

SERBIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS

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# SERBIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONS

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE  
PROCEEDINGS

National Parliament – Republic of Serbia  
Belgrade, September 11, 2019



Novi Sad / Beograd  
2019

### ***Co-Chairmen of the Conference***

Dragan Šormaz, Member of the Serbian Parliament, Head of Serbian-American Parliamentary Caucuses

Vladimir Marinković, PhD, Deputy President of the Serbian Parliament, Founding member of INIS

Darko Trifunović, PhD, Director of the Institute for National and International Security – INIS

### **Opening**

H. E. Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia

### **Keynote speakers**

H. E. Kyle Randolph Scott, U.S. Ambassador to Serbia

Major General John C. Harris Jr., Assistant Adjutant General, Ohio Army National Guard

H. E. Ivica Dačić, The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia

H. E. Nebojša Stefanović, Vice President of the Serbian Government and Minister of Police

H. E. Aleksandar Vulin, Minister of Defense, Serbia

H. E. Mladen Sarčević, Minister of Education, Science and Technological Development, Serbia

H. E. Aleksandar Antić, Minister of Mining and Energy, Serbia

## STRIDE TOWARD VALUE

Oxford Dictionary researchers have stated that the past year's "word of the year," that is, the most often used word on the planet, was adjective "toxic" meaning "poisoned." It referred to both natural and social phenomena and interpersonal relationships. This information uniquely alerts that the tendency to destroy both natural environments and the broadest cultural values is, in fact, a global phenomenon that is in unpredictable movement and momentum. Many factors contribute to this atmosphere, but in our opinion, certainly one of the most significant is a limited or controlled supply of unlimited knowledge horizon for humans. One adjusts, through media monopolies and educational policies, to accept the picture of reality that translates the basic human need for knowledge into indolent adoption of recommended norms that dull curiosity and perceive activism as a threatening tendency.

A unique and striking response to this narrative is to stimulate the development of research work and face all the possible controversies and issues that can arise in the process. Also, the model of dialogue and *democraticity* when presenting adopted views is the most adequate form of mutual respect and tolerance which knocks the bottom out of the canonization of any scientific advances and reluctantly rests upon axioms. The need for constant review of and doubt in existing achievements is proof that scientific discipline evolves and before them becomes void and unworthy skepticism out of malice, that is, abuse of responsibility and commitment of researchers. We believe that with these Proceedings which refer to most often tabooed and otherwise very complex relations between Serbia and the USA, the scientific community in Serbia, as well as the state supporting it, makes another great stride in the interdisciplinary approach to shedding light on thematic and problematic strongholds that have marked national correlations.

The most significant contribution of this particular project seems visible, on the one hand, in the openness employed in its writing with-

out reservation due to possible criticism, and on the other hand, in the presented accountability of the pronounced that instantly unmask any unscientific attack as an ideological mimicry of strikingly short duration. This avoided the anachronous character of the manuscript, as well as its negative context in the form of a stereotype about implied “truths.” The existing contradictions of the Serbia–US relations are part of a process of reciprocal relationships that have lasted for more than a century and have had their own negative and positive implications. The ambivalent relationship was motivated by numerous state and national interests, and a considerable number thereof was, in our view, a consequence of underdeveloped communication and the lacking need for nurturing existing cultural heritage in interrelationships.

In this act, the Serbian and American social elites bear equal responsibility, and further research is to indicate the circumstances that have led to them and the character of their manifestation, without hesitation and with the willingness to accept critical challenging, but not belittling. That way, the burden of incompleteness and acceptable fabrications will be forced to retreat before research sharpness. Its role is decisive in the simultaneous processes of suppressing irrational projections and nurturing of an analytical approach in geopolitical reflections.

Scarce existing research into Serbia–US relations, with one of the most significant being the work by Professor Dragoljub Živojinović: *U potrazi za zaštitnikom, studije o srpsko-američkim vezama 1878–1920*, will be significantly enriched by the coming works. The interdisciplinary character of the works and different authors’ research interests indicate a particular satisfaction with the role of *spiritus movens* these Proceedings can provide. Historical research, geopolitical analytics, legal contextualisation of relationships, issues of student future, new contents of the archives institution activities, bold dividing reflections, as well as other topics presented in the Proceedings, in our opinion, offer an openness in the texts written precisely to intrigue debate and initiate the affirmation of scientific interest. It is this targeted purpose that is the only way to confront approximate estimates and unfounded, but easily acceptable half-truths that have neglected the holistic approach and fostered segregation of data according to their own intentions. It is also the path to, as our renowned philosopher Mihailo Đuric wrote, “true humanistic education” which “does not erase or nullify, but preserves

and refines national differences and peculiarities.” On this path, “no universal man who was previously not instilled awareness of a man of a particular nation, of a particular language, of a certain history, can be brought up.”<sup>1</sup> Attached to their traditional values being rediscovered by both Serbian and American society in the main streams of their modernization, they build a future ready for challenges of both many antinomy layers and the revival of alliance and mutually aligned interests.

Nebojša Kuzmanović, PhD  
Darko Trifunović, PhD

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<sup>1</sup> Mihailo Đurić, „Ogledalo srpsko“, *Srbija i Evropa između prošlosti i budućnosti: letopis jugoslovenske tragedije*, BIGZ, Beograd – Bonart, Nova Pazova 2003, p. 55–56.



## INTRODUCTION

The Serbian-American Relations Conference, that will be held in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, organized by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia and the Institute for National and International Security – INIS, is another confirmation that the relations between the two countries are headed in a good direction and it shows that cooperation can be brought to a level that they were when the two countries and their people were allies. It is important to note that apart from politicians and businessmen, several scientists will also be taking part which means that cooperation will extend from economic and political fields to science, education, innovations, new technologies and culture.

This speaks volumes about how a great amount of people in the Republic of Serbia are interested in cooperating with the USA, fully realizing the importance of this country as the largest political and economic force in the world but also the strongest democracy whose values, and principles that it was founded on, include the highest standards in all fields of social life. The USA and its citizens create a large amount of ideas every day, as well as initiatives, businesses and innovations that benefit the whole planet. The American economy is an example of a long-lasting process, permanent progress and the growth that creates an environment for personal development, constant growth of the spirit of entrepreneurship, culture and work ethics, which creates competition and new possibilities for citizens under equal conditions and equal chances to achieve prosperity, development and progress.

Serbia is located in a very complex geopolitical position but is determined to modernize, advance and to create a quality environment for the life of its citizens. In the last 5 years, highly successful economic and political reforms have been implemented whereby Serbia today is a lot stronger and influential than a few years before, which is all thanks to President Vučić who created the reforms and at the same time did a lot

with regards to strengthening the international position of our country that has been completely devastated from 2000 to 2012. He managed to rebuild economic and political alliances with many countries and of course with the USA whose companies are investing more and more in Serbia while members of the political establishment are interested in creating stronger alliances with our country.

It is without a doubt that our people can't forget the disagreements and conflict with the USA in the not-so-distant past but surely there exists a crucial group that is interested in developing relations, and it is very important that a good will and an outstretched hand is present at the other side. I am sure that the leadership of President Trump and President Vučić will result in our countries becoming once again close and trustworthy partners which will positively reflect on the lives of the citizens of Serbia and on the position of our country in the international framework. The USA and the people of America are one of the most important donors to our country, whereby American companies employ around 17 000 of our citizens, the USA strongly supports the European integration of Serbia and most importantly they take into consideration Serbia and our legitimate interests.

Every chance for strengthening cooperation with the USA is very important, including every new partnership, investment, friendship in the House of Representatives, Senate, State Department, universities, theater, sport club... As responsible people we will continue to work in the interest of our own country and cooperation with the USA and possible strategic partnership will surely bring us into an alliance like the one we had a hundred years ago, in both good and harsh times. This conference will be a small step and I'm positive that it will be a quality contribution to achieving the goal and a new era of good relations between Serbia and the USA.

Vladimir Marinković, PhD  
Republic of Serbia  
National Assembly Deputy Speaker,  
President of Serbian-Israeli Parliamentary Caucus,  
President of Serbian-American Congress

Gregory R. Copley\*

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## A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR US–SERBIAN RELATIONS

A Rare Window of Opportunity Opens for the US in the Balkans

**Abstract:** The author notes that this period in history provides a unique opportunity for the advancement of US–Serbian relations. Mutual contributions between Serbia and the US are mentioned as well as their gradual decline during Socialist Yugoslavia. Other countries, such as Russia, PRC and Turkey, are taking the opportunity to spread their influence in the region, and the US should take the opportunity to do the same. Among the ways that the US can contribute is in their support for a solution between Serbs and Albanians concerning Kosovo. One of the solutions that is emphasized is given by Darko Trifunović, Head of the Institute for National and International Security. Furthering relations with Serbia would put the US in a favorable position in the entire Balkan region.

**Keywords:** US–Serbian relations, Kosovo, Turkish influence, border adjustments

The new Trifunović Plan<sup>1</sup> to provide the basis of a resolution of the long-festering question of the future of Kosovo – and therefore of Serbia and Albania – possibly cannot gain traction without the active support and efforts of the United States. It is one of the few areas in the current global framework which is uniquely suited to the arbitration skills of the US, because of Washington’s rôle during the past three decades in the

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<sup>1</sup> Described below.

region, and therefore offers a positive opportunity for the US Administration of US Pres. Donald Trump.

As a prelude to studying this opportunity, it is fair to say that 95 percent of the history of US–Serbian relations over the past 150 years – to the extent they were active at all – was marked by warmth, cooperation, and shared values. And, as is mostly the way in asymmetric relationships, when one power is strategically more powerful than the other, the junior partner gives disproportionately to the senior in terms of blood and loyalty.

The junior partner is highly conscious of the senior, but the senior usually shows little understanding and appreciation of the junior.

This is not atypical in the history of strategic relationships and alliances.<sup>2</sup>

It is because of that failure by the US to understand and appreciate Serbia that a decade of the past 150 years of their relationship was marred by actions which profoundly damaged the strategic welfare of both states. Washington, in particular, is now paying a heavy price for that misunderstanding. It did not help that for 45 years of that relationship Serbia was virtually forgotten by the US in the period when Serbia was obscured within a communist Yugoslavia Socialist Federal Republic. Arguably it was also forgotten by the US as a separate entity as well during the years of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1918 until World War II. So any understandings of mutual warmth and Serbian support for the US also slipped into obscurity in the minds of the US politicians and public.

Arguably, the creation of the Yugoslav federation in 1918 was the worst thing that could have happened to US–Serbian relations, because the very name of Serbia was subordinated or forgotten in the US. But the final 45-year communist period as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was the worst of the worst for the US–Serbian relationship.

Forgotten was the fact that Serbia had earlier provided a significant portion of its population to the United States at critical times in the history

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<sup>2</sup> See, Copley, Gregory R.: Chapter 19, “Loyalty and Survival”, in *The Art of Victory*. New York, 2006: Simon & Schuster Threshold Editions. The maxim reads: “Mutual loyalty exists only between equals. In all other instances, loyalty flows only in any durable form from the weaker to the more powerful.”

of both countries. Serbia's great scientist, Nikola Tesla<sup>3</sup>, disproportionately contributed to setting the US on its path toward the modern era – the era of electricity and electronics – in a way which was pivotal to the urbanization and scientific progress of the US. Tesla was a decisive, disruptive figure who, more than almost anyone else, put the US into economic, social, and scientific efficiency, enabling the US to emerge as the world's most powerful economy. Tesla's contributions outweighed many others.

But what would have happened if Tesla had been able to evolve his genius in Serbia rather than the US? Would the Serbian culture of that time have nurtured his abilities and actions in the way that the US environment did? But regardless of any such speculation, Tesla was a gift to the US in the same way that countless other Serbs contributed enormously to the industrial and fighting strength of the US, including their participation in the aerospace industry and particularly the *Apollo* space program. Or that Serbian-Americans as a group won the greatest number of the highest US award for valor: the Congressional Medal of Honor. This is all basic knowledge to the Serbian people, even if it is less known and appreciated in the US.

Indeed, the very fact that this contribution was less known and less appreciated in the US is what allowed the rupture in US-Serbian relations to occur at the end of the Cold War with the collapse of the Yugoslav state which contained Serbia. It was the near-total ignorance in the US polity toward Serbia in 1990-91 which allowed US Pres. William Clinton (1993-2001), for reasons which had more to do with his own views and domestic political challenges than because of US strategic interests, to intervene in the affairs of the Balkans in a way which profoundly damaged the strategic wellbeing of Serbia.<sup>4</sup> Much of that damage has yet to be rectified.

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<sup>3</sup> Tesla, Nikola; b. July 10, 1856, in Tecna (then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire); died January 7, 1943. He emigrated to the US in 1884.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Copley, Gregory R.: "The New Rome & The New Religious Wars", in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, March 1999. The report gave some of the background to the US interventions against Serbia and Serbs. It also cited the remark in the 11-12/1992 edition of *Strategic Policy* in which this author also noted: "Incoming President Clinton will be tempted to take fast, populist decisions on the Balkans crisis, and these could be fatal for any chances for peace there. ... Bill Clinton campaigned for the US Presidency without touching on strategic issues. Now he must learn to lead the US through the most dangerous global morass for perhaps 70 years."

And even following that period – after, say, the 1990–2019 time-frame, a three-decade era – the US remains largely ignorant of the history of Serbian support for the US and the West; it remains largely ignorant of the strategic importance, geopolitically, of Serbia in the heartland of South-Eastern Europe; and it remains totally ignorant of the historical and recent underpinnings of the war in which Washington became implacably opposed to its onetime Serbian ally.

In other words, the critical elements of the US–Serbian relationship have *still* not been addressed adequately by the US. And Serbia itself has not acted comprehensively to correct this situation. Nonetheless, because the US now finds itself strategically challenged globally, it is prepared to look Serbia in the eye to at least some degree. The US is in significant competition with other powers to retain influence in Western Europe, South-Eastern Europe, and the Eastern Mediterranean. And Washington is now somewhat more humbled than when it began its offensive against Serbia in the 1990s. That is not to say that the US yet comprehends South-Eastern Europe at the priority level it merits, but – particularly with the collapse of US–Turkish relations and the substantial rise in Russian and Peoples Republic of China regional engagement – Washington now sees a need to restructure its capabilities in the broader Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean.

What is perhaps one of the few fortunate openings for Washington in recent years is that events have conspired in the Eastern Mediterranean to open a new strategic opportunity for the United States, essentially allowing it to fill the vacuum caused by the loss of Turkish allegiance and the rise of Russian, PRC, and Iranian influence.

Turkey, by moving further toward Russia as well as making its own bid to revive the Ottoman sphere of influence and a new pan-Turkism, has forced the US to consider strengthening its strategic and military relationship with other, long-neglected allies in the region. Washington has already begun rebuilding military-political ties with Greece – particularly with the election of the New Democracy Government of Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis – and Cyprus, and has begun to rebuild a relationship with Serbia. Washington has supported the trilateral Israel–Cyprus–Greece economic and military relationship, and encouraged its expansion to include Egypt in some aspects because of overlapping energy exploitation interests. And it is no coincidence that the Serbian–Israeli links have deepened over recent years.

Washington, indeed, has little choice but to revisit the region and to consider new relationships.

Serbia had been a great historical ally of the US, and then had become merely a curiosity for it during the communist 45-plus years of Socialist Yugoslavia. And because of that interregnum and isolation from US thinking, Serbia was, even after the fall of communism, abandoned by the US in the break-up of Yugoslavia and the war which followed in the 1990s. The US Clinton Administration delivered unspeakable insults to its old ally by ensuring the erosion of its rights and its territory in the Dayton Accords of 1995, which cut the territory of the Bosnian Serbs by half; the Rambouillet “agreement” which was unilaterally thrust on Yugoslavia in 1999 (with Yugoslavia’s rejection of it being the basis for NATO to start the war against Serbia), and then in carving out of Serbia’s heartland in 2008 a new, artificial “nation”, based on a population of illegal Albanian immigrants: Kosovo.

And yet today Kosovo offers the US no real benefits, but only innumerable ongoing problems. Even the US base in Kosovo, Camp Bondsteel, has little strategic purpose, and which, despite the huge cost to the US taxpayer, now houses only around 1,400 US National Guard troops.

