



# **Serbian Americans and Their Communities of Cleveland**



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*Volume I*

**Dragoslav Georgevich, Nikolaj  
Maric, and Nicholas Moravcevic**

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# Preface

When Djordje Djelic, Executive Vice President of Serbian Organizations of Greater Cleveland, was asked to coordinate the writing of the Serbian manuscript, no one would have expected to receive, ten months later, a manuscript that included so much scholarly material. Either we had to substantially shorten the manuscript into one volume and eliminate much valuable data, or publish the work in two volumes. We opted for the latter. The first volume emphasizes the Serbian history, cultural traits, literature, immigration and the Serbian communities of Cleveland. The second deals with Serbian art and is the only survey ever written on this subject in English.

We are, therefore, greatly indebted to Mr. Djelic for bringing to such fruition a pioneering study on Serbian Americans. We are sure it will help American students to better understand immigrants of Serbian heritage and their descendants who enriched this country with many outstanding contributions.

The author of the section on Serbian history, culture and immigration is Dragoslav Georgevich, Chairman of the Serbo-

Croatian Department of the Defense Language Institute of Monterey, California. Professor Georgevich is an author and noted historian of Slavic and Balkan nations. He holds degrees from Yugoslavia and San Jose State University.

Nicholas Moravcevic authored the essay on Serbian literature. Professor Moravcevic is one of the leading Slavists in the United States, internationally known author and literary critic, and is presently heading the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle.

Mr. Nikolaj Maric is the young author of the section on the Serbian community of Cleveland. Maric is presently teaching at the West Technical High School of Cleveland. He holds degrees from the University of Belgrade with advanced work at Case Western Reserve University and The Cleveland State University.

To the three authors, our sincere “thank you”. I am sure that their greatest reward is the awareness of being able to make the American public better aware of the Serbian heritage and their contributions to the development of this nation.

Special thanks also to Mr. Alex Machaskee, Executive Assistant to the Publisher of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, for his valuable suggestions and support, to Mrs. Ellen Gambrill for copyediting, to Mrs. Karen Fredenburg and Mrs. Ginny Sumodi for typing and helping to bring this work to its conclusion.

Dr. Karl Bonutti  
Editor, Monograph Series  
Ethnic Heritage Studies

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MORAVCEVICH

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# Introduction

There is a wealth of informative material in the pages of this book about the heritage of a small but important group of Americans –immigrant Serbs and their descendants. Of particular interest to the younger generations of the latter group, but also to Americans generally, will be the clear and succinct history of the struggle of Serbia and the Serbs for freedom and democracy depicted on the following pages. The discussion of Serbian values, customs, mores, and their aspirations and struggles provides much that is exciting and stimulating for anyone who believes in freedom. Without doubt, this work will stimulate the reader to seek additional information about Serbia and the Serbs.

Part I deals with the history of the Serbs and their political and religious leaders. There is a rich and interesting detail that is not easily available elsewhere in English. Of particular significance in Serbia's long struggle for freedom and independence is the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the preservation of a sense of national identity and in the

transmission of the nation's cultural heritage. Part II is concerned with immigration and settlement of Serbs, with problems of adjustment, and with some note of the contributions to American life of certain Serbs and their descendants. Part III focuses on the Serbian community in Cleveland, Ohio —where they live, the professions they follow, as well as their organizational life and activities.

This, and Volume II on Serbian Art, is the work of four authors. Together they have made an important contribution that serves to forge ties between the old and the new, between new generations of Americans and their ethnic forebears, leading to a better appreciation of what America is and how it achieved its greatness.

Alex N. Dragnich

Professor of Political Science

Vanderbilt University

# Part I: History and Culture



Republic of Serbia in 1970's Socialist federal Republic of Yugoslavia



# The Nation and Its History

DRAGOSLAV GEORGEVICH

During the sixth and seventh centuries, the Serbs, with other Slavic tribes, entered their Balkan homeland from the north and unlike their predecessors, Visigoths, Huns, Ostrogoths and Avars, formed permanent settlements there. Since the environment is of primary importance in the creation of the culture of a nation, it is necessary to examine the structure of the region populated by Serbian people.

## **The Geographical Scene**

The Balkans, one of three South European peninsulas, is unlike Iberia and the Apennines because it is wide open to the north. Surrounded by the Adriatic, Aegean and Black seas, it is separated from Asia Minor by only the narrow Strait of Bosphorus. Throughout centuries the Balkans has been a natural

land bridge between Europe and the continents of Asia and Africa.

The territory populated by the Serbian people can be divided into two large topographic regions, the lowlands and the mountains. The hills and plains including the Pannonian basin, Northern Serbia and river valleys make up the lowlands. The mountain region encompasses the rest of Serbia, Crna Gora, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Dalmatia and Lika.

The two regions differ greatly, lowland hills and plains as well as river valleys are passable, have a continental climate with hot, long summers and short but cold winters, and are suitable for agriculture. Mountain regions consist of many mountain chains with rugged, barely passable mountains, and have a mountain climate with short summers and long, cold winters unsuitable for agriculture. Mountains either are covered with forests or grass or are barren with very little vegetation. The Dinaric Mountains, parallel chains between the Adriatic and Sava River, are composed almost wholly of limestone with certain special features. There are small hollows known as kotlina, larger depressions called polje and short sinking rivers and ponds. Large surfaces composed of limestone, known in geology as “karst,” have little vegetation and water. The people in this region organize their lives around kotlinas and poljas which are suitable for agriculture. Mountains of other systems, as the Alps and Carpathians, differ greatly from the Dinaric Mountains both geologically and topographically. They offer better conditions for life since they are more densely forested, have more water

and are more passable, even though there are obstacles for communication.

This configuration of the Dinaric terrain influenced the life of the population negatively in the past because it was difficult to organize political unity among Slavic tribes and clans. They lived on forested slopes, lowlands, and depressions or valleys developing individual cultures. On the other hand, these same conditions helped them survive many invasions from people outside. Invaders were never able to conquer all the mountain chains, forests, gorges or small valleys. Slavic people used their mountains as refuge in times of national emergency.

The geographical position of their land has been unfortunate for Serbs because of two main corridors or the routes which connect Central Europe with the Middle East. The first route runs from the North Adriatic along the Sava and Danube river valleys to the Black Sea. The second route is from north to south; that is, from Vienna to Belgrade and then along the Morava and Vardar rivers to the Aegean Sea. From Nis another route leads along the Nisava and Marica rivers to Constantinople. During the thirteen centuries of Serbian history, many invasions occurred along these routes. Serbian lands were invaded again and again by more powerful states, Turkey, Austria and Germany. Serbian history therefore is tragic, full of wars and struggles for survival for freedom and independence.

The Adriatic coast is precipitous for the most part. Many smaller and larger islands parallel the coast. Short rivers with many deep gorges flow into the Adriatic Sea. Most of these gorges are so steep and narrow that they are unsuitable for communications.

Mountain chains and ridges of the Dinaric Alps separate the coast from the rest of the land and prevent penetration inland of the mild Mediterranean climate. These circumstances also stopped influences of Western culture from spreading beyond a narrow region along the Adriatic coast.

## **The Pre-Slav Period**

Before the South Slavs (Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) arrived in the territory where they now live, other nations composed of many tribes occupied the Balkan Peninsula. These natives are known in history as the Illyrians and Thracians. Illyrians occupied the Dinaric region, Albania and all territory up to the Vardar River and north of Epirus in Greece. During a period from the eighth to sixth century B.C., the Adriatic coast was under strong influence from Greek merchant colonies. During the same period Celtic peoples from Central Europe infiltrated the north and northwest of the Illyrian territory. The Celts were assimilated by the Illyrians in a rather short time.

During the third century B.C. Illyrian pirates interfered with Roman commerce in the Adriatic which caused two Roman expeditions against the Illyrians. The Romans continued their wars against Illyrians for three centuries and by the beginning of the Christian era they had conquered and incorporated the whole area as part of the Roman Empire under the name of Illyricum. The area was rapidly Romanized. The administrative center of the province was in Salona, now the city of Split. The area prospered under Roman rule and Illyrians became leading



Roman soldiers, administrators and even the emperors Claudius, Aurelian, Probus, Diocletian and Maximilian.

The Roman Empire was divided into eastern and western empires in 395 A.D. The line of division ran from Lake Skadar along the river Drina to the river Sava. This was broadly the line dividing the Latin-speaking part of the empire from the Greek-speaking part.

## **The Arrival of the Slavs**

The arrival of Huns from Asia in 375 A.D. caused a great movement of nations and tribes in Europe. Illyrian lands were invaded during the fifth century by Visigoths, Huns and Ostrogoths. In 476 A.D. the Western Roman Empire came to an end and the whole Balkan Peninsula was reconquered in 535 A.D. by the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian. In the second half of the sixth century a barbarian invasion from the north devastated the whole Balkans. The invaders were the Avars who from 567 A.D. together with the Slavs raided the lands of the Eastern Roman Empire from their center in the Pannonian plain. The Avar supremacy was short lived, and by 650 A.D. the Slavs had already formed their permanent settlement in Illyria. Gradually Slavs assimilated the remnants of the Illyrians and Thracians, except for a small Illyrian group which retreated into the mountains of the present Albania.

The Slavic peoples who settled the Balkan lands were composed of three large groups. To the north were Slovenes, south of them Croats, and to the south and east of Croats were the Serbs. At

the time of their arrival into the Balkans, the Slavs spoke one language with many dialects called proto-Slavic. It has been assumed by many historians that the Slavs originally settled in the area east of Carpathians between the Pripyat marshes, the Dnieper and the upper flows of the Prut, Dniester and Bug rivers. This is in today's White Russia and Ukraine and the Slavs called it Boika.

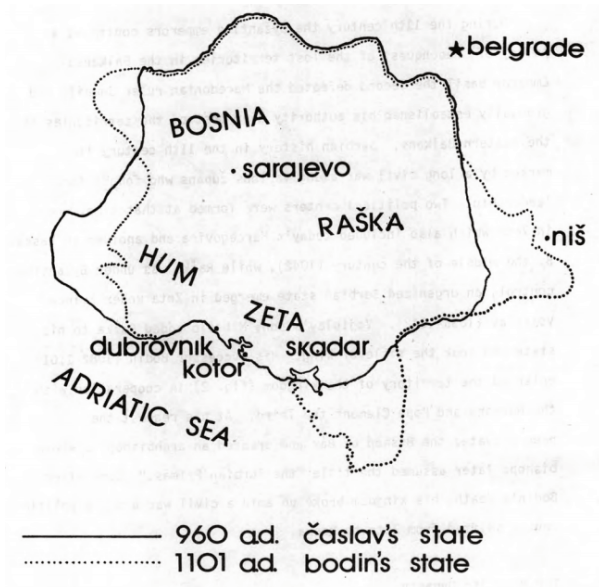
## **Serbian Settlement in the Balkans**

Slavic settlement in the new country occurred during the rule of the Byzantine emperor Heraclius (610-641). Serbs first settled the region of Salonika, now Greece, but since they did not like that territory. they returned back north of the Danube. Shortly afterwards they asked the emperor for new territory for a permanent settlement. They accepted the region between the rivers Lim, Piva, upper Drina, Ibar and upper flow of the West Morava. Other Slavic tribes gradually settled all territories south of the Sava and Danube. Byzantine emperors permitted Slavs to stay in their lands and named all Slavic settlements "Sklavinia."

The existence of Serbs in their new country was endangered in the seventh century by Bulgarians who, after their arrival to the Balkans, organized a strong state and waged constant wars against Byzantium. The Bulgarian danger forced southern Serbs to organize a union in 850 under Prince Vlastimir. The Serbs recognized the superiority of Byzantine emperors and their influence led Serbs to convert to Christianity. The conversion took place between 871 and 875 mainly through

the work of the two Slavic missionaries, Saints Cyril and Methodius.

Towards the end of the ninth century Bulgarian power grew to a peak under Emperor Simeon (893-927) who conquered most of the eastern Serbian territories. Serbian chieftains or zupans in alliance with the Byzantine emperor fought the Bulgarians and liberated a large part of Serbian territory. One zupan, Prince Caslav (927-950), organized a new and rather large state which encompassed Raska, Zeta, Travunia, Hum and Bosnia (fig. 1). In the middle of the tenth century Hungarians from the north made many raids into Caslav's territory, and in one such attack he lost his life.



Serbia During the Middle Ages

During the 11th century the Byzantine emperors continued a

policy of reconquest of the lost territories in the Balkans. Emperor Basil the Second defeated the Macedonian ruler Samuilo and gradually established his authority over most of the territories in the eastern Balkans. Serbian history in the 11th century is “marked by a long civil war among various zupans who fought for leadership. Two political centers were formed at that time, one in Zeta which also included today’s Hercegovina and another in Raska. By the middle of the century (1042), while Raska was under Byzantine control, an organized Serbian state emerged in Zeta under Prince Vojislav (1036-1042). Vojislav’s son, Mihailo added Raska to his state and took the title of king. His successor Bodin (1082-1101) enlarged the territory of the kingdom (fig. 2) in cooperation with the Normans and Pope Clement the Third. At his request the pope elevated the Bishop of Bar and created an archbishopric whose bishops later assumed the title *lithe* Serbian Primas.” Soon after Bodin’s death, his kingdom broke up amid a civil war and the political center shifted from Zeta to Raska.

## **The Nemanjit Dynasty**

The founder of the Nemanjic Dynasty, Great Zupan of Raska Stefan Nemanja, ruled over Serbia from 1169 to 1196. He was the most important Serbian ruler in the twelfth century and his dynasty lasted more than two hundred years. It enlarged Serbian territory, organized a strong modern state and finally, under Emperor Stefan v Dusan, led Serbia to a flowering greatness in the Balkans and southern Europe. Stefan Nemanja’s youngest son Rastko, later Saint Sava, organized an independent Serbian church with the blessings of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch and

the Byzantine Emperor. Other Serbian rulers from the Nemanjic Dynasty contributed greatly to the progress and strength of the Serbian state. They built beautiful churches, monasteries, and good roads, opened many mines and organized commerce.

## **Stefan Nemanja (1169-1196)**

Stefan Nemanja shook off Byzantine suzerainty after the death of Emperor Manuel in 1180 and enlarged his state with support of the Hungarian king Bela III. He conquered Skadar, Ulcinj, Bar and Kotor. When the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Frederick I Barbarossa entered Nemanja's realm in 1189 leading a large European Army of 100,000 crusaders, Nemanja and his brother received him with friendship and offered an alliance against the Byzantine emperor. The crusaders continued their campaign towards Constantinople and Nemanja continued his own conquest of Byzantine territories. Even after a military defeat at the river Morava in 1190, Nemanja was able to retain most of his conquered lands. Emperor Isaak Angelo wanted a long-lasting peace and friendship with Serbs. Nemanja's son Stefan married the Emperor's niece Eudokia. From that time and after his abdication in 1196, Nemanja lived in peace with his neighbors. His state was in good shape and rich with many beautiful monasteries and churches which he built.

The youngest of Nemanja's three sons, Prince Rastko, was interested in religion and philosophy. He diligently read religious books and, with great interest, listened to stories of the lives of saints told by monks from Mount Athos. When a deputation of monks visited Nemanja's court in 1192 seeking

financial help, Rastko left the court and joined them. On reaching Mt. Athos and the monastery Vatoped, Rastko took monastic vows under the name of Sava. In 1197 after his abdication the Great Zupan Nemanja joined his son Sava at Mt. Athos as the monk Simeon. Father and son received permission from their relative Emperor Alexis III to build a monastery at Mt. Athos. Hilandar, their large impressive monastery, became the center from which spread a rich ecclesiastic and secular culture, the pride of Byzantium. It served the happiness and spiritual and cultural progress of the Serbian nation. The monk Simeon died at Hilandar on February 13, 1200.

## **Sava Nemanjic and the Serbian Church**

After his father's death Sava retreated for a time to his "Postniza" or House of Silence in Kareia on Athos for meditation. For his distinguished life and deeds Sava was promoted to archimandrite, the highest ecclesiastical rank next to bishop. He took good care of his monastery Hilandar, wrote a constitution and bylaws for it and organized the education of monks.

Soon after the death of monk Simeon a war broke out in Serbia between two royal brothers. Vukan, the older, attacked his younger brother Stefan. Vukan had support from Hungarians who were relatives of his Roman Catholic wife. After defeating Stefan and driving him out of the country, Vukan received his royal crown from the Pope and voiced allegiance to the Papal church. Since in Hungary a fratricidal fight between the King Emeric and his brother had broken out, Vukan lost his Hungarian

support and Stefan regained his throne in 1204 with Bulgarian help.

At that time fratricidal wars were common almost everywhere and Bulgaria and Byzantium were the worst. Six Byzantine Emperors died in twenty years, and not one of them a natural death. Constantinople was conquered by Latin Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade. They did not have much respect for monasteries on Mt. Athos and made frequent raids into them to plunder, steal and kill. They had completely forgotten their original goal, the liberation of the Holy Land, and devoted themselves to plunder in order to get rich.

The royal Serbian brothers Vukan and Stefan wanted a permanent reconciliation, so they asked their younger brother, Sava, to help them to restore permanent peace between them. Sava decided to do it although it would expose his two hundred monks at Hilandar to the dreadful crusaders. Sava took the body of his father, and, escorted by many distinguished monks from Mt. Athos, went to his native Serbia on a peace-making mission.



St. Sava: He was founder of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its first Archbishop, diplomat, author and educator. He is a Prince and his life deed is a substance of the Serbian Cultural Heritage.

Sava's travel and subsequent stay in Serbia was successful because Vukan and Stefan were reconciled completely. Vukan recognized Stefan as Great Zupan of Serbia and hostilities ceased. The body of their father Simeon was kept in the monastery of Studenica and the church proclaimed Simeon a Saint. On the request of his brothers, the nobility and the mass of Serbian people, Sava decided to stay in Serbia. Great Zupan Stefan appointed Archimandrite Sava the superior of Studenica. Very soon the monastery became the sanctuary of the nation. From it Sava taught his people how to pray, believe, repent, how to be charitable and honest, and how and where to seek



happiness. The people very soon felt in Sava a true friend and real shepherd; they felt that confusion and unrest for Serbia was over.

During his stay in Studenica, Sava wrote a book, The Life of Saint Simeon, one of the first Serbian literary works. He also wrote many epistles to the monks at Hilandar and other monasteries as well as letters to Serbian princes warning them about the Bogomil and Latin heresies. He continued to educate the monks in Studenica and train them for missionary work. With the help of his brother, Stefan, he started to build the Monastery Zitcha. This productive period of Sava's life in Serbia was of utmost importance for the Serbian people. By hard, well organized work Sava fortified orthodoxy in Serbia, strengthened the authority of the church and ruler, and awoke the Serbian national consciousness.

After a short stay on Mt. Athos, Sava traveled to Nikeia in Asia Minor and visited the Byzantine Emperor Theodore Laskaris and the Ecumenical Patriarch Manuel. From them he received permission to organize "the Serbian Autocephalous Church" In 1219 Sava was consecrated Archbishop of all Serbian lands by the Patriarch and received a Grammata. During his travel through Arabic and other lands in Asia Minor, Sava was greeted and revered by people who had heard about him. He spoke perfect Hellenic Greek, delivered excellent deeply spiritual sermons and showed great charitableness. His reputation and greatness exceeded all other Serbian rulers and dignitaries. On the way back to Serbia the Archbishop Sava visited Mt. Athos,

or Sveta Gora, and selected many well educated monks to go with him to Serbia.

Sava arrived in Serbia in 1220 and organized new Serbian dioceses and bishoprics. There were nine new dioceses organized in addition to the seven old ones. All the dioceses were located in monasteries, and his own seat was in the beautiful new monastery Zitcha.

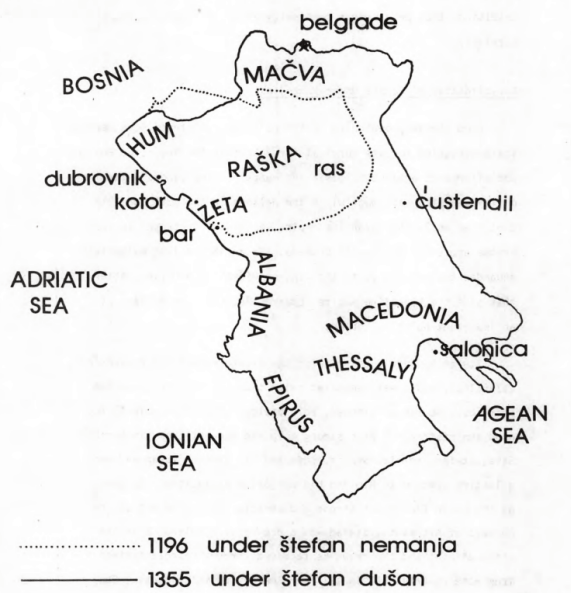
The organization of the Serbian Autocephalous church was of utmost importance for Serbia and the Balkans. The Serbian king and archbishop were very moderate in the Greek-Latin church division which began in 1054. but the Serbian independent church definitely strengthened Orthodoxy in the Balkans. The creation of the Serbian Autocephalous church also strengthened Nemanjic's Serbia by increasing connections between various groups in the country. Clerical and secular authorities were united in one religious and political entity. The church had an integrative role between the state created by Nemanja and the church created by Saint Sava. Later, when the state was destroyed by foreign powers, the church remained and the Serbian historical consciousness was preserved by church tradition, thus providing a continuity vital to Serbian cultural survival.

## **Consolidation of Serbia Under Nemanjics**

From the very beginning of its political existence, the Serbian state struggled for its survival first against the Byzantine Empire and afterwards against Bulgaria and Hungary. The

second Bulgarian medieval empire was powerful in the Balkans in the 12th and 13th centuries while the Byzantine empire was almost destroyed in 1204 by the armies of the Fourth Crusade. From 1186 to 1258 Bulgarians expanded to the west up to the line of Nis-Skoplje-Ohrid. After that time the Byzantine empire appeared again in the Balkans as an important political power.

Stefan Nemanja's heir Stefan the First Crowned, or Prvoventani, (1196-1228) was a well educated ruler indoctrinated in Byzantine politics. He was a talented, able diplomat, cautious soldier and good administrator. With strong help and support from his brother Sava, Stefan pacified Serbia, defeated his brother Vukan and made a lasting peace with him and his Hungarian protectors. As long as the Latin Empire was strong and Venician power present at the borders of his state, Stefan was a pro-western ruler. Even the title of king and the crown he received through representatives from Pope Honorius III in 1217 were merely political acts. Soon after the Latin Empire started to weaken, Stefan turned towards Byzant. His brother Archbishop Sava, the devoted orthodox spiritual leader, crowned him in 1220 and also served Stefan as an excellent connection with the Byzantine Emperor.



Serbia Under the Nemanjić Dynasty

King Stefan the First Crowned died in 1228 and was succeeded by his son Radoslav (1228-1233). Radoslav was both the son and husband of Byzantine imperial princesses. He was a weak ruler and completely under Byzantine influence. When his father-in-law Emperor Theodore was defeated by the Bulgarian emperor Asen II, dissatisfied noblemen overthrew Radoslav in 1233 and proclaimed his brother Vladislav king.

Vladislav (1233-1243) had full support from his father-in-law, Bulgarian Emperor Asen II, but when Asen died in 1236 Vladislav lost much of his support. In 1236 his uncle, the First Serbian Archbishop Sava, died in the Bulgarian city of Trnovo after long travel in the East. The next year Vladislav transferred St. Sava's body to the monastery Milesevo in Serbia. In 1241

a Mongolian army passed through Serbia after defeating the Hungarian king Bela IV. Vladislav abdicated in 1243 in favor of his brother Uros.

Uros was not a particularly strong ruler but he succeeded in keeping all lands he inherited in spite of several wars against Bulgaria, Dubrovnik, Byzant and Hungary. In 1276 his son Dragutin, who had expected for quite a few years to become a co-ruler with his father, overthrew him with the political and military help of his Hungarian relative, King Vladislav.

Dragutin (1276-1282) kept good relations with his neighbors, concluded a peace with Dubrovnik and continued his father's policy of friendship with Charles I of Anjou, the king of Sicily. Bulgaria was in a civil war and presented no danger for Dragutin. After an accident during horseback riding when he broke his leg, Dragutin decided to abdicate believing that God had punished him for overthrowing his father. He transferred his royal powers to his brother Milutin and received from his brother-in-law, the Hungarian king, Belgrade, Maeva and northeastern Bosnia as a domain. He led an ascetic life and died in 1316. Before his death he became a monk under the name Teoktist.

## **Milutin (1282-1321)**

Milutin was one of the strongest Serbian kings, ruling Serbia for almost forty years. Following the policy of his brother Dragutin, Milutin kept good relations and concluded an alliance with Charles I of Anjou, the king of Sicily. During an Easter uprising

in Sicily in 1282, almost all Frenchmen were killed. Not knowing what had happened in Sicily, Milutin attacked Byzant alone. His offensive was successful and his troops conquered Skoplje, Gostivar, Tetovo, Ovce Polje, Zletovo and Pijanec. After much combat with Byzantine and allied Tartar armies, Milutin retained the conquered territory and made peace with honor in 1299 with the Byzant. Milutin got as a wife the Byzantine princess Symonida with a dowry of all lands he already had in his possession. Later on Milutin extended his military help to Byzant in her fight against Turks in Anatolia. His Grand Duke Novak Grebostrek led a Serbian cavalry unit and inflicted several defeats on the Turks. Milutin also clashed with Dubrovnik in 1317-18 and with Hungary, but he overcame both without any serious consequences.

Milutin waged many wars against Serbian neighbors, Byzant, Hungary, Bulgaria and Dubrovnik. He enlarged Serbian territory by pushing borders southward. This was his political testament for Serbian foreign policy. The economy was strengthened under his rule. Many mines were opened, silver coins were produced and used in foreign markets and trade blossomed as never before. Milutin built 40 churches and monasteries. His court was rich and a high cultural spirit prevailed there, particularly after the arrival of Queen Symonida. Milutin made Serbia a great Balkan power before he died on October 29, 1321 at his court in Nerodimlje. He was buried in Banjska but his remains were moved to Sofia in Bulgaria by 1460 and entombed in the church Sveti Kral.

## **Stefan Decanski (1321-1331)**

After the death of King Milutin civil disorder broke out in Serbia. Three pretenders for the throne of Serbia began fighting, two of Milutin's sons, Stefan and Vladislav, and a son of King Dragut in. Stefan, the oldest son, had the sympathy of the people and in 1322 he was proclaimed king with his son Dusan as Mladi Kralj or "Junior King."

Soon after his enthronement Stefan married Maria Paleolog a niece of the Emperor Andronik II of Byzant. During the fight between Andronik II and his grandson Andronik III, Stefan supported Andronik II. The grandson was victorious, so Stefan was involved in a fatal war against the Byzantine-Bulgarian alliance. The decisive battle took place at Velbutd (Custendil) on July, 28, 1330 against the Bulgarian emperor Mihailo Sisman. Serbian forces defeated the Bulgarians and Emperor Mihailo lost his life in the battle. The defeated Bulgarians asked for peace and offered Stefan a union between Bulgaria and Serbia. Stefan concluded the peace but declined the offer to unite the two states. In this battle Stefan's son Dusan was distinguished as a great military leader. The Bulgarian ally Andronik III retreated from Serbian territory and attacked Bulgaria.

