was to remain true for the American media to the present day: those whom gods wish to destroy, they first make into a celebrity. Mihailović had that fate. Tito, on the other hand, while generally praised and occasionally virulently criticized, never achieved that superman status. At the height of their popularity, the Chetniks were featured in comic books, such as DC Comics' Captain Marvel (fig. 3).<sup>18</sup> At the height of Tito's popularity, in 1944/45, newspaper articles entitled: "Tito:

<sup>18</sup> DC Comics: Master Comics, no. 36 (Feb. 1943): "Liberty for the Chetniks" (Captain Marvel Jr.)



Fig. 3 Captain Marvel featuring the Chetniks. DC Comics: Master Comics, no. 36 (Feb. 1943)

The Cost of Our Yugoslav Blunder” were still very common.<sup>19</sup>

The media war waged over the Yugoslav Resistance had many dimensions. Political leanings of both sides were quite obvious. *Daily Worker* and *Picture Magazine* were firmly on the side of Tito’s Partisans, especially after 1941. Louis Adamic, the American “manager” of the Partisan PR campaign was a long-term contributor of *The Nation* magazine and other left-leaning newspapers mostly from the New York area. Konstantin Fotitch, the Royal Yugoslav Government’s ambassador in Washington, although on the right of the political spectrum, was a close personal friend of Sumner Welles, a staunch supporter of Roosevelt and the undersecretary of state

till 1943, when he was forced to resign from the State Department due to a homosexual affair. Although Welles was Fotitch’s main contact in the State Department, he was also his lifelong friend even after the Ambassador was replaced in 1944. Fotitch naturally had many friends and acquaintances among American politicians, and in general those tended to be from the Republican Party and from the upper crusts of society.

The issue of gender adds an additional dimension to the endless debates about politics. Ambassador Fotitch was in tune with the American society and several mostly upper-class American women feature prominently in the press-clippings. The image of Yugoslavia in American cultured circles, especially in the early part of the war when Mihailović was virtually the Allied only hero, were greatly influenced by the publication of Rebecca West’s *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey through Yugoslavia*, which was published in May 1941. One can even say that the first description of the Yugoslav Resistance stylistically much resembles the pages of *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*. This should not be surprising, since West was considered one

<sup>19</sup> Miloje Sokic Collection, “Tito: The Cost of Our Yugoslav Blunder,” *Saturday Evening Post*, February 13, 1945.

of the greatest stylists of the English language and published regularly in the *New York Herald Tribune*, *New Republic*, and in many newspapers in her native London. Rebecca West's popular travelogue, even today one of the 100 most read books of the century, contributed greatly to the Balkan Myth, the image of the Balkans as a place of death, martyrdom, sacrifice. Though employing such imagery in describing resistance to the Nazis, West personally believed the Allies should "fight for life, not for martyrdom," and thus sought to present the Chetniks as fighters who rejected



Fig. 4 Fundraising in Yugoslav folk costumes

the idea of self-suffering, and embraced resistance to free themselves from the bondage of deadly European masochism of the early part of the war. This was what the anti-Nazi West needed to hear from the front, and the courage of Mihailović's rebellion, which started on May 17, 1941, immediately gripped American readers. Since there was little good news for the Allies in May 1941, the news of Yugoslav resistance received via West's writings was extremely popular. Given West's role, it is not surprising that there followed a Chetnik craze in the US, especially among upper-class women. One of the favorite social activities of the late 1941 and early 1942 was fundraising for the Chetniks carried out in colorful Yugoslav folk dresses (fig. 4).<sup>20</sup>

Presented as "wild and free and fiercely untamed as eagles in their native Sumadia", Chetniks themselves were imbued with the stereotype of a Balkan man, rugged, patriarchal and patronizingly protective of women. That stereotype did not mean that no women ever appeared in newspaper clips about Chetniks—the abovementioned fundraisings were highly publicized. Yet, we rarely hear about women as *members* of the Chetniks, even though they existed, such as the famous Milka Baković Radosavljević, known as Milka Ravnogorka.

<sup>20</sup> *Miloje Sokic Collection, Tribune, June 7, 1942.*



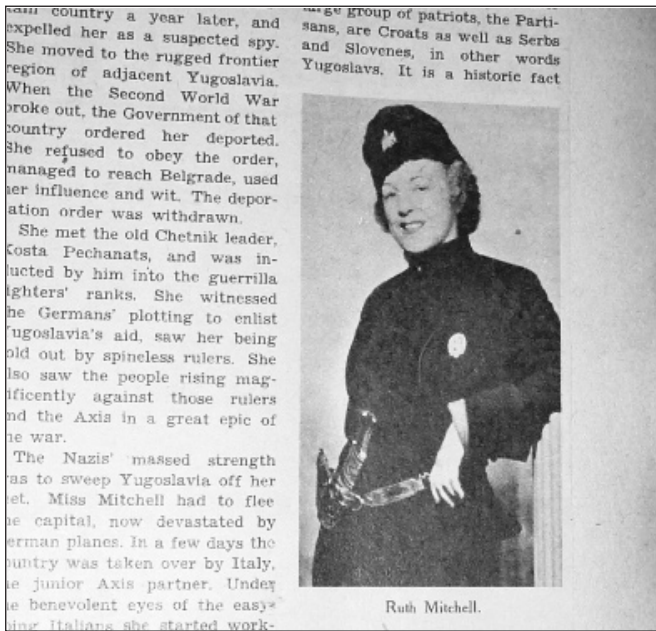


Fig. 5 Ruth Mitchell was often the “spokesperson” of the Chetniks in the American press

Particularly interesting in this regard is the case of Ruth Mitchell, sister of the controversial American general Billy Mitchell, a First World War hero and one of the creators of the United States Air Force. Ruth Mitchell was stationed in Albania with her husband Stanley Knowles, a British diplomat. After the Italian attack on Albania, she moved to Yugoslavia, and after the German invasion joined the Chetniks. She was captured by the Gestapo, and put on trial, condemned to death, but later reprieved, and sent to jail. Diplomatic wrangling accomplished her release in 1942, and Mitchell returned to the United States, where she devoted her life to supporting the war effort, and in particular the cause of the Serbian Chetniks (fig. 5).<sup>21</sup>

The case of Ruth Mitchell does not weaken, but actually reinforces the male image of the Chetnik forces. Women among the Chetniks were an exception that proved the rule, and Ruth’s stories about how Chetnik commanders were extremely reluctant to accept her prove that she was able to join only after convincing Kosta Pećanac that she was as capable as any man. Ruth herself said that she was accepted only because she could “ride just about anything on four legs” and was ready “to die like a man.” Other Chetnik women were expected to be at home, mistresses of their houses, taking care of the children, and supporting the war effort from that household position. In the movie, *Chetniks, the Fighting Guerillas*, Jelica Mihailović (nee

<sup>21</sup> Miloje Sokic Collection, “Ruth Mitchell, Who Fought with Chetniks, 81, Dies,” *New York Times*, Sunday, October 26, 1969.

Branković), the wife of the Chetnik leader Draža Mihailović, was presented as a typical middle-class American housewife, who cooks dinner and raises children, while her husband is at work. In the movie, Mihailović actually “pops in” for dinner almost on a

regular basis. Jelica Mihailović, mistakenly called Ljubica in the movie, actually spent most of her war years in a German concentration camp. Jelica no doubt was a strong woman, but she was not expected to leave the kitchen and go to the front line like—as we shall see—the Partisan women did.

Gender was defined very differently in the public relations of the Partisan movement. Stana Tomašević was a famous Partisan fighter and also a model, whose photographs appeared on the pages of many American newspapers.<sup>22</sup> According to the British liaison to Tito’s Partisans, Fitzroy Maclean, the photographs of Tomašević contributed considerably to the positive opinion about Yugoslav Partisans. Stana Tomašević was not the only Partisan woman that was photographed, there were others, such as Mira Afrić, but their number was limited, and a few of the carefully staged photographs were widely circulated.<sup>23</sup> The impression that was conveyed to the public was that fighting women accounted for as much as a quarter of Tito’s armies. In many of her pictures Stana Tomašević was photographed professionally and with extensive preparation by the war photographer John Talbot. The fact that there were many women in Tito’s army was repeatedly emphasized in the press. Those women were not just helping and supporting the men, they were fighting. They left the kitchen for the front and there was no domestic life for them until the victory was won. We would say today, they also fought hard. In fact, Mihailović was often criticized among the Partisans for leaving his wife at home. Throughout the war, the



Fig. 6 Stana Tomašević, Tito’s Partisans’ top “photo model”

<sup>22</sup> Mилоје Sokic Collection, *Time*, October 9, 1944.

<sup>23</sup> Nebojša Tomašević, *Life and death in the Balkans: a family saga in a century of conflict* (Columbia University Press, 2008), 394. Also, Dubravka Žarkov, *The body of war: media, ethnicity, and gender in the break-up of Yugoslavia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 253.



Partisans interpreted her internment in the German concentration camp as “collaboration with the enemy.”

At home, in Yugoslavia, gender relations among the Partisans were fairly patriarchal and even puritanical. In the traditional patriarchal society, such as Yugoslavia, it would have been a political disaster for a popular movement to advocate openly sexual liberation of women. This strategy was tried by the Communist movement in the 1920s with disastrous political consequences. Under Stalin in the 1930s and 40s, the gender policy of the Communists changed. Consequently, the Partisan movement advocated gender liberation for women, but under no circumstances it was for sexual liberation. The Partisan movement was not about free love, though this was often hinted in the press, perhaps due to the sensationalist value of the idea, which might boost circulation. Even romantic love was considered inappropriate during the war. It is interesting to note that the marriage of Yugoslavia's King Peter on March 20, 1944, while praised in the American press as ultimate romantic story of the war, was criticized both by the ministers of the Chetnik-backed Royal Government and by Tito's Partisans (fig. 7). These two bodies, the Government in Exile and the Committee for National Liberation could rarely agree on anything, but they agreed that it was inappropriate for the king to get married during the war. Tito, for example, hid his relations with his secretary Davorjanka Zdenka Paunović very carefully. Moreover, the news of Davorjanka's premature death in 1946 and the place of her burial were kept in absolute secrecy, even though by that time Tito and Davorjanka had been in a “steady” relationship for several years.

This, however, was not how Partisan women were presented to the world. In the press, the Partisan women not only fought hard, but played hard, one is tempted to say like a typical Bond girl. This comparison of the liberated and sexualized women of the 1960s with Tito's Partisan women of the 1940s is not just a useful comparative device. How these Partisan women were perceived in the West is clearly seen from many newspaper articles which repeatedly talk about men's excitement to be in the army with so many strong and beautiful women. This image of the Partisan woman was in many ways the impression of the British liaison commander to the Partisans, Fitzroy Maclean, and the creation of the sophisticated Partisan general Vladimir Velebit, who was the point person of the Partisans in charge of foreign relations. When Fitzroy Maclean died in 1996, the *Daily Telegraph* entitled his obituary “Sir Fitzroy, the Original James Bond is Dead.” The *Telegraph's* title just reflects the widespread speculation that the British liaison to the Partisans, and a long-time diplomat-adventurer in Stalin's Moscow, was one of the inspirations for Ian Fleming when he created James Bond. Both Fitzroy Maclean and Randolph Churchill expressed clearly their sexist admiration of the Partisan women.



Fig. 7 The story of the royal wedding was somewhat of an obsession for the American press

During the war, this new type of women, which the Partisans promoted, fitted well with the image of the new woman emerging during the New Deal period. Women were no longer members of the family, where the male was the head, but breadwinners themselves. They joined the workforce, first during the Great Depression, when the man was not able to provide enough, and then during the war, to help the war effort. Therefore, a stark contrast was drawn between the domestic upper-class women, who supported the Chetniks with their fundraising, and the determined and beautiful ordinary women, who joined the Partisans. In short, Vladimir Velebit and Louis Adamic hit the jackpot with the image of Partisan women in the American press. They presented that image at the right time for their cause, because the image of a free warrior woman would be eclipsed in American culture by the post-war image which saw “Rosie the Riveter” leaving the workforce and returning to the role of demure and domesticated householder.

The ultimate victory of the Partisan forces in Yugoslavia was also explained in a very romantic way in the American press. It all had to do with King Peter’s love for Princess Alexandra of Greece. As the Hearst Corporation’s *American Weekly* succinctly summarized it, “Another Crown Kicked Away for Love.”<sup>24</sup> Very simply, King Peter fell in love with a beautiful girl, Princess Alexandra of Greece. This was the “right” girl for a king to marry, but the

<sup>24</sup> Miloje Sokic Collection, “Another Royal Crown Kicked Away for Love”, *American Weekly*, March 12, 1944.



Fig. 8 "Another Royal Crown Kicked Away for Love", *American Press*, March 12, 1944.

timing was bad. Fierce male resistance warriors in Yugoslavia, following their non-romantic code of ethics believed that it was not appropriate for a king to marry while the liberation struggle was still going on. According to the *American Weekly*,

both Chetniks and Partisans resented the King's romantic love. When they heard the news of his marriage, the Chetniks who were thus far extremely loyal to the King simply could not stomach such an unmanly behavior and joined the Partisans in their rejection of the monarchy. One need not indicate how inaccurate and misled such a summary was, yet this view was repeated again and again in the popular press and became somewhat of an official version of the events. The summary actually fitted well with the American view of the Slavs in general and Serbs in particular as an extremely male-dominated culture, where there is no place for courtly love. In that sense one can understand why Tito kept his romantic escapades during the war a closely guarded secret.

Overall, one can say that the battle of Yugoslav resistance groups was not won in the American press and it is more the case that the press was controlled by the government than the other way around. Nonetheless, the image of Yugoslav resistance clearly documented not only American popular opinion of the Balkans, but also attitudes and preferences of American wartime society. In the Roosevelt era, the image of a strong, independent woman was more popular than the image of a safe or even adventurous upper-class woman. The bourgeois sophistication of Ambassador Fotitch, of his friends and associates, was more of a drawback than an asset, because it was out of touch with the new American egalitarian sensibilities developed

during the New Deal period. In that sense Tito's Partisans were more successful in gauging the spirit of the times. Yet, one can say that both groups, the Yugoslav Government in Exile and the Partisans, approached the issue of the press presentation with great sophistication.

The Royal Yugoslav Government, even before the war started, paid special attention to its relations with the United States, in no small measure because of the large immigrant community that could have substantial influence on the policy of the United States toward Yugoslavia. Ambassador Fotitch was especially active in this regard, establishing contacts with many influential politicians, as well as working on a more popular level, such as talking at the opening ceremony of the World Exhibition in New York in 1939.<sup>25</sup> Adamic, on the other hand, had an advantage of understanding the American mentality better. He came to the United States when he was fifteen and was familiar with all levels of society, from a poor immigrant fisherman village in California to a cozy dinner for journalists in the White House. He was also more aware of American prejudices against the Slavs in general, and the fact that they knew very little about the difference between various Slavic ethnic groups, but often simply assumed that if Russia became communist, other Slavic nations would be following suit enthusiastically very soon.

One can even say that the struggle between the two immigrant groups was not primarily an extension of the political struggles that were going on during the time of resistance in Yugoslavia, but that it was a struggle of two cultural images in American Psyche. On the one side there was an image of *Homo Balkanicus*, which was in no small part created by Rebecca West in her book, *Grey Falcon and Black Lamb*. This was the image that persisted ever since the Enlightenment, an image of a savage man among the civilized.<sup>26</sup> In Rebecca West's novel, it is the savage men that teach the civilized how to find and use the moral compass. This was the romantic image of Serbia which was nurtured in the West since the First World War, and it was very natural for the Serbian émigré community to fall into this trap. This was the role that Mihailović played in the dark days of 1941. In those dark days, the defeated West needed the image of Grey Falcon, the symbol of the Kosovo defeat in Serbian oral poetry, to remind the West, that the wild *Homo Balkanicus* keeps faith in the ultimate victory even in the darkest hour of defeat. This is something that the wild East was able to offer to the civilized West.

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<sup>25</sup> New York Public Library, New York World's Fair 1939 and 1940 Incorporated records, Mss. Col. 2233.

<sup>26</sup> Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 39–42.

On the other side of the spectrum was the image of Slavic laborer, the union man in the United States. These images of Slavic working class came out of reality. They could have been seen and experienced by many Americans who worked in the steel mills of Pittsburg, Youngstown, Cleveland, and Chicago. Adamic used these images in his novels. That is why he is considered as one of the creators of the genre of ethnic novel, describing the immigrant experience in the United States. Adamic was one of the few writers who openly talked about the relations between immigrants and a society that was predominately Anglo-Saxon in its prejudices. Adamic believed that Americans coming through Ellis Island were as dignified as those that came by way of the Plymouth Rock.<sup>27</sup> He was not afraid to admit his union and socialist orientation, because that was what many working class immigrants were. He imagined that America was to become Socialist and the nation of nations, as was the title of one of his most successful books. In a way, he wanted to see America become a multiethnic socialist utopia, and that was exactly how he saw the purpose of the Yugoslav liberation struggle. His dream of socialist America, which he projected to the Yugoslav Partisans, turned out to be a much better propaganda strategy. Successful in public affairs, this strategy, however, did not work in Adamic's private life. Under pressure from McCarthyism on the one hand, and the rigid Stalinist ideology of the many among the New York City left-leaning intellectuals on the other, he took his own life in 1951. Perhaps he was disappointed that his idea of America as nation of nations, of brotherhood and unity between the Slavic workers and the Anglo-Saxon managers fell apart in the 1950s.

Finally, I need to make a disclaimer. One has to bear in mind that newspaper clippings, no matter how young or old, are actually not primary sources for the events they depict. For example, it would be wrong to treat these clippings as primary sources for the resistance struggle in Yugoslavia. For that kind of information one needs to go to archives. That being said, such newspaper collections—ever more possible via the efforts of publishers to offer access to massive digital newspapers collections—constitute a valuable primary source for studying how the views of international events and policies are shaped and the (changing) values they reflect. In a multi-polar age when a number of forces intervene in or try to influence civil conflicts managed locally by increasingly media-savvy actors in almost every corner

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<sup>27</sup> Review of *From Many Lands* by Louis Adamic in *Journal of Educational Sociology* 16/6 (February, 1943), 399–400. Also Rudolph J. Vecoli, “Louis Adamic, 1898–1951: A Retrospective View and Assessment Thirty Years Later”, *International Labor and Working-Class History* 20 (Fall 1981), 62, writes, “Adamic became the outstanding spokesman for ‘new Americans,’ the immigrants and their children, and an advocate of a new synthesis of America in which Ellis Island would be as important as Plymouth Rock.”

of the world, it is becoming more and more important to study the relationship between the media and the public, and the way in which foreign actors seek to shape the views of the international community.

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## The Bulgarian-Yugoslav Dispute over the Macedonian Question as a Reflection of the Soviet-Yugoslav Controversy (1968–1980)

**Abstract:** During the Cold War, relations between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were marred by the Macedonian Question. Bulgaria challenged the historical roots of the Macedonian nation, whereas Yugoslavia insisted that Bulgaria should recognise the rights of the Macedonian minority within her borders. The Soviet Union capitalised on its influence over Bulgaria to impair Yugoslavia's international position. Bulgaria launched an anti-Yugoslav campaign questioning not only the Yugoslav approach to Socialism, but also the Yugoslav solution of the Macedonian Question. This antipathy became evident in 1968, in the wake of the events in Czechoslovakia. In the years 1978/9 the developments in Indochina gave a new impetus to the old Bulgarian-Yugoslav conflict.

**Keywords:** Macedonian Question, Brezhnev's doctrine, Macedonian minorities, Soviet-Yugoslav relations, Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations, Zhivkov, Tito, Gromyko, Dragoicheva, Indochina

When Benedict Anderson decided to deal with matters of nationalism and to write his book *Imagined Communities*, he was astonished by the developments in Indochina in 1978/9, the conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia, Vietnam's military intervention in Cambodia, the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge regime, and China's subsequent limited invasion of Vietnam. The main question he was facing consisted in determining how Communist countries could dispute the questions of nationalism, identity and national borders, and the "onerous legacy" of capitalism. However, Anderson did not notice that another conflict of a similar nature was affecting the intra-Balkan relations at the same time. It was the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute over the Macedonian Question which had been reopened ten years earlier and reached its peak in 1978/9.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the Yugoslav solution of the Macedonian Question with intra-Balkan implications, see Stephen E. Palmer Jr. & Robert R. King, *Yugoslav Communism and the Macedonian Question* (Hamden, CT: The Shoe String Press, Inc. Archon Books, 1971). The Bulgarian army of occupation was hailed in the Serbian part of Macedonia in April 1941 as an army of liberation, and during the first stage of occupation pro-Bulgarian feeling ran high. There was no Communist Party of Macedonia, because the Yugoslav Communist Party's decision of 1934 to form one had been impossible to carry out. The local Communists, under Metodija Šatorov broke away from the Yugoslav Communist Party and joined the Bulgarian Workers' Party. There was little support for Tito's resistance movement in Yugoslav Macedonia. The Communist Party of Macedonia was formed by

From 1948 to 1962 the Bulgarian Communist Party tried to balance the ideological components of Macedonism with Bulgarian state interests, but unsuccessfully.<sup>2</sup> It did not deny the process of configuration of a new Slav identity in the People's Republic of Macedonia within the framework of Yugoslav Federation from 1944 onwards, but it called its historical roots into question. According to the Bulgarian thesis, the Slav population in Yugoslav Macedonia cut off the umbilical cord with the Bulgarians due to the political developments in the Balkans after the First and Second World Wars and tied its fate to the Yugoslav peoples. The new Macedonian nation should not have been built upon an anti-Bulgarian basis. The Slav population in the Bulgarian part of Macedonia was an integral part of the Bulgarian nation, since it had been included in the Bulgarian state after the Balkan Wars and did not share the experience of the Bulgarians in Yugoslav Macedonia. Thus, according to the Bulgarian thesis, Yugoslavia's demand for the recognition of a Macedonian minority by the Bulgarian authorities was unfounded.

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Tito's envoy to Yugoslav Macedonia, Svetozar Vukmanović aka Tempo, in March 1943. But Bulgarian administration proved to be unsuccessful and caused discontent. After Italy capitulated (September 1943) and it became obvious that Germany and Bulgaria would be defeated, there was armed resistance. The Yugoslav Communist Party pushed for the Communist International's earlier notion of a separate Macedonian nation and the formation of a united Macedonia (comprising the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian parts) within a Yugoslav federation. The first session of the Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) announced, on 2 August 1944, the establishment of the People's Republic of Macedonia as a Macedonian Piedmont. After the creation of the state, a nation-building process was inaugurated for the configuration of a Macedonian identity (applicable only to Slavs), mainly on an anti-Bulgarian basis. Yugoslavia's expansionist intentions in the name of Macedonism were blatantly apparent in her plans for the creation of a South-Slav federation or in its embroilment in the Greek Civil War. After Tito's rupture with the Cominform in June 1948, the Yugoslav leadership abandoned its plans for a conclusive solution of the Macedonian Question and concentrated on the cultivation and consolidation of the new national identity of the Slav population of Yugoslav Macedonia and on stamping out rival influences. At the same time, the Yugoslav leaders were raising the issue of respect for the rights of putative Macedonian minorities in the neighbouring countries.

<sup>2</sup> For general information, see Spyridon Sfetis, *Το Μακεδονικό και η Βουλγαρία. Πλήρη τα απόρρητα βουλγαρικά έγγραφα 1950-1967* [The Macedonian Question and Bulgaria. Classified Bulgarian documents 1950-1967] (Thessaloniki: Society for Macedonian Studies - Bulgarian State Archives, 2009). Iva Burilkova & Tsocho Biliarski, eds., *Makedonskiiat Vupros v bulgaro-iugoslavskite otnosheniia 1950-1967 g. Dokumentaleni sbornik* [The Macedonian Question in Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations 1950-1967. A collection of documents] (Sofia: State Archives Agency. "Archives are speaking", 2010). Djoko Tripković, "Jugoslovensko-bugarski odnosi 50-ih i 60-ih godina 20.veka", *Tokovi istorije* 1-2 (2009), 84-106.

Nevertheless, Bulgaria's policy on the Macedonian Question was contingent on the developments in relations between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The Soviet historical and linguistic science accepted Macedonism as a new parameter in Balkan politics. The Communist International had propagated the notion of an explicit Macedonian nation in 1934; the theoretical argumentation for the existence of a Macedonian nation in the 1930s had been based on Stalin's concept of nation,<sup>3</sup> and on his thesis that ethnic groups could become Socialist nations by achieving statehood and developing their culture in a Socialist society. Of course, there is no historical evidence for the existence of the Macedonian nation. In fact, the political notion of Macedonism neutralised the old Serbian-Bulgarian antagonism over the identity of the Slavs in Macedonia and offered a new alternative for the settlement of the Macedonian Question, patterned after the Soviet model for the Belarusian or the Moldavian nation.

Irrespective of historical or political dimensions of Macedonism, the Soviet Union instrumentalised the Macedonian Question in the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute, according to its interests, playing one side against the other. After Stalin's breach with Tito (1948), the Soviet Union tolerated Bulgaria's campaign against the Yugoslav leader, who was branded by Sofia as "traitor of the interests of the Macedonian people, enslaved to Tito's clique and Western imperialists". The Bulgarian Communist Party portrayed the Bulgarian part of Macedonia as the only liberated part of Macedonia, stressed the affinity and historical bonds between Bulgarians and Macedonians and called upon the Macedonians in Yugoslav Macedonia to rise up against Tito. When the process of normalisation of Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations began in 1955-56, Bulgaria was compelled to get accustomed to the new situation, and it watered down its campaign against Yugoslavia. Under Yugoslav pressure, it gave signs of its willingness to recognise a Macedonian minority, as it had in 1946-47. The census of 1956 showed that more than 180,000 people in the Bulgarian part of Macedonia declared themselves as Macedonians. Even if Bulgaria did not see the Macedonians as a national minority, but rather as a cultural group closely linked to the Bulgarian people, the simple fact that Macedonians were mentioned in Bulgarian statistics gave Yugoslavia the justification to demand that their rights be respected. Had Bulgaria officially recognised a Macedonian minority within her borders, she would in fact have accepted the thesis of the existence of a Macedonian nation as a historical entity, since minorities were regarded as integral part of nations in the Balkans. Besides, Bulgaria feared Yugoslavia's

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<sup>3</sup> See Spyridon Sfetas, *Η διαμόρφωση της Σλαβομακεδονικής ταυτότητας. Μια επώδυνη διαδικασία* [The configuration of Slavo-Macedonian identity. A painful process] (Thessaloniki: Vaniias, 2003), 91-138.

territorial claims in the name of Macedonism. The fear of territorial expansionism was not without a precedent, given the events of 1944–48.

In 1956–58 a new friction marred Soviet-Yugoslav relations, mainly because of the Hungarian issue. But Soviet-Yugoslav relations entered a new phase of improvement because of Yugoslavia's determination to support Soviet positions on international issues. Showing flexibility, Tito endorsed the Soviet position on the German issue and condemned China's adventurism and the American spy war against the Soviet Union. Thus, another noticeable rapprochement between Belgrade and Moscow took place in 1961–62.<sup>4</sup>

When Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party, took office as Prime Minister in 1962 and consolidated his positions, he decided to carve out a clear policy on the Macedonian Question, no matter what Yugoslav-Soviet relations were or would be like in the future. Under Zhivkov's prodding in March 1963, the Plenum of the Bulgarian Communist Party elaborated some theses that would serve as a basis of the Bulgarian policy on the Macedonian Question, irrespective of the state of Soviet-Yugoslav relations: 1) There is no Macedonian nation as a historical entity. 2) The falsification of Bulgaria's history by the historians in Skopje and the creation of the Macedonian nation on an anti-Bulgarian basis are unacceptable. 3) There is no Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. 4) A Macedonian national awareness is being built in the People's Republic of Macedonia, but it is due to political conditions that favoured the mutation of the Bulgarians into Macedonians.<sup>5</sup> According to Zhivkov, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had not been informed about Bulgaria's decision to raise this question at the Bulgarian Communist Party's Plenum.<sup>6</sup>

These tenets were the cornerstone of Bulgaria's policy on the Macedonian Question in Zhivkov's era. Moreover, the Bulgarian leader raised the question of those Bulgarians in Yugoslav Macedonia who opposed Macedonism; i.e. he hinted at the existence of a Bulgarian minority as a counterbalance to the supposed Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. Since Soviet-Yugoslav relations were noticeably improved, both Sofia and Belgrade decided to avoid discussing the Macedonian Question at official bi-

<sup>4</sup> See Djoko Tripković, "Poboljšanje jugoslovensko-sovjetskih odnosa 1961/62. godine", *Tokovi istorije* 3-4 (2008), 76–97. For some aspects of Yugoslavia's foreign policy in the Cold War until 1961, see *Jugoslavija u Hladnom ratu*, ed. Aleksandar Životić (Belgrade: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2010), and Vojislav G. Pavlović, ed., *The Balkans in the Cold War. Balkan Federations, Cominform, Yugoslav-Soviet Conflict* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> See Sfetas, *To Μακεδονικό και η Βουλγαρία*, 102–128.

<sup>6</sup> See Todor Zhivkov, *Memoari* (Sofia: Siv Ad, 1997), 455.

lateral meetings. It was historians' task to investigate the historical aspects of the Macedonian Question and the roots of the Macedonian nation. This was confirmed during the meeting between Todor Zhivkov and Krste Crvenkovski, President of the League of Communists of Yugoslav Macedonia (May 1967, in Sofia), and between Tito and Zhivkov (June 1967, in Belgrade) as well.<sup>7</sup>

In the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War (June 1967) Yugoslavia behaved as if she were a member of the Warsaw Pact. Tito gave permission to Soviet airplanes to fly over Yugoslavia's airspace to provide military assistance to Arabs, and to use Yugoslavia's military airports to refuel. Like the other socialist countries, Yugoslavia broke diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>8</sup>

However, after Alexander Ranković's removal from power (July 1966), a decentralisation process was in full swing in Yugoslavia. The Federal Republics were granted more autonomy, which resulted in the resurgence of nationalism with ethnic and economic undertones.<sup>9</sup> In Croatia, the movement known as the "Croatian Spring" occurred.<sup>10</sup> In Yugoslav Macedonia, an "Autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church" was established by the Communist authorities in July 1967. Undoubtedly, it was a political move and served the nation-building process. (The Macedonian Orthodox Church has not been recognised by the other Orthodox Churches till this day.<sup>11</sup>) The same year the foundations of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts were laid. Although Bulgaria did not protest strongly in 1967 due to Yugoslavia's pro-Soviet attitude towards the developments in the Middle East, it was keeping track of the new developments in Yugoslav Macedonia and decided to give a cultural response. In December 1967 the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party worked out some theses on the

<sup>7</sup> See Veselin Angelov, "Dokumenti. Makedonskiiat vupros v bulgaro-iugoslavskite otnosheniia spored provedeni razgovori i razmeni poslaniia mezhdu Todor Zhivkov i Josip Broz Tito (1965-1973 g)", *Izvestiia na Durzhavnite Arkhivi* 87(2004), 83.

<sup>8</sup> See Dragan Bogetić, "Približavanje socijalističkom lageru tokom arapsko-izraelskog rata 1967. godine", *Tokovi istorije* 3-4 (2008), 89-116.

<sup>9</sup> On the internal situation in Yugoslavia, see Branko Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988*, vol. 3 *Socijalistička Jugoslavija 1945-1988* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1988), 388-417.

<sup>10</sup> See Ludwig Steindorff, "Der Kroatische Frühling. Eine soziale Bewegung in einer sozialistischen Gesellschaft", in Jürgen Elvert, ed., *Der Balkan. Eine europäische Kriegsregion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997), 197-210.

<sup>11</sup> On this subject, see Charalambos K. Papastathis, "L'autocéphalie de l'église de la Macédoine yougoslave", *Balkan Studies* 8 (1967), 151-154.



patriotic upbringing of the Bulgarian youth.<sup>12</sup> An essential element of the new national doctrine was the proclamation of the Third of March and the Second of August as Days of National Celebration, the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of San Stefano (3 March 1878) and the anniversary of the Ilinden Uprising (2 August 1903) respectively. Both events were associated with Macedonia. According to the Bulgarian interpretation, under the Treaty of San Stefano Bulgaria's ethnic borders coincided with its state borders. The revision of this Treaty at the Congress of Berlin (13 June – 13 July 1878) had been a historic injustice since the Bulgarians in Macedonia had been abandoned to the Ottoman yoke.<sup>13</sup> The Ilinden Uprising was also claimed as a Bulgarian historical legacy. The manifestations in Bulgaria on the occasion of the Third of March were branded in Belgrade and Skopje as "a revival of Greater-Bulgarian chauvinism" and as an expression of its territorial claims on Yugoslav Macedonia. In February 1968, Radio Sofia ceased broadcasting in the Macedonian language which, according to the Bulgarian interpretation, was a Bulgarian dialect. The events in Czechoslovakia in August 1968 shrouded the Bulgarian-Yugoslav conflict over Macedonia with ideological and political terms.<sup>14</sup>

Bulgaria participated in the Warsaw Pact's intervention in Czechoslovakia to put an end to Alexander Dubček's open-minded policy for socialism with a human face. In contrast, Yugoslavia and Romania supported Dubček's reforms and condemned the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia.<sup>15</sup> It was a matter of principle for both countries to speak out against foreign intervention. The Warsaw Pact's ruthless attitude towards Czechoslovakia caused alarm in Yugoslavia. Tito ordered partial military mobilisation and Yugoslav troops were on alert. When, in September 1968,

<sup>12</sup> Arhiv Jugoslavije [Archives of Yugoslavia, hereafter AJ], Kabinet Predsednika Republike [Office of the President of the Republic, hereafter KPR], fond 837/1-3-a/14-17: Information on the state of Yugoslav-Bulgarian relations. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 13 May 1969, p. 73.

<sup>13</sup> See "Das Mazedonien Problem-neu gestellt?", *Wissenschaftlicher Dienst Südosteuropa* 12/3 (1968), 34.

<sup>14</sup> For general information on the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute over the Macedonian Question after 1967, see Spyridon Sfetas, *Ο Ακήρυκτος Πόλεμος για το Μακεδονικό. Βουλγαρία-Γιουγκοσλαβία 1968-1989* [The undeclared war on Macedonia. Bulgaria-Yugoslavia 1968-1989] (Thessaloniki: Society for Macedonian Studies & Bulgarian States Archives, 2010). See also, Stojan Germanov, *Makedonskiiat vupros 1944-1989. Vuznikvane, evoluitsiia, suvremennost* (Sofia: Makedonski nauchen institut, 2012), 169-250. For a still useful old monograph, see Stefan Troebst, *Die bulgarisch-jugoslawische Kontroverse um Makedonien 1967-1982* (Munich: Oldenburg Verlag, 1983).

<sup>15</sup> For Yugoslavia's reaction, see Djoko Tripković, "Medjunarodni položaj Jugoslavije i vojna intervencija u Čehoslovačkoj 1968", *Istorija 20. veka* 1 (2008), 115-130.

Leonid Brezhnev announced his doctrine of the limited sovereignty of socialist countries and the irreversibility of socialism, the Yugoslav government drew up a law on general people's resistance and guerrilla war in case of the Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia.<sup>16</sup> The bill was passed in Parliament in November 1968, and Yugoslavia accused the Soviet Union of hegemony.

Under these circumstances, Bulgaria embarked on a large-scale anti-Yugoslav propaganda campaign, placing the Macedonian Question at its centre. Articles in the Bulgarian press on the Bulgarian army's great contribution to the liberation of Serbia and Yugoslav Macedonia in 1944 caused consternation in Belgrade. The Yugoslav leadership was aware that the Soviet army had liberated Belgrade and parts of Serbia in October 1944. During his hasty visit to Moscow in September 1944, Tito had asked Stalin and Molotov for military aid,<sup>17</sup> since the Yugoslav partisans were unable to defeat the well-equipped German forces in Serbia, where the royalist chetniks of Draža Mihailović had influence. Stalin had granted Tito's request in order to gain ground in the new Yugoslavia, but he insisted that the Bulgarian army, already under Soviet control, should participate in the military operations in a bid to free this army of the stigma of being a fascist army. Indeed, the Soviets contributed heavily to Belgrade's liberation in October 1944, and Bulgarians, though undesirable for the Yugoslav partisans, fought in the battles for the liberation Skopje in November 1944. According to the Yugoslav interpretation, by raising these old issues Bulgaria aimed to write off the atrocities that Bulgarian troops had committed in occupied Yugoslavia. In the light of Brezhnev's doctrine, she wanted to pave the way for military intervention in Yugoslavia to wrest Macedonia away from the Yugoslav federation on the pretext of saving socialism from deviations, Yugoslavia's non-aligned foreign policy and self-management socialism being alien to the Soviet Union.

In November 1968, the Institute for History of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences issued a historical-political essay on the Macedonian Question. It recycled the well-known Bulgarian positions: 1) that two-thirds of the population of Vardar-Macedonia are of Bulgarian ethnic origin, and subjected to a policy of national mutation for the sake of one artificial Macedonism at all levels; 2) that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia

<sup>16</sup> See Mile Bjelajac, *Diplomatija i vojska. Srbija i Jugoslavija 1901-1999* (Belgrade: Medija Centar "Obrana"& Akademija za diplomatiju i bezbednost, 2010), 241-250.

<sup>17</sup> See Nikola Popović, "Prvi Titov susret sa Staljinom", in *Oslobodjenje Beograda*, ed. Aleksandar Životić (Belgrade: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2010), 147-158, and in the same volume: Momčilo Mitrović, "Beograd 20. oktobra 1944. godine", 159-167; cf. also Georgi Daskalov, "Sporazumenieto v Kraiova ot 5 oktombri 1948 g.", *Istoričeski pregled* 6 (1980), 62-74.

adopted the thesis of the Serbian bourgeoisie that the Macedonian Slavs are a separate nation, abandoning its former and correct position, which is a United and Independent Macedonia of the Macedonian people, i.e. all nationalities living in Macedonia; 3) Bulgarian historians admitted the mistakes the Bulgarian Communists made in 1944–48 when they, acting under pressure, instructed the population in Pirin Macedonia to declare themselves as Macedonians during the census of 1946, thus enforcing upon them a type of cultural autonomy. The Bulgarian Communist Party corrected the mistakes. During the census in 1965 everybody in Pirin Macedonia had the right of self-determination, but very few people declared themselves as Macedonians.<sup>18</sup>

The conclusion was quite striking. It sent a political message as part of the psychological war Bulgaria waged against Yugoslavia.

The Bulgarian Communist Party regards the Macedonian Question as an onerous legacy of the past, as a result of the machinations of the Imperialist Powers. But nowadays the crucial question affecting the relations between the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and the People's Republic of Bulgaria is not the Macedonian Question, but their cooperation in building Socialism. It is necessary to work on the consolidation of friendship between the peoples of our countries, on the unity of all Balkan Socialist countries, it is necessary to approach the Soviet-Union. On this depends our success on the way to progress, to peace, to democracy, to socialism, on this depends the containment of NATO's and international imperialism's plans in the Balkans.<sup>19</sup>

Capitalising on the tension in Soviet-Yugoslav relations, Bulgaria, as an active member of the Warsaw Pact, highlighted her own role in defending the interests of the socialist camp in the Balkans and the Middle East. In a Bulgarian military review Bulgaria's role was commented as follows:

The Warsaw Pact is a guarantee of the preservation of the achievements of the socialist countries. Their armies, with the invincible Soviet army, are a gigantic power against imperialism. They prevent imperialism from stirring up a new, third world war. The Bulgarian People's Army, as one of the Warsaw Pact member countries, defends the interests of socialism in the Balkans and in the Middle East, fulfilling her mission, national as well as international...<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Istoriko-politicheska spravka po Makedonskiiat Vupros* (Sofia: Institut za istoriia pri BAN, 1968), 1–26.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* 32.

<sup>20</sup> See Velko Palin, "Vissh printsip v stroitelstvo na BNA", *Armeiski komunist* 23/9 (1969), 14.