Kosovo’s sovereignty has not been universally recognized, especially by Serbia, as the US had hoped, and even Kosovo’s initial recognition by many states has been regretted by governments which originally recognized Kosovo merely as an act of support to the US. Some governments have gone to the extreme length of withdrawing recognition. This has led to the point where today the governments of Albania and Kosovo have begun the creation of joint diplomatic legations internationally, so that Kosovo could, in essence, “piggyback” on Albania’s more ready acceptance as a sovereign nation-state.<sup>5</sup>

In this lies the seed of a solution for all parties.

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<sup>5</sup> Kosovo and Albania on July 3, 2019, signed an agreement on unifying and coordinating their foreign policies, which would include joint embassies. As the website, *Balkan Insight* reported (by author Blerta Begisholli, from Priština), Kosovo Foreign Minister Behgjet Pacolli said: “This is a big step ahead to come together in front of the world and act as a [single] nation,” he continued, referring to the fact that both Balkan countries are mainly ethnic Albanian. Albanian Foreign Minister Cakaj said he felt honored to conclude such an agreement. “It opens new horizons for joint institutional action as we move ever closer towards deep national integration,” Cakaj wrote on Twitter.

At the same time, we have seen Serbian Pres. Aleksandar Vučić substantially step up the search for a creative solution to the Kosovo problem.

Serbia, despite being weakened by the results of the war of the 1990s, remains a critical and stable hub of South-Eastern Europe, as witnessed by the campaign by Russia to build its influence with Belgrade. Can Russia have Turkey *and* the Balkans both? Would this provoke the US and EU too far?

And can Turkey, after its past several years of escalating hostility toward the US, expect to be rewarded with revived dominance over the Balkan states?

In all this, what are some of the key factors which lead to a strategic opening for the US, Serbia, Albania, and Kosovo, as well as providing a solution which would substantially ease the challenge of the Balkans for the European Union and NATO, and key regional states such as Greece?

- **Turkey's Alliance with Russia:** Turkey, which sees itself as the key benefactor of Islam and as traditional overlord of the Balkans, has now created a *de facto* alliance of necessity with Russia. This is inimical to US, EU, and NATO interests, and particularly to the interests of Greece;
- **Turkey's Alliance with Iran:** The Turkish Government in 2019 created an express and explicit alliance with Iran to challenge US and Western interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and Persian Gulf. Iran has been, with Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and others, a principal driver in the use of the Balkans as a hub of Islamist-*ji-hadist* activities.
- **The Kosovo Problem:** The existence of a separate state of Kosovo has emerged as a problem for the US, a disaster for Serbia, and what is now emerging as an unrealizable dream for Albania. It has also emerged as a reality which cannot be resolved by merely attempting to force Serbia to accept the loss of lands which have the deepest and most iconic sense of centrality to Serbia's national saga of identity. How do all parties to the dilemma, including Russia (if it wishes to retain any of its historical friendship and leverage with Serbia), proceed toward resolution?

In July 2019, Serbian professor Dr Darko Trifunović proposed a formula which could circumvent the need for Serbia to formally recognize Kosovo, but which could still provide both the Albanian Government and Kosovo Albanians with a unique opportunity to create a far more important geopolitical entity. At the same time, the move would substantially and positively impact the stability and strategic viability of Serbia while limiting the construction of a landbridge of Islamist activity of the type favored by Turkey and Iran into the heart of Europe.

Dr Trifunović, who heads the Institute for National and International Security (INIS) in Belgrade, and who is a Senior Fellow of the International Strategic Studies Association, publisher of the *Defense & Foreign Affairs* reports, on July 27, 2019, proposed a framework of territorial exchanges.

These exchanges, the basis of a normalization between Serbia and Albania, would see the northern, ethnically Serbian, area of Kosovo returned to Serbian control and a corridor of traditionally Serbian-populated Western Albania handed to Serbia to give it back its access to the Adriatic sea, in exchange for an acceptance of the merger of the Kosovo “state” into Albania, substantially expanding the geography of a “greater Albanian” state.

The area of Northern Albania ceded would be the traditionally Serbian lands, including, for example, the historical medieval Serbian city of Skadar, and its region, now called Shkoder. Albania would receive the Kosovo region south of the Ibar River.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Prof. Trifunović was quoted in the Serbian news site, [www.alo.rs](http://www.alo.rs), on July 27, 2019, as saying: “This is our opportunity. A fair proposal should be made to [US Pres. Donald] Trump because he is pragmatic. The proposal would consist in the fact that we should have a dialogue directly with Tiranë and not with Priština. How could we talk to someone suspected of war crimes (such as [Kosovo Pres. and Kosovo Liberation Army founder/leader Hachim] Thaçi, [Kosovo Liberation Army leader] Kadri Veseli, and [Kosovo Liberation Army leader Ramush] Haradinaj ... The proposal is that Serbia would exchange territories with Albania; that is, in exchange for what is south of [the] Ibar [river], Serbia would receive the Shkoder region with [the ancient Serbian city of] Shkodra [Skadar]. Serbs in enclaves should receive the maximum protection [as is] enjoyed by Albanians in Serbia, and the same should apply to monasteries.” Asked if he feared whether individuals would accuse him of making the “Greater Albania” through such a land exchange, he replied: “How do I make a Greater Albania when I advocate that Serbia go out to sea? It is a fair proposal and a compromise and so everyone would get something and everyone would lose something. And then we

Such an internationally-accepted enlarged Albania would resolve the issue for Albania and the Kosovo authorities of legitimizing the combined entity internationally.

This would provide Tiranë with the greatest Albanian strategic advance in centuries (while perhaps still not fully satiating the craving for a “Greater Albania” which seeks parts of Northern Macedonia and even Montenegro), but would also re-establish Serbian stability and prosperity to help guard the South-Eastern European framework of logistics, via the Danube-Sava rivers, and down to the Adriatic/ Mediterranean.

There is no question that many Albanians and many Serbs will argue that such an exchange does not satisfy deep-seated historical quests, or restore iconic national heartlands (for Serbia), but such a gesture would be a strategic win-win for Serbia and the Albanians (of Albania and the Albanian diaspora in Kosovo). And it would resolve fundamental issues for Europe (not just the European Union), and the US.

Quite apart from current and projected geopolitical realities, the US has a particular historical engagement which it needs to consider: the commitment of the US by Pres. Woodrow Wilson, on January 6, 1918; the 14-point “Program for the Peace of the World”.

This was at the heart of Prof. Trifunović’s proposal insofar as engagement of US good offices toward the resolution of the Kosovo dispute was concerned. Wilson fully recognized the uniquely heavy burden which Serbia shouldered in opposing the Triple Alliance powers around Germany in World War I, losing the largest number of its troops and civilians of any combatant power in the war. He ordered the Serbian flag to be flown over the White House as an unprecedented mark of respect.

Point XI of the 14 Points notes: “Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated [by foreign forces]; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea ...”

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would not have to recognize Kosovo. We should deliver this proposal to [Pres.] Trump as soon as possible, and we can do it through our friends in Israel. I am convinced that the US President would support this proposal. Any party which rejected the resolution would have America on its back and would then be pressured by sanctions. Such a solution can in no way affect Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH), which was made on the basis of the Dayton Agreement, because the proposed understanding with Albania would be a mutual exchange of territories.”

The longer the Kosovo problem degrades, from the US perspective, the more difficult it becomes for the sole US base in the Balkans, Camp Bondsteel, in Kosovo, to retain its utility. A resolution of the Kosovo situation in which Serbia recognizes an enlarged Albania which would include most of what is now Kosovo enhances the security and strategic viability of all. Greece, though remaining cautious of Albanian intentions toward both Greece and Northern Macedonia, could be expected, too, to support the outcome.

Prof. Trifunović noted: “A fair proposal should be made to [US Pres. Donald] Trump because he is pragmatic. The proposal would consist in the fact that we should have a dialogue directly with Tiranë and not with Priština.”

A win-win-win situation for Albania, Serbia, and the US would also, in fact, provide tangible benefits for the European Union, strengthening the stability of its south-eastern extremities at a time when the most vulnerable EU border with the east is with Turkey. This is particularly significant at a time when Turkey may once again prove to be a volatile element, possibly stimulating a resurgence in refugee and migrant flows from the Middle East into Europe.

As well, in June 2019, Kosovo Pres. Hashim Thaci started a new discourse about Kosovo joining Albania, after his former call for “border corrections” between Kosovo and Serbia failed to get traction. Clearly, with Kosovo ready to talk “border adjustments”, and Kosovo and Albania discussing the merger of their states in some respects, the time is right for all parties to come to the table with a constructive plan.<sup>7</sup> Clearly, the viability of Kosovo lies in being part of its fellow Albanian state, Albania, even if some in Tiranë might be concerned that the aggressive KLA-based leadership could take a disproportionate share of power in a united state.

Would the Trifunović Plan – which could be good for Serbia, Albania, Kosovo, and the US – necessarily be seen as a negative strategic proposition for Russia or the People’s Republic of China (PRC)? No, not necessarily. Indeed, given Belgrade’s historically open relationships with

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<sup>7</sup> As well, on July 2, 2019, Hashim Thaci noted: “New circumstances are being created, and the best solution would be that two parliaments, of Kosovo and Albania, approve the statements of the people’s wish to live in a single state.”

Moscow and Beijing, it could well be that the improved strategic viability of Serbia (and Albania) resulting from the accommodation would also be seen as favorable for Russia and the PRC.

What is significant is that although Russia currently benefits from the dynamic of the new Russia–Turkey relationship, and while the PRC might be open to dealings with Turkey, the reality is that both Russia and the PRC are anxious to see a reduction in Turkey’s flirtation with *jihadist*, Islamist, and pan-Turkist or Ottomanish terrorism and with its political interventions into the Caucasus (in the case of Russia) and Xinjiang (in the case of the PRC). Indeed, Moscow and Beijing are happy to have improved ties with Turkey – for separate strategic realities – but equally each wishes to see Turkish Pres. Reçep Tayyip Erdoğan constrained.

Neither Russia nor the PRC wish to see Erdoğan’s ambitions fulfilled to revive Turkish influence in the Persian Gulf, Arabian Peninsula, or Red Sea/Horn of Africa regions. That would potentially disrupt the nascent pax-Russo-Sinica which is replacing Western influence in that part of the Middle East.<sup>8</sup> Russia and the PRC each clearly see the inalienable linkage between the Middle East – including the Red Sea/Suez sea lane (SLOC) – and the Eastern Mediterranean. And the Eastern Mediterranean’s inherent linkage with the Balkans.

But there is little doubt that both Russia and the PRC would wish to see any short-term US advantage in the Balkans remain just that: short-term.

In the meantime, Serbia is in a position to act as a neutral and increasingly influential center for the consolidation and mediation of issues within the Eastern Orthodox Christian communities, given the recent polarization caused by the creation of autocephaly by some of the Orthodox community in Ukraine, at the expense of Russia. And now, once again, Orthodoxy is playing a significant rôle in the outcomes in the Red Sea as the end occurs of some 45 years of communist secularism in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

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<sup>8</sup> See, particularly, Bodansky, Yossef: “The Dawn of the Chinese Gulf: Saudi Arabia and the UAE move away from the US as Iran cements its ties with Beijing and Moscow”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*, August 12, 2019.

The linkages between Orthodox Christian societies is, in the case of Serbia and Ethiopia, paralleled by the historical linkage between Serbia and Ethiopia during the Yugoslav Tito years and the era of Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia. If the Middle East-Mediterranean linkage is critical to the strategic thinking of Russia and the PRC, then the iconic rôle of Serbia as a player in this – thanks to Tito, Haile Selassie, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) – is relevant today.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, though the Non-Aligned Movement is now departed, the rôle of Belgrade as a bridge or a space between the Eastern and Western powers has remained, and this makes Serbia, once again, the “neural ground” which can provide an acceptable buffer between the PRC-Russia *bloc* and the West.

So in some senses, post-Soviet Russia has for some time had a view of Russian-Serbian relations while the US has not had a commensurate view of US–Serbian relations. But the US has begun to awaken to the need for a cohesive policy toward Serbia. The visit to Serbia in July 2019 of a US State Department-sponsored public diplomacy mission by aerospace veteran (and Serbian–American) David Vuich, to pay tribute to the rôle of Serbian Americans in the *Apollo* space program, was a hesitant start to this revival.

It is yet to become apparent whether or not the US Trump Administration, or, indeed, the inertia-dominated bureaucracies of the State Department and the Defense Department, comprehend the need to see Serbia as a centerpiece for a new US Balkan strategy to counterbalance the “loss” of Turkey.

But it is clear that the Trifunović Opportunity gives great impetus and urgency to Washington to seize an opportunity to find a rare and important strategic victory at a critical time in history. It would not only start to correct some of the damage the US committed in the Balkans in the 1990s, it might also provide a significant and positive foreign policy action which could impact the November 2020 US elections.

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<sup>9</sup> See, Copley, Gregory R., et al: *Rise of the RedMed : How the Mediterranean-Red Sea Nexus is Resuming its Strategic Centrality*. Alexandria, Virginia, 2016: the International Strategic Studies Association and the Gusau Institute.

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**Gregori R. Kopli**

### **NOVA STRATEŠKA OSNOVA ZA AMERIČKO-SRPSKE ODNOSI**

#### **Jedinstvena prilika pruža se Americi na Balkanu**

##### Rezime

Autor naglašava da ovaj period u istoriji stvara jedinstvenu mogućnost za napredak američko-srpskih odnosa. Pominju se međusobni doprinosi između Srbije i Amerike kao i njihovo postepeno opadanje za vreme socijalističke Jugoslavije. Druge države, poput Rusije, NRK i Turske, koriste ovu šansu da prošire svoj uticaj na region i Amerika bi trebalo da iskoristi mogućnost da učini isto. Sjedinjene Američke Države mogu da doprinesu time što će pomoći u iznalaženju rešenja među Srbima i Albancima u vezi sa Kosovom. Jedno od rešenja koje je naglašeno, dao je Darko Trifunović, direktor Centra za nacionalnu i međunarodnu bezbednost. Unapređenje odnosa sa Srbijom stavilo bi SAD u dobru poziciju u balkanskom regionu.

Ključne reči: američko-srpski odnosi, Kosovo, turski uticaj, korekcija granica

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## SERBIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONS – SECURITY AND GEOPOLITICAL ASPECTS

**Abstract:** Serbia and the United States have always been allies with the exception of the last few decades during the rule of pro-Bolsheviks headed by dictator Slobodan Milošević and his wife Mirjana Marković. President Wilson was a key person, together with Serbian and American scientist Mihajlo Pupin, to emphasize the importance of American–Serbian relations. The US, headed by President Wilson, took significant part in defining borders of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croat and Slovenes. US support was namely directed toward Serbs with great respect to Serbia's desire to include, within the new kingdom, those Slavic nations which were defeated in WWI. During WWII and despite the fact that the US and its allies abandoned the heroic General Mihailović and his units, who saved hundreds of lives of US pilots, our Western allies play their cards on Josip Broz Tito and his troops on the territory of Yugoslavia. Tito was the only leader who opposed Hitler and Stalin at the same time. During the Cold War, US policy concerning Yugoslavia was clearly directed in such a way as to demonstrate that Yugoslavia, a communist later socialist country, can be an ally of the West with all possible benefits. The greatest success of the neo-Stalinists is the turning of Serbia, and the Serbian people, against the West and putting all of us in the service of Russia's foreign political interests. Serbia and the Serbian people are the biggest victims of the ideologists' propaganda which is why Serbia needs help.

**Keywords:** Serbia, US, relations, security, geopolitical, cooperation, Cold War, Yugoslavia

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## Introduction

Serbian–American relations had different phases. From great friendships, understandings and alliances to our modern history where two countries were on the opposite side. America was a dream for many Serbs who were leaving the Balkan Peninsula. Many Serbs have realized their dream in America. The first of these was George Šagić (George Fisher), followed by the Nikola Tesla and Mihajlo Pupin, as the most famous examples. Nine congressmen, four Pulitzer Prize winners, Oscar winners and six thousand heroes of the US Army made the Serbian community in US one of the smallest yet one with the most remarkable impact on US society. Serbia and the United States have always been allies with the exception the last few decades during the rule of pro-Bolsheviks headed by dictator Slobodan Milosević and his wife Mirjana Marković. The United States was among the first countries in the World to established diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Serbia in 1882. H. E. Mr. Eugene Schuyler was the first US Ambassador designated to Serbia on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1882 from Athens, Greece.<sup>1</sup>

## President Woodrow Wilson and Serbia

The United States had joined the Allied Powers in fighting the Central Powers on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1917.