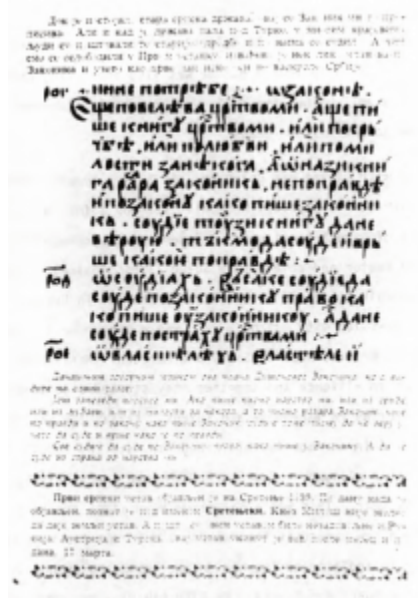
Soon after this war a struggle for power between Dusan and Stefan broke out. The cause was the succession to the Serbian throne. Stefan Decanski had another son from his second marriage to Maria Paleolog, Sinisa, and he probably wanted to make him his successor. Serbian noblemen supported Dusan and the old king was overthrown. Dusan was proclaimed king

in 1331 and crowned at the state convention on September 8. Stefan Decanski died soon after he lost his throne.

## **Stefan Dusan (1331-46 King; 1346-55- Emperor)**

Stefan Dusan, tall, robust and handsome, made a striking impression on his contemporaries. Philip Mezier, a western nobleman, wrote that Stefan Dusan was the tallest man he had ever seen. He was not only physically superb but he was also energetic, ambitious and an able ruler. He had the ability to overwhelm other men and to lead them toward his own goals.





Photostat of two paragraphs of Emperor Dusan Stefan's Code of Law from 1349 in Skopje. A free English translation is: Emperor's Order: if you receive a demand in writing from my throne, whether from anger or love, or as mercy for somebody, and it is conflicting with the Code of Law, it is not just. And, according to the Code of Law judges are not to honor the letter, but to judge according to justice. All judges are to judge according to the Code of Law and not to judge from fear of my crown.

The War with Byzant was going on. In 1334 a Byzant general, Syrgian, deserted his emperor, Andronik II, and joined Dusan in his conquest of Byzant territories. Dusan quickly conquered Ohrid, Strumica and Kostur and came before Solun (Thessalonike). After the death of Andronik III in 1341, civil war broke out in Byzant. Jovan Kantakuzen, co-ruler with

Andronik III, was a pretender for the throne against Empress Anna of Savoy and her son. Kantakuzen offered Dusan an alliance and together they started a conquest of Byzant territories in Macedonia and Epirus. Kantakuzen was neither very successful in war nor faithful to Dusan with the result that they broke their alliance. Kantakuzen acquired a new ally in the Turkish Emir, Omar. This was a dangerous move since the Turks proved to be a new menace in the Balkans and Europe for many centuries thereafter. In addition to the war in the south, Dusan had smaller wars against Hungary and Bosnia. By 1345 Albania, Macedonia, Epirus and part of Thracia Were under Dusan's rule. Dusan decided to proclaim his empire and proclaimed himself "Emperor of Serbs and Greeks." II At the same time the Serbian archbishop Joanikije was proclaimed patriarch. Dusan's wife Jelena, empress, and their son Uros, king. Other dignitaries were given such titles as despot, sevastokrator, cesar, and duke. The Serbian Empire was now a reality.

News of the Serbian Empire was not well received by Byzant. The Greek patriarch anathematized Dusan and the Serbian patriarch, but Dubrovnik and Bulgaria participated in the coronation with large delegations. The new emperor visited many monasteries and gave them rich presents of gold, lands and settlements. He visited Mt. Athos in 1347 with Empress Jelena and also gave rich donations to the monasteries there.

The proclamation of the empire clearly showed the political program of the Serbian ruler. His intention was to create a new, better and stronger state in the Balkans and Mediterranean. He immediately began negotiations with Venice for naval support

in his campaign against Constantinople. He also asked the Pope in Avignon to name a “captain” for a crusade against the Turks, but his efforts were in vain because Hungarian and other western rulers were against his program. Dusan died unexpectedly of a fever in 1355 in the midst of great preparations for a march on Constantinople.

The Serbian state under Dusan achieved its largest expansion in the Balkans, stretching from the Adriatic and Ionian to the Aegean Sea. Dusan was a wise enlightened ruler. He gave his empire a new and progressive law known as *Dusanov Zakonik* or Code of Laws (1349) based on Serbian and Byzantine laws. One famous sentence in the code was, “If the Emperor is guilty to the peasant, the peasant has the right to accuse him to the empire.” This code, consisting of a constitution, criminal, church, and civil law, was an important cultural monument of medieval Serbia.

## **Disintegration of the Serbian Empire, 1355-1459**

Dusan’s son Uros was a weak ruler. During his lifetime until 1371, the Serbian Empire broke into many fragments. Chieftains who were quiet and disciplined members of the empire under Dusan were able to assert their independence. The Turkish advance into Europe progressed rapidly. In 1354 Turks conquered Gallipoli, in 1360 Adrianople, then most of Thracia and Bulgaria. By 1386 a Turkish army penetrated as far as the river Neretva, but in 1388 Serbian noblemen defeated the Turks so disastrously that the Turkish commander Sahin barely escaped with his life.

Sultan Murat now came to the conclusion that he must prepare a great army in order to subjugate the Serbs. He organized an army of 100,000 men in Asia Minor and Europe composed of Turkish and vassal troops. The army was under the command of Murat and his two sons, and consisted of infantry, light cavalry and many camels. The Serbian Prince Lazar, meanwhile, organized a pan-Serbian league in order to save the Balkans for Balkan nations. However, even with allies his force of 35,000 men was numerically inferior to Murat's huge army.

## **Battle of Kosovo, 1389**

The Turkish and Christian armies met June 15, 1389 on the Field of Kosovo (Field of Blackbirds). A bloody battle lasted almost all day. In spite of their numerical supremacy the Turks were in a precarious position at midday when the Serbian nobleman Vuk Brankovic repelled the attack of Turkish left wing and progressed toward the Turkish center. During the melee a Serbian nobleman, Milos Obilic, killed Sultan Murat who was inspecting the battlefield. However, the battle was won by Murat's son Crown Prince Bajazit, who used a Turkish light cavalry reserve at the right moment. The Christian army was defeated and the flower of Serbian aristocracy fell in the battle. Lazar was captured during the combat and beheaded before the dead body of Murat. Turkish casualties were also heavy, so Bajazit was anxious to return to Asia Minor in order to fortify his power and restore his army. The quick Turkish retreat gave the impression in the West that the Christian army had won the battle.

The battle of Kosovo was fateful for Serbs because, although their state did not cease to exist, it became a tributary to the Turks. Lazar's son Stefan and his mother Milica concluded a peace with Bajazit in which Lazar's daughter Olivera became Bajazit's wife and Stefan became his vassal. Thus he was obliged to participate in Bajazit's wars with his 10,000 cavalymen.

A great cycle of legends known in Serbian poetry as "The Cycle of Kosovo" followed the battle at Kosovo. Each year on June 28, Serbs commemorate Vidov-dan. Gusle music and folk singers have kept alive the fate of Serbian heroes up to the present. Those poems are among the best of that kind in world literature and have been translated into all major languages. Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic was cannonized as a saint by the Serbian Church under the name of St. Lazar of Kosovo. His body was preserved and is now kept in the Serbian cathedral in Belgrade. Murat I is also revered by Moslems. His body is preserved and buried at Brusa, while his entrails are buried at Kosovo in a small mosque known as "Muratovo turbe" which still exists.

lazar's son Stefan ruled Serbia from 1389 to 1427. He was a wise ruler, courageous soldier, precocious politician and patron of art and literature. During the life of Sultan Bajazit he was loyal to him, but in the beginning of the 14th century Bajazit was entangled in a war against Tamerlane, Emir of Samarkand. In 1402 Bajazit was defeated by Tamerlane in a great battle at Ankara. After that time Despot Stefan decided to instigate a new foreign policy of friendship with the Hungarian king Sigismund. He acquired Belgrade (1404) and transferred his capital there.

During his 38 years reigning over Serbia, Despot Stefan united under him many provinces which had been under the rule of other minor Serbian noblemen. Stefan's foreign policy was successful because he was able to use both the Turks and Hungarians to his advantage.

After Stefan's death the Turks conquered the largest part of Serbia and in 1459 they captured the last Serbian fortress of Smederevo. With the fall of that stronghold the last Serbian hope for an independent state fell. The next Serbian state, Bosnia, fell soon after in 1463 and, with the exception of a tiny refuge in Crna Gora (Montenegro), all Serbs lost their freedom. Europe was occupied with its own small wars and disputes and did not have time to fight the Turks. Serbian states and Serbian rulers had fought the Turks for more than a hundred years from the death of Emperor Dusan (1355) until the fall of Smederevo (1459). Of all the European countries, only Hungary took an active part in the fight against the Turks.

After the fall of the Serbian despotate (1459) and the fall of Bosnia, the Turks continued their invasions into Dalmatia and Hungary. Constant war forced the Serbian populace to emigrate to the West and North. Serbian masses populated Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia, Srem, Banat, Backa and even Erdelj and Vlaska. Serbian aristocracy spread allover Europe, but the largest number remained with the people in Hungary to continue its struggle against the Turks. This resistance was insufficient to detain the Turks since Hungary was already weak. In 1526 Sulejman the Magnificent defeated Hungarians at Mohac and occupied Hungary. The Hungarian nobility elected the Austrian

emperor, Ferdinand of Habsburgh, as their king. Austria, now, was in the first line of combat against the Turks.

## **Serbs Under Turkish Rule**

From the battle at Mohac in 1526 throughout the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, Austria and then Russia were at war with the Turks. With the Kucuk-Karnejdzi peace treaty in 1774 Russia acquired a right to protect all Christians in Turkey. The Serbian people under Turkish rule suffered much in such situations. They joined Christian powers in the struggle against Turks and were repeatedly abandoned by them and exposed to Turkish revenge.

Turkish rule in Christian lands was oppressive but not intolerable, for Serbs had some independence in their local administration. Also the Turks were tolerant in matters of religion. The Serbian Orthodox Church and its followers had better treatment from Turks than they could have expected from their Roman Catholic fellows. In 1557 the Turkish Grand Vizir, Mehmed Sokolovic, concluded an agreement with the Serbian church according to which the Serbian patriarchate was organized to encompass all Serbian lands under Turks. The first patriarch of the restored Serbian Church was Makarije Sokolovic, brother of the Grand Vizir. This event was of enormous importance for Serbs since, even without their own state, they were united through their church. Patriarch Makarije was an excellent administrator and organizer. Serbian bishops visited their dioceses and monasteries, consoled their people, and encouraged a high spirit and hope for better days in the future.

Gradually Serbs came to the conclusion that they could acquire their freedom only by their own efforts. Throughout 350 years of occupation Serbs kept their traditions and nationality through their folk songs and stories. Blind Iiguslarsll sang about Nemanjics, about Dusan, Lazar, Kraljevic Marko and the heroic Serbian struggle for freedom throughout centuries. Without schools or books Serbs transferred their oral literature from one generation to another through poems and stories. Whenever Turkish tyranny and oppression became unbearable, the most courageous men among Serbs went to the woods and mountains, organized guerrilla units and attacked Turks. They were known as hajduks and uskoks. The Serbian fighting spirit and hope were constantly growing as the time for liberation was approaching.

## Serbian Struggle for Liberation

At the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century Serbs felt that the time for liberation arrived. In the spring of 1804, Karadjordje Petrovic (Black George) rose up against the Turks. With minimal Russian support Serbs fought the Turks for eight years and, after many bloody battles, defeated them. However, the political situation in Europe with Napoleonic wars was unfavorable for the Serbs and their uprising against the Turks collapsed in 1813.

Their failure to achieve independence did not discourage the Serbs and in 1815 Milos Obrenovic started the second Serbian rising against the Turks. More battles followed this fateful event. From that time up to 1918 the Serbs fought for their liberation.



In 1912 Serbia concluded the Balkan Alliance with Crna Gora (Montenegro), Greece and Bulgaria in order to liberate all Christians in the Balkans who were still under Turkish rule. In two major battles at Kumanovo and Bitolj, the Serbian army decisively defeated the Turks. Armies of Crna Gora, Bulgaria and Greece also defeated Turks in other battlefields. The Turks were expelled from the ancient Serbian lands, Old Serbia and Macedonia. Then a dispute about the new borders resulted in another war in 1913 in which Bulgarian armies attacked Serbs and Greeks. The Bulgarians were soon defeated by Serbs, Greeks and Romanians, but the Turks reoccupied Jedrene and a part of Thracia.

Austria-Hungary was now unhappy with the Serbian success which elated the Slavs under her rule. Serbia and Crna Gora cooperated closely and that was dangerous for Austro-Hungary. Clearly little Serbia was blocking Austro-German expansion to the East as well as causing racial and national problems for the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. That government first tried to contain Serbia by using various political and economic means such as a custom war and threats. On facing stiff Serbian resistance it made the fatal decision to withstand Serbia militarily in a preventive war.

The immediate cause for aggression was the attempt on the life of the Austro-Hungarian Crown Prince Ferdinand and his wife on June 28, 1914 by an Austrian subject, Gavrilo Princip, a young Bosnian Serb. The Austrian government cast blame for the attempt upon the Serbian government and submitted an ultimatum to Serbia. The content of this ultimatum was such that

no sovereign state could accept it. After thorough consultation with the allied governments of Russia, France and Great Britain, the Serbian government decided to reject the Austrian ultimatum; consequently Austria declared war against Serbia.

Military operations against Serbia began on July 28, 1914 with a bombardment of Belgrade. Thus World War I began. The Russian Emperor Nihilolas II warned Austria to cease operations against Serbia; Germany invaded Belgium, attacked France and addressed an ultimatum to Russia; and Great Britain, a French and Russian ally and guarantor of Belgium neutrality, declared war with Germany.

## **Serbia in World War I**

When the Serbian Government rejected the 1914 ultimatum, Austro-Hungarian troops were ready for a “penal expedition” against Serbia. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was one of the strongest countries in Europe. It had the best territory in the heart of Europe, 36 million inhabitants, a strong well-trained army, an excellent bureaucracy, firm traditions, an able diplomacy, and a war industry able to produce contemporary armaments. But its troops which consisted of Slavic elements were unreliable.

Against a heterogeneous Austria-Hungary composed of 15 nations stood the spiritually united, small but tough Serbia. the Serbian king, Petar I Karadjordjevic, was a democratic ruler beloved by his people and respected by foreigners.

While Serbia’s morale was very high, her material preparedness

for this war was inadequate. Ammunition was spent in the Balkan wars, weapons were worn 'out and her finances were less than good. The first Austro-Hungarian offensive against Serbia ended in defeat. The Austro-Hungarian Fifth Army was badly beaten and forced to withdraw across the Drina River. After this first Austrian attack the Serbian government issued the "Nis Declaration" stating that the Kingdom of Serbia would continue fighting until final victory over Austria-Hungary and liberation of all South Slavs.

The second Austro-Hungarian offensive, during which Serbs were forced to abandon Bel grade and other territory because of an acute lack of ammunition, also ended in disaster for the Austrians. They were badly defeated, losing 50,000 prisoners and a large amount of war equipment to the Serbian army.

In the fall of 1915 the third enemy offensive began. Serbia was attacked from the west, north and east by the Austro-Hungarian, German and Bulgarian armies. Serbian" resistance was persistently strong, but Serbs were overwhelmed and retreated toward the south and the Adriatic coast. From there allied navies evacuated remnants of the army to the Greek island of Corfu. Out of 300,000 men about half survived the great retreat.

In September 1918 Serbian and French troops supported by British and Greeks broke through the Thessalonike front and Bulgaria capitulated. Serbian troops then made one of the fastest pursuits known in modern history. They liberated Belgrade on November 1, having crossed 500 kilometers in 45 days with continuous fighting. In one month all lands populated by the South Slavs were liberated and Austria-Hungary fell apart.

Vojvodina proclaimed unification with Serbia on November 25 with Crna Gora following the next day and then most of Bosnia-Herzegovina. On December 1, 1918 the Serbian Prince Regent Alexandar received a delegation of the Yugoslav National Council. The delegation asked the regent for unification of all Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in a new state. Regent Alexandar responded promptly and proclaimed the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

## **Crna Gora**

Serbian tribes which populated the territory of the present Crna Gora organized their tribal states as early as the 9th century. At that time Crna Gora had the name Zeta. In 1077 Prince Mihailo Voisavljevic organized a stronger state which encompassed a number of surrounding regions. He was the first king of this Serbian state. His successor, Bodin (1081-1101) enlarged the kingdom, but after his death the state broke up amid civil war.

In the era of the Nemanjic dynasty Zeta was governed by the Serbian crown princes with the capital at Skadar. In the 15th century a new dynasty was established by Stefan Crnojevic. His son, Ivan the Black, was a fierce warrior who had fought the Turks all his life. In 1493 Ivan established the first printing press in Obod which printed the first books in Cyrillic characters. Ivan also built a monastery at Cetinje and made it a bishopric. During his rule the name of the state changed to Crna Gora (Montenegro). Turks forced him to become their vassal and Ivan, the last Crnojevic, accepted Islam under the name Skenderbeg. He governed both Crna Gora and Albania, but after his

death in 1528 the Turks attached Crna Gora to the district of Skadar. In the 17th century Venice tried unsuccessfully to put Crna Gora under her reign. Crna Gora remained under the Turks with autonomy and a vladika (bishop) as head of state. The tribes were ruled by their chieftains who had such titles as serdar, vojvoda or captain.

When in the beginning of the 18th century Russia acted as protector of all Christians in the Balkans, Vladika Danilo I Petrovic established relations with the Russian emperor Petar the Great. Danilo was dissatisfied with the state of affairs in his domain because some of his subjects had adopted Islam and had given support to the Turks. On Christmas Eve 1702 a wholesale massacre was ordered, an event known as “istraga poturica” (extermination of Turkish converts). This event, with the many bloody battles which followed, did not result in freedom for the Serbs of Montenegro. The Turks subjugated the uprisings of 1712 and 1714, and, from that time until 1851, Montenegro was ruled by its bishops. They kept connection with Serbia and Russia and worked for the recovery of their national consciousness. The last bishop-ruler was Petar II Petrovic Njegos, a philosopher and poet with a pan-Serbian and pan-Slavic feeling. His capital work was *Gorski Vijenac*. After his death in 1851 his nephew, Danilo II, not wanting to be bishop, was proclaimed Prince of Montenegro with Russian support. Turkey opposed this act and started preparations to invade Montenegro, but Russia with other powers prevented a Turkish invasion. When in 1875 Serbs in Hercegovina led by Luka Vukalovic revolted against the Turks, Serbia and Montenegro declared war against Turkey.

In 1860 Danilo II died after being shot by an outlaw, and, since he had no son, his successor was his nephew Nikola. An able ruler and skilled politician, Nikola I reigned over Montenegro until 1914. He married his daughters to Russian princes, Serbian king Petar I Karadjordjevic and Italian king Victor Emanuel III to secure friends in European courts.

## **Crna Gora Under Nikola I**

After the wars of 1876-77 Crna Gora lived in peace. Her economy slowly grew and important social and political changes took place. Roads were built, post offices were opened, a bank was founded, agriculture was improved, many elementary schools were opened and an agricultural college was founded in Podgorica. A theatre, museum and public library were opened at Cetinje. In 1906 Crna Gora had over a hundred primary schools, two secondary schools and about ten thousand pupils. For higher education students were sent abroad, mostly to the University of Belgrade.

Internal political development was equally important. In 1915 a parliament was established, and in 1910 Nikola I took the title of king. Because of his relations with the Serbian, Russian, Italian and German royal families through the marriages of his daughters, Nikola was described as “the father-in-law of Europe.”

In all the Serbian wars for liberation in 1876, 1877, 1912, 1913 and 1914 Crna Gora participated against Turkey, Austria-Hungary and Germany as an ally of Serbia. In all those wars

Crna Gora expanded her territories and enlarged her population. When in 1915 Serbia was occupied by the central powers, Crna Gora too was occupied and in 1918 Crna Gora proclaimed her union with Serbia.

## **Serbs in Macedonia**

Macedonia is the geographical region between the river Mesta on the east, the Aegean Sea to the south, Lake Ohrid to the west and the mountains Sara and Kara Oagh to the north. In the 14th century the whole of Macedonia was part of the Serbian empire. Emperor Stefan Ousan made Skoplje his capital. After the battle of Marica in 1371 the Turks gradually conquered Macedonia and after the battle of Kosovo it was in Turkish possession. By 1430 the whole of Macedonia together with Salonica was firmly in Turkish hands and it was held by them until the Balkan wars of 1912.

The Turkish regime in Macedonia was as suppressive as in other Balkan lands. There were two classes of people, the Ottoman chiefs as landowners and the peasants. Local Turkish governors gradually became independent while central power declined in the 17th and 18th centuries. Lawlessness in that part of the Ottoman Empire became so great in the 18th century that the big European powers intervened in order to protect Christians. By the Kucuk-Karnejdzi agreement of 1774, Russia was acknowledged protector of all Christians who belonged to the Patriarchate of Istanbul. In 1839 the Sultan issued a decree which proclaimed the equality of all races and religions within the empire. The Paris agreement of 1856 recognized the right

of the big European powers to interfere with Turkish reforms, but despite all interventions, the situation of the people was not improved.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Bulgarian nationalism awoke and pressed the Turkish government to grant a separate Bulgarian church under an exarch. Jurisdiction of that Bulgarian church autonomy extended over the whole of Macedonia and included also the towns Pirot and Nis. The Treaty of San Stefano which created Great Bulgaria in 1876 was rescinded by the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, but the Bulgarian exarchate was left untouched. The Bulgarian government strongly supported the exarchate and opened many Bulgarian schools in Macedonia. Two Bulgarian bishops were appointed, one in Skoplje and one in Ohrid, so the Bulgarian influence increased.

The Serbs strongly opposed this Bulgarian action in Macedonia which for them was ancient South Serbia. At the Berlin conference the Serbs had claimed that region, but in vain. However, later in 1881, the Serbian king Milan Obrenovic received Austro-Hungarian support for Serbian expansion toward the south. King Milan promised that Serbia would discourage any agitation in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Serbian influence in Macedonia advanced very well after that time. By 1900 there were 800 Bulgarian and 180 Serbian schools in the districts of Kosovo, Bitolj and Salonika. The Greeks also organized over 900 schools in districts of Bitolj and Salonika.

The Bulgarians also gave refuge to terrorists. Their Internal Macedonia Revolutionary Organization aimed at securing Macedonian autonomy. Since their propaganda did not gain



support of all the Christian population, Bulgarians organized bands of “comitadjis” who started to wage guerrilla warfare against the Turks. Bulgarian armed bands also terrorized the population forcing them to become Bulgarians or pro-Bulgarian. Serbs retaliated by organizing their own guerrilla units, and the Greeks followed the Bulgarians and the Serbs. Terrorist activities broke out over all three districts. The Turks retaliated sharply, so this irregular warfare depopulated and destroyed many villages.

In October 1903 Austria and Russia proposed to the Sultan a plan known as “Murzsteg Progranme.” Two civil agents, one Russian and one Austrian, were attached to the Turkish Inspector-General. Five European powers took control over five different sectors of Macedonia. This attempt failed and the guerrilla activities were renewed. In 1908 a group of Turkish officers, the so-called “Young Turks,” revolted against Sultan Abdul Hamid, deposed him and proclaimed the equality and brotherhood of all subjects of the Ottoman Empire. As a result, the great powers abolished international control of Macedonia and withdrew the officers of gendarmerie from the five sectors of Macedonia.

The Young Turks proved to be nationalistic and in favor of centralization of Ottoman power. Macedonia again became the scene of murder and plunder. Such developments in the Ottoman Empire drew all Balkan countries together. In 1912 Serbia and Bulgaria concluded an alliance; Greece and Crna Gora followed them and a strong Balkan alliance was formed which forced the end of the Turkish rule over most of their European domains.

After five centuries ancient Serbian lands with fine monuments of medieval Serbian culture were joined to the Serbian national state. Macedonia was divided among the Serbs and Greeks. Since Bulgaria was excluded from this position, during World War I she joined the Central Powers hoping to gain control over Macedonia. Defeated in 1918, Bulgarians awaited a new favorable moment to fulfill that aspiration. In 1941 Bulgaria received all of Serbian and Greek Macedonia from Hitler, but after his defeat by the Allies she lost all of it again. In 1941 Yugoslav Communists created a new nationality and a new Macedonian language and separated the “Macedonian church” from the Serbian church.

## **Vojvodina**

The provinces Banat, Backa, a part of Baranja and Srem have been known as Vojvodina since 1848; Slavs populated that region for the first time in the fifth and sixth centuries during the Hun invasion of Europe. In the ninth century the Hungarians created their state and this region became part of it. The settlement of Serbs into Vojvodina was continued throughout centuries but it was substantially increased in the 15th and 16th centuries after the fall of Serbia. At the end of the 15th century Hungarians permitted Serbs to organize an autonomous region ruled by Serbian despots. They encouraged Serbs to settle in this region to serve as a bulwark against Turks who were making plundering raids into Hungary.

During the Austrian-Turkish war in the 17th century after the Turkish defeat at Vienna, the Serbs were instigated by Austrian

propaganda to rise up against the Turks and participate in the war on the Austrian side. The Austrian offensive was stopped by the Turks at Kacanik and they were forced to retreat. The Serbs who feared Turkish revenge withdrew to the north. The organizer of this large migration of 60,000 families was Patriarch Arsenije III Carnojevic. The abandoned Serbian lands of Kosovo and Metohija were settled by Albanians. Patriarch Arsenije III asked and received a guarantee from Emperor Leopold that Serbian religion and church autonomy would be respected. However the Hungarians did not always adhere to that agreement. The Serbian struggle for religious and later secular autonomy lasted throughout all of the 18th century, but without success.

In the revolutionary year of 1848 when Hungarians led by Lajol Kostur rose up against the Habsburgh dynasty, Serbs together with Croats under Jelacic fought against Hungarians in support of the Austrian emperor. In May 1848 the Serbs elected Josif Rajacic their patriarch, Stevan Supljikac their military leader and proclaimed Serbian Vojvodina. The emperor promised them autonomy but did not keep his word, for in 1849 he appointed an Austrian general as governor. In 1860 Vojvodina was completely abolished and remained in the Austro-Hungarian empire until 1918 when the Serbian army defeated Austria-Hungary and liberated it. On November 21, 1918 the Great National Assembly of Vojvodina proclaimed its union with Serbia. After many centuries under foreign rule the Serbs of Vojvodina became part of a Serbian national state. Although Serbs form a majority in Vojvodina there are other national minorities as Hungarians, Romanians, Germans and Slovaks. This mixture of

various nationalities is a result of the Austrian policy of “first divide then rule.”

## **Cultural Life in Vojvodina**

Although under foreign rule, Serbs in Vojvodina had rather favorable conditions for their cultural development. Agriculture was progressive and commerce flourished in the Austrian Empire. A substantial number of Serbs in Vojvodina were wealthy people who supported education, religion and art. A main role in the Serbian cultural development in Vojvodina was played by the literary association “Matica srpska” (Serbian Queen Bee) which was established in 1826 in Budapest by rich Serbian merchants. Since 1863 the association has been in Novi Sad and regularly publishes “Letopis Matice srpske” (Chronicle of Serbian Queen Bee). This magazine still publishes literary works written by Serbian authors for Serbian people.