On 2 August 1969 in Skopje, Tito, speaking in Parliament, characterised Bulgaria's refusal to recognise the Macedonian nation as a continuation of her old policy and sent a stern warning that "every attack on the Macedonian people is an attack on all Yugoslav peoples. Every attack on the Socialist Republic of Macedonia is an immediate attack on the Socialist Yugoslavia as a whole".<sup>21</sup>

Tito's reference to Soviet hegemony, even after the "normalisation" of the situation in Czechoslovakia, provoked Soviet reactions. In September 1969 Andrei Gromyko visited Belgrade to clear up the misunderstanding. Speaking to the Soviet foreign minister, Tito condemned the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia and pointed out that the crisis in that country should have been settled by political means. Gromyko replied that the Soviet leadership had thought of a political solution in Czechoslovakia, but opted for a different one after anti-Soviet protests.<sup>22</sup> Tito did not fail to mention the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute over the Macedonian Question, criticising Bulgaria's negation of the Macedonian nation and the claims expressed in the Bulgarian press that Bulgaria had put up resistance to fascism as early as 1941 and that the Bulgarian army had liberated Yugoslavia.<sup>23</sup> Gromyko replied that the Soviet Union was following the Bulgarian-Yugoslav controversy over Macedonia, but did not want to interfere in their bilateral relations. At any rate, the Soviet foreign minister stressed that the polemic between two socialist countries did not serve the interests of socialism.<sup>24</sup>

Gromyko's visit to Belgrade did not improve Soviet-Yugoslav relations, since Tito was still suspicious about Moscow's plans regarding Yugoslavia. Following Gromyko's visit to Yugoslavia, Ivan Bashev, Bulgarian foreign minister, came to Yugoslavia in December 1969 at the invitation of the Yugoslav foreign minister, Mirko Tepavac. He was received by Tito on 12 December. Yugoslavia's leader made it clear to Bashev that the Macedonian nation existed, that it had proved its existence in the resistance against fascism and in the creation of socialism. He saw a political expediency behind the articles in the Bulgarian press about the alleged contribution of the Bulgarian army to Yugoslavia's liberation. Bulgaria tried to play down

<sup>21</sup> See J. B. Tito "Preku osvoboditelnata borba i socijalistička revolucija makedonskiot narod izrazuvaše vo slobodna nacija", *Glasnik na Institutot za nacionalna istorija* 13/3(1969), 10.

<sup>22</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-3a/101-113: Note on the talks between Tito and the USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko in Brioni 4 Sept. 1969.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

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

Yugoslavia's resistance, Tito concluded.<sup>25</sup> Bashev replied that Bulgaria did not intend to underestimate Yugoslavia's resistance against fascism; on the contrary, she highly appreciated the common Bulgarian-Yugoslav struggle against fascism, but many publications in Yugoslavia failed to draw a clear distinction between the Bulgarian fascist government and the Bulgarian people. As for the Macedonian Question, he referred to the oral agreement, reached by Tito and Zhivkov in 1967, that the Macedonian Question should not affect bilateral relations, and stressed the need for a new meeting between the two leaders.<sup>26</sup>

Negotiations between Bashev and Tepavac did not yield any results. Bulgaria was not interested in improving her relations with Yugoslavia as long as Soviet-Yugoslav relations were stalled. The proposal Zhivkov made to Tito in the following period with the view to bypassing the Macedonian Question was as follows: Bulgaria was to accept that the Macedonians in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia had already shaped their national identity, and Yugoslavia was to give up any claim to the Bulgarian part of Macedonia, and to stop raising the question of a Macedonian minority in Bulgaria.<sup>27</sup> But Yugoslavia rejected this deal. Even if Bulgaria accepted that the Slavic population in Yugoslav Macedonia had developed a national identity after 1944, the Bulgarian historical science contested the historical dimension of the Macedonian nation. The burning question was that history intertwined with politics. On the other hand, the Macedonian minority was perceived in Yugoslavia as an integral part of the Macedonian nation and, therefore, Yugoslav authorities could not help broaching this matter.

To counterbalance the potential Soviet threat, Tito boosted Yugoslavia's relations with the US and China. Soviet-Chinese relations were particularly tense in 1969–70, and not only for ideological, but also for territorial reasons. The US was already on track to normalise relations with China.<sup>28</sup> In August 1970, Chinese-Yugoslav diplomatic relations were elevated to the ambassadorial level. In September 1970, US President Richard Nixon visited Yugoslavia. It was the first ever visit of a president of the United States to Yugoslavia. Tito and Nixon discussed international questions, focusing

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<sup>25</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-3-a/14-17: Note on the talks between President Tito and the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Bashev, 12 Dec. 1969.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-3-1-a/14-18: Foreign Affairs Group. Reminder. Audience of the Ambassador of PR Bulgaria with Comrade President. Ambassador bringing the reply of the Prime Minister and First Secretary of the CPB CC Todor Zhivkov to Comrade President's letter of 10 Dec. 1970, Brioni, 22 Dec. 1970.

<sup>28</sup> See Yafeng Xia, "China's Elite Politics and Sino-American Rapprochement, January 1969 – February 1972", *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8/4 (2006), 3–28.

particularly on the Middle East after Nasser's death, and on China. Tito reiterated the well-known Yugoslav position on the settlement of the Palestinian issue (Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories, the creation of a Palestinian state, but also recognition of Israel by Arabs), and expressed dissatisfaction with the presence of the American 6th Fleet as well as the Soviet fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>29</sup> At a personal meeting with Nixon, Tito called on the American President to boost American-Chinese relations and to help China overcome her isolation and become a member of the United Nations, but not to the detriment of the Soviet Union.<sup>30</sup> With the support of the non-aligned countries, China became a member of the General Assembly of the United Nations and a Permanent Member of the Security Council in October 1971. The American-Chinese rapprochement brought about the resumption of Greek-Albanian and Greek-Chinese diplomatic relations as well. Greece and Albania had been in a state of war since 1940. In view of Brezhnev's doctrine, the Greek military regime did not rule out Soviet intervention in Albania after her formal withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. In case of the Eastern European countries' invasion of Yugoslavia by land and air, and the simultaneous naval operations of the Soviet fleet on the Albanian coast, Greece's security would be in jeopardy. In that case, the Albanian communist government expected that Greece, under the pretext of protecting the Greek minority in North Epirus, could invade south Albania to safeguard strategic positions.<sup>31</sup> Early in 1971, Greece and Albania started covert negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, which resulted in the restoration of Greek-Albanian diplomatic relations on the ambassadorial level in May 1971. However, the state of war was not lifted, and neither were the rights of the Greek minority recognised in a special Greek-Albanian treaty. Security reasons overrode the outstanding bilateral questions. In fact, Greece renounced any territorial claims to Albania and believed that the new situation would benefit the Greek minority. Complying with the American policy, Greece established diplomatic relations with China in June 1972. Greece also gave the right to the American Sixth Fleet to harbour permanently in Greek ports in the Aegean. Greece's Balkan policy served NATO's interests and had a clear-cut anti-Soviet connotation. Albania stood on its Yugoslav positions

<sup>29</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-3-a: Note on the talks of the President of the Republic with US President Richard Nixon on 1 Oct. 1970 in Belgrade.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. For Nixon's visit to Yugoslavia in general, see Dragan Bogetić, "Niksonova poseta Jugoslaviji 1970 – novi američki prilaz politici i pokretu nesvrstanih", *Arhiv* 8/1-2 (2007), 165–178.

<sup>31</sup> Bekir Meta, *Shqipëria dhe Grecia. Paqja e vështirë* [Albania and Greece. The uneasy peace] (Tirana: Shtëpia Botuese Koçi, 2004), 217–218.



regarding the Macedonian Question. No wonder that Bulgaria saw China's international role as a threat to Soviet interests in the Balkans.<sup>32</sup> Albania was China's outpost in the Balkans. The Albanian leader, Enver Hoxha, had inaugurated an "egalitarian cultural revolution", taking his cue from Mao's China.<sup>33</sup> However, due to the distance between Albania and China, Peking was not bound by any military agreement to defend Albania in case of an emergency.

Brezhnev, realising that Yugoslavia's pro-western orientation could endanger Soviet interests, rushed to Belgrade in September 1971, in a bid to come to terms with Tito. He made it clear to Tito that the so-called Brezhnev's doctrine was not applicable to the Yugoslav case, and proposed a Soviet-Yugoslav treaty of friendship without insisting on Yugoslavia's membership in the Warsaw Pact. Tito turned down Brezhnev's proposal, arguing that friendship should be proven in practice.<sup>34</sup> He did not fail to mention the Macedonian Question. He drew Brezhnev's attention to the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute on the Macedonian Question, pointing out that Bulgaria's negation of the Macedonian nation was pointless.<sup>35</sup> Brezhnev's visit brought no results. Yugoslavia's leader did not rule out the possibility that the Soviet Union could exploit Yugoslavia's internal crisis in 1971 ("Croatian Spring" had reached its peak, and, in general, the Federal Republics were heading for decentralisation and liberalism; the Croatian emigration was active in its anti-Yugoslav, anti-communist policy). On the eve of Brezhnev's visit to Yugoslavia, military manoeuvres conducted in Eastern Europe were a cause of concern in Yugoslavia. In October 1971, Tito visited the United States. In his meeting with Nixon he discussed international matters, such as relations between India and Pakistan, the Middle Eastern situation, Vietnam, China etc. Regarding Soviet-Yugoslav relations, Tito stressed that Yugoslavia's independent policy was a thorn in the Soviet side, but, little by little, the Soviets were coming to adjust themselves to change, without, however, allowing the members of the Warsaw Pact to leave their orbit.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ivan Bashev, *Politik, durzhavnik, diplomat*, eds. S. Bakish et al. (Sofia: Universitetsko izd. Sv. Kliment Ohridski, 2009), 147–149.

<sup>33</sup> Valentina Duka, *Histori e Shqipërisë 1912–2000* [History of Albania 1912–2000] (Tirana: Shtëpia Botuese "Kristalina-KH", 2007), 281–287.

<sup>34</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-3-a/14-18: Speech of President Tito at the meeting of the Executive Bureau of the LCY Presidency of 3 Oct. in Brioni.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> See Memorandum for the President's files, Washington, 30 Oct. 1971. Subject: Meeting between President Nixon and President Tito, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [FRUS], 1969–1976. Vol. XXIX. *Eastern Europe, Eastern Mediterranean 1969–1972*, eds. J. E. Miller et al. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 2007),

Although Soviet-Yugoslav relations were still stalled, Brezhnev's visit to Yugoslavia, if unsuccessful, indicated Moscow's willingness to improve the situation. The main reason was Yugoslavia's increasing role in the Middle East and in the non-aligned movement. After Nehru's and Nasser's death, Tito became the only leader of the non-aligned movement. Besides, the situation in the Middle East was deteriorating after the "Black September" of 1970. The Soviet Union's naval presence in the Eastern Mediterranean became more impressive. The Soviets needed Yugoslavia's airspace to assure the provision of military supplies to Arabs in case of a new war in the Middle East. After Belgrade, Brezhnev visited Sofia in late September 1971, where he drew Zhivkov's attention to Yugoslavia's pivotal role in the non-aligned movement and the fact that it sided with the Soviet Union in the common struggle against imperialism and colonialism.<sup>37</sup> He hoped that the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia would establish closer relations in view of the preparations for the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.<sup>38</sup> For obvious reasons, Yugoslavia supported the Soviet initiative to discuss security and co-operation issues within the framework of an international conference. For the Soviets, it was an opportunity to allay Western suspicions about Brezhnev's doctrine. But in his meeting with Zhivkov, the Soviet leader did not refer to Tito's scathing criticism of Bulgaria regarding the Macedonian Question. Seeking to bridge the gap between Moscow and Belgrade, Brezhnev obviously did not want to stir up new troubles in relations between Sofia and Belgrade. Even so, Brezhnev's visit to Yugoslavia had an impact on Bulgaria. In late 1971, Bulgaria's public anti-Yugoslav campaign gradually subsided, but the Bulgarian leadership persisted in its stance on the Macedonian minority. When Stane Dolanc visited Bulgaria in February 1973, Todor Zhivkov reiterated the well-known rigid Bulgarian theses, without showing any sign of flexibility.<sup>39</sup>

Marshal Tito, taking into account the global economic crisis in 1972–73, avoided pushing Soviet-Yugoslav relations to the edge. The convertibil-

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593. For Tito's visit to the United States in general, see Dragan Bogetić, "Razgovori Tito-Nikson 1971 – politička implikacija Vašingtonske deklaracije", *Istorija 20. veka* 29/2 (2011), 159–172.

<sup>37</sup> Tsentralen Durzhaven Arkhiv [Central State Archives, hereafter CDA], fond 1B, opis 60, arhivna edinica 83: Meeting between Dr. Todor Zhivkov – First Secretary of the CPB CC and Dr. Leonid Brezhnev – Secretary General of the SUCP CC, Sofia, 27/9/1971.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> CDA, f. 1B, op. 60, a.e. 106: Talks between Dr. Todor Zhivkov, First Secretary of the CPB CC, and Dr. Stane Dolanc, Secretary of the Executive Bureau of the LCY Presidency, 20 Feb. 1973.

ity of the dollar to gold had underlain the international monetary system since the Breton Woods Agreement of 1944. After the US government suspended the convertibility of the dollar to gold in 1971, there ensued a wave of competitive devaluations, which contributed to inflation in many European countries. The international oil crisis in 1973 forced Tito to show more flexibility, since the Soviet Union was Yugoslavia's basic trade partner. In the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War of October 1973, Arab states failed to boycott some countries that were seen as supporters of Israel, but succeeded in pushing up the price of oil. In the last three months of 1973, the oil price quadrupled. The oil price rises had severe effects on the countries that had few internal sources of energy. Besides, Tito had smashed the "Croatian Spring" by late 1971. In 1972, the liberal opposition in Yugoslavia was totally defeated. Yugoslavia overcame its internal crisis, but only temporarily, since the main cause of the crisis was the chronic, simmering national question under the guise of decentralisation. When Tito visited Moscow in June 1972, the focus of his talks with Brezhnev was on economic matters.<sup>40</sup>

Sensing an incipient thawing in relations between Belgrade and Moscow, Bulgaria decided to tighten its political, economic and cultural bonds with the Soviet Union to counterbalance a possible Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement. This spirit permeated the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party held in Sofia in July 1973. However, the Resolutions of the Plenum did not raise the question of Bulgaria's union with the Soviet Union.<sup>41</sup>

In the aftermath of the July Plenum, Brezhnev visited Bulgaria again in September 1973. In a private meeting at the "Voden" residence, Zhivkov and Brezhnev discussed many issues concerning bilateral relations and Bulgaria's Balkan policy.<sup>42</sup> In this context, Zhivkov's aggressiveness against Yugoslavia and Tito seemed striking. The Bulgarian leader accused Yugoslavia of laying territorial claims to Bulgaria after the Second World War. He described the Bulgarian-Yugoslav negotiations about a South-Slav federation, conducted in 1944-48, as an attempt by Yugoslavia to swallow Bulgaria, since the federation was not planned on the principle of equality. Even

<sup>40</sup> AJ, KPR, f. I-2/53: Steno notes of the talks between SFRY President Josip Broz Tito and CPSU CC Secretary General Leonid Brezhnev of 6 June 1972 at 11 a.m. at Kremlin.

<sup>41</sup> CDA, f. IB, op. 58, a.e. 81: Steno notes from the plenary session of the CPB CC, 17-19 July 1973. In 1963, Zhivkov had suggested to the Soviet Union that Bulgaria should become a Soviet Republic. See Iskra Baeva, *Bulgaria i Iztochna Evropa* (Sofia: Paradigma, 2001), 111-117.

<sup>42</sup> CDA, f. IB, op. 58, a.e. 90: Talks of Dr. Todor Zhivkov and Dr. Leonid Brezhnev at the government residence "Voden", 20/9/1973.

Georgi Dimitrov had been unable to see through Yugoslavia's game; he had granted cultural autonomy to the Bulgarians in the Pirin region to convert them to Macedonians and allowed agents from Skopje to launch nationalistic agitation there, Zhivkov stressed. It was Stalin who had thwarted Tito's plans and saved Bulgaria from sinking into the Yugoslav federation under unfavourable conditions, he concluded. Switching to the issue of Yugoslavia's present Balkan policy, Zhivkov underscored that she tried to undermine Soviet policy and to force some countries to join the non-aligned movement.<sup>43</sup>

In the light of the developments in 1973, it is not difficult to understand the reasons that motivated the Bulgarian leader to launch this onslaught against Yugoslavia. Given the improvement of relations between Moscow and Belgrade, and Yugoslavia's increasing geostrategic role in the Middle East, Zhivkov feared that Yugoslavia, now able to speak from an advantageous position, might urge the Soviet Union to exert pressure on Bulgaria to recognise the Macedonian minority. Besides, Yugoslavia intended to raise the minorities question at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in Helsinki in July 1973.

Even if Brezhnev was taken aback by Zhivkov's attack on Yugoslavia, he seemed neither to agree nor disagree. At any rate, he thanked Zhivkov for providing this information and promised to update Alexei Kosygin on the situation in the Balkans pending his visit to Yugoslavia and his first meeting with Tito.<sup>44</sup> It is clear that Brezhnev did not give up the Soviet policy of equidistance from Bulgaria and Yugoslavia in their dispute over Macedonia; i.e. to accept the Macedonian nation in Yugoslavia, like the Moldavian nation in the Soviet Union, but to deny the existence of a Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. Moscow strenuously opposed Yugoslavia's plan to broach the question of minorities in Helsinki.

In late September 1973, the Soviet Prime Minister Kosygin visited Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo and Skopje. In the meeting between Kosygin and Tito on the island of Brioni, many questions were raised regarding international and bilateral relations.<sup>45</sup> The Soviet Union was ready to supply Yugoslavia with oil and natural gas, which was of paramount importance for Yugoslavia in view of the approaching world energy crisis. A Soviet loan for the growth of the Yugoslav industry was also announced.<sup>46</sup> Keeping in mind

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-3-a/101-148: Note on the talks between President of the Republic Josip Broz Tito and President of the Soviet Government Alexei Kosygin of 28 Sept. 1973 in Brioni.

<sup>46</sup> See Milan Skakun, *Balkan i velike sile* (Belgrade: Tribina, 1982), 158.

the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute over the Macedonian Question, Kosygin praised the achievements of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia during his visit to Skopje, but avoided any reference to the Macedonian people.<sup>47</sup>

In the Yom Kippur War of October 1973, Yugoslavia gave permission to Soviet airplanes to fly over her airspace and to use her airports. During Tito's visit to the Soviet Union in November 1973, the improvement of Soviet-Yugoslav relations was noticeable. Brezhnev expressed his gratitude to Tito for Yugoslavia's attitude during the Middle East crisis and assured him of the Soviet Union's determination to boost economic cooperation with Yugoslavia.<sup>48</sup> In the following years the Soviet Union was the main trade partner of Yugoslavia, through the system of clearing.

As for the Macedonian Question, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia held their own respective positions. Yugoslavia kept raising the question of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, and in Greece as well. Under the new Yugoslav Constitution, which entered into force in early 1974, the Socialist Republic of Macedonia was granted broader powers and was entitled to raise the Macedonian Question independently of the federal government. In fact, foreign policy was framed in the Yugoslav republics, and the federal government was only to implement it.

Zhivkov met Tito and Edvard Kardelj in Helsinki, on the occasion of the signing of the Final Act of the CSCE on 1 August 1975. The Macedonian Question was raised again. Kardelj admitted that Bulgaria had recognised the Socialist Republic of Macedonia as a state, but the crux of the matter was Bulgaria's reluctance to recognise Macedonian identity and its historical roots.<sup>49</sup> Zhivkov replied that Bulgaria had in fact recognised both the Macedonian state and identity, but only within Yugoslavia; she rejected Yugoslavia's claim on the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria because such a group was non-existent. Eventually, both sides agreed to set up a scientific commission to research the historical dimension of the Macedonian Question and the roots of the Macedonian nation. The two parties were to take into consideration the views and proposals of historians. Since Zhivkov had not visited Belgrade for a long time, the two foreign ministers of the two countries were to re-establish contact to prepare a summit meeting be-

<sup>47</sup> "Aleksij Kosygin posetio Makedoniju. Jugoslovenska ostvarenja – deo borbe za socijalizam u svetu", *Politika*, Belgrade, 27 Sept. 1973, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-2/55: Steno notes of the talks between President of LCY and SFRY Josip Broz Tito and Secretary General of CPSU Leonid Brezhnev of 12 and 13 Nov. 1973 in Kiev.

<sup>49</sup> Novica Veljanovski & Jan Rihlik, eds. *Čehoslovački diplomatski dokumenti za Makedonija (1939–1975)* (Skopje: Državen arhiv na Republika Makedonija, 2008), vol. III, 460.

tween Tito and Zhivkov.<sup>50</sup> Judging by the past experience, this gentleman's agreement in Helsinki was not meaningful; neither side could wait for the verdict of historians to carve out its policy. Bulgaria precluded every effort of Yugoslavia to internationalise the question of the Macedonian minority after the Final Act of Helsinki under the pretext of the human rights issue. The definitive settlement of the Trieste question between Yugoslavia and Italy in November 1975 contained some terms regarding the protection of the rights of the Italian and Slovenian minorities respectively. It was a precedent for Bulgaria.

In November 1975, the Bulgarian foreign minister Petur Mladenov visited Belgrade. He suggested to his Yugoslav counterpart, Miloš Minić, that Bulgaria and Yugoslavia might sign a mutual agreement on territorial integrity, inviolability of the borders, and non-interference of one country into the internal affairs of the other.<sup>51</sup> In January 1976, Belgrade accepted the Bulgarian proposal in principle, provided that the Parliaments of both countries issue a joint declaration on the protection of the rights of the Bulgarian minority in Serbia and of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria.<sup>52</sup> It was unacceptable for Bulgaria. Her initiative met with no response in Belgrade and proved to be a stillborn policy. Under Bulgaria's pressure, political and national matters were not addressed at the First Balkan Conference held at Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis's initiative in Athens in January-February 1976.

A mixed Bulgarian-Yugoslav commission set up in 1976 to tackle bilateral issues did not yield any results. The Macedonian Question overshadowed all other questions.<sup>53</sup> The Soviet Union stayed away from the dispute. Although the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs confidentially made the Soviet stance that there was no Macedonian minority in Bulgaria clear to Belgrade,<sup>54</sup> the Soviet Union did not exert pressure on Yugoslavia to refrain from campaigning against Bulgaria regarding the Macedonian Question. When Brezhnev visited Yugoslavia again in September 1976, his talks with

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 460-461.

<sup>51</sup> CDA, f. 1B, op. 35, a.e. 5535: Information on the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the PR Bulgaria Petur Mladenov to SFR Yugoslavia on 11-13 Nov. 1975, Sofia, 17 Nov. 1975.

<sup>52</sup> See the brochure prepared by the Yugoslav Tanjug Agency, *Jugoslovenski stavovi i dokumenti za odnosi so Bugarija* (Skopje, July 1978), 17-21.

<sup>53</sup> See Stojan Germanov, "Bulgaro-iugoslavskite razgovori po makedonskii vupros. Stenografski protokoli, september 1976g.," *Makedonski pregled* 2 (2007), 107-128.

<sup>54</sup> AJ, KPR, f. 837/1-3-a/101-148: Information on the USSR and Yugoslav-Soviet relations for the occasion of the audience of the Prime Minister of the USSR A. Kosygin with Comrade President, Brioni, 19 Sept. 1973.



the Yugoslav leadership focused only on matters of economic and military cooperation. Brezhnev distanced himself from the so-called “Cominformists”, an anti-Titoist group recently smothered by Yugoslav authorities, and raised the question of home-porting for Soviet warships in the Adriatic Sea.<sup>55</sup> Soviet warships should be allowed to anchor in Yugoslav harbours for the purpose of maintenance and repair. Yugoslavia made this concession. In August 1977, Tito visited the Soviet Union. The Yugoslav delegation discussed matters of economic cooperation and international relations with the Soviets; only Stane Dolanc referred briefly to Bulgaria’s negation of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia.<sup>56</sup> Since the Soviet Union pursued a balanced policy towards Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the two countries had toned down their usual harsh language. In September 1977, on the eve of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which was to be held in Belgrade in October 1977, Bulgaria warned Yugoslavia of negative consequences, should Yugoslavia capitalise on its role as the host country and raise the Macedonian Question with her terms on an international level.<sup>57</sup>

However, the celebrations in Bulgaria in March 1978 of the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of San Stefano and their international implications made the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute flare up.

Bulgaria had celebrated the Third of March as the day of her liberation from the Ottomans with the essential support of the Russian army. The blame for the revision of the Treaty of San Stefano by the Congress of Berlin (1878) was placed on the imperialistic Western powers. In the new political circumstances, the celebrations in Bulgaria turned into a manifestation of traditional Bulgarian-Russian friendship and of the contemporary Soviet-Bulgarian alliance. In Yugoslavia, any Bulgarian reference to San Stefano was perceived as a revival of the Bulgarian dream of a Greater Bulgaria, with Macedonia as a bone of contention. Yugoslavia was not afraid of Bulgaria, but of the Soviet Union, which stood behind her as a reliable ally. In this respect, airing the Macedonian minority issue was a self-defence policy for Yugoslavia. In June 1978, the 11th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia called upon Bulgaria to respect the rights of the Macedonian

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<sup>55</sup> AJ, f. 837, K-176, KPR I-2/101-103: Note on the talks between the President of the SFRY and President of the LCY Comrade Josip Broz Tito and Secretary General of the CPSU CC Leonid Brezhnev of 15 Nov. 1976 at Beli Dvor.

<sup>56</sup> AJ, f. 837/K-107/KPR I-2/140-141: Steno notes of the formal talks between the President of the SFRY and President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito and Secretary General of the CPSU CC Leonid I. Brezhnev in Moscow-Kremlin, on 17 and 18 Aug. 1977.

<sup>57</sup> See Veljanovski & Rihlik, eds., *Diplomatski dokumenti*, vol. IV 1976-1989 (2010), 101-106.

minority within her borders.<sup>58</sup> As a reaction, on 24 July 1978, the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a brochure entitled *Multilateral Development of Bulgarian-Yugoslav Relations*. It repeated the well-known Bulgarian view that there was no Macedonian nation as a historical entity and no Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, that historians in Skopje distorted Bulgarian history, that Bulgaria was ready to sign an agreement with Yugoslavia on territorial integrity, inviolability of the borders and non-interference of one country into the internal affairs of the other country, leaving to historians the contentious questions.<sup>59</sup>

Meanwhile the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute took international dimensions with China's involvement in the Balkan affairs. After the termination of the Vietnam War, China competed with the Soviet Union for influence in Indochina. In 1978 relations between the two countries were strained due to the developments in Indochina. China supported the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia, whereas Vietnam relied on the Soviet Union. This antagonism was transferred to the Balkans, when China, after the total severance of relations between China and Albania in July 1978, began to pursue a Balkan policy on an anti-Soviet basis.<sup>60</sup> In August 1978, Hua Guofeng visited Romania and Yugoslavia to get acquainted with socialism in these countries and to improve economic relations.<sup>61</sup> His visit to Yugoslavia took place on 21 August. On that day, ten years earlier, the Warsaw Pact had invaded Czechoslovakia. The date of the visit was not a matter of coincidence. Hua Guofeng did not fail to visit Skopje and raise the Macedonian Question. He expressed his admiration for the Macedonian people for their ancient history and glorious historical traditions, paid homage to their resistance to foreign occupations in the Second World War under Tito's leadership and praised the modern Socialist Republic of Macedonia for its achievements.<sup>62</sup> Mihailo Apostolski, President of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, presented the Chinese leader with

<sup>58</sup> Hans-Joachim Hoppe, "Der bulgarisch-jugoslawische Streit um Makedonien", *Ost-europa-Archiv* 5 (1979), 302.

<sup>59</sup> *Za vsestranno razvitiie na bulgaro-iugoslavskite otnoshenia. Deklaratsia na Ministerstvom to na Vunshnite Raboti na Narodna Republika Bulgaria*, Sofia 1978.

<sup>60</sup> For the causes of Albania's rupture with China, see Hysni Myzyri, ed. *Historie e Shqipërisë dhe e shqiptarëve* [History of Albania and Albanians] (Prizren: Sirint, 2001), 347-351.

<sup>61</sup> "Eine Zwischenbilanz nach Hua Kuo-fengs Staatsbesuch in Rumänien und Jugoslawien. Chinas Präsenz in Südosteuropa", *Wissenschaftlicher Dienst Südosteuropa* 22/8-9 (1978), 203-217.

<sup>62</sup> "Makedonskiot narod ima drevna istorija i slavni revolucionerni tradiciji", *Nova Makedonija*, Skopje, 25 Aug. 1978, p. 3.

a three-volume *History of the Macedonian People*. In Sofia, Hua Guofeng's Balkan tour was perceived as an attempt by China and the US to encircle Bulgaria. On the eve of Hua Guofeng's visit to Romania and Yugoslavia, Zhivkov had met Brezhnev in the Crimea. The Bulgarian leader assured Brezhnev that Bulgaria supported Vietnam materially due to China's aggressiveness. He characterised the situation in the Balkans as complicated, given the conspiracy against Bulgaria and the Soviet Union hatched by the US, NATO and China.<sup>63</sup> As for Albania after its rift with China, Zhivkov suggested that Bulgaria should win over this country in her search for allies in the Balkans against China. Obviously, Zhivkov envisaged a common Bulgarian-Albanian front against China and Yugoslavia. Albania stood up for the right of the Kosovo Albanians to have their own federal republic in Yugoslavia. Given the new circumstances, she might adopt the Bulgarian position on the Macedonian Question, Zhivkov might have calculated, since China's flirtation with Yugoslavia was one of the causes of the severance of Albanian-Chinese relations. Brezhnev shared Zhivkov's concerns about China's policy in Indochina, and in the Balkans as well, but discouraged Zhivkov from approaching Albania, unless this country sought Soviet tutelage first.<sup>64</sup> There were, however, no signs of Albania's willingness to forge a common Albanian-Bulgarian front as an anti-Yugoslav spearhead.

In September 1978, Bulgaria responded again by the publication of the volume *Macedonia. Documents and Material*, a collection of documents from the medieval period to the Second World War, translated into English, aiming to prove that Macedonians were Bulgarians and that there was no evidence for a Macedonian nation. When Tito, in his speech in Skopje on 6 October 1978, called upon Bulgaria and Greece to respect the rights of the Macedonian minority, Bulgaria reacted with a double-edged offer. She proposed to Belgrade that an independent foreign commission be set up to establish if there was a Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, but also to inquire into the fate of the Bulgarians in Yugoslav Macedonia after the Second World War.<sup>65</sup> Expectedly, Yugoslavia declined the proposal as inconceivable.

The Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute was highly politicised when, in December 1978, Vietnam invaded Cambodia to topple the ruthless Khmer Rouge regime. China responded by invading Vietnam in February 1979. Whereas Vietnam's troops remained in Cambodia for some ten years, China's invasion was not a large-scale operation and after some days her troops

<sup>63</sup> CDA, f. I B, op. 66, a.e. 1373: Information on the friendly meeting between Todor Zhivkov and Leonid Brezhnev of 14 Avg. 1978 in the Crimea.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> See Veljanovski & Rihlik, eds., *Diplomatski dokumenti*, vol. IV, 159–167.

pulled out of Vietnam. Bulgaria characterised Vietnam's military action in Cambodia as a "liberation movement" and condemned China's invasion of Vietnam; Yugoslavia, in contrast, identified both military events as aggression. Yugoslavia's flirtation with China and reluctance to draw a distinction between Vietnam's international solidarity with Cambodia and China's belligerence aroused concerns in both Sofia and in Moscow. In January 1979, Brezhnev visited Sofia to take a break for a few days, but also to discuss the situation in the Balkans and in Indochina with the Bulgarian leadership. In his meeting with Brezhnev, Zhivkov expressed his concerns over the unholy alliance of Yugoslavia, Romania, China, the United States and NATO against Bulgaria: "It is a perturbing process. It unfolds on an anti-Soviet and, more naturally, an anti-Bulgarian basis. We can already recognise their effort to isolate Bulgaria in the Balkans. Of course, they cannot do it yet, but we might become isolated at a given moment. Obviously, measures should be taken by both countries, and by the brotherly socialist countries, to reinforce our positions in the Balkans."<sup>66</sup> Raising the Macedonian Question from the Bulgarian point of view again was a self-defence policy for Bulgaria. During Brezhnev's stay in Sofia, Tsola Dragoicheva, a former partisan and now member of the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party, published her memoirs.<sup>67</sup> Dragoicheva referred to the conflict between the Bulgarian and Yugoslav Communist Parties during the Second World War and afterwards. She criticised the Yugoslav Communist Party for turning the Macedonian Question into a purely Yugoslav question, working towards the unification of the entire region of Macedonia within the Yugoslav federation. In fact, she argued, a fair solution to the Macedonian Question would be a united and independent Macedonia. She stressed that the population in Vardar Macedonia had hailed Bulgarian soldiers as liberators and that the Regional Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party had joined the Bulgarian Communist Party. She rebuked the Yugoslav Communists for their territorial aspirations for the Bulgarian part of Macedonia. The political message was the following: 1) Bulgaria cannot cut her umbilical cord with Vardar Macedonia; 2) the process of the formation of the Macedonian nation is a long-term and complicated one, but it does not mean that people in Vardar Macedonia should be oblivious of their past and historical bond with Bulgaria. In other words, Dragoicheva questioned the legitimacy of

<sup>66</sup> CDA, f. IB, op. 60, a.e. 248: Steno protocol of the meeting of the CPB CC Politburo with Dr. Leonid Ilich Brezhnev – Secretary General of the CPSU CC and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, 13 Jan. 1979.

<sup>67</sup> Tsola Dragoicheva, "Na klasovi i internationalisticheski pozitsii", *Septemvri* 32/1 (1979), 5–80.

the Socialist Republic of Macedonia within Yugoslavia and implied that the process of the creation of the Macedonian nation was not irreversible.

Dragoicheva's Memoirs, which were translated into foreign languages, caused outrage in Yugoslavia. The fact that Dragoicheva, in her capacity as President of the Association of Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship, presented Brezhnev with a copy of her Memoirs, was interpreted in Yugoslavia as the Soviet endorsement of Bulgarian claims. The press in Yugoslavia stigmatised Dragoicheva's Memoirs as "the most outrageous anti-Yugoslav slander surpassing all anti-Yugoslav and anti-Macedonian slanderous publications in Bulgaria after Second World War".<sup>68</sup>

Vančo Apostolski, editor-in-chief of *Nova Makedonija*, replied to Dragoicheva in a detached academic tone. His arguments were the following: 1) the Regional Committee in Yugoslav Macedonia unwittingly broke away from the Yugoslav Communist Party and joined the Bulgarian Communist Party; it acted under the pressure of Bulgarian communists, who condemned the Bulgarian fascist government only formally; they accepted the annexation of Yugoslav Macedonia by the Bulgarian authorities; 2) the policy of the Bulgarian Communist Party coincided with that of the Bulgarian fascists; Bulgarian communists in Yugoslav Macedonia did not call upon people to rise up against the Bulgarian army, arguing that there were no conditions for armed resistance; 3) the Yugoslav solution of the Macedonian question could be explained by the fact that the Macedonian people identified their fate with that of the other Yugoslav peoples; 4) in 1944–48 the Bulgarian Communist Party favoured the creation of a South-Slav federation and the solution of the Macedonian Question within its framework; it accepted that the Macedonians were a separate nation, only to change its position after Dimitrov's death.<sup>69</sup>

In 1979, there were no available primary sources to elucidate the relationship between Bulgarian and Yugoslav communists regarding the Macedonian Question in the period of 1941–48. Nowadays, it is evident that the Bulgarian Communist Party did not dissociate itself from the official Bulgarian policy in 1941–42, that it tried to play a decisive role in resolving the Macedonian Question in 1943, rejecting the Yugoslav solution and

<sup>68</sup> "Bugari dokazuju 'istorijsko pravo' na teritoriju Makedonije", *Politika*, 20 Jan. 1979, p. 4.

<sup>69</sup> Vančo Apostolski, "Na velikobugarski nacionalistički poziciji", *Pogledi* 16/1 (1979), 5–51. Tito's special envoy to the Balkans during the Second World War, Svetozar Vukmanović-Tempo, replied to Dragoicheva in a series of articles published in *Politika* from 16 May to 6 June 1980, under the title "Borba za Balkan" [Struggle for the Balkans]. His main thesis was that the policy of the Bulgarian Communist Party regarding Macedonia was the same as that of the Bulgarian fascist regime.

propagating a free, integral and independent Macedonia, and that it operated under the pressure of the Yugoslav communists in 1944–48.<sup>70</sup>

Contrary to Vančo Apostolski, Mihailo Apostolski, President of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and former commander of the partisan resistance movement in Yugoslav Macedonia in 1943–44, responded curtly. In an interview for the Yugoslav weekly *Nin*, he indirectly characterised the Bulgarians as a servile people carrying evil in their genes, owing their freedom to foreign powers, but believing that they originated from the ancient Thracians and were able to impose their hegemony in the Balkans.<sup>71</sup>

Yugoslavia suspected that the Soviet Union had appropriated the Bulgarian standpoint on the Macedonian Question; the Soviet Union feared that Yugoslavia might side with China in international affairs. The suspicions of the Yugoslav leadership about Soviet partiality towards Bulgaria found corroboration in the fact that the Soviet press highlighted the official declaration of the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry in July 1978, and Dragoicheva's Memoirs, without even mentioning the Yugoslav position. Moreover, Dragoicheva, as President of the Association of Soviet-Bulgarian Friendship, was awarded the Order of the October Revolution. There is no doubt that the Soviet Union instrumentalised the Macedonian Question as part of its psychological war against Yugoslavia at that time.

To clear up the situation, Yugoslavia's foreign minister, Miloš Minić, visited Moscow in April 1979. He met Andrei Gromyko who did not try to hide the Soviet Union's concern over Yugoslavia's attitude towards the events in Indochina, since Yugoslavia seemed to blur the distinction between Vietnam's action in Cambodia and China's military invasion of Vietnam.<sup>72</sup> Minić replied that Yugoslavia was against foreign intervention in principle. Just as Vietnam invaded Cambodia on the pretext of Pol Pot's regime being a terrorist one, he stressed, so one could invade Yugoslavia under the pretext of Tito's regime being revisionary. Yugoslavia did not approve of China's intervention in Vietnam. To appease the Soviets, Minić disclosed that Tito had urged China to withdraw troops from Vietnam. In continuation, the Yugoslav foreign minister raised the Macedonian Question, blaming Moscow for not being impartial.<sup>73</sup> Gromyko replied that the

<sup>70</sup> Sfetas, *Η διαμόρφωση της σλαβομακεδονικής ταυτότητας*, 147–166 and 215–243.

<sup>71</sup> "Nemam dokaze, ali tvrdim", *NIN*, Belgrade, 4 March 1979, pp. 7–8.

<sup>72</sup> AJ, f. 837, KPR/1-2/75: Note on the talks between member of the LCY CC Presidency Miloš Minić and member of the CPSU CC and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the SU Andrei Gromyko held in Moscow on 23 and 24 Apr. 1979. Talks of 23 Apr. 1979.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*



Soviet Union would remain neutral and did not desire any deterioration of Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations over the Macedonian Question, a question on which historians could differ, just as Russian historians did on the issue of the origin of the Russian people from the Normans. Minić emphasised that he was not concerned over matters of history, but of current politics. Referring to Dragoicheva's Memoirs, published at the time of Brezhnev's visit to Sofia, he elucidated that Bulgaria called into question Socialist Yugoslavia's legitimacy as a state.

Hua Guofeng's visit cannot produce a "powder keg" in the Balkans, as Bulgaria's policy towards Yugoslavia does. Until now we believed that the contentious issue is that of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, now we see that the Macedonian people is proclaimed part of the Bulgarian people, that there is no Macedonian people, that Bulgaria lays territorial claims to Yugoslavia, especially to the national territory of the Macedonian people. Moreover, we are worried about the fact that Bulgaria is a member of the Warsaw Pact, whereas Yugoslavia is a non-aligned country. Our protection is both our readiness to defend our independence, our independent and not-aligned policy, and our broad cooperation with most countries worldwide. We are not asking the Soviet Union to embrace our positions, we have to settle the dispute with Bulgaria by ourselves, but we wish the Soviet side to better understand our point of view. If we solve this problem with Bulgaria, peace and security will be consolidated in the Balkans.<sup>74</sup>

It was the first time that Yugoslavia articulated its position to the Soviet Union in detail. In fact, Yugoslavia called upon the Soviet Union to urge Bulgaria to tone down her anti-Yugoslav polemic pending Tito's visit to Moscow.