President Woodrow Wilson addressed to the nation in a famous speech known as the Fourteen Points.<sup>2</sup> In his speech to Congress, President Wilson declared fourteen points which he regarded as essential for long-lasting peace in the World. Serbia as ally was mention in chapter XI. “Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and econom-

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<sup>1</sup> *Department of State Publication: Department and Foreign Service series*, Department of State, Washington D.C, US, 1948, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> President Woodrow Wilson, *The Fourteen Points Speech*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, Scotts Valley CA, US, 2017.

ic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into". In this historical document, Serbia was granted free and secure access to the sea. For Serbia, this support from a great ally was very important. Above all, reintegration of occupied territories, free and secure access to the sea and international guarantees for political and economic independence in the geopolitical and security sense for Serbia has great importance.

President Wilson personally monitored a famous operation in the Adriatic Sea in September of 1918. Austria-Hungary had addressed a peace note to the United States, but President Wilson was suspicious of its sincerity and rejected it. In the following month, Austria-Hungary joined Germany in requesting a peace treaty on the basis of Wilson's Fourteen Points. By this time, Wilson had already recognized the Czech National Council and was sympathetic to Yugoslav national aspirations to the point that the opportunity for autonomous development, that Wilson's Tenth Point had asserted to the peoples of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, was no longer enough. Wilson had already gone further and had tacitly recognized the intention to dissolve the Austro-Hungarian Empire, even as its authority and military capabilities were rapidly dissolving. Unaware that the armistice was to go into effect after a 24-hour hiatus, the Austrian Army laid down its weapons as the Italian Army moved forward and captured some 300,000 prisoners and plenty of loot in that period. Meanwhile, the area that Austria-Hungary had ruled along the Adriatic had been divided into various territories, but during the war a very active group of local political leaders had promoted unification of these territories into a single state. These leaders formed a national council and declared a union to form the state of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Emperor Karl I of Austria and Karl VI of Hungary granted the former Austro-Hungarian Navy to the Yugoslav Council.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Woodrow Wilson becomes the 28<sup>th</sup> President of the United States in 1913 in the eve of Great WWI. United States under the leader-

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<sup>3</sup> John B. Hattendorf, *The United States Navy in the Mediterranean During the First World War and its Immediate Aftermath* (1917–1923) pp. 190–191. [https://www.academia.edu/37059995/The\\_United\\_States\\_Navy\\_in\\_the\\_Mediterranean\\_During\\_the\\_First\\_World\\_War\\_and\\_its\\_Immediate\\_Aftermath\\_1917-1923](https://www.academia.edu/37059995/The_United_States_Navy_in_the_Mediterranean_During_the_First_World_War_and_its_Immediate_Aftermath_1917-1923) Retrieved 29/07/2019.

ship of President Wilson also become a World Super Power. At the same time President Wilson was a key person together with Serbian-American scientist Mihajlo Pupin to emphasize importance of American-Serbian relations. In fact, Serbian-American friendship could be seen also as Wilson-Pupin friendship. Dr. Pupin worked days and nights to gather support for the Serbian people, stressed about the starvation of Serbian people as well as the great military success against common enemies. President Wilson was amazed by this small nation fighting for its own freedom against this evil. His sympathy and gratitude toward Serbian people were show at all possible place. The United States of America officially celebrated July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1918 as “Serbia Day.” On July 27<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Secretary of State Robert Lansing called on every American citizen to, “gather on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup> in their churches in order to express their sympathies toward this enslaved nation (Serbia) and their oppressed brothers in other countries and to invoke the blessing of the almighty God for them and cause that they are fighting for.” Thanks to a report by the Serbian Ambassador to the United States and an article published in *Detroit News*, we know today that, “over the White House and other public institutions waved the Serbian flag for the first time.” Other than the American and Serbian flags, only one other has been flown over the White House. That was the French flag, on the 131<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1920.<sup>4</sup>

It was very clear that the US headed by President Wilson took significant part in defining borders of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croat and Slovenes. US support was namely directed toward Serbs with great respect to Serbia’s desire to include in this new kingdom those Slavic nations which were defeated in WWI.

During the negotiations for the Treaty of Versailles, the United States were represented by a delegation which was fully pro-Serbian oriented. During the process of defining new borders, Dr Jovan Cvijić was elected to represent Serbia and to show maps to the American delegation in an effort to persuade them to endorse the restored occupied territory of Baranja, East Banat, and other regions previously occupied

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<sup>4</sup> *The Day When the Serbian and U. S. Flags Flew Together Over the White House*, US Embassy in Serbia, <https://rs.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/day-when-the-serbian-and-u-s-flags-flew-together-over-the-white-house/> Retrieved 29/07/2019.

by Austro-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romanian invaders into the newly formed Serbia borders.<sup>5</sup> Thanks to all of above mentioned joint efforts, but primarily to President Wilson, Serbia regained its own territory previously occupied by Austro-Hungarians and their ally.

### **US Presidents Harry S. Truman, Richard M. Nixon, Ronald Reagan and Serbia (Yugoslavia)**

During World War II, the US had a multi-layered relations with the conflicting parties in the territory of present-day Yugoslavia. Although the only legitimate military formation in the territory of Yugoslavia at that time was the Army of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and the remains of Chetnik units led by General Draža Mihailović, Commander-in-Chief of the Yugoslavian Army Force, the US also maintained contacts with the Partisan-communist units led by Josip Broz Tito. During WWII Serbia was the only country in South East Europe together with Greece to oppose Hitler and the first European resistance to defeat Hitler's troops. At that time Serbian resistance movement led by General Mihajlović was glorified in the US and other Western media. Unfortunately, General Mihailović and his troops at the end of the war were abandoned and betrayed by the allies despite of the fact that Chetniks played an important role against the Nazis and saved hundreds of allied pilots. Josip Broz Tito's communist regime prosecuted and sentenced General Mihailović to the death. French President De Gaulle did everything in his power to save General Mihailović's life but with no result. That was the main reason why Tito and De Gaulle, two prominent leaders of the resistance movement and two notable states-

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<sup>5</sup> See more: Tatjana Korićanac, *The Belgrade Atlas of Jovan Cvijić Century and a half since the birth 1865–2015*, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts Belgrade City Museum, Belgrade, Serbia, 2015.

As a scientific expert and a person of great influence, Cvijić took part in important state missions for the Serbian Government in exile, during the crucial moments for the Serbian people, assisting the Serbian Supreme Command in working out military strategic plans including the plan for the withdrawal of the Serbian army across Albania, not to mention his contribution in determining the most favorable borders for the newly formed Kingdom of SCS by using scientific argumentation before the Allies in Versailles.

men of their day, ended their rule and life (Tito the same day, who is closer to dictators, unlike De Gaulle, who himself withdrew from power for life, which was determined in a democratic way) without ever having met. Tito wanted but De Gaulle refused. This is because of Draža Mihailović. General De Gaulle awarded general Draža Mihailović with the “Croix de Guerre” in 1943.<sup>6</sup> At the same time President Truman honored Draža Mihailović with the Chief Commander Legion of Merit two years after his murder.<sup>7</sup> English Intelligence Service SOE opened its archives recently and announced that Draža Mihailović was innocent of all charges and never was a Nazi collaborator but rather a patriot and the first anti-fascist leader in occupied Europe<sup>8</sup>. US President Richard M. Nixon in his statement dated April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1966 described General Draza Mihailovic as *a patriot, brave soldier and gallant ally of the United States and every nation that went to the war in the early forties to destroy the tyrannies that sought to enslave our world. Hundreds of American pilots owe their lives to General Mihailovic and his forces and the American people will never forget that debt. As long as there are patriots in any nation, the name of General Mihailovic will be remembered and revered.* Ronald Reagan, 40<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (1981–1989): “The ultimate tragedy of Draza Mihailović cannot erase the memory of his heroic and often lonely struggle against the twin tyrannies that affected his people, Nazism and Communism. He knew that totalitarianism, whatever

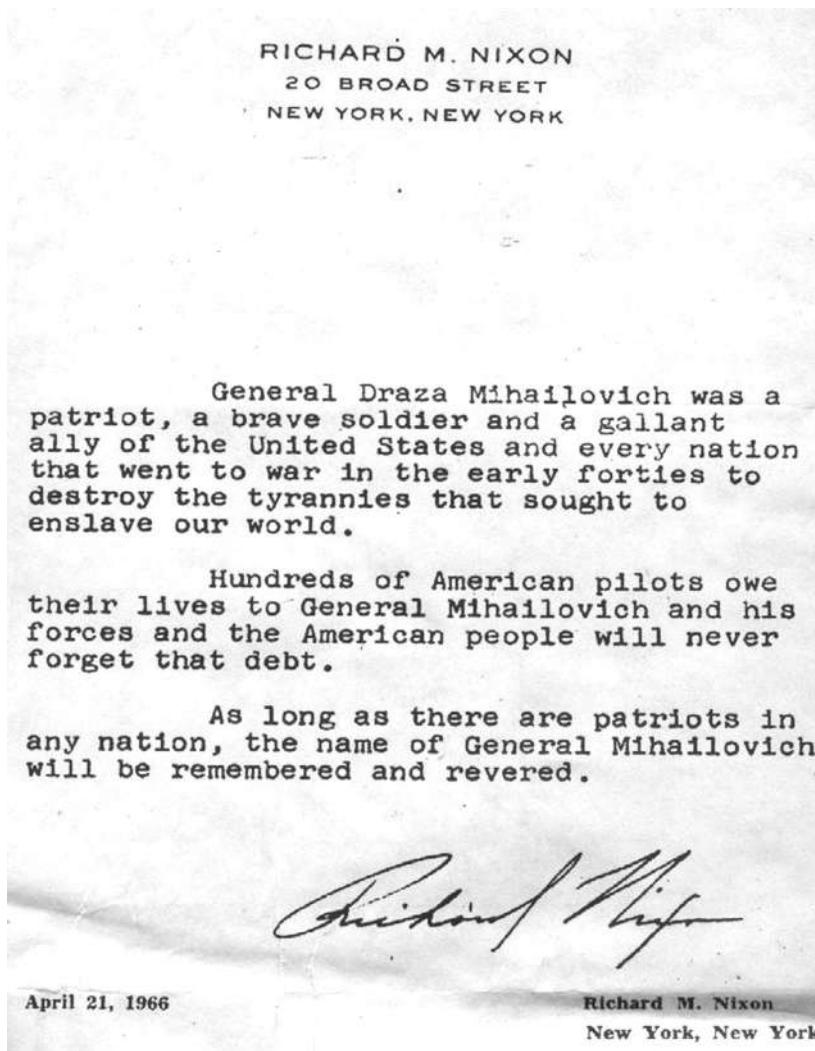
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<sup>6</sup> Dušan Bataković, *La Serbie et la France – une alliance atypique*, Balkanološki institut SANU, Beograd, Serbia, 2010, p. 360.

<sup>7</sup> Vladislav A. Tomović, *Canadian Serbs: a History of Their Social and Cultural Traditions: (1856–2002)*, Batlik, 2002, p. 472.

<sup>8</sup> The aforementioned communist infiltration into SOE has been given some credit in historiography, but the evident influence of the communist group in the SOE – favouring a shift from supporting Mihailović towards sending military aid to Tito – was heavily overstressed, both in historiography and public debate. Rather than relying on the SOE activities, the British policy of supporting resistance movements in Yugoslavia was much more defined through evidence of the chetnik collaboration with the fascists provided by the German reports deciphered in Bletchley Park. See: R. Bailey, Communist in SOE: Explaining James Klugmann’s Recruitment and Retention, *Intelligence and National Security*, vol. 20 (2006), 72–97; see also J. Cripps, Mihailović or Tito? How the Codebreakers Helped Churchill Choose, in: *Action This Day*, edited by Michael Smith and Ralph Erskine, London: Bantam Press, 2001, pp. 237–263.

name it might take, is the death of freedom. He thus became a symbol of resistance to all those across the world who have had to fight a similar heroic and lonely struggle against totalitarianism. Mihailovic belonged to Yugoslavia; his spirit now belongs to all those who are willing to fight for freedom" (September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1979).



Document No. 1 US President Richard M. Nixon statement dated

RONALD REAGAN

September 8, 1979

Mr. Michael Radenkovich  
Vice President  
California Citizens' Committee to  
Commemorate General Draja Mihailovich

Dear Mr. Radenkovich:

Please convey to the California Citizen's Committee to Commemorate General Draja Mihailovich my sincere appreciation for their kind invitation to attend tonight's dinner to commemorate General Mihailovich. Unfortunately, prior commitments prevent me from being with you.

I believe that the spirit in which you have gathered here to honor the memory of General Mihailovich, the faithful allied commander and the first anti-Nazi leader in Europe, is shared by the great majority of Americans.

The ultimate tragedy of Draja Mihailovich cannot erase the memory of his heroic and often lonely struggle against the twin tyrannies that afflicted his people, Nazism and Communism. He knew that totalitarianism, whatever name it might take, is the death of freedom. He thus became a symbol of resistance to all those across the world who have had to fight a similar heroic and lonely struggle against totalitarianism. Mihailovich belonged to Yugoslavia; his spirit now belongs to all those who are willing to fight for freedom.

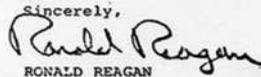
I wish it could be said that this great hero was the last victim of confused and senseless policies of western governments in dealing with Communism. The fact is that others have suffered a fate similar to his by being embraced and then abandoned by western governments in the hope that such abandonment will purchase peace or security.

Thus, the fate of General Mihailovich is not simply of historic significance--it teaches us something today, as well. No western nation, including the United States, can hope to win its own battle for freedom and survival by sacrificing brave comrades to the politics of international expediency.

1990 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90024

Mr. Michael Radenkovich  
September 8, 1979  
Page Two

Your dinner therefore commemorates something more than the legacy of patriotism and heroism that Michailovich left us. You commemorate the principles for which he fought and died. And you remind our nation that abandonment of allies can never buy security or freedom. In the mountains of Yugoslavia, in the jungles of Vietnam, wherever men and women have fought totalitarian brutality, it has been demonstrated beyond doubt that both freedom and honor suffer when firm commitments become sacrificed to false hopes of appeasing aggressors by abandoning friends.

Sincerely,  
  
RONALD REAGAN

Document No. 2 Letter of US President Ronald Reagan regarding the first anti Nazi leader in Europe General Draza Mihailovic

Despite the fact that the US and its allies abandoned the heroic General Mihailović and his units that saved hundreds of US pilot's lives, Western allies played their cards on Josip Broz Tito and his troops on the territory of Yugoslavia. Tito was the only leader to oppose Hitler and Stalin at the same time. Such a policy launches great interest to Western powers and their allies. Josip Broz Tito's policies were the only one in Yugoslavia. It was a policy of communism that grew into socialism. Yugoslavia played a major role in the creation of Non-aligned countries.<sup>9</sup> It received huge financial assistance from the West in order to attract more and more Third World countries as far away from Russia and the USSR.

### **Cold War US – Yugoslavia**

The Serbian people lived all across the former Yugoslavia together with other nations and nationalities. US policy over Yugoslavia was clearly directed in such a way as to show that Yugoslavia, a communist later socialist country, can be an ally of West with all possible benefits. The US wanted to create a division between the USSR and other communist countries. Fighting totalitarian communist regimes became one of the key pillars of US foreign policy from President H. Truman to President Reagan and even to this day. It is very well known that President H. Truman stated: “*there isn't any difference in totalitarian states. I don't care what you call them, Nazi, Communist or Fascist*”.<sup>10</sup> It was President Truman who initiated the Marshall Plan and NATO as a response to aggressive communist's policy. It is also important to note that it was President H. Truman who recognized the state of Israel only 11 minutes after its creation. The decision was greeted with enthusiasm in Yugoslavia, especially from the Serbian people, who together with Jews and Roma people survived the Holocaust during WWII. During the Cold War US helped Yugoslavia enormously despite the fact that Yugoslavia was a communist and later socialist country. The Cold War was not only ideological but it was also a geopolitical war. Russia and the USSR

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<sup>9</sup> Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Nonaligned World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, US, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas G. Paterson, *Meeting the Communist Threat : Truman to Reagan: Truman to Reagan*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1988, p. 3.

considered Yugoslavia as one of the greatest obstacles in their foreign policy of speeding their poisoned ideology. Regardless of the heavy US presence and assistance in former Yugoslavia, Russians had developed a Russian special agent network. It was a matter of high ranking members of security services and politicians who directly received instructions from Moscow. They were known as “Yugoslav Red Orchestra” headed by General Aleksandar Vasiljević.