Serbs in Vojvodina have always been in close connection with Serbs in Serbia proper: During the Serbian wars for liberation their help to the insurgents was great both in armament and in services of educated men. They helped the Serbian government to organize its own administration, schools, post office, telephone and telegraph. Their contribution to the whole Serbian nation was great. They produced famous authors, painters, composers, university professors and scholars. A native of Vojvodina was Mihailo Pupin, world famous physicist and professor at Columbia University in New York, as well as an outstanding inventor in the field of electrical engineering.

Serbs from Vojvodina strongly supported the Serbian church. From 1690 the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch was in Sremski Karlovci and all Serbs under Austro-Hungarian rule recognized the Patriarch as their spiritual leader. The Serbian Patriarchate did much to preserve the Serbian national consciousness and prevent Magyarization.

## **Military Frontier**

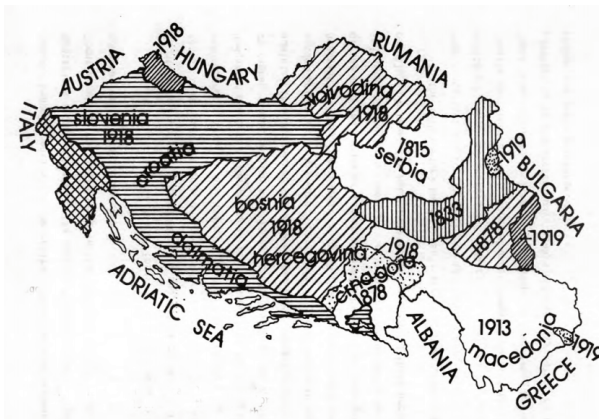
After the fall of Serbia, the Turks continued their raids into Hungarian lands. The whole 15th century was marked by the Hungarian struggle against the Turks. In 1526 at Mohach the Hungarians were disastrously defeated, their king was killed and their resistance came to an end. Hungarian and Croatian noblemen elected the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand of Habsburg their ruler in 1527. From that time on he and nearly all succeeding Austrian emperors waged perpetual war against the Turks. The land was devastated and depopulated by constant Turkish raids. Austrian military authorities decided to organize a special region, the Military Frontier, (popularly called Kordun) to serve as a bulwark against the Turks. The region was gradually populated by people with special privileges and certain obligations. They held their land without any taxes but in return they voluntarily accepted the obligation of rendering military service to the empire. In 1557 the Austrian Archduke Charles of Styria (Steiermark) built a fortress at Karlovac on the river Kupa and he became the first commandant of the Military Frontier. In 1578 the whole region from the Adriatic Sea to the Drava River was named the Croatian Military Frontier (fig. 4). this region was a land of fortifications, watchtowers

and guards. Its inhabitants were free peasant-soldiers who were obligated to bear arms and fight Turks from the age of 16 to 60. Among other ethnic groups the Austrian military commanders invited also Serbs to settle in this region. They accepted the offer and settled there in large numbers. They had the privilege of electing their own mayors and judges. After the great Serbian / immigration into Hungary under Arsenije III Carnojevic in 1690 Emperor Leopold reorganized the Military Frontier into regiments, battalions and communities. The number of Serbs in the Military Frontier was particularly large in the 18th century when Serbs composed half of the Austrian army.

Croatian and Hungarian feudal lords did not like to have Serbs in Military Frontiers. Serbs were not subject to their feudal taxes, their jurisprudence or their church hierarchy. They were the emperor's soldiers and had more freedom than Croatian and Hungarian peasants. Those feudal lords as well as the Archbishop of Zagreb fought Serbian privileges at all levels of the Austrian administration. However the emperor was their protector since he needed soldiers for his wars. Serbs had many problems with their Austrian military commanders. Many of them behaved as sole owners of the land and requested taxes; discipline was brutal, pay was low and often not on time. However, Serbs fought successfully for their privileges because the Habsburgh emperors continued their protection.

In the 18th century Empress Maria Teresa who was under pressure from Hungarians and Croats joined the largest part of the Military Frontier to Croatia and Hungary. In 1881 the region was finally abolished and incorporated under Hungarian

administration. Serbs have continued to live in the regions of the former Military Frontier up to the present day, always successfully defending their rights and their existence.



Yugoslavia: Historical Development 19th and 20th Centuries

## Serbs in Yugoslavia

After December 1, 1912, for the first time in history, all Serbs were united in one state with other South Slavs. From its very beginning, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes had difficult problems. One initial problem was the political issue of centralism versus federalism. The new state had been created from two independent Serbian states, Serbia and Montenegro, and from territories which had been under Austria-Hungary. The South Slavs were inexperienced in the complicated democratic machinery of modern state politics. The Serbs of Serbia and Montenegro, although having been subjects of constitutional and parliamentary monarchies, did not have the needed political experience to rule a large country consisting of several other

nations. Other Slavs who had been under Austria-Hungary had been in the opposition and against the state and its authorities for several centuries. Economically speaking, Yugoslavia was predominantly an agricultural country with 85 percent of the populace employed on the land. It was rather rich in natural resources, but underdeveloped in comparison with the West European countries.

The three major religions –Serbian Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Moslem –were not very tolerant of each other. Nationality problems were also complex. There were those who considered themselves Yugoslavs; others were hoping for independent countries of the major nationalities of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. While most Yugoslavs spoke Serbian-Croatian, the Slovenes had their own language and national minorities spoke Hungarians German or Albanian. To make it even more complex, the Slovenians and Croats use the Latin alphabets while the Serbians still use the Cirilica, similar to the Russian alphabet.

Before the constitution was even voted on or implemented the Serbian and the Croatian politicians argued sharply over two ideas. The Serbs were for centralization while the Croats were for a confederation. The Croats wanted a republican system while the Serbs had been monarchists from the very beginning of their history. They had a victorious army which participated in World War I on the side of the Entente; they had their national dynasty and bureaucracy, and a homogeneous population the largest in number of all partners in the new state.

The first constitution of the Kingdom of Serbs Croats and



Slovenes was accepted in 1921 by a vote of Serbian, Slovenian and Moslem deputies. The Croats abstained. According to the constitution, the state was an integral, centralized, parliamentary and constitutional monarchy. The Croats refused to participate in the work of the National Assembly (Skupstina) from 1921 to 1924. In 1924 they made an agreement with the Radical Party and their participation in the government was secured. Unfortunately, in 1928, during a long, bitter and unrestrained debate in the National Assembly, the deputy Punisa Racic killed two Croatian deputies and mortally wounded Stjepan Radics president of the Croatian Peasant Party. The Croats again left the Assembly in open defiance of the government.



Geographic Location of Serbia within Yugoslavia

Seeing that the parliamentary system had failed, King Alexandar I suspended the constitution in January 1929, and following the advice of political leaders, formed a

caretaking government. Political parties were dissolved, the National Assembly was abolished and the name of the state was changed to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Although the king's act was labeled "royal dictatorship" by many westerners, King Alexandar was never an autocrat. He always regarded himself as "a guardian but not a source of the power, the servant and not the lord of the people." Two years after, the king promulgated a new constitution which did not mollify the Croats. In 1934, during a state visit to France, King Alexander was assassinated.

After his death, the Regency, headed by Prince Paul, reached an agreement with the Croats, creating an autonomous Croatian Banovina headed by a governor and with its own national assembly.

Although Prince Paul's main idea in foreign policy was to keep the country out of war, there was much dissatisfaction with him. In 1937 he signed pacts of friendship with Bulgaria, Italy, and in 1941 the fatal pact with the Axis (Germany) in order to avoid war. Dissatisfaction with the Regency and the Government after Yugoslavia's adherence to the Tripartite Pact resulted in a military coup d'état. The Regency was overthrown and the young Prince Petar II was made king. The Serbian people received the news of change in government with mixed feelings, but mostly with sympathy. Croats were for peace and against the putsch, while the Slovenes were neutral.

As a consequence of this change of government, Hitler decided to destroy Yugoslavia in spite of assurance by the new Yugoslav government that adherence to the Tripartite Pact would be respected. On April 6, 1941, German, Italian and Hungarian

troops invaded Yugoslavia. The resistance of Yugoslav armed forces was insignificant. The troops were not fully mobilized yet and the air force was quickly destroyed by superior German air power. German troops quickly penetrated into Yugoslav territory and, at the same time, attacked Greece.

The Yugoslav government and King Petar escaped from Yugoslavia to Greece by airplane.

## **Occupation, Resistance and Civil War**

The collapse of Yugoslavia was so rapid that the Serbian peasants called it “The April confusion.” About 250,000 Serbian officers and soldiers were captured and taken to Germany and Italy as prisoners of war. A considerable number took up side arms and light armament and went to their homes in the mountains, determined to start a long and merciless guerrilla war against all enemies. This was a centuries-old Serbian tradition and nobody was able to prevent it.

## **Draza Mihailovic and Josip Broz**

In May 1941, a general staff colonel, Dragoljub (Draza) Mihailovic, who refused to recognize the capitulation of the Yugoslav army, appeared at Ravna Gora in Western Serbia. Many armed groups immediately recognized him as their commander in chief. The Yugoslav government in exile promoted him to general and appointed him Minister of Defense. General Mihailovic started a thorough organization of his

guerrilla units, called chetniks, and ordered selected attacks and sabotage against occupation forces.

After Germany attacked the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav Communist Party also started action against Germans. The leader of this action was the Secretary General of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz –Tito. His guerilla units were known as partisans. The two guerrilla groups had different objectives. General Mihailovic primarily wanted to save the Serbian people from possible extermination and therefore favored attacking Germans only when needed. His plan was to preserve his forces for the end of the war and then to inflict a decisive blow to the enemy. Tito, on the other hand, favored immediate take over of the occupied lands.

Because of these armed actions, Germans made many terrible reprisals. For every dead German soldier, they shot up to 100 hostages. The German commanding general in Serbia offered a reward of a hundred thousand reichmarks in gold each for Mihailovic and Tito. On orders of the Yugoslav government in London, Mihailovic had two meetings with Tito. Their cooperation was short lived, and by the end of 1941, chetniks and partisans were in a bloody civil war which cost many thousands of lives. In 1941 and 1942, the Western Allies recognized and supported only Mihailovic. He and his chetniks were glorified in Great Britain and the United States as the first insurgents in occupied Europe.

From 1942 on, this external and fratricidal revolution, one of the worst in human annals, decimated the Serbian population. In the meantime, domestic and foreign Communists began an effective

campaign in support of Tito's guerrilla units. Mihailovic was attacked as a German collaborator and by 1943, the Allies switched their support and military aid to Tito.

Having secured military support from allies, Communists enjoyed a favorable political situation for their ascendance to power in Yugoslavia. On October 20, 1944, troops of Soviet General Talbukhin entered Belgrade and with them Tito came to power in Yugoslavia.

In March 1945, a regency and a new Yugoslav government were formed. Tito became Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. Many Serbian leaders opposed the new regime, including Mihailovic, and were arrested and sentenced to death with the help of the so-called people's courts. When the Communists did organize elections in November, there was no opposition to them. The newly elected Constitutional Assembly abolished the monarchy and proclaimed the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. According to the new constitution enacted in January 1946, Yugoslavia was divided into six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Crna Gora, Serbia and Macedonia. Thus, the Serbian people were divided among several republics.

Between 1946 and 1948, resistance to the Soviet type communist regime and Soviet domination became so strong, even within the Yugoslav courts, that the government was forced to relax the pressure toward nationalization of land and Soviet dependence. This in turn provoked Stalin and other leaders who accused Tito and Yugoslav Communists of deviation from their basic doctrines. In 1948, the Cominform expelled Yugoslavia

from the society of the socialistic community. Economic sanctions followed, isolating Yugoslavia from the rest of the Communist world. In this situation, Tito turned to the United States for economic aid. The American government decided to help the country with food, money, armament and the education of Yugoslav military and civilian personnel. The purpose of this policy of “calculated risk” was to preserve the independence of Yugoslavia. The relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia were poor until 1956 when the Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev visited Belgrade and established friendly contacts.

Life for Serbian people in Yugoslavia is not free. Criticism of the regime and the society is forbidden. Although religion is permitted by law, there are many restrictions which fetter the freedom of religious practices. Christmas, for example, is not a holiday so employees must work on that day. Serbian national holidays are outlawed. City people cannot celebrate St. Sava’s Day, St. George’s Day, Vidov-dan or their Slava (Patron Saint of the House). However, villagers have more freedom in that respect. Consequently, the Serbian village is once more, as in the past, the guardian of Serbian customs, traditions and culture.

# Cultural Traits, National Life and Contributions

DRAGOSLAV GEORGEVICH

## Serbian Culture

Serbian culture is based on Eastern Orthodox dogmas and ethics. Saint Sava expressed Serbian orthodoxy through the independent Serbian church which he established in 1219. This spiritual legacy has been lived by the Serbian people through their leaders, saints, literature, art, architecture, and institutions as well as by their thought, philosophy and whole way of life. Although Serbian culture is a part of Eastern Orthodox Christian culture, it is also a specific and unique culture of its own.

Serbian conversion to Christianity occurred in the ninth century but transformation to a Christian culture was slow and long. Only in the second half of the 12th century when the Great

Zupan Stefan Nemanja centralized all political power into his hands did the situation become clearer. Nemanja expatriated the Bogumils, remained on good terms with the Roman Catholic church, but firmly embraced Orthodoxy and Byzantine culture.

From the very beginning of its existence, the culture of the Serbian Church was more spiritual than material. Its ethical influence on individual men as well as on the whole nation was strong and faithful. It determined the destiny of both the individual and the nation. The Serbian Church accepted both knowledge and faith and was able to influence the intellect and sensibility.

## **Spiritual Values and Mores**

In order to understand the spiritual culture of the Serbian nation it is necessary to consider Serbian spiritual qualities. The basic characteristic of Serbs is their great vitality which is expressed through a strong instinct for self-preservation. However, this vitality is not an aggressive but a passive quality. Serbs possess the passive forces of defense and endurance rather than the active forces of movement and aggression.

Their historical development forced Serbs to become a nation of warriors, but not a nation of aggressors. Since they were subjected to many attacks, they became deeply distrustful. They learned not to expect good deeds or help from anyone, only unprovoked attack. Many times in their turbulent history the Serbs were sentenced to death. In 1813 after the First Serbian Revolt the Turks intended to destroy Sumadija completely.



Hitler decided to do the same in 1941, but the Serbs survived both threats and outlived their aggressors. Out of resistance and endurance, heroism was born as an answer to aggression. Therefore, the basic spiritual quality of Serbs is to bear evil heroically, enduring all calamity until victory.

Serbs are excellent soldiers because heroism and warfare have been practiced throughout centuries. A high regard for heroism, struggle and endurance along with a love for military affairs are deeply-rooted Serbian qualities. Western writers noticed and described these Serbian qualities long ago. Throughout centuries Serbs fought against stronger enemies in defense of their homelands. An ardent love for liberty combined with a defensive nature, introduced perseverance, bitterness and sacrifice into the Serbian struggle for freedom.

The foremost Serbian spiritual values and mores are tied to war and struggle. They are heroism, self-sacrifice, word of honor, comradeship, patriotism, modesty, individualism and the ability to extricate themselves from difficult combat situations. Other qualities held in high esteem are a good education, brightness, good physical and mental health, beauty, wit, intelligence and modesty. Highly esteemed women are widows whose husbands lost their lives in war, mothers whose sons were killed in defense of their country and mothers of many sons, particularly those whose sons were courageous fighters in combat. Also admired are men and women who pledge their properties to schools, churches or benevolent societies, men who are able to find water and build fountains in dry regions, builders of churches and

monasteries, and good story-tellers who relate national traditions.

Engineers, physicians, lawyers, authors, singers, musicians, famous sportsmen, and men or women able to treat bone fractures, snakebites, and small injuries inflicted by accident are admired. People with well-organized and well-kept households and those who produce good fruit are respected. This includes women who are excellent housewives and cooks and those who take good care of children and older people. Modern professional women, as doctors, professors or artists, also command respect. Because church and state are separated the church has less influence today, but clergy-men are still much respected as individuals and their advice is sought.

It is interesting to note that salt and bread have a spiritual value. They symbolize a desire for peace and are so respected that they are seldom thrown away. Salt and bread are brought before an enemy to eat and thereby show an acceptance of a peace offer. Oil and wine also have a spiritual value.

Spiritual standards are set very high for Serbian people, so it is difficult to receive recognition from neighbors, friends, relatives or the general public. A family's reputation is much guarded. In Crna Gora people still live in clans and so public opinion is very sharply watched in regard to every individual. It praises good deeds and generally admitted values and virtues. It also registers, judges, scolds and rejects all worthless and weak behavior or deeds.

Cowards, dishonorable, immodest, or lazy people are despised.

Stupid persons and fools are subjected to ridicule. Bad housewives are held in low esteem, selfish people are hated, egocentric people are disliked, and indecisive persons are so despised that about them people say, "They neither stink nor smell." In particularly low esteem are those superiors who do not have enough courage to command. Opportunists are despised, particularly those who are always in agreement with the regime. Evil women, those with sharp tongues, are disliked, and avoided. Children and youth are admired and liked if they are gay, open, friendly and polite toward older folks. In schools the able, strict and just teachers are held in high esteem, while weak, soft or unjust teachers are despised. Politicians and leaders who do not fulfill their promises and who protect or favor friends and relatives are hated. In general, all weak, insipid and morally feeble behavior is despised by Serbs.

## Material Values

Material value is attached to various expensive things or animals which are seldom purchased, highly treasured, and given away only in cases of emergency. They include jewels, such as rings, bracelets, necklaces, brooches, watches and gold coins (ducats and napoleons); old weapons, such as decorated knives, pistols, rifles and swords; various pieces of fancy, decorative, cloths, such as embroidered scarves, folk costumes, furs and fancy footwear.

Such valuable things are usually kept in a family for generations and given as an inheritance to children, relatives or friends. In many cases such heirlooms are transferred from

one generation to another for hundreds of years. Gold coins are highly valued because of frequent wars, change in regimes and an unstable paper currency. Gold coins are not in circulation for money but only as decoration. Women make bracelets and necklaces out of them. Old arms are also used for decoration and they are usually hung on the walls of homes, particularly if they were taken from an enemy in war.

In Serbian villages high value is put on domestic animals and things used for agriculture, such as good horses, oxen, cows, mules, donkeys, roosters and shepherd or hunting dogs. Agricultural machines or vehicles and equipment for hunting and horses are important. People consider their vegetable and flower gardens, vineyards, bees, and wine barrels as valuable. Modern goods are highly valued today, such things as automobiles, bicycles, small appliances, musical instruments and fancy furniture. Sporting equipment is important since all sports are popular.

## **National Customs**

Traditional courtesy is expressed in several ways. For many centuries Serbs lived a tribal and patriarchal life. In such a closed society unwritten rules precisely regulate the behavior and courtesy of all its members. One basic rule is that younger people must show respect to older members of the society. This respect is expressed by outward signs and, even more, by proper care and support. Older people must be greeted and, while speaking to them, younger persons stand. Seats on trains and

buses are given over to them and, generally speaking, they are honored in every respect.

Material care for parents who are unable to earn their livings is the responsibility of their sons and daughters. Old parents may live alone or in the same household with their children. In villages they usually live on their own small properties, and if they are unable to take care of them, their kinsfolk do it. Sometimes one grandchild lives with them because grandparents are usually close to their grandchildren. Most Serbian children grow up under the care and guidance of their grandparents.

Greetings are also determined by centuries-old customs. Younger people should greet older ones first. Those who enter a home first extend greetings to those they find within. In addition to a spoken greeting, male persons greet others by taking their hats off. Relatives address each other by their terms of relationship, such as uncle, aunt, grandfather, grandmother, and so on.

Hospitality is a very old Slavic custom. In early times hospitality was intended to take care of travelers who may have gone astray in a strange country and needed shelter, food and protection overnight. This custom continued to exist after Slavic conversion to Christianity because during the Middle Ages the number of travelers was substantial.” Emperor Dusan’s code contained very heavy punishment for any village in which a traveler should suffer certain mishaps. That custom was kept when Serbs were under Turkish rule. Travelers also acted as messengers by transferring news from one region to another. Travel was difficult at that time so travelers enjoyed respect and

attention. Many of them were gusle players who knew many folksongs. They also played patriotic and heroic songs which contributed to Serbian national feeling. Hospitality was particularly given to those travelers who collected donations for repair and maintenance of churches and monasteries. Travelers of the kind described above are very few today, but the hospitality remains.

Engagement between two persons wishing to marry was done in olden days with the consent of the parents of the girl and boy. In modern times it is an affair between the two people who plan to marry. After the couple decides to be engaged, they inform their parents, relatives and friends and a party is usually given for invited guests. The Serbian Orthodox Church participates in this custom by making an announcement three times in the church. In these announcements the parish priest says the names of the engaged couple and invites all people to make any appropriate objections.

A wedding ceremony may be performed by a clerk in a special office or by a priest in a church or home. After the wedding a party is given for invited guests at home, in a restaurant or in some other suitable place. The bride and groom are dressed in their best clothes. In Serbian villages weddings are big social events. Very often a long procession composed of many vehicles follows the bride and groom to the church and back to the place where a banquet is given. The whole affair is joyous; much food and drink are consumed. Music is played and guests sing and dance for hours.

Kumstvo, or sponsorship, is a custom which exists in the

Balkans among all Christians. Both Orthodox and Catholic Serbs still practice this custom, but nowadays less than in the past. A kum, or kuma if female, is one of the two witnesses who officiate at the wedding of a couple. In the Serbian Orthodox Church the kum puts wedding rings on the ring fingers of both bride and groom and also signs the marriage contract. With this act a kum becomes a relative not only of the couple but also of their families. In addition to his participation in the wedding, a kum becomes godfather to the children of the couple. He holds the infant during baptism and gives it a name, usually with the consent of the parents. If a godfather can not attend the baptism, he appoints a substitute to officiate in his place. Serbian custom requires that kumstvo be kept throughout many generations.

The Slava is a Serbian Orthodox religious custom which dates from the time of conversion to Christianity. Each family celebrates the saint's day on which their ancestors became Christians. The House Patron Saint who protects the family is inherited by all male members of the family from their fathers. A woman celebrates her father's Slava if unmarried and her husband's if she is married. A Slava is always celebrated at home. On that day a special bread (slavski kolac) and specially prepared wheat are consecrated by a priest either at home or in church. Bread symbolizes the body of the saint and the wheat is for his soul. For a few immortal saints like Archangel Michael and Saint Ilya, wheat is not prepared, only the bread.

On Slava day the house is open for all visitors, both invited and uninvited. Each guest is treated to food, drink, coffee and cakes. Special guests and relatives are invited for dinner. A Slava is

both solemn and joyous. Serbs have kept this custom through centuries, even under the most difficult conditions. The most frequently celebrated Slavas are Saint Nikola, Saint Jovan, Saint Dimitrije, Saint George and Saint Sava.

Serbian outings are much like American picnics, but many of them have religious origins. Saint George's Day (Djurdjevdan) on May 6 is an old Serbian holiday dedicated to the memory of hajduks, guerrilla fighters against the Turks. In the past it was the day when all fighters gathered at certain places, organized small units and began their campaigns against the Turks. They fought the enemy up to Saint Dimitrius' Day at the end of November when they disbanded and went to their villages to await spring and Saint George's day when trees were bearing new foliage. At present Yugoslav Communists do not celebrate Saint George's Day, but they have their labor day on May 1. People in villages and small towns do keep Saint George's Day by going early in the morning into fields for picnics. Serbs in the free world celebrate this day regularly with singing, music, dancing and sports events.

Another religious celebration is known as Zavetina. This takes place once a year at a certain place called "zapis," usually an oak tree. After a religious ceremony with a parish priest officiating, all participants have a picnic. Each church has its patron saint and once a year on the saint's day (Slava) people celebrate with a service and picnic in the church courtyard. Christ's resurrection is celebrated in Crna Gora where people believe that before Easter no one should go into the mountains. All the villagers gather at certain places, celebrate Easter and after that shepherds



depart to the mountains with their animals. Bairam is a moslem religious festival which occurs after a long period of fasting. It is a great outing, usually close to some creek or river. Such a place is called “teferic” and the outing is also called by this name.

Friends and relatives get together for the departure of recruits to military service. This outing is held once or twice a year in villages or towns when new conscripts gather in order to go together to barracks for basic training.

In Macedonia they celebrate the departure of workers for other parts of the country to work and save money. This happens because most young men must be able to prepare dowries for wives. In other Serbian lands the dowry goes to the groom, but in Macedonia it is given to the bride’s parents.

An old Serbian custom called Moba helps families at harvest time. Friends come to work free of charge and after sunset the host family serves a meal around a fire.

Saint Sava’s Day is an important religious and national holiday for Serbs of the Serbian Orthodox faith. It is celebrated on January 27, the day Saint Sava died in 1235. Serbian churches in Yugoslavia and churches and schools in the free world celebrate Saint Sava’s Day to commemorate this great Serbian reformer and teacher. On this day selected contestants receive awards for special papers prepared for the celebration. Before the Communist party took power in Yugoslavia all Serbian schools including universities celebrated Saint Sava’s Day.

Vidovdan (St. Vitus Day), celebrated on June 28 (June 15 by

the Julian calendar), commemorates the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 when the Serbs were defeated by the Turks and the flower of Serbian nobility lost their lives. Vidovdan is also like the American Memorial Day devoted to the memory of all soldiers who fell for the nation and the country through the centuries from Kosovo to the present. On that day all Serbian churches have a requiem with an appropriate patriotic speech by the priest or a prominent man of the community.

Christmas Eve is celebrated by Orthodox Serbs on January 6 which is December 24 on the old Julian calendar. Serbs of Orthodox and Roman Catholic faiths hold similar celebrations with some small differences. Every Orthodox home has a small oak tree from the forest called "Badnjak." In the evening the landlord takes the tree into the house. When he enters he greets the members of the household with, "Good evening, happy Christmas Eve to you," (Dobro, vece, srecno vam Badnje vece). One man from the household sprinkles him with mixed cereals, corn, wheat, rye and oats, and answers, "God give you good, lucky and honorable man," (Bog ti dao dobro, srecni i cestiti). Then the landlord puts the tree on the fire to burn.

Catholics and also many Orthodox Serbs have in their homes Christmas trees decorated as they are in America. There are also packages with presents for all members of the household. This custom among Serbian Orthodox people started after World War I but only in the cities. Villagers did not accept it, not even at the present time, and have only Badnjak. In Dalmatia both the Orthodox and Catholics have Christmas trees and Badnjak. A

decorated tree is a custom children like very much and so it is spreading among the Orthodox Serbs.

A Christmas Eve dinner consists of dishes used for fasting, such as beans, fish, noodles, honey, prunes, apples and walnuts. In many homes straw is spread on the floor to symbolize the hut in which Jesus Christ was born. The first person to enter the house on Christmas Day is called Polazenik. His duty is to stir up the fire with a firebrand of Badnjak and extend good wishes to the family. He usually says, "As many sparks, so much money, health and progress to this home." A Polazenik should be a child because children are believed to be less sinful than adults and good blessings will follow the family all year. A Polazenik is invited for dinner.

The Serbian Orthodox Christmas is celebrated for three days, while the Roman Catholic one is celebrated two days. In a Serbian Orthodox home no one leaves the house on the first day except to attend church. Dinner on that first day is a special affair with a huge meal. A roasted suckling pig is the main dish with various other side dishes. A wheat bread called "cesnica" with a hidden coin inside is divided among members of the household and guests. One piece is saved for "the traveler," thus symbolizing Christian charity. Serbs of Roman Catholic faith do not have the Polazenik and cesnica, but their celebration of Christmas is more or less the same as for the Orthodox. To offset the religious Christmas celebration, Communists have an official New Year as their state holiday. Christmas is a work day and absence from work is not permitted.