In May 1979, Tito paid his last visit to the Soviet Union. His main goal was to assure Brezhnev that Yugoslavia's policy towards China, which was trying to exit from isolation, had no anti-Soviet motives, that it was not detrimental to Soviet interests. As for the Middle East, Tito made it clear that Yugoslavia did advocate a conclusive solution for the Palestinian Question, irrespective of the Camp-David agreements. Tito did not fail to mention the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute over Macedonia. The Yugoslav leader argued that Bulgarian positions were harmful to Yugoslavia's vital interests and that they implied territorial claims. By awarding Dragoicheva the Order of the October Revolution, Tito underscored, the Soviet Union seemed to have shared the Bulgarian point of view on the Macedonian Question as articulated in her Memoirs.<sup>75</sup> Brezhnev replied that Dragoicheva had been

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> AJ, f. 837, KPR/1-2/75: Steno notes of the talks between the President of the Republic and President of the LCY Josip Broz Tito and Secretary General of the CPSU CC Leonid Ilich Brezhnev held on 17-18 May in Moscow, Kremlin.

awarded the Order of the October Revolution for the simple reason that she was President of the Association of Soviet-Bulgarian Friendship and reached eighty years of age.<sup>76</sup> Gromyko, who had already discussed the matter with Minić, reiterated that the Soviet Union remained neutral as regards the Bulgarian-Yugoslav dispute, and called upon both countries to settle the question without external mediation.<sup>77</sup>

After Tito's visit to the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia ended their public polemics. In Indochina, the Soviet Union seemed to gain the upper hand. China's military operation in Vietnam was limited and only an act of retaliation, whereas Vietnamese troops stayed in Cambodia until 1987. In June 1979, Pencho Kumbadinski, a member of the Politburo of the Bulgarian Communist Party, met Minić in Belgrade. They discussed the whole complex of bilateral relations retrospectively from 1944, but failed to find common ground on the past. Both sides demonstrated their differences, and the outstanding questions were referred to a new summit meeting of Tito and Zhivkov.<sup>78</sup> But this meeting never took place.

In late December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Early in January 1980, Tito was hospitalised for circulation problems, with little hope of recovery. In the Balkans, the Soviet invasion was expectedly hailed only by Bulgaria. Thus, the Bulgarian government was anxious about the attitude of the other Balkan states in so far as the Afghanistan War could impair Bulgaria's relations with the neighbouring countries. The memorandum on the impact of the Afghanistan events on the Balkan states prepared by the Bulgarian ministry of foreign affairs in February 1980, paid special attention to Yugoslavia's position. It was noted that Yugoslavia spoke of Soviet "military action", not explicitly invasion, nevertheless, the Soviet Union cut across the principles of International Law regarding the state sovereignty and territorial integrity.<sup>79</sup> At first Yugoslavia placed the responsibility for the new crisis only on the Soviet Union, but she later also held NATO responsible, on account of its decision to install missiles in Europe. In the Bulgarian view, the most important conclusion that Belgrade drew from the Afghanistan War was the Soviet Union's determination to settle outstanding questions by force. In this respect, with Marshal Tito being in hospital, the Yugoslav mass media, the Yugoslav diplomats abroad and the Yugoslav army in the country were struck by the obsession that Yugoslavia

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> CDA, f. 1B, op. 60, a.e. 254: Talks between member of the Politburo of the CPB CC Dr. Pencho Kubadinski and member of the LCY CC Presidency Dr. Miloš Minić.

<sup>79</sup> CDA, f. 1B, op. 101, a.e. 346: Information on the impact of the developments in Afghanistan on the Balkans and the attitude of the other Balkan countries, 6 Feb. 1980.

would be the next victim of the Soviet invasion, that Soviet divisions were deployed along the Bulgarian-Yugoslav border. The Memorandum stressed that Yugoslavia sought support from Italy, Austria and Romania for the contingency of Soviet invasion, and exploited the alleged Soviet threat to get economic aid from Western countries.<sup>80</sup>

Bulgaria branded Yugoslavia's allegations about a possible Soviet-Bulgarian military invasion of Yugoslavia as the figment of slanderous propaganda. Yet, both sides avoided raising the Macedonian Question in open polemics on the political level, as had been the case during the crisis in Indochina. Tito died on 4 May 1980. Brezhnev and Zhivkov attended Tito's funeral to sound out the new Yugoslav leadership about Yugoslavia's orientation in the post-Tito era. As Brezhnev disclosed in a meeting with Zhivkov in the Crimea in August 1980, the impression he had taken from Belgrade was that the new Yugoslav leadership (headed by Lazar Koliševski) would continue its balanced policy towards the Soviet Union.<sup>81</sup> He now observed that no essential change had occurred in the Yugoslav policy; that the new Yugoslav leaders would not let Yugoslavia's relations with the socialist countries deteriorate. Zhivkov remarked that Bulgaria had been extremely patient with Yugoslavia, it did not reply to her slanders against the Bulgarian policy, the Bulgarian people and the Bulgarian Communist Party, it refrained from open confrontation. But he admitted that the anti-Bulgarian campaign in Yugoslavia had been subsiding in the last months.<sup>82</sup> Obviously, Zhivkov realised that, given the new circumstances, the Soviet Union disapproved of the Macedonian Question affecting Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations.

After Tito's death, Yugoslavia faced enormous economic difficulties, she no longer had the international reputation she had enjoyed in Tito's lifetime, and ceased being a threat to Bulgaria. When Josip Vrhovec, Yugoslavia's new foreign minister, visited Sofia in November 1980, he and Petur Mladenov agreed on the following principles: 1) both countries should boost their bilateral cooperation; 2) the open issues should not hamper this process, as mutually acceptable solutions can be found through constructive dialogue.<sup>83</sup> Bulgaria followed the internal situation in Yugoslavia carefully, and did not rule out the possibility of its break-up. She paid special atten-

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> CDA, f. 1B, op. 66, a.e. 2507: Meeting of Comrades Leonid Ilich Brezhnev and Todor Zhivkov, Crimea, 7 Avg. 1980.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Arhiv na Ministerstvoto na Vunshnite Raboti [Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, hereafter AMBnP], f. 115, op. 38, a.e. 3242: Petur Mladenov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Politburo of the CPB CC, with information on the visit and talks

tion to its domestic problem relating to the Muslim minority. The Macedonian Question was discussed on the margins of bilateral Bulgarian-Yugoslav meetings, but in a moderate tone. Each country insisted on its own position, but the war over Macedonia was gradually relegated to Bulgarian and Yugoslav historians, who, however, were unable to reach a middle ground.<sup>84</sup>

It is evident that the Macedonian Question plagued Bulgarian-Yugoslav relations in the Communist era. The Soviet Union instrumentalised this issue according to its interests. Irrespective of the ideological and political dimensions of the dispute, the Macedonian Question evolved from being a matter of territorial security to a matter of identities. With this historical background in mind, it becomes easier to understand why Bulgaria was the first country to recognise the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name — the Republic of Macedonia — but not the Macedonian nation. From the Bulgarian point of view, to be a Macedonian means to be a Bulgarian from Macedonia. Bulgarians stick to the German model of nationalism, i.e. the emphasis is on blood and language, not on national awareness. But in the Balkans ethnicity partly overlaps national identity.

Greece stayed away from the Bulgarian-Yugoslav showdown over the Macedonian Question. Like Bulgaria, Greece did not recognise either the Macedonian nation as a historic entity or the existence of a Macedonian minority on her soil. It paved the way for a Greek-Bulgarian understanding. When the Bulgarian-Yugoslav conflict broke out in 1968, the Greek junta, in keeping with its anti-communist and anti-Slav ideology, had already downgraded Greece's relations with Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia's role in the Greek Civil War (1946–1949) and the presence of political refugees (from the Greek part of Macedonia) in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, who acted there as a pressure group against Greece's territorial integrity, were stressed in official propaganda. Greece was concerned over the decentralisation process in Yugoslavia after Ranković's downfall, because it enabled the Socialist Republic of Macedonia to raise the question of a Macedonian minority and to embark on an anti-Greek campaign, with the central government being powerless to act as a deterrent. In May 1973, even during the military dictatorship, Greece signed a declaration on good neighbourliness with Bulgaria. After the downfall of the junta in July 1974, the Karamanlis government tried to improve relations with Bulgaria and with Yugoslavia as well, in view of the Cyprus crisis and the deterioration of Greek-Turkish relations in the Aegean Sea. A number of outstanding ques-

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with Josip Vrhovec, Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the SFRY, in Bulgaria from 17 to 20 Nov. 1980.

<sup>84</sup> See Troebst, *Bulgarisch-jugoslawische Kontroverse*, 151–237.

tions in Greek-Yugoslav relations were settled (Free Yugoslav Zone in the port of Thessaloniki; the signing of a consular convention; exploitation of the waters of the river Axios/Vardar).<sup>85</sup> However, when Belgrade or Skopje raised the question of the Macedonian minority, Greece was affected too. Greek protests ensued both in the press and on the diplomatic level.<sup>86</sup> It forced the Karamanlis government to side with Bulgaria in denying the existence both of a Macedonian minority in Greece and of the Macedonian nation as a historic entity. By recognising the existence of Macedonian minorities on their soil, both Greece and Bulgaria would have legitimised the Macedonian nation in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. Greece was reluctant to offset Yugoslavia's support on the Cyprus Question by making concessions over the Macedonian Question, as one might have calculated in Belgrade. Since the Macedonian Question turned into a matter of identities, the burning question for the Greeks was the distinction between the Greek and Slav inhabitants in a broader area of Macedonia. Under the term "Macedonians" the Greeks understand either the ancient Macedonians, with whom the Slavs share nothing in common, or a geographical term, i.e. all the inhabitants of Macedonia, including the Slavs who differentiated themselves from the Bulgarians and the Serbs in the twentieth century due to political and social circumstances, and forged another identity within a statehood. For this reason, the Greeks prefer the term Slavo-Macedonians to Macedonians.

Nevertheless, the Greek-Yugoslav dispute over the Macedonian Question was an academic one and did not damage bilateral relations. Economic and military cooperation superseded emotions over the Macedonian Question. Yugoslavia was dependent on Salonica's harbour to meet her need for oil and trade, and Greece's road to Central Europe passed through Yugoslavia. Greece did not rule out the likelihood of increasing Soviet influence in Yugoslavia after Tito's death. In this case, Athens feared that the Macedonian Question might be complicated by Soviet interference. When Evaggelos Averoff-Tositsas, Greek defence minister, visited Yugoslavia in October 1976, with Greek General Staff officers, a formal military agreement was discussed. Should the Soviets invade Yugoslavia after Tito's death,

<sup>85</sup> For a new era in Greek-Yugoslav relations after the downfall of the Greek military regime, see Spyridon Sfetas, *Η Τιτοϊκή Γιουγκοσλαβία και η μεταπολιτευτική Ελλάδα του Καραμανλή (1974–1979). Έγγραφα από τα γιουγκοσλαβικά αρχεία* [Tito's Yugoslavia and Karamanlis's Greece after the downfall of the junta 1974–1979. Documents from Yugoslav Archives] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2012).

<sup>86</sup> See, e.g., Greek reactions to Marshal Tito's speech delivered in Skopje on 6 October 1978: "Δυσχεραίνει τις σχέσεις Αθηνών-Βελιγραδίου το 'θέμα της μειονότητας'" [The minorities question hampers relations between Athens and Belgrade], *Kathemerini*, Athens, 7 Oct. 1978, p. 1.

Greece would support Yugoslavia. If Turkey attacked Greece, Yugoslavia would condemn the Turkish attack and help Greece materially and military as well.<sup>87</sup> According to the Yugoslav army, Yugoslavia after Tito would be threatened not by its internal national contentions, but by a possible foreign invasion. However, it turned out that Yugoslavia collapsed under the burden of its contradictions, and after her break-up the legacy of the Macedonian Question is still alive.

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*323.1(=163.3:497.2)*

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<sup>87</sup> *Ἰδρυμα Κ. Καραμανλή* [Karamanlis's Foundation], *Αρχείο Ευάγγελου Αβέρωφ-Τσιτσά* [Archive of Evaggelos-Averoff-Tsitsas], 28/11/4/1: Information to the Military Leadership on the negotiations between the Greek Minister of Defence and the Yugoslav leaders 5–8 October, Greek Defence Minister, Protocol no. 40521, Confidential, Athens, 16 Oct. 1976 (in Greek).



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## Dr. Djura Djurović A Lifelong Opponent of Yugoslav Communist Totalitarianism

**Abstract:** The paper deals with the life story of Dr. Djura Djurović (1900–1983), one of key targets of Yugoslav communist totalitarianism. He was a Belgrade lawyer who worked in the Administration of the City of Belgrade before WWII. In 1943 he joined the Yugoslav Home Army (YHA) of General Mihailović, and held high positions in the YHA press and propaganda departments. His duties included running the Radio-telegraphic agency Democratic Yugoslavia. He accompanied General Mihailović on his meetings with OSS Colonel McDowell, and with Captain Raković he established successful co-operation with Red Army units in October 1944. He was arrested by Tito's partisans in 1945, given a show-trial and sentenced to twenty years in prison. In his writings he described horrible conditions, sufferings and various types of torture used against political prisoners in Yugoslav communist prisons. He himself spent more than two years in solitary confinement, and on several occasions nearly died in prison. He was released in 1962, and was able to establish a circle of former political convicts from the ranks of the YHA and other anticommunists in Belgrade and Serbia. He maintained this network, advocated pro-American policies and hoped that at some point the United States might intervene against communism in Yugoslavia. Gradually he came to the conclusion that Tito was an American ally, and was satisfied to maintain his network of likeminded anticommunists and prepare reports on the situation in Yugoslavia. As a pre-war freemason, he sent one such report to Luther Smith, Grand Commander of AAFM of Southern Jurisdiction of American masons, describing the ghastly conditions in Yugoslav communist prisons. He was rearrested in 1973 on account of his relations with a Serbian émigré in Paris, Andra Lončarić, and spent another four years in prison. Thus, the almost twenty-one years he spent in communist prisons qualify him for the top of the list of political prisoners in Yugoslav communism. In 1962–1973 he was spied on by a network of informers and operatives of the Yugoslav secret service. The paper is based on Djurović's personal files preserved in the penitentiaries in Sremska Mitrovica and Zabela, and his personal file from the archive of the Yugoslav secret service (UDBA/SDB). This is the first paper based on personal files of "political enemies" compiled by the Yugoslav communist secret service, disclosing the latter's activities and methods against anti-communist circles in Belgrade.

**Keywords:** Djura Djurović, Yugoslav communist prisons, Yugoslav totalitarianism, Yugoslav communist courts

Under the shadow of Western press coverage, papers and studies on Yugoslav communist dissidents such as Milovan Djilas and Mihailo Mihailov, and semi-dissidents such as Dobrica Ćosić and Vladimir Dedijer, the fact has been neglected that there were also open lifelong opponents of communist totalitarianism in Yugoslavia. One of the most committed of

them was Dr. Djura Djurović.<sup>1</sup> The memoirs of Milan L. Rajić, Dimitrije Djordjević and Radomir Milošević, all three former convicts in Yugoslav communist prisons, draw the attention of their readers to the fact that there were individuals who fiercely opposed communist monism. Among such opponents was a group of pre-WWII Belgrade lawyers, including Dragić Joksimović, Nikola Djonović and Dr. Djura Djurović. All three of them continued to oppose communism until their deaths. The first died in a communist prison, while the last spent almost twenty-one years in prison as a political convict. Thanks to a possibility to use the archives of the penitentiaries in Sremska Mitrovica and Zabela, and because members of the Serbian Committee for Establishing the Circumstances of Execution and Burial Place of General Mihailović were allowed to see secret police files of the arrested members of the Yugoslav Home Army (YHA) of General Mihailović, it is possible today to reconstruct Djurović's biography.<sup>2</sup>

Djurica Djurović, son of Čedomir Djurović and Natalija Djurović née Vujović, was born on 11 January 1900, in the village of Gornja Gorevnica, central Serbia.<sup>3</sup> He finished primary school with top marks.<sup>4</sup> The school was seven kilometres away from his home. In 1912, he enrolled in the grammar school in the town of Čačak, and finished it with very good

<sup>1</sup> His full name was Djurica (also spelled Đurica), but he was known by his nickname Djuro. The area from which Djurović originated used Serbo-Croatian jekavian speech at that time. His nickname was later adjusted to dominant ekavian speech used in Belgrade and central and northern Serbia, and he became Djura. Both versions of his nickname (Djuro and Djura, also spelled Đuro and Đura) were alternatively used in various documents as his official name.

<sup>2</sup> I would like to thank Mr. Milan Obradović, former director of the Administration for the Execution of Penitentiary Sanctions of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Serbia for granting me permission to visit the archives of the penitentiaries in Sremska Mitrovica and Zabela and to see and copy files of Djura Djurović. I would also like to express my special gratitude to Dr. Miroslav Perišić, Director of the Archives of Serbia, and Mr. Miladin Milošević, Director of the Archives of Yugoslavia, for their kind and dedicated co-operation and support. Special thanks should also go to Marija Nenadić, archivist in the Archives of Serbia, for her assistance. I owe special thanks to the late Mr. Života Lazić, a Belgrade barrister, who preserved some of Djurović's manuscripts that would otherwise have been confiscated and destroyed by the SDB. I am very thankful to Prof. Dragoljub Živojinović for establishing contact with relatives of Dr. Djurović's wife, Ana, and to Mr. Milan Maksimović, son of the sister of Ana Djurović, for providing various materials on Dr. Djura Djurović from his family.

<sup>3</sup> Transcript from the Registry of Births of the Municipality of Čačak for the community of Gornja Gorevnica, No. 3 for 1900.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Djura Č. Djurović, "Autobiografija" (4-page handwritten autobiography), Arhiva Kazneno-popravnog doma Zabela [Archive of the Penitentiary in Zabela, Požarevac; hereafter: AKPDZ], Pers. file no. 14.591.

marks after the First World War. He received support for his studies from his parents, but also gave private lessons to earn pocket money. Djurović selected jurisprudence for his BA studies. He began as a student at the Law School in Subotica, hoping to get a scholarship, but when his hopes were not met he moved to the Law School of the University of Belgrade, in the academic year 1921/22. He took his LLB degree in October 1924.<sup>5</sup> As a student, he worked in Belgrade's leading liberal daily *Politika*. The owner of Resava Mines, Nikola Jocić, noticed his qualities and decided to fund his trip to France, Britain and Germany. He was in these countries from November 1924 to April 1928, and he also spent one month in Geneva in September 1925. He spent most of these three and a half years in Britain and France since he stayed only four months in Germany. Djurović had a task to learn how dailies in the Western world operate in order to be able to help his patron Jocić and his associates to launch a new daily in Belgrade. He used this opportunity to advance his knowledge in law. In March 1928, he earned a doctoral degree at the University of Paris with the thesis *La protocole de Genève devant l'opinion anglaise*.<sup>6</sup>

Upon his return to Belgrade, he did his military service in the 3rd Artillery Regiment in Kragujevac in 1928/29, and passed exams for the rank of artillery lieutenant. At last, in 1929, he was free to start his career. That, however, was the year when King Alexander of Yugoslavia, in the wake of interethnic tensions, established his personal rule, suspending certain rights and freedoms. Obviously, it was not the best time to launch a new daily. Instead of becoming a journalist, Djurović began working in the Belgrade City Administration from 1929, holding various posts in the 1930s. In 1941 he was head of the Directorate of Supplies.<sup>7</sup> In 1932 he married Ana Paligorić (1907–1994), a daughter of Ilija Paligorić and Kaliopa Paligorić née Dada. Her family was wealthy, and she proved to be as loyal a companion throughout Djurović's life as one can imagine.

Djurović was not politically active until 1935. In May that year he was an MP candidate on the list of Prime Minister Bogoljub Jeftić, the leader of the Yugoslav National Party. Jeftić personified a policy of Yugoslav national unity that was greatly shaken by the assassination of King Alexander Karadjordjević (Karageorgevich) in Marseilles in October 1934. How-

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<sup>5</sup> Copy of his diploma issued 19 May 1962 by Prof. B. Blagojević, Rector of the University of Belgrade, No. 2440/2.

<sup>6</sup> *Le Protocole de Genève devant l'opinion anglaise*. Thèse pour le doctorat présentée et soutenue le samedi 10 mars 1928 à 11 heures par Djura Djourovitch (Paris: Jouve & Cie, éditeurs, 1928).

<sup>7</sup> Djura Djurović, "Izveštaj Luteru Smitu" [Report to Luther Smith; hereafter: "Izveštaj"], in the author's collection.



ever, Djurović failed to become an MP. He obviously followed the political stream of integral Yugoslavism. In 1939 he joined the Democratic Party, but he never had any official duty in the party.<sup>8</sup>

#### *Activities during the Second World War*

At the time of the German invasion of Yugoslavia and occupation of Belgrade (April 1941), he performed duties in the city administration as director of the newly-established Directorate of Supplies. In April 1941, as a pre-war French and Yugoslav freemason, he was asked by German authorities to fill in a questionnaire on his links with freemasonry. Not surprisingly, he was soon retired (19 May 1941). He continued to live in Belgrade in the modern apartment block owned by the family of his wife at 8 Kapetan Mišina Street in the heart of downtown Belgrade.

On 7 May 1942, he was ordered by an extraordinary commissioner for personal affairs to put together a more detailed report on his involvement with freemasonry. Like other Serbian freemasons living in the areas under the German Military Command in Serbia, he was affected by the Order on Removal of Nationally Unreliable Officials from Public Offices. He got a list containing thirty-three questions and was requested to answer all of them within three days. As it follows from his replies, he became a freemason in 1925, in Général Paigné lodge in Paris. His guarantor before the lodge was Dušan Tomić, a member of the Yugoslav Legation in Paris.<sup>9</sup> Djurović wrote that he had joined freemasonry with two aims in mind: 1) moral education; and 2) to get to know the French spirit and people through this organisation. In Belgrade he was affiliated to "Dositej Obradović" lodge in 1929, where he was also a secretary in 1933. Among other distinguished members of this lodge were leading Belgrade historians Vladimir Čorović, Viktor Novak and Vasilj Popović, writer Lujo Bakotić, etc.<sup>10</sup> The growing influence of the Third Reich in Yugoslavia in the late 1930s had put freemasonry under great pressure. In a kind of political response to this pressure, pro-Western Anglophiles, outnumbered among Serbian freemasons only by Francophiles, planned to establish an Anglo-Yugoslav lodge that would operate in English. According to his own testimony, Djurović was very much

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Djura Djurović's handwritten answers to 33 questions on his membership in freemasonry, Arhiv Jugoslavije [The Archives of Yugoslavia; hereafter: AJ], Fond 100, folder 16, "Djuro Djurović".

<sup>9</sup> Tomić was a prominent Serbian and Yugoslav freemason who was a delegate of the Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia to the Executive Committee of the International Masonic Association at Geneva.

<sup>10</sup> AJ, Fond 100, folder 16, "Djuro Djurović".

involved in these efforts.<sup>11</sup> However, Italian and German pressure on the Yugoslav government eventually forced the Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia to suspend itself on 1 August 1940. The next day all freemasonic organisations in Yugoslavia were officially banned.

The attitude of German authorities toward freemasonry in occupied Serbia was extremely hostile, just as it was in all other areas occupied by the Third Reich. Moreover, German intelligence had begun collecting data on Yugoslav freemasons in 1938, soon after Austria was annexed and Yugoslavia became a neighbour of the Third Reich. Therefore, German authorities had had lists of Yugoslav freemasons even before Yugoslavia was invaded.<sup>12</sup> In Belgrade, German authorities encouraged, organised and financed an anti-Masonic exhibition directed against freemasonry, Jewry, Great Britain and communism. It was opened on 22 October 1941 by the German commander of Belgrade von Keyserberg, and was available to visitors until 19 January 1942, and during all these months anti-Masonic publications flourished. Members of pro-fascist Zbor took an active part in the organisation of the exhibition and German authorities encouraged members of Nedić's pseudo-government to take part in it in order to create the impression that the exhibition was domestically organised. According to official reports, the exhibition had some 90,000 visitors.<sup>13</sup> The fact that Belgrade was the third former capital where the German occupying authorities mounted such an exhibition (before Belgrade, similar exhibitions were held in Paris, in October 1940, and in Brussels, in February 1941) shows that they assessed that freemasonry had been particularly strong in interwar Yugoslavia, and this assessment was to a certain degree correct.

In November 1941, 190 intellectuals were arrested in Belgrade and confined as hostages in the notorious Banjica concentration camp. Approximately two-thirds of them, or about 130 persons, were freemasons. Most were released in late 1941 or early 1942.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, it was very desirable for the questioned Serbian freemasons to demonstrate in their answers that their attitude to freemasonry changed and became at least less than favour-

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<sup>11</sup> Djurović, "Izveštaj". Members of his lodge, "Dositej Obradović", were also very active in publishing a pro-British journal *Britanija* in 1940, and Djurović was involved in the publication of another pro-British journal *Vidici* (published in 1938–40). Both journals were banned in 1940.

<sup>12</sup> Nadežda Jovanović, "Odnos okupatora i kvislinga prema masoneriji u Srbiji", *Godišnjak grada Beograda* 18 (1971), 85.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> B. Stamenković and S. G. Markovich, *A Brief History of Freemasonry in Serbia* (Belgrade: Cicero, 2009), 122–124.

able. Yet, Djurović assumed a rather courageous attitude in assessing his membership of this association:

The first thing that I want to emphasise is my deep conviction that I have no reason to be ashamed of the fact that I was a freemason. In that organisation I have never heard a word or seen any gesture by freemasons, either as an organised body or as individuals, directed against the interests of the state or the nation ... Perhaps in the ranks of freemasons in general and my lodge in particular there were people who differed by their qualities, but I do not think that there was in such a divided Yugoslavia any private organisation with more idealism and honour than Yugoslav freemasonry, and especially the Dositej Obradović Lodge.<sup>15</sup>

He joined the Yugoslav Home Army on 10 July 1943.<sup>16</sup> By this time the Yugoslav Home Army (or the Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland, also popularly but incorrectly known as chetniks)<sup>17</sup> was already deeply engaged in a civil war with a rival guerrilla movement — communist-led partisans. The civil war between the two movements began in the autumn of 1941 in Serbia, and by the beginning of December 1941 both movements were decimated by an effective German offensive. In the summer and autumn of 1941, Serbian civilians in Serbia were subjected to horrible reprisals. Based on the order of Adolf Hitler signed on 16 September 1941, one hundred Serbs were to be executed for every German officer or soldier killed, and fif-

<sup>15</sup> Handwritten answers by Dr. Djura Djurović to 33 questions concerning his membership of freemasonry.

<sup>16</sup> In an interrogation conducted by the Yugoslav communist secret police in March 1949, Djurović said that he had joined the YHA on 10 July 1943. Interrogated by the secret police on another occasion, in December 1952, he stated that he had “actively participated in the DM [Draža Mihailović] movement from May 1943 until the end of 1944”, Arhiv Srbije [The Archives of Serbia; hereafter: AS], Fond OZNA/UDBA, file no. 720-01-16556 (Pers. file of Dj. Djurović), pp. 72 and 81.

<sup>17</sup> Chetnik is a name that originated in the early twentieth century to refer to a member of a cheta (company). These chetas were irregular Serbian units that operated in Old Serbia and Macedonia while these areas were still a part of the Ottoman Empire. The name was popular among the common people and was immediately applied to Mihailović's movement. However, there were several groups of “chetniks”, including one that was under the direct control of German authorities (the chetniks of Kosta Pećanac), and there were also Bosnian, Croatian and Montenegrin chetniks. Mihailović and the YHA were involved in disputes and bitter fight with the chetniks of Kosta Pećanac, and some other “chetniks” recognised Mihailović's authority only nominally. Thus, in 1942–44 the YHA and Mihailović effectively controlled only some areas of central, western and eastern Serbia, whereas in other “chetnik” areas their authority was recognised either only nominally or not at all. To complicate things further, many former YHA officers tended to refer to themselves as “chetniks”, rather than as YHA, in their memoirs and other writings.

ty for every wounded one. Consequently, German troops killed 11,522 Serb insurgents and 21,809 Serb hostages. At the same time, only 203 German soldiers were killed.<sup>18</sup> From that moment, fearing further German reprisals, the leader of the YHA, General Mihailović, adopted a more cautious tactics and avoided large-scale operations against the Germans.

The partisans, however, continued their previous tactics and also worked seriously, although not always overtly, on setting the stage for a social revolution and introduction of communism. From the end of 1942 there was a rising tension between Mihailović and the British liaison officers over Mihailović's approach. More importantly, the Soviet Union began acting against the YHA as early as spring 1942, and openly favoured the communist-led partisans, who were given directives from Moscow on a regular basis. The combination of British tactical considerations and Soviet opposition to and effective propaganda against the YHA gradually led to the decision that the Allies should abandon Mihailović and support the partisans instead. This indeed happened at the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944.

Thus, Djurović joined the YHA when this guerrilla movement had already taken a declining direction. His motives for joining the YHA probably included his Anglophilia and his respect for the United States of America, his commitment to democratic values and his opposition to the Soviet polity. His own Democratic Party was a coalition partner in the London-based Yugoslav government. This government recognised the YHA as the only legal army in Yugoslavia and appointed General Mihailović minister of War, Navy and Air-Force in four successive cabinets (from January 1942 to June 1944). He explained his motives for joining the YHA in his report to Luther Smith written in or immediately after 1967:

For me as well as for any convinced democrat, and especially for me as a freemason, there was no choice. I could not join a resistance which aimed, in accordance with the example of the Soviet Union, to introduce into our country a totalitarian polity and a collectivist mode of production. I enlisted under the banner of General Mihailović, convinced that I was doing not only my patriotic but also my Masonic duty.<sup>19</sup>

After joining the YHA Djurović immediately became head for foreign propaganda directed to the Anglo-Saxon world running a radio-telegraphic station known as "Democratic Yugoslavia". The station operated

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<sup>18</sup> Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Hitler's New Disorder: The Second World War in Yugoslavia* (London: Hurst and Co., 2008), 61 and 67.

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Djura Djurović, "Izveštaj", AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 136. The same report was in the collection of Ž. Lazić, now in the author's collection, p. vi.

from Kablar in Ljubić District and Djurović was in charge of it continually from July 1943 to August/September 1944.<sup>20</sup>

*Involvement with the Central National Committee of the YHA*

Later on, he got a political function within the YHA. He became a member and secretary of the Central National Committee (CNK). The Committee was set up at the end of August 1941 as a political body within the YHA. However, it operated only through its Executive Board headed by Dragiša Vasić, a well-known writer, and Mladen Žujović. From the spring of 1942, Stevan Moljević, a barrister from Banja Luka, also played a prominent role in the Executive Board of the Central National Committee. At the end of November 1943, the rival communist-led National Liberation Movement, popularly known as partisans, formed its supreme body, the Antifascist Council of National Liberation, as “the supreme representative legislative and executive body”. This prompted General Mihailović to activate his connections with pre-war leaders of political parties, and to organise a congress at the end of January.

A Preparatory Committee had its meeting on 26 January. It included Živko Topalović and Branislav Ivković on behalf of political parties, and Dragiša Vasić, Stevan Moljević and Djura Djurović on behalf of the Ravna Gora Movement (essentially another name for the YHA with an emphasis on its nation-wide character). The meeting witnessed a sharp disagreement between Moljević and Topalović. The former argued that the CNK on behalf of the Ravna Gora Movement should represent political interests of various political parties, while Topalović thought that the Ravna Gora Movement was nothing more than an idea and that it lacked capacities of a political organisation. Therefore he advocated the creation of a new organisation, which he named the Yugoslav Democratic National Union. The Congress in the village Ba was held on a significant national holiday for Orthodox Serbs — St. Sava’s Day.<sup>21</sup> Mihailović succeeded in mediating between the two opposite streams, but demonstrated preference for Topalović’s attitudes and Topalović was elected president of the Congress.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Official minutes from the interrogation of Djura Djurović conducted on 30 March 1949 at the Penitentiary of Sremska Mitrovica. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 73.

<sup>21</sup> Kosta Nikolić, *Istorija Ravnogorskog pokreta*, 3 vols. (Belgrade: Srpska reč, 1999), vol. 2, 425–436; Kosta Nikolić & Bojan Dimitrijević, *General Dragoljub Mihailović. Biografija* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2011), 370–376.

<sup>22</sup> Pavlowitch, *Hitler’s New Disorder*, 223–225.

The Congress attended by 274 delegates, only six of whom were not Serbs, adopted a resolution, with Article 4 proclaiming that Yugoslavia should be renewed and that it should be a federal state and a parliamentary monarchy. The Resolution stated that “our people ... notwithstanding the highest possible price ... joined the great Western democracies in fighting for freedom and equality of all peoples, both small and great, against Nazism and Fascism and all sorts of dictatorships.” Any idea of collective retaliation in case of the YHA’s victory was rejected. The whole Serbian people should be gathered in one unit and the same should apply to Croats and Slovenes. However, the reorganisation of 1938, which had created a special Croatian unit within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, was rejected. The Congress condemned actions of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the establishment of the political body at the end of November 1943. In conclusion, the Resolution expressed faith in the Allied nations, headed by America, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, and invited people to join the Yugoslav Democratic National Union.<sup>23</sup>

The organs of the Union were: the National Congress and the Central National Committee with its Executive Board. The CNK was supposed to be expanded to include members of democratic parties and to operate within the Supreme Headquarters. The changes did not take place until the end of May or the beginning of June 1944. On its session of 30 June, a statute was adopted. Mihailo Kujundžić, a prominent member of the Democratic Party, became president of the CNK and Dr. Djura Djurović became its secretary-general.<sup>24</sup> Apparently Djurović was both secretary-general of the CNK and secretary of the CNK Executive Board.<sup>25</sup> Djurović claimed that the new CNK was set up on 28 June 1944, and that it operated until 10 September 1944, when he, “due to operational circumstances broke away from it and stayed in Serbia, while a part of the members of the Committee went home, and the smallest third part went to Bosnia with Draža Mihailović.”<sup>26</sup>

The reformed CNK had various boards as well, and Djurović was president of the Political and Organisational Board. Since Djurović was in charge of propaganda, it is interesting to note that a Croatian writer,

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<sup>23</sup> *Odluke Svetosavskog kongresa u slobodnim srpskim planinama* [Decisions of the St. Sava’s Day Congress in free Serbian mountains] (the Executive Board of the Central National Committee, 1944), 28–32.

<sup>24</sup> Nikolić, *Istorija Ravnogorskog pokreta*, vol. 2, 425–436.

<sup>25</sup> Djurović, “Izveštaj”.

<sup>26</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 72.



Dr. Djura Vilović, became president of the CNK Propaganda Board.<sup>27</sup> The CNK issued orders to local “Ravna Gora committees”. They were in charge of overseeing local government and organising propaganda, the latter being their main activity.<sup>28</sup> In such circumstances Djurović, who was in charge of a very important segment of propaganda, gained prominence.

*A wartime journalist*

The most important of several printing presses in the territories controlled by YHA units was the one at the Supreme Headquarters. According to an order dated 6 May 1944, the printing press was to be transferred to the territory of the 2nd Ravna Gora Corps. The same order placed the printing of all journals, brochures, leaflets and other propaganda materials under the control of Dr. Djura Djurović, “to whom all manuscripts will be handed, and who can appoint a suitable person as an assistant for the purposes of this job”. Director of the printing facility was required to meet Djurović’s requests “in every regard”.<sup>29</sup>

In the spring of 1944 Djurović also acted as editor of a very important journal called *Ujedinjeno Srpstvo* (United Serbdom). It was started as an “unofficial Serbian journal” with the aim to “represent interests of the Serbian Federal unit and the whole Serbian people”.<sup>30</sup> Only four issues are known to have been published and most of the articles were written by Djurović. This activity finally made him a newspaper editor, though under very peculiar circumstances. The journal became a kind of the unofficial organ of the Ravna Gora movement. According to Djurović’s statement given to the Yugoslav communist secret police, it was printed in 10,000 copies in an illegal printing facility in Ljubić District. Since the journal was an “organ of the political leadership” of the YHA, it was supposed to be distributed throughout Serbia. But it could not reach even areas around Valjevo, Kruševac and Užice, and the reason was that the YHA postal service showed no understanding for propaganda materials. A special courier was responsible for its transportation to occupied Belgrade.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Djurović, “Izveštaj”. Apart from Djurović and Vilović, a third freemason in charge of a CNK board was Dr. Aleksandar Popović, President of the Judicial Board.

<sup>28</sup> Pavlowitch, *Hitler’s New Disorder*, 225.

<sup>29</sup> Milan B. Matić, *Ravnogorska ideja u štampi i propagandi* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1995), 64–65.

<sup>30</sup> Letter of Dragiša Vasić and Stevan Moljević to General Mihailović, dated 12 Feb. 1944. Quoted from Matić, *Ravnogorska ideja*, 73.

<sup>31</sup> Statement of Djura Djurović given to UDBA on 18 Dec. 1952. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 81–82.

The YHA leaders desperately sought to regain the support of Britain and the United States, and propaganda was again a key tool to achieve that goal. Domestically, new propaganda measures were aimed at counterbalancing successful communist propaganda. With this aim in mind, a “congress of the underground democratic press” was planned for 8 August 1944, and was held 21–23 August on Mt Jelica. It was attended by some forty representatives of propaganda headquarters and editors of newspapers and journals associated with the YHA. The CNK was represented by Dr. Djura Djurović, Dr. Stevan Moljević, Dr. Djura Vilović, Aleksandar Aksentijević, Mustafa Mulalić, Josip Cvetić and Aleksandar Pavlović. The Congress was presided over by Dr. Vilović, Dr. Moljević submitted a report on the “Ideas and development of the Ravna Gora movement”, and Dr. Djurović spoke of the means, methods and aims of propaganda. Although at least sixty-two journals were associated with the Ravna Gora movement, lack of coordination and central planning sometimes led to confusing and conflicting lines published in different journals. The Congress therefore concluded that “stronger organisation and full harmonisation of propaganda services” had to be undertaken.<sup>32</sup>

#### *Co-operation with the Red Army and the Office of Strategic Services*

The conclusion, however, came too late, since the combined advance of partisan forces from the south-west and Soviet troops through eastern Serbia decided the winner of the civil war in Serbia. As the historian Stevan Pavlowitch remarked, “Serbia had not seen much of the partisans since 1941, and was rather confused by their reappearance”.<sup>33</sup> Yet, in September/October 1944, the partisan and Soviet troops “liberated” or “conquered” Serbia (depending on one’s standpoint). On 8–9 September, the last meeting of the CNK had been held in the village of Miličevci near Čačak. On that occasion Mihailović ordered that “Russians should under no circumstances be attacked”, but welcomed as allies and friends.<sup>34</sup> Soviet troops entered Serbia on 22 September. YHA troops collaborated fully with the advancing Soviet forces against German forces, until Soviet troops began to demobilise them, and to hand them over to partisans.

In line with the orders of General Mihailović from the last meeting of the CNK, Djurović participated in the co-operation of the YHA troops led by Predrag Raković, commander of the 2nd Ravna Gora Corps, and

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<sup>32</sup> Matic, *Ravnogorska ideja*, 45–48.

<sup>33</sup> Pavlowitch, *Hitler’s New Disorder*, 228.

<sup>34</sup> Nikolić & Dimitrijević, *General Dragoljub Mihailović*, 398.

the Soviet troops under the command of Colonel Salichev. In June 1953, Djurović was interrogated about this co-operation by the communist secret service, UDBA. From the preserved interrogation records, the following is clear: Soviet advanced troops were in Gornji Milanovac after 14 October 1944. At the same time, YHA units were attacking German troops in Čačak. At a meeting attended by Djurović and other YHA officials, they agreed to co-operate in liberating Čačak and attacking the German Valjevo–Čačak–Požega communication lines. They also signed a written agreement on co-operation and exchanged liaison officers.<sup>35</sup> The YHA liaison officers were Captain Čeković and another one whose name Djurović forgot. Russian demands were sent by radio through liaison officers. A Russian liaison officer was attached directly to Raković. At first, the co-operation was very good, and some units were even mixed in their operations. However, when the partisan units under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Mesić appeared, the co-operation stopped. Raković sent a protest letter at the end of October or the beginning of November.<sup>36</sup>

From a report published in the YHA journal *Poklić* in late November 1944, one learns that in some cases Soviet officers even threatened to open fire on local partisan units to force them to comply with their agreement with Captain Raković. Co-operation between the Red Army and Captain Raković's troops exceeded all expectations. The YHA claimed to have handed more than 300 captured Germans and members of the White Guard over to the Soviets. The cessation of the co-operation after the appearance of Lieutenant-Colonel Mesić and his partisan troops was attributed to the fact that Mesić was a former ustasha officer who had been captured at Stalingrad and then recruited by the Soviets and, along with other former ustasha soldiers, trained as a partisan. These people had crossed the Danube together with Soviet troops.<sup>37</sup>

Djurović was not in contact with the British military missions at Mihailović's headquarters until the end of May 1944, since Mihailović

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<sup>35</sup> From an official communiqué of the YHA 1st Storm Corps it follows that the agreement was signed on 18 October and expanded by an oral agreement two days later. Under the agreement all captured Germans and members of pro-German White Guard (recruited from Russian White emigration) were to be handed over to Soviet troops. Commander during the operations in the Kraljevo and Čačak areas was to be Lieutenant-Colonel Gadelshin and commander of the 93rd division Colonel Salichev. No partisans were to participate in operations around Čačak. The communiqué originally published in the YHA journal *Poklić* on 27 Nov. 1944 is reproduced in Matić, *Ravnogorska ideja*, 286–290.