### After the Cold War

After the death of Josip Broz Tito, nationalistic movements developed in the whole of Yugoslavia. The peoples and nations which live in former Yugoslavia were all poisoned by extreme ideologies of totalitarian regimes. This situation went to Moscow’s advantage in order for it to dominate and managed the situation on the ground more easily. Proponents of these policies were leaving the traditional friendship with America and turned towards the Russian-German intelligence circles that had their strongholds in the local political, economic and security nomenclatures. The aim of the Russian service in Yugoslavia was to break up and open hot spots in South East Europe with the aim of stopping NATO. Neo-Stalinist political nomenclature in Serbia and Croatia, in conjunction with the Islamist exponents in Bosnia and Herzegovina, smashed Yugoslavia before the eyes of the whole World. It was Stalin who sent KGB assassins several times to kill Josip Broz Tito.<sup>11</sup> Historically, from Ohrana, Checka, NKVD, KGB or FSB all of those services had instructions from above, from political arenas to keeping Serbia and the Serbian people far away from the West, Western civilization, culture and influence. Throughout history every Serbian politician or ruler who wanted to move Serbia closer to the West were killed or assassinated, from Mihailo Obrenović, Prince of Serbia, King Aleksandar Obrenović, King Aleksandar Karadjordjević to Serbian Prime Minister Dr. Zoran Djindjić. The situation remains unchanged even today. The current situation reminds us of the Cold War. Russia and certain Eu-

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<sup>11</sup> Jussi M. Hanhimäki, Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 451.

ropean countries in the surroundings claim that the North Stream II is against the US and its partners in East Europe. War of ideologies, influence, dominance, energy, war to win the minds and feelings of people is underway.

## Conclusion

Serbia and the Serbian people must decide in which direction they want to pursue their policies. One option coming from the East is the ideology and distorted reality option based on conspiracy theories. The past and the present teach us that the bearers of that policy of the East robbed the Serbian people and ruined the state and its institutions. This option led the Serbian people into direct confrontation with the most powerful Western powers. In the clash between Russia and the West, the Serbs and their children paid with their lives and loss of territory. The greatest success of the neo-Stalinists was the turning of Serbia and the Serbian people against the West and putting all of us in the service of Russia's foreign political interests. Serbia and the Serbian people are the biggest victims of the ideologists' propaganda and that's why Serbia needs help. Russia cannot be blamed for the situation in Serbia in this paper. Russia is a great power and has a legitimate right to pursue its interests. Just as long as all Serbs disappear from the face of the earth in order to preserve Russia, this is fully justified from the position of Russian politics. Already, the historical tactics of Russian foreign policy have proven to be very effective. Whoever wants to invade Russia, it's best to first "get stuck in the Balkan mud" at the cost of Serbs disappearing. That was a proven strategy in World War I, II and of course in the early 1990s.

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**Darko Trifunović**  
**Zoran Dragišić**

## **SRPSKO-AMERIČKI ODNOSI – BEZBEDNOSNI I GEOPOLITIČKI POGLEDI**

Rezime

Srbija i Sjedinjene Američke Države oduvek su bile saveznici, sa izuzetkom poslednjih nekoliko decenija tokom vladavine proboljševika na čelu sa diktatorom Slobodanom Miloševićem i njegovom ženom

Mirjanom Marković. Predsednik Vilson je bio ključna osoba, zajedno sa naučnikom Mihajlom Pupinom, koja je naglašavala važnost američko-srpskih odnosa. SAD su, predvođene predsednikom Vilsonom, imale značajnu ulogu u određivanju granica nove Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca. Podrška SAD se uglavnom fokusirala na Srbiju sa velikom obzirnošću prema srpskoj želji da uključi, u novu kraljevinu, slovenske narode koji su izgubili u Prvom svetskom ratu. Tokom Drugog svetskog rata, i uprkos tome što su SAD i njeni saveznici napustili junačkog generala Mihailovića i njegove jedinice, koji su spasli živote stotine američkih pilota, naši zapadni saveznici su odlučili da podrže Josipa Broza Tita i njegove jedinice na teritoriji Jugoslavije. Tito je bio jedini vođa koji se suprotstavio Hitleru i Staljinu u isto vreme. Tokom Hladnog rata, američka politika u vezi sa Jugoslavijom bila je takva da je pokazala da Jugoslavija, komunistička a kasnije socijalistička država, može da bude saveznik Zapada sa svim mogućim benefitima. Najveći uspeh neostaljinista jeste to što su okrenuli Srbiju i srpski narod protiv Zapada i što su nas sve stavili pod ruske spoljnopolitičke interese. Srbija i srpski narod su najveće žrtve propagande ideologa, zbog čega je Srbiji potrebna pomoć.

Ključne reči: Srbija, SAD, odnosi, bezbednost, geopolitički, saradnja, Hladni rat, Jugoslavija



Steven Oluic, PhD, U.S. Army retired\*

## SERBIA – GEOPOLITICAL DIRECTIONS, EAST OR WEST?

**Abstract:** Russia’s resurgence, displayed by its success in Syria, and the rise of China, manifested in the “Road & Belt Initiative,” challenge the United States and the West on every front: economically, militarily, and geopolitically. The “unipolar moment” enjoyed by the U.S. following the collapse of the USSR is long gone; one could argue that the American Century has been eclipsed by global competitors long waiting to challenge post-1989 U.S. global hegemony. Serbia finds itself in a geopolitical predicament that is both domestic and global. Should this small republic look East or West to select its “geopolitical way” forward? Adding to the challenges of these major powers are lesser regional powers, such as Turkey, and antagonistic Balkan neighbors, such as Albania and Kosovo. There are competing elements within and without Serbia pursuing the patronship of Russia, China, or the West (namely the United States) – how is the current geopolitical landscape shaping Serbia’s future in Europe? The legacies of the recent past and potential opportunities of the future will continue to inform Serbia’s geopolitical way forward.

**Keywords:** Serbia, USA, geopolitics, transit route, Kosovo, international relations

### Setting the Geopolitical Stage

The Republic of Serbia, a small landlocked country of some 77,474 square kilometers and approximately 7,100,000 inhabitants, sits across the geographic crossroads of empires and competing powers. It has sat long in what is called a “shatter belt” region of the globe. A former Yugoslav Republic, Serbia lost its unfettered access to the Adriatic Sea with Montenegro’s abrupt secession from the remnant Serbia & Montenegro

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in 2006. It is now a European “land island” surrounded by eight, some assert seven, countries that are ambivalent if not outright hostile to Serbia’s economic and political future. Of those countries, four are members of the European Union and five members of NATO. Serbia is a truly a borderland European state, lying outside of the benefits offered by true membership in the West.



Figure 1 – The Republic of Serbia (CIA World Factbook)

The Balkans and Serbia in particular, are overwhelmed and burdened by history. From the vantage of a Serbian national perspective, Serbia fought as a victorious Western Ally in two world wars to only be betrayed by its former allies at the turn of the century. Serbia, including the short-lived Yugoslavia, was attacked and invaded three times in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The current Serbian resentment is a natural outcome

of recent history and cannot but help to impact, to whatever level, the relationships Serbia has with other countries. While many academics, policy makers, and pundits in the international relations community will downplay such statements as irrelevant, I would beg to differ as policy and international relations are always imbued by a sense of history and open to short-term political necessities. They are components of the great power's policymakers and strategic leaders; both friendly and hostile.



Figure 2 – Major inland road and railway freight corridors (Kovacevic, 2017)

While Serbia has a favorable geographic location straddling the critical overland transit route from the Near East and Turkey to Western Europe (see Figure 2), this geographical asset is severely diminished

by the lack of European Union (EU) membership and the antagonistic neighborhoods to the north and west. Serbia cannot economically leverage this transportation corridor given the political realities of today that have been shaped by the legacy of Yugoslavia's breakup and subsequent turmoil and remaining lingering tensions.

Serbia's significant diaspora communities in neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the greatly reduced diaspora populations in Croatia and Kosovo, continue to impact its internal political environment and that of these neighbors. While many countries around the globe, especially China and Russia, support Serbia's adamant opposition to Kosovo's recognition, including several EU member states, Serbia's access to the West, whether via the EU or even NATO membership is doomed. Serbs found outside of Serbia proper face severe hardship and discrimination in Croatia and Kosovo and are under duress in Bosnia & Herzegovina given their unwillingness to support a unitary Bosnian state. Indeed, Bosnia today is in the grey zone of failed state status and would predictably become a crisis without continued Western involvement.

The question of Kosovo's recognition by Serbia drives much of the West's fraught relationship with the country. Those countries, primarily Western, that were eager to see Yugoslavia's destruction are now tired of dealing with the "Balkan Issue(s)" and crave an end to the interminable tensions, irredentism, and revanchism. Donor fatigue, loss of patience with continued inter-ethnic squabbling, and geopolitical events outside of the Balkans dominating Western attention will only exacerbate this situation.

Drug trafficking and organized crime have leveraged the regional instability. Long argued as a position to halt Kosovo's international recognition, these criminal elements emanating from Kosovo, and to a somewhat lesser extent Albania proper, are readily recognized in Europe as a major threat. According to the annual report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for 2017, Albanian gangs are the world's No. 1 heroin and cannabis smugglers and the world's No. 3 cocaine traffickers. (Ruci, 2018) Some estimate that over 90% of Western Europe's heroin trade is controlled by Kosovo Albanian organized crime networks. Serbia and its allies argue that this factor alone provides solid evidence of the failure of a Kosovar state and that it must be returned to the Serbian state. Others posit that the lack of diplomatic

recognition and full economic integration into the global community will continue to inhibit economic development, hinder governmental transparency, and foster continued graft and corruption in the greater region and allow illegal activities to flourish.

The realities of the 1990s Yugoslav civil wars and post 9–11 growth of Islamic radicalism have nurtured what some regional security officials term the “green transversal,” a radical extremist Balkan thoroughfare into the heart of Western Europe from Southwest Asia.

Chancellor Angela Merkel’s 2015 decision to fling European doors open to unvetted migrants and refugees fleeing conflict in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria has only complicated this issue and opened Europe to cultural and extremist violence. The repatriation of many former ISIS fighters and radicals from these countries over the past year adds veracity to this conclusion. The strengthening of the EU’s external borders, the rise of European populism, and Croatia’s and Hungary’s “hard borders” with Bosnia and Serbia have led to a decrease in the flow of nefarious actors into the West; however, the “promise” or “target” of the West will continue to draw migrants and extremists to the Balkan overland route into Europe.

It is an uncomfortable and often overlooked fact by U.S. and Western media outlets, think tanks, and government policy makers that the Balkan Muslim diaspora members in the West have taken active roles in terrorism in the U.S. and EU. The 2007 Fort Dix, New Jersey plot, the attempted 2009 New York City bridge bombing, and most recently, the arrest of Bosniak-American ISIS supporters corroborates this unpleasant reality. (Oluic, 2014) (Goudie and Tressel, 2019) In fact, Kosovo “... has seen a greater percentage of its citizens fight for IS than any country in Europe.” (Klapper, 2019)

The unsettled political status of several Balkan states, specifically Kosovo, and until recently the Republic of Northern Macedonia, has permitted migrant waves from southwest Asia into Western Europe. The lack of a comprehensive approach and legal regime towards border control and security has fostered this phenomena’s growth. This problem has to be resolved by both the EU and Balkan states. This land corridor, from Thessaloniki to the Danubian plains of Croatia and Serbia has always served as a human migrant and travel corridor. Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel open invitation to those fleeing war-torn Syr-

ia and Iraq to come to Germany, and by default, Western Europe and elsewhere, increased the use of the corridor and enabled many to profit from the misery of refugees and to deliver the aspirations of radicals and criminal networks.

### **Great Power Politics – a new version & location for the “Great Game?”**

Today Serbia finds itself the target of international economic and political influence by China, Russia, and even Turkey; the United States is conspicuously absent and the lack of EU membership all but makes any EU investment and trade irrelevant. Serbia's economic interaction with the United States is almost non-existent; there is no impactful American foreign direct investment and import/export activity. As of 2017, Russia is Serbia's 4<sup>th</sup> largest export and import partner, with China being its 3<sup>rd</sup> largest importer. (CIA World Factbook, 2019) Domestic Serbian politics and international relationships have set political parties within Serbia against one another. This political atmosphere has led to unrest and tension to slowly develop in the political affairs, internal and external, of this small Balkan country. Serbia's desire to successfully leverage its location to benefit economically is being nullified by the policies and demands of the West, namely Kosovo's recognition. This situation has permitted China and Russia to build their favorable economic and political influence in Serbia and the region.

According to Reuters, China's ongoing infrastructure investments in Serbia total over five billion Euros. (Vasovic, 2019) China envisions Balkan countries as part of its ambitious One Belt, One Road initiative which will open trade links for Chinese companies and expand its regional influence. Chinese economic and financial interest in Serbia is not a new development, in the last ten years Chinese companies purchased Serbia's only copper mine, a steel plant and invested in electric power production. Of interesting note, the presence of thousands of Chinese tourists and workers in Serbia has led to the Chinese providing police officers to assist the Serbs in dealing with issues that arise in many Serbian cities and worksites. (Vasovic, 2019)

China is not alone in its Serbian investment. Russia plans to construct the South Stream gas pipeline that will cut the Balkan's reliance on the Central European Gas Hub in Austria and strengthen Russia's

economic and therefore political power in the region. (Kovacevic, 2017) While the Balkan gas market is not expected to grow substantially soon, Russian development in the region will continue to reinforce its economic power and political influence in the West. The transit fees will greatly aid in improving Serbia's economic position and fiscal situation, allowing it to finance the ambitious infrastructure plans of President Vucic. China and Russia displacing the West as the chief investors and political supporters of Serbia in the international arena.

In October 2019, the Washington Post asserted that, "Russia and the West are engaged in a pitched battle for the allegiance of Serbia, a pivotal Balkan nation that has declared a desire to join the European Union but also counts Russia as an ally." Serbia, indeed as the former Yugoslavia had done, is pursuing a long-term strategy of leveraging the West and East against one another. However, Russia and China, have made a far deeper penetration into Serbia by using their "soft power," typically an asset used by the U.S. The Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Center in Nis, while decried by the West as a Russian intelligence gathering center in southern Serbia, is an example of inexpensively purchased influence in the country as noted in the figure below. While seen by many Western intelligence officials as a Russian intelligence gathering site, it has provided much in the way of humanitarian and disaster relief support to the region.

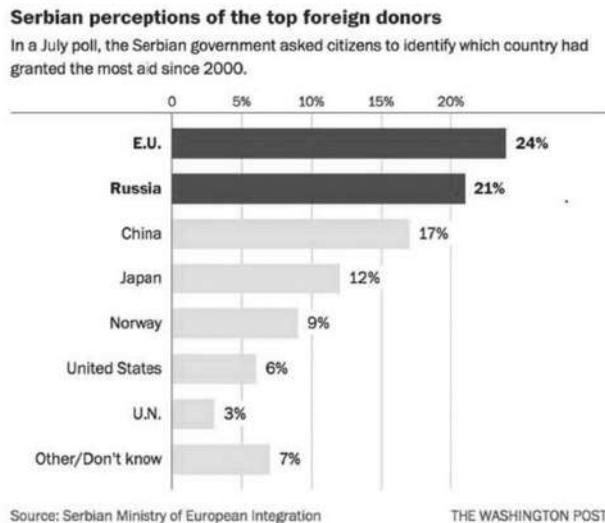


Figure 2 – Serbian Perception of Top Foreign Donors (Birnbbaum, 2019)

The reality is, however, that the EU and the U.S. have provided far more in terms of donations to Serbia from 2010 to 2016. The question that begs to be asked is the “why?”, why do Serbs perceive Russian donations are greater than the facts portray? There are several factors, in many cases history and common Slavic culture, the role of the media, and perhaps most significantly, who receives these “donations.” Many non-governmental organizations that are perceived as anti-Serbian receive this aid and while many EU donations go towards infrastructure projects, these are seen as benefiting actors in the region and Serbia that do not support Serbian national goals – such as maintaining Kosovo as an integral part of Serbia.

Why is the United States’ interaction and relationship with Serbia held hostage to the tensions Serbia has with Kosovo? The recent import tariffs on 100% of Serbian goods being exported to Kosovo highlights this. The Kosovar government and leadership have been criticized by the EU and U.S. over this measure as very damaging towards establishing normal Serbian-Kosovo relations and are being actively countered by Serbian officials. Normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo are far from certain and will be a persistent challenge in the foreseeable future.