БИРИЛИЦА—CYRILLICA		ЕНГЛЕСКИ ENGLISH		LATINICA LATIN	
Импечатни саопи Printed letters	Писани саопи Written letters				
А - а	А - а	a (arm)	A - a		
Б - б	Б - б	b (bell)	B - b		
В - в	В - в	v (voice)	V - v		
Г - г	Г - г	g (glass)	G - g		
Д - д	Д - д	d (day)	D - d		
Ђ - ђ	Ђ - ђ	j (jam)	Dj - dj		
Е - е	Е - е	e (egg)	E - e		
Ж - ж	Ж - ж	- (pleasure)	Ž - ž		
З - з	З - з	z (zoo)	Z - z		
И - и	И - и	i (ink)	I - i		
Ј - ј	Ј - ј	y (yard)	J - j		
К - к	К - к	k (kiss)	K - k		
Л - л	Л - л	l (leg)	L - l		
Љ - љ	Љ - љ	- (million)	Lj - lj		
М - м	М - м	m (milk)	M - m		
Н - н	Н - н	n (neck)	N - n		
Њ - њ	Њ - њ	- (news)	Nj - nj		
О - о	О - о	o (old)	O - o		
П - п	П - п	p (pen)	P - p		
Р - р	Р - р	r (rain)	R - r		
С - с	С - с	s (sand)	S - s		
Т - т	Т - т	t (toy)	T - t		
Ћ - ћ	Ћ - ћ	tch (pitcher)	Ć - ć		
У - у	У - у	oo (spoon)	U - u		
Ф - ф	Ф - ф	f (farm)	F - f		
Х - х	Х - х	h (hat)	H - h		
Ц - ц	Ц - ц	tz (hits)	C - c		
Ч - ч	Ч - ч	ch (chair)	Č - č		
Џ - џ	Џ - џ	- (giant)	Dž - dž		
Ш - ш	Ш - ш	sh (shirt)	Š - š		

Serbian Cyrillic Alphabet

## Serbian language

Before their arrival in the Balkans the Serbs, like all other Slavs, spoke the Proto-Slavic. language. During their movement from Boika to the south, Serbs gradually developed their own language, probably from a dialect of the Proto-Slavic language. This development of the Serbian language and creation of a literary language was greatly influenced by the work of two Slavic Apostles, the brothers Cyril and Methodius. They were Greeks from Thessalonike, who learned a Slavic language in order to convert Slavs to Christianity and translated church books from Greek to Slavic languages. In the beginning there were two scripts, Cyrillic and Glagolitic. Cyrillic has survived with certain modifications up to the present day, while Glagolitic

has disappeared. The language used in literature for a long time was Church-Slavic. Only a few people among the Serbs were educated from the 9th through the 11th centuries. Clergymen were educated and used Church-Slavic in their writing. The Serbs of Roman Catholic faith used the latin script and often the latin language.

The arrival of the Turks in the Balkans and the downfall of the Serbian state interrupted literary work by educated Serbs. The only places where a few men could work on literature were monasteries. While writers wrote in a mixture of Russian and Serbian Church-Slavic languages, the people continued to use their folk language which was different. Many authors were educated in Russia and were influenced by the Russian language. The first educated Serb who opposed the use of a mixed language was Dositej Obradovic. He was the first president of the Great School at the time of Karadjordje, the school which was the first Serbian university. His book Zivot i prikljutenija Dositeja Obradovica was written in the Serbian people's language.

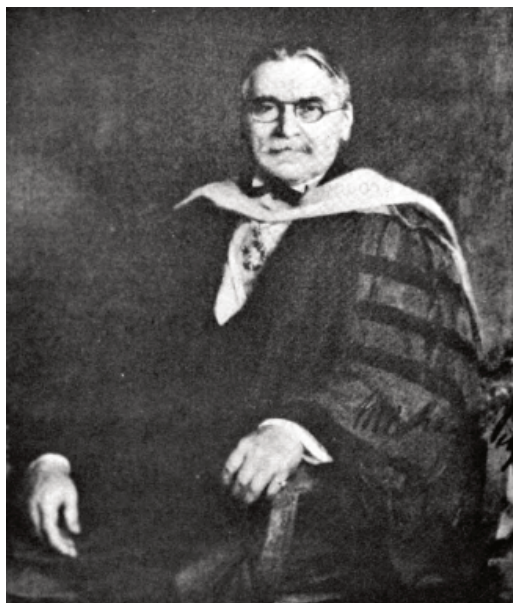
The great Serbian philologist Vuk Stefanovic-Karadzic worked long and diligently on the reform of the Serbian language, beginning in 1814 when he published the first Serbian grammar and a collection of Serbian folk poetry in Vienna. Vuk fought a long and persistent battle until the people's language was recognized as the Serbian literary language. His intention was to establish a Serbian literary language by rejecting the Kajkavski dialect in favor of Stokavski. This second dialect had three subdialects, jekavski, ekavski and ikavski, and Vuk wanted

jekavski for the literary language. However the Serbian educational center in Novi Sad, which was under Austria-Hungary, and the government of Serbia in Belgrade accepted the ekavski subdialect in schools, administration and printing. He had to yield to the subdialect which was perpetuated by official use. Vuk's battle was crowned by victory because his reforms were accepted and the spoken language of the common people became the written Serbian language. The jekavski subdialect survived and today it is equal to the ekavski, while the ikavski subdialect is disappearing.

## **Scientific Contributions**

The first scientist of Serbian origin was Rudjer Boskovic who was born in Dubrovnik in 1711 and died in Milan, Italy, in 1787. His family was from Hercegovina originally and his two brothers were talented mathematicians. Rudjer's father was a merchant and he lived for a time in the Serbian town Novi Pazar in Raska. He acquired his elementary education in Dubrovnik, entered the order of Jesuits and after graduating became a teacher of mathematics in the Collegio Romano. Through all his life Rudjer worked in science. His contribution to astronomy was a geometrical method to determine the position of the equator and planets. He also worked on a molecular theory of matter, measured the size of a meridian angle, accepted and defended Newton's ideas and originated an atomic theory. In 1773 the King of France appointed him to work on nautical optics for his navy. In 1783 Budjer retired to Italy to supervise the printing of his voluminous scientific works which were written mostly in Latin but also in French and English.

Mihailo Pupin Idvorski was born in Idvor, Banat, Vojvodina, in 1858 and died in 1935. He arrived in America in 1874 and graduated from Columbia University in 1883. As holder of the John Tyndall Fellowship of Columbia he studied at Cambridge University in England and under von Helmholtz at the University of Berlin where he received his doctorate. A professor of electromechanics at Columbia from 1901 to 1931, he was the inventor of long distance telephony by means of self-inducting coils. His system was acquired by the Bell Telephone Company and by German firms. His other inventions were in electrical wave propagation, electrical resonance, iron magnetization and multiplex telegraphy. He published *Electro-Magnetic Theory* (1895), *From Immigrant to Inventor* (1923), for which he received the Pulitzer Prize in 1924, *The New Reformation* (1927), and *Romance of the Machine* (1930). Professor Pupin was appointed honorary consul general in New York by the King of Serbia. He was an active supporter of Serbia during World War I and at the Paris peace conference in 1919 he helped the Serbian delegation acquire favorable borders for Yugoslavia.



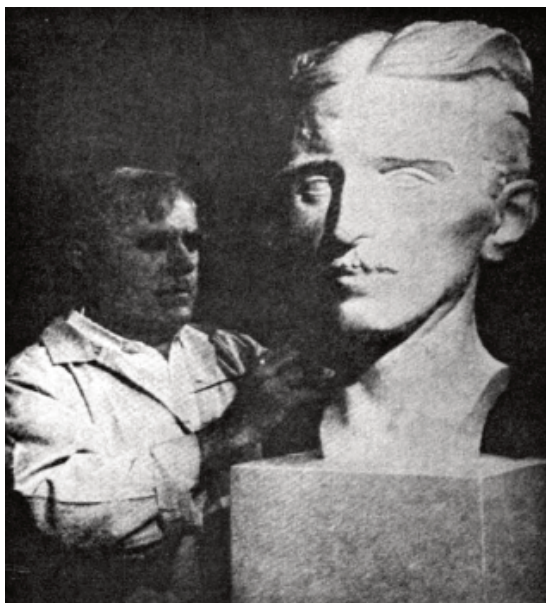
Michael Pupin: Inventor, professor of Columbia University, New York, New York. Pulitzer Prize winner.

For his scientific achievements and contributions in other fields Pupin was awarded many medals and honors such as the Edison Medal of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, the John Fritz Gold Medal and the Elliot Cresson Medal of Franklin Institute. President Harding paid a compliment to Pupin in a letter to him dated October 14, 1922: “I take this occasion to record recognition and appreciation of the fact that by virtue of experiments conducted and directed in your laboratory, you were successful in contributing in an important respect to the development of one of the marvels of our age, the radio telephone.”

Nikola Tesla was born in Smiljan, Lika, in 1856 and died in New



York City in 1943. His father Milutin was a Serbian Orthodox priest who worked hard for the development of Serbian national consciousness, education and economic development in various places in Lika which at that time was under Austria-Hungary. Nikola's mother Georgina was also an inventor as was her father. After graduating from secondary schools in Gospić and Karlovac, Nikola studied at the Polytechnic School in Gratz and at the University of Prague. He developed his first invention in Budapest in 1881, a telephone repeater. He arrived in the United States in 1884, became a naturalized citizen and worked for a time with Thomas Edison. His original works include a large number of electro-technical inventions in the field of poly-phase systems. He invented a system of arc lighting (1886), the Tesla motor and alternating current power transmission system (1888), a system for electrical conversion and distribution by oscillatory discharges (1889), high frequency current generators (1890), the Tesla coil (1891), a system of wireless transmission of information (1893), mechanical oscillators and generators of electrical oscillations (1894-95), and a high potential magnifying transmitter (1897). The inventions for which he has been known as an epoch-making inventor were alternating current motors and the famous Tesla coil or transformer. He was one of the outstanding geniuses in his field and his contribution to humanity was enormous.



John David Brzin: American Serb, famous sculptor at work on Nikola Tesla's Statue, placed in the Nikola Tesla's Elementary School in Chicago, Illinois.

Jovan Cvijit (1865-1924) was a professor of geography at the University of Belgrade, founder of the Geographical Society and president of the Royal Serbian Academy of Science. He was an expert in the field of geomorphology. His published works are Geomorphology, Anthropogeographical Problems of the Balkan Peninsula, The Karst and Man, and Geography and Geology of Macedonia and Old Serbia. Professor Cvijic was an internationally known contributor to geographical science.

# Serbian Literature

NICHOLAS MORAVCEVICH

The arrival and settlement of the ancient Serbs in the Byzantine controlled central regions of the Balkan peninsula started in the first half of the 6th century. Since they had already spread over a sizable territory by the middle of the 7th century, the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, making a virtue of necessity, granted them official permission to remain there as permanent settlers in return for their recognition of the Byzantine suzerainty and payment of annual tribute. Though the Byzantine rule over the Serbs greatly enhanced the spread of Christianity among them from the very beginning of their arrival to the Balkans, numerous linguistic, cultural and geographical barriers continued to impede the success of their conversion for a considerable length of time. The decisive change occurred in the 9th century when two Byzantine missionaries, Constantine (later known as Cyril) and his brother Methodius, finally devised the first Slavic alphabet (now known as Glagolitic) and translated

the most important Christian liturgical texts into the Slavic dialect spoken in the Salonika region. Preserved in these liturgical texts, this language (later known as Old Church Slavonic) was quickly adopted as the official language of all Slavic Churches of the Orthodox variety, and as such survived to this day. The work of Cyril and Methodius was under-taken in response to the request of the Moravian Prince Rostislav, who asked the Byzantine Emperor Michael III to send him some missionaries who could spread the Gospel among the Moravian Slavs in a language that they could understand. The Moravian mission of Cyril and Methodius was ultimately not fully successful because of the stiff opposition of the local Latin-oriented Frankish clergy, which looked up to the church of Rome. Yet, several of their pupils continued their work among the Serbs and Bulgarians after they were forced to abandon Moravia and settle further south in Ohrid. Consequently, the oldest Serbian literary texts were the Church Slavic liturgical translations from the Greek, written in the Glagolitic alphabet. Sometime in the 10th century this script was replaced by a different one, now erroneously known as Cyrillic, which was most likely devised by Cyril and Methodius' pupil, Kilment, whose Macedonian cultural center in the town of Ohrid (which at that time was within the territory of the first Bulgarian empire) exerted a strong influence upon the development of early Serbian letters.

After the creation of the independent Serbian medieval state in 1168 by Stefan Nemanja (1123-1200) and the establishment of the long line of Nemanjic dynasty rulers in Serbia, the local literary endeavor began to acquire more pronounced national

characteristics. The most significant 12th century literary and artistic accomplishment was the illuminated Miroslav Gospel, written by a monastic pupil Grigorije of whom nothing else is known. From the 13th century survive four biographies of Serbian rulers and church dignitaries written in a hagiographic style. The first two, written by the first Serbian Archbishop and national saint Sava (Rastko Nemanjic, 1169-1235) and his older brother, King Stefan Nemanjic (?-1223), are biographies of their father Stefan Nemanja; while the last two, written by the Hilandar Monastery monks Domentian and Theodosije, both treat the life of Saint Sava.

The 14th century Serbian Archbishop Danilo the Elder (c. 1270-1337) started the collection of *The Lives of Serbian Kings and Archbishops* which was later continued by a number of anonymous biographers and eventually included his own life as well. From this century also date the famous *Law Code of Tsar Dusan the Mighty* (1308-1355), an invaluable record of medieval Serbian society and its institutions, and Danilo the Younger's (c. 1350-1396) *Praise of Prince Lazar* (1393).

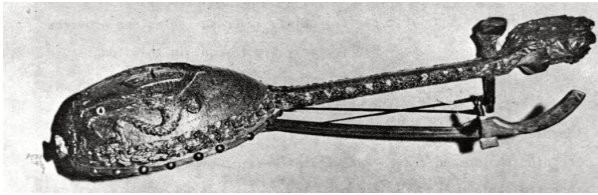
From the beginning of the 15th century survive the biographies of King Stefan Decanski and Despot Stefan Lazarevic, produced by Gligorije Camblak (c. 1365-1420) and Konstantin Kostenecki (?-c. 1433), both of whom worked at the Serbian Court although they were born in Bulgaria and are thus claimed by Bulgarian literature as well. The best 15th century work, however, *Pohvala knezu Lazru* (*Praise of Prince Lazar*, 1402), who as the last independent Serbian ruler perished fighting the Ottoman Turks in the famous *Battle of Kosovo* (1389), was

embroidered on his shroud by the nun Jefimija (c. 1349-c. 1405), widow of Despot Ugljesa Mrnjavcevic. In addition to these especially prominent literary works, a number of lesser authors produced during the 14th and 15th centuries a considerable quantity of translated and adapted apocryphal writings, hymns and secular tales, until the Turkish conquests of the Serbian lands, completed in 1459, extinguished almost all written literary endeavor.

During the three and a half centuries of Turkish rule, the national creative impulse went entirely into the cultivation of oral folk literature resulting in one of the largest and most interesting bodies of epic and lyric poetry, tales, legends, fables and proverbs found in European lore. Particularly significant in this long period is the Serbian epic poetry composed in decasyllabic blank verse and singing of the exploits of both historical and legendary Serbian heroes. Of the numerous cycles of such poems, those concerning the Kosovo tragedy and its aftermath, the Serbian national hero Kraljevic Marko, the struggle of Hajduks and Uskoks against the Ottoman oppressors and the liberation from the Turks in the beginning of the 19th century are the most outstanding.

Several centuries of the oppressive Turkish rule and a number of wars between Turkey and Austria fought on Serbian soil compelled many Serbs to flee to the Austro-Hungarian borderlands in Vojvodina, and the first signs of a Serbian cultural revival appeared there. A certain degree of local religious and secular autonomy won by the Serbian exiles from their not-too-generous new masters by the mid-18th century, eventually

resulted in a modest spread of literacy among the Serbian settlers, the appearance of printed books (first in the Old Church Slavic language and later in the vernacular) and growth of the press and printing. Closer contact with Western European thought brought to Vojvodina the ideas of the Enlightenment which quickly reawakened the long dormant Serbian written literary tradition. The leading rationalist author of this era was Dositej Obradovic (1739-1811) whose shrewd pragmatism, apparent in his numerous translations and adaptations, educational endeavor and such original literary work as his autobiography (1783), greatly influenced subsequent Serbian literary development.



Serbian Gusle: An instrument used in the narration of Serbian epic poetry, in particular, during the five centuries of Turkey's occupation.

The cultural leadership of the Vojvodinian Serbs remained dominant for a considerable time even after the liberation of Serbia proper in the early years of the 19th century. The first modern Serbian poet of note Lukijan Musicki (1777-1837), author of numerous odes and patriotic songs written in the neoclassical style was a Vojvodinian, as were Joakim Vujic (1772-1847), founder of the modern Serbian theater and a prolific translator and adapter, and Milovan Vidakovic (1780-1841), pioneer of the Serbian novel. Yet by the mid-

century it was already clear that all of these were overshadowed by the towering figure of the first great cultural leader to come from Serbia proper Vuk Stefanovic-Karadacic (1787-1864), whose monumental cultural achievements remain the cornerstone of the entire modern Serbian civilization. As the reformer of the Serbian literary language, the inventor of the modern Serbian phonetic script, the first collector and proselytizer of Serbian oral literature and folklore, noted historian, memoirist and creator of the first Serbian dictionary and grammar, Vuk in a single lifetime accomplished tasks that might have taken scores of dedicated scholars to do.

Vuk's labor provided the firm cultural foundation for the creative effort of the whole generation of Serbian romantic writers including the most renown South Slav poet, the Montenegrin Archbishop-Prince Petar II Petrovic Njegos (1813-1851), author of several notable poetic works, among which the most outstanding is a magnificent philosophical poem Gorski vijenac (The Mountain Wreath, 1847) which, through the depiction of the epic Montenegrin fratricidal struggle for survival against the local Moslem converts and their alien ideology and allegiance, forwarded the idea of freedom and opposition to tyranny in general. Other outstanding authors of this generation were the talented lyricist Branko Radicevic (1824-1853) whose verse full of enthusiasm, poetic freshness and formal flexibility enriched Serbian poetry with new motifs, modern sensibility and rare melodiousness; and the noted dramatist and poet Jovan Sterija Popovic (1806-1856), most renown today for a cluster of his comedies of manners strongly reminiscent of Moliere.



The most distinguished younger romantic authors were the poet Jovan Jovanovic-Zmaj (1833-1904), widely acclaimed for the clarity and simplicity of his love lyrics and the polish of his reflective; patriotic and children's verse; the poet, dramatist and short story Djura Jaksic (1832-1878), particularly renown for his large output of lyric, epic, love, patriotic, and satirical poetry distinguished by rare plasticity of expression, exemplary sincerity and depth of feeling; and the poet and dramatist Laza Kostic (1841-1910), whose creative inventiveness and originality were equally apparent in his numerous lyrics, historical plays such as Pera Segedinac (Peter of Szeged, 1883) and a number of very successfully translated Shakespearean plays.

Realist tendencies, which were already noticeable in the later output of Jaksic and Zmaj, did not prevail in Serbian literature until the mid-seventies. At that time, however, the polemical and critical writings of Svetozar Markovic (1846-1870) came into vogue and this greatly accelerated the change in literary taste. Educated in Russia and greatly impressed by the liberal ideas of Chernishevski, Herzen and Dobrolyubov, Markovic, upon his return home, quickly became the leading Serbian liberal, utopian-socialist theoretician and the most outspoken champion of the literature of social commitment and criticism that required a distinctly realist mode of expression. Of those prose writers who under the influence of the new liberal ideas switched from the romantic to the realist style of writing, the most successful was Jakov Ignjatovic (1822-1889), author of the first Serbian social novel Milan Narandzic (1860), a critique of bourgeois society. The first full-fledged realist, however, was the father

of the Serbian peasant short story, Milovan Glisic (1847-1908), whose satirical tales exposed the corruption of petty rural officials, greedy merchants and money lenders, while his humorous folkloric stories and comedies ridiculed the gullibility and backwardness of the peasantry and small townsfolk and laid bare various popular superstitions and foibles. Even more adept in the realm of the short story set in a provincial milieu, though far less prolific, was Laza Lazarevic (1851-1891), whose conservative yearning for the older, more patriarchal way of life was in his tales aptly heightened by his subtle psychological character portrayal, keen sense for atmosphere and background and impeccable style. Of the younger village story writers that emerged in this era the most popular with the reading public was Janko Veselinovic (1872-1905), despite the fact that his numerous tales and novels frequently suffered from excessive idealization of village life and manners and too strong a stress on patriarchal rural harmony. Within the same period, the short story writer and novelist Sima Matavulj (1852-1908) gained considerable recognition for his successful presentation of life in Dalmatia, Hercegovina and Montenegro. His best work, the novel *Bakonja Fra Brne* (1892), depicted both realistically and humorously life in a Dalmatian-Catholic monastery. An even more eclectic short story writer and novelist of a distinctly conservative persuasion, Stevan Sremac (1855-1906), drew his often humorous and satirical inspiration from life in his native Vojvodina and the towns of Nis and Belgrade where he spent many years in government service. His most popular novel Pop Cira i pop Spira / (The Priests Cira and Spira, 1898) is a broadly sketched, humorously lyrical panorama of Vojvodinian customs and manners, revealed through the Gogolian depiction of the

petty squabbles of two neighboring Orthodox clergymen and their wives.

To this era also belongs the endeavor of the first Serbian master of allegorically-satirical prose, Radoje Domanovic (1873-1908), whose sharp and often bitter satire enveloped the broadest range of contemporary social evils; the work of the highly esteemed short story writer and novelist, Svetolik Rankovic (1863-1899), whose darkly critical view of the Serbian rural reality was most explicitly shown in his novels Gorski car (The Emperor of the Mountains, 1897) and Seoska uciteljica (The Village Schoolmistress, 1898); and the earlier endeavor of the most popular modern Serbian humorist and playwright Branislav Nusic (1864-1938), particularly renown for his comedies Narodni poslanik, Sumnjivo lice, and Protekcija (The Member of Parliament, 1883; The Suspicious Character, 1888; and Protection, 1889) in which poignant satirical themes were often diluted with the author's weakness for quick comic effects and topical humor.

The most outstanding of this generation's poets was Vojislav Ilic (1862-1894) who both widened the scope of Serbian poetry with themes from classical antiquity and old Slavic, Eastern and Medieval lore and enriched it with an unusually polished and cosmopolitan stylistic refinement. Though he left us some excellent examples of patriotic, satirical, epic and lyric verse, his best works are his parnassian elegiac poems rich in mood and emotion and endowed with exceptionally vibrant musicality and mellowness of style.

In the opening years of the 20th century Serbian poetry came

under a strong French influence. Both symbolist and parnassian affinities were clearly visible in the verse of the leading poets of this era, Jovan Ducic (1871-1943) whose elegantly composed sonnets evoked equally well the distant ages of the gay and frivolous baroque Dubrovnik and the Byzantine, mystically austere medieval Serbia; Milan Rakic (1876-1938) whose slim output and somber and pessimistic view of life were more than offset by the complex spirituality and formal brilliance of his line; and Milutin Bojic (1892-1917), noted for the vigorous sensuality and patriotic fervor of his lyrical and dramatic works, but occasionally criticized for his declamatory rhetoric and verbosity. Quite apart from the modernist influence so distinct in the work of these poets stood the Bosnian realist bard Aleksa Santic (1868-1924), author of some highly flavorful and moving love lyrics, elegies and patriotic songs. The last are particularly indicative of his strong attachment to the native soil and his boundless empathy for its poor and often exploited tillers.

In the realm of prose, still characterized by regionalist affinities and untouched by the Western modernists trends, the most notable author in Serbia proper after the turn of the century was the short story writer, novelist and playwright Borisav Stankovic (1876-1927). He created a powerful psychological novel *Necista krv* (Tainted Blood, 1911) and a number of stories in which the conflict of the new and older order in the provincial atmosphere of Vranje unleashes an avalanche of suffering, passion and nostalgia for the old patriarchal way of life gradually swept away by the continuous influx of the social, economic and cultural changes. Similar regionalist flavor adorns the work of the Bosnian short story writer and dramatist Petar Kocie

(1877-1916), a powerful portraitist of the beautiful Bosnian landscape and its colorful, shrewd and hardy peasants locked in an uneven struggle with their mindlessly bureaucratic Austrian oppressors; and the endeavor of the Dalmatian short story writer and novelist Ivo Cipiko (1867-1923), whose whole creation echoes the lure of the sea and the beauty of life lived in harmony with nature. His major novel Pauci (Spiders, 1909), however, contrasts this with the sufferings of the Dalmatian farmers and fishermen, abused and exploited by the local officials, merchants and clergy.

The leading dramatist of this era continued to be Branislav Nusic, whose later comedies Pokojnik, Ozaloscena porodica and Gospoda ministarka (The Loved One, The Bereaved Family, The Cabinet Member's Wife) continued to expose the countless foibles of the Serbian petty bourgeoisie in a frenzied pursuit of wealth, privilege, political influence and fashion.

A substantial improvement in the quality of Serbian literary criticism during this period was largely brought about by the effort of such dedicated critics as Bogdan Popovic (1863-1944), founder of the major literary journal Srpski knjizevni glasnik (Serbian Literary Herald, 1901) and editor of an impressive collection of Serbian poetry (1911), and Jovan Skerlit (1877-1914), a most authoritative Serbian advocate of ethical positivism in literary creation and author of three brilliant studies of modern Serbian literature, Pisci i knjige (Writers and Books, 1905), Omladina i njena knjizevnosti (The Youth and Its Literature, 1906), and Istorija novije sprske knjitevnosti (History of New Serbian Literature, 1914).

In the interwar period following the unification of the Yugoslavs, Serbian poetry continued to develop under a strong French expressionist and surrealist influence. Of the poets who matured during this era, the most outstanding were Rastko Petrovic (1898-1949) who, influenced by Eluard, Apollinaire and Cocteau, sought poetry in everyday life and favored spontaneous poetic outbursts, unhampered by contemplation, polish or revision, and Desanka Maksimovic (1898-) whose intensely personal verse expression is rich in emotion, fluidity of thought, freshness of imagery and rhythmic melodiousness.

Of those authors who in this period contributed to both poetry and prose, the most notable is the Vojvodinian Milos Crnjanski (1893-), who for a long period during and after World War II/ lived as a political exile in England. In his early collections of verse he presented a distinctly personal, emotionally intense and often elegiac view of the contemporary human condition. However, he is far better known for his large historical novel in two parts *Seobe* (Migrations, 1929-62) which depicts the 18th century Serbian exodus into Austrian borderlands. This profoundly pessimistic work strongly underscores the theme of the endlessness and futility of the uprooted man's search for a better life, peace, and domestic tranquility. Though Crnjanski's prose frequently appears obscure and antiquated, it bears a highly personal stamp which greatly heightens the elemental intensity of his poetic vision and the epic breadth of his historical perspective. Another writer of this era who excelled in more than one genre, Stanislav Vinaver (1891-1955), was noted for both his poetry and his essays. Though rich in rhythmic melodiousness, his verse, influenced by Valery, is often rendered

difficult by excessive stylistic experimentation. His essays, similarly, reveal both his immense linguistic and formal versatility and his great love of polemic and literary ridicule.