<sup>36</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 85–87. Interrogation was conducted at the Penitentiary of Sremska Mitrovica on 15 June 1953.

<sup>37</sup> Matić, *Ravnogorska ideja*, 288–290.

wished to conceal Djurović's function in the radio-telegraph station known as "Democratic Yugoslavia." However, Djurović was asked to find out the purpose of the mission of US Colonel Robert McDowell of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), who had landed in Yugoslavia in August 1944. The OSS wanted a separate mission that would establish facts independently of the British Special Operation Executive (SOE). Since in February 1944 Britain had publicly abandoned her support to the YHA, Djurović was supposed to find out if McDowell's arrival indicated any shift in Western policy toward the YHA.

In this capacity he also took part in a rescue mission in which more than 500 airmen, mostly American, were rescued by members of the YHA, and then safely evacuated to Italy. Djurović's task was to send the names of the rescued American airmen to the Americans through this radio station. This practice was later "forbidden by the American command in order to prevent the enemy from discovering certain data from my information on the rescued airmen."<sup>38</sup>

In October, Djurović did not join General Mihailović who went to Bosnia with his troops. He stayed in Serbia, and in the spring of 1945, hid in a bunker specially built by a friend of his. He was arrested in the village of Srezojevci, Takovo District, on 8 June 1945. *Politika* reported on his arrest on 21 June, claiming that he had been hiding in Srezojevci since 25 December 1944. The purpose of this lengthy article was to convince the readers that some very important figures of the Yugoslav Home Army had been captured: "This dark freak — whose name on Boston radio is 'Fanfan', 'Stefan', and 'Gregor' — is too bloody not to be revealed, too closely connected with international and émigré reactionary circles to be handed over to a people's court without any comment."<sup>39</sup> The article claimed that after the Congress in the village of Ba, Djurović had become "the 'political fuehrer' of the chetnik movement". Another person who became available to communist authorities was Colonel Dragutin R. Keserović, characterised by *Politika* as "the bloodiest and most faithful dagger of Draža Mihailović". In this way, the reader was under the impression that two most important associates of General Mihailović had been arrested.

<sup>38</sup> Minutes of the interrogation of Djurović conducted at the Penitentiary of Sremska Mitrovica on 30 March 1949. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 75-76.

<sup>39</sup> "Organi narodne vlasti uhvatili su 'političkog ideologa' četnika dr Djuru Djurovića i 'pukovnika' Dragutina Keserovića, ubicu i 'komandanta rasinsko-topličke grupe korpusa'" [Organs of people's authorities caught "political ideologue" of chetniks, Dr. Djura Djurović, and "Colonel" Dragutin Keserović, murderer and "commander of Rasina-Toplica corps group"], *Politika*, 21 June 1945, p. 4.

*The first show-trial*

On 28 July, in the main hall of the Faculty of Law in Belgrade, court proceedings against twenty-five members of the Yugoslav Home Army began before the High Military Court of the Yugoslav Army. The authorities announced loudly that the proceedings were brought against “members of the so-called Central National Committee of Draža Mihailović and commanders of his military formations”. The atmosphere in the hall was far from orderly. It speaks much of general social conditions that the strictly state-controlled daily *Politika* found no reason to hide the fact that the proceedings resembled a lynching. A reporter of the leading newspapers of the Yugoslav capital noticed that the appearance in the hall of the accused headed by Dr. Djuro Djurović provoked “great alarm and indignation”. Before the judges entered, the hall resonated with the cries: Death to Djura Djurović! To the gallows with murderers! Down with cutthroats! Down with murderers! Blood for blood! A head for a head!<sup>40</sup>

The show-trial took place from 28 July to 6 August 1945. The Office of the Public Prosecutor was represented by Colonel Miloš Minić, a most reliable communist hardliner. In the second half of 1945, he sent a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CC CPY), denouncing the Yugoslav provincial prosecutors and particularly the prosecutor of Croatia, Jakov Blažević, for their non-communist attitude toward the notorious Yugoslav military secret service, the OZNA. Minić himself was one of the heads of the most prominent OZNA department — OZNA for Belgrade — from November 1944 to March 1945. The OZNA was a Yugoslav communist version of the Soviet secret service, the NKVD, created with the help of Soviet instructors in 1944.<sup>41</sup> In the letter Minić concluded: “It is my impression that the ideas of comrade Blažević as regards this question are non-communist, that they are based on their forgetting that our Party administers both the public prosecutor’s office and the OZNA, and all other state institutions as well.” The proof that the CC CPY took Minić’s suggestions seriously may be found in a handwritten remark in the upper left corner of the first page of his letter: “measures have been taken and this

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<sup>40</sup> “Juče je otpočelo sudjenje pred Višim vojnim sudom članovima takozvanog Centralnog nacionalnog komiteta Draže Mihailovića” [Trial of members of so-called Central National Committee before High Military Court began yesterday], *Politika*, 29 July 1945, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> OZNA – *Odeljenje za zaštitu naroda* [Department for the People’s Protection] changed name to UDBA – *Uprava državne bezbednosti* [Administration of State Security] in 1946. In 1964 UDBA was renamed SDB – *Služba državne bezbednosti* [State Security Service]. So the three different abbreviations used in this paper (OZNA, UDBA and SDB) refer to the same Yugoslav communist secret service but at different periods.

has been settled.”<sup>42</sup> The remark is written in Latin script, and in the ekavian dialect used only in Serbia. Among members of the Politburo, this combination of script and dialect was used by Aleksandar Ranković. It is characteristic of the communist legal system of that time that Minić addressed the Central Committee of the Communist Party on this matter, and not the Ministry of Justice. In other words, as he put it himself, the Communist Party stood above all state institutions.

Another vivid impression of the character of early Yugoslav communist courts may be gained from the memoirs of Dr. Josip Hrnčević (1901–1994). He was a judge in the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In 1945–46 he was President of the Military Panel of the Supreme Court of Yugoslavia. In February 1946 he became Federal Public Prosecutor of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia. As one of the highest officials of the early communist Yugoslav judiciary, he admits that one thing was clear to him from the beginning: that the office of the public prosecutor, in spite of its huge powers, was “under the ‘hat’ of the party and the government”. The other thing that became clear to him right away was that he had to co-operate closely with the organs of public security: “Investigation in all criminal cases of some relevance was then in the hands of the Administration of State Security [UDBA], and our real chief was organisational secretary of the Central Committee of the CPY and Minister of Interior Aleksandar Ranković.”<sup>43</sup>

The trial was organised for “members of the political and military leadership of the organisation of Draža Mihailović”. Here a novelty was added to the standard pattern of Stalinist show-trials. Four commanders of the Yugoslav Home Army and nine members of its Central National Committee were charged together with twelve other persons from three different groups labelled by Yugoslav authorities and the Yugoslav press as being “a connection with the occupation command” (one of the accused), “Gestapo members and terrorists” (three of the accused), and “terrorists and spies” (eight of the accused). In truth, some from these groups had been a part of the apparatus of various German secret services and agencies that had operated in Serbia during the German occupation. By grouping real collaborators together with political and military leaders of the Yugoslav

<sup>42</sup> AJ, Fond No. 507, unit X-I/3.

<sup>43</sup> Josip Hrnčević, *Svjedočanstva* (Zagreb: Globus, 1986), 121–122. On the huge influence of the OZNA in Yugoslav society, see Monty Radulovic, *Tito’s Republic* (London and Brussels: Coldharbour Press Ltd., 1948), 118–128. On its influence on the Public Prosecutor’s Office, see Slobodan G. Marković, “Rehabilitacija ideološki progonjenih kao jedan od stubova vladavine prava u posttotalitarnim društvima”, *Izazovi evropskih integracija* 20 (2012), 74–77.



Home Army, a clear message was sent that all anticommunists belonged into the same category of “enemies of the people”. The foreword to the published version of the “stenographic notes” of the trial reveals the aim of the trial:

The trial untangled a repulsive fascist bunch that was created in our country during the first days of the People’s Liberation War and was preserved until the collapse of the German occupiers. One could see at the trial that in the bunch one could find together German fascist occupiers, Nedić, Ljotić, Pavelić and Draža Mihailović, then almost all officers of the former Yugoslav Army who stayed in the country during the occupation and did not take part in the People’s Liberation Movement, then a larger part of emigration abroad, then a larger part of the leadership of former political parties. All of them had a common aim: to destroy the People’s Liberation Movement of our peoples.<sup>44</sup>

In other words, almost all non-communists of any significance, who represented the views of the vast majority of the population in Serbia, were “fascist collaborators”, or simply “fascists”. The court in Belgrade only followed the pattern established by the communist show-trial of the heads of the Polish Home Army and Polish political leaders staged one month earlier (18–21 June) in Moscow.

*Secret proceedings: questioning on Djurović’s relations with the OSS*

This trial had another aspect that remains obscured if the published “stenographic notes” are all that historians consult. The personal file of the first person accused, Dr. Djuro Djurović, preserved in the archive of the Yugoslav secret police, reveals that secret proceedings by the Higher Military Court were held in the evening hours of 2 August 1945. Djurović was interrogated about the meeting of General Mihailović and OSS Colonel Robert McDowell with Rudolf Stärker, who represented the German envoy Hermann Neubacher, on 6 September 1944. Djurović explained that McDowell had anticipated the possibility of the German surrender in the Balkans, and wanted to see Neubacher who, being an Austrian and aware that the Reich had already lost the war, would be given a chance “to make exceptional gains for his homeland, Austria”. McDowell spoke openly to Djurović and Mihailović about the fact that Germany wanted to capitulate in the Balkans. As Djurović put it:

Therefore the purpose of this meeting, which was supposed to be with Neubacher, was on the following basis and with an aim to discuss how

<sup>44</sup> *Sudjenje članovima političkog i vojnog rukovodstva organizacije Draže Mihailovića* (Belgrade 1945), 5.

McDowell understood German capitulation in the Balkans. He wanted to conduct the capitulation in agreement with Neubacher and in agreement with Draža Mihailović.

Instead of coming in person, Neubacher sent Stärker to represent him at the meeting. According to Djurović, he was against the meeting with Stärker, and General Mihailović agreed with him, but McDowell insisted “that it would be a stupid thing not to meet with that Jerry and see what he had to say”.<sup>45</sup> Needless to say, the contents of these proceedings could not be presented during the open part of the trial. A year later, in the case against General Mihailović (the second Belgrade trial), neither Mihailović, nor his defence, nor any subsequent historian, could know about this part of the trial. These details did not become known until 2009, when the members of the Committee for Establishing the Circumstances of the Execution and Burial Place of General Mihailović, set up by the Office of the Public Prosecutor of Serbia, were allowed to see the secret police files of the YHA members, and the contents have been publicly revealed only recently.<sup>46</sup>

Djurović revealed additional details in the interrogation in 1949. He repeated what McDowell’s plan had been. It was essentially to suggest to Neubacher to surrender his troops to the Americans and General Mihailović. “Had this, what McDowell planned, been realised, had Germans capitulated in the Balkans to the Americans and Draža Mihailović, the situation of the chetniks and the attitude of the Western Allies to them, McDowell thought, would certainly have radically changed in favour of the chetniks.”<sup>47</sup> Yet, Yugoslav communist propaganda claimed that on the third day of the trial, 30 July, Djurović alleged that at the meeting Mihailović had been promised rifles by the Germans. Reuter took the news from the Yugoslav News Agency and it appeared in the Western media.<sup>48</sup> The conduct of the communist court and the communist Yugoslav press prompted Colonel McDowell to speak with a British diplomat in Washington, Peter Solly-Flood, in the second half of February 1946. By this time McDowell was a chief of Balkan Intelligence in the US War Department. He said to Solly-

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<sup>45</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Djura Djurović, pp. 31–37.

<sup>46</sup> Slobodan G. Markovich, “New and Old Evidence on the Show-trial of General Dragoljub Mihailovich”, *The South Slav Journal* 31/1-2 (2012), 113–114.

<sup>47</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 75. McDowell’s mission remains a mystery, and S. K. Pavlowitch, *Hitler’s New Disorder*, 230, raised two questions regarding this mission: “Did McDowell explore the possibility of an anticipated German capitulation to stop the Russians from entering Yugoslavia? Did he in any way encourage Mihailović to expect a change in his favour?” Judging by Djurović’s testimonies, the answer to both questions is affirmative.

<sup>48</sup> “Mihailovitch and the Germans. Alleged Arms Talks”, *The Times*, 31 July 1945, p. 3D.

Flood essentially the same thing that Djurović had said during the secret proceedings. Solly-Flood passed the information to the British ambassador in Washington, Lord Halifax, and he sent it on to the Foreign Office. The British embassy received additional confirmation of the story from Barbour, head of the US Southern Department Division. Referring to the trial of Djurović, Barbour said:

When the trials of “war criminals” were beginning in Yugoslavia, considerable play was made of this story about Staerker’s visit to Mihailovic both at the trials and by the Yugoslav press and radio. State Department thereupon instructed the United States Embassy at Belgrade to inform the Yugoslav Government that a) McDowell accepted full and sole responsibility for arranging the interview between Staerker and Mihailovic...<sup>49</sup>

### *First sentence*

Djurović was lucky, since he was sentenced to twenty years in prison. Others were not so “lucky”. On 14 August 1945, three of the four commanders of the YHA were executed (Vojislav Lukačević, Dragutin Keserović and Vojin Vojinović). So that they could still be labelled as “fascists”, they were shot together with Anton Schwartz of the Prince Eugen SS division, and a specially trained SS Captain for special operations, Branko Gašparević. During the trial, both of the latter had been portrayed as “close collaborators of Draža Mihailović”.

From the outset, the leading Belgrade daily *Politika* made it more than clear how the trial would end. Its first report from the trial had the following headline: “Traitors, political and military leaders of Draža Mihailović before the People’s court.”<sup>50</sup> Unsurprisingly, the headline after the pronouncement of the verdict was: “Seven terrorists and commanders of traitorous military formations of Draža Mihailović were proclaimed by the Court war criminals and sentenced to death.”<sup>51</sup> Conspicuously, the list opened with “terrorists”.

The Higher Court pronounced the verdict on 9 August 1945. Djurović was found guilty of being a member of the Ravna Gora Movement, to-

<sup>49</sup> Ambassador Halifax to the Foreign Office, 27 March 1946. PRO, FO 115/4266.

<sup>50</sup> “Izdajnici, politički i vojni rukovodioci Draže Mihailovića pred narodnim sudom” [Traitors, political and military leaders of Draža Mihailović before the people’s court], *Politika*, 29 July 1945, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> “Sedam terorista i komandanata izdajničkih vojničkih formacija Draže Mihailovića sud je proglasio za ratne zločince i osudio ih na smrt” [Seven terrorists and commanders of traitorous military formations of Draža Mihailović found guilty and sentenced to death], *Politika*, 10 Aug. 1945, p. 3.

gether with eight other members of the CNK (Aleksandar Aksentijević, Mustafa Mulalić, Aleksandar Pavlović, Dr. Božidar Popadić, Aleksandar Popović, Branislav Ivković, Ljubiša Trifunović and Nikola Raspopović). They were guilty because they had joined the Ravna Gora Movement: “Although they knew that the chetnik organisation of Draža Mihailović is anti-people, traitorous and in the service of the occupiers, they became members of the so-called Central National Committee, the leading political body of that organisation.” They helped Draža Mihailović “to present his traitorous work and service for the occupiers to the global democratic public as a movement of national liberation against the occupiers...” Djurović was specifically found guilty of four charges: 1) For reorganising propaganda for foreign countries by “establishing radio contact with Fotić<sup>52</sup> in the United States and by sending radiograms and radio broadcasts in which he falsely presented the situation in the country. He popularised the occupier’s servant Draža Mihailović and he presented the chetnik organisation as the only organisation fighting against the occupier in Yugoslavia. He slandered the National Liberation Movement, its leadership, and the Army of National Liberation and Partisan Units in Yugoslavia in all possible ways — and all that with an aim to deceive the public in democratic countries and thus to demolish the morale and political credits that the Movement of National Liberation gained by its ferocious fight against the occupiers”; 2) For editing the journal *Ujedinjeno srpstvo* in which he “instigated hatred against the Movement of National Liberation and popularised the chetnik organisation of Draža Mihailović”; 3) For giving propaganda instructions at various meetings directed “to break the people’s unity in its struggle against the occupiers”; 4) For meeting General Trifunović near Varvarin, where he advocated “gathering and uniting of broken chetnik, Nedić’s and volunteers’ [units of Dimitrije Ljotić] units under chetnik command in order to fight the Army of National Liberation.”<sup>53</sup> As one can see, there was not a single serious accusation against Djurović, apart from the fact that he had participated in a defeated movement.

Djurović expected a death penalty. His wife prepared poison in case he was sentenced to death. Another opponent of communism who joined the Ravna Gora Movement at a very young age was Dimitrije Djordjević,

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<sup>52</sup> Konstantin Fotić served as Royal Yugoslav minister in Washington during the Second World War (as ambassador from October 1942). He was known for his loyalty to Mihailović and opposition to communism. Therefore, the leadership of the partisan movement insisted that he be replaced, and he was on 9 June 1944.

<sup>53</sup> Arhiva Kazneno-popravnog doma u Sremskoj Mitrovici [Archive of the Penitentiary in Sremska Mitrovica; hereafter: AKPDSM], Pers. file of Djura Djurović. The verdict on 14 typewritten pages encompasses all twenty-four accused.

who later became professor of Balkan history at Santa Barbara University in California. Djordjević himself underwent a similar trial in May 1946 as a member of the anticommunist youth. His view of the first Belgrade trial is therefore very valuable. On the attitude of the accused during the trial, Djordjević assessed: "Apart from Djura Djurović and Vojin Vojinović, all others were broken... It was another proof of ideological dissolution of the Ravna Gora Movement."<sup>54</sup>

Djurović gave his closing statement on 6 August 1945. It apparently made a very strong impression and might have played a role in the decision of the court to sentence him to 20 years instead of sentencing him to death. On 10 August, the judge, Major Nikola Stanković, a member of the Panel of the Higher Military Court that tried Djurović, came to his cell together with Josip Malović, deputy public prosecutor of Yugoslavia. Major Stanković told Djurović that he was lucky since: "had I been tried only two or three months earlier, I would certainly have been put to death."<sup>55</sup>

On 15 September 1945, Djurović was sent to the notorious communist dungeon of Sremska Mitrovica to serve his sentence. Before that he spent several weeks in Zabela and Niš. The prisons in Sremska Mitrovica and Zabela essentially were a Yugoslav version of the gulag, a concentration camp for undesirable members of the bourgeois class, for captured YHA members, and other real and imagined enemies of Yugoslav communism. Apart from these two prisons in Serbia, there were similar ones in other Yugoslav republics.

### *The communist prison in Sremska Mitrovica*

Several eye-witnesses have written about the two terrifying Serbian communist prisons for political enemies. Dimitrije Djordjević claims that there were 12,000 prisoners in Zabela in March 1947,<sup>56</sup> and Milan Rajić estimated that Sremska Mitrovica held more than 3,500 prisoners in 1951.<sup>57</sup> Djura Djurović mentions 3,000 prisoners in Sremska Mitrovica, estimating that

<sup>54</sup> Dimitrije Djordjević, *Ožiljci i opomene*, 2 vols. (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1995), vol. 2, 51.

<sup>55</sup> Djura Djurović, "Razmišljanje o smrti", 33. His closing statement was published in *Sudjenje članovima političkog i vojnog rukovodstva organizacije Draže Mihailovića* (Belgrade 1945), 481–500.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* 212.

<sup>57</sup> Milan L. Rajić, *Srpski pakao u komunističkoj Jugoslaviji. Trilogija komunističkih zločina* (Belgrade: Evro, 1991), 72. The third part of his trilogy on Tito's dungeons was originally published in Chicago under pseudonym: Jastreblaković, *Titovi kazamatni u Jugoslaviji* (Chicago: Pokret srpskih četnika "Ravne Gore", 1960).

around three-fourths of them were ex-members of the YHA.<sup>58</sup> Convicts were sentenced as “deserters”, “collaborators”, and harbourers of what was left of the YHA forces. With the so-called *kukuruzari* (from Serb. *kukuruz*, “corn”), peasants who opposed the enforced requisition of grains, added to the number of convicts in Sremska Mitrovica, the total number would be much greater than Rajić and Djurović estimated.<sup>59</sup>

Both prisons had special sections for prisoners held as top enemies of the state, and Djurović and Dr. Stevan Moljević were certainly the top two at Sremska Mitrovica. Djurović kept this high status among “enemies of the state” throughout his prison term and was considered prone to organise resistance to communist authorities. Originally, convicts were placed in big dorms, and Djurović shared room with 200 inmates. At first he was strictly supervised, then put in isolation, and then in solitary confinement. A special terror ensued after the announcement of the resolution of Information Bureau of 28 June 1948 that expelled the Communist Party of Yugoslavia from the family of Soviet-controlled communist parties. Five days later, the warden personally selected the political convicts who were to be given “special treatment”. This group was divided into two subgroups: those who would be isolated collectively, and those who would be isolated individually. The terror lasted some six months in the second half of 1948. The individually isolated convicts were deprived of walking and of the previous possibility of having a shower once in fifteen days. Strict group isolation continued until September 1953, while individual isolation ended in June 1950, when the most distinguished political convicts rejoined other convicts in group rooms.<sup>60</sup>

In a report submitted in December 1959 by Radovan Marković, some sort of assistant warden, one can read that in the course of 1947 and 1948 Djurović, together with Stevan Moljević, Slavoljub Vranešević, Sava Banković and others, was “a centre of chetnik headmen and hostile activity in the circle of convicts”. Marković also assessed that Vranešević, Banković and Moljević caused the main problem in the penitentiary in the period of 1953–58.<sup>61</sup> However, the former YHA members drew a clear distinction between those who had belonged to the YHA headed by General Mihailović and those who had supported either the Serbian fascist Dimitrije Ljotić

<sup>58</sup> Djura Djurović, “Sećanja iz komunističke robijašnice u Sremskoj Mitrovici”, 10.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Srdjan Cvetković, *Između srpa i čekića. Represija u Srbiji 1944–1953* (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2006), 421; Srdjan Cvetković, “Struktura političkih zatvorenika u Srbiji i Jugoslaviji”, *Hereticus* VII/1–2 (2009), 72–73.

<sup>60</sup> Djura Djurović, “Sećanja iz robijašnice u Sremskoj Mitrovici”, 30–31, 35 and 125.

<sup>61</sup> Report on Djura Djurović by Radovan Marković dated 25 Nov. 1958. AKPDSM, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.



or the marionette pseudo-government of General Nedić. Accordingly, Banković was never considered as part of the YHA circle in the prison.

As noted above, political prisoners were divided into two groups: those put in collective isolation and those isolated individually. Djurović provided a list of those who had been isolated. From the ranks of the YHA (or Ravna Gora Movement, as Djurović preferred to call it) the following persons were isolated individually: Dr. Djura Djurović; Dr. Aleksandar Popović; a CNK member, Vojin Andrić; Mihailo Mandić of the YHA Belgrade branch; Colonel Petar Simić; and Rade Bojović, YHA commander in Dragաչevo District. From the “Nedić-Ljotić group” the only individually isolated person was the priest Sava Banković. Two more persons were isolated in the same way: engineer Zdravković and Dr. Dragoljub Jovanović, pre-war leader of the Agrarian Party.<sup>62</sup> Among collectively isolated prisoners who belonged to the YHA were: Dr. Stevan Moljević, former president of the Executive Board of the CNK; two other CNK members, Dr. Djura Vilović and Aleksandar Pavlović; Colonel Slavoljub Vranešević and Captain Radomir Milošević – Čeda, of the YHA Avala Corps. Among the collectively isolated were also: Dr. Laza Marković, leader of the Radical Party; Vlada Ilić, a well-known Belgrade industrialist; three Teokarević brothers (Vlada, Lazar and Slavko), also industrialists; and Dragi Stojadinović, brother of the former PM of the Royal Government Milan Stojadinović. Individual isolation lasted some twenty-three months, until 3 June 1950. According to his own testimony, Djurović was the only one who was kept in solitary confinement during this entire period of twenty-three months, while the others were kept in isolation for several months. Dr. Moljević was among those kept in solitary cells for several months. Djurović vividly described his experience of solitary confinement:

In those endlessly long days and nights, tormented by hunger and deprived of any human contact, and any distraction, all the time in a solitary with locked doors with a small window opening for delivery of food, and when the bucket is taken to be slopped out, there is not a single person apart from oafs [guards] at any floor, the individually isolated felt lost in a bleak world deprived of any sense of human, humane, a world where a man is thrown below the level of an animal.

Yet, in that gloomy and senseless world even the individually isolated could sense some signs of life outside the cell. Alas, these were screams of other convicts.

This ghastly dark atmosphere was raised to Shakespearean heights by the signs of distressing human suffering. From the first floor, almost after each tattoo, one could hear horrible screams of human beings, moans that tore

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<sup>62</sup> Djurović, “Sećanja iz robijašnice”, 30.

one's heart. As if coming from hell, they rent dead silence of murky night in a spacious chasm stretching from the concrete floor in the basement up to the glass roof separating rows of solitaries from one side and the other. It was as if humankind had returned to the dayspring of civilisation, as if human pain had been the ultimate enjoyment for those who caused it.

In the murky nights, screams and moans could be heard for hours. "These were really the darkest, the most distressing hours in the history of imprisonment of political convicts on the second floor isolated under the strictest terms."<sup>63</sup>

All the isolated were stripped of all personal belongings, they had bans on visits and were systematically kept undernourished. Previously, prisoners were allowed a monthly 14-kilo package from their families. From the moment the campaign of terror was introduced the weight of packages was reduced to five kilos per month. Prison food amounted to 200 grams of corn bread and some sort of dishwater food. Since some individually isolated convicts also had monthly bans on receiving packages, some lost up to one third of their body weight. The first victim of the terror and isolation was Colonel Petar Simić. He committed suicide. Throwing himself out of a window, he said: "I am innocent."<sup>64</sup> The August and September of 1948 were the worst for Djurović. At the beginning of his isolation Djurović was given a one-month ban on receiving packages and thus the package for September was handed to him at the end of that month instead of at the beginning. He suffered from haemorrhoids that were bleeding. With bleedings and the daily allocation of 200 grams of bread and some sort of dishwater food, his condition reached the point where he could barely stand up. When he was finally allowed to receive the food provided for patients of the penitentiary infirmary, he was on the verge of utter exhaustion.<sup>65</sup> Fortunately for the convicts, the terror ended at the end of that year.

At the beginning of his prison term, Djurović believed in the imminent fall of the communist regime. Therefore, he wrote, in 1947 or 1948, a leaflet entitled "Ideological foundations of the Ravna Gora Movement", which was copied and distributed among prisoners. Apparently, the text referred to the organisation of a new state that would replace the communist Yugoslavia. He was also an informal leader of the convicts originating from the YHA.<sup>66</sup> The penitentiary kept a personal file for each prisoner. From Djurović's file one can find that during his time in isolation he was addi-

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<sup>63</sup> Djurović, "Sećanja iz robijašnice", 32–33.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. 30–37.

<sup>65</sup> Djurović, "Razmišljanje o smrti", 19–20.

<sup>66</sup> Opinion on Djurović by Dušan Milenović dispatched to the Administration of State Security (UDB) of Serbia, 18 Dec. 1959. AKPDSM, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

tionally punished seven times by bans on visits and food packages, and four times more sent to a solitary cell for a period of 7–14 days. Since he received three out of the eleven punishments in 1948, it is clear that it was the year of his most intensive activity and, also, that the administration of the penitentiary was particularly sensitive to all his undertakings in that period.

Life under special punitive conditions and isolation in the penitentiary seriously affected Djurović's health. From the end of 1948 he faced cardiac problems, and from 1950 he had serious problems with haemorrhoids and also suffered from chronic intestinal catarrh. His wife Ana appealed to all possible authorities, including President Josip Broz Tito, to permit her husband to have a haemorrhoids operation. By the time he underwent the operation, in 1951, his condition had deteriorated badly, causing a severe blood loss. The penitentiary administration obstructed the surgery for a long while, but Djurović was finally sent to a civilian hospital in Sremska Mitrovica, and this probably saved his life. He also suffered from cardiac arrhythmia, but the administration repeatedly refused to grant the appeal of his wife from January 1955 to give permission to a physician from Belgrade to examine Djurović. In May, the warden refused again to grant the appeal, and stated that in case the Ministry of Interior's had an opposite opinion, a doctor would be permitted to come from Belgrade to examine Djurović, albeit at his wife's expense.<sup>67</sup> Finally, in October 1955, a prison doctor suggested that Djurović should be examined in Belgrade.

In January 1960, the Penitentiary allowed another haemorrhoids operation in the hospital of the Central Prison in Belgrade. He was operated and treated in that hospital from 18 January until 11 February 1960. As his health deteriorated further, he was sent to the Central Prison hospital again in December 1960 for the treatment of haemorrhoids and cardiac problems, with a word of caution in capital letters by the person in charge of keeping his personal file in Sremska Mitrovica, warning that Djurović was inclined to escape.<sup>68</sup> Djurović remained in hospital from 28 December 1960 to 15 February 1961. He was sent to the same hospital for two more treatments, in April and May 1960, and with the same warning.<sup>69</sup> These sudden repeated permissions for the medical treatment of Djura Djurović should be attributed to international pressure exerted through the Red Cross and other international actors. They also show that Djurović's health severely

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<sup>67</sup> Letter of Dušan Milenović to the Ministry of Interior of Serbia, 23 May 1955. AKPDSM, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

<sup>68</sup> Letter of Zvonko Renčelj, officer for personal files, to the Central Prison hospital, dated 27 Dec. 1960, AKPDSM, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

<sup>69</sup> Letters of Zvonko Renčelj, officer for personal files, to the Central Prison hospital, dated 4 Apr. and 9 May 1961. AKPDSM, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

deteriorated as a result of years of neglect. International pressure also forced Yugoslav communist authorities in 1959 and 1960 to temporarily end the practice in Sremska Mitrovica of mixing political prisoners and criminals, although political prisoners could still be mixed with criminals as a punishment.<sup>70</sup>

From 22 September 1953 until 14 June 1959, he worked in a group room and he worked in limited scope in the building department. He was again under everyday observation both by the penitentiary administration and by the secret services. In order to humiliate him after his collective isolation ended in 1953, Djurović was given a task to straighten up nails in an open shed. Many convicts found an excuse to pass by the shed to see Djurović and greet him, and noses noted down every one of them.<sup>71</sup>

The warden of the penitentiary at Sremska Mitrovica, Dušan Milenović, noted in his report of 9 December 1958 that Djurović's activities "abated" after 1953; but he also added that, "he remains strongly hostile to socialism even today."<sup>72</sup> After a break in the almost six years of ruthless maltreatment, Djurović was singled out, in June 1959, as one of a special group of convicts "for his hostile stance and for his active hostile activities." In a report by a UDBA official dated 10 July 1959, Djurović is assessed as a person who belongs "among the organisers and initiators of hostile activity, especially among convicts-chetniks", with a remark that a whole book in dozens of pages could be written on his hostile activities. It is stated that upon his arrival to the prison he formed a close circle of chetniks that he personally headed, and also that he "headed hostile activities among other chetniks".<sup>73</sup>

He was particularly reprimanded for his role as the organiser of a two-day hunger strike on 28–29 March 1959. Djurović and the Ravna Gora Centre organised the hunger strike as a reaction to the treatment of Dušan Glumac, a convict who was beaten by a guard. Warden Milenović did not hide in his report to the UDBA of Serbia of December 1959 that Dušan Glumac, "convicted as a Western spy was beaten with a club by an officer."<sup>74</sup> On 28 March, the strikers turned back bread with a note that they were on strike. On the first day of strike, 117 political convicts returned food, and

<sup>70</sup> Djurović, "Sećanja iz robijašnice", 9.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* 54.

<sup>72</sup> Warden of the Penitentiary of Sremska Mitrovica to the Supreme Military Court, 9 Dec. 1958, No. 6343/58.

<sup>73</sup> Assessment of Dj. Djurović by UDBA officer Dragoljub Perić, written 10 July 1959. AKPDSM, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

<sup>74</sup> Opinion on Djurović by Dušan Milenović dispatched to the Administration of State Security (UDBA) of Serbia, dated 18 Dec. 1959. AKPDSM, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

on the second day, 127. Most of them were former YHA members. On this occasion, Moljević's group joined Djurović in this hunger strike. All the persons considered as organisers of the strike were punished by solitary confinement, and they included: Dr. Djurović, Bogdan Krekić, Vojin Andrić, Andra Lončarić, Bogoljub Tatarović and Ilija Stefanović.<sup>75</sup>

The hunger strike again singled out Djurović as the informal leader of resistance of the YHA group in the penitentiary. Therefore the UDBA officer concluded: "On the basis of what we have reported above and on the basis of the other materials that we have on Djurović, we assert that Djuro still remains an unshaken enemy element and that he will fight against the achievements of our Revolution at every opportunity."<sup>76</sup>

The hunger strike incident of 1959 was particularly upsetting for the administration of the penitentiary. There is a note in Djurović's personal file that he incited convicts not to receive food, and did it both personally and through other convicts. Therefore, on 5 April, he was punished by two-week solitary confinement, and by a two-month ban on visits and a three-month ban on receiving packages. This was the first and only case during his imprisonment that he was forbidden from receiving packages and having visits for a period longer than a month. Altogether, Djurović spent twenty-four and a half months in solitary confinement, of which twenty-three months continuously (1948–1950), once for two weeks (March 1959), once for twelve days (April 1948), and twice for one week (September 1953 and January 1955). The last disciplinary punishment was imposed on him in June 1960. He got a one-month ban on receiving mails and packages because "he supported a group of Albanians that were making trouble while walking laps."

During his imprisonment in Sremska Mitrovica he was one of key figures to all convicts that came from the ranks of the YHA. Another was Dr. Stevan Moljević. The two of them created two subgroups of former YHA members. Moljević believed in the imminent fall of communism and arrival of Western allies who would liberate Yugoslavia. Djurović grew more realistic with time and no longer expected drastic changes. In accordance with his expectations, Moljević suggested to all convicts to sabotage all activities organised by the penitentiary, such as film screenings, prison theatre performances, prison school etc. Djurović had the opposite opinion.<sup>77</sup> He thought that convicts should use their time in the penitentiary to acquire all kinds of knowledge and skills they could get. Dr. Moljević also underwent a terrible ordeal in prison and various forms of humiliations. He had serious

<sup>75</sup> Djurović, "Sećanja iz robijašnice", 85–86.

<sup>76</sup> Assessment of Dj. Djurović by UDBA officer Dragoljub Perić, written 10 July 1959.

<sup>77</sup> Radomir Milošević Čeda, *Zakasneli raport kapetana Čede. Hronika jedne srpske sudbine* (Belgrade: Interprint, 1996), 146–148.

health problems in 1956, was diagnosed with a colon cancer the following year, operated in Belgrade and promptly returned to the prison in Sremska Mitrovica. He died on 15 November 1959.<sup>78</sup> After Moljević's death, Djurović remained the uncontested informal leader of all prisoners related to the YHA.

*The construction of the new communist man*

Djurović observed that, contrary to the prison practice of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, where sentenced communists were treated as political prisoners and were allowed to read, translate, paint and buy food from nearby villages, in communist prisons nothing of the kind was allowed. Furthermore, the prisons of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had no intention to change the prisoners' political convictions. The practice of communist prisons was quite different. As Djurović observed: "The construction of the new man was not only the job of prisons, since not only convicts were opponents of the new order; a huge mass of the population throughout Yugoslavia was in opposition."<sup>79</sup> Milovan Djilas, in his Stalinist period, called this practice, in the style of Nikolai Ostrovski, "the forging of the new man". In the penitentiary at Sremska Mitrovica, this forging was carried out by two highest-ranking persons: the warden (during the entire period of Djurović's incarceration, it was Dušan Milenović) and his deputy. Djurović was in a particularly unfavourable position since the long-time deputy warden was Miloljub Toroman, a teacher before the Second World War. Most of his family members had been killed in the clashes with the YHA, and he came from the same village as Djurović. The two of them knew each other and had spoken on many occasions before the war.

With this background, it is hardly surprising that Toroman either was given the task or arrived himself at the idea to gather evidence on Djurović that would lead to his second trial. He was particularly irritated by the fact that Djurović was a major organiser of various activities among convicts in 1947 and 1948. Both Milošević and Djurović claim that Toroman tried to recruit the hairdresser Milovan Djurdjević for his plan. Djurdjević had a little daughter and was threatened with not being able to see her ever again if he refused to co-operate by placing the blame for the organisation of all sabotages and strikes in the prison on Djurović. Djurdjević, however, held Djurović in high esteem and they had become quite close, which threw him into a great moral dilemma. He accepted to co-operate with the prison administration, but he could not bring himself to betray Djurović. He found

<sup>78</sup> Rajić, *Srpski pakao*, 367–380.

<sup>79</sup> Djurović, "Sećanja iz robijašnice", 10.



the only way out by committing suicide. Toroman boasted that Djurović saved his head once but that he would not be able to do it again. Yet, the whole plan failed in the end.<sup>80</sup> Perhaps Toroman would have continued in the same direction, but the shift in Yugoslav foreign policy, increasingly pro-Western in the early 1950s, made a new trial politically inconvenient.

After this failure, there were other plans to crush the resistance of convicts and force them into accepting the communist order. In Djurović's view, Toroman's plan was to recruit spies from the ranks of political convicts while they still were serving their sentences. Upon their release, they would enjoy the status of martyrs in anticommunist circles, and as such would be in a position to collect information from unsuspecting "reactionary elements". One of the noses, however, confided to other convicts that he had had to sign a written obligation that he would be a lifelong informer of the UDBA, informing on everyone, including his family. The word spread fast and made it more difficult for Toroman to recruit new spies. To counter Toroman's effort, in the autumn of 1945 the former YHA members around Djurović set up the so-called Ravna Gora Centre in the penitentiary.<sup>81</sup> The centre helped fellow sufferers in an organised way, especially those who could not receive packages. Those who received packages agreed to share a part of what they received with those who received nothing. Djurović remembered solidarity "as one of the best pages of the history of our imprisonment."<sup>82</sup> Since Milan L. Rajić belonged to Moljević's group, he made no mention of this centre in his memoirs.

Toroman's plan did not work well and he resorted to a new method. Djurović claims that this new method of Toroman's was as follows: a convict ordered to strip down to his underwear would be left for two, three or four days in a unheated solitary cell during cold months; the cold prevented him from falling asleep and after two or three days of such torture, he would be faced with another such exposure and consequent pneumonia or tuberculosis. The fear induced by general terror led several convicts to commit suicide.<sup>83</sup> Yet, optimism "and strongly emphasised faithfulness to old ideals" was the dominant note among the political convicts.<sup>84</sup> In another place Djurović remarked: "to be so crushed and yet to believe that it all was temporary is really incomprehensible. Perhaps it is our Kosovo [Battle]

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<sup>80</sup> Milošević, *Zakasneli raport*, 133–135.

<sup>81</sup> Djurović, "Sećanja iz robijašnice", 26–29.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* 94.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* 41–44.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* 46.

commitment that makes a victory out of defeat and endures hoping not for a decade but for centuries.”<sup>85</sup>

Upon the end of isolation in 1953, the penitentiary administration planned to stir up division among the convicts. In June 1954, all political convicts (i.e. not only former YHA members, but also former supporters of Stalin), were summoned to the prison cultural centre. In front of them, a convict who had accepted to work for the UDBA attacked Dr. Djurović and Dr. Moljević. He claimed that it was their responsibility that political convicts were still in prison, because these two headmen lulled themselves into a false hope that actions of the United States and Yugoslav emigration would cause the existing order to collapse. When the convict-informer asked the other convicts to shout after him “Long live the leader of our people Comrade Tito!”, only an ex-Stalinist joined, and the show soon ended with no result.<sup>86</sup>

The next method was to find what they called “reformed persons” (Serb. *revidirci*) among the convicts. Those who chose to “improve” themselves by revising their stance would become “reformed persons”. They were allocated a room in each building where they could meet and discuss plans for the future. A convict who was close to becoming “reformed,” but eventually refused to carry it through, revealed to the others that the “reformed persons” had to write down a confession that would include hitherto unknown details of their wartime past; in other words, they had to make some self-accusations that would prove their “reformed status”. Djurović claims that these self-accusations led to further arrests, because they had disclosed some new details to the UDBA. The “reformed” enjoyed some privileges. They were given new clothes, and became labour overseers and inmate overseers. However, the Ravna Gora Centre, in Djurović’s words, was able to resist this action. Radomir Milošević adds in his memoirs that noses and “reformed persons” were often very useful for the convicts as well, since they were willing to do small favours to other convicts. Milošević also remarked that there were almost no “reformed persons” among peasants and workers, but mostly among intellectuals.<sup>87</sup>

#### *Release and surveillance by the UDBA/SDB*

His wife Ana Djurović née Paligorić (1907–1994) proved to be a person of great determination and dedication. She committed herself fully to the ef-

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid. 124.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. 61–64.