Serbia’s relationship with most of the West, especially the United States, will forever be scarred by its role played in the breakup of Yugoslavia and NATO’s Airwar against the rump-state of Yugoslavia in 1999. Given how large history looms in the consciousness of nations, especially in Southeastern Europe, it is doubtful that improvement in relations will be above an absolute minimal threshold required to aid Serbia’s economy, political standing and global relationship(s) with the West.

In the recent July 2019 12-nation Balkan summit, Turkey’s President Erdogan voiced his skepticism with Western Balkan integration and disappointment with the European Union’s lack of follow-through to open membership talks with North Macedonia and Albania in June. He asserted that this weakens the region’s stability and doubts the blocs existing strategy to counter a growing Russian and Chinese presence in the region. (Sito-Sucic, 2019) Over the past several years Erdogan has been overtly casting himself and Turkey as the historical leader and regional partner of the Balkans; moreover, he has been the Balkan Muslim’s advocate.

Erdogan has tied the recent European populism, albeit tangentially, to allegedly European anti-Islam and anti-immigrant policies. Coupled with Turkish revanchist rhetoric, closer religious and cultural ties, and economic investment, one must wonder if the Turkey will gain from the West's absence in Serbia. Further exacerbating the already fragile societies in the Western Balkans is Erdogan's tendency to trumpet Europe's so-called prejudicial stance towards Muslims by noting the EU's continued recalcitrance toward Turkey's EU accession and by attending annual memorial events such as the Srebrenica Anniversary commemoration in Bosnia this year.

Lastly, Serbia, as with many other countries in Eastern and South-eastern Europe are increasingly facing criticism from domestic elements of society demanding more transparency and less corruption in government affairs. Whether perceived or real, these governments have been challenged by open and at time violent demonstrations; many in Serbia are calling for President Vucic's resignation and are challenging his leadership. (Stratfor, 2019)

### **The End Game**

The legacy of the past – the relatively recent events of the 1990s and early 21<sup>st</sup> century – will undoubtedly jaundice any relationship between Serbia and the United States and West.

Unless America abandons the one-sided and critical rhetoric towards Serbia and the uncompromising support of states anathema to Serbian interests, it is hard to envision a positive relationship outside of where it stands today. Coupling this sentiment with U.S. demands for allies to share more “global policing” and security expenses, plus the perceived isolationist tendencies of the current Administration, it is difficult to see a renewed American interest in the geopolitical gamesmanship in the region and Serbia specifically. (Shake, 2019) The current inability of the U.S. to garner Western support in its ongoing and growing conflict with Iran only serves to support this view.

In the grand scheme of international relations and geopolitics, Serbia today does not rise to the level of a national security concern for the U.S.; in fact, I would argue that Serbia and the Balkans have suffered

from a benign neglect on the part of America over the past decade. The legacies and outcomes of the 1999 NATO Airwar and American role in it, and its continued presence at Camp Bondsteel would suggest that the U.S. is satisfied with the current regional status quo. As Balkan states slowly gain entrance into the European Union and possibly NATO,

U.S. concern or interest with Serbia will further decline. Possibly Serbia's current political-military relationship with the Ohio National Guard within the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace, is all that is on the horizon for America's geopolitical Balkan interests. As such, this vacuum will slowly be taken advantage of by the competitive interests of not only Russia, but of an increasingly assertive China and revanchist Turkey.

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**Stiven Oluić**

## **SRBIJA – GEOPOLITIČKI SMER, ISTOK ILI ZAPAD?**

### Rezime

Povratak Rusije, demonstriran njenim uspehom u Siriji i uzdizanje Kine, što se vidi iz njenog „Pojas i put“ inicijativom, predstavljaju izazov za Sjedinjene Američke Države i za Zapad u svakom smislu: ekonomskom, vojnom i geopolitičkom. „Unipolarni momenat“ koji je SAD uživala nakon pada SSSR-a je davno prošao; neki bi mogli čak da kažu da je vek Amerike pokriven svetskim konkurentima koji dugo čekaju da dovedu u pitanje globalnu hegemoniju SAD u periodu nakon 1989. Srbija se nalazi u geopolitičkoj poteškoći koja je i domaćeg i globalnog karaktera. Da li bi ova mala republika trebalo da gleda ka Istoku ili ka Zapadu da bi odabrala svoj „geopolitički put“ napred? Dodatni

izazov, pored ovih velikih sila, predstavljaju i manje regionalne sile, kao što je Turska i neprijateljski balkanski susedi poput Albanije i Kosova. Postoje suprotstavljeni elementi (unutar i izvan zemlje) koji određuju težnju Srbije ka pokroviteljstvu Rusije, Kine ili Zapada (konkretno Sjedinjenih Američkih Država) – što je ilustracija toga kako trenutne geopolitičke okolnosti formiraju budućnost Srbije u Evropi. Ostaci nedavne prošlosti i moguće šanse za budućnost nastaviće da formiraju srpski geopolitički put napred.

Ključne reči: Srbija, SAD, geopolitika, tranzitna ruta, Kosovo, međunarodni odnosi

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## **FIVE POINTS FOR BUILDING NEW SERBIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONS IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY**

**Abstract:** Relations between Serbia and the United States have a long history, marked by ups and downs, with extremes ranging from the most intense friendship and brotherhood to armed conflict. Both countries have shown an interest in improving their relations and overcoming the historically low point of the last three decades, which is a necessary assumption to discuss ways in which this should be achieved. The potential for improving Serbia–US relations is objectively limited by a group of factors, some of which (geographical distance, vast disparity in power and potential) are inherent in many other countries in the world, but there is also an exclusively bilateral disruptive factor, and these are relations from the recent past. In our view, two states and two nations must find areas where progress will lead to a long-lasting strengthening of overall relations, which will not be affected by occasional differing views in the political and economic spheres, which will certainly happen, and which is not uncommon in contemporary international relations. These areas are technology, security, culture, personal connections and historical connections. Both states and their people, their economic and cultural communities, can make use of the vast space and upgrade existing links in these areas, with the two state administrations encouraged to foster this connection.

**Keywords:** Serbia, USA, relations, cooperation, security, culture, technology, diaspora, tourism, history, trade, partnership

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

“You Serbs started the last century with wars, you ended it with wars ... What nice things are you preparing for us in this century?”<sup>1</sup> – this question was asked by Henry Kissinger to Živorad Kovačević in the early 2000s, when two old friends, great diplomats, met in America, where they were introduced many years earlier – one as head of the State Department and the other as a young ambassador for socialist Yugoslavia. Indeed, what do Serbia and the United States have to offer each other, in order to thoroughly redefine their relations the remaining four-fifths of the 21st Century, and advance them to the level they have had in the period from the beginning of Henry Kissinger’s question?

In pursuit of this answer, we will not primarily address the advancement of political, diplomatic and economic relations, because their constant upward dynamics simply has to be implied, given the position of the two countries in the international environment – the US is the global leader in political and economic integration, and Serbia is strategically seeking to join the European Union, as one of the closest political and economic partners of the United States. We see the political and economic relations of the US and Serbia, that is, the relations of the two governments and the directions in which they will lead inter-state relations in the future, as a permanent and basic support for strengthening the overall relations, such as the two countries once cultivated, and which have withstood the test of occasional political changes and economic orientations.

## 2. LIMITATIONS

Here we will offer five answers to the question asked, five fields on which Serbia, and the US, their governments, organizations and people should work, in order to obtain long-lasting and close relations based on ties that can easily withstand the test of possible political, diplomatic disagreements, which will inevitably occur from time to time. In trying to formulate these answers, we will start with several factors that make

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<sup>1</sup> A. Mijalković: *The Man with Two Lives*, interview with Živorad Kovačević, *Politika* 2009

it difficult to establish (renew) stronger bonds, but which we cannot change. Those are:

- A. Geography
- B. Huge disparity in size
- C. Close historical heritage

Serbia and the United States are geographically distant. This circumstance will always be a limiting factor when it comes to trade and personal contacts, despite the steadily declining cost of transporting goods and the ever-increasing availability of air travel.

By all parameters, human, economic, security, political... the US is many times larger than Serbia. The individual economies of Manhattan or California are larger than the economies of the whole of Russia. This large disparity naturally limits many potentials for cooperation, because size naturally, determines the priorities, including the interests and ambitions of each state. While the United States has long played a dominant role on the global scale, and it is likely that it will continue to do so in the future, Serbia, in line with its dimensions, wants to pursue its interests primarily through integration with others, which is primarily the European Union.

While the previous two factors are applicable to the relations of a large number of countries with the USA, the third factor of “alienation” of Serbia and the USA is exclusively theirs, bilateral. It is a difficult historical legacy, only three decades old. Although brief in historical terms, this burden on relations between the two states is characterized by its strong intensity and negative effects on relations between the two states and the two nations. Relations have deteriorated sharply since the beginning of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, culminating with the NATO bombing of the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in 1999. During that period, relations between the two countries went from disagreements in attitudes, then cooling down, followed by termination of diplomatic relations, to open armed conflict and the destruction of the US Embassy in Belgrade. Although diplomatic, political, economic and cultural relations were restored within a very short period of time, on the relations between the two countries remained a deep mark, which continues to burden them, primarily through perception in the Serbian public.

What needs to be done, what can be done to make relations between Serbia and the US get a new dimension of cooperation, partnership and mutual respect, and for the rest of the 21st century to remain a period of steady rise in Serbian–American relations? First of all, do the two countries have any interest in improving their relations at all?

### 3. INTERESTS

Serbia's interest in this direction is indisputable. It should not be measured by the usual benchmarks, such as the growth of trade, since trade between the two countries is rather scarce, amounting to just over \$ 400 million in both directions,<sup>2</sup> despite the fact that Serbian products are duty-free again from last year in the USA. Serbia and the US will never be major trading partners, and the first two previously mentioned geographic factors are most responsible for this. The Serbian economy is tied to the European Union market and it is the only possible space in which it can achieve qualitative and quantitative growth. Two thirds of exports (67%) Serbia markets to the EU countries, while as many as 60% of total imports to Serbia come from these countries.<sup>3</sup>

Serbia's interest in better relations with the US is to develop a strong and comprehensive partnership with it, because the realization of all direct and concrete priority interests of Serbia are derived from this fact – whether Serbia is a US partner (in all fields) or not. It also depends on how Serbia will be treated by the European Union, and Serbia's eventual progress towards EU membership, relations with its closest neighbors, place and influence in all multilateral forums, as well as some specific, extremely important internal interests, which is primarily the Kosovo issue, and relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina / Republika Srpska.

The United States has no apparent interest in developing close relations with Serbia in particular and invest time, political and economic influence in them. Serbia is economically irrelevant to the United States,

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<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, bilateral relations with foreign countries ([www.mfa.rs](http://www.mfa.rs))

<sup>3</sup> Benefits of Serbia's trade with the EU, Delegation of the European Commission to the Republic of Serbia (2018)

and the region to which Serbia belongs has already fully realized strategic partnership with the United States through EU membership (Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia), or through NATO membership (all countries in the region except Serbia and B&H). However, the interest of the United States in improving relations with Serbia exists, and it is not small. The United States is one of the largest investors in Serbia, with a volume of about US \$ 1.7 billion.<sup>4</sup>

Otherwise, Serbia considers itself to be the number one country in the Western Balkans, and at the very top in Southeastern Europe, in terms of geographic, human and economic resources, and especially potentials. Its position in the security architecture of Europe is especially important in the fight against extremism, Islamic terrorism, arms trafficking and narcotics... Having Serbia as a partner in this field alone is an important interest of the United States. The interest of the USA in better relations with Serbia is particularly expressed from the perspective, assuming that the transition to Serbia's EU membership will be successful and relatively quick. With a place in the EU, and advanced democratic institutions, which in turn leads to strong economic growth, Serbia in a short time becomes an even more important factor in Southeast Europe and a country with which the US must have close and partnership relations.

#### **4. FIVE POINTS FOR BUILDING NEW SERBIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS**

Given that both countries have enough reason to commit to improving their relations, we will try to locate specific areas whose promotion would make the content of this partnership permanently enriched and mutual relations vaccinated against the harmful effects of occasional disagreements, which in today's international relations are impossible to avoid when it comes to any two states on the planet. In our opinion, these are the following five areas:

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<sup>4</sup> State Department: US relations with Serbia, Bilateral economic relations (2018)

## 4. 1. Technology

In the context of modern globalization, the one that followed the global financial crisis of 2008 and often referred to as “Globalization 4.0” with a clear association with the fourth industrial revolution, technology is the factor that most strongly compensates developmental and geographical differences between economic entities. With advances in technology, Serbia and the United States would greatly reduce, if not completely cancel out, the handicap of geographical distance (disruptive factor No. 1) affecting mutual economic relations. The main capacity and resource for advancing technological cooperation is undoubtedly on the US side, as a global technological superpower, one of the five most innovative countries in the world and an unrivaled global champion in education and research. Most importantly, the US is home to the largest technology companies, which will, in their current or different form, retain long-term primacy for companies in general. The impetus for technological transfer from the USA is of great interest to Serbia, but these are also programs for studying, improvement, joint projects and other forms of scientific and technical cooperation. In developing this aspect of cooperation, Serbia can offer, above all, its potentially and relatively strong sector in the field of IT, but also the research potential of its universities and institutes, especially in the fields of electronics, agriculture, basic sciences (physics, chemistry, mathematics...), and medicine. The technological, organizational, and process “attachment” of some large systems in Serbia to similar American systems can be a field of return and long-lasting strengthening of the ties between two states and two nations. What also connects us are decades of experience and the departure of our experts to the United States, where they work in the education, science or business sectors, and cooperation programs such as Fulbright, which has connected in this regard several of our generations, both for the United States and the former Yugoslavia. Let’s just mention an example in the field of medicine – the Institute for Mother and Child “Vukan Čupić” in Novi Beograd, which gained the reputation of a top institution just by applying and nurturing knowledge and practices from similar institutions in the United States.

## 4. 2. Security

Although not a member of NATO, unlike all its neighbors (except B&H and for some time Northern Macedonia), Serbia and the United States have a strong mutual interest in developing security cooperation. This cooperation is still at a rather enviable level, given the constant joint activities, either bilaterally or at NATO level, but also through the cooperation of police and investigative services, as well as the cooperation of the Serbian Armed Forces with the Ohio State Guard. It is this program that has been rated by the United States as one of the most successful programs implemented by more than 60 countries worldwide.<sup>5</sup> Still, the space to build a full partnership here is still huge. The United States is by far the largest global security actor, but at the same time its field of interest in security matters is global, which includes Serbia and the Balkans. To protect their national interests, the United States pays some attention to security cooperation with Serbia, bearing in mind, above all, several challenges – international terrorism and extremism, illegal migration, arms smuggling and narcotics. On all these issues, Serbia is an extremely important country, primarily as an area of transit from Asia and from the Middle East to Western Europe. Serbia, for example, remains at the center of Afghanistan's largest heroin smuggling route (accounting for 85% of world production)<sup>6</sup> to Western Europe, which accounts for a quarter of the world's drug market. In 2015, almost one million of the total 1.5 million refugees (migrants) from the Middle East to Western Europe crossed the territory of Serbia. These and similar challenges place Serbia high on the list of countries with which the US should have a strong security partnership, because managing these risks is vital to US interests in Europe, above all. So far, Serbia has shown extremely high performance in meeting these security challenges, but given its economic resources, its security capabilities are below what they deserve to be, given the seriousness of the challenges it faces, especially in the technological context.

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<sup>5</sup> Serbian Army: Serbia–Ohio State Partnership Program, [www.vs.rs](http://www.vs.rs)

<sup>6</sup> UNODOC: World Drug Report (2010)

### 4. 3. Culture

We will understand culture here in its broader sense, not just as so-called “elite”, but also in its pop-cultural, sports and even sub-cultural aspect. The redefinition of US–Serbian relations probably has the greatest potential in this area, and at the same time the greatest chance of contributing to the strengthening of relations in all other fields by strengthening cultural ties. Connecting nations and identifying one with the other is the most challenging, but also most effective, precisely through strengthening cultural ties. There is no doubt that, as a part of what was once Yugoslavia, Serbia has been emphatically pro-American from the cultural point of view since the 1950s. This was also reflected in cultural creativity, and especially since the late 1960s and during the 1970s, especially in the world of theater, film, literature and popular culture (music, fashion, design...). It was precisely the period of the most precious achievements in Serbian and Yugoslav literature, theater, film, the visual arts and music, coinciding with the period of strong American influences and general positive attitude towards the USA in Serbian and Yugoslav society, from the mid-1950s to the beginning of the seventies when we began to feel the crisis with the certainty of the breakup of the Yugoslav federation.