The most distinguished prose writer of this period, and of the entire modern Serbian literature as well, the 1961 Nobel Prize winning short story writer and novelist Ivo Andric (1892-1975), produced in the interwar years three collections of tales about his native Bosnia which both stylistically and thematically heralded his later great novel-chronicles Na Drini cuprija (The Bridge on the Drina, 1945) and Travnicka hronika (The Travnik Chronicle, 1945), the first monumental panorama of a Bosnian microcosm of the world over which ramble centuries of events and generations of men, and the second, a penetrating psychological study of the Bosnian milieu as seen by the French consul at Travnik during the turbulent Napoleonic era. The plasticity of Andric's narrative, the depth of his psychological insight and universality of his symbolism remain unsurpassed in the entire Serbian literature.

Of the lesser interwar prose authors the most notable was the short story writer Isak Samokovlija (1899-1955), whose best short story collections are distinguished by a mixture of heroic and ludicrous, tragic and humorous, lyrical and naturalist details. Like Babel in Russia, Samokovlija showed a great affinity for poor but picturesque characters and used an archaic language of biblical flavor with many Yiddish and obscure expressions. His contemporary, Isidora Sekulic {1877-1958}, devoted herself primarily to the short story and literary criticism. Her best story collections betray her strong romantic affinities

and a frequent preoccupation with the dichotomy of human nature. Her essays reveal that she was an imaginative and stimulating analyst of literary texts, though deeply introspective and at times highly subjective. The last notable prose author of this era, Branimir Cosit (1903-1934), is remembered chiefly for his last novel, Pokoseno polje (The Mowed Field, 1934), a largely autobiographical work and the only one in this period that successfully depicted the contemporary Serbian urban milieu.

The most influential literary critic of this time, whose career continued well into the postwar years, was Milan Bogdanovic (1892-1964). Influenced by the French critic Jules Lemaitre and by his older colleague Skerlit, he emphasized in his numerous essays that literature should be engage and relevant to the reality of its time. This prompted him to deny the modernist notions of absolute freedom and condemn most of the modernist experimental tendencies. Bogdanovic's style was distinguished by its fluidity and polish, and his critical judgment was notable for its harmonious blend of ethical and aesthetic considerations.

The emergence of the socialist regime in Yugoslavia in the aftermath of World War II resulted in a number of politically inspired attempts during the first post-war decade to replace the traditional Western cultural ties with those of the Soviet-style socialist regime. However, the subsequent Yugoslav parting from the Eastern bloc and lesser government and party restrictions on literary expression allowed the modernists to gradually regain their original prominence. At the outset of the socialist period the Belgrade literary scene was dominated by a



group of authors who, after championing a largely unsuccessful surrealist movement in the 1930's, joined the communist cause. The most notable among them are the poets Milan Dedinac (1902-) and Dusan Matic (1898-), and the poets and novelists Aleksandar Vuco (1897-) and Oskar Davico (1909-), all from Serbia proper, all educated in Belgrade and Paris, all involved in their formative years primarily with poetry, and all of them striving half-heartedly after the war to replace their earlier avantgarde subjects and stylistic excesses with more socially relevant material. Dedinac is the least prolific of the four, since his entire opus comprises only three slim collections of verse. From the dream world of abstractions reminiscent of that of Andre Breton and rich in striking metaphors and symbolic visions which prevailed in his early poetry, Dedinac has gradually shifted to the level of socially more relevant expression, though he still tends to overintellectualize his subject matter. As a prose writer and essayist, Matic is urbane and erudite but seldom gripping; as a poet he has produced some of his most significant verse in the last few years. Vuco's best poetry is characterized by its black humor and his best prose by its erudite complexity. Davico is both the most prolific and the most modernist author of this group. Several of his verse collections show that he is an original poet with a fertile imagination, although his poems frequently contain irrational construction, exaggerated metaphors and vague verbosity. His best novel Pesma (The Song, 1952) depicts the actions and dilemmas of a young and overimpulsive resistance fighter in occupied Belgrade. This work, regarded as a bold modernist experiment when it appeared, is carelessly structured and contains much excessive soliloquizing and fantasy.

The realist style and war themes appeared to be most popular among those contemporary authors who matured during the war and joined the mainstream of socialist realist expression in its after-math. The most successful prose writers within this circle are Branko Copic (1915-) whose stories and novels of small people caught in the cauldron of armed struggle and social turmoil are told in the colorful popular idiom and with a great deal of humor, and Mihailo Lalic (1914-) who in his stories and novels concentrated largely on his dark memories of the fratricidal partisan-chetnik war encounters. His most successful novel Lelejska gora (The Wailing Mountain, 1962) is a modern prose poem about the loneliness of a partisan fighter, struggling to survive his isolation and danger and still remain human.

Similar to Copic and Lalic in background and experience but greater in talent is the novelist Dobrica Cosic (1921-). After his first war novel Daleko je sunce (The Sun Is Far, 1951) won wide acclaim for its objectivity and artistic vigor, he followed with an even better one Koreni (The Roots, 1954), in which his penetrating portrayal of life in a rich Serbian peasant family at the turn of the century successfully evoked the overall sociopolitical atmosphere of the time. His later and best endeavor, Deobe (The Divisions, 1961), a novel in three volumes, follows a descendant of the same family through the ordeals of World War II. Its plot focuses almost exclusively on the Serbian chetniks and the decline of their ill-fated political movement. Cosic is an exceptionally keen psychologist and an unsurpassable connoisseur of the Serbian peasant mind. The authenticity of his plots, the vibrancy and boldness of his nature sketches, and the free flow of his straight-forward, colloquially

pungent expression clearly reveal that he is an author of rare potentiality and distinction.

The most representative Serbian post-war literary critics are Marko Ristic (1902-), a past member of the Belgrade surrealist circle and the leading contemporary supporter of modernist tendencies in Serbian literature, and Velibor Gligoric (1899-), whose interwar propensity for polemics and stubborn opposition to everything but a literature of social aims and realistic content has considerably mellowed.

Within the very youngest generation of authors coming into prominence, the most outstanding prose writers appear to be Miodrag Bulatovic (1930-), creator of grotesquely picaresque novels Rat je bio bolji (The War Was Better, 1969) and Heroj na magarcu (Hero on a Donkey, 1967) and Radomir Konstantinovic (1928-); and the most promising poets, Vasko Popa (1922-), Miodrag Pavlovic (1928-) and Stevan Raitkovic (1928-).



The first page of the Oktoih, the church hymnal book, printed in Serbia -Mantenev 1493.

## **Part II: Immigration and Settlement**



# Serbian Immigration to the United States

DRAGOSLAV GEORGEVICH

## Reasons for the Immigration

Before 1920, immigration to the United States was unrestricted. That period may be divided into two different phases. During the first phase from 1820 to 1896, according to the government records, most immigrants came from countries of western and northern Europe, that is, from the British Isles, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland. During the second phase from 1890 to 1924 the majority of immigrants came from countries of central, eastern and southern Europe, mainly from Austria-Hungary, Russia and Italy. After the adoption of the immigration law which restricted immigration by establishing quotas, the tide was turned. Countries of northern and western Europe gave more immigrants to the

United States than the central, east and south European countries.

South Slavic immigration followed the European pattern. Until 1890 only a trickle came to America, but since then the tide has swelled and the movement increased. The immigration of Serbs to the United States was never so strong as that of other nations. During the 1880's Croats, Slovenes and Serbs from Austria-Hungary immigrated in masses to the States. A majority of Serbian immigrants were from provinces which were under the rule of Austria-Hungary: Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina. A large number of them were people whose ancestors were for centuries peasant-soldiers in the Military Frontier of the Austrian empire. Their situation after the abolition of the Military Frontier in 1873 became so unfavorable that they decided to immigrate to the United States. They were from the Vojvodina, Slavonia, Lika and Krbava regions. Serbian emigrants from the two independent Serbian states, the kingdoms of Serbia and Crna Gora (Montenegro) were few in number. The same is true for the Serbs from Macedonia who were under Turkish rule. After the creation of Yugoslavia in 1918 the number of Serbs who immigrated to the United States was small. Around the beginning of World War II the number of immigrants began to increase and reached a peak in 1952.

The causes for Serbian immigration to the United States were mainly the same as for other people of Europe: bad economic conditions in their homeland and detrimental political factors in Austria-Hungary. The Kingdom of Serbia made significant progress in her economic, social and political life, particularly



after 1880. Ownership of land was in peasant hands, industry although only in an initial phase was making a good beginning, and the political situation under King Petar I Karageorgevic was greatly improved. The king introduced a completely democratic system similar to those in Western Europe. Therefore Serbs did not immigrate to other countries from Serbia.

Serbs in Austria-Hungary, like all other Slavs, lived under strong political and economic pressures. The best land was held by rich landlords, mostly Austrian, Hungarian or Croatian nobility. Rural areas under the dual monarchy were overpopulated and impoverished, and people struggled with each other and the nationals of German origin who behaved as a privileged class. Serbian peasants in Austria-Hungary were living on small plots of land and could not compete either with the great landlords or with the German and Hungarian farmers who were favored by the Austrian government. Wages were low, taxes were high, industrial development was slow and cities were unable to absorb agricultural workers who were forced to leave the land. It is no wonder that poor Serbian peasants decided to escape to America to improve their ways of life.

Another phenomenon that contributed to immigration to America was the break-up of the Zadruga or family cooperatives. This occurrence deprived peasants of their livelihood because it caused an excessive subdivision of land. In Dalmatia, for example, the average size of peasant holding was 1.5 acres and yet 86% of the population was supported by agriculture and forestry. Arable land was scarce in Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia, Hercegovina and Crna Gora (Montenegro)

particularly in the karst areas which have very little land for agriculture.

Compared with the economic situation in Serbia and Montenegro, Serbs in Austria-Hungary, although politically and economically oppressed, had better life conditions than their compatriots in those free lands. With the exception of peasants from the karst, Serbian farmers in Vojvodina and Slavonia had more and better land and better markets for their produce than Serbian farmers in Serbia or Montenegro. Yet in spite of this situation, peasants from both both provinces emigrated in large numbers. Clearly the Serbs in Serbia and Montenegro stayed at home because they had their national states and freedom.

On the Adriatic coast a very serious agricultural problem was caused by phylloxera, a plant lice. Most of the Dalmatian vineyards were destroyed in the 1880's. Although total catastrophe was avoided by use of special vines which resisted phylloxera, the damage inflicted to vineyards substantially increased emigration. Other economic activities on the coast weakened the economic fortunes of Dalmatian fishermen. Outmoded fishing equipment, obsolete ships and a diminishing of the fish population caused a constant decline of the fishing industry. Dalmatian fishermen were unable to buy better equipment for fishing and to compete with modern steam-powered ships. Thus farmers, sailors and fishermen looked at emigration as an exit from their unfavorable economic situation.

Serbs in Austria-Hungary had other good reasons for emigration, one of them being compulsory military service which lasted for three years. The pay in the dual monarchy military service

was very low for an army private or for an ordinary seaman: three to five dollars a month. Discipline was strict and the life of a serviceman was hard because the monarchy had frequent diplomatic crises and wars. The draftees were forbidden to marry and they served far from home. Austrian officers and noncoms treated Slavic enlisted men harshly, often with ridicule.

Letters from friends and relatives who had immigrated to America described favorable conditions and encouraged further immigration. Returning immigrant-visitors were better dressed, had more money to spend and brought valuable gifts from America. Although they tended to exaggerate their achievements, they nonetheless influenced many young men to leave for the land of unlimited opportunity. This was particularly true for those who had read adventure stories about American Indians, explorers and pioneers. Often relatives in America paid the passage for young immigrants. The few migrants who were unsuccessful or lost their health in the new land and returned home did not deter this movement.

Social reasons also caused immigration. In Austria-Hungary as well as in Serbia and Crna Gora, society was already stratified. Two principal classes existed there, the city people and rich land-owners called gentlefolk (*gospoda*) and the common people (*narod*) and peasants (*Seljaci*). The upper class very often exhibited superiority and arrogance toward the lower class. Bitter strife and resentment existed between them. Another motive for immigration was occasional bad family relationships, scandal and friction with the desire to escape to a new life elsewhere.

Steamship companies and mine owners sent agents abroad to influence and encourage immigration of new laborers. Although the recruiting of foreign labor was made illegal by federal law in 1885, various agents violated this law both directly and indirectly. The first immigrants to America were from Dalmatia. Many Dalmatians knew more than one foreign language and were able to find good jobs in America. Others from Austria-Hungary, Crna Gora, Serbia and lands under Turkish rule were able to get only difficult or dangerous work such as in construction, steel plants, mining and manufacturing. Continental immigrants went to mines in northern Minnesota and copper mines in northern Michigan. They were also concentrated in the industrial cities of New York, Milwaukee, Cleveland and Chicago and the mining centers of Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

## **Method of Transportation and Costs**

Travel from their homeland to America was usually by railroad train from Serbia, Vojvodina, Bosnia, Hercegovina or Croatia to a seaport on the Adriatic coast. The large ports at that time were Trieste and Rijeka from which large transatlantic ships sailed to America. However, many emigrants went to the large West European harbors of Genoa, Marseilles, Le Havre, Bremen or Hamburg.

Individual Serbs immigrated to America throughout the whole 19th century and into the first decade of the 20th century. In 1892 a group of several hundred Serbs from Dalmatia and Montenegro settled in California. Sailors from Dalmatia came

to Louisiana and California, many by simply abandoning ship on arrival in an American port. Some of them disembarked in New York and traveled overland to California. Others settled in New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio or Illinois. Only a few settled in the South. All of them traveled by rail. The cost of transportation between Austria-Hungary and the United States in the first decade of the 20th century was from 60 to 80 dollars. This was a very large sum of money for an immigrant. To pay for a trip to America the family of an immigrant had to sell half of their animal stock. On the other hand, if an immigrant wanted to finance travel for a relative he needed four to six months of very hard labor in a mine or factory to save the 60 to 80 dollars for one fare. At that time hourly wages were so low that only about one dollar could be earned in a ten-hour work day.

Serbian immigrants to the United States were mostly young men without wives or children. They came with some relatives or friends revisiting their old homes. Their ages were 14 to 44 with an average of 20 years. The Serbs who immigrated to the United States by 1910 were of working age, so their movement is characterized as a labor migration. They were of two kinds. One group wanted to work for a time and then return to their homes with savings. The other group expected to stay permanently and bring their families from the home country after saving enough money to pay for the trip. They wanted first to improve their economic situation and then to bring their families or get married.

## Government Policies Concerning Immigration

In 1924 the immigration conditions for all South Slav and East European immigrants worsened. The immigration law of 1924 implemented a policy of restriction and reduced the number of immigrants by quotas. From 1921 to 1950 a total of 5,670,679 immigrants arrived in the United States. Of this number 21% were from Canada and Newfoundland, 14% from Mexico, the West Indies and Central and South America, 34% from northern and western Europe, and 26% from southern and eastern Europe. Less than one percent (56,475) of the total number was furnished by Yugoslavia. The number of Serbs among them is not known, but certainly it was very small. During the depression years of 1931-1939 the number of Serbian immigrants to the United States together with Bulgarians was only 2277, while at the same time 3749 emigrated from the United States.

During World War II and after it, the number of immigrants was increased to hit a peak in 1952, but a large majority of them were nonquota immigrants. The Yugoslav annual quota by the 1924 immigration act was 611, raised to 845 in 1929. This quota was sometimes unfilled. The nonquota immigrants were mostly displaced persons and refugees. These immigrants who entered the United States during and after World War II were a different kind of people. They were not illiterate or unskilled laborers but mostly intelligent, educated, well-trained semiprofessional and professional people. Among them were clerical workers, craftsmen, farmers, managers, teachers, merchants, doctors and scientists. The 1948 Displaced Persons Act favored immigration

to the United States of all members of allied armed forces who fought the enemy of the United States during World War II. The number of Serbs who used this privilege for immigration was 17,238. They were mainly former Serbian prisoners of war in Germany and Italy who chose not to return to Yugoslavia because of political changes at the end of World War II. The Refugee Act of 1953 and the Acts of 1960 and 1965 brought thousands more of new Serbian immigrants. The total number of Yugoslav citizens who immigrated to the United States between 1946 and 1968 was 99,152 of which 16,000 were not Slavs but Volksdeutsches born in Yugoslavia.

## **Serbian Immigration to Other Countries**

Serbian immigration to the United States is only one of many Serbian migrations in a 13-century-long history. In the 14th century the Turkish invasion and oppressive rule over Serbian lands caused several large scale migrations to the north and west. Throughout four centuries, first Hungary and then Austria gave Serbian immigrants special privileges in exchange for their services in the Military Frontier. After the Turkish danger diminished, the Roman Catholic Church tried to exercise a pressure against the Eastern Orthodox Serbs in order to convert them into Roman Catholics. Serbian reaction to this was another large scale immigration to Southern Russia. More than 100,000, perhaps even 200,000, Serbs from the Banat, Backa and the Moros districts immigrated to Russia between 1751 and 1753. Those Serbs in Russia have been assimilated, although as late as 1910 there were pure Serbian villages in the district of Jekatarinoslav. Besides those large Serbian immigrations to

Hungary, Croatia, Russia and the United States, there were smaller immigrations to South America, Australia and various European countries. Several thousand Serbs immigrated to those lands between the 14th century and the present.

It is almost impossible to establish the number of Serbs in the United States. Statistics list Serbs by their country of birth, as Dalmatians, Montenegrins, Austrians, Bosnians, Hercegovinians and Serbians. Immigrants were often confused or ignorant about political changes in Europe and gave authorities erroneous information. A more reliable estimate of Serbs in the United States was obtained by a survey of various Serbian political, cultural, religious and social organizations. Counting the foreign born Serbs with the first, second and third generations, there may be about 200,000 of them.

The present Yugoslav government welcomes retired American pensioners because they bring in much needed foreign currency. The high buying power of the dollar in Yugoslavia makes this attractive to some, but changing government regulations create a life there that is unstable. Most Serbs in the United States are citizens who plan to make America their permanent home.

## **Serbian Contributions to America**

Serbian contributions in the field of science by the two most important persons, Michael Pupin and Nikola Tesla, have already been described. It is necessary to repeat that they were world famous scientist-inventors whose inventions created in America benefited humanity as a whole. Pupin's contribution



was in long distance telephony and wireless telegraphy and Tesla was an electric wizard under whose name are listed about 700 inventions. Probably many more of his discoveries were not registered at all. Tesla not only invented new devices, but also he discovered new principles and new fields of knowledge. Just a few of his inventions are his motor, the essentials of radio and radar, neon and other gaseous-tube lighting, fluorescent lighting, high-frequency currents and remote control by wireless. Nikola Tesla's nephew, Nikola Trbojevic, works in the American automobile industry and has many patented inventions.

Serbs have made a substantial contribution to education. Dr. Paul R. Radosavljevic was a professor at New York University and Chairman of the Experimental Education Department. He wrote books in the Serbian, Russian, German and English languages. His published works are Experimental Psychology, Experimental Pedagogy, History of Experimental Psychology, and New Movements in Education. His monumental study is Who Are the Slavs? Among other teachers and authors of books in their special fields are Dr. Wayne S. Vucinic, Stanford University; Dr. Alexander Vucinic; Dr. Michael Petrovic; Dr. Alex Dragic; Dr. Gojko Ruzicic; Dr. Milorad Draskovic of Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace; Dr. Milomir Stanisic, Purdue University; Dr. Milan Djordjevic, University of Alabama; Dr. Nicholas Moravcevic; Dr. Nikola Pribic, Florida State University; Dr. Caslav Stanojevic, University of Missouri at Rolla; Dr. Milos Velimirovic, University of Wisconsin; Dr. Milan Vucic, Wisconsin State University; and Dr. Ilija Yoksimovic, Show University, Dr. Stephen Stepancev, King's College, New York; Dr. Eli Orlovich, Iowa University.



Major Louis Cukela -Luka Chukela (1888-1956): Native of Serbia, was awarded both the Navy and Army Medals of Honor for extraordinary heroism during World War I. "Gunny" Cukela received over twenty other decorations from the United States and other countries.

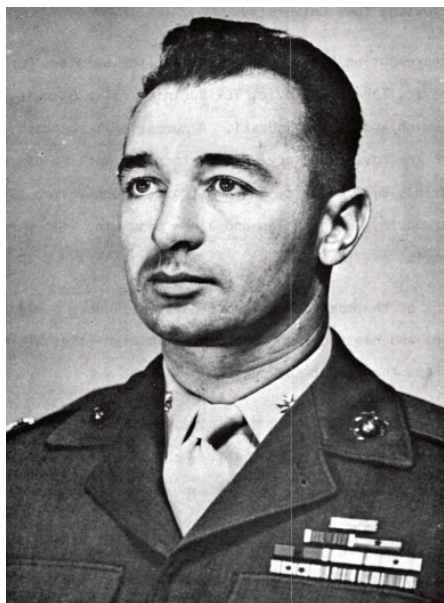
Representing Serbs in the arts are the painters Borislav Bogdanovic, Tanasko Milovic, Vuk Vucinic, Milan Bulovic, Sava Rakochevich and Alex Dzigurski. A number of Serbs have achieved fame in the movie industry. Among them are Karl Malden (Mladen Sekulovic), Bill Radovic, Marta Mitrovic, John Vivyan (Ivan Vukojan), Bob Obradovic, George Milan and a new promising film director Peter Bogdonovic.

One of the most celebrated sculptors is John David Brcin (fig. 6)

who has received many awards in his field; his works have been shown throughout the country.

Many young Serbs have distinguished themselves in various sports, particularly in football. Bob Gain, Branko Kosanovic, Steve Rutic, Mike Nixon and Nick Skoric are a few prominent names in football. Also well known are Walter Judnic, Walt Dropo, Eli Grba and Emil Verban in baseball; Peter Maravic in basketball; Bill Vukovic in car racing; and Pete Radenkovic in soccer.

The only American who ever won two Congressional Medals of Honor in war was Captain Louis Cukela (fig. 7) of the United States Marines. Two other Medal of Honor winners were Alex Andjelko Mandusic and Mitchell Page (Milan Pejic) for heroism on Guadalcanal (fig. 8). Petar Tomie died at Pearl Harbor and was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. George Miric and George S. Wucinic both received the Distinguished Service Cross, and Steve Mandaric achieved the rank of Rear Admiral.



Mitchell Paige – Milan Pejic: Marine First Lieutenant M. Paige had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor “for extraordinary and conspicuous gallantry in action above and beyond the call of duty... in combat against enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands area on October 26, 1942.” Born in Charleroi, Pennsylvania, August 31, 1917, he now resides in Redwood City, California.

Serbs who contributed to the American economy are numerous so it is sufficient to name just a few of them. They are Mihailo Ducic, a dairy man; Stjepan Kralj and Todor Polic, builders; William Salatic, Gillette Safety Razor Company; William Jovanovich, president of Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Publishing Company; Thomas Dabovich, Morton Chemical Company; and Daniel Maximovich, Skil Corporation. Serbs who were workers in American industry, mines, fishing and

agriculture gave a great contribution to the United States economy.

# Settlement in the United States

DRAGOSLAV GEORGEVICH

## First Settlers

The first Serbian settlement in the United States was in New Orleans, Louisiana. Sailors from ships that traded with the United States visited several ports before deciding to settle in one of them. Principal settlers in New Orleans were Serbs from Dalmatia, Bay of Kotor (Boka Kotorska), Crna Gora and areas of the old Republic of Dubrovnik. The first settlers arrived in Louisiana during the middle 1830's. Their main occupations were fishing, the oyster industry and sea transport, but by 1840 some of them had their own businesses. Among them were Jovan Vidakovic from Hercegnovi who came to Louisiana in 1839, Antonije Konjevi from Konavlje who arrived in 1835, M. Giuranovic, N. Ivanovic, Teodore Stanic, N. Marie, Marko Radovic and A. Petrovic. Many were well established by 1840 and owned businesses such as coffee houses, billiard parlors,

groceries, fruit stands and restaurants. One of the richest settlers was Marko Givanovic from Dubrovnik. He owned the Home Place Plantation a few miles north of Alexandria, Louisiana. The value of his plantation together with the slaves, buildings and furniture was \$325,000. He died in 1896 and a community on the Cane River is called Marco in his memory.

Before 1860 most of the settlers came from the geographical area between the mouth of the Neretva River and the Bay of Kotor. Since they knew one another, they lived in the same part of New Orleans around the French Market. They were intelligent, capable people who spoke several languages and were able to cope with the complex way of life in New Orleans and Louisiana.

## **California Gold Rush**

After the discovery of gold in California in 1848, many settlers left New Orleans and participated in the gold rush. Other Serbs from Dalmatia, Bay of Kotor and Crna Gora went directly to California by way of the Straits of Magellan. Several ships sailed from the Adriatic coast to the Golden Gate carrying hopeful prospectors. Some of them established companies such as the Serbian and Slavonian Mining Company in 1876, Adriatic Mining Company and the Slavonia Gold and Silver Company.

Only a few Serbian prospectors were successful in gold mining. By the 1850's and 1860's most of them, especially those from Montenegro and Dalmatia, went into other businesses. Here are a few names of businessmen in San Francisco, a majority of

whom were from the Bay of Kotor (Boka Katorska) and Crna Gora.

Nikola Pavlovic	(1851)	Fruits	Pastrovic
Nikola Dabovic	(1856)	Fruits	Boka
Toma Radonjic	(1852)	Fruits	Risan
Spiro Obradovic	(1858)	Restaurant	Boka
Marko Milinovic	(1859)	Coffee Saloon	Boka
Jovan Markovic	(1856)	Saloon	Crna Gorna
Petar Orlovic	(1861)	Saloon	Boka
George Fisher	(1860)	Lawyer	Vojvodina
Stefan Miletic	(1870)	Saloon	Serbia

The first Greek Russian Slavonian Orthodox church was organized in 1864 in San Francisco. Its president was the Russian consul, but the vice-president was Nikola Dabovic and trustees were Jovan Franeta, Luka Zenovic, Savo Martinovic, Ilija Celovic, Bozo Radovic, and Petar Vukanovic, all Serbs from Crna Gora, and George Lazarevic, a Serb from Belgrade. The president of the Pan-Slavonic Society was the most prominent Serb in San Francisco in the early 1860s, Judge George Ribar-Fisher. He was a Serb from Vojvodina who was educated at the Serbian Orthodox College in Sremski Karlovci under the charge of Stefan Stratimirovic, a Serbian Orthodox Archbishop. He joined Karageorge in 1813, escaped to Austria after the fall of Belgrade, immigrated to America in 1815, and settled first in Mississippi where he married and became a naturalized American citizen. He worked at many jobs and



finally became a Mississippi plantation owner. He arrived in California early in the 1860s when he was over sixty years old and became a judge in San Francisco. King George of Greece appointed him Greek Consul in 1870. When he died at the age of seventy-eight, this article in the San Francisco Bulletin reflected the genuine respect in which he was held in 1873:

The late George Fisher, who for some years before his death held the honorable position of Greek Consul at this port, and whose death has been announced in the papers of State, was a gentleman of sterling worth and unimpeached integrity...

During the 1850's and 1860's many Serbs settled in Sacramento and opened restaurants, saloons and coffee houses. Some of them organized boardinghouses for prospectors who were going to the gold fields of the Mother Lode. Those businessmen were from the general area of Dalmatia and the Bay of Kotor and many of them came by way of Louisiana. Here are a few names of those early settlers in Sacramento.