<sup>87</sup> Milošević, *Zakasneli raport*, 156.

fort to alleviate the hardship of her husband's imprisonment, and she went through an ordeal herself. When she refused to sign divorce papers presented to her by the OZNA and to become an informer, her name was removed from the list of persons with the right to vote by court decision. Subsequently, the UDBA attempted to drive her out of Belgrade, to Svrlijig, a small place in south-east Serbia. Encouraging wives to divorce their imprisoned husbands was not an exception, but the routine practice of the OZNA, which wanted to make the life of all political convicts as bad as possible.

The UDBA's plan was to be realised through the Commissariat for Internal Affairs of the 1st District of Belgrade. This body decided on 31 August 1949 to sentence Ana Djurović to five days in prison and six-month exile in Svrlijig. The decision was justified by the claim that Mrs. Djurović was "jobless" and allegedly avoiding work. From her appeal, one finds out that she worked in the trade company "Vetserum" from December 1948 until 31 July 1949, when she was notified of dismissal as of 31 August.<sup>88</sup>

Her appeal was eventually granted and a new battle began, since the UDBA could always expel her under the same pretext of her being jobless, and she could find no employment exactly because the UDBA saw that she did not. Fortunately, the wife of Radomir Milošević, Olga, gave her a job at her fashion tailor shop in Hilandarska St., and she later worked in a bookstore. Ana could barely eke out a living for herself, but still she managed to send packages to her husband regularly.<sup>89</sup>

She also fought a long and persistent legal battle by sending appeals to various state bodies requesting a reduction of her husband's sentence. By decision of the Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia (Yugoslav Federal Government) No. 2255, on the Day of the Republic, 29 November 1958, after thirteen years in prison, Djurović was granted two years' sentence reduction, from twenty to eighteen years. Even after fourteen and a half years of serving his sentence, the administration of the penitentiary, particularly the warden, were convinced that Djurović's sentence should not be reduced any further: "Djurović has remained an unswerving enemy of all results of our revolution. Therefore he does not deserve to be released."<sup>90</sup> Her last appeal for her husband to be released on probation was rejected in January

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<sup>88</sup> Appeal of Ana Djurović to the Commissariat of Internal Affairs dated 7 September. A copy is in the author's possession.

<sup>89</sup> Djurović, "Razmišljanje o smrti", 10; Milošević, *Zakasneli raport*, 140.

<sup>90</sup> Opinion on Djurović by Dušan Milenović dispatched to the Administration of Public Security (UDBA) of Serbia, 18 Dec. 1959. AKPDSM, 02 No. 6343/59.

1962 by the Supreme Military Court.<sup>91</sup> Fortunately for Djurović, amnesty was soon implemented. The State Commission of the People's Republic of Serbia for the implementation of the Amnesty Law enacted on 13 March 1962 unanimously decided, at its session of 30 March, that in the case of Dr. Djura Djurović all conditions for amnesty were fulfilled.

Djurović had been arrested on 8 June 1945 and was released on 2 April 1962, almost seventeen years later. He again became an inhabitant of Belgrade, a communist capital with a well-organised secret service network. During this period of freedom under surveillance, from April 1962 until November 1973, he continued to advocate values of Western democracies, to criticise the Yugoslav communist regime within the circle of friends that he still had, and to maintain contact with YHA-related former convicts, with political emigrants in France and the United States, and with likeminded individuals in Belgrade. He also had contacts with some circles in the West through the remnants of Belgrade Masonic lodges that continued to organise gatherings. Djurović's martyrdom in the prison was a well-known fact in Belgrade bourgeois circles where Djurović where was looked upon with respect and admiration. His opposition to communism and his pro-Western and pro-American stance were also well known. Therefore, meeting with Djurović, or even only greeting him in public could have been interpreted as an act hostile to Yugoslav communism. Yet, the Yugoslav communist regime created such a wide range of real and imagined enemies that "non-reformed" former convicts, pre-war politicians and anticommunist members of pre-war Belgrade freemasonry immediately gathered around Djurović in spite of all challenges that their contact with him could cause.

A UDBA report to the minister of Interior of the People's Republic Serbia, dated 2 November 1962, lists his main friends. Among them were: the prominent freemason and barrister Boža Pavlović, the lawyer Dr. Vojin Andrić and the engineer Živojin Veličković (both released together with Djurović), the pre-war socialist journalist Bogdan Krekić (pre-war MP for the Democratic Party), the barristers Ljubiša Trifunović and Aleksandar Popović, ex-Captain of the YHA Miodrag Stojanović, YHA Major Miloš Radojlović, YHA Captains Radomir Milošević and Živojin Lazić, the lawyer Dr. Todor Perović, the theologian Dobrivoje Uštević, and the former cabinet minister Kosta Kumanudi. All of them, apart from Pavlović, were former convicts. He also kept contact with Dr. Milan Protić, former director of the National Bank of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and minister in the government of Dragiša Cvetković. Djurović was also in contact with persons from the Patriarchate of the Serbian Orthodox Church and with

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<sup>91</sup> Decision by Colonel Miloje Topisirović KVL No. 1/62, 31 Jan. 1962. A copy is in the author's possession.

persons outside the capital, particularly from Novi Sad, Čačak, Kragujevac, Sombor etc. He also kept close contact with Serbs employed with the US embassy in Belgrade and also had contacts in the French, US and some other embassies. A UDBA officer observed that Djurović was able, in a very short time, to establish contacts “with his acquaintances from the ranks of Belgrade bourgeoisie, intellectuals, and especially from the ranks of former convicts.”<sup>92</sup>

The personal file of Djurović preserved in the UDBA and SDB was in 2010 transferred to the Archives of Serbia. It contains some 424 pages. Only five days after his release the first report was submitted to the UDBA by “Ćosić”, and as soon as 3 July the head of the 2nd Department of the UDBA Belgrade branch placed a ban on issuance of a passport to Djurović. This ban was extended on 1 November 1968, upon a note by the SDB officer B. Nedeljković of September 1967 assessing that Djurović would not return to the country in case he was granted a passport. He was under surveillance during his private conversations, and in many of his visits to restaurants. His correspondence was under constant surveillance that began immediately after his release and was renewed in October 1967 by the decision of the Secretariat (Ministry) of Interior of the Socialist Republic of Serbia.<sup>93</sup> His flat was bugged and he seemed to be aware of it since he made all important conversations outside of his apartment.<sup>94</sup> He was also aware that his correspondence was under surveillance since some letters were sent but never reached him.

From the personal file of Djurović one finds out that the Yugoslav secret service was able to recruit a considerable number of informers from the ranks of former convicts. Obviously, the original idea to recruit noses in the penitentiary who would become informers once they were set free bore fruit. Four persons spied on Djurović and submitted written reports to the UDBA. Their code names are “Ćosić”, “Kuzman” (UDBA No. 572), “Oskar” (UDBA No. 596), and “Lale” (UDBA No. 611). It is obvious from the reports that “Ćosić”, “Kuzman” and “Oskar” were former convicts of the Sremska Mitrovica penitentiary who enjoyed Djurović’s trust, since he saw them as his fellow sufferers. “Oskar” is also known to have been born in the village of Velika Drenova, and a plumber by occupation.<sup>95</sup> “Oskar” became

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<sup>92</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 96–99.

<sup>93</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 89, 95, 220 and 226.

<sup>94</sup> Report by “Oskar”, 23 May 1967. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 200.

<sup>95</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 128 and 210. Djurović also thought of asking his friends from the US Embassy in Belgrade to employ “Oskar” as a plumber at the Embassy. Report by “Oskar”, 21 Nov. 1966.

so close to Djurović that Djurović invited him to spend summer vacations with him in 1967, and insisted that he would not go unless “Oskar” agreed to come with him.<sup>96</sup>

Djurović’s confidence in “Oskar” was fatal. It led to his second arrest six years later, since “Oskar” gathered valuable information for the SDB that was later used to construct Djurović’s second trial. On 29 April 1967, “Oskar” informed Djurović that he had been issued a passport, and Djurović decided to send him to Paris to visit Andra Lončarić, a person who had been close to Djurović during his imprisonment in Sremska Mitrovica. Lončarić was known to be inclined to organise violent actions against Yugoslav communists. Djurović provided “Oskar” with a password that would convince Lončarić that he had been sent by Djurović. He also advised him to be very careful in Paris, since the UDBA had infiltrated into many émigré circles. Then Djurović sent a letter to Lončarić, pretending to be a female acquaintance of his, announcing that Lončarić would have a visitor in mid-June. The letter came into the possession of the SDB.<sup>97</sup> There is no information in Djurović’s file on what exactly happened in Paris, but “Oskar” remained his “friend” and, after a short break in the second half of 1967, he continued to submit reports on Djurović.

Djurović’s activities were observed also by UDBA local branches and even by the UDBA for Macedonia in January 1968. Overall, there are three reports by “Ćosić” (two from April 1962, and one from December 1963), fourteen by “Kuzman” (from February 1964 to January 1969), twenty by “Oskar” (from November 1964 to May 1971), and three by “Lale” (two from April 1968, and one from April 1971). In other words, some forty reports submitted in a nine-year period. There are also dozens of reports by UDBA officials based on the information supplied by these four informers, reports by other informers and the recorded conversations he had in his flat.

Like other former convicts, Djurović tried to find employment, but the UDBA made sure that it did not happen. The experience of his friend and associate, former YHA Captain, Radomir Milošević nicknamed Čeda, was very much the same. He was released from Sremska Mitrovica on 30 December 1958, after fourteen years of imprisonment. He spoke three foreign languages, a skill that was quite sought-after in Belgrade at the time. Yet, no one dared employ him. He finally applied to a job as a translator for the US embassy in Belgrade and was admitted in 1959. Since Djurović had the same problem, Milošević arranged for him to translate for the US embassy, but under his wife’s or someone else’s name, which was approved

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<sup>96</sup> Report by “Oskar” to SDB, 12 Apr. 1967. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 190–192.

<sup>97</sup> AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 193 and 200–201.



by Milošević's chief at the embassy, Benson. Djurović was also engaged as a translator by many of his friends. It is known from Milošević's memoirs that Djurović translated four books from the Dr. Dolittle series for a well-known Serbian publisher (Dečje novine). The publisher's legal representative was Života Lazić, an YHA sympathiser,<sup>98</sup> and he arranged for Djurović to translate Dr. Dolittle, but under Milošević's name.<sup>99</sup> Also, considered the informal leader of the YHA in Serbia, Djurović received occasional financial support from several emigrants.

During the period of eleven and a half years between two imprisonments, the UDBA (renamed SDB/State Security Agency, in 1964) surrounded not only Djurović but also his associates and friends with a network of agents. It was less than sympathetic to the affection that some of his friends had for him. Therefore, its agents openly told Radomir Milošević that he would get a passport if he stopped socialising with Djurović. However, they remained friends, and Milošević mentions that they and their wives travelled together around the country and went to the seaside once.<sup>100</sup>

The UDBA also infiltrated into the circles of freemasons in Belgrade through the "Belgrade lodge" and the "Yugoslav lodge". These were the surviving remnants of pre-war Belgrade freemasonry. As early as the mid 1950s, members of these lodges began to send reports to freemasons and distinguished emigrants in the West, with the aim to criticise Yugoslav authorities in political circles of Western democracies. From 1956, the "Yugoslav lodge" took the lead, headed by Vojislav Paljić, a pre-war judge, and Božidar Pavlović, a barrister. The two of them kept contact with American freemasons. On the recommendation of Paljić and Pavlović, Dr. Djurović prepared a special report addressed to Luther Smith, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdic-

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<sup>98</sup> Belgrade barrister and bibliophile Života Lazić (1927–2010) kept at his home five typewritten works of Dr. Djurović. One of these, "Reflections on Death", ends with Djurović's handwritten dedication to Lazić and his heirs "to use it when circumstances permit". "Advokat koji je poklonio sedam kamiona knjiga" [A barrister who donated seven trucks of books], *Politika*, 5 Nov. 2011.

<sup>99</sup> Milošević, *Zakasneli raport*, 168–274, mentions that Djurović translated four books from Hugh Lofting's Dr. Dolittle series under his name. I have been able to find three: Hju Lofting, *Doktor Dulitl ZOO* [trans. Radomir Milošević] (Gornji Milanovac: Dečje novine, 1979); *Doktor Dulitl vrt* [tr. Radomir Milošević] (Gornji Milanovac: Dečje novine, 1979); and *Putovanje doktora Dulitla* [tr. Radomir Milošević] (Gornji Milanovac: Dečje novine, 1981). There is yet another book with "the nicest true stories from the Wild West" translated for Dečje novine under Milošević's name: *Najlepše istinite priče Divljeg Zapada* (Gornji Milanovac: Dečje novine, 1981).

<sup>100</sup> Milošević, *Zakasneli raport*, 173.

tion in Washington.<sup>101</sup> Pavlović died in early 1967, before Djurović completed the report. At least two versions of the report have survived.<sup>102</sup> It was written in or immediately after 1967, since Božidar Pavlović is referred to as “late”, and it also mentions the text accompanying the Order of Merit awarded posthumously to General Mihailović by US president Harry Truman in April 1948. Since the United States did not disclose the existence of this award and text until 1967, this is the earliest date the report could have been written.<sup>103</sup> The report came into the possession of the SDB, and was used as evidence against Djurović in 1973.

In spite of its well-developed network surrounding Djurović, the UDBA/SDB was only partially successful. Namely, some of Djurović’s reports did reach the Western world, including the report to Luther Smith, other reports reached Paris, and some of his writings were preserved by his friends in Serbia. However, the UDBA/SDB’s greatest failure in coping with Djurović was its complete inability to undermine his considerable influence on former convicts from the YHA ranks.

#### *Djurović’s tactical and political considerations*

Reports by SDB informers reveal only a part of Djurović’s tactical and political considerations. It should be borne in mind that he was very careful and that he kept even the most “successful” among informers, “Kuzman” and “Oskar”, only partially informed. Besides, the main informer, “Oskar”, was certainly far below Djurović’s education and it is highly unlikely that Djurović shared complicated concepts with him. Therefore, the preserved reports certainly offer a somewhat distorted picture of Djurović’s activities and considerations, but they still provide some insights.

Djurović believed that ex-convicts and other anticommunists should stay in Yugoslavia and organise activities rather than leave the country. He apparently had channels to leave through emigration and was encouraged

<sup>101</sup> In 1983 Boško Matić’s article titled “Masons” in the journal published by the Ministry of Interior of Serbia demonstrates how deep was the coverage of both Masonic lodges in Belgrade by UDBA/SDB. At the same time it shows that the SDB did not have quite reliable data. For instance, Matić attributes the authorship of the book *Tito’s dungeons in Yugoslavia* to Djura Djurović. This book was published under a pseudonym, Jastreblaković, but its real author was Milan L. Rajić, another ex-prisoner of Sremska Mitrovica. Boško Matić, “Masoni”, *Bezbednost* 1 (1983), 70–92.

<sup>102</sup> One was in the late Života Lazić’s private collection and now is in the author’s possession, and the other is in Djurović’s personal file of UDBA/SDB. They slightly differ in detail.

<sup>103</sup> Gregory A. Freeman, *The Forgotten 500: the untold story of the men who risked all for the greatest rescue mission of World War II* (New York: Nal Caliber, 2008), 271.

by some Americans to do that, but he never tried to use these channels. He spoke along these lines with his friends and succeeded in dissuading engineer Veličković from leaving,<sup>104</sup> and certainly influenced the decision of some other hesitant anticommunists to stay in Yugoslavia. From his friends and associates who stayed in the country he formed some sort of a new Ravna Gora circle. He thought that it was very important to keep this circle vigilant and prepared in case of a favourable twist of circumstances. He expected that he would be consulted on the new government if communism began to collapse.<sup>105</sup>

To make some of his less educated associates more operative, he spared no time clarifying to them the meaning of terms such as democracy, dictatorship and totalitarianism. For instance, he gave such lessons to his associate Zagorka Kojić-Stojanović, who was his typist and whose apartment was apparently also wired.<sup>106</sup>

He was encouraged in his expectations by some political developments in communist Yugoslavia, such as, for instance, the downfall of Aleksandar Ranković in 1966. Ranković had been in charge of the Yugoslav secret service network since its inception in 1944 and therefore was particularly disliked by political convicts. Moreover, Djurović thought of him as being a pro-Soviet man and of Josip Broz as pro-American and, therefore, although an opponent of both, he preferred Yugoslav dictator Josip Broz. From 1968, when Josip Broz turned seventy-six, he expected that he would die within a year or two and that his death would cause chaos.<sup>107</sup> Djurović and other ex-convicts carefully followed occasional activities of former Yugoslav supporters of Stalin and were fearful of what might happen if they came to power in Yugoslavia. In this regard, Djurović considered the Yugoslav breakaway from the Russians in 1948/49 as “the life achievement” of Josip Broz.<sup>108</sup>

He carefully followed Cold-War disputes between the Soviet Union and the United States, hoping that the US would break with the Soviets. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Djurović and some other followers of the

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<sup>104</sup> Report by “Kuzman”, 7 Feb. 1967. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 186.

<sup>105</sup> Report by “Kuzman”, 19 Sept. 1967. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 224.

<sup>106</sup> Official minutes by SDB officer Lj. Ljubičić, dated 21 March 1968. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 248.

<sup>107</sup> Report by “Oskar”, 8 Apr. 1968. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 253.

<sup>108</sup> Report by “Oskar”, 14 May 1970. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 287–288.

YHA thought of moving to Topola, a town in central Serbia, to the house of the former military judge from the YHA ranks Gradimir Ciganović, in order to hide themselves there until circumstances permit them to renew their activities.<sup>109</sup>

Djurović saw the United States of America as the only possible foreign-policy ally of Ravna Gora and other anticommunist circles. In May 1967, encouraged by the April events in Greece, where a military junta took power, Djurović expected that American military bases could be used to help the downfall of communism in Yugoslavia.<sup>110</sup> He also had hopes that major changes would happen in Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1968, and he noticed a rise of nationalism in the countries of the Soviet bloc and hoped this would open possibilities for more action. In April 1968, however, he became aware that there was no Western (American) support for any big action against the Yugoslav regime.<sup>111</sup> Student protests in 1968 encouraged him to contemplate organising a formal opposition group, but he was not fully confident that its potential members would be loyal.<sup>112</sup> He also came to believe that there was an agreement between the United States and communist Yugoslavia, particularly in case of Soviet invasion, and that the Americans would defend Yugoslavia if such scenario happened.<sup>113</sup>

His most prominent activities included writing his own report for American freemasons in 1967, and helping Bogdan Krekić to compile “a socialist report” for French and Belgian socialists, and particularly for Guy Mollet, former Prime Minister of France. At the beginning of 1969, the SDB undertook “all security measures aimed at identifying channels by which Djurović sent materials abroad”,<sup>114</sup> but was not fully successful in this endeavour. Djurović carefully followed the economic situation in Yugoslavia, statistical data, and the disposition of young people, and he continued to write reports until the moment he was arrested for the second time.

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<sup>109</sup> Official minutes by SDB officer B. Nedeljković, 23 May 1967. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 202–203.

<sup>110</sup> Report by “Kuzman”, 6 May 1967. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 195.

<sup>111</sup> Report by “Lale”, 12 Apr. 1968. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 255.

<sup>112</sup> Report by “Oskar”, 10 June 1968. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 263.

<sup>113</sup> Reports by “Oskar”, 14 May 1970 and 3 Nov. 1970. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 288 and 296.

<sup>114</sup> Official minutes by Lj. Ljubičić, SDB officer, 19 Feb. 1969. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, p. 276.

*New arrest and new trial*

In September 1974, the Yugoslav communist regime staged a new trial of Dr. Djura Djurović. The trial is important for the analysis of the state of the judiciary in the communist Yugoslavia of the time, and it is also a good indicator of the increased level of authoritarianism of the Yugoslav state in the 1970s. Lack of legal knowledge and insufficiently careful analysis of the preserved documents may lead historians dealing with repression to unreliable conclusions.<sup>115</sup> Criticism of legal sources is not possible without knowledge of both Yugoslav communist penal law and practices implemented in proceedings in the field of penal law in the SFRY. The trial of Djura Djurović offers a valuable insight into legal practice, since the text of the verdict may be compared with an independent report prepared for the Amnesty International by Prof. Christiaan Frederik Rüter from Amsterdam.

In early November 1973, the District Court of Belgrade received “anonymously” mailed texts attributed to Dr. Djura Djurović. They were passed on to the UDBA. On 22 November 1973, Dr. Djurović and Zagorka Stojanović were arrested. The Secretary for Internal Affairs (Minister of Interior) of Serbia sent a letter mentioning Djurović’s and Stojanović’s connections with the SOPO (*Srpski omladinski pokret oslobodjenja*/Serbian Youth Liberation Movement)<sup>116</sup> and with Andrija Lončarić, a Serbian emigrant who had served his sentence and was pardoned at the same time as Djurović. On 10 March 1969, Lončarić was killed in Paris, in an SDB-organised action. He is widely believed to have been an organiser of the SOPO, although not even today is there a clear picture of how big and operative this organisation was, and Prof. Rüter was not even sure if the SOPO had ever existed.

There indeed was some secret communication between Djurović and Lončarić, particularly in 1967–68 and, as we have seen, Djurović even sent his “friend”, the ex-political convict “Oskar”, to meet with Lončarić in 1967. However, Djurović was essentially opposed to Lončarić’s strategy, since the latter believed that the struggle against the communist regime should be led by emigrants, whereas Djurović gave preference to the building and maintenance of an anticommunist network in Yugoslavia, which should be used to take power in Yugoslavia once the United States entered into an open conflict with the Yugoslav regime. Djurović was also opposed to any violent action against Yugoslav communists and considered that the remnants of the Ravna Gora Movement had to differ in this respect from ustasha émi-

<sup>115</sup> An obvious exception is the memoirs of Dimitrije Djordjević, who was well aware of the perverted practice of Yugoslav communist courts and who vividly described how justice was ridiculed in these courts.

<sup>116</sup> SOPO is believed to have been established in late 1966.

grés, who amply used terrorist methods. This means that Djurović's position was moderate and actually opposed to what Lončarić was doing. The SDB had information on all of this.<sup>117</sup> Therefore, the charges against him were fabricated. They concerned something that the SDB had been fully aware of for some six years, and "Oskar" must have submitted oral and written reports to the SDB on his visit to Paris in June 1967. Besides, by the time the prosecutor pressed charges against Djurović, Lončarić had already been dead for more than four years. Therefore, Djurović's contact with Lončarić was only a pretext for a case against him. The real reason was the crisis of Yugoslav communism, the rise of nationalism in Croatia and elsewhere in Yugoslavia, and the resulting fear of the Yugoslav dictator Josip Broz and some of his associates in 1972–74 that their position might be jeopardised. As a result, in that period all possible "enemies" were arrested and tried.

The Office of the Public Prosecutor waited for the maximum duration of detention to expire, including permitted extensions. Only on the day when the detention had to be terminated legally (21 May 1974 or, in other words, six months after the arrest) did the Prosecutor's Office press charges. Djurović and Stojanović were incriminated for "participating in hostile activities against Yugoslavia" under Article 109 of the Penal Code.

The trial took place between 16 September and 21 October 1974. The Panel presided by judge Dragomir Nikolić, comprised judge Djuro Svorcan and three lay members-jurymen (*porotnici*), Draga Kovačević, Momir Popović and Marija Tomić. Dr. Djurović was defended by barristers Vitomir Knežević from Belgrade,<sup>118</sup> and Vladimir Ivković from Zagreb. The Prosecutor's Office was represented by Deputy District Attorney Stojan Miletić.<sup>119</sup>

The verdict includes "statements" given by Djura Djurović. However, Yugoslav communist courts tended to use typists only exceptionally. This practice has continued in Serbia even after the fall of communism. Therefore a serious researcher must take "statements" given by the accused with caution, since the typist only typed down the summary made by the presiding judge. This means that the "statements" attributed to Djurović were dictated by the judge who presided the panel, and this inevitably means that the judge made various abridgements, shortenings and unavoidable simpli-

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<sup>117</sup> Reports by "Oskar", 3 May 1967, and "Kuzman", 6 May 1967; official minutes by Lj. Ljubičić, SDB officer, 21 Mar. 1968. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 194, 196 and 248.

<sup>118</sup> Vitomir Knežević, a well-known Belgrade barrister who defended the accused in many politically motivated cases in communist Yugoslavia in the 1970s and 1980s.

<sup>119</sup> Data have been taken from the verdict of the District Court of Belgrade, No. 485/74, 23 Oct. 1974.



fications that were self-evident to the persons present, but that make it difficult for a researcher to understand them several decades later. Therefore, this and other verdicts of Yugoslav communist courts may provide a blurred and distorted picture of what the participants in the proceedings really said.

Fortunately, the proceedings were attended by Prof. Rüter,<sup>120</sup> who put together a wider report for the Research Department of the Amnesty International in London, dated 28 October. On 15 November 1974, he sent an abridged version of the report to Secretary-General, marking it as confidential and with a remark to show it first to Yugoslav authorities in order to try to influence them, and to publish it only later. Prof. Rüter first approached the Yugoslav embassy at The Hague, and then was in Belgrade from 13 to 19 October 1974. In the Yugoslav capital, he was in contact with a colleague, Dimitrijević, professor of penal law at the University of Belgrade,<sup>121</sup> and with “a Belgrade correspondent of a Dutch newspaper”. Upon his arrival in Belgrade, Rüter had to face the fact that Western embassies refused to give him anything that was likely to cause strained relations with Yugoslavia. Even the Dutch embassy refused to help him.

Still, “officials” appeared in the court, but “officials” of the SDB. It was not too difficult for Rüter to guess that the persons who introduced themselves as “law students”, but who knew nothing about Yugoslav penal law, were actually SDB agents. His assumption was only strengthened when there appeared a woman who spoke English and said that she was also a “law student”. These “students” showed great interest in the Amnesty International, and even wanted to see Rüter’s Dutch passport.

Amnesty International’s observer places the proceedings in the context of decisions made by the 20th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia held in May 1974, which announced a showdown with all who opposed the official party line. The list included political opponents (pro-Soviet elements, chetniks, scholars who supported a critical socialist approach advocated by the journal *Praxis*, and ustashas), and opponents who advocated separatism in the member republics. Rüter assessed Djurović’s activities as harmless for the Yugoslav regime and, therefore, saw his arrest as the “result of increased measures, and criminal proceedings, against all dissidents”. He characterised Djurović as “a strong personality of great erudition and substantial courage”. What made a particular impression on him

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<sup>120</sup> Christiaan Frederik Rüter (b. 1938), lecturer and professor of penal law at the University of Amsterdam (1972–2003).

<sup>121</sup> This is probably Dr. Dragoljub Dimitrijević who was professor at the Belgrade University Law School, chair of the Department for Penal Law, and director of Law School’s Institute for Criminology. Cf. *Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji* [Who’s who in Yugoslavia] (Belgrade: Hronometar, 1970), 205.

was Djurović's statement given at the beginning of the trial, "that he was old and therefore feared neither death nor prison".<sup>122</sup>

On 13 March 1975, the Federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs entered a translation of this report into its records, and the SDB for Serbia did the same a day later. Rüter noticed a peculiar fact. Although the state security possessed a document considered by the Prosecutor's Office as key evidence against Djurović (the document concerned contacts of the accused with Lončarić), the detention of Djurović was prolonged up to the maximum allowed period, and the prosecutor pressed charges only one day before the legal deadline for release of the detainees. Rüter compiled a chronology of the trial covering pre-trial proceedings. The chronology clearly demonstrates that the written evidence whose authorship was attributed to Djurović reached the District Court of Belgrade in early November 1973. The District Court forwarded it to the organs of the state security, and Dr. Djurović and Zagorka Stojanović were arrested on 22 November. The prosecutor submitted the indictment on 21 May 1974. Such a long detention, in Rüter's opinion, was meant to "reduce resistance of Mrs. Stojanović and to obtain her statements that would incriminate Dr. Djurović". Rüter believed that this was the only reason why Mrs. Stojanović had been accused at all.

Although Rüter had no previous experience with court proceedings in Yugoslavia, he easily noticed two key bizarre elements in Yugoslav judicial procedure. The first was that there were in the five-man panel three jurymen who just sat there, and that there was no stenographer, but instead the presiding judge dictated the statements both of the prosecutor and of the accused to a typist. Rüter observed that the three jurymen did not say a word during the entire trial, and the second professional judge said something only once. "The president of the panel directed proceedings in a very superficial way. It was obvious that he was in a hurry." Rüter also noticed that: "the presiding judge dictated into the record the decisions of the court, the speeches of the Defence and the Prosecution, the statements of the accused and experts' statements." Rüter assumed that the presiding judge, Nikolić, acted "on Party orders".

The most relevant observations of Prof. Rüter were summarised in Section 9 of his report. He had objections to preliminary procedures and to the circumstances under which Dr. Djurović was arrested. From what he witnessed and from what information he was able to gather, Rüter concluded "that there is a justifiable doubt that the decision on Djurović's guilt had

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<sup>122</sup> Since I had at my disposal only a Serbian translation of Rüter's report, I was compelled to translate certain quotations back into English. Therefore, the original report sent to the Amnesty International was certainly phrased somewhat differently, but the quotations have the same meaning.

been made long before the proceedings began.” Djurović was not given the chance to organise his defence properly. The court and the presiding judge in particular acted with bias. The issue of Djurović’s health was not sufficiently taken into consideration. The way in which the court had obtained evidence (publications and letters) increased his fears. The evidence had been sent to the court in November 1973 in an anonymous letter (signed “an old Yugoslav”) from Paris. During the trial the prosecutor presented letters that had not been presented before.

Rüter specified five problems:

1. There were threats the prosecutor made against the barristers, and the presiding judge did not even give him a warning. Previously, Rüter clarified that, on the session of 18 October 1974 which he had attended, barrister Knežević accused the presiding judge of partiality. Reacting to this, the prosecutor, who was very annoyed, said that Knežević had made several insinuations against state organs. Therefore it was not only the right of the court but also its duty to initiate proceedings against barrister Knežević before a disciplinary panel of the Bar Association. The prosecutor also said that he himself would check if such proceedings were initiated and in case of a negative finding he would carry it through himself.

2. The presiding judge took on to a great extent the role of the prosecutor (the prosecutor hardly participated in discussions with the barristers since the presiding judge did it).

3. Motion to terminate detention was rejected on the grounds that there was a danger that similar criminal acts might be repeated (in spite of the fact that Lončarić was dead and that the act for which Djurović was accused had been committed five years earlier).

4. The court ignored the fact that barrister Ivković had to be absent on 18 October 1974, with an explanation that the court did not have the available time after 18 October. Later, it became obvious that there had been the available time.

5. No attention was paid to medical reports and the proceedings continued in spite of Djurović’s requests.<sup>123</sup>

The trial was covered not only by Western observers, but also by Western analysts. In a 33-page typewritten report by Slobodan Stanković on the happenings in communist Yugoslavia in 1974, a summary of the trial of Djurović covers half a page. Stanković was an analyst of a Radio Free Europe research unit and he prepared the report “for the use of editors and

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<sup>123</sup> C. F. Rüter, *Izveštaj o sudjenju Djuri Djuroviću i drugima pred Okružnim sudom u Beogradu* [Report on the trial of Djura Djurović and others before the District Court in Belgrade], 15 Nov. 1974. AS, Fond OZNA/UDBA, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, pp. 403–423.

policy staff of Radio Free Europe”. Djurović was described as a “leading member of the wartime National Committee of the Anti-Axis and Anti-communist Resistance movement led by General Dragoljub Mihailovic.”<sup>124</sup>

The verdict was pronounced on 23 October 1974, and both of the accused were found guilty:

For coming into contact, in the period from 1964 to the end of 1969, with the foreign-based chetnik organisation SOPO, through Andrija Lončarić, one of the officials of this chetnik organisation, otherwise an acquaintance of the accused, Djura Djurović and Zagorka Stojanović. Because all are participants in the notorious chetnik movement, they maintained contacts with it by sending various pamphlets and letters jointly prepared in Belgrade. They also helped its work in conducting hostile activities, and to this end they did the following:

- On an undetermined date in the period from 1964 to the end of 1969 they wrote, typed and delivered the following pamphlets: “Forwards – a general insight”, “Andrija’s imprisonment – the testimony of a fellow sufferer”, “Tito’s prisons”, “How to destroy corruption”, “After 20 years of experience”, “Fight of the tillers for land and freedom”, with an aim to publish them abroad in journals of chetnik organisations, and also

- By maintaining contact with the chetnik Andrija Lončarić, an official of the chetnik organisation SOPO, they sent him several letters delivered by Zagorka Stojanović informing him that the prepared pamphlets were sent on activities of the accused Djurović, and that he received help sent to him. They organised meetings in such a way that Zagorka Stojanović went to Paris, had meetings there with Lončarić and passed to him messages of Djura Djurović regarding a plan for activities of the chetnik organisation and its operational tactics. They were receiving letters from him and in that way were in contact with him until he was killed in Paris, in an internal clash of various chetnik groups,

- Thereby they committed the criminal act of PARTICIPATING IN HOSTILE ACTIVITIES AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA under Article 109 of the Penal Code.<sup>125</sup>

A day after the verdict was read out, *Politika* informed its readers that Dr. Djura Djurović was sentenced to five years of severe imprisonment, and that the same day the writer Ivan Ivanović was sentenced to two years in prison by the District Court in Prokuplje.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>124</sup> Slobodan Stankovic, “Yugoslavia 1974”, 23 Dec. 1974, Open Society Archives, No. 81-3-1.

<sup>125</sup> Verdict of the District Court of Belgrade, K 485/74, AKPDZ, Pers. file of Djura (Čedomir) Djurović, No. 14.591.

<sup>126</sup> “Dr Djuri Djuroviću pet godina strogog zatvora” [Five years of severe prison to Dr. Djura Djurović], *Politika*, 24 Oct. 1974, p. 12.

*In the Penitentiary of Zabela*

On 19 June 1975, nineteen months after his arrest, Djurović was transferred to the Penitentiary of Zabela to serve his sentence. This must have evoked bitter memories of his first imprisonment. One of the most despised persons in his life, the warden of his former prison in Sremska Mitrovica, still held the post. Milenović sent a letter to Zabela with a characterisation of Djurović, mentioning that he had been an “initiator and organiser of hostile activities in the penitentiary”, and that for such activities he had been “isolated in special premises with a group of the most reactionary elements, and separated from other convicts until 1953. Later he did not expose himself openly, but kept to himself and to a circle of the closest likeminded persons.”<sup>127</sup>

Djurović considered his second sentence as profoundly unjust. In a short handwritten autobiography sketched in Zabela, he claims that he took his first sentence in 1945 as a normal thing, and would have taken as normal even capital punishment: “I belonged to a movement that was defeated in the revolution. The winner had the right to settle accounts with the defeated as it saw fit.” In contrast, he considered his second sentence as “the greatest injustice inflicted on me by the court, since I did not commit the crime for which I was sentenced under article 109 of the Penal Code.”<sup>128</sup>

Although he was in his mid seventies, he was still considered an enemy of communism. In June 1975, Svetislav Mitić, an official of the Penitentiary of Zabela, wrote a report on Djurović: “It is quite certain that the convict still has an utterly hostile attitude towards our state and social system. It is quite possible that he may try to spread his ideas among the convicts during his prison term. Therefore maximum attention should be paid to his behaviour, and especially to his behaviour in this area. It would be an illusion to undertake anything in the way of re-education.”<sup>129</sup> Being considered a potential threat, he was sent to a closed part of the penitentiary by the decision of the warden Aleksandar Stefanović.<sup>130</sup>

His personal file includes information on his wife and a handwritten remark that all of his mails “should be given to Marko”. This means that his entire correspondence was under strict surveillance. Thus, one can find in his file a handwritten letter he addressed to his barrister Ivković, which

<sup>127</sup> Letter of Dušan Milenović, warden of the Penitentiary of Sremska Mitrovica, to the Penitentiary Zabela, 10 July 1975. AKPDZ, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović, No. 27/12.

<sup>128</sup> Djuro Djurović, “Autobiografija”, AKPDZ, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

<sup>129</sup> Report on conversations with the sentenced persons compiled by Svetislav Mitić, 30 June 1975. AKPDZ, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

<sup>130</sup> Decision of the Warden, 3 July 1975, AKPDZ, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

probably never left the penitentiary. There was a special printed form that the administration of the penitentiary kept on all visits, received packages, and sent and received letters using a kind of codes. Codes related to two of his sent letters are encircled, probably meaning that these particular two deserved some special attention or treatment.

From the opinion of his instructor Živko Jovanović, who was in charge of “re-education”, one finds out that he soon gained the trust of other convicts. The instructor thought that this should be attributed to his “bribes” given to other convicts. What was certainly more important was his previous experience of harshest imprisonment, where he was mixed with criminals and had to learn how to behave under such circumstances. In the instructor’s opinion, his attitude to his “criminal act” represented “a group of his intellectual and emotional ideas against the socialist polity in our country”. Therefore, the instructor concluded that there were no conditions for granting him a pardon, since “the punishment has no educational effect on him”.<sup>131</sup> The opinion submitted by another instructor was similar. His intellectual abilities were assessed as above average despite his age, and his “practical intelligence” as “the best dimension of his general mental abilities”. Yet, his attitude to the “committed criminal act” was “totally negative”. It was assessed again that no “educational treatment” would prove effective since “his intellectual ideas are directed against the socialist polity of our country”.<sup>132</sup>

His main act of rebellion during his stay in Zabela took place when he obtained a cap that resembled the traditional Serbian cap called *šajkača*, which was interpreted by the administration of the penitentiary as a chetnik symbol, and in January 1976 Dr. Djurović was punished with a one-month ban on using money and ten days in solitary confinement.

He had already been suffering from several illnesses before his second imprisonment and they continued during prison days in Zabela. They included cardiomyopathy, arterial hypertension and emphysema. There was a lack of medicines, and Dr. Djurović lost nine kilos during the first months of his imprisonment. Therefore, his wife Ana sent an appeal to the prison warden reminding him of “socialist humanism of which I have heard so much on television”. She requested that Dr. Djurović should be allowed to receive dietetic packages and that she should be allowed to bring medicines, given that her husband had had a cardiac attack with absolute arrhythmia which lasted for thirty hours since there were no medicines in the prison infirmary. On the back side of the letter is a handwritten remark that pack-

<sup>131</sup> Opinion of the instructor, 21 Jan. 1976, AKPDZ, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

<sup>132</sup> Opinion of Ž. Jovanović, 8 Mar. 1977, AKPDZ, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.



ages are allowed, but that there is no need for his family to bring medicines "since our pharmacy has them".<sup>133</sup>

Although the report the instructor in charge of him submitted in March 1977 was negative, he was pardoned by the Presidency of the SFRY on 22 November 1977. A telegram with this decision arrived in Požarevac on 25 November and he was released the same day.<sup>134</sup> Previously, the Federal Council for the Protection of Constitutional Order, on its session of 6 April 1977, discussed the pros and cons of amnesty and pardon. The Council concluded that "foreign factors" undertook actions and exerted pressures aimed at liberating political convicts, and they all referred to six persons: Mihajlo Mihajlov, Sava Banković, Djuro Djurović, Marko Veselica, Vladimir Dapčević and Franc Miklavčič. The President of Yugoslavia received some 10,300 appeals. Of these, more than 5,000 were for Miklavčič, more than 4,000 for Djura Djurović, and 595 for Mihajlov.<sup>135</sup> A number of foreign appeals for Djurović is impressive indeed and testifies to an increasing Western interest in the violation of human rights in communist Yugoslavia in the 1970s. US President Jimmy Carter also insisted on amnesty for political prisoners in communist Yugoslavia, and the organisation of sessions of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in Belgrade (October 1977 – March 1978) exposed Yugoslavia to the Western eyes. Besides, Yugoslavia was very much dependent on Western loans at the time.