The vast majority of Serbian citizens share the cultural patterns of the American people, which is only increasing with the development of communication technologies and the availability of cultural content. The cultural influence of the United States globally is undeniable and elusive, but Serbia, though a small country, has its “trump cards” to offer to the American audience. These are already world-famous sports stars – Novak Đoković and basketball players, for example; or young fashion designers (Roksanda Ilinčić), artists (Isidora Žebeljan, Vladimir Pištalo...). Promoting cultural connections has particular potential in the film industry, that is, in strengthening Belgrade and Serbia as destinations for film-making, including the engagement of Serbian film professionals. The promotion of stars originating from Serbia in America has a tremendous impact on perception of Serbia with US citizens, and such positive perception inevitably spills over into Serbia itself, whose public is glad to receive the news that in “great America” they have paid respect and admiration to an athlete/artist from Serbia.

#### 4. 4. Personal connections

Relatively few citizens of Serbia, and even fewer Americans have personal experience with another country or its citizens. Considering that the strength and scope of personal relationships is one of the most important features of relations between the states, Serbia and the USA would have a lot to do in this field if they are interested in improving their overall relations. Here we will point out only two aspects of personal relationships that deserve promotion, which could significantly improve the overall relations between the two countries. One aspect is the Serbian diaspora in the US and the other – US tourists in Serbia.

The Serbian diaspora in the United States is numerous, but also very heterogeneous, in terms of social, educational status, as well as attitudes towards the motherland. What connects it, however, is the permanence of their stay in the United States, which set it apart from the vast majority of Serbian emigrants in Europe, who are more likely to choose to return to the country. According to official US estimates, slightly more than 188,000 people of Serbian descent<sup>7</sup> live in the US, while there are no official data and estimates from Serbia, except for occasional media assessments, which speak of a much larger number. Practically the entire Serbian diaspora in the United States (98.9%) has lived in the country for more than one year, and as many as three quarters (72%) were born in the United States, which is an indication of a firm, lasting attachment to the United States, or a low likelihood that they will decide to come to Serbia.<sup>8</sup>

The Serbian diaspora in the United States, however, does not have enough confidence in the country of origin or its institutions, “thanks” to the frivolous and unsystematic approach that the Serbian state had for it for decades. There is no confidence in the extent to invest in it. However, they would have much more confidence in Serbia if the US and its institutions were lobbyists of the Serbian state to its immigrants to the US. Of course, only if Serbia and its institutions deserve such treatment by the US government, with their progress in building demo-

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<sup>7</sup> Selected Population Profile in The United States, American Community Survey, US Census Bureau (2017)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

cratic institutions and a market economy. Serbia today, by its own merits, and probably the only former Yugoslav republic, does not have a loyal diaspora in the US, but that can change if the United States, which the American Serbs trust, assures the Serbs there that their motherland has progressed in partnership with the US and that it is their worthy partner.

On the other hand, the potential for developing personal connections also lies in stimulating and promoting the arrival of more American tourists to Serbia. The current figures are not encouraging, but to dedicated partners this can also mean great potential and a field for action. Of the 17.7 million US tourists who visit Europe annually (data for 2018, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, National Travel and Tourism Office), only 39.000<sup>9</sup> or 0.2% “drop in” to Serbia. This percentage can certainly be increased, but it is a task for tourist workers in Serbia. With regard to state institutions, encouraging such efforts would be beneficial for the overall relations of the two countries, as this would directly increase the number of people who gain personal experience with another country. We see these efforts primarily in applying the same experiences of the continental states of the former Eastern Bloc, the Czech Republic, Slovakia or Hungary, but also in the field of accelerating European integration, which will remove borders with neighbors and speed up all administrative procedures.

#### 4. 5. Historical connections

Awareness and memory of the strong historical ties between Serbia and the US and their people have been the biggest victims of the poor political relations of two countries since the 1990s. Thanks to the anti-Western and anti-American policies that have since created public discourse, generations of young people in Serbia have grown aware that the United States is the enemy of Serbia, that they wish it harm, and that they systematically do so by favoring its enemies. Anti-Americanism

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<sup>9</sup> Statistics on tourism in the Republic of Serbia (January–December 2018), Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications (2019).

did not exist as a widespread social sentiment even during the communist era, that is, before the 1990s. This regression made the collective memories of the strong bonds that people and the two states have made throughout history, and especially in mutually difficult moments, such as World War I and World War II disappear. In these wars a strong alliance was forged, spoken and taught, and which both responsible nations sought to cherish as their valuable heritage. It is only in the last few years, more and more through the efforts of the United States, that historical ties are more strongly strengthened, and in their respect, attempts are being made to build a new relationship between the two nations. We should strive to rescue from oblivion the friendship between Mihajlo Pupin and President Woodrow Wilson, which also resulted in a favorable American attitude toward Serbia after World War I. It is similar to commemorating the anniversaries of the Halyard mission and promoting the heroism that has been shown in the rescue of American aviators in World War II. Since the end of World War II, the United States has made tremendous efforts to rebuild Yugoslavia whose development remained slow until the mid-1960s, due to the inherited poverty of previous times, the effects of the devastation of war and the loss of over half a million human lives, and the failed economic policies of post-war Yugoslavia. Serbia and the US have a duty to their citizens to make an effort and to bring back from oblivion numerous examples of alliances and friendships, since they are unknown in Serbia for the younger generations, and for those older, only a hazy memory of some earlier times.

The sense of historical alliance and partnership is something that, in the long run, “colors” the relations between the two countries and their nations and lays a solid foundation for building other forms of partnerships. One of the significant foundations of our historical alliance is precisely the experience that Serbia has gained in the Yugoslav community, the only complex country, in state and social sense, which has a similarity to the United States. Several generations of our expatriates, thanks to this experience, have been able to assimilate and achieve tremendous success in American society in economics, education, and social mobility. If the American dream, based on reality, is the possibility of Serbia’s integration into the European Union, that dream, even when it comes to the EU, is based on the support and assistance of the USA to European unification. Finally, the American experience could

again help us in the search for peace and new paths of cooperation with our neighbors, because the area of application or understanding of the Serbian language, and all other identical or similar Yugoslav languages, covers a large market of about 30 million inhabitants, much of Southeast Europe.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Serbia and the United States have a great challenge ahead, but certainly both will obtain great profits from building new, better relationships for the 21st century. Many assumptions are already at hand, and some must come with dedicated work and patience, which will not be easy, given the complexity of relationships so far, and especially their conflict phase over the last three decades. However, the interests of better relations far outweigh the consequences of this difficult legacy, which both governments should be aware of, which should also lead this process. It will not be short or easy, but over time it will bring visible and tangible fruits to both nations, which, by acquiring historical circumstances, are farther from each other than their past, and especially the future, require and deserve.

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**Orhan Dragaš**

## **PET TAČAKA ZA GRADNJU NOVIH SRPSKO-AMERIČKIH ODNOSA U 21. VEKU**

### Rezime

Odnosi Srbije i Sjedinjenih Američkih Država imaju dugu istoriju; ona je obeležena usponima i padovima, pri čemu su dostizani i ekstremi – od najintenzivnijeg prijateljstva i bratstva, do oružanih sukoba. Obe države pokazuju zainteresovanost da unaprede svoje odnose i da prevaziđu istorijski nisku tačku koja traje poslednje tri decenije, što je neophodna pretpostavka da se uopšte i diskutuje o načinima na koji to treba postići. Potencijali za unapređenje odnosa Srbije i SAD objektivno su ograničeni grupom faktora, od kojih su neki (geografska udaljenost, ogromna nesrazmera u snazi i potencijalima) svojstveni i mnogim drugim državama na svetu, ali tu je i jedan ekskluzivno bilateralan remetilački faktor, a to su odnosi iz nedavne prošlosti. Prema našem mišljenju, dve države i dve nacije moraju pronaći oblasti u kojima će napredak voditi dugotrajnom jačanju ukupnih odnosa, na šta neće uticati povremeni različiti pogledi u političkoj i ekonomskoj sferi, kojih će svakako biti i što nije ništa neuobičajeno u savremenim međunarodnim odnosima. Te oblasti su tehnologija, bezbednost, kultura, personalne i istorijske veze. Obe države i njihovi narodi, njihove ekonomske, kulturne zajednice, mogu u ovim oblastima da iskoriste veliki prostor i nadgrade već postojeće veze, pri čemu bi dve državne administracije trebalo da daju podstrek tom povezivanju.

Ključne reči: Srbija, SAD, odnosi, saradnja, bezbednost, kultura, tehnologija, dijaspora, turizam, istorija, trgovina, partnerstvo



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## UNITED STATES – SERBIAN RELATIONS: A GREEK PERSPECTIVE

**Abstract:** The author analyses the situation in the West Balkans with regards to security and other challenges. The focus is primarily on Serbia and its relations with other countries as well as its effects on the region. Some of the challenges and threats that are mentioned are Muslim extremism and the migrant crisis in the Balkans. Near the end of the paper, the role of the U.S. is highlighted, as well as the fact that its cooperation with Serbia may be a stabilizing factor in the region.

**Keywords:** US–Serbian relations, strategic significance, migration, security, foreign policy, Islam in the Balkans

### Introduction

The end of the Cold War created a world in which the relative stability between the two superpowers has disappeared. During the Cold War, a country's every action was conducted in the light of the adversary relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. The cataclysmic changes that took place in Central and Eastern Europe inevitably changed the face of politics in Europe and in the Western world as a whole. The civil war in Yugoslavia was the first case of ethnic conflict in Europe in the post-Cold War order.

On September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, the international community was introduced to a new type of international order, one that was truly global in its organization and its impact. In both the European Union member-states and the United States, it was immediately clear that an effective response would require a new level of cooperation across the Atlantic and around the world.

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The post September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 era has challenged governments, policy-makers, religious leaders, the media and the general public to play both critical and constructive roles in international security, especially in the Balkans and Mediterranean region.<sup>1</sup>

The goal of the paper will be to point out the strategic significance of the Republic of Serbia as a stability factor in the tortuous history of the Balkans as a hotbed of repeated crises and why US-Serbian relations is important nowadays for the prosperity in the Balkan peninsula.

The security analyst thus approaches the Balkan countries, a theater pregnant with instability and a permanent risk of war, with great trepidation. After the break-up of Yugoslavia, and the savage ethnic conflicts thereby provoked, the Balkan countries are again on the cusp of reignited ethnic hatreds and religious conflicts. While the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula (namely Bulgaria and Romania) remains relatively quiet – if the illegal immigration that began in summer 2015 and particularly affected Bulgaria is overlooked – the “Balkan East” is no imminent cause of concern. Not so with “Balkan West,” a region in great distress containing Albania, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, Greece, to the south, has earned the dubious distinction of a stability factor for the security development in the Balkan Peninsula.

### **Geography vs Security in the Balkans**

Serbia is located along a historical trade route between the Middle East and Western Europe. The so-called Balkan Route continues to be a corridor for trafficking weapons, narcotics, and people.<sup>3</sup> During the early stages of Europe’s recent migration and refugee crisis, Serbia (like Greece) became part of a land route for refugees and migrant from the

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<sup>1</sup> John M. Nomikos (2007), “Transatlantic Intelligence Cooperation, the Global War on Terrorism and International Order”, Yiannis A. Stivachtis (ed) *International Order in a Globalizing World*, p. 161, (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, USA).

<sup>2</sup> Slovenia, once part of Yugoslavia, is generally exempted from discussion of the Balkans, see, for example, “Why Slovenia is not the Balkans,” *The Economist*, 20 November 2003, processed on 07/13/2019 <http://www.economist.com/node/2206879>.

<sup>3</sup> “Serbia: Background and U.S. Relations”, (2018), Congressional Research Service Report, processed on 07/14/2019 <https://crreports.congress.gov/R44955>, USA.

Middle East and Africa bound for the rest of the European Union member states, primarily Germany, Netherlands and Scandinavian states.

Law Enforcement analysts in the EU member-states and the US have expressed concern that political and security stability remains tenuous. Serbia has experienced political crises, sometimes involving third-party interference and stagnating economy, high unemployment and high rates of emigration. In Serbia, these crises, have raised concerns that any decrease in the European Union or the United States presence could create a regional vacuum in which organized crime, radicalization and terrorism could flourish. In addition, security analysts observed that growing economic and political roles of Russia, China, and other states agenda in the Western Balkans might conflict with the United States and European Union interests in the Balkan Peninsula.

However, United States relations with Serbia have been rocky at times because of the past interventions in the conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo and United States recognition of Kosovo's independence. Many observers believe that the European Union Commission has been preoccupied by domestic issues such as eurozone crisis, exit of the United Kingdom from the European Union, and illegal immigration crisis. These observers in both the United States and the Balkan states, believe that the United States must reinvigorate its strategy of active engagement with western Balkan states, and in particular its relations with Serbia.

On the occasion of celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the rising of the Serbian flag over the White House – United States President Woodrow Wilson's gesture was meant to honor the sacrifice of Serbia in the First World War. Ivica Dacic, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister, stated “the United States and the Serbian capital together recalled our two people's historical alliances, but more importantly, together we paved the way for further development of our partner relations. Serbia is committed to achieving regional peace and stability by making efforts to become a part of a united democratic Europe, and that is why the positive dynamics of bilateral relations with the United States is at the top of our foreign policy priorities.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Serbia, US “paved way for development of partner relations”, July 30, 2018 Processed on 07/14/2019 [https://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2018&mm=07&dd=30&nav\\_id=104740](https://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics.php?yyyy=2018&mm=07&dd=30&nav_id=104740).

On the contrary, Russian President, Vladimir Putin's visit to Serbia on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 poses an interesting question – are China and Russia making inroads into Serbia due to less active US involvement? The numbers speak for themselves. The last US President to visit Belgrade was Jimmy Carter in 1980. Russian President, Vladimir Putin has made his fourth trip to Serbia since coming to power in 2000.<sup>5</sup> Putin has met with the current Serbian President, Aleksander Vucic fourteen times so far.

And the Russians have not been alone in courting Belgrade over the past few years. Chinese President Xi Jinping paid an official visit to Serbia in 2014 and he had five official bilateral meetings with his Serbian counterpart since 2014.<sup>6</sup> As Gordon N. Bardos pointed out: “why policy-makers in Moscow and Beijing have been busy visiting Belgrade is because they know how to read a map.”<sup>7</sup> The most important land and riparian transportation corridors between Western Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean and between the Baltic Sea and Aegean Sea, run through Serbia.”

On the contrary, US policy-makers have over the past two plus decades focused on Kosovo, and Bosnia-Herzegovina which in terms of geography are strategically of secondary importance compared to North Macedonia and Montenegro<sup>8</sup> (mainly to promote NATO integration).

### **Security Challenges in the West Balkans**

Twenty-eight years after the break up of Yugoslavia, we have a developed model of geostrategy in the Western Balkans again. Renovation of rivalry is only one of the factors that will affect the already existing elements of instability of the Western Balkans<sup>9</sup> Security analysts strive

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<sup>5</sup> Gordon N. Bardos (2019), “Why America is Blind to Serbia's Bright Future”, processed on 07/14/2019 <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-america-blind-serbias-bright-future-41832>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Milan Balazic (2016) “Geopolitics of the Western Balkans 25 years After the Breakup of Yugoslavia”, in (ed) Vladimir N. Cvetkovic *The One Belt, One Road: The Balkan Perspective – Political and Security Aspects*, p. 181, (University of Belgrade, Faculty of Security Studies, Serbia).

for predictability that are always obliged to work on probability. The West Balkan condition is characterized by strong permanent elements guaranteed to produce conflict provided that the right mix of triggering element develops. During the past two decades, West Balkans stability has been maintained largely due to the United States efforts at mobilizing European initiatives in the area. The Western Balkans has never been a priority for the European Union in comparison with other European Union problems such as the Euro-crisis and the Brexit. Twenty years' worth of European Union has cultivated expectations in the West Balkans which cannot be met.<sup>10</sup> This state of affairs is a strong predictor of conflict as popular dissatisfaction and frustration are funneled back into ethnic strife, religious hatred, social isolation, economic malaise, and political impasse.

Nowadays, the maritime routes from Turkey to West Balkans through Greece have become the most traveled illicit migrant thoroughfare in the world. Although, this mass migration poses implications for security challenges, economic well-being, and political stability throughout the region.<sup>11</sup> The number of migrants hoping to make their way into Europe show few signs of abating in the coming years. It is essential that governments in Greece, Serbia, North Macedonia and Bulgaria as well as policy-makers understand the implications of the ongoing migration trends and mitigate the potential threats of mass movements – for both states' security and for the safety of the migrants.