Nikola Trianovic	(1854)	Saloon	Boka
Nikola Zambelic	(1854)	Saloon	Boka
Petar Mandic	(1860)	Sebastopol Saloon	Boka
George Mandic	(1860)	Barkeeper	Boka
Marko Zenovic	(1860)	Saloon	Pastrovic
Nikola Pavlovic	(1851)	Fruits	Pastrovic
Paul Vlautin	(1861)	Universal Coffee Saloon	Konavlje
Paul Vlautin	(1852)	Gold Miner, Amador County	
Petar Mandic	(1859)	Saloon	Boka

The number of Serbian gold miners is unknown, but one estimate says that there were a few hundred of them. It can be said that Serbs participated in the California gold rush. Although few of them got rich by mining, they were successful as businessmen.

Later on, beginning in 1880, a respectable number of Serbs settled in Los Angeles. Most of them came from the mining fields. One of the early settlers was Jovan Lazarevic from Crna Gora who owned a grocery store. Others were Jovan Mitrovic from Boka, the brothers Polic, N. Milovic and Nikola Mitrovic from Boka. They organized prosperous businesses of various kinds. Many Serbs settled in the San Joaquin Valley around Stockton or Fresno, while others became fruit growers in the Santa Clara and Pajaro Valleys.

Serbs organized their own social institutions in California soon after they settled there. The first Serbian church in America

was built in 1874 in Jackson, Amador County. Although many were officially listed as being Austrians or even Italians for administrative purposes, Serbs established Slavic or South Slavic societies. The names of some of these organizations were: Slavonic Illyric Benevolent Society of San Francisco, established in 1859; Slavenska Citaonica of San Francisco, established in 1869; Russian and Pan-Slavonic Benevolent Society of San Francisco, established in 1869; Greek-Russian-Slavonian Benevolent Society of San Francisco, established in 1872; and Serbian-Montenegrin Benevolent Society of San Francisco, established in 1881.

## Settlements in Other States

One of the first Serbian pioneers in the Nevada territory was Marco Medin from Budva. He came from San Francisco in 1861 and in 1863 he formed the Medin Gold and Silver Company. He lived in Virginia City where he also had a fruit store. Serbs in Nevada included Marko Milinovic, Petar Radovic, Jovan Ivankovic, Nikola Dabovich, Jovan Savic, and the families Vukovic, Gregovic, Radulovic, Bralic, Drobac, Markovic, Matic, Mitrovic, Pavlicevic and Vulicevic.

Arizona copper mines also attracted a number of Serbs to settle and work there. In the early 1900's Bisbee was the center of the richest copper district in the United States. Besides other Slavs, there were about 300 Serbian families. They had a lively cultural life, celebrated Christmas on January 7 (December 25 by the old calendar), produced a yearly "Night in Belgrade," celebrated Vidov-dan and enjoyed Serbian customs, music and folklore.

Among these Serbs were Petar Ragenovic, David Radovic, Jovan Gregovic, Jova Lukin, George Giurovic, Petar Markovic, Jovan Savie, Mihailo Peri sic, Jovan Glumae, George Kovie, Jovan Zenovic, Nikola Giurovic, Luka Radulovic and V. D. Medigorit. They lived in various counties and very often along with Slovenes.

At the turn of the century many Serbs settled in the northwest. There were economic opportunities in western Washington in lumbering, fishing, agriculture, mining and manufacturing. Here, as in other western states, Serbian immigrants were mostly from the Adriatic coast, Crna Gora, Hercegovina and Croatia. Following their cultural heritage, the Dalmatians continued to fish. The Serbs from Crna Gora were mostly from Podgorica and they worked in mining in the area of Roslyn. A number of Serbs lived in Wilkenson and had a small Orthodox church there, although a few of them were Moslems. According to official statistics, there were 872 Serbs in Washington in 1910. They organized societies in Roslyn, Seattle and Spokane, all of them lodges of the Serb National Federation.

Serbs settled during the 1870's and 1890's in Minnesota, Michigan, the coal districts of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kansas and the southern parts of Ohio and Illinois. A number of settlers were attracted to the copper mines in Montana, Utah and other western states. Pay was good in iron and copper mines, about \$1.25 a day. A large group went to work in Milwaukee, Chicago, Joliet, Cleveland, New York and other large industrial centers.

## Types of Settlements

Before 1880 Serbian settlers often established their settlements in the same places as Croats. That was primarily in large cities of the northeast and the northern central parts of the United States. An exception to this pattern occurred in New England states. Large Serbian and Croatian colonies were in Saint Louis and Kansas City. Many of those settlers had come by way of New Orleans, an important port of entry for immigrants from Southern Europe.

Most Serbs lived in urban districts, a pattern of settlement begun at the end of the 19th century since later immigrants tended to follow the pioneers. Newcomers usually went to the places with best employment opportunities. As an example, the automobile industry in Detroit offered good employment after 1920, so many immigrants left Pennsylvania and moved to Detroit for well-paid jobs. Since new immigrants did not know English, their best solution was to settle near countrymen who could advise them in their search for work. Therefore, early Serbian communities in large cities became ghettos. Since the immigration law of 1924 required a sponsor for each new immigrant, Serbs who entered the United States after that date usually went to the places where their sponsors lived. Sponsors were often relatives who helped the new-comers find suitable work and living arrangements.

The mobility of new immigrants who knew English was greater than that of those who did not. They could move freely from place to place and settle where they liked. The American-born children of Serbian immigrants moved even more freely than

their parents did. The new urban mobility of the American white population has been exhibited by Serbian groups. They are gradually leaving their ghetto-like settlements in large cities and moving to the suburbs. Thus the old immigrant colonies are disappearing and both old and new immigrants are being dispersed. They are in touch with one another because they have telephones and cars. Their social institutions which usually center around the church keep them together. Their desire to preserve their national, religious and cultural inheritance is very strong. Although the necessity to live together is gone, Serbs are still a close group because of modern communications and their national heritage.

## **Social and Economic Conditions**

The main Serbian settlement in the United States began during the era of the reconstruction and expansion after the Civil War. At that time communication and transportation were expanded, manufacturing was converted from workshop to factory, machinery was perfected and increased both in size and number, business grew and corporations were created. America was gradually converted from an agricultural to an industrial country. Such changes in the national economy brought many social changes. American rural society declined in the number of its members while the new industrial society grew rapidly. The phenomenal growth of cities transformed the United States into an urban nation.

Since new machines and industrial processes eliminated the need for skilled and experienced labor, jobs for unskilled

workers grew constantly in number. In order to protect their interests experienced skilled workers organized trade unions. When employers did not comply with worker demands, strikes broke out periodically. Employers began to search for cheap manpower in eastern, central and southern Europe. South Slavs who were used to a low standard of living in their home countries became victims of industrial exploitation. Many were forced to accept jobs with low wages and unsafe, unsanitary working conditions. Thus they were welcomed by American industrialists but not by their fellow workers and their labor unions.

Organized labor was against immigrant workers. In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers signed a contract with industry which excluded all unskilled workers. Serbs, other Slavs and Italians belonged to that category. They had to work for considerably lower wages than those paid to the skilled English-speaking union members. Their work day was 12 to 14 and even 16 hours and they were not paid for overtime. A similar situation prevailed also in the coal mines of Pennsylvania and elsewhere. Generally speaking, newcomers were willing to work for lower wages and therefore they were used as strikebreakers. In the mills, and in lumbering, stockyards, automobile, aircraft and textiles industries, working conditions were at first as bad as the mines; but gradually Serbs learned English, joined labor unions and improved their status. From early strikebreakers they became some of the staunchest union supporters.

As already mentioned, Serbian immigrants to the United States

settled mostly in the Northeast, Midwest and the Far West. Here are a few statistics compiled in 1940 regarding distribution by regions:

New England... 220

Middle Atlantic... 12,900

East North Central... 17,180

West North Central... 2,960

South Atlantic... 1,320

East South Central... 20

West South Central... 80

Mountain... 1,280

Pacific... 1,680

The distribution of new settlers by Serbian mother tongue was 33,260 in the north, 1420 in the south and 2960 in the west. By states Serbs were found in significant numbers only in Pennsylvania (31,900) and in Ohio (6000).

According to the 1940 census the number of Serbs in cities of 500,000 or more inhabitants was:

Baltimore... 140

Boston... 20



Buffalo...	20
Chicago...	2,480
Cleveland...	640
Detroit...	3,360
Los Angeles...	240
Milwaukee...	300
New York...	540
Philadelphia...	60
Pittsburgh...	1,340
St. Louis...	440
San Francisco...	180

According to government data the number of Serbs living in urban areas was 12,540 while in the rural-nonfarm classifications there were 3,960 and on farms only 740. Only two states showed Serbs in their census in rural-nonfarm areas, 3100 in Pennsylvania and 860 in Ohio. Although incomplete, these statistics provide a fairly clear picture of the distribution of the Serbs in the United States. It is interesting to note that the Serbs who were mostly employed in agriculture in their home countries changed to urban industrial workers in America. One important reason for this was the lack of capital for modern farming in the new land. An immigrant was forced to start his

life in the United States as a worker. If after many years of hard physical labor he acquired some capital, he would probably decide not to become a farmer again but a businessman. He quickly learned the advantages of a capitalistic economy and adjusted his life to it.

The distribution of Serbian immigrants who came after World War II was similar to the former. Most of them settled at first in the well-organized Serbian colonies of Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio and California. Later on they moved to other states according to job availability. Since most were already skilled or professional people, they needed only a short time to learn English and move on to other places. Today Serbs live in almost every part of the United States.



These newspapers and periodicals are published in the United States in both the Serbian and English languages. Half a dozen more, published in Canada and in the United States are not shown here.



## **Part III: The Serbian Community of Cleveland**



# Early Serbian Settlers

NIKOLAJ MARIC

## Problems of Adjustment

Cleveland's first Serbian immigrant was Lazo Krivokapic who arrived in 1893. Although most early immigrants to the United States were laborers, Krivokapic was not. Well-educated and multi-lingual, he had served his country as a diplomat in Constantinople prior to coming to America. Here he owned a real estate business near East 25th Street and St. Clair Avenue where his linguistic skill proved most useful. Since there were no other Serbs in Cleveland, Krivokapic joined a Greek enclave because he spoke their language and shared their Eastern Orthodox religious beliefs. He felt at ease with them, too, for in Europe, Serbs and Greeks were traditionally good neighbors.

For years after their arrival in America, immigrants commonly suffered from homesickness and loneliness, taking solace from

companionship with fellow countrymen. While living among the Greeks, Krivokapic continually searched for a fellow Serb. After nine years he encountered a factory worker named Grahovac as he strolled along St. Clair Avenue. Their friendship and the humble beginning of the Serbian Colony of Cleveland were recounted in a Plain Dealer feature on September 28, 1964.

Other Serbs arrived around 1910 and experienced problems similar to those of Krivokapic. Some of the problems stemmed from an old Serbian tradition of living in huge families, *zadruge*, as they were called. As many as 60 people lived under one roof and one command –the eldest male in the family. Grandfather made the major decisions, grandmother prepared the food and tended the small children, while other family members performed domestic and farm chores. Life was simple and, in many ways, carefree.

Even in the delicate matter of choosing a marriage partner, the elders in the household usually made the decision. The story is told of the way 23-year-old Aran Ve1isavljevic from Slavonia, Yugoslavia was married in the early 1900's. He was the youngest of four brothers and it was his turn to get married; the family convened to select his bride. There were two candidates. Each girl came from a good family and had a sizeable dowry. Aran sat quietly as the older brothers argued whether to choose the one west of the village, or the one who lived east. Nobody asked Aran what he thought about either one of them. It was late at night, and the family was still arguing about the choice when the oldest brother came up with a solution. They would harness the horses in the morning, loosen the reins, and let the horses go



to the east, or to the west as they chose. Thus was decided the future of young Aran Velisavljevic. Even the bride did not seem to mind the way she was “chosen” over the other young girl.

Serbs arriving here in the early 20th century found the change in life style traumatic. Young, unmarried men arrived alone, often intimidated by their environment and possessed of meager funds. For the first time in their lives, they had to make their own decisions and provide food and shelter for themselves. And compounding their problems was the need to learn English as quickly as possible.

To be Serbian is to be sociable. Socializing is intrinsic to the Serbian way of life. Households are geared toward hospitality, a hospitality which is closely linked to their religious beliefs. For Serbs, every event from birth to death over the centuries has been humanized and celebrated in a special way through their revered Eastern Orthodox religion. Cut off from this ritual which daily revitalized his life, the immigrant could not help but feel alienated by the stark and lonely life he was forced to lead in his adopted land. However poor he had been as a peasant in Europe, he was continually sustained by the warmth of family ties and a vibrant religion. In America he had no such solace. When he came here, he stayed, most likely, in a boardinghouse or, if he were so blessed, with a relative who had preceded him here. His life was a daily grind of long hours and hard work for meager wages in whatever nearby factory or shop needed his unskilled hands.

Many of the early immigrants, Serbs and others, hoped to work and save enough to return to their native lands and establish

themselves well there. Some saved to bring other members of their family to America. Whatever their goals for the future, they came to realize that to survive and be happy in America, they would have to reestablish their social and religious traditions here.

Meanwhile, the comfort of lonely hours for the immigrant was the nostalgic memory of his homeland. He recalled such pleasures as wedding celebrations which went on for several days and nights as friends and relatives sang and danced and feasted. No expense was spared, though the newlyweds' parents might have to live frugally for some time to pay for the reception.

Celebrating the Slava was another event that went on for days. Slava referred to the patron saint under whose protection the household was placed. The house was "open" to the village and hospitality extended to all.

Other ordinary activities which were elevated to occasions of merrymaking were harvesting, corn husking, wine making and picking feathers for the stuffing of pillows. This rather idyllic life was hardened somewhat, however, by the harsh reality that the small patch of land worked by the average farmer provided little hope for future prosperity; frequently it was hardly enough to sustain a sizeable family. Consequently, many young men sought to better themselves economically by immigrating to America.

The early Serbs in Cleveland retained whatever they could of favorite traditions. Whenever they could obtain the services of

an Eastern Orthodox priest, they would worship simply in a store front- a considerable comedown from the exquisite churches and elaborate ritual they had known. The feast day of the beloved St. Sava continued to be a joyful event. In an article appearing December 1959 in the Serbian-American newspaper *American Srbobran*, author Stevo Ivancevic described the occasion as follows:

On Hamilton Avenue there were five berths (boarding places) where about 100 young, Licanis (Serbs from Lika) were living. At seven in the morning, as if someone issued a command, the St. Sava's songs were reverberating, and at the end of each stanza: My dear Bania, Lika and Krbava (provinces in Yugoslavia)! So help me, one would think he was in Atos listening to the monks sing. I was visiting the respectable family Banjanin with twenty other Serbs. After the songs were finally exhausted Mile Vukadinovic told us that he had heard some tamburitza bands were to perform at the hall. This hall belonged to Janko Popovic called "Uncle," on St. Clair Avenue. The building was relatively big, two stories – the hall upstairs, the saloon downstairs. At the time many buildings, including this one, had no electricity. Petroleum lamps were used for lighting, with glass cylinders and some sort of material used as wick, which, when burnt out, remained inside the lamp and gave better light. The only drawback was that these wicks could not withstand any tremors.

The St. Sava's celebration that evening was better and

richer than ever, because the organizing committee had brought the best tamburitza bands from Detroit called Krisom Sremci. At seven in the evening the hall was already full of young, powerful males, mostly Licani. The rest consisted of our Vojvodjani and a number of young women. There were six tamburitza bands, five small ones and one big one – bass. Licani were particularly impressed with the big one. “You could make a berth out of it,” commented one, while the others broke into laughter.

Gajo Germanovic, the host for the evening, was ceremoniously dressed in coattails, full cylinder on his head, cane in hand ... “Look at Gajo!” whispered Licani among themselves, “He looks like Franz Josef,” shouted another Lican and the entire audience laughed... “Brothers and sisters, I salute you... Let’s praise St. Sava,” exclaimed Gajo. “Long live Gajo,” yelled the Licani... The program ended around ten o’clock, and the spectators quickly got up from their chairs, which were removed to make room for dancing. The orchestra took its place on stage; a group of Sremci and Sremice gathered in the middle of the hall demanding, “Seljancica” and “Sremsko kolo,” and as the Vojvodjani were dancing, the Licani formed a ring around them watching the fancy footwork of their Serbian brothers and sisters from Vojvodina, but they could not join in, because they never saw the dance before. For an hour the Vojvodjani were dancing, and then it happened. A Lican jumped on the stage, pulled a five dollar bill out of his pocket and gave it to the orchestra not to play, ordered the Vojvodjani off

the floor to make room for Licko kolo, saying, “We, too, paid the tickets to get here. We, too, want to dance;” they started the kolo such as Cleveland never saw before. One of the musicians tried to help out with the tamburitza, but without success. Licko kolo has no rhythm, no beat (similar to Crnogorci and Hercegovci). The kolo was accompanied by singing of songs from Lika. The inevitable came: those fifty voices from the strong Litani made such a thunderous noise that very few wicks survived in the lamps, the whole room trembling and swaying until the owner, Mr. Popovic, came running into the hall holding his head. “No, lads, stop it, we are all going to collapse with the building. Stop it!” Reluctantly the Licani stopped, but the leader turned around and shouted, “Let’s go to Hamilton and dance till dawn!” All the Licani left and proceeded to dance until morning in the middle of the street.

The history of American immigration is replete with accounts of individuals of unusual fortitude who overcame incredible odds to get to America and endured great hardships in the early years of settlement. Typical of such is the story of Lazo Simic of 2153 West 20th Street.

When Simic was but three years old, his father died and his mother abandoned the family. His oldest brother, a boy of sixteen, took care of him and the four other children. When he was nine years old, Simic left home in the company of several older boys. They worked at odd jobs to sustain themselves and eventually reached Germany where they stayed for some time.

In 1911 Simic sailed for New York on a false passport. On arriving he went first to Indiana to his brother's home, then fled to Cleveland to avoid being inducted into the army. The army caught up with him and he was obliged to work for the government for a time to payoff his debt. In Cleveland, like many other single male immigrants, he lived in a boardinghouse. For more than 40 years he was a factory worker at Crucible Steel Company at West 84th Street.



Lazo Simic: Steel mill worker.

Despite his many difficulties and the fact that he could neither read nor write in either Serbian or English, he made a good life for himself. He married a Polish woman and they have two children, Mary and Nick. While Simic would be the first to admit that life for the early immigrants was hard, he avows he

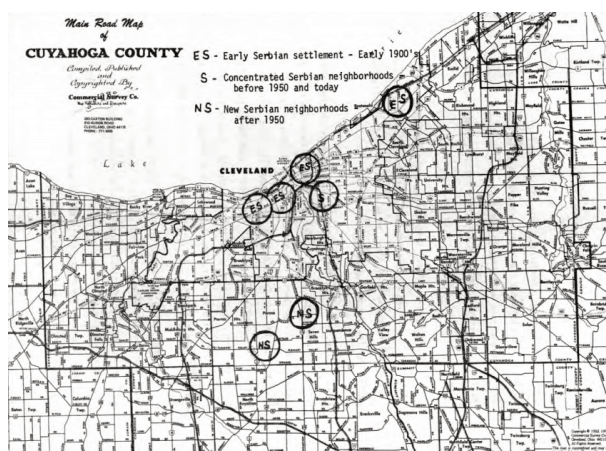
never once considered returning to his homeland to stay. Like most of his fellow countrymen, he is proud to be an American.

## Major Settlement Areas

**Major Settlement Areas** Newcomers to Cleveland generally chose to live near their work and in areas where other Serbs were already established. Other European groups had preceded the Serbs to Cleveland and the Serbs often joined those whose language and customs were most compatible with their own.

In the earliest years, small pockets of Serbs could be found from East 26th Street to East 40th Street on Hamilton, St. Clair and Payne Avenues. Here their neighbors were Croats, Slovenes and Zumbercani. They worked mainly in nearby shops and factories, but a few owned businesses. The Zegarac grocery and the Vardar restaurant were at East 36th Street and Payne Avenue.

Further east on St. Clair Avenue near East 152nd Street, the Collinwood area, lived a number of Serbs who had found work in the Collinwood railroad yards. Earlier settlers here included Croats, Slovenes and Italians. Records for 1917-1918 of the patriotic organization, Serbian National Defense Council of America, list many Serbs with Collinwood addresses. Among them are: Amidzic, Djermanovic, Grozdanic, Stipanovic, Mistic, Loncar, Djelailia, Markovic, Banjanin, Jovic, Zikic and Carico. This same organization claimed a number of members from the vicinity of Madison Avenue and West 73rd Street including the families Lukin, Radic, Stanimirov, Savic, Lekic, Matic, Davidov, Tomic, Rankov and Jovanovic.



When the Republic Steel Corporation began operating in the flats, Serbs started boardinghouses along Broadway Avenue between East 30th Street and East 40th, an area which had originally been settled by the Czechs and Poles.

In time, as the Eastern Orthodox churches were erected and parishes founded, the Serbs tended to settle or relocate near them. When, in 1917, the Serbs purchased the German Lutheran church at East 36th Street and Payne Avenue and formed St. Sava's Church, this became a Serbian center. In the 1960's many Serbs purchased houses in Parma and Seven Hills when the new St. Sava's Church was built at Broadview Road and Ridgewood Drive in Parma. Seven Hills and Parma were the first suburbs to draw Serbs away from the city.

Although second and third generation Serbs have scattered throughout Greater Cleveland, they continue to socialize closely with one another in political, social and religious organizations. Hundreds convene regularly for picnics at St. Sava picnic grove



in Broadview Heights. Weddings, christenings and funerals continue to be occasions for large social gatherings.

# Serbian Organizations of Cleveland

NIKOLAJ MARIC

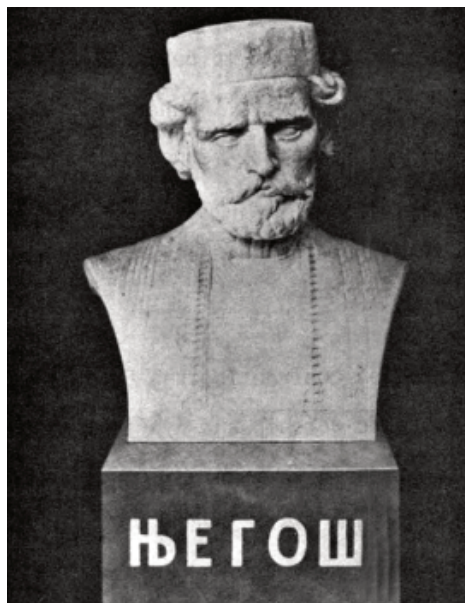
## **St. Sava Serbian Benevolent Society**

The first Serbian organization to be established in Cleveland was St. Sava Serbian Benevolent Society. Founded February 2, 1904 in the home of Stevo Arambasic on Hamilton Avenue, it numbered among its first 32 charter members, Lazo Krivokapic, Nikola Banjanin and Jovan Srdic, President. Through this society many spiritual, benevolent and cultural activities were begun.

The most urgent problem confronting the Society was that of finding a suitable place to worship and a priest to hold services. Through their efforts, in 1909, a Serbian school-church congregation was founded and given the name, St. Sava. A

Russian priest, Father Jason Kappanadze, celebrated the liturgy in the small house they had adapted for services. This was the beginning of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Cleveland. When the parish outgrew these facilities, the Society, along with other Serbian organizations, contributed toward the purchase of the former German church on 36th Street and Payne Avenue which then became the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church. A sizeable Serbian community began to center around this site.

One of the cultural activities in which the Society was deeply involved was the creating of the Yugoslav Cultural Gardens in Rockefeller Park. They cooperated with other Cleveland Serbs and Slovenes on this project. The Serbs erected a statue of the noted Petar Petrovic-Njegos, bishop, statesman and poet. Each Labor Day weekend a commemorative ceremony is held there in his honor, known as Serbian Day.



Petar Petrovich-Njegosh: Statue of Serbian Bishop, statesman, poet, philosopher, Petar Petrovich-Njegosh erected in 1936 in the Yugoslav Cultural Gardens at Rockefeller Park.

The charitable works of Ilija Zegarac, longtime president of the Society are noteworthy. He gave generously of his time and money to bring hundreds of Serbs to America following World War II. He found them jobs and housing and introduced them to the Serbian community and to the American way of life as well.

As the number of Serbian immigrants increased, new benevolent societies emerged including Krsna Da1macija (Serbs from the near West Side), Sveti Jovan, Sveti Lazar and groups in other parts of Ohio. St. Sava Benevolent Society initiated the move to unite all of these groups into a federation under the name

Jedinstvo (Unity) with headquarters in Cleveland. In 1963, Jedinstvo joined the Serb National Federation.

## **Serbian Benevolent Society Brothers Unity**

This group was organized in 1905 to assist other Serbian organizations such as St. Sava Church, Serbian Sunday School, Serbian Singing Society and Serbian National Defense. This society also offers members life insurance at a modest fee and assists needy families.

## **The Circle of Serbian Sisters St. Petka, Inc.**

A pillar of the Serbian community, this women's group was founded in 1913 to serve St. Sava's Church. The Sisters, as they are known among Serbs, have also planned and run successful children's camps in Shadeland, Pennsylvania; Jackson, California; and Libertyville, Illinois. Former presidents of the organization include Femka Stojakov, Zorka Sekulic, Anka Uzelac, Melanija Zegarac, Milka Simic, Helen Milisavljevic and Mimi Naperta.

## **Serbian National Defense Council of America, Cleveland Chapter**

The Serbian National Defense Council was organized in 1908 in the Kingdom of Serbia and was influential in determining the future of Serbia. Serbs living in other areas of the Balkans, in Europe, and in the United States were interested in the welfare of Serbia. Consequently this group was founded on the eve

of World War I to aid Serbia in her struggle against Austria-Hungary.

The Council's Cleveland Chapter, formed in 1917, worked closely with the Serbian Mission from Serbia to provide Serbs in Europe with money, clothes and medicine during the War either directly or through the Serbian Red Cross in Switzerland. Most Cleveland Serbs were originally from the part of Yugoslavia ruled by Austria-Hungary, so they were pleased to be able to help Serbia defeat Austria and release the Serbs from the Dual Monarchy.

In support of the Serbian cause, Cleveland Serbs did not limit themselves to moral or financial support but actually enlisted with Serbian armed forces. Among Cleveland's Serbs who, in 1917, went to fight on the side of Serbia were: Petar Kosanovic, Rista Peric, Petar Radakovic, Mane Panjkovic, Ilija Brankovic, Stevo Bozickovic, Spasoja Vukotic, Janko Hrkalovic, Stevan Radakov, Iso Brekic, Stevo Popovic and Niko"Radic. These names are from membership records of the Serbian National Defense Council only. Other Serbian organizations may have kept similar records.



During World War I and II, throughout the United States, the Serbian women were organized in the Serbian Chapter of the Red Cross, mainly operating in the various Serbian church halls. They also sold millions of dollars worth of U.S. Treasury Department war bonds, and worked for the Serbian Relief Council of America helping Serbian war victims in Europe. During peace time, they are an integral part of Serbian Orthodox Churches, working through Kolo or Serbian Sisters.

After World War I a few Serbs decided that they had made enough money and wished to return to their homeland and reestablish themselves there. The majority, however, remained here and again helped the Serbs in Europe in World War II, though this was a vastly different war. The Defense Council was revived and is still active. Its headquarters is in Chicago, Illinois and they publish a weekly newspaper “Sloboda” (Liberty). At the end of World War II, this organization brought thousands of Serbs to America from the DP camps of Europe, when Serbs decided they could not accept the Community rule of Yugoslavia. Its chapter’s president in Cleveland is Starioje Stojovic.