The amnesty also included communist dissident Mihailo Mihailov, Croat professor Marko Veselica, Slovene judge Franc Miklavčič, and more than two hundred other political prisoners. Each member republic made a list of persons proposed to be pardoned and Djurović was on the list of the Socialist Republic of Serbia. The text that accompanies this proposal ends with the following assessment of Djurović: "He has not changed his political convictions and therefore there are no results in this regard."<sup>136</sup> After

<sup>133</sup> Letter of 23 Oct. 1975, AKPDZ, Pers. file of Dj. Djurović.

<sup>134</sup> AKPDZ, Pers. file of Djura Djurović.

<sup>135</sup> AJ, Fond 803 (Presidency of SFRY), f. 46, "Informacija o amnestiji i pomilovanju lica osuđenih za politička krivična dela" (75. sednica Saveznog saveta za zaštitu ustavnog poretka održana 12. aprila 1977) [Information on amnesty and pardon for persons sentenced for political crimes (75th session of the Federal Council for the Protection of Constitutional Order held on 12 Apr. 1977)], p. 3. The document was tagged as "strictly confidential."

<sup>136</sup> Report titled: "Socijalistička Republika Srbija. Spisak osuđenih za krivična dela iz glave XV i XVI KZ SFRJ i krivičnih dela iz člana 157. KZ SFRJ koji se nalaze na izdržavanju izrečene kazne a predlažu se za pomilovanje povodom 29 novembra – Dana Republike", AJ, Fond 803 (Presidency of SFRY), f. 648.

twenty-one years of keeping Djurović in various prisons, the communist authorities had to recognise their complete inability to “reform” Djurović, even on the occasion of his pardoning.

The decision on amnesty for 724 prisoners, including 218 political prisoners, was brought by Yugoslav authorities with much reluctance and against their intimate wishes. In April 1977, the President of the SFRY, Josip Broz Tito, stated that no foreign pressure would force Yugoslav authorities to grant amnesty. Yet, three months later, on 1 July 1977, the Law on Pardon was enacted. A researcher of Radio Free Europe, Slobodan Stanković, devoted most of his report to the release of Mihailo Mihailov and shortlisted Djurović among the most prominent persons who were released, describing him as “a wartime political advisor of the nationalist guerilla leader General Draza Mihailovic”.<sup>137</sup>

The action of the Amnesty International was also of key importance and in May 1976 the readers of *The Times* were informed on two political convicts as two exemplary cases covered by Amnesty International: Dr. Djuro Djurović from Yugoslavia and Carlos Alvariza from Uruguay.<sup>138</sup>

Overall, Djurović spent twenty years, nine months and twenty-eight days in Yugoslav communist prisons. His first prison term lasted sixteen years, nine months and twenty-five days (8 June 1945 – 2 April 1962). His second term lasted four years and three days (22 November 1973 – 25 November 1977). Among the convicts in Yugoslav prisons designated as members of the “DM movement” (the movement of General Dragoljub Mihailović) Djurović holds a record together with Captain Slavoljub Vranješević, who served his first prison sentence together with Djurović in Sremska Mitrovica until 1963, was rearrested in 1976 and died in prison in Sremska Mitrovica in 1979.<sup>139</sup>

### *Djurović's contribution to the dismantlement of Yugoslav communist dictatorship*

Although one might conclude that Djurović's activities, particularly those performed in prisons, were harmless, and that his systematic activity, nota-

<sup>137</sup> Slobodan Stankovic, “Yugoslav Amnesty Assessed”, Radio Free Europe, RAD Background Report/233 (Yugoslavia), 29 Nov. 1977, No. 82-5094, Open Society Archives.

<sup>138</sup> Caroline Moorehead, “The power of shame as a weapon”, *The Times*, 24 May 1976, p. 16A.

<sup>139</sup> Cvetković, *Između srpa i čekića* 2, 238–239, made a list of political prisoners in communist Yugoslavia based on the duration of their imprisonment. Djurović ranks as second with “22 years” in prison. Even though Cvetković's calculation is not quite accurate, Djurović certainly holds the top of the list.

bly during his first imprisonment, was undertaken in vain, some findings of political anthropology seem to suggest otherwise. James S. Scott observes that apart from bloody peasant uprisings, villagers in authoritarian countries deprived of their rights may and usually do employ different tactics. It is an ongoing and everyday process in which peasants struggle against exploitation by pilfering, lying, foot-dragging, slander, minor sabotage and arson. He calls this sort of opposition to oppression “weapons of the weak”.<sup>140</sup> The political convicts in Sremska Mitrovica and elsewhere under Yugoslav communist dictatorship employed similar tactics and used the “weapons of the weak”. By doing this, they kept hundreds, possibly thousands, of the personnel of Sremska Mitrovica and other communist prisons tied down; moreover, they kept members of the state security apparatus and various state analysts engaged in controlling, monitoring and covering their activities.

Once they were pardoned, ex-convicts were able to organise more substantial and better synchronised activities. Again, the amount of energy, paperwork, and maintenance of a developed network of spies working for the UDBA/SDB, required substantial organisation and means on the part of the Yugoslav communist state in order to control and monitor Djurović and his network, other ex-convicts and other political opponents of Yugoslav communism, including communist dissidents. By keeping substantial portions of the state apparatus busy following its activities, Djurović’s group made the Yugoslav state more vulnerable. However, its main contribution to dismantling the Yugoslav communist regime was probably the way it affected the image of Yugoslavia abroad. By maintaining links with émigrés and Western embassies, this group kept foreign diplomats informed on the Yugoslav type of dictatorship and on the persecution of political opponents. In this way, they counterbalanced Yugoslav official propaganda that sought to portray the Yugoslav type of communism as a more humane socialism, essentially different from the Soviet model. This probably was the most important achievement of Djurović’s circle and other similar groups. In the 1970s, as a result of their efforts, a considerable number of articles critical of Yugoslav communism appeared in the Western press for the first time after 1946–49. Djurović, a former journalist, was particularly skilful in activating a network of friends which included many persons connected to the diplomatic community, and providing them with data and analyses detrimental to Yugoslav communism.

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<sup>140</sup> James S. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasants’ Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

*Last years*

He died on 2 April 1983, in A Section of the Hospital for Internal Medicine in Belgrade, from respiratory insufficiency and general languidness caused by *leucosis lymphocytica*. He had been treated for leukaemia in the same hospital since 1980.<sup>141</sup>

Some of his writings were confiscated by the UDBA on the occasion of his second arrest. He wanted to write memoirs, but his health problems prevented him from doing so in the period after his release. Djurović wrote his last work, "Reflections on death", in 1982. It includes many autobiographical elements. Djurović spoke of his various encounters with death and human suffering, and revealed a part of his inner world and his thoughts on facing death from a severe illness:

Man is a great mystery of the world. Death is a no smaller human mystery. Is it the ultimate end or a new beginning? No matter what answer will be given to this question, the very act of reflecting on death, be it by a theist or by an atheist, makes him nobler, more humane, more just, more responsible to himself and his kin and any other human. There is no doubt that an affirmative answer to the second part of the alternative will have more intense and more enduring effects than an affirmative answer to its first part. It is for this reason that a religious man finds it easier to reconcile himself with death.<sup>142</sup>

He was buried at a central Belgrade cemetery (Novo Groblje), in his wife's family sepulchre. He felt that the fall of communism was near, and this made him very satisfied. In accordance with his wishes, a wreath made of thorns, symbolising his life experience, was laid on the sepulchre. The wreath of thorns was indeed a symbol of his bitter life, but it was also a symbol of thousands of life stories of other former YHA members in communist Yugoslavia.

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323.22:929 Djurović, Djura*

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<sup>141</sup> Hospital for Internal Medicine—A Section, Belgrade, Discharge Summary signed by Dr. Milan Petrović (without date).

<sup>142</sup> Dr. Djura Djurović, "Razmišljanje o smrti", p. 48 (typescript in the author's collection). A slightly different version of the same text was published in a Belgrade journal: Djura Djurović, "Razmišljanje o smrti", *Hereticus* VII/1–2 (2009), 236.

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Unpublished works by Dr. Djura Djurović from the private collection of his friend, barrister Života Lazić, especially:

— “Izveštaj Luteru Smitu o stanju političkih zatvorenika u komunističkoj robijašnici u Sremskoj Mitrovici” [Report to Luther Smith on the condition of political convicts in the communist dungeon in Sremska Mitrovica] (a slightly different version of the report has been preserved in the OZNA/UDBA personal file of Djura Djurović in the Archives of Serbia, No. 720-01-16556, pp. 132–185)

— “Sećanja iz komunističke robijašnice u Sremskoj Mitrovici” [Memories from the communist dungeon in Sremska Mitrovica] (136 typewritten pages with few handwritten corrections), essentially an enlarged version of the report to Luther Smith. It is not signed and Djurović speaks of himself in the third person obviously fearing that the text might fall into UDBA/SDB hands.

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## Imagining the Serbs Revisionism in the Recent Historiography of Nineteenth-century Serbian History

**Abstract:** The end of the Cold War has brought about a complete change of the political and social context in the world. Consequently, history, as a scholarly discipline, has also undergone a significant transformation. In this broader context, with the destruction of Yugoslavia, the interpretations of the Serbian nineteenth century have been experiencing a far-reaching revision. It is necessary, therefore, to scrutinize the main topics of the debate on nineteenth-century Serbian history in recent world historiography, as well as to examine the main causes of this academic revision.

**Keywords:** historiography, nineteenth century, Serbs, Balkans, Yugoslavia, modernization, radicalism

### I

Writing on Balkan historiographies in the “Introduction” to his history of the Balkans, Mark Mazower remarks that “national histories, until very recently, presented the past as the inevitable and entirely deserved triumph of the Nation over its enemies”.<sup>1</sup> Yet, he also observes that “more recently, a disillusionment with nationalism has bred nostalgia for the days of empire”, which is why many historians have come to describe the Ottoman Empire as a “multicultural paradise”.<sup>2</sup> Mazower describes such an approach to the past as “normative history”. In this context, he is particularly critical of the type of normative history that seeks to understand the history of the Balkans through the theoretical model of “modernization”:

Normative history sets up one pattern of historical evolution as standard and then explains deviations from that. The nineteenth-century mind took it for granted that history worked in this way, and that what one was describing was the success or failure of any given society in climbing the path of progress from backwardness and barbarism to civilization. In preferring to talk about the path from tradition to modernity, twentieth-century scholars have changed the terms but retained much of the same linear view.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Mazower, *The Balkans: A Short History* (New York: Random House Inc., 2000), xlii.

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

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

However, history can be both deceptive and seductive. “The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there,” writes Leslie Poles Hartley in the famous, oft-quoted opening sentence of the novel *The Go-Between*. All too often, we tend to forget that people in the past were very different from us. The closer they are to our time or our social group, the more easily we tend to believe that they shared our own concerns or our own ideological convictions.

A distorted picture of the past is not based simply on errors or misconceptions. The wise Jacob Burckhardt drew some explicit distinctions when discussing *knowledge* and *intent*. According to him, behind a thirst for *knowledge* is the desire to understand the past; behind *intent*, however, is the desire to use it. This is a fine dividing line which, in his opinion, distinguishes history from journalism. A historian seeks to explain, whereas a journalist, having no wish to crack the shell of his own times and self-interest, makes value judgements.<sup>4</sup> Of course, Burckhardt was well aware that it is impossible to rid oneself from intent completely, just as he knew that many of the greatest historians did not hesitate to assume the role of historical judges. Even so, this distinction, as well as Mazower’s definition of “normative history”, undoubtedly leads us to a clearer profiling and preservation of the integrity of historiography as an academic discipline.

Temptation becomes much stronger if historians seek to understand the history of distant countries and cultures. It is not easy to sit in London, Moscow, Berlin, Paris or New York, and write a rational, unbiased history of the Serbs on the tails of a decade of bloody wars (1991–99) which, to put it mildly, have left no one indifferent.<sup>5</sup> In her influential and insightful book *Imagining the Balkans*, Maria Todorova has shown what sorts of prejudices and abuses can nest in the writings of foreign travellers throughout the history of the Balkans. After the “Orientalist discourse” which, according to Edward Said, leads from intellectual underestimation to colonial subjugation, now we also have a “Balkanist discourse”, similar in content and purpose.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Jacob Burckhardt, *Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen* (Berlin/Stuttgart: Verlag von Speemann, 1905), 10–12, 253–273.

<sup>5</sup> See *Yugoslavia and its Historians: Understanding the Balkan Wars of the 1990s*, eds. Norman M. Naimark and Holly Case (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), and therein particularly Dušan M. Djordjevich, “Clio amid the Ruins: Yugoslavia and its Predecessors in Recent Historiography”, 3–21; *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: A Scholars’ Initiative*, eds. Charles W. Ingrao and Thomas A. Emmert (Washington/West Lafayette: United States Institute of Peace Press and Purdue University Press, 2009). See also Aleksandar Timofejev, “Savremena ruska istoriografija o Srbiji”, *Tokovi istorije* 3 (2006), 200–213.

<sup>6</sup> Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3–20; Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), 1–28. For

The purpose of this article is to sketch out a picture of the nineteenth-century history of the Serbs as portrayed in recent world historiography, though with no pretensions to presenting an exhaustive analysis. Its focus is on works which have appeared since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, which is to say that they were written in a new political context, determined above all else by the Yugoslav wars between 1991 and 1999. Even the most cautious of historians will admit that their choice of topics is influenced by the present; the Balkan conflicts of today, it is thought, were conceived precisely in the turbulent changes of the nineteenth century. The limited length of this article necessarily narrows its focus to books and monographs, to academic historiography produced at major universities and research institutes with the longest tradition of engaging with the history of the Serbs and the Balkans. An analysis of the current revision of Serbian history in the work of Serbian historians should be the subject of a special article, since it has its own causes and inner logic.

## II

To say that the wars of 1991–1999 have produced a flood of speedily written histories to cater to current political trends and political contexts is common wisdom. It is perhaps better to say that the rationale for the vast majority of such works comes down to passing value judgements on the basis of the existing literature, frequently without being familiar with primary source materials or the Serbian language, and in almost all cases in line with the prevailing political trends of the time.

Context provides many answers. In the First World War, the Serbs found themselves on the side of the victors. Consequently, the works emanating from the most influential interwar academic centres (i.e. those of the victorious side) viewed their history, from the First Serbian Uprising to the creation of Yugoslavia, in a generally favourable manner; needless to say, the historiography of the defeated, and later totalitarian, academic centres saw nineteenth-century Serbian history differently. Although a similar stance was largely retained after the Second World War, the discourse on “Greater

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“Balkanism”, see also Eli Skopetea, “Orientalizam i Balkan”, *Istorijski časopis* 38 (1991), 131–143; Milica Bakić-Hayden and Robert M. Hayden, “Orientalist Variations on the Theme ‘Balkans’: Symbolic Geography in Recent Yugoslav Cultural Politics”, *Slavic Review* 51 (Spring 1992), 1–15; Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1998); Katherine Elizabeth Fleming, “Orientalism, the Balkans, and Balkan Historiography”, *American Historical Review* 105/4 (2000), 1218–1233; Bogoljub Šijaković, *A Critique of the Balkanistic Discourse: Contribution to the Phenomenology of Balkan Otherness* (Toronto: Serbian Literary Company, 2004).

Serbian” hegemony in interwar Yugoslavia, in the spirit of the official Titoist regime, began to make its way into world historiography. In the wars of the 1990s, the Serbs, once again viewed from the victorious and dominant academic centres, now found themselves on the “wrong” side. As a result, a wider revision of earlier interpretations of Serbian history, coupled with a search for the roots of “Serbian misconceptions”, was initiated. It seems that there are few nations in Europe whose history has been, in the last twenty years, subjected to so many value-based revisions and reinterpretations.

In this process of historical revisionism, several influential and oft-quoted books are of particular importance. The discourse on Greater Serbian nationalism has been very eloquently transposed into a new, post-Cold War era through Ivo Banac’s *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, where nineteenth-century Serbian history is covered by a long and biased introductory section.<sup>7</sup> However, the books that conspicuously stand out in terms of how widely read and influential they have been, and how hostile they are towards the Serbs, are those of Noel Malcolm, a columnist of the *Daily Telegraph* and fellow of All Souls College in Oxford.<sup>8</sup> This “new Edward Gibbon”, as an overexcited reviewer<sup>9</sup> describes him on the cover of Malcolm’s *Kosovo*, does, it is true, use diverse sources, including Albanian and, much less, Serbian. Even so, his books are ill-intentioned journalism cloaked in academic gowns more than real history. However, compared to Branimir Anzulovic’s *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide*, Malcolm’s works look like a bright example of honest research and flawless objectivity.<sup>10</sup> Anzulovic’s writing, closer to propaganda than to anything else, has not been nearly as influential as that of Banac and Malcolm, but it also deserves attention inasmuch as it all too frequently features in the literature referenced even by serious historians.

In order to understand the motives of these authors, let us turn to Burckhardt once more. According to him, the usual driving force behind *intent* is “patriotism”, which “often is nothing more than arrogance towards other nations” and “often consists in offending others. This kind of history is journalism”.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 21–140.

<sup>8</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1994), as well as his *Kosovo: A Short History* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

<sup>9</sup> Michael Foot, publicist and former Labour Party leader.

<sup>10</sup> Branimir Anzulovic, *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide* (London: Hurst & Co., 1999).

<sup>11</sup> Burckhardt, *Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen*, 11. There is no doubt that what we are dealing with in Banac and Anzulovic is their Croat patriotic intent. As regards the

On the other hand, it has to be said that among the books which, judging by how frequently they are quoted, have had a particularly important impact in shaping the contemporary image of the nineteenth-century Serbs, there are some very valuable works, to mention but the histories of the Balkans that provide an overall survey such as those by Leften Stavrianos, Stevan Pavlowitch, Barbara Jelavich and, especially, the exceptional *Balkan Worlds* of Traian Stoianovich.<sup>12</sup>

It is also encouraging that there still are a considerable number of very well-researched monographs looking at individual themes relating to the history of the Serbs in the nineteenth century. This group primarily includes published doctoral theses, such as Robin Okey's *Taming Balkan Nationalism: The Habsburg 'Civilizing Mission' in Bosnia 1878–1914*; Marie-Janine Calic's *Sozialgeschichte Serbiens 1815–1941: Der aufhaltsame Fortschritt während der Industrialisierung*; the intellectual biography of Nikola Pašić by Andrei Shemiakin; or the research undertaken by James Evans on the role of Great Britain in the creation of Yugoslavia.<sup>13</sup> The category of commendable examples also includes the study of Gale Stokes on the beginnings of political parties in Serbia; the book by Georges Castellan on the history of Serbia at the time of Karadjordje and Miloš Obrenović; Svetlana Danchenko's analysis of Russo-Serbian relations between 1878 and 1903; the books of David MacKenzie, and a number of others.<sup>14</sup>

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imperialistic, patriotic and other intent of Noel Malcolm, see Jovo Bakić, *Jugoslavija: Razaranje i njegovi tumaci* (Belgrade: Službeni glasnik and Filozofski fakultet, 2011), 343–385; *Response to Noel Malcolm's Book 'Kosovo: A Short History'*, ed. Slavenko Terzić (Belgrade: Institute of History, 2000); Aleksa Djilas, "Imagining Kosovo. A Biased New Account Fans Western Confusion", *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 1998), 124–131.

<sup>12</sup> Leften S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453* (London: Hurst & Co., 2000); Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans I–II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans 1804–1945* (London/New York: Longman, 1999); Traian Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds: The First and Last Europe* (New York/London: M. E. Sharpe, 1994).

<sup>13</sup> Robin Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism: The Habsburg 'Civilizing Mission' in Bosnia 1878–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007) (significantly expanded PhD thesis, defended in 1972); Marie-Janine Calic, *Sozialgeschichte Serbiens 1815–1941: Der aufhaltsame Fortschritt während der Industrialisierung* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1994) (Serb. ed. 2004); Andrei L. Shemiakin, *Ideologija Nikolaj Pashicha. Formirovanie i evoljutsiia (1868–1891)* (Moscow: Indrik, 1998); James Evans, *Great Britain and the Creation of Yugoslavia: Negotiating Balkan Nationality and Identity* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2008).

<sup>14</sup> Gale Stokes, *Politics as Development: The Emergence of Political Parties in Nineteenth-Century Serbia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1990); Georges Castellan, *Serbes d'autrefois: Aux origines de la Serbie moderne* (Brest: Armeline, 2005); Svetlana



## III

The recent historiography of Serbia and Serbs in the nineteenth century confirms the old truth that the history of a nation cannot be understood without using a comparative approach and situating it in a broader context. That the European context is the most fruitful context for Serbian history was shown long ago by Leopold Ranke in his *Serbian Revolution*.<sup>15</sup> After 1918, and particularly after 1945, Serbian history was usually placed in the broader framework of the history of the Yugoslav peoples. Yugoslavia was an attempt by the Serbian elites to escape from the Balkans into Central Europe; following the break-up of this state, historiography has begun to return Serbia into a Balkan context. But, historiography can only benefit from this "return to the Balkans". There is no doubt that the Balkans, particularly if the countries of the former Yugoslavia are subsumed under the term, is the smallest cultural and geographic whole within the framework of which, through comparison, Serbian history can be understood.

A survey of the history of the Serbs in the nineteenth century within the context of more recent histories of Europe is a matter for a separate article. It is clear, however, that today Serbian history is very often placed in an East-European setting. A good standard for this type of comparative approach was set by Robin Okey's *Eastern Europe*.<sup>16</sup> Originality, independent judgement and a critical approach being the characteristics of *The Making of Eastern Europe* by Philip Longworth,<sup>17</sup> the reader can only regret that the author has not paid more attention to the history of Serbia. However, more often cited in the literature is the much broader, and yet, when it comes to the history of Serbs in the nineteenth century, unreliable *History of Eastern Europe* written by Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries.<sup>18</sup> In their brief survey of

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I. Danchenko, *Razvitie serbskoi gosudarstvennosti i Rossiia 1878–1903* (Moscow: Institut slavianovedenia i balkanistiki, 1996); David MacKenzie, *Jovan Ristic: Outstanding Serbian Statesman* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2006), as well as his *Milovan Milovanovic: Talented and Peace-loving Diplomat* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> For an English translation see Leopold Ranke, *A History of Servia and the Servian Revolution* (London: John Murray, 1848).

<sup>16</sup> Robin Okey, *Eastern Europe 1740–1985: Feudalism to communism* (London/New York: Routledge, 1991; 1st ed. 1982).

<sup>17</sup> Philip Longworth, *The Making of Eastern Europe: From Prehistory to Postcommunism* (London: Macmillan, 1997; 1st ed. 1994; Serb. ed. 2002).

<sup>18</sup> Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change* (London/New York: Routledge, 2007; 1st ed. 1998), 5–7, 110–124.

nineteenth-century Serbian history in *The Balkans: A Post-communist History*, *knowledge* retreats before *intent*.<sup>19</sup>

In the more recent literature on the two Yugoslavias, the nineteenth century, if mentioned at all, is touched upon in just a few introductory pages. John Lampe's *Yugoslavia as History* is one of the exceptions in that it gives a somewhat more detailed explanation of the rise of the Yugoslav idea prior to 1918. This placement of pre-1918 Serbian history in the Yugoslav context is reminiscent of the literature that originated in the time of Yugoslavia.<sup>20</sup> John Allcock's *Explaining Yugoslavia* also stands out in terms of attention paid to the pre-1918 period.<sup>21</sup>

Among the most recent histories of the Balkans, Traian Stoianovich's *Balkan Worlds* holds an especially important place. Considering the innovativeness of his approach, the breadth of his views, the independence of judgement, and the new questions he raises, it would probably not be an overstatement to say that it is one of the best histories of the Balkans written over the last few decades. Stoianovich's other great contribution is the four-volume collection of his articles published under the title *Between East and West: The Balkan and Mediterranean Worlds*.<sup>22</sup> Among the best works of a more recent date are Stevan Pavlowitch's detailed and reliable *History of the Balkans 1804–1945*, written in the style of Stavrianos's *The Balkans since 1453*, and Barbara Jelavich's *History of the Balkans* (1983). Another very solid work is Georges Castellan's *History of the Balkans* from the fourteenth to the twentieth century.<sup>23</sup> The domination of both the English language and Anglo-Saxon academic centres being yet another important feature of the changed post-1989 context, the citedness of this book, as well as of Ed-

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<sup>19</sup> Robert Bideleux and Ian Jeffries, *The Balkans: A Post-communist History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 233–237.

<sup>20</sup> John H. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History. Twice there was a country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 39–98 (expanded ed. 2000). Lampe tried his hand at a history of the Balkans under a similarly inventive title, but it deals with the twentieth century, with only a summary overview of the previous period. John H. Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe: A Century of War and Transition* (Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 11–40. For a critical assessment of Lampe's work, see Aleksa Djilas, "The academic West and the Balkan test", *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans* 9/3 (2007), 328–332, as well as Lampe's, *Response*, in the same journal, 10/1 (2008), 113–115.

<sup>21</sup> John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

<sup>22</sup> Traian Stoianovich, *Between East and West: The Balkan and Mediterranean Worlds*, 4 vols. (New Rochelle/New York: A. D. Caratzas, 1992–1995).

<sup>23</sup> Georges Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans (XIV<sup>e</sup>–XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Paris: Fayard, 1991) (2nd ed. 1999; English ed. 1992).

gar Hösch's slightly earlier *History of the Balkans*,<sup>24</sup> has not been as high as that of, for instance, Denis Hupchik's *The Balkans from Communism to Constantinople*.<sup>25</sup> When it comes to the history of the Serbs in the nineteenth century, Hupchik's book is much less reliable than Castellan's, both factually and interpretatively. While being very well-informed on certain matters, Hupchik offers a presentation of the 1903–1914 period which is replete with factual errors and unconvincing arguments, particularly as regards the Yugoslav movement.<sup>26</sup>

Much like Noel Malcolm and Denis Hupchick, Tom Gallagher, in his book on the history of the Balkans from 1789 to 1989, expresses his dissatisfaction with the standoffish stance of the Western powers, particularly the British government of John Major, towards the demand that the Yugoslav crisis be settled through a confrontation with the Serbs.<sup>27</sup> While Hupchik even goes so far as to compare the stance of the West to Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policy towards Hitler, Gallagher, it has to be said, concedes that there was systematic violence on the part of not only Serbian, but also Croatian nationalists.<sup>28</sup> For Hupchik, the bombing of Serbia in 1999 was a "half measure", while Gallagher commends the newly-discovered resoluteness of Western governments.<sup>29</sup> Gallagher's book promises a great deal, the author being above all else interested in the role of the Great Powers in the Balkan conflicts; this, however, makes the reader's disappointment all the greater. When it comes to the Serbs in the nineteenth century, Gallagher the researcher is far less credible than Hupchick.<sup>30</sup>

Mark Mazower, in his *Balkans*, also relies on media-generated truths about the wars of the 1990s and the history of two Yugoslavias. However, when writing on the nineteenth century, Mazower uses more serious sources and literature, relying in particular on the work of Stavrianos, Stoianovich, Castellan and Jelavich. Indeed, there are in Mazower some original interpretations and observations concerning the nineteenth-century Balkans.

<sup>24</sup> Edgar Hösch, *Geschichte der Balkanländer: von der Frühzeit bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C. H. Beck Wissen, 2008) (1st ed. 1968; English ed. 1972).

<sup>25</sup> Dennis P. Hupchick, *The Balkans from Constantinople to Communism* (New York/Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004; 1st ed. 2002).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* 302–320.

<sup>27</sup> Tom Gallagher, *Outcast Europe: From Ottomans to Milošević* (London/New York: Routledge, 2005), vi–vii (1st ed. 2001).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* vi; Hupchick, *Balkans*, xi. See also Noel Malcolm, *Povijest Bosne: Kratki pregled* (Zagreb/Sarajevo: Novi Liber/Dani, 1995), IX–XIV, XXI–XXV.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* xii; Gallagher, *Outcast Europe*, 15–17.

<sup>30</sup> See, e.g., his comparison between Miloš Obrenović and Slobodan Milošević, or Petar Petrović Njegoš and Željko Ražnjatović Arkan (*ibid.*, 37–38, 53–54).

Particularly important is his understanding of the dynamic relationship between the imperialism of the Great Powers and the nationalism of the Balkan nations.<sup>31</sup>

The series of edited volumes under the title *Chelovek na Balkanakh*, published in St. Petersburg since 2002,<sup>32</sup> support the impression that this trend of accommodating the nineteenth-century history of the Serbs to the picture generated by the mass media has not taken place in Russian historiography. It is interesting, however, that, in unravelling the causes of the tragic departure of the Balkan peoples from the redeeming path of modernization, Russian historiography, at least judging by these volumes, also nurtures the kind of “normative historiography” that Mazower writes about, and nurtures it in its starkest form.

#### IV

Theories of modernization predominate in many of the most important new studies concerned with the nineteenth-century history of Serbia. Andrei Shemiakin's *Ideology of Nikola Pašić*, based on a vast number of primary sources and bringing many new facts and findings, is an example of a well-researched topic. However, the theoretical framework of this book is the “challenge of modernization”. It stresses in particular the conflict between the “economic and cultural primitivism” of the traditional, backward, collectivist Serbian peasant society represented, according to the author, by the People's Radical Party, and the Serbian Progressive Party's modernizing, Europeanizing, ruling elite, which, relying on the “powerful state apparatus”, sought to impose “reforms from above”.<sup>33</sup> Pašić's populism and pragmatic references to Orthodoxy and Slavdom during his youthful years, at the time he was an émigré trying to secure Russia's support in his struggle against King Milan Obrenović, are taken as a proof of his anti-Western and

<sup>31</sup> Mazower, *Balkans*, 86–88, 101–103, 111–112.

<sup>32</sup> *Chelovek na Balkanakh v epohu krizisov i etnopoliticheskikh stolkoventii XX v*, eds. G. G. Litavrin and P. R. Grishina (Saint Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2002); *Chelovek na Balkanakh i protsessy modernizatsii. Sindrom otiagoshchennoi nasledstvennosti (poslednaia tret' XIX – pervoia polovina XX v)*, eds. A. M. Vasil'ev and N. R. Ignat'ev (Saint Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2004); *Chelovek na Balkanakh i protsessy modernizatsii. Gosudarstvo i ego instituty: grimasy politicheskoi modernizatsii (poslednaia chetvrt' XIX – nachalo XX v)*, ed. P. R. Grishina (Saint Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2006); *Chelovek na Balkanakh: Sotsiokul'turnye izmereniia protsessa modernizatsii na Balkanakh (seredina XIX – seredina XX vv.)*, ed. P. R. Grishina (Saint Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2007); *Chelovek na Balkanakh. Vlast' i opshchestvo: opyt vzaimodeistviia (konets XIX – nachalo XX v)*, ed. P. R. Grishina (Saint Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2009); *Chelovek na Balkanakh glazami russkikh*, eds. P. R. Grishina and A. L. Shemiakin (Saint Petersburg: Aleteiia, 2011).

<sup>33</sup> Shemiakin, *Ideologiia Nikoloy Pashicha*, 21–37.

anti-modern beliefs. Such interpretation of Pašić's ideas is then projected onto the ideology of the People's Radical Party as a whole. The broader European, or even Balkan, context of the emergence of Serbian Radicalism is completely neglected in favour of an exclusively Russian, Slavic context. Even the basic introductory literature about the history of nineteenth-century Europe shows, however, that an ambivalent attitude towards modernity, and reliance on the peasantry in resisting rulers and their governments was actually characteristic of *European Radicalism*.<sup>34</sup> The general literature also makes it clear that it was precisely in the 1880s, the period covered by Shemiakin's book — i.e. at the beginning of the "age of the masses" — that mass, radical, democratic parties were emerging on the liberal left from Norway to Italy, and from France to Serbia and Bulgaria.<sup>35</sup> The vast existing literature on European radicalism as well as nationalism — which, judging precisely by the material assembled by Shemiakin, was the basis of Nikola Pašić's ideology — remains unused. What it shows is that nineteenth-century nationalism in all its diverse forms, particularly in "developing societies", essentially was a modernizing, European ideology.<sup>36</sup>

The manichean division of nineteenth-century Serbian society into patriarchal, primitive, traditional, "segmented", pro-Russian rural communities, represented by the all-powerful Radicals, and the enlightened, pro-Western, Progressive bureaucracy in the service of the modernizing state, is taken to extremes in Holm Sundhaussen's *History of Serbia from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-first Century*.<sup>37</sup> According to this author, the supremacy of the "anti-modernizing" Radicals in Serbia in the crucial transitional period of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is not merely typical of the chronic late-running of Serbian modernization, but is also related to the conquests and ethnic cleansing that the Serbs engaged in during the twentieth century, since 1912. Traditional Serbian society, stubborn and

<sup>34</sup> See Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution. Europe 1789–1848* (London: Abacus, 2001), 155–157, 299–305.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Gildea, *Barricades and Borders, Europe 1800–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 311–314; Norman Stone, *Europe Transformed 1878–1919* (Cambridge, US: Harvard University Press, 1984), 42–73; Michael D. Biddis, *The Age of Masses. Ideas and Society in Europe since 1870* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1977), 29–40; Pavlowitch, *History of the Balkans*, 130–131, 138–139.

<sup>36</sup> See Andrej Mitrović, "Karakteristična crta današnjeg veka'. Jedan izvor o modernom mentalitetu u Srbiji – analiza dopisa Nikole Pašića od 8/20. marta 1872", *Istorijski časopis* 42–43 (1995–96), 117–118. For an overview of theories of nations and nationalism, see *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>37</sup> Holm Sundhaussen, *Geschichte Serbiens: 19.–21. Jahrhundert* (Vienna etc.: Böhlau, 2007) (Serb. ed. 2008).

unmoving like a rock, resisted the tide of modernization, while its intellectuals, from Vuk Karadžić and Njegoš to Jovan Cvijić, promoted the damaging myth of Kosovo, the *hayduk* ethic, collectivism and violence. Combined together, this purportedly created a dangerous mixture which during the twentieth century, with some brief breaks, such as the period of Tito's Communist rule, consistently threatened neighbouring peoples and nations.<sup>38</sup>

Sundhaussen's book resembles an indictment in many respects, as it finds the roots of the crimes of the 1990s in the depths of Serbian history, as far back as the Battle of Kosovo (1389) and the epic poetry of the pre-modern period. Sundhaussen states in the introduction that he has no wish to act as prosecutor, judge or defence lawyer, but hastens to add that he sees himself as a "court expert or investigative judge, as someone who provides leads, collects evidence, interrogates and metes out..."<sup>39</sup>

In nineteenth-century Serbia, according to some parameters, industry, agriculture, transport and education were indeed underdeveloped, even by Balkan standards. This can be seen particularly clearly from the comparative statistics relating to Serbia for the period between 1834 and 1914, a truly precious work Sundhaussen published in 1989.<sup>40</sup> The appearance of this book was an important event, as it opened up a series of new research questions revolving around the theme of Serbia's "delayed progress". However, Sundhaussen's *History of the Serbs* offers few inspiring answers or rational interpretations of this phenomenon; it is rather Marie-Janine Calic's *Social History of Serbia 1815–1941* that does this. Among a number of factors, she stresses several laws passed in Serbia in the 1830s, which, in her opinion, hindered economic competition and preserved the traditional social structure.<sup>41</sup>

In his *History of Serbia*, Sundhaussen offers his own explanation of Serbia's "delay". What is contentious, however, is the contemporary political context within which he places her "delayed progress". The view that the Serbs, precisely in the nineteenth century, turned away from modernity as the path to universal salvation, only to find themselves at the historical dead-end of the twentieth century, enslaving and murdering members of other nations in the process, beginning in 1912, is one of key premises of the current revision of Serbia's history. Sundhaussen obviously borrows this kind of explanation from German *Sonderweg* theories, which interpret the existence and crimes of the Third Reich as the result of delayed modern-

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<sup>38</sup> Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije*, 108–127, 206–230.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* 28.

<sup>40</sup> Holm Sundhaussen, *Historische Statistik Serbiens 1834–1914. Mit europäischen Vergleichsdaten* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1989).

<sup>41</sup> Čalić, *Socijalna istorija Srbije*, 417–429.



ization in nineteenth-century Germany. What is particularly interesting is that Sundhaussen has been able to find such strange comparisons and interpretations even in Serbian historiography. This, however, is an altogether different topic going beyond the scope of this article.

Mark Mazower, on the other hand, finds an explanation for the misfortunes of the Balkans precisely in the phenomenon of “modernity”. His explanation appears quite convincing, and deserves to be quoted:

They [historians] have drawn on supposedly universal models of economic development and political democratization in order to understand why Balkan states and societies have remained poor and unstable and have not turned out as they should have done. But it is questionable whether relative poverty in southeastern Europe—or indeed the politics of ethnic violence—can really be explained as marks of backwardness. Since the ethnic mix of the Balkans has remained remarkably unchanged for centuries—during most of which there was no ethnic conflict at all—why is it only in the last one or two centuries that the cocktail became politically volatile? Contemporary contingencies of mass politics and urban, industrial life, the rise of new state structures and the spread of literacy and technology may well turn out to be as important in the Balkans as the supposed eternal verities of religious fracture, peasant rootedness and ethnic cleavage.<sup>42</sup>

Even less than well-informed social scientists consider “modernization theories” to be rather archaic and only occasionally usable relics of the 1950s and 1960s; judging the quality of the democratic “superstructure” through the state of the economic and social “base” (no industry and no strong middle class, no democracy) belongs to even older times. Immanuel Wallerstein, Edward Said and many others warn that theories of modernization are regularly used as an ideological tool of Western imperial and colonial interests. According to them, modernization is another name for Westernization, the process which aims to impose Western dominance and destroy indigenous cultures.<sup>43</sup> Historians of twentieth-century totalitarianism and mass atrocities also increasingly stress their modern roots. Thus, Mazower notes that the Nazis in their destruction of the Jews relied on modern, quasi-scientific racial theories, modern technology and education rather than on medieval, pre-modern ideas. According to him, the root of

<sup>42</sup> Mazower, *Balkans*, xliii.

<sup>43</sup> See Immanuel Wallerstein, *European Universalism: The Rhetoric of Power* (New York/London: The New Press, 2006), 33–34, 46–47, 75–76; Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (New York: Vintage Books and Random House, 1981), 29–35; Bill Aschroft and Pal Ahluwalia, *Edward Said* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2001), 126–127; John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction* (London/New York: Continuum, 2002), 140–172.

the evil lies in the modern state and its authoritarian, professional bureaucracy<sup>44</sup> — precisely those actors among which Sundhaussen and Shemiakin identify the driving force of modernizing, pro-European change when it comes to Serbia.<sup>45</sup> This focus on the role of the modern state and bureaucracy in the mass atrocities of the twentieth century brings Mazower's ideas closer to the conclusions drawn by the influential sociologist and historian Michael Mann who, in his book *The Dark Side of Democracy*, goes even further and claims that ethnic cleansing can be linked to democracy and civil society, as well as that it “has been a part of our modernity and civilisation”.<sup>46</sup> It is not only Nazism and Bolshevism that reveal the dangers of “modernity”; the destruction of whole populations were projects undertaken by ideal-type modern, liberal states of the nineteenth century such as Britain, Holland, France, America or Australia in their colonial wars. In *Hitler's Empire*, Mazower compares the attitude of Hitler's Empire towards European peoples, especially the Slavs, to the treatment that native, non-European peoples were subjected to in America and in modern, liberal colonial empires. According to Mazower, in Slavic Eastern Europe Hitler was eager to use the experience of America and the British Empire in colonizing lands of the American and Asiatic “inferior races”.<sup>47</sup>

## V

As we have seen, delayed modernization and the ideological origins of Serbian Radicalism figure among the key themes in the contemporary reassessment of Serbian nineteenth-century history. Historiography has, however, long ceased to lay claim to final truth; hence a divergence of opinion on these issues.

In examining the causes of Serbia's “delayed development”, Traian Stoianovich, as a student of Fernand Braudel, is closer to the former director of *Fernand Braudel Center* at Binghamton University, Immanuel Wallerstein, and his theories regarding the “world system” and global economic

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<sup>44</sup> Mark A. Mazower, “Violence and the State in the Twentieth Century”, *The American Historical Review* 104/7 (2002), 1147–1151.

<sup>45</sup> It is from there that the praise for the Serbian Constitutionals and Progressives comes from: Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije*, 79–80; Shemiakin, *Ideologija Nikolj Pashicha*, 33, 35–36. Sundhaussen (*Istorija Srbije*, 89) even describes the rule of the Constitutionals (1839–1858) as “dictatorship of modernity”.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 18–23.