Another serious security threat is the organized crime's influence on the migrant crisis that poses a transnational threat to the United States, European Union, and West Balkan states. Organized criminals see the mass influx of desperate populations hoping to cross a dangerous body of water as yet another opportunity for profit. Vulnerable people – in this case the migrants – employ any means, legal or otherwise, to reach their destinations. As more European Union member states resist accepting migrants, organized criminal activity and the demand for their

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<sup>10</sup> John M. Nomikos and A. Th. Symeonides (2017), "Interesting and Balkan Instability: Repeating the Past or Moving in a New Direction", p. 87, *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Vol. 31, No. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Lacey Bruske (2016), "Organized Crime's Goldmine: Combating Maritime Smuggling Routes from Turkey to Greece" p. 5, *Research Institute for European and American Studies Monograph*, May 2016, Greece.

services increase. Turkish smugglers charge upwards of \$ 1200 per person for safe passage across the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea.<sup>12</sup>

In the Balkans, one of the more notorious European criminal organizations, the Albanian Mafia, also serves as one of the criminal exploiting migrants on the maritime from Turkey to Greece. It is notorious for its human trafficking and heroin smuggling operations along the Balkan Route. The lack of proper regulation of migrants and the smugglers who assist them by the Turkish government has allowed organized crime to flourish.<sup>13</sup> Concurrently, the increased difficulties of reaching other European Union member states (primarily Germany, The Netherlands and Scandinavian countries) legally, and the various physical and legal barriers to entry that have been erected have provided a greater need for organized crime.

Confronting the security challenges in the Balkan region, the Serbian government has taken initiatives (networks of cooperation) for the improvement coordination and joint action between law enforcement and intelligence agencies. The Western Balkan depends on the more specific development of reforms in the judicial and law enforcement areas. Without these components, the fight against illegal immigration, organized crime, human trafficking, corruption, smuggling of excise commodities, radicalization and terrorism cannot be successful.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, the Serbian and Greek governments have pointed out the need of information-sharing among the West Balkan states on suspected smugglers and their networks. A more complete picture of smuggling operations and organizations can assist law enforcement services and state attorneys in catching and prosecuting criminals as well as implementing collaboration between Interpol and Europol. Interpol has significant intelligence gathering and analytical capabilities. It could provide support to Europol by increasing information sharing. This is particularly important with Interpol's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (LTD) databases, which could assist Europol and the Schengen

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Gabriela Konevska (2007), "Policy Responses to Human Trafficking in the Balkans" (eds) H. Richard Friman and Simon Reich Human Trafficking, Human Security, and the Balkans, p. 127, (University of Pittsburgh Press, USA).

Information System<sup>15</sup> to discover identification fraud such as illegal migrants and human traffickers.

### **U.S. Foreign Policy towards Serbia**

The important role of the Balkans, particularly Bosnia-Herzegovina, in the early formation of radical – militant Islam during and soon after the Second World War is being belatedly recognized by Western mainstream scholars.<sup>16</sup>

After the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Clinton Administration resolved to prove the enduring relevance of NATO and thus retain United States influence in Europe by dragging NATO into the brewing fighting in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>17</sup>

However, as Yossef Bodanski has pointed out: President Clinton decision to side with the Muslims against the Serbs was a most cynical gambit of greater significance. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Bosnia-Herzegovina remains central to the ascent of Jihadism worldwide. In Bosnia, the veterans of the Jihad created and continue to provide unique logistical, communication and clandestine travel services for European Jihadists traveling to and from Chechnya, Iraq and Syria.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Darko Trifunovic has made observations regarding US foreign policy in the Balkans by stating that – the Balkans armed conflicts from 1991 to 2001, greatly misrepresented in the Western public, were the biggest defeat for the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, a great defeat for the European Union – but a victory for global jihad.<sup>19</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>15</sup> Schengen Area signifies a zone where 26 European countries, abolished their internal borders, for the free and unrestricted movement of people, in harmony with common rules for controlling external borders and fighting criminality by strengthening the common judicial system and police cooperation. Processed on 07/14/2019 <https://www.schengenvisa.info.com/schengen-visa-countries-list/>.

<sup>16</sup> Yossef Bodanski (2014), “Yossef Bodanski” in (ed) Darko Trifunovic “Islamic Terrorism and Al Qaeda In the Balkans” p. 7. (ISSA–International Strategic Studies Association, USA).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Darko Trifunovic (2014), “Islamic Terrorism and Al Qaeda in the Balkans – Testimony of a former Al Qaeda lieutenant” p. 11. (ISSA – International Strategic Association, USA).

the Trump Administration should take into consideration that radical Islamist activity is endangering the security of not only Serbia, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also the United States, European Union member states and the world.

The instability and the chaotic situation that prevailed in the Balkans for many years left their stamp and turned this arena into an optimal operational theater for the Islamic terror organizations and Iran. They view the Balkans as a springboard and a conventional front base for the networking of terror infrastructure on European soil.<sup>20</sup> As Shaul Shay pointed out: The “Islamization” processes that the Muslim population underwent in the Balkans during the war years (in Bosnia, Kosovo, and North Macedonia), the bitterness against the West that failed to rush to their aid, and the gratitude felt for their “Muslim brethren” who took their side when they were in distress, all create a supportive political and social environment for radical Islam. Thus, it would appear that most of the Islamic movement in the Balkans currently strive to establish an independent Islamic state, which will be built only after a prolonged and intractable struggle against the Serbs<sup>21</sup> and any other entity (including the West) that constitute an obstacle.

Under the Trump Administration, United States intelligence needs to re-invent its Balkan West wisdom, although the use of this term sounds incongruous when reminiscing about the 1990s. The iconoclastic beginning of such a reassessment project would be to downgrade the “incentive” of eventual EU Membership as a primary tool of stabilizing the Balkan situation. Yet, such a proposition would raise the hackles of European traditionalists pushing for “more Europe” at a time when calls for the dismantling of the European project, in its present form, are increasing.<sup>22</sup>

At the end, other changes to conventional 1990s wisdom should include the recognition that trying to satisfy Islam in the Balkans, in the name of a “balanced approach” is a dangerous mistaken political

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<sup>20</sup> Shaul Shay (2007), “Islamic Terror in the Balkans” pp: 201–202, (Transaction Publishers, London, UK).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> John M Nomikos & A. Th. Symeonides ((2017), “Interesting and Balkan Instability: Repeating the Past or Moving in a New Direction”, pp: 96–97, International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, Vol. 31, No, 1.

assumption; that insisting of a non-negotiable acceptance by local societies of social myths cherished by the West is counterproductive; that forgetting and forgiving the unpaid tolerating and not confronting war criminals as national leaders is the inevitable price of “stability.”<sup>23</sup>

### **Concluding Remarks**

Across a range of post-Cold War matters, globalization has undermined many of the familiar mechanisms by which states formerly provided their population and security.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, illegal immigration, human trafficking, transnational organized crime, drug-trafficking and money laundering are serious threats in the Balkan peninsula.

International attention due to terror attacks, increase of organized crime, economic instability, and social unrests has drawn a critical lens of the migrant crisis in Europe. The millions of individuals streaming into Greece through the maritime route, whether as refugees from conflict or economic migrants, have greatly strained the European Union member state’s institutional capacity, and its people patience.

Law Enforcement and intelligence regional cooperation among the Balkan states, but especially between Serbia and Greece, is the most important weapon in the battle to contain the Islamic terrorist networks in the West Balkans. Intelligence and law enforcement issues are now more prominent than ever in Western political discourse as well as the wider public consciousness. Much of this can be attributed to the shock of terrorist acts in Burgas, Bulgaria (2012), Paris (2015) and Brussels (2016).

Confronting security challenges in the West Balkans, modern security and intelligence is a multinational activity, US homeland security and intelligence community along with the EU member states and Interpol must increase foreign intelligence cooperation. There are several parameters that need to be applied such as: US support to the EU’s financial intelligence units; formalize the financial intelligence branches

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> John M. Nomikos (2007), “Transatlantic Intelligence Cooperation, the Global War on Terrorism and International Order”, Yiannis A. Stivachtis (ed) *International Order in a Globalizing World*, p. 179, (Ashgate Publishing Ltd, USA).

within Interpol and Europol; and increase the use of social media as a means to counter radicalization in the West Balkans.

In addition, another security issue is the return of foreign fighters from the Middle East (Syria) in the West Balkan states which are confronted with the challenge on how to use criminal rehabilitation programs as a model for reintegrating violent extremists back into society. Serbia and Greece realize that rehabilitation programs are designed to ease former radicals and gang members back into society in order to be adapted for use with repentant extremists. Judiciary and penitentiary systems need to be reformed in the West Balkans to ensure that rehabilitation and reinsertion work starts in prison.<sup>25</sup> Psychological support structures must be strengthened. There should be a special focus on children and youths recruited by extremists to ensure their rehabilitation. In the West Balkans, the European Union could play a distinct role by enabling a review of rehabilitation programs that have emerged and where this approach is being taken in order to be able to demonstrate the social and economic benefits of such programs and to promote them across the European Union.

Nowadays, US foreign policy in the West Balkans should take into consideration the comments by Gregory Treverton who has called -intelligence the craft of solving puzzles, mysteries and complexities.<sup>26</sup> The West Balkans offer all three abundance. Outside forces are at work, sometimes quite openly, in efforts to co-opt dissatisfied domestic non-state entities.<sup>27</sup> They manipulate them to create threats to incumbent political leaders, then later profess that they are the saviors of central government power, thereby securing a manipulation advantage to pursue their own politico-strategic aims.

At the end, the United States realizes that West Balkans is a region that needs special attention and Serbia is an important nation for the

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<sup>25</sup> Debating Security Plus – Conflict, Competition and Cooperation in an Inter-connected World Report, Autumn 2018, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, p: 21, (Friends of Europe Think Tank, Brussels, Belgium).

<sup>26</sup> Gregory F. Treverton (2014), “The Future of Intelligence: Changing Threats; Evolving Methods”, In Isabelle Duyvesteyn, Ben de Jong and Joop van Reijn, (eds) *The Future of Intelligence Challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, p. 28, (Studies in Intelligence Series, Oxon, Routledge, UK).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid p: 30.

stability of the region by promoting an innovative approach to law-enforcement and intelligence sharing information which is necessary to confront emerging security threats and thwart the strategies of deviance of refractory countries in the Balkan peninsula.

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**Džon M. Nomikos**

## **AMERIČKO-SRPSKI ODNOSI: IZ GRČKE PERSPEKTIVE**

### Rezime

Autor analizira situaciju na zapadnom Balkanu u vezi sa bezbednošću i drugim izazovima. Fokus je uglavnom na Srbiji i na njenim odnosima sa drugim zemljama, ali i na posledicama u regionu. Naglašene su razne pretnje i izazovi za bezbednost, poput muslimanskog ekstremizma i migrantske krize na Balkanu. Pri kraju članka ističe se uloga koju SAD imaju, kao i činjenica da njihova saradnja sa Srbijom može da bude stabilizirajući faktor za region.

Ključne reči: Američko-srpski odnosi, strateški značaj, migracije, bezbednost, spoljna politika, islam na Balkanu

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## FOUR PORTRAITS OF RARE VALOR: SERBIAN- AMERICANS IN THE US MILITARY

**Abstract:** The author notes four examples of great valor shown by Serbian-Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These examples include people such as: Rade Grbitch, Jake Alex, Mitchell Paige and Lance Sijan who received Medals of Honor for their heroism. Operation Halyard is also mentioned as an example of great courage by Serbs during the Second World War, as well as the role that Serbian-Americans played in the operation.

**Keywords:** Serbian-Americans, Medal of Honor, courage, Operation Halyard

In an age that has spawned a multiplicity of various awards, the US Medal of Honor possesses a unique distinction.<sup>1</sup> Established by Congress in 1861, it first applied to sailors and marines and was then extended to soldiers the following year. Today it serves as the highest award recognizing valor in combat for all members of US armed forces. In the intervening years, the criteria underwent a number of revisions. Initially, during the American Civil War, the medals were loosely bestowed with only minimal requirements. Later in the century, a more stringent selection process evolved to acknowledge “gallantry and intrepidity.” By 1897, for example, an application for the award could no longer be submitted by the person in question, and the heroic deed to be commemorated required at least one eyewitness testifying under oath.

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<sup>1</sup> Although some incorrectly refer to the Congressional Medal of Honor, the official name from the outset has been the Medal of Honor. Because an act of Congress brought the medal into existence, which is also presented in the name of Congress, this confusion is understandable.

More exacting measures followed in the twentieth century. Not only were hundreds of prior awards revoked, predominantly from the Civil War era, but in 1963 an act of Congress specified the distinction be limited to valor in military combat. Previously heroic acts – such as those of the aviator Charles Lindbergh and the Artic explorer Admiral Richard Byrd – merited this high recognition as well. With these increased restrictions also came, as compensation, the introduction of several lesser awards including the Army's Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, the Air Force Cross, the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart. In these instances, approval can be granted by the secretary of defense or the appropriate service secretary.

By contrast, the Medal of Honor requires the approval of the president himself, who generally presides at the official ceremony. As a further distinguishing feature, the medal, unlike other military awards, is worn around the neck, suspended by a blue ribbon. The actual design on the medal depends largely on the service branch. Whereas a five-star general such as Douglas MacArthur was a recipient, the overwhelming number have had a far more modest background. Such is the case with these four Serbian Americans who, at a critical moment, unhesitatingly displayed a special kind of bravery or self-sacrifice. Each comes from a different time period, and each represents a different service branch.

### **PRELUDE (Rade Grbitch – US Navy)**

For the USS *Bennington*, it seemed an auspicious arrival in San Diego harbor on 19 July 1905. Having just completed a rather turbulent, seventeen-day voyage from Hawaii, the crew of the yellow-and-white patrol gunboat looked forward to a few days of on-shore leisure. But an emergency order to aid a distressed ship near Santa Barbara cancelled any such prospect. The steam-powered *Bennington* was neither new nor large, even though it had managed to claim possession of Wake Island during the Spanish-American War while en route to the Philippines in 1899.

Yet before its departure from San Diego harbor, a horrendous explosion occurred in one of the four boilers. As the ship shuddered violently, scalding steam moving at a gale-force velocity immediately filled the

decks and living compartments. To compound matters, the ruined boiler also produced intense flames that could potentially detonate the store of munitions onboard. When the magazine doors were opened as a precaution, the sudden influx of seawater caused the ship to list starboard. Although other vessels in the harbor offered assistance, more than 60 people perished, while the large number of injured overwhelmed the limited medical facilities and trained personnel in the city. Extensive inquiries by the Navy afterward failed to ascertain the precise cause of the explosion, and charges of negligence were eventually dropped. To mark the event, a 60-foot gray granite obelisk was installed several years later near the gravesites on Point Loma.

Eleven surviving members of the crew received Medals of Honor. One of them was Rade Grbitch, a Serb who was born in Dalmatia in 1870, emigrated to the United States, and joined the US Navy in Ohio. He had been on deck when the explosion occurred and, uninjured himself, immediately went below to aid his stricken shipmates and then volunteered to return to the boiler room to stop a leak. His official citation simply reads: "On board the USS *Bennington*, for extraordinary heroism displayed at the time of the explosion of a boiler of that vessel at San Diego, Calif., 21 July 1905."<sup>2</sup> Dying at an early age only five years later, Grbitch was buried at the San Francisco National Cemetery.

### **FIRST WORLD WAR (Jake Alex – US Army)**

The outbreak of hostilities in August 1914 – following the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo – escalated into one of the defining events of the twentieth century. Especially fateful was the set of fortified trenches that eventually extended from the Swiss border to the North Sea coast of Belgium. Both the Central Powers and the Allies found traditional military offensives nearly impossible to execute, and little ground was gained. Staggering casualties mounted as a result. In the Battle of the Somme alone – fought on a 15-mile front in 1916 and lasting nearly five months – more than a million soldiers were either wounded or perished.