### **Njegosh Serbian Choir and Njegosh Serbian Choir, Inc.**

These Serbian men and women sing together every Sunday

and holiday in St. Sava's Church making the liturgy a moving experience. No instruments are allowed in the Eastern Orthodox Church because only human voices are believed worthy of praising the Lord. Besides singing at church services, the Choir makes Christmas home visitations and participates in music festivals throughout the United States and Canada.

The Choir grew out of the St. Sava Serbian Benevolent Society. It was organized through the efforts of the tireless and inspiring Father Boro Petrovic. The group was called Oraz (Eagle) when it was begun in 1930, but the name was later changed to Njegos to honor Bishop Petar Petrovich-Njegos when a statue was erected of him in the Yugoslav Cultural Gardens. Carol Schigel presides over the first group and Petra Cojic over the latter.

## **Serbian Athletic Club of Cleveland**

Milos (Mike) Janjatovich organized this club for young men in 1927 when he was but 16 years old. For 20 years they played in basketball, bowling, baseball and golf tournaments with Serbs from all over America. Membership was extended to women and activities were sponsored to support St. Sava's Church financially. Members of this club later formed the American-Serbian Men's and Women's Club. For a time this group worked to unite all Orthodox believers into an American Orthodox Church, but these efforts were not successful. Members continued, however, to give their support to Serbian Orthodox Church.



## Serbian Church Schools

The Serbian Religious School and Serbian Language School were begun in 1951 under the guidance of Father Branko Kusonjic and teacher Pavle Jovanovic. Ann Hrkalovic, Helen Milisavljevic and Ann Julylia were the original instructors of the religious school. Later, under the direction of Bogoljub Mirkovic, instruction was given not only in spiritual values but also in the history, geography and culture of the Serbs. Since 1963 both Serbian churches have had such schools. Hundreds of children are enrolled.

## St. Sava Serbian Cultural Club

The name of this group is somewhat misleading, since its orientation and purposes are more political than cultural. It was begun in 1936 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia arising out of a land dispute between the Serbian and Croatian factions of the government. The American organization is headquartered in Chicago, Illinois where it publishes a weekly newspaper, Srpska Borba (Serbian Struggle), which is written in the Cyrillic alphabet. Former university professor and author Dr. Slobodan Draskovic is editor.

Primary goals of the Club are promotion of Serbian interests and justice for Serbs within their own country. The Club motto is "United Serbiandom in free Serbia." Members feel that Serbia was dealt with unjustly after World War I and World War II. The Club was always strongly anti-Nazi and anti-Communist. Local president is Ratko Simic.

## **American-Serbian Square Club**

Peter Uzelac is president of this organization which was formed in 1940 by Charles Herke and George Vujaklija. A membership of about 60 meets several times a year for socials.

## **Draza Mihailovich Association of the Royal Yugoslav Army Combatants**

The first meeting of this organization was held in a refugee camp in Germany in 1948. Its founder was General Miodrag Damjanovic. Membership is comprised of Serbians only, and originally included those who had fought with Draza Mihailovich's forces when they retreated into the mountains of Yugoslavia and continued to resist the Nazis and Communists. The Cleveland branch was formed in 1952. Marko Stoisavljevic is president and Milorad Petrovic, secretary. The Association headquarters are in Chicago, Illinois where a periodical newspaper, Ravnogorski Borac is published.

## **Serbian Brothers Help**

Founded in 1950, members assist Serbs who fled Communist Yugoslavia for the Free World; disabled veterans, those in need, the sick and the old throughout the world. The group provides help with financial assistance and moral support. President of the Cleveland branch is Dragan Obrenich.

## **Serbian Chetniks**

Many veterans of Draza Mihailovich's forces from refugee camps in Italy, in 1951, founded another organization known as the Organization of Serbian Chetniks, "Ravna Gora." The leaders of this group were former priest, Momcilo Djujic and Dobroso Jevdjevic. The two men, along with their followers, went their separate ways in 1957. Djujic founded the movement of Serbian Chetniks of Ravna Gora while Jevdjevic kept the original name. Both groups have their local chapters in Cleveland.

## **Serbian Radio Club Ravna Gora**

The Radio Club was founded in Cleveland in 1953, broadcasting first on station WJMO, then WDOK, WZAK and WBOE, where it is now heard on Saturday. The Club promotes Serbian music and informs listeners of major events in the Serbian communities, both locally and nationally. President of the organization is Marko Stoisavljevic; secretary is Milorad Petrovic.

## **St. Sava Serbian Youth Club**

Organized in 1957, St. Sava Youth Club existed only three years. In that short time, however, it served a good purpose and gave rise to other groups which have continued. It was formed to help the younger immigrants who arrived after World War II in their adjustment to American life and to Serbian relatives and friends who had preceded them to this country. The younger persons had

lived under Communist rule; the older immigrants had not and often failed to understand the social and political orientation of the newcomers. The club sought to bridge the gap between these groups as well as provide a social outlet for the young people.

## **Soccer Clubs**

The first Serbian soccer team in Cleveland was named Obilic and was started within the St. Sava Youth Club in 1957. They competed against other nationality teams such as the West Side Hungarians, Italian Soccer Club and the Olympicos (Greek Soccer Club).

Obilic existed for some three years and then became part of a new group, Serbian Sport Club Karageorge, which is now a member 149 of the Major Division of the Lake Erie Soccer League of Ohio, White Eagles. Karageorge plays its game\$ at St. Sava's field off Wallings Road in Broadview Heights. Games are usually played on Sunday after-noons and are often followed by picnicking and dancing until late at night. President of Karageprge is Rade Stojisavljevich.

## **Serbian Kolo Groups**

Another offspring of the St. Sava Youth Club was the Serbian Kolo Group. This dance group existed continuously but under these different names: Kosovski Bozuri, Ruzmarin, Ravna Gora, Church Group and Ravanica.

## **The American Association of War Veterans of the**

## **Kingdom of Yugoslavia**

The Cleveland branch of this association was begun in 1957 to unite former members of the Royal Yugoslav Armed Forces. Membership is almost exclusively Serbian. Sanko Jovanovic leads the organization in Cleveland.

## **Serbian Historical and Cultural Association Njegos**

Begun in 1956, the Association collects and publishes new and unknown documents pertaining to World War II or any other period relevant to Serbian history. Their semi-annual publication Herald is widely read. Milutin Stojovic is president of the Cleveland chapter; headquarters are in Chicago, Illinois.

## **Serbian Republican League of Ohio**

The League met for the first time in 1972 in Parma for the purpose of bringing Serbian-Americans into the Republican Party and providing them with an opportunity for political expression and recognition. About 50 members meet monthly at the County Republican Headquarters. Present president is Dr. Ratko Yuboja.

## **Serbian Chess Club of Ohio**

Organized in 1974, they are registered with the United States Chess Federation. Team captain is Senior Master Vukevich; United States Open Co-Champion on 1969, a Cleveland city champion for several years and third place winner in Zone

Tournament United States Championship of 1975. In a year's time, competing in the First Division of Cleveland Chess Association, the team did not lose a single match. Other players are A. Pavlovich, S. Stevanovich, M. Mijatov, J. Bozen, and K. Malesevich. President is V. Nikolic.

## **Serbian Orchestras**

Musical expression is a vital part of Serbian life style. They relish social gatherings with other Serbs such as picnics, shows, dances and weddings where they can sing and dance and listen to Serbian music. Serbian orchestras often play at these events. The best known orchestra, Sloboda, has performed at Blossom Music Center and the Ohio State Fair. Ivan Mirkovic is director.

Exclusively tamburitza orchestras are Sister Trivanovich Orchestra and Continental Strings Orchestra. Most popular in the 1940's and 1950's was the Plavi Jadran Tamburashi. Also well known is the Rade Simovic Orchestra.

## **The Council of Serbian Organizations of Greater Cleveland**

These 12 diverse Serbian organizations became a part of the Council: St. Sava Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church; Serbian National Defense Council of America; St. Petka Serbian Sisters Circle, Inc.; Serbian Brother's Help; The American Association of War Veterans of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; St. Sava Serbian Cultural Club; Njegosh Serbian Choir, Inc.; Ravna Gora Serbian Chetniks Organization; Serbian Historical and Cultural

Association Njegosh; Karageorge Serbian Sport Club; Ravanica Serbian Folklore Group and Serbian Republican League of Ohio. President of the Council is Milutin Ristic.

The objective of this umbrella organization is to cultivate the Serbian heritage, promote the Serbian cause and represent the Serbian community. The first project was to establish annual public commemoration of the Serbian Liberation and Unification of November 26, 1918. The event would include a prominent Serbian-American speaker, participation of well know local citizens and government officials, official acknowledgement of the event from the mayor of Cleveland, and the raising of the Serbian flag on public square for that day. Proceeds from this event would help establish a scholarship fund, and provide for other needs in the cultural life of Cleveland Serbs.

It was the Council's responsibility to establish a celebration, beginning in 1973, of St. Sava's Day (January 27), at the Cleveland Public Library with the participation of school children. At this celebration, in 1974, the Council donated to the Library (Foreign Language Department) an exhibit case with various artifacts.

## **Independent Radio Programs**

There are three weekly broadcasted Serbian language radio programs:

GLAS SLOBODE – Announcer: Milorad Mitic The program can be heard Sunday mornings on WXEN.

152 • DRAGOSLAV GEORGEVICH, NIKOLAJ MARIC, AND NICHOLAS MORAVCEVICH

AVALA – Announcer: Stanoje Stojovic The program can be heard Friday evenings on WXAK -FM.

GLAS ISTINA – of the Chetnik movement. The program can be heard on Saturday evenings on WZAK.



# The Serbs and Their Religion

NIKOLAJ MARIC

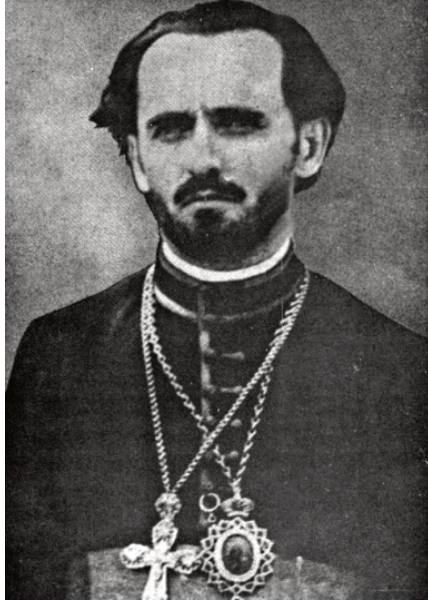
## The Early Years to 1950

Serbs are a religious people and the majority are affiliated with the Eastern Orthodox religion. In Cleveland, a few attend services at churches other than Eastern Orthodox –St. Nicholas Byzantine, Yugoslav Seventh Day Adventist, Cleveland Islamic Center, and Apostolic Christian Church. However, about 90% profess allegiance to the Eastern Orthodox religion. The following excerpt from a recent sermon by Father Jovan Todorovich of Gary, Indiana expresses the feelings many Serbs have toward their religion:

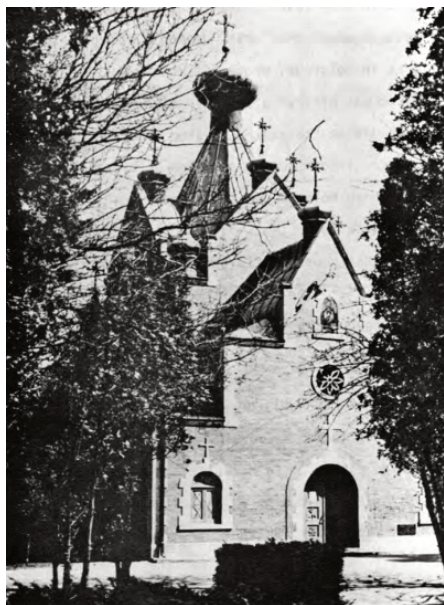
“The greatness of a nation is measured by the spiritual power it wields to overcome life’s obstacles. Just as Christ is an eternal well of spiritual refreshment leading to eventual rebirth, so is the tradition of a God-loving

nation. Its generations can drink of the same life-giving waters for the spirit to create new works. There are few people on earth whose history brims with as much suffering for its Orthodox Christianity as the Serbian nation. So there are few nations as spiritually great.”

The Serbs accepted Christianity in the eighth and ninth centuries. Since then, the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church and the Serbian nation have remained inseparable despite attempts by diverse enemies to destroy their religion and their nation. From the time of Tsar Dusan’s Great Serbia of the 14th century to the present Tito regime, Serbian enemies have tried to separate the people from their religion in order to crush their resistance and create docile subjects. In the beginning of the 19th century Serbs again tried to repel the 500-year-old Turkish rule. During this unsuccessful uprising of Bosnian Serbs against the Turks, deacon Avakum was taken prisoner by the Turks in Belgrade, where his mother was also imprisoned. Deacon Avakum was offered a choice: either renounce his Serbian Orthodoxy or die at the stake. Avakum’s mother tried desperately to talk her son into becoming a Moslem in order to save his life, but he would have no part of it. He said to his tormentors, “You can do anything with me that you want... You can do anything with my body that your beastly temper wants. But you can not master my soul... The Serb will never give up his soul to live...” Avakum was subsequently killed and later proclaimed a Saint of the Eastern Orthodox Church.



His Grace Bishop Mardary  
(Uskokovich): The first bishop of  
Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese for  
the United States and Canada and the  
founder of St. Sava Monastery,  
Libertyville, Illinois.



St. Sava Monastery Church, Libertyville, Illinois: Built in 1923, this church is the headquarters of the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the United States and Canada, and the burial site, inside the monastery, of the founder, His Grace Bishop Mardary and of King Peter II, Karageorgevich.

Throughout Serbian history Serbs have been put to similar tests by various tormentors. In World War II Croatian quisling Pavelich tried either to Catholicize or to exterminate Serbs who, on Hitler's orders, had been expedited to Croatia. A Croatian priest, Mate Mugosa, in his speech of June 13, 1941, threatened:

Till now we have worked for the Catholic faith using prayer book and cross, and now is the time to use the rifle and revolver. We shall evict and exterminate the

Serbian people in Croatia, and I shall be happy to be able to distribute the Serbian land to Croatians. Ustashe will mercilessly fight and exterminate all those who are not loyal to NOH (so-called independent state of Croatia) and to her poglavnik (leader) and creator, Ante Pavelich. Take a look, people, at those 16 brave Ustashes who have 16,000 bullets which will kill 16,000 Serbs, after which we shall distribute the Mutilicko and Krbavsko plains ... (Text is from the Memorial Museum of Jasenovac, Yugoslavia.)

The Communist takeover of Yugoslavia after World War II discouraged Serbian Orthodoxy and other religions as well. Today the Serbian church continues its struggle for survival against an oppressive and atheistic government.

In America Serbs can worship freely as they did when Serbia was a free state. When Serbia was independent, Church and State were not separated. Wealthy benefactors built churches and monasteries and supported the clergy. Religion flourished. Serbian immigrants to America had freedom to worship but not wealth, and they were obliged to build their own churches. While Serbs, as a rule, seldom attend services daily or even weekly, they crowd the church on holidays such as St. Sava's Feast, Christmas and faster. Also, each Serbian household displays an icon of its patron saint to whom private prayer and devotion are encouraged. However, public ritual and an official place of worship are essential to Serbian religious orientation. Consequently, the first order of business of the early Serbs who

formed the St. Sava Benevolent Society of Cleveland was to buy or build a church.

St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church of Cleveland began quite simply in 1909 when services were held in a rented hall on St. Clair Avenue at East 41st Street. This small church-school congregation soon' dissolved for lack of funds but resumed again in 1911. Within a short time, they purchased two small frame houses on East 33rd Street near St. Clair Avenue. One was used as a church, the other as a priest's residence. This \$2,600 investment soon became a center around which Serbs built the kind of life they had known in Europe. The tudjina (foreign land) was now more bearable.



St. Sava Monastery Church, Libertyville, Illinois: Built in 1923, this church is the headquarters of the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the United States and Canada, and the burial site, inside the monastery, of the founder, His Grace Bishop Mardary and of King Peter II, Karageorgevich.

The children of St. Sava's were soon being instructed in the Serbian language and given the rudiments of the Eastern Orthodox religion and Serbian history and culture. Their first teachers were Mane Momcilovic and Father Nikodim Stojakovic. Cleveland resident, Mimi Naperta recalls, "We were busy in those days. We would come home from regular school and then hurry off to Serbian school which was held twice a week from four to six in the afternoon. And if that were not enough, there were choir rehearsals three times a week, too."

The new congregation was hardly established when they were called upon to assist Serbia in its struggle to gain independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912. Serbian organizations joined with St. Sava's in collecting money and goods to send to Serbia. Many Cleveland Serbs enlisted with Serbian Armed Forces to fight the Turks.

Before long, a new church building became imperative as the Serbian community grew and the small frame house bulged with worshippers. It was learned that the German Lutheran Church at East 36th Street was for sale, and in 1919 this was purchased and became the new St. Sava Church. Many Serbs who for years had lived in rented homes, bought houses on streets near the church. The neighborhood was becoming predominantly Serbian.

The Serbs got along well with other nationalities with the possible exception of the Croats. Bitter experiences with the Croats in Europe during World Wars I and II cast a pall over their relationships with them in this country and made cooperation with them difficult.

Following World War II, when it had become obvious that the Communists would control Yugoslavia, thousands of Serbs left the country and many hundreds of them settled in Cleveland, finding employment and housing in the vicinity of St. Sava's Church on East 36th Street. Thousands of Serbs who survived the German prisoner of war camps were confronted with problems: to go home to live under Communist regime or to become D.P. IS (displaced persons). Many thousands went to England, New Zealand, Australia, Africa, Canada, U.S.A.... One of these immigrants, Ratko Simic, recalls his experience:



We arrived in New York in 1950 and each received \$5.00 from the fund allocated to us by the American government. We came to Cleveland shortly after and stayed at Crawford Hotel on Prospect Avenue, where we had to pay \$21.00 a week each for room and board; there were seven of us in one room, and only two beds and one chair in the entire room... About 100 Serbs were immediately employed by the Ferro Company of Cleveland.

Many of these newest immigrants were helped to reach America through the combined efforts of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of American and Canada, the Serbian National Defense Council of America, and the International Refugee Organization. Cleveland Serbs welcomed their fellow countrymen, pleased at the strength and numbers they added to the community. They, in turn, having escaped an oppressive and atheistic government, relished the opportunity to enjoy political and religious freedom once again.



His Grace Rt. Rev. Bishop Dionisije (Milivojevic); has been head of the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the United States and Canada since 1940.

## 1950 to the Present

The influx of immigrants in the 1950's infused new life into the Serbian community. Young and vigorous, the newcomers joined St. Sava Church and eagerly participated in religious, social and political organizations. Particularly helpful in facilitating their adjustment to Cleveland were oldtimers, Ilija Zegarac, Bogdan Dragisic, Pajo Novakovic and others. When they were not at regular work, they were busy finding the newcomers jobs and housing, and activities to meet their social needs.

St. Sava's prospered socially and financially through the

contributions of these new young immigrants. Very Reverend Father Branko Kusonjic, appointed pastor in 1951, was grateful for their help. The church debt was paid off, Serbian Sunday school was held regularly and in 1952, 30 acres were purchased in Broadview Heights for recreation purposes through the special efforts of Gliso Lonchar, president.

However, with the ever increasing membership, the church at 36th Street was no longer adequate for services and members decided to build a new church. The elected head of the congregation, Trisha-Tom Simic, made a down payment on the chosen site at the corner of Ridgewood Drive and Broadview Road in Parma. On January 15, 1961 the land was consecrated.

As building plans became a reality, far more money than the projected \$600,000 would be required to complete the church, school, priest's residence and parking lot. The congregation sorely felt the increased financial burden and some members differed sharply with the church board as to how to meet these needs. The board passed a resolution whereby each member was to pay \$500 to the building fund in addition to regular monthly dues, stipulating that if a member did not pay, his membership rights would be forfeited. This action initiated much bitterness in the community.

Despite this turbulence, the church services were held for the first time in February of 1963. Unfortunately, before it was consecrated, more problems developed. They began with a letter sent by Patriarch German of the Holy Synod of Belgrade, Yugoslavia to all congregations in America and Canada informing them that, as of May 10, 1963, the American-

Canadian Diocese would have to be split into an Eastern American-Canadian Diocese, Middle-Western American Diocese, and Western American Diocese. Bishop Dionisije was temporarily suspended from his duties, and three new bishops were to take over the newly created dioceses: Very Reverend Stevan Lastavica, Archimandrite Firmilijan Ocokoljic, and Archimandrite Grigorije Udicki, respectively.

This was the beginning of a long and costly struggle within the Serbian Orthodox Church in America and Canada, as the Serbs now started taking sides; one group sided with Patriarch German, the other with Bishop Dionisije, head of the American-Canadian Diocese.

St. Sava Serbian Church in Parma was to be consecrated, and the already feuding sides could not agree who should do the consecrating the newly appointed bishops or Bishop Dionisije. The stormy meeting took place on June 1, and June 9 was set aside for the consecration. When the day came, the pro-Patriarch German candidates for bishops performed the consecration, and the pastor, Father Kusonjic, refused to participate, thereby expressing his protest at the choice. The somewhat subdued celebration proceeded without further difficulty. However, shortly thereafter, on June 19, 1963 the representatives of nine Serbian organizations issued a joint declaration denouncing the decision of the Holy Synod in Belgrade, thus siding themselves with Bishop Dionisije. They stated that the Holy Synod was forced to the action it had taken by the Commission for Religious Affairs, a government agency of Communist Yugoslavia.

The group siding with Bishop Dionisije was known as the pro American-Canadian Diocese group. The opposing faction, the pro Mother-Church group, under Patriarch German contended that the Holy Synod of Bishops in Belgrade had the right to appoint or suspend clergy as they saw fit. The pro American-Canadian Diocese group argued that since the Orthodox Church in Yugoslavia was not free, it could not function normally.

Possibly, the Patriarchate in Belgrade miscalculated the spirit of Orthodox Serbs outside of Yugoslavia; or, it was coerced by the Communist Commission for Religious Affairs to act as it did. Whatever the reason for suspending and later defrocking Bishop Dionisije, it created a split among Orthodox Serbs throughout the world, halted the progress of Cleveland's Serbs, and caused bitter animosity between friends and within families.

Each faction had its own governing board and priest; the Very Reverend Branko Kusonjic was with the pro American-Canadian Diocese group and the Very Reverend Branko Skaljic with the pro Mother-Church group. Services were held separately. Both groups claimed the right to St. Sava's Church property and this became a matter which had to be settled in the courts.

The pro Mother-Church group contended that the church property belonged to them because they had remained with Mother Church and their priest was appointed by the new bishops in America and Canada, thus following canonical procedure, a major weapon against the opposition. The pro American-Canadian Diocese group held that the Church in Yugoslavia was not free and had no right to ignore the

constitution of the American-Canadian Diocese and the by-laws of St. Sava's Church in Cleveland.

After 12 years of litigation, on March 23, 1975, a settlement was reached on the allocation of St. Sava Church property. The pro Mother-Church group received the existing buildings in Parma including the church building with one half of the lot. The pro American-Canadian Diocese group received one half of Ridgewood Drive lot, the picnic ground on Wallings Road and \$215,000. The group moved to Broadview Heights and started to build a church, hall, and school on the St. Sava picnic grounds at 2151 West Wallings Road.



St. Sava Serbian Eastern Orthodox Religious, Social and Cultural Center, 2151 West Wallings Road, Broadview Heights, Ohio. (architectural drawing) (50% of the work completed)

### Pastors of the Cleveland Serbian Community

Religious needs of the first Serbian settlers were fulfilled by pastors of existing Eastern Orthodox Churches, such as Greek and Russian, and, in particular, St. Theodosius Russian Orthodox Cathedral.

FR. JASON KAPPANDZE from St. Theodosius was serving the new Serbian community before it had its own church life organized.

Chronologically, the following is a list of pastors serving the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Cleveland, Ohio.

1909-1911	REV. FR. JOAKIM BJEDOV was a visiting pastor from Mingo Jct. (Steubenville, Ohio), the oldest Serbian Orthodox Community in Ohio. Services were first held in St. Sava Lodge house on Hamilton Avenue and later in a formerly renovated saloon building on St. Clair Avenue between East 40th and East 41st Street. The first president of the congregation was Gajo Germanovic.
1911-1912	REV. FR. NESTOR VUKICEVIC
1913	REV. FR. MILAN JUGOVIC
1913-1916	REV. FR. JOAKIM BJEDOV
1916-1918	REV. FR. NIKODIM STOJAKOVIC - during his time a German Protestant church building was purchased on East 36th Street with the special efforts of president, Geo Kukich and Dane Zegarac.
1919-1921	REV. FR. ALEKSIJE SAVIC
1921-1922	REV. FR. NIKODIM STOJAKOVIC, second time.
1922-1924	REV. FR. MARKO KOMNENIC
1924	REV. FR. PAVLE VELJKOV
1924-1925	REV. FR. HARALAMPIJE DONOVIC
1925-1928	REV. FR. DJORDJE PETROVIC
1928-1930	REV. FR. NIKODIM STOJAKOVIC, third time.
1930-1938	REV. FR. BORA PETROVIC
1939-1943	REV. FR. EMILIJAN GLOCAR
1943-1944	REV. FR. NIKODIM STOJAKOVIC, fourth time
1944-1946	REV. FR. DANILO KOZOMARA
1946-1950	REV. FR. MLADEN TRBULOVICH
1950-1951	REV. FR. BORIVOJE PAVLOVIC



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1951-1964 REV. FR. BRANKO KUSONJIC

**St. Sava Serbian Orthodox  
Cathedral**

1964-1976 REV. FR. BRANKO  
SKALJAC

1977 REV. FR. MILORAD  
DOBROTA

**St. Sava Serbian Eastern  
Orthodox Church**

1964-1974 REV. FR. BRANKO  
KUSONJIC

1975 REV. FR. DJURO  
MAJERLE

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# Serbian Holidays

NIKOLAJ MARIC

Serbia has many national and religious holidays replete with unique rituals and customs. These celebrations played an important role in the survival of the Serbs in the past, particularly during those centuries when the nation was enslaved by the Turks. At times, festive events were used to organize uprisings against the Turks. However, some of the events are purely religious and celebrated among Christians everywhere. Yet even such holidays as Christmas and Easter have aspects unique to the Serbian culture.

## Christmas

Since Serbian liturgy follows the Julian calendar, Christmas is celebrated January 6. Although many Serbs have adopted the modern custom of displaying a Christmas tree with family presents beneath, the old traditions are cherished and still

practiced. In many homes the father awakens the children early Christmas Eve to help him bring in the badnjak (oak branches and logs) from the woods, after which comes one of the most exciting features of Christmas – the barbecuing of a pig on the open fire outside the house. In the Orthodox faith, one is not allowed to eat meat or dairy products on Christmas Eve, so it is a torture to watch and smell that succulent pork and not be able to eat it until after midnight. Supper, however, is rich and plentiful. Twelve main courses, delicious though meatless, are placed on the table when the family returns from the long Christmas Eve vesper services. These services are an opportunity for people to visit with others whom they may not have seen since Easter. On both holidays, the church is crowded; many people attend only on special occasions.

Another custom in the home is to scatter straw about the floor of each room and then to form a cross of straw on the supper table symbolizing the stable in which Christ was born. Also, the father carries badnjak from room to room, saying prayers to protect his household from evil and sickness.

A Serbian table on Christmas Eve is set with the bozicnjak –a cake with various designs and pictures rolled out of dough baked on the cake top. Fruits and nuts are placed around the cake, symbolic of the fruits of the earth. A candle is set alongside its holder filled with grains, and a dish of wheat, planted on St. Nicholas' Day, December 19, completes the setting.