<sup>47</sup> Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire. Nazi Rule in Occupied Europe* (London: Penguin Books) 2009 (1st ed. 2008), 556–561, 581–590.

interdependence. Apart from internal obstacles to modernization, Wallerstein also stresses the influence of external actors, through unequal terms of exchange and the colonial control of the “core” over the “periphery”.<sup>48</sup> In Stoianovich’s view, among the factors that delayed Serbia’s industrialization were the consequences of wars, beginning with the wars of 1804–1815, a fear of competition from the Habsburg Empire, but also the monopolies the neighbouring Empire sought to establish over the Serbian economy.<sup>49</sup>

Gale Stokes, in his book focused on the role of the People’s Radical Party in the emergence of political party life in Serbia, uses this Balkan principality as a case in point for the political system that is not necessarily a reflection of the social and economic situation in the country. Keeping to the limits of modernization theories, Stokes argues that “by most standards Serbia in the nineteenth century was a backward country”, but also that it had established a political system which “had every appearance of being modern”.<sup>50</sup> The system, of course, “did not work perfectly”; yet, “the fact remains that this almost completely peasant nation, without the complex socioeconomic structure that we associate with functioning democracies, had built a relatively sophisticated political structure based on the best models of the nineteenth-century liberal state.”<sup>51</sup> Stokes also notes that all three major political parties in Serbia were pro-Western and pro-modernization; in their struggle to monopolize the interpretation of the national idea, the Radicals merely went further than the Liberals and Progressives, basing their theories of popular sovereignty on the inclusion of the broadest possible cross-section of society in politics as well as on the new, mass emotional nationalism of the 1880s.<sup>52</sup> In his conclusion, Gale Stokes stresses that the main sphere in which modernization occurred in Serbia in the nineteenth-century was not society or industry, but politics.<sup>53</sup>

John Lampe embraces the conclusions put forward by Stokes, observing that the Serbian Radicals quickly abandoned their utopian peasant socialism, in order to adapt their programme to that of the French Radicals. However, according to Lampe, the struggle for national unification prevented the Radicals and Progressives from pursuing internal modernization; instead, they built the institutions of government on weak foundations dependent on a backward, rural economy.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>48</sup> This is also noted by Čalić, *Socijalna istorija Srbije*, 13.

<sup>49</sup> On these and other causes, see Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*, 100–103 and 288–293.

<sup>50</sup> Stokes, *Politics as Development*, 1.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* 296 and 299–306.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* 306.

<sup>54</sup> Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 54.

Dennis Hupchick also sees the Radicals, along with the Progressives, as “Western-leaning” and “espousing liberal-democratic ideals”, while Tom Gallagher on the other hand sees Radicals as “isolationists” and “nationalists” with explicit territorial ambitions.<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, Georges Castellan is also among those who stress the Russian, populist, socialist origins of their ideas.<sup>56</sup> In his *History of the Balkans*, Stevan Pavlowitch presents the evolution of the Radicals from Russian populism to French leftist republicanism and Swiss radicalism, while also noting that their “role in the modernization of Serbia is subject to controversy”.<sup>57</sup> In his *Serbia: the History behind the Name*, Pavlowitch no longer mentions this controversy; instead, apart from the French and Swiss models as obviously inspiring for the Radicals, he also highlights the indirect influence of British parliamentary practices and procedures.<sup>58</sup>

## VI

There are several other topics which are considered important in international historiography within the ongoing revision of nineteenth-century Serbian history. The First and Second Serbian Uprisings have, for the most part, not been subjected to revisionism but, much like events from more recent Serbian history, they continue to attract the attention of historians. Sundhausen remains relatively isolated in questioning the use of the term *Serbian Revolution*, forged early on by Ranke, to refer to these events. He argues that it is more appropriate to speak of peasant uprisings than of a revolution.<sup>59</sup> Phillip Longworth, for his part, does not believe that nationalism played a significant role in these events.<sup>60</sup> However, Traian Stoianovich stresses that, as in the case of Bulgaria and Greece, what actually took place was also a national and social revolution which swept away the existing class structures in order to replace them with institutions modelled on those that were being established in Western Europe. In his opinion, the Balkan revolutions remained incomplete inasmuch as they failed to create a social basis, in particular a middle class, which would have been able to guarantee

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<sup>55</sup> Hupchick, *Balkans*, 282; Gallagher, *Outcast Europe*, 57.

<sup>56</sup> Castellan, *Histoire des Balkans*, 327.

<sup>57</sup> Pavlowitch, *History of the Balkans*, 126, 127.

<sup>58</sup> Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Serbia: The History behind the Name* (London Hurst & Co., 2002), 69 (Serb. ed. 2004).

<sup>59</sup> Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije*, 76.

<sup>60</sup> Longworth, *Making of Eastern Europe*, 176–177.

the stability of the new system in the face of wars and other difficulties.<sup>61</sup> Stoianovich's original contribution is also in his linking the beginning of the Serbian Revolution with the millenarian expectations of messianic liberation which, as he observes, had spread among the Serbs in the second half of the eighteenth century;<sup>62</sup> this argument is accepted by Pavlowitch and Lampe.<sup>63</sup>

The role of Kosovo, epic folk poetry, Vuk Karadžić reforms, Njegoš's *Mountain Wreath* and Garašanin's *Draft* in shaping Serbian national ideology are pet topics in the revision of Serbian history that is currently under way. In short, some of the most recent studies belonging to this category seek to prove that the traditions of the Serbian people and the cultural heritage stemming from them, such as the poem *Mountain Wreath*, set the stage for the persecution of Muslims in the twentieth century, and that Vuk Karadžić and Ilija Garašanin provided a political blueprint for the conquest of non-Serbian territories and the creation of "Greater Serbia". Blaming individuals from past centuries for present-day events is clearly an anachronism; yet, the inapplicability of such a view is not proportional to its actual influence. The works of Michael Sells and Branimir Anzulovic, experts on the "genocidal tradition" in Serbian history, are quoted particularly often.<sup>64</sup> Their key arguments are accepted, for instance, by Holm Sundhaussen and Tom Gallagher.<sup>65</sup> John Lampe is also among those who condemn Njegoš for dedicating himself, in his *Mountain Wreath*, to avenging Kosovo and expelling the local Turks rather than to the ideas of the Enlightenment.<sup>66</sup> Perhaps as a result of this, Elizabeth Roberts, the writer of the latest history of Montenegro, touches upon *Mountain Wreath* only very briefly, avoiding any deeper discussion of this poem. However, not even she shies away from mentioning the interpretations that place the responsibility for the crimes perpetrated in the late twentieth century on Njegoš, and from expressing bemusement at his voluntary submission to Serbia's policies, personified in Ilija Garašanin.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*, 175–178.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 168–170.

<sup>63</sup> Pavlowitch, *Serbia*, 28; Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 48.

<sup>64</sup> Michael A. Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

<sup>65</sup> Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije*, 108–127; Gallagher, *Outcast Europe*, 57–59.

<sup>66</sup> Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 57.

<sup>67</sup> Elizabeth Roberts, *Realm of the Black Mountain: A History of Montenegro* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 186–189, 134–135 and 214–215.

As for Garašanin's *Draft*, there have been some serious monographs. Konstantin Nikiforov's book, which critically examines the extent to which Garašanin's ideas were suited to the reality of his time and how successful his plans were, is a case in point.<sup>68</sup> Traian Stoianovich and Stevan Pavlowitch are among those who stress the economic aspect of the *Draft*, particularly its demand for access to the sea in order to wrest Serbia from her trade dependence on the Habsburg Empire.<sup>69</sup>

When it comes to Serbia's involvement in the Balkan Wars, there is very little divergence of opinion. With some honest exceptions, the examination of the Balkan Wars boils down to the view that what was at work was the Serbian occupation of non-Serb areas and systematic destruction of the Albanian people. What has become the most frequently quoted contemporary source is the pro-Bulgarian *Report* of the Carnegie Endowment which places most of the blame for the expulsions that took place in Macedonia on the Greeks and Serbs.<sup>70</sup> The Serbian army's repression against Albanian civilians has been a long-known fact, and it constitutes an important and legitimate research topic. What is surprising, however, is the silence about Albanian violence against the Serbs in Kosovo, particularly the systematic mass expulsion carried out in 1878–1912. Where such events are mentioned at all, as in Noel Malcolm's *Kosovo*, they are mentioned in order to deny that the Serbs experienced any real suffering<sup>71</sup> or, as in Sundhaussen, a few words on the matter are slipped into a long and detailed description of the suffering of Albanians at the hands of Serbs.<sup>72</sup> In both cases, what is stressed is that everything that happened to the Serbs was the consequence of the Serbian persecution of the Albanians which had begun in 1878, and that the misfortunes of the Serbs in Kosovo, if there were any at all, cannot compare with the mass crimes of Serbs against Albanians in 1878.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Konstatin V. Nikiforov, *Serbia v seredine XIX v. (nachalo deiatel'nosti po ob'edineniiu serbskikh zemel')* (Moscow: Institut slavianovedenia i balkanistiki, 1995). See also Nikiforov's text in the volume relating to this period *Mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniia na Balkanakh 1830–1856 gg.*, ed. Vladlen N. Vinogradov (Moscow: Nauka, 1990), 132–147.

<sup>69</sup> Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*, 103; Pavlowitch, *Serbia*, 44–46.

<sup>70</sup> Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914) (reprinted ed. 1993), 148–207. See also Ivan Ilchev, "Karnegievata enketa prez 1913 g. Obstanovka, izvrvshvane i mezhdunaroden otzvuk", *Istoricheski pregled* 45/10 (1989), 15–28.

<sup>71</sup> Malcolm, *Kosovo*, 228–238.

<sup>72</sup> Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije*, 237–243.

<sup>73</sup> For this approach to Serbia's role in the Balkan wars, see also Mazower, *Balkans*, 118; Gallagher, *Outcast Europe* 66; Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 94–95.



In his monograph on the Balkan Wars, Richard Hall carefully analyzes the military operations. Yet, quite in the spirit of the current trend of elevating empires above nations, he presents the successes of the Balkan allies as satisfying nationalist appetites at the expense of a multinational, Ottoman, empire. Although this author is not familiar with the violence perpetrated by Albanians against Serbs after 1878, he at least does not look at the Serbian repression of Albanians outside the context of mutual violence and recrimination among Balkan peoples.<sup>74</sup> In his *Balkan Worlds*, Traian Stoianovich places the mutual expulsions of 1912–13, as well as those that took place later in the twentieth century, within the context of forced relocations of different ethnic and religious groups that different empires, from the Roman and Byzantine to Ottoman, had been carrying out in the Balkans for centuries.<sup>75</sup> *The Balkan Wars* of André Gerolymatos, which covers much more than the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, is a good example of a historian's desire to understand rather than to use the past.<sup>76</sup>

Surprisingly, neither the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand nor the beginning of the First World War is subjected to the same deep-going revision as the Balkan Wars. A rising star of Anglo-Saxon historiography, Niall Ferguson, ever favourably inclined towards powerful empires and disparaging of small troublemakers, argues in his history of the First World War that Serbia's foreign policy of the time deliberately sought to provoke conflict, and describes it as a nationalist version of Lenin's "the worse the better" principle. However, not even he claims that the Serbian government was aware of the preparations for the Sarajevo assassination.<sup>77</sup> In principle, most historians of the Balkans are more cautious than Ferguson when it comes to attributing the blame for the First World War. There is a clear stress on, but little glorification of, the "modernizing" successes of the Habsburg regime in Bosnia.<sup>78</sup> Robin Okey, in *The Habsburg 'Civilizing Mission' in Bosnia 1878–1914*, places Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia within the context of the "age of empires" and points to its colonial nature.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Richard C. Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), 136–138.

<sup>75</sup> Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*, 199–200.

<sup>76</sup> André Gerolymatos, *The Balkan Wars: Conquest, Revolution and Retribution from the Ottoman Era to the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

<sup>77</sup> Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War 1914–1918* (London: Basic Books, 1999), 146–147.

<sup>78</sup> Mazower, *Balkans*, 107; Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 64–68, 79–81; Gallagher, *Outcast Europe*, 68–69. Malcolm, *Povijest Bosne*, 187–209, paints a positive picture of Austro-Hungarian rule, as well as Hupchick, *Balkans*, 316–317.

<sup>79</sup> Okey, *Taming Balkan Nationalism*, vii–viii, 220. The colonial nature of Habsburg rule in Bosnia is noted by Mazower, *Balkans*, 103; Pavlowitch, *Serbia*, 76.

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Scientific advances are impossible without re-examining long-accepted views. Yet, the re-evaluation of nineteenth-century Serbian history which is currently under way has little to do with the advancement of knowledge. What is at work is not a desire to understand the past, but rather the intent to accommodate the past to the present. The victors do write history, but not forever; their interpretations last only as long as their power.

One of the major causes of the declining quality of historical studies on Serbia's nineteenth-century history lies in the fact that, over the last two decades, a generation of historians whose contribution to global knowledge is undisputable has been departing from this world: Michael Boro Petrovich, Wayne Vucinich, Traian Stoianovich, Dimitrije Djordjevic. However, good academic work continues to be published in the face of temptation. In times such as these, it becomes clearer than ever that the basic method of historians, with all perfected techniques and increased knowledge, is the audacity to confront one's own *intent*; that, coupled with honesty, prevents us from making unfounded claims.

*UDC 930(100):94(497.11)"18"*

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## REVIEWS

DANICA POPOVIĆ, BRANISLAV TODIĆ AND DRAGAN VOJVODIĆ, *DEČANSKA PUSTINJA. SKITOV I KELIJE MANASTIRA DEČANA* [English summary: THE DEČANI DESERT. THE SKETAE AND KELLA OF THE MONASTERY OF DEČANI]. BELGRADE: INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES AND INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE OF THE SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS FOR THE STUDY OF KOSOVO AND METOHIIJA, 2011, pp. 282, ill. 136.

*Reviewed by* Irena Špadijer\*

The Dečani Desert is the name for dependencies of the monastery of Dečani that were established in a five-kilometre long belt west of the mother monastery and consisted of some ten ascetic communities whose cells were scattered in caves dotting the left wall of the canyon carved by the Dečanska Bistrica river. It was formed not later than the mid-fourteenth century and remained active until the end of the seventeenth century. There is absolutely no doubt that it is one of the most important phenomena in the history of Serbian eremitic monasticism; moreover, it is the only such whose history may be to an extent reconstructed from written sources. When, in the difficult times of Serbian exoduses from Kosovo and Metohija, the last kelliotic monks were forced to leave, their abodes became abandoned and were never inhabited again.

An occasional interest shown from the mid-nineteenth century by concerned or curious individuals — among whom were two distinguished archimandrites of Dečani, British lady travellers and few professionally equipped twentieth-centu-

ry researchers — and their now invaluable records, were what the historians of art Danica Popović, Branislav Todić and Dragan Vojvodić could count on in the volatile Balkans of the turn of the second millennium, when they embarked upon a rather unpredictable adventure to explore ascetic abodes in Metohija. After their preliminary field survey conducted under precarious circumstances in 1998, there was much work and many challenges ahead of them. Despite all difficulties, they found the courage and stamina to continue their fieldwork in 2006 and 2007. The obtained fieldwork findings, combined with the earlier records and the until recently unknown documentary material from the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, resulted in a book, which, as the authors put it themselves, “was taking shape slowly, with interruptions and various obstacles along the way”.

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Apart from a brief introduction, the book contains seven chapters, two appendices, an extensive summary in English, a list of abbreviations and an index. Finally, it is richly illustrated: photographs of the sites taken over a long span of time from the 1930s to the early years of the twenty-first century add a particular value to it, as they document the situation in the field at different periods.

The first chapter (“Reviving the memory of the Dečani Desert and its ascetics”), by Branislav Todić, provides background information on the “rediscovery” of the Dečani Desert in the mid-nineteenth century — from the monastery’s learned archimandrite Seraphim (Ristić), the accounts of the British travellers Georgina Muir Mackenzie and Adelina Paulina Irby, and Miloš S. Milojević — to literary and scholarly pieces of another archimandrite of Dečani, Leontios (Ninković), written in the 1920s and 1930s.

The reader is then acquainted with the pioneering, but sporadic, scholarly interest in the site in the twentieth century (Sergei Smirnov and Djurdje Bošković in the 1930s; Janko Radovanović and Milan Ivanović in the 1960s), and the publication of the relevant source materials (most of all, the notes and inscriptions compiled and edited by Ljubomir Stojanović). It is in this chapter, which its author, Dragan Vojvodić, appositely titles “On the margin of scholarly attention, far from protected status”, that the reader becomes fully aware of the extent to which the hermitages of Dečani were uncared for throughout the past century.

The ascetic communities are then looked at in the light of the surviving written sources: B. Todić analyzes references to them in literary works, such as *The Life of Patriarch Ephrem* by Mark of Peć, and in the notes made in manuscripts transcribed in the Dečani Desert. We even learn the names of some scribes, such as Nikandar, active in 1493/4, and Nestor,

in the 1560s. All communities recorded in the sources — Belaja, the Holy Three Hierarchs, St Nicholas, St Neilos and St George — are looked at in detail.

After this historical and philological perspective on the whole of the complex, the authors shift their attention to the three most important and best preserved of the *sketae* and *kellia*: those of Belaja with the church dedicated to the Dormition of the Virgin, of the Holy Three Hierarchs (also known as the Holy King), and of St George (also known as the Hermitage of St Helen). Given that the three sites — notwithstanding the identical function they used to fulfil and a measure of similarity when it comes to the current state of preservation of their architecture and wall paintings — show a number of differences, the authors (D. Popović and D. Vojvodić) necessarily adopt different approaches and methodologies. They maintain their individual research styles without eroding the overall structure of the book or disrupting the common thread running through their accounts, which results in remarkable observations concerning the antiquity and style of the layers of frescoes in Belaja, and a meticulous analysis of the structural remains of the Three Holy Hierarchs leading to some interesting suggestions about their former use.

This part of the book, which may be defined as concrete examination of written and physical sources — reporting on the explored sites and analyzing the evidence thus obtained, which is in fact the basis of a book thus conceived — is followed by a chapter that provides both a historical synthesis and a theoretical background for the entire study: “The Dečani Desert within the framework of Byzantine and Serbian eremitism”. In her approach to the subject, Danica Popović clearly separates the diachronic and synchronic perspectives, which, as she points out herself, required that her account be structured

“in decreasing order of generality”: the type of monasticism under study is first looked at “within the Byzantine world at large”, then within the Serbian environment, and finally, in the case of the hermitages of Dečani. This is the reason why this part of the book begins with analyzing the very concept of the *monastic desert*, drawing attention to *terminological* problems encountered by modern researchers concerned with the past practices of *solitary monasticism*, offering a categorization of the terms occurring in the sources, and providing justification for the adopted terminology. Eremitism in the Byzantine world is looked at in its full temporal and spatial extent, which inevitably involves the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, Syria or Asia Minor. Special attention is paid to Mount Athos which, with its distinctive types and forms of monasticism, served as the fundamental model for the practice of eremitism in medieval Serbia. The situation in medieval Serbia is looked at primarily in terms of its connection with the monastery of Hilandar and its dependency, the Kellion of St Sabas at Karyes, and, of course, with special reference to the role of St Sava (Sabas) of Serbia and the prototypical example of Studenica. Naturally, the brightest beam of the searchlight illuminates the anchoritic communities of the Dečani Desert. Their relationship with the mother monastery, including the issue of ownership, organization, structure, day-to-day life with its liturgical practices, ascetic labour and monastic duties, all of that is looked at in its chronological continuity. The essay concludes with an analysis of the natural setting and the man-made “physical structures” that provided shelter for the Dečani ascetics and, with them, grew into a symbol of a distinctive form of Orthodox spirituality.

Two appendices at the end of the book constitute a particularly valuable supplement: the memorial books of two anchoritic communities of Dečani: Belaja and the

Holy Three Hierarchs. The original books were kept in the manuscript collection of the National Library in Belgrade, which burned to the ground in Germany's air attack on Belgrade on 6 April 1941. So, both are lost forever. But large excerpts from these books and almost all personal and place names had been copied out by the librarian Svetozar Matić. After 1957, his transcripts and notes found their way into the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Through the effort of Branislav Todić, these hitherto unknown sixteenth-century sources, of interest not only for the history of the monastery of Dečani and its *desert*, but also for many other fields of research, are now accessible to a broader public.

A book conceived in such a way as to integrate several important forms of scholarly work — from field surveys to critical analysis of sources to theoretically well-grounded examination of the perceived phenomena — inevitably produces new and fresh insights; moreover, it brings back to life an entire existence in all its fullness. This vibrant portrayal of the anchoritic communities of Dečani challenges the widespread stereotype of hermits as persons withdrawn from life and strangers in this world, confirming the claim that their solitude was not a mere flight. As D. Chitty observed as early as the 1960s, it was rooted in the profound faith in God and acceptance of a struggle which was not the struggle against the material world but against the powers of darkness and evil in this world. If it was not so, Chitty asked, how is it that hermits tended to choose the natural setting for their withdrawal with such a sense of beauty, and showed such love for all God's creatures.

*The Dečani Desert* is a book that comes as a result of years-long research of three scholars. They found themselves facing an impossible mission. In a situation in which Serbian scholars are practically

barred from access to the sites, they struggled to rescue from oblivion, if they could not from decay, an important testimony to an authentic monastic spirituality and presence in Metohija. Unreservedly dedicated to their work, which involved field research in a less than friendly environment, they were given a generous reward: in company with Dečani monks, they lived to “hear, after more than three centuries, the gorge of the Bistrica reverberate with the sound of *troparia*, which, at least for a brief moment, restored to the

Dečani Desert some of its original spirituality and blissful peace”. D. Popović, B. Todić and D. Vojvodić have given future generations of scholars, as well as interested readers, a remarkable book which will be a must-read for a comprehensive understanding of the Serbian past of Kosovo and Metohija. At the same time, it will be a comprehensive and exceptionally well-documented case study for comparative research into Eastern Christian anchoritic monasticism.

NICOLAS VATIN, GILLES VEINSTEIN AND ELIZABETH ZACHARIADOU, *CATALOGUE DU FONDS OTTOMAN DES ARCHIVES DU MONASTÈRE DE SAINT-JEAN À PATMOS. LES VINGT-DEUX PREMIERS DOSSIERS*. ATHENS: FONDATION NATIONALE DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE, INSTITUT DE RECHERCHES BYZANTINES, 2011, pp. 673.

*Reviewed by Ognjen Krešić\**

In 1997, the Institute for Byzantine Studies (*Institut de recherches byzantines*) of the National Foundation for Scientific Research (*Fondation nationale de la recherche scientifique*) and the Centre for Turkish, Ottoman, Balkan and Central-Asian Studies (*Centre d'études turque, ottomans, balkaniques et centrasiatiques*) of the National Centre for Scientific Research (*Centre national de la recherche scientifique/CNRS*) started collaboration on an archival research project concerning the Ottoman documents preserved in the monastery of Saint John the Theologian on Patmos. The actual archival work began four years later, when the first research team arrived in the monastery. It was made up of Elizabeth Zahariadou, retired professor of Turkish studies at the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Crete, Nicolas Vatin, director of research at the CNRS, and Gilles Veinstein, professor at the Collège de France and director of studies at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (*École des hautes études en sciences sociales*).

The result of their work is the first volume of a catalogue of Ottoman documents published in 2011. The volume offers the summaries of 823 documents divided into folders (Z, 1b, and from 1 to 20), which span the period from the fifteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century, including several documents dating from later centuries. The remaining part of the archival material, consisting of 522 mostly eighteenth- and nineteenth-century documents, is in the process of being prepared by Michael Ursinus, and should also appear in the form of a catalogue.

The book consists of an introduction to the Catalogue and Appendix (pp. 9–28), the Catalogue with summaries of every document (pp. 29–566), the indexes of personal names, most important functionaries and place names, a topical index, a chronological list of the monastery's

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\* Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia doctoral scholarship holder

hegumens, a genealogical table of the Diakos family, and a glossary (pp. 567–664). The authors made detailed summaries of every document, which provide basic diplomatic information about the type of document, date of issue, issuer and recipient, signature and seal, contents of the reverse side, dimensions, a summary of the main text in French and, where needed, additional remarks. Most documents have short commentaries or additional information written on them in Greek, and the authors included them in summaries. They also included in their remarks all available information about the persons mentioned in the documents or drew attention to interconnections between different documents.

At the time when the Ottomans incorporated the island of Patmos into their sphere of influence the monastery of Saint John had already had a long history. It was not only the religious centre of the island but, during the last decades of Byzantine rule, it also became the most important administrative institution that governed the lives of the islanders. Facing the new developments on the neighbouring Anatolian coast, where the Turkish emirates of Aydın and Menteşe were founded, and the rapid decline of Byzantine central authority, the monastery continued to fortify its influence, and the island became a “small, practically independent, monastic state”. In exchange for the preservation of its autonomous status, the monastery paid a tribute to the emirs of Menteşe. It is believed that the monastery established relations with the Ottomans as soon as they conquered the coastal emirates, but it was only after the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople in 1453, that Patmos finally became part of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman central government did not formally recognize the temporal authority of the hegumen and his status was not sanctioned by a *berat*. As a result, communication went through the Patri-

archate and the local authorities. On the other hand, the local authorities were well aware of the influential role of the monastery and its hegumen in the life of the inhabitants of Patmos.

The fact that the monastery was so involved in the functioning of the island's society and that it had developed relations with Ottoman authorities, especially local, explains the great number and diversity of Ottoman documents preserved in its archive. Most are various types of certificates and attestations issued by the *kadı* (*hüccets*, *temessüks*), but there is also a rich collection of documents issued by the central (*fermans*, *berats*) and local authorities (such as pashas, beys, kapudan-pashas). An especially interesting feature of the monastery's Ottoman collection is that it contains a considerable number of documents of a private nature. Given that the island was a sacred and geographically well protected place, many people, and not only locals, chose to deposit their valuables and important documents in the monastery vaults. Moreover, the islanders used the monastery as a kind of public archives. Therefore, those interested in the life of the islanders can obtain information about various types of everyday transactions and about the kind of problems that caused them trouble.

The archive of such an important institution as the monastery of Saint John on Patmos undoubtedly is a mine of information for various areas of academic interest. In the first place, there are economic topics. The monastery possessed a large number of estates, scattered on different Aegean islands, and its monks were actively engaged in trade. Thus, researchers can follow the functioning of the monastery's economy, the collection of revenues from its properties and the complicated operation of transporting products both to the island and to other Ottoman territories. Closely connected with this is the question of rela-

tions between the monastery and local authorities and payment of taxes due to the state. The monastery's rights over its estates and sources of income were often disputed by neighbours or local notables, and with a help of many documents one can reconstruct how such problems were handled and resolved. Also, the Ottoman documents can provide some information about the relationship between the monks and religious authorities, notably the Patriarchate in Constantinople.

The archival material from a monastery situated on an island is, of course, of great interest to researchers concerned with any topic relating to the sea. Patmos was involved in the Aegean trade network, but its trade connections were not limited to the nearby regions, but encompassed the whole of the Mediterranean. Apart from trade, the documents also provide information about agriculture and animal husbandry on the Aegean islands. The sea can bring as many problems as benefits to insular communities. The Patmiots expe-

rienced many problems caused by piracy, and several documents testify to the aid they extended to the victims of pirate attacks.

The *Catalogue of the Ottoman documents in the Archive of the Monastery of Saint John on Patmos* can be highly useful to all researchers interested in the history of the Orthodox monasteries in the Ottoman Empire. The documents provide information about the functioning of the monastery as an institution, about its economic activities and its relationship with Ottoman central and local authorities. Moreover, given the distinctive role that the monastery of Saint John played in the society of the island, its archive is also a source of valuable information about the life of all inhabitants of the island. Taken as a whole, these documents can give us a picture of the life on an Aegean island under Ottoman rule, which could never be completely isolated from events taking place elsewhere across the vast empire.

JOVAN DJ. AVAKUMOVIĆ, *MEMOARI* [MEMOIRS], ED. SLOBODAN TURLAKOV.  
SREMSKI KARLOVCI – NOVI SAD: IZDAVAČKA KNJIŽARNICA ZORANA STOJANOVIĆA,  
2008, pp 686.

*Reviewed by* Aleksandra Kolaković\*

Jovan Avakumović (1841–1928), Serbian jurist, politician, and member of Royal Serbian Academy, was one of the figures who marked the political and social scene in Serbia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A descendant of the merchant Babadudić family, he graduated in law from the Great School (*Velika škola*) in Belgrade and then continued his law studies in Germany, France and Switzerland. Avakumović began his career as first secretary of the Court of Cassation (1871), and held the office of mayor of Belgrade (1875), chief of the Police Department of the Ministry

of Interior (1875–1880) and judge of the Court of Cassation (1881–1887).

As a member of the Liberal Party, Avakumović served twice as Minister of Justice, in the cabinet of Jovan Ristić (1881) and the coalition cabinet of Liberals and Radicals (1887). He was Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1892 until the King Alexander Obrenović's coup d'état of 1893, which was the reason why the Radicals demanded that Avakumović and some other

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members of the Liberal government be tried. After the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga Obrenović (29 May 1903), Avakumović again became the Prime Minister of Serbia. During his premiership, Peter I Karadjordjević accessed the throne as King of Serbia and the Constitution of 1888 was reinstated.

During the First World War, Avakumović was captured and sent to the internment camp in Cegled (Hungary), and thence at Hietzing (Austria). After the war, he withdrew from politics and started a law practice. Avakumović wrote a number of books on legal issues including: *Teorija kaznenog prava* (1887–1891) [The Theory of Criminal Law 1887–1891], *Nužna odbrana* [Self-Defence], *Važnost krivičnog zakona* [The Importance of Criminal Law], *Francuska i Engleska porota* [French and English Juries] etc.

The memoirs of Jovan Avakumović cover nearly sixty years of political and social life in Serbia, encompassing the reign of three Obrenović rulers: Michael/Mihailo (1860–1868), Milan (1872–1889) and Alexander (1893–1903), and one Karadjordjević: Peter I (1903–1918), as well as the period of the First World War. It is divided chronologically into six thematically structured chapters.

The first chapter describes the period from 1840 to 1869. Having reminisced about his childhood and family background, Avakumović moves on to his education at Heidelberg, Berlin, Zurich and Paris (1862–1868) and the friendships he struck up during those years. Most of the chapter is devoted to the assassination of Prince Michael Obrenović (1868) and the trial of the assassins, in which he took part as assistant of one of the investigators. Following his appointment as secretary of the Ministry of Interior in 1868, he became a close friend of Radivoje Milojković, Minister of Interior and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs. He also enjoyed the trust of the three-men Re-

gency (Milivoje Blaznavac, Jovan Ristić and Jovan Gavrilović) ruling on behalf of Prince Milan Obrenović, as evidenced by a wealth of information about them, their mutual relations and the events they participated in. The second chapter covers the course of his career and political life in Serbia between 1869 and 1883, including the adoption of the Constitution (1869), the Serbian–Ottoman wars (1876–78), the Congress of Berlin (1878), the so-called Timok Rebellion (1883). Along with his recollections of the Congress of Berlin written immediately after the event, Avakumović added a text about the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1908), which he obviously wrote much later. This confirms what Avakumović himself stressed: some parts of his memoirs were notes produced at the time of the events in question, whereas others underwent some modifications and took their final shape later.

Party struggles, the reign of King Milan Obrenović and his conflict with the Radicals, the divorce of King Milan and Queen Natalie, the adoption of a new Constitution (1888) are described in the third chapter of the memoirs. When Jovan Ristić, leader of the Liberals, served as Regent (1889–92) for the young King Alexander Obrenović, Avakumović's influence in the Liberal Party grew, which was reflected in its organization and activities. Apart from his own party, Avakumović pays special attention to the activity of the Radical Party and its relations with two Obrenović sovereigns, Milan and his son Alexander, between 1883 and 1893. Not surprisingly, he dwells on the programme, composition and activities of his own government, with special reference to the coup d'état mounted by King Alexander Obrenović (1893) which led to the fall of his cabinet. In this part of his memoirs, Avakumović gives valuable testimonies about his dealings with foreign diplomats in Serbia.



The fourth chapter covers the period from 1894 to 1902. It opens with the description of the proceedings brought against him and his ministers on charges of violation of the Constitution during the parliamentary elections in 1893. Avakumović also records his view of King Alexander's abolition of the Constitution (1894) and reinstatement of the conservative Constitution of 1869. The premiership of Vladan Djordjević and the situation in the Liberal Party, particularly after the death of Jovan Ristić (1899), are described in detail. The failed assassination attempt on ex-King Milan in 1899, which took place on St. John the Baptist's Day (*Ivanjdanski atentat*), the reign of Alexander Obrenović and his marriage to Draga Mašin, the April Constitution (1901) are also touched upon in the fourth chapter of the memoirs.

The fifth chapter reviews the last year of the life and reign of King Alexander (1902) and the distinctive decade that preceded the Balkan Wars (1912–13). After an account of his meetings with King Alexander and Dimitrije Cincar Marković and the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga (the May Coup), Avakumović explains his activities during the reign of Peter Karadjordjević. As Prime Minister of Serbia, later an MP, Avakumović had a number of opportunities to meet and exchange views with King Peter I. These conversations, Avakumović's suggestions concerning the education of the King's sons, and his notes on Crown Prince Djordje's relinquishment of the throne in favour of his younger brother, Prince Alexander, make an ample contribution to the history of the Karadjordjević dynasty. On the other hand, Avakumović briefly sketches the turbulent events surrounding the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkan Wars.

The sixth chapter focuses on the Great War (1914–1918). On the day of the as-

sassination of Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, Avakumović was on his way to Vienna with his family, and thus witnessed firsthand the atmosphere that the Archduke's death caused in Austria-Hungary. He then gives a detailed account of his return to Serbia and Austria's attack on Belgrade. Avakumović's description of the refugees flooding into central Serbia and the conditions of daily life in the towns of Niš, Čačak, Kraljevo and Vrnjačka Banja, provides a vivid glimpse into what the war operations of 1914–15 brought to Serbia. Finally, Avakumović recalls the Austro-Hungarian occupation, his own arrest and internment in Hungary and Austria, and the end of the war.

Due to the abundance of information and Avakumović's prominent role in Serbia's politics, his memoirs are an important source for the history of Serbia. The most valuable sections of the memoirs are certainly those in which he discusses his own participation in government and the political activities of his Liberal Party. Much is said about the Obrenović and Karadjordjević dynasties, and many political figures in Serbia before the First World War. The author's interesting account of his studies at prominent foreign universities, his travels and contacts with foreign diplomats and journalists, and the description of his internment expand the usual range of topics for which memoirs can be an important source. Avakumović's profession seems to have influenced his clear and precise train of thought and his tendency to provide additional explanations. The memoirs of such a prominent political and legal figure as Jovan Avakumović undoubtedly are a treasure trove for historians and all lovers of history.

*MEMOARI VUKAŠINA J. PETROVIĆA* [MEMOIRS OF VUKAŠIN J. PETROVIĆ]. BELGRADE: SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS, 2009, pp. 240.

*Reviewed by Aleksandra Kolaković\**

The Department of Historical Sciences of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, presided by Vasilije Krestić, published the memoirs of Vukašin J. Petrović (1847–1924), a distinguished Serbian statesman and finance expert of Jewish origin. His contemporaries never questioned his expertise, but thought of him as being an “Austrian man”.<sup>1</sup> Close to King Milan (Prince 1872–1882, King 1882–1889) who pursued an Austrophile policy, and well-received in Vienna and Berlin after the First World War, Petrović was tried for treason and acquitted. The main body of the book consists of two parts: “Memoirs of Vukašin J. Petrović”, and “Supplements to the memoirs of Vukašin J. Petrović”. An informative text by Slobodan Turlakov, who prepared the manuscript for publication, is added at the end of the book, as well as a very useful index of personal names.

Having graduated from Belgrade’s Great School, Vukašin Petrović continued his education in Vienna, Berlin and Heidelberg.<sup>2</sup> While in Germany, he be-

came close to Jovan Ristić,<sup>3</sup> and it was through this acquaintance that he began a career in the civil service. In 1870 he was appointed to a clerical post in the Ministry of Interior. He was also the editor of the newspaper *Jedinstvo* (Unity).<sup>4</sup> He

340–341; *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2008), 827.

<sup>3</sup> Jovan Ristić (1831–1899), a statesman, historian and member of the Royal Serbian Academy; founding member and leader of the Liberal Party. Under Prince Michael (Mihailo) Obrenović, he was appointed secretary of the government delegation to Constantinople (1860). As Serbia’s representative to the Ottoman Porte (1861–67), he negotiated the withdrawal of the last six Ottoman garrisons from Serbia in 1867. He influenced the adoption of the Constitution of 1869. During the Serbian–Ottoman wars (1876–78) he served as minister of foreign affairs, and in their wake, took part in the Congress of Berlin in 1878 under the provisions of which Serbia was internationally recognized as a sovereign state. He served as regent for two minor kings, Milan Obrenović (1868–72) and Alexander Obrenović (1889–93), and four times as prime minister (1867, 1873, 1878–80 and 1887). He was a moderate Liberal and an advocate of individual ministerial responsibility, judicial independence, freedom of the press, a strong government, and a well-organized legislature. For his equilibristic foreign policy he was considered both an Austrophile and a Russophile. He wrote a three-volume book on Serbia’s foreign policy and a two-volume diplomatic history of Serbia during her wars of independence (1875–78). For general information, see *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, 954.

<sup>4</sup> *Jedinstvo*, a semi-official daily of the Serbian government (1868–73); published articles on foreign policy and reports from Serb-inhabited areas outside Serbia. It

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<sup>1</sup> According to the notes of the prominent Serbian intellectual and politician Jovan Žujović (1856–1936), kept in the Archives of Serbia (JŽ-91, Audience with King Alexander Obrenović, 13 Dec. 1893), Žujović described Petrović as a brilliant parliamentary orator, but unacceptable on account of being an “Austrian man”. He corroborated his view by ex-King Milan’s alleged claim that Petrović was not simply an Austrophile, but “considered to be a paid Austrian servant”.

<sup>2</sup> S. Stanojević, *Narodna enciklopedija srpsko-hrvatsko-slovenačka*, vol. 3 (Zagreb 1928),

entered the circles close to King Milan quite early and after the 1885 war with Bulgaria became some sort of his advisor, and purportedly his “trusted confidant and an ardent Austrophile”. Even though closer to the Progressives from the 1880s, he collaborated with Jovan Ristić for over a decade. Widely esteemed by his contemporaries as Serbia’s greatest finance expert, he served as finance minister in the governments of Milutin Garašanin (1885–87),<sup>5</sup> Svetomir Nikolajević (1894),<sup>6</sup> Nikola Hristić (1894–95)<sup>7</sup> and Vladan Djordjević (1898–1900).<sup>8</sup> During his terms as minister, he drew up several financial laws (on direct taxation, on tobacco monopoly, on fiscal administration, on fiscal committees), and sat on

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stood out for a very good literary column, but also for Vladan Djordjević’s attacks on the socialist Svetozar Marković. For general information, see *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, 445.

<sup>5</sup> Milutin Garašanin (1843–1898), a politician, founder and leader of the Popular Party, a contributor to the magazine *Videlo* (Beacon); served as Serbia’s minister to Austria-Hungary (1883), minister of foreign affairs and prime minister (1884–86), minister of interior (1886–87); towards the end of his life, served as head of the Serbian diplomatic mission in Paris (1894–95), and as president of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbia.

<sup>6</sup> Svetomir Nikolajević (1844–1922), a writer, Great School professor, member of the Royal Serbian Academy; served as interior minister and prime minister (1894).

<sup>7</sup> Nikola Hristić (1818–1911), a politician; served as interior minister (1860), and prime minister (1860–61, 1883–84, 1888–89, 1894–95).