Christmas Day is strictly a family day; one is not supposed to go visiting. A special kind of bread called chesnitsa with honey on top is baked for Christmas Day dinner, and a silver coin is

hidden inside the bread. At dinner, the housewife breaks the chesnitsa into pieces, serving one to each member of the family and setting aside a piece for a poor traveler should he knock upon the door. Whoever is lucky enough to get the piece with the coin inside, has good fortune for the year long.

## **St. Sava's Day**

St. Sava relinquished his father's throne in the 12th century to become a monk. Through his wisdom and patience as a spiritual leader, both the Serbian church and nation grew and prospered. After his death, his grave became a place of veneration for the Serbian faithful. He became a saint and a legend even for the moslems. This so enraged the Turks that they exhumed his body and burned it, hoping to destroy every vestige of him. Instead, his fame spread and he is still revered by Serbs around the world. His feast day is January 27th.

In addition, in Cleveland, the Serbians celebrate their favorite saint within the Serbian community. These programs are customarily prepared by the Sunday School teachers.

## **Easter**

Serbian Easter differs little from the way other Christians celebrate Christ's Resurrection. On Lazarus Saturday, eight days 173 before Easter, instead of palm branches symbolizing Christ's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, the Serbian Orthodox bless pussy willow branches and distribute them after the church service. On Easter Sunday Serbian parents rise before

their children to hid ornately decorated eggs in unlikely places in the yard and garden. As soon as the youngsters get up, they grab their baskets and hunt for the eggs and chocolates the Easter Bunny has left them for being good children. After church services, they break the eggs.

## **St. George's Day (Djurdjevdan)**

Like Easter, St. George's Day signifies the beginning of Spring. The ritual involved in the festivities is related to the legend of St. George and the Dragon. St. George is pictured as a brave young knight on a beautiful white horse. As the story goes, the townspeople are obliged to surrender a lovely maiden each year to the dragon or suffer dire consequences. St. George slays the dragon with his spear, saves the maid and delivers the town from future sacrifices.

In Yugoslavia, villagers would go to the woods on St. George's Day, May 6th, and gather greens to decorate their homes and yards. Young men would rise early in the morning and ride their horses through the village seeking the company of pretty girls. This outing was called *uranak*, which translates roughly into English as early rising. In Cleveland, *uranak* is usually celebrated with singing, dancing and picnicking.

## **Vidovdan**

This holiday commemorates the loss of the Battle of Kosovo on June 28, 1389. With that battle, the Serbs lost their independence to the Turks. Although the Serbs knew they were heavily

outnumbered, they chose to lose their lives rather than their dignity. In Serbian literature, the “Kosovski Ciklus” (Cycle of Kosovo) describes this battle and the courage of the Serbs who died defending their freedom.

The story is told that on the eve of the battle, Tsar Lazar, leader of the Serbian forces, sent a spy to discover the position and number of Turkish armies. On his return, the spy reports:

“Da se svi mi u so pretvorimo, Ne bi Turkom Zasolili Rucka.” Translated loosely, this means, “There are so many Turks out there that, should we turn into salt, we would not be able to salt their dinner.”

Before World War II, ‘Vidovdan was the last day of school in Serbia, and students received their report cards and awards in a special ceremony. Communist Yugoslavia no longer celebrates this historic day. Legendary Kosovo is now an autonomous province where Serbs are powerless and the Albanian minority prevails.

Cleveland Serbs celebrate Vidovdan with enthusiasm. Serbian Sunday School children receive their diplomas now just as they did at the turn of the century. After the ceremony in the church and school, the people move to the St. Sava picnic grounds for singing and dancing, and refreshments late into the night.

## **Serbian Njegos Day**

Njegos Day began in 1935 when Serbs from all over America and Canada came to Cleveland during Labor Day weekend to

join Cleveland's Serbs and Slovenes in dedicating the Yugoslav Cultural Gardens of Rockefeller Park. The Serbs erected a statue of the noted Petar Petrovic Njegos, bishop, poet and statesman, in the Cultural Gardens. Each year, on Labor Day weekend, Serbs from near and far convene to pay homage at the Njegos statue. Afterwards, celebrating continues at the St. Sava picnic ground with music, soccer games and refreshments. Hot barbecued lamb and pork are the special treats of this day.



King Peter II of Yugoslavia chats with Dorothy Fuldhiem from TV Channel 5, in February, 1959, on a visit to the Serbian community. A reception was held at the Sheraton-Cleveland Hotel. Also present is the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Bogdan Dragisic, and Very Reverend Branko Kusonjic.

## Serbian Unification Day

The origin of this event goes back to World War I. The Kingdoms of Serbia and Crna Gona (Montenegro), working together against Austria-Hungary, decided to unite under one

crown. On November 26, 1918, the Montenegrin National Assembly voted to join the Kingdom of Serbia and this date was generally accepted among the Serbs in all parts of Yugoslavia to be Serbian Unification Day. It was first celebrated locally in 1973, under the auspices of the Council of Serbian Organizations of Cleveland.

## Slava

Next to Christmas, Slava is the most festive day in Serbian homes. Serbs became Christians in the eighth and ninth centuries, and the Slava refers to the saint's day on which the particular family accepted Christianity. The household is placed under the spiritual protection of that saint. Slava celebrations are held the year around. Some of the best known Slavass are St. Jovan (John), January 20th; St. George, May 6th; St. Paraskeva (Petka), October 27th; St. Michael the Archangel November 21st and St. Nicholas, December 19th.

The Serbian family displays an icon of its patron saint on the eastern wall of a room with kandilo (an ornamental, oil filled glass) hanging in front of the icon and a branch of badnjak (oak) behind the image. Family members pray before the image, especially during times of difficulty.

In celebrating the Slava, the first order of the day is to take the slavski kolac (Slava bread) to church to be blessed. In the evening the feast will take place. As friends and relatives arrive, they greet the host with "Srečna Slava!" (Happy Slava), after which it is the custom to "kiss each member of the family on



both cheeks. The hostess then offers the guests zito (wheat), a specially prepared wheat which is cooked, ground, mixed with ground nuts, sugar and spices and decorated ornately on top. Before tasting this delicacy, the guest makes the sign of the cross. No expense is spared in the feasting that follows.

# Serbian Community Leaders

NIKOLAJ MARIC

## **Geco Kukic**

Geco Kukic was one of the first Serbian businessmen in Cleveland. He came here from Lika in 1905 and shortly thereafter opened a pop shop on St. Clair Avenue. He also worked in the pipe factory on Hamilton Avenue near East 26th Street as did many other early Serbian immigrants. Kukic returned to Serbia for a time during World War I when he enlisted in The Serbian Army to fight Austria-Hungary.

When he returned to America, he continued to be active in a number of organizations. He served as president of St. Sava's Church congregation and of the St. Sava Serbian Benevolent Society. Also, he was active in the Serbian National Defense Council of America and in the Serbian Benevolent Society Jedinstvo.

## **Bogdan Dragisic**

Bogdan Dragisic came to Cleveland from Zrmanj, Yugoslavia in 1911 when he was 19 years old. Four years later he married Sophia Mikasinovic, a Serbian school teacher from Pennsylvania. They have two children, Milan, a draftsman for Warner and Swasey Company, and Vera Zugic, a music teacher in Cleveland School System. Dragisic worked for 40 years as an agent for the Prudential Insurance Company. He was also a translator and journalist.

Free time to Dragisic meant promoting one Serbian cause or another. Involved with many organizations, he was a founder of the Cleveland Chapter of the Serbian National Defense Council of America. Also, he was treasurer of the Serb National Federation for four years, secretary of the Serbian Sokol, president of the Serbian Benevolent Society Bratska Sloga of the Serb National Federation and a member of several other organizations.

Dragisic was quite outspoken about international politics and some Serbs and others sharply disagreed with him at times; however, nearly everyone agreed that he always put Serbian interests foremost and served his community well. Bogdan Dragisic died on November 2, 1967 and is buried in St. Theodosius Russian Cemetery.

## **Michael "Mile" Djakovich**

Born in Sibenje, Banija, Yugoslavia in 1883, Djakovich came to Youngstown, Ohio at the age of 22 and continued his schooling

there. He later took a position in the Foreign Exchange Department of Youngstown's Dollar Savings and loan Company. Djakovich organized the first choir at the Serbian church in Youngstown and was active in other Serbian organizations there.

Djakovich moved to Cleveland in 1931 to work for the city. A year later he was appointed Deputy County Treasurer of Cuyahoga County, serving in that capacity until his retirement in 1965 at the age of 85. Politically active, Djakovich organized the first Serbian Democratic Club in 1934 and was a member of the Cosmopolitan league of Cuyahoga County.

In the Serbian community, Djakovich performed many services. He wrote the by-laws for St. Sava's Church and served as president of the St. Sava's Church congregation. He helped to set up the Yugoslav Cultural Gardens. From 1931-34 he published his own news-paper Pravda.

Djakovich lived for a short time in Pittsburgh, and there, at the Cathedral of learning library, he established a South Slav exposition featuring Serbian arts and crafts. During his stay in Pittsburgh, he was Executive Secretary of the Serb National Federation and editor of the daily newspaper American Srbrobran. For these and other accomplishments, he was decorated by the late King Alexander of Yugoslavia. After World War II the United States State Department offered Djakovich a position in the American Embassy in Belgrade, but he refused, fearful for his life because of his anti-Tito activities in America.

## **Nikola Uzelac**

At the age of 85, Nikola Uzelac is the oldest Serb living in Cleveland. After Uzelac came to Cleveland from Lika in 1906, he worked at the American Steel and Wire Company near Hamilton Avenue. He lived within walking distance of his job and recalls being paid a dollar a day in wages. In those days, room, board and laundry cost two dollars a week.

One of the first presidents of St. Sava's congregation. Uzelac still participates in church activities. He lives on Bidulph Road in Brooklyn with his daughter, Mary.

## **Misa Zoric**

A German freighter brought Misa Zoric to America's shores in 1913 from his native Lika. He clearly recalls his first experiences in Cleveland. He and other young Serbs lived in boardinghouses near Pershing and Broadway Avenue. Two men shared a bed; one worked days, the other, nights. The room was so cold that the water would freeze in the pitcher on the nightstand.

Zoric worked for the American Steel and Wire Company, Corrigan Steel Company and Republic Steel Corporation where many Serbs were employed. He is retired now and lives at 6401 Gertrude Avenue. During all his active years, he served as an officer of the Church Board, Serbian National Federation, or Serbian National Defense Council.

## **Ilija Zegarac**

Zegarac's grocery store at the corner of East 36th Street and Payne Avenue was an oasis for many years to Serbian immigrants in Cleveland. They spoke little English but they understood the word benefactor. To them it meant Ilija Zegarac, for it was he who found many of them jobs and gave them food before they had the first paycheck in hand. Even the bus drivers knew what a rider meant when he said, "Stani kod Zegaraca." Stop at Zegarac's.

Ilija Zegarac was president of the oldest Serbian society in Cleveland, the St. Sava Serbian Benevolent Society. He and his wife, Melanija were active in many organizations. They cherished the Serbian traditions, but they valued the freedom they found in America and always found time to help other Serbs who sought a better life in a free country. The Zegaracs recently moved to Gary, Indiana, but Cleveland Serbs still like to recall how, on such and such a day, the Zegaracs helped a Serb in need.

## **Trisha-Tom Simic**

Like many Cleveland Serbs, Simic came to Cleveland from the province of Lika, which was part of Austria-Hungary prior to World War I. And typically, he brought with him neither skills nor diplomas. In Cleveland he worked off and on with contracting companies, and during the depression years, supported his family by collecting scrap metal.

Today, Simic owns Tom Simic and Son, Contractors, Inc. and employs a number of Serbs in his company. A street in Seven

Hills is named after him. He is a success. But to a Serb, success is more than economics. A successful person is one who has served his community well. Trisha-Tom Simic and his late wife, Milka, did just that. Milka was president of the Circle of Serbian Sisters and Trisha-Tom was president of the St. Sava's Church congregation. Both contributed countless hours and financial support to many other organizations in the Serbian community. To the Serbs, they were, indeed, successful.



Trisha-Tom and Milka Simic



Ilija and Melanija Zegarac

## **Milan Naperta**

Milan Naperta came to Cleveland at the age of 11. His wife, Mimi, recalls that she saw him for the first time running along St. Clair Avenue shortly after his arrival here in 1921. Mimi, who was born here, is the daughter of Geco Kukic, owner of one of the first Serbian businesses in Cleveland—a saloon and pop shop.

The Napertas were active members of St. Sava's Church. Milan was president of the congregation when the split occurred. He died before it was settled. Mimi worked with the Serbian Sisters and helped to organize the youth summer camp which was held at the Serbian monastery at Shadeland, Pennsylvania. The



Napertas have two daughters and a son who continue to be active in the Serbian community.

## **Dusan Yovich**

Yovich is one of the few Serbian immigrants who came to America with not the least intention of returning to Yugoslavia to live. He came to Cleveland from Lika for economic reasons. There were seven in his family and they were poor. Yovich's brother in America paid his way.

His brother lived at 2495 East 86th Street and Woodland Avenue, then a Czech neighborhood. He had married a Czech girl and remained with her people. Dusan, however, was homesick for his Serbian folk and so sought out a Serbian community and found and married Milka, a Serbian girl who had also come from Lika. Milka participated in St. Sava's Church activities and was secretary of the Serbian Sisters Circle. Dusan's special talent was preparing the meats at the many St. Sava picnics. For many years, he owned a grocery store at 1534 Waterloo Road. Their children, Martha, Natalia and Milan, are now grown with families of their own. The entire family is active in the Serbian community.

## **George S. Voinovich**

George S. Voinovich's parents immigrated to the United States from Serbia in 1902 and he was born six years later in Beaver, Pennsylvania. His mother died when he was six years old and his father brought him to Cleveland to be raised by his aunt and

uncle. He grew up on the South Side of Cleveland, near Harvard and 78th Street. He attended Warner Elementary School, South Junior High and South High graduating in 1929.

His aunt and uncle wanted him to quit school and go to work when he was 16 but his high school principal convinced them that he should stay in school. His classbook predicted that someday George Voinovich would be an architect and would design buildings under-ground in Yugoslavia.

His friends used to call him lithe professor because he never had time to play. In spite of his busy schedule he found time to participate in school activities and in affairs of St. Sava's Church at 36th Street. (Many years later he would design the new St. Sava's Orthodox Church in Parma, where his funeral services were held in 1974.) He was a great benefactor of the Serbian Monastery in Shadland, Pennsylvania.

Upon graduation from high school he received a Kroger Foods partial scholarship to Carnegie Institute of Technology, now Carnegie Melon, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His friends remember seeing him off at the train depot, carrying a burlap bag full of food. With the scholarship, part-time work and help from friends in the Serbian Community in Pittsburgh, he graduated from Carnegie Tech's School of Architecture. He was registered to practice architecture in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Illinois.

He was with the City of Cleveland Architect's Office in the early 1930s. He was the Assistant Chief Architect in the Cleveland Office of the Home Owner's Loan Corporation and worked for

Walker and Weeks, an outstanding architectural firm. In the late 1930's he went into business for himself and during the war he was the Project Planner for the Federal Public Housing Authority in Northern Ohio. After the war he went back into the private practice of architecture in partnership until 1951 when he formed George S. Voinovich and Associates.

During his early years Voinovich worked on the Shaker Heights Town Hall; Malvern, Ludlow, Fernway and Lomond Elementary Schools; the Administration Building to Hopkins Airport; the Administration Building at Hudson Boys Farm; the Cleveland Public Library and was the consulting architect for the Main Avenue Bridge in Cleveland.

The buildings that he did in his own right in the State of Ohio are the Educational TV and Theater Building and the Life Science Building at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, the additional classroom building at Kent State University, and the largest correctional institution ever built in the State of Ohio, the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility at Lucasville, Ohio. He was also architect for the Hawthornden State Hospital in Macedonia, Ohio and the Ohio Correctional Institution at Marion, Ohio.

Locally, he was the architect for the Parma Community General Hospital, the Garfield Heights City Hall, the Garfield Heights High School, the Maple Heights and Richmond Heights City Halls, the preliminary design work for the Illuminating Building, the Alexander Graham Bell School for the Cleveland Board of Education and the Westside and Eastside Health Centers for the City of Cleveland.

Voinovich was elected president of the Architects Society of Ohio. He also served as a member and president of the State of Ohio Board of Examiners of Architects and served on the City Planning Commission of Cleveland. He received many national awards for his architectural work.

He distinguished himself in civic affairs and believed strongly that those with Eastern European backgrounds should take leadership roles in the community.

He was president of the Builders' Exchange (the first architect to receive this honor), president of the United Churchmen of Cleveland, president of the Cleveland Alumni Association of Carnegie Tech and a member of the Village of Bratenahl City Council.

He was a member of the Kiwanis Club of Cleveland; United Torch Board of Trustees; Board of Managers, Addison Road YMCA; Secretary, Urban League of Cleveland; Treasurer, Lake Erie Girl Scout Council and a member of the Executive Board, Boy Scouts of America. He was holder of the Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award and holder of the Girl Scouts of America Outstanding Service Award.

In 1935 he married Josephine Bernot, a Slovenian girl from Collinwood, whom he met at the Yugoslav University Club, a club of first generation Slavs who had gone to college. He was devoted to his family and constantly stressed the importance of keeping the family unit strong. He was proud of his wife and his four sons and two daughters. His wife was president of the Lake Erie Girl Scout Council. His son George is an attorney

and politician; Michael, a teacher and Assistant Supervisor of Special Education for the Cleveland Board of Education; Paul, a planner and developer; Victor, an accountant and C.P.A.; JoAnne, a teacher; and Maryanne, one of the first women salesmen for the IBM Corporation. Three of his children have masters degrees and one has a doctorate.

## **Dobrosav Milisavljevic**

Milisavljevic was recently elected president of the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church and it was largely through his efforts that the two feuding Serbian groups finally agreed on a settlement in dividing the church properties. He and his wife Helen have worked hard for the Serbian community in the last twenty-five years.

Milisavljevic was a brilliant student in the prestigious Kragujevac Gymnasium (high school in Yugoslavia) and was supposed to gear his education toward the highest ranks in the military command of Yugoslavia, but his education was interrupted by World War II when he was attending the Higher Military Academy of Belgrade. He was taken prisoner in Sarajevo as an officer of the Yugoslav Armed Forces and wound up in a German P.O.W. camp in Nurnberg. After the collapse of Hitler's Germany, Milisavljevic, like thousands of other Serbs, refused to return to Communist Yugoslavia but instead came to the United States in 1950. Here he married Helen, a Serbian girl, and together they have devoted countless hours to the Serbian community of Cleveland, Dobrosav as member and officer of various organizations, Helen in the Serbian Sisters Circle. When

Milan Naperta died shortly after the split within the church occurred, Milisavljevic took over his duties as vice president, later to be elected president in the court-supervised elections.

Dobrosav Milisavljevic took the leadership of the troubled congregation at the time when feelings on both sides of the conflict were the strongest, and when it took patience and intelligence to avoid possible bloodshed and still be the kind of leader to accomplish as much as possible for his followers. He resigned in 1968 for health reasons. Milutin Ristic took his place until 1974, and when he resigned, Milisavljevic was again elected to lead his people. He has retired from his regular job, but is still working full time for the church and community.



Dobrosav and Helen Milisavljevic

## Father Branko Kusonjic

At the regular Annual Assembly of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church of Cleveland on June 3, 1951, Father Kusonjic was elected spiritual leader of Cleveland Serbs over the other two candidates. Father Dazgic from Lebanon, Pennsylvania, and Father Skaljac from Chisholm, Minnesota. Since that time, a period of more than twenty years, Father Kusonjic played a crucial role in the Serbian community of Cleveland.

Father Kusonjic survived the Second World War fighting on the side of General Mikhailovic's chetniks, and when he, too, chose voluntary exile over Communist Yugoslavia, he devoted all his energies to his fellow Serbs. In the true tradition of a Serbian priest, Father Kusonjic was a father, friend, teacher, advisor and a helping hand to everybody. His personal tragedies (the death of his son, and his wife's return to Yugoslavia) had to be pushed aside as hundreds of Serbs came to him daily for guidance and comfort. And when it looked as though the hard work was to be rewarded by serving in a beautiful new church, tragedy struck again: Father Kusonjic had to choose sides in the split within his own church.

Although it was a great hardship for Father Kusonjic to leave so many close friends and good Orthodox Serbs on the "other" side, he went against the Patriarch directives and led his followers through the most troublesome times in the history of the American-Canadian Diocese of the Serbian Eastern Orthodox Church. He saw brother going against brother, friend against friend.

Tired, and weary of the struggle and not in the best of health, he recently resigned and moved to the St. Sava Serbian Monastery in Libertyville, Illinois, leaving St. Sava Church to a younger priest, Father Djuro Majerle, the present pastor of the church. Father Majerle came here from Canada where he served the Serbs for more than three years following his escape from Yugoslavia to Trieste, Italy.

## **Milutin Ristic**

Former career military officer, a World War II immigrant, he came to Cleveland from Germany, where he spent the war years as a prisoner of war. Very active and a leader in various local organizations, he was also president of the church congregation from 1969 to 1974.

## **Djordje Djelic**

Djordje Djelic was born in 1932 and grew up in Banat, Serbia. His father came to the United States in 1951, became a citizen five years later, and then tried to unite his family after years of separation, war and loneliness.

American immigration laws of the 1950's allowed a naturalized citizen to bring his wife, but not children over twenty-one. Therefore, in 1957, when Djordje Djelic came to the United States as a visitor, he had to go through much red tape before he was permitted, in 1960, to stay with his father in Cleveland. He volunteered to join the military service, but was refused due to his age. His struggle to stay in the United States was given



full coverage in a series of articles by the now defunct Cleveland News, and ABC Radio Story.

Ever since he became a permanent resident of Cleveland, Djelic has worked tirelessly at both church and community endeavors. Deeply concerned with the plight of the Serbian immigrant, in 1957 he organized the St. Sava Serbian Youth Club to help newcomers adjust to their new life in Cleveland. The Youth Club provided them with a social outlet in addition to sponsoring sports and cultural events. Djelic's work with Serbian youth was significant enough to merit a Voice of America interview which was subsequently broadcast to Yugoslavia.

The Serbian community benefited greatly from his efforts on behalf of the St. Sava Church in Parma. When the rift in the church occurred, Djelic initiated the Serbian National Radio Program to help explain and clarify the controversy for both Serbians and the general public. With a fellow Serb, Milan Vukadinovic, Djelic formed the Serbian Broadcasting Corporation, in 1974, which broadcasts a Serbian language program daily.

In 1972, he succeeded in bringing 12 groups together into the Council of Serbian Organizations of Greater Cleveland, which he served as executive vice president. He has long been active in the Nationalities Services Center, a member and founder of the American Nationalities Movement of Greater Cleveland, Executive Committee member of the Serbian National Defense Council of America and the Cuyahoga County Republican Party, founder of Serbian Republican League of Ohio, and involved in many other organizations.

In private life, Djelic has worked as a farm hand, a hospital technician, a lab technician in a chemical plant, a county inspector and a realtor. He is married to Miroslava Vladislavljevic.

There are literally hundreds of prominent Serbs who served and are serving the Greater Cleveland Community in many different capacities. While we might seem unjust to mention one and not another, we believe it to be appropriate to mention at least some:

Dan Backin, NASA Engineer

Steve and Gene Trukalo, Executives, Newman & Stern Company

Milan Dragisic, Warner and Swasey Company

Milan Sekulic, Cleveland Trust Company

Borivoje Karapandzic, Surveyor, Author

Milan Vukadinovic, Teacher, Radio Producer, Writer

Mike Zuber, Insurance Company

Nick Radlick, Politics, Councilman of Parma Heights

Mihailo Minich, Author

Paul Mitrovich, Lake County Prosecutor

Alex Zugic, Cleveland Trust Company

Ratko Laoboja, M.D.

Lidia Ljuboja, M.D.

Predrag Nastasic, M.D.

Bosko Pop-Lazic, M.D.

Milan Radivoyevitch, M.D.

Olga Radosavljevic-Gradojevic, Cleveland Institute of Music

Vera Zugic, Teacher, Cleveland Public Schools

Martha Mirich, Teacher, John Marshall High School

Dorothy Winovich, Dean of Girls, Thomas Jefferson Junior High

Mary Visnic, Teacher, Parma Schools

Joanne Pavicic, Teacher, Parma Schools

Mihajlo Mesarovic, M.D., Ph.D., Case Western Reserve University

Aleksandar Petkovic, Engineer

Milos Milenkovic, Engineer

Dusan Citovic, insurance company and travel agency

Miodrag Panic, Continental Travel Agency

Slavoljub Rajevic, Yorktown Tavern

Vasilije Komnenic, Teacher, Author

Vladimir Mitich, Teacher

Paul Cosic, Cosic Realty

Dan Cosic, Family Discount Shoe Store

Tom Rakic, Tom Rakic Tailoring, Inc., Diamond Men's Stores

Misa Jokanovic, Lake Erie Diecasting Company

Milojko Perisic, Architect

Dragisa Krstovic, Era Machines

Ljubisa Zivkovic, Cabinet Maker

Slobodan Borovica, Broadview Drapery and Carpeting Company

Milovan Cicin, Cicin Wood Products, Inc.

Zvonko Petkovic, Kvarda Cleaners

Sofija Simovic, beauty salon

Vidoje Nikolic, Europe at Night Restaurant

Bata Dimitrijevic, dry cleaning

Tom Simic, Simic & Son Contractors

Petar Topalski, Lada Construction Company

Milan and Rose Yovich, bankers

Alex Machaskee, Assistant to the Publisher, Plain Dealer

George Borato, imports

Joe Lapshevich, real estate broker

Mirko Sholjaga, Cabinet Maker

Marinko Petrovic, tailor

D. Petkovic, Tailor

Meleta Damjanovic, Tailor

Sava Popov, Butcher

Milan Turajlic, Photographer

Rajko Matovic, Auto Salesman

Stanko Sarceвич, Auto Salesman

Steve Opalich, Industrialist, Politician

Steve Babin, Investor

Boza Nedeljkovic, Tavern

Steve Dale, Drapery

Mr. Rafailovich, Teacher

Branko Uzelac, Tavern

Milan Bozickovic, Tavern

Spasenije Zegarac, Tavern

Veibor Vasiljevich, Tavern

Milan Stojisavljevic, Industry

Dr. Milan Vukcevich, Research Dept., General Electric Company

Vera Diklich, Banker

Vojin Gradojevic, Physicist

Paul Voinovich, Architect

Vladimir Scherbin, Electrical Engineer

Konstantin Malesevich, Technician

Miladin Pejic, Electrician

Rade Stojisavljevic, Management

Aleksandar Cukic, Management

Robert Medic, Management

Sava Djurka, Welder

George Bozickovic, Electrician

Drago Savich, Cooling & Heating Specialty

Mila Vukadinovic, Banking

Zivka Petkovic, Banking

Radmila Ilic, Banking

Vladimir Lazukic, Machinist

Steve Coso, Management

Strahinja Ilic, Die Maker

Mladen Beros, Technician

Mrs. Mladen Beros, Biologist

Ljuba Mijatov, Biologist

Miroslava Ristic, Banker

Miroslav Ristic, Engineering

Vojislav Spasic, Teacher

Milorad Karcic, Engineer

Aleksandar Karcic, Engineer

Milan Kecman, Art





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