<sup>8</sup> Vladan Djordjević (1844–1930), a surgeon, army colonel and founder of the Serbian medical corps; served as minister of the economy (1888–89), prime minister (1897–1900), and head of the Serbian legations in Constantinople and Athens.

the committee in charge of preparing the law on agricultural cooperatives (1898). He served as acting prime minister at the time of the failed assassination of ex-King Milan (1899), and the engagement of King Alexander Obrenović to Draga Mašin (1900). After King Alexander’s engagement, he resigned along with the entire cabinet of Vladan Djordjević. In 1906 there were attempts to return him to politics so that he might form a government that would be capable of settling the difficult issues in Serbia’s relations with Austria. Together with his brother Nikola, he published the *Source Materials for the History of the Kingdom of Serbia* in two volumes (1882), and he left behind the manuscript of his memoirs, which is kept in the Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

The first part of the book, “Memoirs of Vukašin J. Petrović”, comprises eleven chapters. His account combines personal observations, events from his private life and events relating to Serbia’s political life in the last decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. He begins by recollecting his student days in Germany, his first encounter and subsequent collaboration with Jovan Ristić. The account of his activity relating to the newspaper *Jedinstvo* is followed by a description of his situation after the fall of Ristić’s government in 1873 and his resignation from the civil service. With Ristić as the most influential member of the cabinet formed in 1875 by Stevča Mihailović, Petrović was appointed to a clerical post in the Police Department of the Ministry of Interior. His closeness to Ristić meant an opportunity for him to take part in state affairs during Serbia’s wars of independence, when he was awarded the Order of the Takovo Cross 4th Class. Formally, Petrović was not a member of a political party. However, he claims that he demanded that his name be removed from the list of the Liberal Party after his clash with Jovan Ristić, who called

him a total zero. From then on he began collaboration with the Progressive Party without becoming a member, and served as finance minister in Milutin Garašanin's cabinet in 1885. As finance minister in the cabinets of Nikolajević, Hristić and Djordjević, and as the acting prime minister at the time of the failed assassination of former King Milan in 1899, he was in a position to witness or influence the course of some of the most important events in the history of Serbia. His memoirs offer his observations, as well as his views on some issues of relevance to Serbia's finances, such as the crash of Bontoux's Union Générale in 1882.<sup>9</sup>

Apart from financial issues, Petrović's memoirs provide his portrayal of character traits of a number of politicians, and abound in information concerning their private life. Especially interesting are the sections describing his encounters with the Austrian politician Benjamin von Kalláy<sup>10</sup> and the German chancellor Bismarck. He also presents what information he had on the conspiracy that ended in the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga in 1903 and the accession of King Peter I Karadjordjević to the throne of Serbia. Quite interesting is his brief description of how he met some of the conspirators in Vienna, including their

leader, Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijević Apis. He also recalls the failed attempt, made at the insistence of King Peter, to form a government that would find a way to ease tensions between Serbia and Austria-Hungary over the so-called "cannon affair". The last chapters are devoted to an account of his situation in occupied Serbia during the First World War, and to the trial he was put on for treason and collaboration with the occupying force.

The second part of the book, "Supplements to the memoirs of Vukašin J. Petrović", subtitled "My defences (1886–87, 1896 and 1920)", is organized into thirteen wholes containing Petrović's perspective on the most important events in his personal life and career, and his reminiscences about prominent figures of Serbian politics and his own relationship with them. Accounts of the attacks in parliament and in court in 1886 and 1887, his resignation as minister in 1895, his recollections of the relationship, in the course of 1897, between King Alexander and prime minister Djordjević, Petrović's friend since their student days, and of Djordjević's cabinet, are an invaluable source for the history of political life in Serbia under the last Obrenovićs. Petrović takes a look at the failed assassination of ex-King Milan in 1899, and at the ensuing persecution of the Radicals.

Two parts of the Supplements concern the issue of King Alexander's prospective marriage to Draga Mašin. In 1900, at the time the King was setting the stage for announcing his engagement, Petrović was the acting prime minister, and therefore in communication with the King, as can be seen from his account of the conversations he had with the King. He also left behind his correspondence with the prime minister (Djordjević), who was out of the country at the time. Petrović pays particular attention to his relationship with Nikola Pašić, a prominent politician and leader of the Radical

<sup>9</sup> The cabinet of Milan Piroćanac concluded in 1881 a contract with Bontoux's investment bank concerning the construction and exploitation of the Belgrade–Vranje railway. The bank's bankruptcy a year later caused one of the greatest scandals in Serbia's modern history and threatened the country's finances.

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin von Kalláy (1839–1903), consul-general of Austria-Hungary in Belgrade (1868–75), subsequently the administrator of Bosnia-Herzegovina (1882–1903), known for promoting the creation of a Bosniak nation; wrote a history of the Serbs (1877), but forbade its distribution in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Party. In the sections titled “Relationship with Pašić 1904” and “Pašić and I (26 Oct. to 22 Nov. 1912)”, he accounts their conversations, and brings his correspondence with Djordje Genčić and a few quotations from the Serbian and German press.

Now available to the general public, the memoirs of Vukašin Petrović are an invaluable contribution to the publication of the sources for the history of the reigns of two last Obrenovićs, King Milan and his son, King Alexander. Of course, historians need to be cautious when dealing with memoirs, and for more than one reason. The inevitable issue of the authors’ objectivity set aside, their frequently frag-

mentary narrative tends to paint an incomplete picture of events and persons. In this particular case, the supplements contribute to a greater clarity and completeness of the body text. The relevance of Vukašin Petrović’s career as a statesman and his acquaintance and collaboration with the most prominent political figures of Serbia and Austria-Hungary make such drawbacks appear less important. The memoirs of Vukašin Petrović should be considered an unavoidable source for the history of political and social life of the Kingdom of Serbia in the last decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

PHILIPPE GELEZ, *SAFVET-BEG BAŠAGIĆ (1870–1934). AUX RACINES INTELLECTUELLES DE LA PENSÉE NATIONALE CHEZ LES MUSULMANS DE BOSNIE-HERZÉGOVINE*. ATHENS: ÉCOLE FRANÇAISE D’ATHÈNES, MONDES MÉDITERRANÉENS ET BALKANIQUES, 2010, pp. 807.

*Reviewed by* Veljko Stanić\*

The book presented here originates from a doctoral thesis defended at Paris Sorbonne University (Paris IV) in 2006. Its author, Philippe Gelez, a former fellow of the French School in Athens, has been assistant professor at the Paris Sorbonne University Department for Slavic Studies since 2010. His main area of interest is the past of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially its Islamic component. With the biography of Safvet-bey Bašagić, he joined the ranks of modern French Balkan studies scholars.

Safvet-bey Bašagić (1870–1934) belongs to the circle of Muslim intellectuals of Bosnia-Herzegovina of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries championing a Bosniak nation. A poet, translator, literary historian and Oriental studies scholar, Bašagić is also a politician whose activity coincides with the last years of the Austro-Hungarian administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Moreover, Bašagić sees Austria-Hungary as an unavoidable patron of the Bosnian Muslims in the process of modernization, opening to Europe and an understanding between East and West. Not fully accepted in Bašagić’s lifetime, his work has seen an exuberant revival in the last few decades, and notably so since 1992.

Gelez offers an exhaustive biographical account applying the classical chronological approach. Despite its extensiveness, it is systematically and readably structured, and very well written. The book is organized into three large parts: *Aux origines de la pensée de Bašagić: racines familiales et formation intellectuelle (1596–1890)*; *Nationalisme et orientalisme chez Safvet-beg Bašagić (1890–1906)*; *Kultur et politique chez Safvet-beg Bašagić (1907–1934)*, each comprising several chapters. Apart from

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an introduction, epilogue and conclusion, it contains extensive appendices (a census data table for Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1866–1931, personal documents, translated excerpts from Bašagić's literary and history writings), a bibliography, and an index of personal names. The central corpus of documentary source material comprises Bašagić's personal archive kept at the Historical Archives in Sarajevo, the Bašagić family archive from the Archives of Herzegovina in Mostar, and official sources from the period of Austrian administration kept in the Archives of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo. Finally, the author's thorough familiarity both with Bašagić's writings and with the literature on him contributes to a more comprehensive picture of the man and his work.

Gelez paints a vibrant and suggestive portrait of Safvet-bey, a lonely intellectual poised between two worlds, lacking the energy to assert himself as an intellectual or political leader of the Bosnian Muslims. Yet, it was Bašagić who outlined the major tenets of Bosniak nationalism, and today his name holds a central place in the revival of the Bosniak ideology in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The origin and history of the Bašagić family, to which this book pays special attention, leads us to a prominent bey family from Herzegovina. Aristocratic origin and an attachment to the land and tradition are key elements of Bašagić's intellectual as well as political profile, decisively contributing to his conservatism and elitism. However, Bašagić belonged to the minority part of the Muslim elites in Bosnia-Herzegovina who did not see the 1878 Austro-Hungarian occupation of this Ottoman province as a disaster. On the contrary, having completed his education at a religious school, the boy proceeded to the Austrian State Gymnasium in Sarajevo, and from 1895 to 1899 pursued Oriental studies at the University of Vienna. His experience of fin-de-siècle

Europe led him to try to find a middle ground between the Ottoman Empire and Europe, between Islam and laicism. He found it in the idea of Bosniakness, elaborated and supported by Austria-Hungary for ideological and geopolitical reasons of her own. It was based on the hypothetical continuity of the Bosniak nation from medieval Bogomilism, to the voluntary conversion of feudal families to Islam, to the Bosnia-Herzegovina of Bašagić's own times.

Apart from declaring himself as a Bosniak, however, Bašagić claimed, especially in his younger days, to belong to the Croat nation as well. This Croat component was important in the formation of Bašagić's political culture, and had never faded away completely. During the First World War and the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, he remained close to the stance of Croatian nationalists. Namely, in the 1890s he belonged to the circle around Ante Starčević (1823–1896), the ideologist of the Croatian Party of Rights and leader of Croatian extreme nationalism. Among the lasting friendships that Bašagić established in those years, reconstructed in detail by Gelez, was the one with Ivo Pilar (1874–1933), a geopolitician and advocate of Bosnia-Herzegovina's unification with Croatia. This dual situation has confronted Gelez with the central contradiction: How does Bašagić define the cornerstones of Bosniak national identity, while emphasizing his Croatness? The answer should be looked for not only in the endeavour, by the Serb and Croat sides alike, to nationalize the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the late nineteenth century, but also in Bašagić's enduring attachment to the Austro-Hungarian political and cultural orbit. Moreover, as a loyal subject, Bašagić entered politics, and as President of the Diet of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1910 until its dissolution after the outbreak of the First World War. Two years



of central importance in Bašagić's life were certainly 1878 and 1918, as clearly emphasized by his biographer. In view of the victorious Yugoslav idea at the end of the First World War, however, these two dates marked the withdrawal and demise of foreign, imperial rules, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian, in the South-Slavic world. After 1918, Bašagić was no longer a man of politics and influence.

Gelez identifies four separate but complementary approaches in Bašagić's endeavours to modernize the Bosnian Muslim community: historiographic, literary, educational and religious. His work as a historian is best illustrated by his *Brief Introduction to the Past of Bosnia and Herzegovina* published in Sarajevo in 1900, which puts forth, in a literary and romantic manner, the abovementioned theory of the continuity of the Bosniak nation from medieval times. The same perspective was used in Bašagić's doctoral dissertation defended in Vienna in 1910, and published in Sarajevo two years later (*Bosniaks and Herzegovinans in Islamic Literature*). In the field of literature, in 1900 Bašagić started the magazine "Behar" (Blossom Tree), and in 1903 became the first president of Gajret (Zeal), a society committed to establishing closer ties between Muslim elites and masses, and to a general moral and national renaissance. Among other things, Bašagić urged Muslim youths to pursue higher education in Europe. Finally, Bašagić's stance as regards the religious question shows a certain measure of liberalism, as he saw the aristocratic, bey, class rather than Islam to be the mainstay of the Bosniak nation. In his view, there is nothing controversial about Islam as a religious or cultural trait, but the conservative social role of the ulema is difficult to balance with Europe's rationalism: Bašagić was inclined to European Orientalism. There resides yet another of Bašagić's contradictions: elated by Islam as a poet, Bašagić as a politician brought

upon himself the disapproval of extremely traditional Muslim circles and thus further undermined his own position.

A particular merit of Gelez's book is its nuanced analysis of Bašagić's ideology, which he justifiably terms *Kultur*. What it means in Bašagić's case is an amalgamation of poetic expression, scientific discourse and political action. It is this ideology, rather than practical politics, that has enabled the continuity of Muslim nationalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Gelez sees it as an "ideological substratum in which the roots of various national ideas are embedded, especially those of the Party of Rights before 1895, of the Independent State of Croatia during the Second World War, of 'Muslim' nationalism in the second Yugoslavia, and finally, of contemporary *Bosniakness*" (p. 613). It is regrettable that Gelez, while giving a precise account of Bašagić's *posthumous fate* in the "Epilogue" (e.g. the appropriation of Bašagić by Croatian nationalists in the 1930s, or, during the Second World War, by the Ustasha, who organized a commemoration of the tenth anniversary of Bašagić's death in Zagreb in 1944), has not embarked upon an analysis of the evolution of the Bosniak ideology in the twentieth century, notably since 1992, a process in which the "rehabilitation" of Bašagić holds a very important place.<sup>1</sup>

Gelez's book has a few weak points which should be noted as well. While admitting that the name "Bosniak" for the language spoken in Bosnia-Herzegovina was in use only in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, reemerging since 1992, he chooses to use it, and not "Serbo-Croatian". In much the same way, he also chooses to define the population

<sup>1</sup> On the evolution of the Bosniak ideology, see Darko Tanasković, "La renaissance de l'idéologie bosniaque", *Dialogue* 20 (Dec. 1996), 33-45.

of Bosnia-Herzegovina exclusively in religious terms, that is, as Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Muslim. According to Gelez, religious identities in Bosnia-Herzegovina not only precede national identities, but national identities purportedly took shape quite late in history; and mostly as the result of the pressure of aggressive nationalisms from Serbia and Croatia in the late nineteenth century. By keeping aloof from “endless debates”, however, Gelez makes a choice, which is as much political as it is theoretical. When it comes to defining nationalism, Gelez does not enter into theoretical discussions, but rather calls for a minimalism: “Nationalism is the idea which tends to influence political grouping around a community of values. In other words, the existence of a people (a community of people sharing the same values) is a prerequisite for the emergence of a nation (political grouping).” However, he fails to take his definition to its ultimate consequences in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, because he overlooks the fact that the religious and ethnic identities of the subjugated Christian population went hand in hand with one another. In other words, through their patriarchal culture the numerically strongest Orthodox population preserved self-awareness as a community of Serbian people and the historical memory of the old, medieval Serbian state. The Serbian Orthodox Church embodied in the Patriarchate of Peć acted as their ethnic as well as political representative. According to one of the most eminent historians of the Balkans, Traian Stoianovich, the early nineteenth-century Serbian insurrections were a social as much as a national revolution which sought to overthrow the Ottoman feudal system quite in the spirit of the ideas of the Enlightenment. Leopold Ranke’s well-known *Serbian Revolution* was published as early as 1829. A leading British expert on the history of central Europe and the Balkans, Rob-

ert William Seton-Watson, wrote: “In Herzegovina and Bosnia, to which the revolt [1875] speedily spread, unrest had been chronic since the beginning of the [nineteenth] century. The two provinces have been hermetically sealed from the outside world ever since the final Turkish conquest in 1483. Of purest Serbian blood, the population was divided between Moslem, Orthodox and Catholic.”<sup>2</sup> Otherwise, how can one explain the enthusiastic response that the insurrections generated among the Orthodox Christians in Bosnia-Herzegovina,<sup>3</sup> Srem, the Banat, Montenegro and southern Serbia, or the series of peasants’ revolts in Bosnia-Herzegovina throughout the nineteenth century?<sup>4</sup> This is the reason why Dimitrije

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone and the Eastern Question* (London: Frank Cass, 1971; first published in 1935), 17.

<sup>3</sup> “The Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina actively participated in the preparation of this insurrection. One of the prominent leaders of this insurrection, Mateja Nenadović, negotiated an agreement in 1803 with notable Sarajevan Serbs on joint revolt in order to bring the two insurgent movements together. The preconditions for such an agreement were excellent, as the Serbs from Bosnia and the Serbs from Serbia had long had a close connection ... The Nenadović family, for example, playing a leading role in 1804 insurrection, had its origins in the Bosnian Birča area, and the parents of Vuk Karadžić, at first a rebel and a revolutionary and later the famous cultural and educational reformer who modernized the Serbian alphabet and the Serbian language, came from Petnica in Herzegovina (Montenegro today). Altogether, about one fourth of the leadership of the 1804 insurrection had roots in Herzegovina and Bosnia.” The quotation comes from Dušan T. Bataković, *The Serbs of Bosnia & Herzegovina: History and Politics* (Paris: Dialogue, 1996), 42, a book which has, unfortunately, escaped Gelez’s notice.

<sup>4</sup> There are plentiful other examples, to mention but, e.g. in the field of cultural his-

Djordjević, in his typology of Balkan nationalisms, opens with “agrarian nationalism”, which was at work from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the 1840s; it then was ushered into the age of “historical nationalism” (historicism) by the Balkan elites (1840s–1878), followed by the age of “state nationalism” (1880s–WWI). Peter Sugar also speaks of a popular or egalitarian nationalism among the Serbs. In other words, Gelez tends to overlook the bigger picture, i.e. the processes that were taking place across the Balkan region of the Ottoman Empire and not only in the Pashalik/Principality of Serbia. Muslim revolts against the sultan in Bosnia-Herzegovina were encouraged, inter alia, by the Ottoman concessions to the Principality of Serbia under Prince Miloš Obrenović (autonomy from 1830), its system of free peasant tenure etc. Serbian national identity in Bosnia-Herzegovina, therefore, is not a tardy development, but an integral part of Serbian nationalism, one of the key integrative forces in the nineteenth-century Balkans. It had its religious and ethnic basis which, from the beginning of the 1800s, became incorporated into the overall process of Serbian national emancipation and modern nation-state building modelled on contemporary European examples.<sup>5</sup>

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tory: a reader for Serbian primary schools in Bosnia-Herzegovina published in Cyrillic script in Sarajevo in 1867, cf. *Istorija srpskog naroda*, vol. V-1 (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1981), 500; or oral history: in 1878, Grga Martić, a Franciscan from Bosnia-Herzegovina, wrote down narrations of a ninety-year old man, Pantelija, who referred to Turkey and Austria-Hungary in the following way: “Both are tyrants. This is a Serbian land”, cf. Fra Grga Martić, “Zapamćenja” (1828–1878), *Izabrani spisi* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1956), 266.

<sup>5</sup> See Dimitrije Djordjević, “Balkan versus European Enlightenment – Parallelism and Dissonances”, *East European Quar-*

When it comes to the period of Benjamin von Kalláy’s administration in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1882–1903), the reader remains unconvinced that Gelez has succeeded in his attempt to relativize the classical findings of Yugoslav historiography, least of all Tomislav Kraljačić’s study *Kalláy’s Regime in Bosnia 1882–1903*, which Gelez himself qualifies as an “excellent monograph”. In this particular case, Gelez describes Yugoslav historiography as “postcolonial” and points to the neglected positive aspects of Kalláy’s regime, denying its quintessentially colonial nature. In his view, Kalláy was facing a difficult challenge of fighting the existing nationalisms. There is no doubt about that; but Gelez makes no effort to expand his view by analyzing the relationship of interdependence between imperialism and nationalism in the Balkans, the interdependence discussed by, for instance, Mark Mazower in his book *The Balkans: A Short History*. We cannot go into detail here, but, on the whole, Gelez seems to be overly willing to show understanding for the intentions and needs of Austro-Hungarian policies, which is more than one can say for his perspective on Balkan nationalisms.

Fully committed to critically reconstructing the life of his “hero”, Gelez sometimes denies his readers the broader intellectual backdrop against which Bašagić’s life and work unfolded. His portrait of an often lonely and isolated Bašagić is not balanced with sufficient information about those Muslim intellec-

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*tely* IV/4 (1975), 487–497, as well as his “National Factors in Nineteenth-Century Balkan Revolutions”, in *War and Society in East Central Europe*, vol. I *Special Topics and Generalization on the 18th and 19th centuries*, ed. B. Király & G. Rothenberg (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1979), 197–214, and “Agrarian Factors in Nineteenth-Century Balkan Revolutions”, *ibid.*, 163–182.

tuals in Bosnia-Herzegovina who opted for the Serbian or the Yugoslav national cause and tied the future of their community to a wider corpus of democratic ideas radiating in the South-Slavic world in the early twentieth century. The same goes for the Serbian intellectual circles in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Even though they belonged to the numerically strongest ethnic and national group in this province of the Ottoman, and subsequently Austro-Hungarian, empire, they are hardly ever mentioned, and if they are, they almost unfailingly figure as exponents of Serbian nationalism. The critique of Bašagić's historical writings put forward by Stanoje Stanojević (1874–1937) or Vladimir Ćorović (1885–1941) is, for Gelez, in the first place nationalist, in the second place scholarly. The *Young Bosnia* movement, the major youth movement in Bosnia-Herzegovina, is only mentioned in passing.

Finally, the reader will vainly search this extensive book for the most important Serbian intellectual figures such as Jovan Cvijić (1865–1927) or Jovan Skerlić (1877–1914), as if the political, ideological and aesthetic battles that they fought, at the time of the Modernist movement, had not been fought in the whole of the Slavic South, and thus in Bosnia-Herzegovina, too. In other words, Bašagić's intellectual and political work can hardly be properly understood if viewed solely within the confines of Bosnia-Herzegovina; it needs to be looked at and evaluated comparatively, against the background of the rest of the South-Slavic world.

There are a few imprecisions and errors that escaped the author's notice: a mediocre Croat writer such as Mile Budak can hardly be described as an "author of great renown" (p. 563), and a political émigré such as Djoko Slijepčević as an exponent of "Yugoslavia's official cultural policy" (p. 591). Finally, Gelez, quoting Ivo Andrić's ironic remark about Safvet-bey, which he

dates to 1934, offers an unfounded claim that Andrić was a "sympathizer of socialism". In the 1930s, Andrić, a high-ranking royal diplomat, certainly was not one; and even after 1945, the communist regime needed him more than he needed the regime. Yet, Gelez remembers Andrić with good reason: the greatest Serbian writer, born in Bosnia-Herzegovina, had little sympathy for the Bosnian bey class.

The book of Philippe Gelez is no doubt an important contribution not only to French historiography, but also to the historiography on Bosnia and Herzegovina at large. The broadness of its analytical approach, which encompasses the literary, scholarly and political work of Safvet-bey Bašagić, makes it the most comprehensive piece of historical writing on this intellectual figure. On the other hand, some views and thoughts it puts forth suggest that Balkan and other European historiographies need to establish a broader critical dialogue.

ANDREJ MILIN, MIODRAG MILIN AND CVETKO MIHAJLOV, *SRBI U RUMUNIJI ZA VREME KOMUNIZMA. ZVUČNI ARHIV I PRIRUČNIK O STRADANJU* [SERBS IN ROMANIA UNDER COMMUNISM. AN AUDIO ARCHIVE AND A HANDBOOK ON HARDSHIP]. TIMISOARA: SAVEZ SRBA U RUMUNIJI, 2011, pp. 552.

*Reviewed by Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović\**

The recently published biligual Serbian/Romanian book on the Serbs in Romania in the age of communism, authored by Andrej Milin, Miodrag Milin and Cvetko Mihajlov, is a result of years-long research into the situation of an ethnic minority in Romania in a recent period of history. The situation of the Serbian minority in Romania during the communist era is one of the key issues in understanding the relations between Yugoslavia and Romania after the Second World War. As a direct consequence of the Resolution of the Cominform of 1948, which expelled Yugoslavia from the communist bloc, the Serbian minority was subjected to political and economic pressure and various forms of assimilation and acculturation. Their minority institutions were abolished, religious schools closed down, there ensued individual arrests and trials, and forced group relocation to the Bărăgan Plain. Having refused to comply with the Cominform Resolution, the Serbian minority came to epitomize the “traitor” and “enemy” of the political system in Romania. As a result, its position deteriorated, and conspicuously so after the break of diplomatic relations between Romania and Yugoslavia and the closing of the Yugoslav embassy in Bucharest. In 1951, members of the minority groups from the Banat area along the border with Yugoslavia, such as Serbs, Germans, Bulgarians and Hungarians, as well as persons considered as posing a threat to the Communist Party, were deported to uninhabited areas of the Bărăgan Plain near the Danube Delta. One of the authors, the historian Miodrag Milin, had already devoted a monograph to the ordeal of the Serbs deported to the

Bărăgan Plain (*Srbi iz Rumunije u Bărăganskoj golgoti*/Serbs from Romania in the Bărăgan Golgotha).

The book *Serbs in Romania under Communism* comprises an introduction and eleven chapters which mostly consist of selected biographical accounts. In the introduction, the authors stress that the study deals with the question “of political prisoners among the Serbs and investigates the social and legal dimensions of anti-Titoist reprisals against the minority population” (p. 11). Political prisoners — among whom special attention is paid to Laza Adamov, Božidar Stojanović and Miladin Silin — were but a few among the large number of imprisoned Serbs, representatives of minority institutions, local activists, teachers and priests. The chapter “Božidar Stanojević’s notes on the SAF [Slavic Antifascist Front] and the USCDAR [Union of the Slav Cultural Democratic Associations in Romania]” contains Božidar Stanojević’s account of the formation of an antifascist front in the Serbian settlements in the Romanian part of the Banat. The Romanian communist authorities, however, did not approvingly accept the establishment of minority antifascist organizations. The SAF was founded after the liberation of Timișoara, and it soon established a network of organizations in Serbian villages, as well as an antifascist front of women. The SAF subsequently transformed into the Union of the Slav Cultural Democratic Associations in Romania, which was to become the most important Serbian minority organization in Romania.

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In his "Notes", Božidar Stanojević offers a detailed account of all key events in the period between 1941 and 1953. The arrested members of the Serbian minority were brought to trial and sentenced to long-term imprisonment. In the second half of 1949, several SAF members were arrested, which led to the "Indictment against a Group of Spies and Traitors Serving Tito's Fascist Clique". The same chapter also gives an account of the circumstances under which the Serbian members of the USCDAR were accused of "criminal activity" and "espionage". Just like other similar trials, this one was intended to show that the accused were "Yugoslav spies" working against the regime in communist Romania, and it ended with severe sentences. The chapter "Political prisoners: interviews, archival materials, notes, testimonies and life stories" acquaints the reader with the Serbs sentenced to imprisonment between 1948 and 1955 through their short biographies and interviews with them. The chapter "The Serbian Church in Romania under communist terror" presents the documentary material evidencing repression against the Serbian Orthodox Church and its clergy. The authors suggest that the entire Serbian Orthodox Church was under suspicion of "Titoist espionage and hostility against the new republic" (p. 17). It also includes the list of Serbian clerics who were "under police surveillance", obtained from the National Council for the Study of Securitate Archives (CNSAS) in Bucharest. The chapter "Three interviews 'from the opposite side'" offers interviews with Serbian intellectuals, activists who were witnesses to the persecution of Serbs. It is followed by the texts of Vasile Sandru "Territorial Pretensions" and Vladimir Lj. Cvetković "The Red Army on the Danube and the aspirations of the Serbs in Romania to be annexed by Yugoslavia", and "Photographs of the former political prisoners among Serbs", which

features photographs of prisons, forced labour camps and prison construction sites in Romania. The chapter "Political prisoners: biographies" presents short biographies of about six hundred members of the Serbian minority in Romania who were persecuted and imprisoned throughout the country on account of being politically unsuitable. The book closes with appendices presenting archival documents and the list of seventy-eight former political prisoners whose biographies are not included in the main body of the study. A CD enclosed with the book contains the audio record of thirty-eight interviews portraying the life of Serbs under communism. It adds a new value to the book and opens up the possibility of further research based on the recorded material. The presented biographical accounts reveal the scale of the damaging impact of the communist period on the ethnic minorities in Romania. As a testimony to a period, the oral histories presented in this study shed light on the role of a community's memory in understanding the past and present. Therefore, this book should primarily be seen as a source material for an important period in the history of the Serbian minority in Romania, which partly explains the reasons for its increasing assimilation and decreasing numerical strength. It is also necessary to point out that the volume is bilingual, Serbian and Romanian, which makes it accessible to both Serbian and Romanian readers. To scholars, this rich corpus of material about the Serbs in Romania during communism provides a basis and opportunity for new research into the history of the Serbian community, and to interested readers, it opens a window onto a dynamic period in the recent history of Romania and the Serbian community in that context.



THE BALKANS IN SEATTLE  
 A CHRONICLE OF THE 18TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE ON BALKAN AND SOUTH  
 SLAVIC LINGUISTICS, LITERATURE, AND FOLKLORE. UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
 SEATTLE, WA, 29–31 MARCH 2012

By Marija Ilić\* and Lidija Delić\*\*

The 18th Biennial Conference on Balkan and South-Slavic Linguistics, one in a series initiated in 1978 by the University of Chicago, was organized in Seattle in March 2012 by the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures of the University of Washington, and assembled more than thirty participants from the United States, Canada, Russia, Germany, Albania, Romania, Slovenia, Serbia, FYR Macedonia and Bulgaria. What added a distinctive charm to it was the fact that the organizers took a special effort to combine two different but related spheres and approaches to Balkan cultures: the academic perspective and the perspective of distinguished residents of Seattle who have a personal, humanitarian or artistic interest in the Balkans. The latter was presented in the section *My Balkans* at the end of each conference day.

The Conference opened with the paper of *Tom Priestly* (University of Alberta, Canada) “Placement of pronouns in a Slovene dialect”, focused on the dialect spoken in the bilingual Slovene/German zone in Austrian Carinthia. By analyzing positions and occurrences of the reflexive pronoun *se* and the singular personal pronouns in relation to verbs, Priestly comes to the conclusion that context seems to be the only sociolinguistic factor affecting the pronoun placement: more formal topics correlate with pre-verbal placement, similar to Standard Slovene, while less formal topics correlate with post-verbal placement, which is more like contact German. The paper of *Matthew C. Curtis* (Ohio State University, USA) “On the chronology of lexical borrowings from Albanian into Slavic” analyzes the chro-

nology of loanwords from Albanian into South Slavic on the basis of Albanian and Slavic diachronic phonological changes. Curtis argues that almost all Albanian borrowings came into Slavic after the fourteenth-century Ottoman conquest of the western Balkans. The paper “Slavic elements in the present Rumanian language and their history” by *Helmut Schaller* (University of Marburg, Germany) concluded the first section. In Schaller’s view, the pattern of borrowing from Slavic into Rumanian was determined by semantic factors. Such a pattern, according to Schaller, structured certain semantic fields which could be related to “nature and agriculture”, “household”, “human existence”. Schaller suggests that the Slavic borrowings in Rumanian and in other Balkan languages may be regarded as typical of the Balkan *Sprachbund*.

In her paper “The female gaze on the new ‘other’—the members of non-Slovenian post-Yugoslav states”, *Kristina Reardon* (University of Connecticut, USA) analyzes short stories of the contemporary Slovenian women writers Maja Novak, Lili Potpara and Suzana Tratnik. Reardon argues that the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the new geopolitical position of Slovenia have brought new symbolic layers to the spatial and social categories (“north/south”; “up/down”; “us/them”), noting that the female gaze on the *other* serves the authors to negotiate Slovenian identity by stressing what the Slovenian female characters are not. *Victor Friedman*

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(University of Chicago, USA), in his paper “What is a newspaper? Basic colour terms and Balkan linguistics”, adheres to Trubetzkoy’s definition according to which lexicon and morphosyntax constitute fundamental aspects of a *Sprachbund*. Friedman argues that borrowings from Turkish for *black*, *white* and *red* as universally basic colours are the most susceptible to stylistic variation in Balkan languages. The Balkan colour terminology, in Friedman’s view, may be relevant to the nature of universals and for a strategic integration of typology and contact linguistics. The paper of *Andrew Dombrowski* (University of Chicago, USA), “Pulevski’s Turkish in a Balkan context”, analyzes the Turkish section of Pulevski’s trilingual Macedonian-Albanian-Turkish dictionary (1875). As an early example of West Rumelian, the Turkish text in the Dictionary is of unique value in the Balkanological context. Dombrowski shows that the Turkish text reflects significant balkanization as regards phonological developments, morphosyntax and syntax. The working section of the Conference concluded with “Reconstruction of the Proto-Gheg infinitive” by *Kelly Lynne Maynard* (Moraine Valley Community College, USA). Maynard bases her analysis on fieldwork conducted among the Samsun Albanian population in Turkey, an ethno-linguistic enclave where archaic linguistic features survive. She endeavours to reconstruct an earlier stage of the commonly proposed Proto-Gheg infinitive as “*ma* + (clitic) + participle”, compared to later “*me* + (clitic) + participle”.

The first conference day was enriched with two talks. Tom Priestly presented his photos, reminiscing about his summer vacation when he hitchhiked to Ohrid in the 1960s. In the *My Balkans* section, Peter Lippman, a human rights activist from Seattle, shared with the audience stories about his travels, particularly to the former Yugoslavia, and his humanitarian

activity aimed at helping families affected by war and loss of family members.

*Denis Ermolin* (Russian Academy of Sciences) opened the second conference day with “Funeral laments and weeping among the Albanians of Ukraine: (con)-text and semantics”. Ermolin analyzes both the published funeral songs (S. Islami; S. Musliu, D. Dauti) and those recorded during his 2007–11 fieldwork among the Albanian population of two regions in Ukraine (Budjak and Priazovje). He distinguishes three main lamenting situations (at home; on the way to the cemetery; at the moment the coffin is being laid in the grave) and discusses common topics, motifs and taboos associated with the ritual. Tracing some Balkan features in the lamentations, Ermolin points to the possible zone of origin of the Albanian population in Ukraine, i.e. the border area between Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo. *Tanya Dimitrova* (Friedrich Schiller University, Germany) presented “Language as a main identification among Bulgarian migrants in Greece”, based on her fieldwork in Greece in 2008–10. Dimitrova argues that, among recent Bulgarian immigrants of various social and cultural backgrounds, Bulgarian language is the primary factor of their self-identification as a “community” and as “Bulgarians”. She points to the reciprocal relationship between language and identity, whereby changes in language use among the migrants indicate changes in identity attitudes, and *vice versa*. Grace Fielder (University of Arizona, USA), in her paper “Language, identity and standardization in the Balkans”, pays special attention to the conjunctions and discourse markers *ama*, *ami* with regard to the Balkan standard languages, Montenegrin in particular. The afternoon section was devoted to literary and folklore issues. *Bavjola Shatro* (University “Aleksander Moisiu”, Albania), in her paper “Metaphysical concepts and hermeticism in contemporary Albanian poetry: the poetry of Mar-

tin Camaj in *Palimpsest*”, focuses on the last volume of poetry that the renowned Albanian poet wrote in the 1990s, shortly before his death. Shatro connects Camaj’s mysticism to Albanian traditional beliefs, and his metaphysical concepts to his understanding of language, memory and the origin of thought and mystery. This section concluded with the paper “Sacred stones in Macedonian folk religion” by *Dragica Popovska* (Institute of National History, FYR Macedonia). It presents Macedonian traditional beliefs and rituals centred on large stones scattered around in the landscape — e.g. the belief in their supernatural and healing powers, and “sacredness”, which has persisted to this day. She emphasizes that people who practise rituals are of different ages, nationalities, confessions and levels of education, which, among other factors, leads to the conclusion about the vitality of very old, archaic layers of tradition and their contamination with new ones. *Aleksandra Salamurović* (Friedrich Schiller University, Germany) presented “Cultural models of self-images and alterity in Serbian newspapers after 2000”. Salamurović adheres to the system theory and constructivism, according to which the media reflect prevailing social relations and symbolic values in a society. By analyzing the Serbian media, she finds that contemporary Germany and its politicians are still chiefly (re)presented by association with Germany’s Nazi past. *Amanda Greber* (University of Toronto, Canada) analyzes Macedonian elementary school readers from 1945 to 2000 in her paper “T is for Tito: good language, good citizen, and identity in textbooks.” Since school textbooks play a central role in nation building and identity construction, Greber conducts a diachronic analysis, looking at changes in language use and the associated rhetoric.

The conference side event was devoted to a newly-released book, *Balkanismen Heute – Balkanisms Today* (ed. by T.

Kahl, M. Metzeltin and H. Schaller). In the *My Balkans* section, Yvonne Hunt, an American ethnomusicologist and traditional dance instructor, spoke about her personal and professional experiences while studying Greek traditional dances still performed in contemporary Greece.

*Ivelina Tchizmarzova* (Simon Fraser University, Canada) opened the final conference day with “Pragmatic function of non-anaphoric definites and non-deictic demonstratives in Bulgarian”. By examining the use of non-anaphoric noun phrases (e.g. nouns with the definite article *-ät*, the demonstratives *tozi* and *onzi*, personal pronouns, etc.) and non-deictic proximal and distal demonstratives (e.g. *tozi / toz / toja*, *onzi / onja*), Tchizmarova finds that these forms often reflect the speaker’s subjective viewpoint, which shows that definiteness is a more subjective notion than generally believed. *Ronelle Alexander* (University of California, Berkeley, USA) presented “Bulgarian dialectology as living tradition”, describing an on-going project based upon digitisation of fieldwork material from the Sofia-Berkeley Archive of Bulgarian Dialectal Speech, collected throughout Bulgaria over a number of years. Although the audio clip — accompanied by text files containing transcription, annotation and translation — is the central feature of the digital format, individual linguistic (and content) elements of each file can be also tagged for retrieval. Furthermore, each audio clip not only displays major linguistic features of a dialect, but also constitutes a coherent discourse segment of relevance to discourse analysis and ethnography. The following section was devoted to multilingual contacts and language policies. *Brian Joseph* and *Christopher Brown* (Ohio State University, USA) co-authored the paper “Balkanological lessons from the Greek of Southern Albania”, which came about as a result of fieldwork conducted in southern Albania, an area inhabited by a large

number of Greek speakers. The paper seeks to outline the current sociolinguistic situation of the Greek-speaking minority and report on some noteworthy linguistic features of the Greek regional dialect. Its other goal is to shed light on language contact between Greek and Albanian. The conference program continued with another co-authored paper "Language in the making? The case of Bunjevački", presented by *Marija Ilić* (Institute for Balkan Studies, SASA, Serbia) and *Bojan Belić* (University of Washington, USA). It looks at the project of creating, alongside the already existing Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian and Montenegrin, a new standardized language based upon the Štokavian dialect — Bunjevački (the language of the Bunjevci). The paper is based on fieldwork carried out among the Bunjevci minority in northern Serbia. Special emphasis is laid upon the phases that the process of standardization is going through. *Keith Langston* (University of Georgia, USA), in "Managing Croatian and Serbian: the role of language planning boards", compares policies and practices carried out by the Croatian and Serbian agencies *Vijeće za normu* and *Odbor za standardizaciju* respectively. Although the constitutions of the two countries provide for the official use of Croatian and Serbian respectively, Serbia has a law on the official use of languages and scripts, whereas Croatia does not. Besides, the Croatian *Vijeće* was set up by the government, is characterized by a purist orientation and meets no organized opposition, whereas the Serbian *Odbor* is characterized by anti-purism, but its policy meets an organized opposition.

The following section was devoted to Balkan folklore. In his text "About dragons and lions in Slavic and Romanian cultures", *Nicolae Stanciu* (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) analyzes the occurrence of lions in Romanian Christmas carols. As lions do not figure in Slavic folklore, Stanciu suggests that their pres-

ence may have come as a result of oriental influences or ancient heritage (Thracian, Greek or Roman). In her paper "Turkish bride in Christian epic poetry: in the web of epic and social stereotypes", *Lidija Delić* (Institute for Literature and Arts, Serbia) points out that, unlike the Muslim male characters in Serbian epic poems, the roles and domains of Turkish women were not predominantly determined by their ethnic or confessional affiliation. As regards the image of the Turkish bride, the importance of the nuptial theme and the plot considerably toned down the traditional notion of otherness.

*Thede Kahl* (Friedrich Schiller University, Germany) presented "Old professions and occupational names in multilingual communities of South Albania". Kahl's analysis, which draws on fieldwork carried out in Southern Albania, observes that different ethnic groups have shown preference for certain traditional professions, and points out that some occupational names underwent a semantic shift towards ethnonyms. *Olga Mladenova* (University of Calgary, Canada), in her paper "Textual analysis and historical linguistics", offers three examples of how editions of important texts can provide data enriching our understanding of the history of a language: she analyzes the origin of a Bulgarian orthographic convention (the spelling of the feminine third-person clitic *i* 'her') and discusses new evidence for the persistence of case in nineteenth-century Bulgarian and for the seventeenth-century Bulgarian continuants of Proto-Slavic \**ě*. The academic part of the conference concluded with the paper of *Donald Dyer* (University of Mississippi, USA) "Hanging in the balance: real lessons in manuscript acceptance and rejection at *Balkanistica*". In his capacity as editor of the *Balkanistica* journal, Dyer summarized its editorial policy and presented the journal's statistics on the authors, their fields of interest and countries of origin.

The Seattle-based internet bookstore *Plavi kit* (Blue Whale), which distributes books mainly from the area of the former Yugoslavia, was presented on the last conference day. In the *My Balkans* section, Mary Sherhart, a Seattle resident and one of America's leading teachers and performers of traditional Balkan vocal music, talked about her work with Balkan musicians and about her own interpretations of Balkan music. The organizers had a final surprise in store for the participants: a small retirement celebration for Prof. Emeritus Jim Augerot, a renowned

Slavist and Balkanologist. The conference ended with a dinner and a party with a Seattle-based orchestra which performed music from all around the Balkans.

Held on the beautiful campus of the University of Washington, owing to the great effort and genuine commitment of Bojan Belić, Jim Augerot and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the 18th Biennial Conference on Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature and Folklore, with its inspiring contributions and warm atmosphere, will remain a memorable experience of all participants.





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