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<sup>2</sup> Medal of Honor Recipients – Interim Awards, 1901–1911. [history.army.mil](http://history.army.mil)

Born in 1887 in Streska, Serbia, near the Sar Mountains, Jake Alex (or Jake Alex Mandusich) left his homeland for the United States at the age of 15. After settling in Chicago, he enlisted in the US Army following the country's abandonment of neutrality and belated entry into the war in 1918. Assigned to Company 11, 131<sup>st</sup> Infantry, he soon found himself in the critical battle-torn region of northern France. On 8 August, the Allies launched the Hundred Days Offensive, which was to prove instrumental in the final victorious outcome of the war. Sizeable gains – more than seven miles of territory – occurred on the first day of battle, causing a dejected General Erich Ludendorff, the heralded victor of Tannenberg on the Eastern front, to call it a “*schwarzer Tag*” (black day) for his German troops.

Even in the face of declining morale, German resistance stiffened. The first phase of this offensive saw the Battle of Amiens, which involved a massive force of 75,000 men, more than 500 tanks, and nearly 2,000 planes. On 9 August, Alex's platoon came under intense attack near Chipilly Ridge. After finding all of its officers either killed or wounded, he took command and led his platoon in the direction of the enemy position. When bursts of heavy machine gun fire forced his men to take cover, Alex advanced alone for thirty yards and killed six German soldiers outright. In the process, his bayonet broke, but using the butt of his rifle as a club, he subdued fifteen more men.

At a ceremony in Luxemburg on 22 April 1919, General John J. Pershing, commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Forces in France, presented Alex with the Medal of Honor. Numerous other countries including France, Great Britain, Italy, and Yugoslavia likewise acknowledged his extraordinary courage with military decorations. Following his death in 1959, he was buried in the cemetery of the Serbian Orthodox Monastery of Saint Sava in Libertyville, Illinois.

## **SECOND WORLD WAR (Mitchell Paige – US Marines)**

The military career of Mitchell Paige began well before the outbreak of the Second World War. Born on 31 August 1918 in the western Pennsylvania mill town of Charleroi to Serbian emigrant parents named Pejic,

he later graduated from McKeesport High School. The lack of job prospects during the Great Depression caused him to join the US Marines after hitchhiking more than 200 miles to the nearest recruiting station in Baltimore, Maryland. Prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, his postings included the Philippines and China.

As the War in the Pacific began in earnest, the Solomon Islands, located east of New Guinea, took on critical significance. The Japanese, anxious to establish bases that could interdict the supply lines between the United States and Australia and New Zealand, had dispatched thousands of troops to the British protectorate. Mitchell was sent to the Pacific attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Marines, which landed first at Apia, British Samoa, before moving on to Guadalcanal in September 1942. Supported by carrier-based bombers and fighters, Japanese soldiers had amassed near Henderson Field, hoping to retake this key strategic facility.

The battle for the airstrip inflicted heavy losses on both sides, but the Marines held their defensive position. On 26 October, the third day of fighting, Japanese troops attempted yet another assault. Mitchell, then a platoon sergeant, commanded a machine-gun section of 32 Marines on a crucial ridge west of the airstrip. Severely outnumbered – and struggling against the general prevalence of malaria – the Americans found themselves being overpowered by the Japanese troops. Mitchell, however, maintained steady fire by moving from one empty machine gun position to the next. At one critical point, he narrowly escaped 30 rounds himself when confronted by a Japanese gunner less than 25 yards away. Undeterred, he next attacked and eliminated an enemy command post. At dawn the next day, the battalion's executive officer found Paige alone on the ridge, ready to lead reinforcements for the final attack that forced the Japanese to retreat.<sup>3</sup> According to Marine estimates, nearly 300 Japanese died near Paige's position; the Americans suffered 14 dead and 32 wounded.

After his promotion to second lieutenant in December, Paige received the Medal of Honor five months later at a ceremony in Mount Martha, Australia, from the commanding general of the First Marine Di-

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<sup>3</sup> Paige's description of the battle for Henderson Field is contained in his memoir, *A Marine Named Mitch: An Autobiography of Mitchell Paige, Colonel, US Marine Corps Retired*. (Great Barrington, MA: Vantage books, 1975), pp.121–160.

vision, Alexander Vandegrift. The closing words of the citation praised “his great personal valor and unyielding devotion to duty.” Paige’s military service continued with additional tours before his retirement in 1959 with the rank of colonel. Tapped later by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, he aided the effort to track down imposters either wearing or selling the Medal of Honor. He died of heart failure in 2003 and was buried in Riverside, California.

### **EXCURSUS (Operation Halyard – OSS)**

It would be remiss not to include brief mention of an extraordinary and little known airlift spearheaded by Serbian Americans serving in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in 1944. While attempting to bomb enemy targets in the Southern theater, increasing numbers of US airmen, flying from bases in Italy, had to abandon their mission over Yugoslavia. Some were taken prisoners by German occupation forces, but many others found a warm reception among Serbian villagers, who, at considerable risk, concealed them and shared their meager food supplies. Given the randomly chosen code name Halyard (known in Serbian as Airlift), the operation was conceived by George Vujnovich, a Serbian American OSS operative based in Bari, Italy. Having himself been trapped behind Axis lines while studying medicine in Belgrade, he felt a particular kinship with both the stranded airmen and the local Serbs.

Vujnovich selected a three-man team, headed by George Musulin, a fellow Serbian American, that would parachute into enemy territory and handle the logistics. Aware that the guerilla army of Draza Mihailovich had been providing protection for many of the downed airmen, the OSS team received firm instructions not to become embroiled in the fierce struggle between Mikhailovich’s Chetniks and the partisans of Josip Broz Tito. Once in the remote mountain village of Pranjani, Musulin directed the rapid construction of a landing strip using only the make-shift tools available. A newly devised radio code established confidential contact with the Bari base.

In early August, the first C-47 cargo planes landed on the precariously short and bumpy airstrip and, as a first priority, returned those needing medical attention to Italy. To defend against attack by the Ger-

man Luftwaffe, sophisticated US fighter planes – the P-51 Mustang and P-38 Lightning – functioned as escorts on occasion. Word of the airlift soon circulated in the environs, drawing additional numbers of Allied airmen to Pranjani to await rescue. At a later point, Nick Lalich, another Serbian American, replaced Musulin as leader of the team. In sum, an OSS mission that was scheduled to last only several weeks continued for five months and rescued 432 US airmen and 80 personnel from British, Canadian, French, Italian, and Russian units.<sup>4</sup> No fatalities occurred throughout this entire period. Not until 2010 – 65 years later – was a Bronze Star awarded to Vujnovich at a ceremony in the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of St. Sava in New York City. A museum and seven historical markers documenting the event can now be found in Pranjani.

### VIETNAM WAR (Lance Sijan – US Air Force)

The Vietnam War counts as the most sustained military engagement in American history. Controversy has not abated over the strategic errors that led ultimately to the fall of Saigon in 1975. The number of total casualties also varies widely; among American military personnel, an estimated 50,000 died, primarily due to small arms fire, enemy booby traps, and aircraft crashes. Afterwards, many of the earlier strong anti-war sentiments found their way into the popular culture of film and fiction. Consequently, US servicemen were frequently characterized in a lurid light – an addicted army ravaged by drugs and displaying unrestrained and sadistic brutality. The example of Lance Sijan, however, provides a compelling corrective to that highly distorted image.

After emigrating to the United States, Sijan's Serbian grandparents settled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where they established a neighborhood tavern that his father continued to operate. Born on 13 April 1942, he attended Bay View High School, becoming known for his outgoing personality, ruggedly handsome appearance, and athletic dexterity, especially on the football field. The family was tightknit, although he and his younger

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<sup>4</sup> For a partial list of the airmen rescued, see Gregory A. Freeman, *The Forgotten 500: The Untold Story of the Men Who Risked All for the Greatest Escape Mission of World War II* (New York: NAL Caliber, 2007), pp. 281–284.

brother later came to hold opposing views on the war in Southeast Asia. Keen to enter the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, Sijan attended the Naval Academy Preparatory School in Maryland after high school graduation to enhance his chances of admission. Once a cadet, he tenaciously overcame certain obstacles – the washout rate was quite high at the time – and graduated in 1965 as a second lieutenant.

After undergoing pilot training, Sijan was assigned to the 480<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron, 366<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing at Da Nang Air Base in South Vietnam. One of its prime tasks involved aerial bombing strikes against the camouflaged artillery positions of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA), which had recently shifted from north of the demilitarized zone to the Ho Chi Minh Trail inside Laos. These two-man missions demanded absolute precision – a fast and steep dive and a low bomb-release altitude – and were countered by greatly improved anti-aircraft defenses by the North Vietnamese as well as electronic surveillance by Soviet trawlers in nearby international waters.

While Sijan and other young officers would have preferred to see a more effective means of waging war, such as mining Haiphong Harbor, they knew that officials in Washington had currently ruled out further escalation. Realizing, too, the acute danger of being captured by the NVA, he had taken some noteworthy precautions. Besides prior jungle survival training in the Philippines, non-standard items – a multiblade pocketknife, waterproofed matches, a small prismatic compass, and a bolo knife – were packed as well. Reading US intelligence reports describing the nature of the enemy on the Ho Chi Minh Trail must have been dispelled any illusions on his part. In addition, he was totally cognizant of the points enumerated of the Code of Conduct for such an eventuality: preparedness to give one's life in defense of the United States; refusal to surrender voluntarily; resistance including devising means of escape; respect for fellow prisoners and deference to any senior officers among them; evasion when interrogated beyond name, rank, serial number, and date of birth; and awareness of one's standing and responsibility as a loyal member of the armed forces.

On the evening of 9 November 1967 – after a careful routine inspection of their F-4C Phantom jet – Sijan and his co-pilot, John Armstrong, left Da Nang on their latest assignment: Ban Laboy Ford, a river crossing six miles inside Laos from the North Vietnamese border. As they neared

their valley target and began to release the ordnance, malfunctioning fuses caused a premature detonation of all six bombs that immediately transformed their aircraft into a ball of fire. Sijan managed to eject from the aircraft, while the fate of Armstrong was never determined. Descending into darkness onto a limestone karst ridge in the triple canopy jungle, Sijan later regained consciousness and discovered the extent of his injuries: a fractured skull, a mangled left hand, and a compound fracture of his left leg. Meanwhile, an intensive search and rescue operation had been ordered, but the lack of continued radio contact with Sijan combined with enemy fire ultimately doomed the two-day effort. Struggling against intense thirst and pain, he decided to drag himself on his hip along the narrow, rocky game trail in quest of water.

Remarkably, after fashioning makeshift bandages, Sijan succeeded in evading the North Vietnamese for forty-six days. On Christmas morning his blood-stained emaciated body was found unconscious on a truck road three miles from Ban Loboy Ford and taken to a NVA camp near Ban Kari Pass. Some solid food and minimal treatment by a medic awakened the desire to plot an escape. Overpowering an armed guard with a solid left-handed chop to the base of his skull, he fled into the jungle but was captured several hours later.

The next phase of Sijan's imprisonment took place at the so-called Bamboo Prison, a holding compound and interrogation center just north of Vinh. Undergoing questioning for the first time, he held firm to the Code of Conduct, despite grueling sessions and repeated physical torture. Details of what had transpired since the plane crash were recounted to his two cellmates, Bob Craner and Guy Gruthers, likewise the subjects of intense interrogation.<sup>5</sup> Even in his diminished state – alternating between periods of lucidity and delirium – Sijan never voiced complaints about his physical condition or ceased expressing his determination to escape once again.

His final destination – the Hoa Lo Prison in Hanoi, colloquially known as the Hanoi Hilton – turned out to be a fatal one. Its notoriously harsh measures soon took a heavy toll upon his malnourished and

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<sup>5</sup> Based on interviews with Guy Gruthers, *Into the Mouth of the Cat: The Story of Lance Sijan, Hero of Vietnam* by Malcolm McConnell (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985) recounts the jungle ordeal of Sijan.

exhausted body, notwithstanding the care administered by Craner and Gruthers. On 21 January 1968, after contracting pneumonia, Sijan was removed from his cell on a pallet and died the following day. His remains were returned to the United States in 1974 and buried with military honors in Arlington Park Cemetery in Milwaukee. Posthumously promoted to captain, he was awarded the Medal of Honor following the recommendation of his two loyal cellmates. In a ceremony at the White House in 1976, President Gerald R. Ford presented the medal to his parents.

Apart from numerous other military decorations, the memory of Sijan took root in multiple ways. Most conspicuously, the US Air Force Academy, taking evident pride in its first graduate to receive the Medal of Honor, named one of its two cadet residence halls in his honor and hung an imposing oil portrait of Sijan clad in his combat flight suit in the main lobby. Additionally, the Air Force established the prestigious Lance P. Sijan USAF Leadership Award beginning in 1981. In Milwaukee, a memorial plaza in his name stands near the entrance to the Mitchell International Airport, replete with a F-4C Phantom jet mounted on a tall pedestal and painted to match the one flown in Vietnam. The city's Serbian community also placed a memorial on the grounds of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church. A special tribute came from another North Vietnamese prisoner of war, the late Senator John McCain. While in captivity, he learned the harrowing details of Sijan's ordeal from fellow prisoners and termed it "the most inspiring POW story of the war." As McCain later wrote, "To Lance Sijan, the Code [of Conduct] was not an abstract ideal, but the supreme purpose of his life."<sup>6</sup>

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For those who live to receive the award, we might well ask what are the thoughts prompted in the soldier's mind. One recent recipient recalled his decidedly mixed feelings – above all, the memory of his fellow soldiers lost in combat and the haunting question of whether he could

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<sup>6</sup> John McCain, "Ennobled by Example" in *Medal of Honor: Portraits of Valor Beyond the Call of Duty*. (New York: Artisan, 2003), xv.

have done more to save them. Comradeship runs very deep, as well as the awareness “that horrible things can – and often will – happen to anybody, even to a soldier dialed to perfection.” In this sense, he modestly described himself, not as the owner of the medal, but its “custodian and caretaker.”<sup>7</sup>

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Džeferson Adams

### ČETIRI PRIMERA RETKE HRABROSTI: AMERIKANCI SRPSKOG POREKLA U AMERIČKOJ VOJSKI

#### Rezime

Autor navodi četiri primera hrabrosti koju su pokazali Amerikanci srpskog porekla u 20. veku. Ovi primeri odnose se na sledeće ljude: Rade Grbić, Džejk Aleks (Aleksa Mandušić), Mičel Pejdz (Mihajlo

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<sup>7</sup> Clinton Romesha, *Red Platoon: A True Story of American Valor* (New York: Dutton, 2016), p. 22, 369.

Pejić) i Lens Sajdžan (Lazar Šijan) koji su dobili Medalje časti za svoje junaštvo. Operacija Halijard se takođe spominje kao primer hrabrosti koju su Srbi pokazali tokom Drugog svetskog rata, kao i uloga koju su Amerikanci srpskog porekla imali tokom operacije.

Ključne reči: Amerikanci srpskog porekla, Medalja časti, hrabrost, operacija Halijard

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## US POLITICAL VIEWS AS A DECISIVE INTERNATIONAL STRONGHOLD FOR ANNEXATION OF VOJVODINA TO THE KINGDOM OF SERBIA IN 1918

**Abstract:** To the surprise of many military strategists, the beginning of 1918 fall became the beginning of the end of the war whirlwind that began in 1914. The breakthrough of the Thessaloniki Front and the central role of the Kingdom of Serbia army in this act conditioned the completion of military operations by November 11<sup>th</sup>. An uncertain period of geopolitical changes followed in the Balkans as well. Political representatives of the Serbian people from Vojvodina (then Banat, Bačka and Baranja), as well as Srem, with the support of other Slavs who lived in the area, organized themselves into national councils to achieve their long-established national program of joining the motherland, Kingdom of Serbia. This intention encountered stiff resistance from the Hungarian political elite and the newly formed Republican government of Mihály Károlyi. However, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy's enthusiastic politics and nationalist discrimination caused deep political distrust in the democratic world. The most important stronghold for the Serbs in this process was the point of view of American President Woodrow Wilson on the right of lesser nations to self-determination. It has been repeatedly emphasized as an understanding of the interests of the Serbian people from Vojvodina, and we intend to substantiate it in the paper.

**Keywords:** politics, principles, joining, support, responsibility

### Austro-Hungarian Paroxysm

The First World War was the inevitable outcome of the conflicting parties' imperialism, Yet the militarism of the Second German Reich

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was most responsible for its bloody feast. “Vague, pervasive hatred”<sup>1</sup> became the guiding force of national and state political actions. Overshadowed by the conflict of the great powers, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy’s attitude towards the Kingdom of Serbia was equally fiery. It was felt by the Serbs in the Monarchy. Their territorial compactness, then political activity relying on the strong expression of church-school autonomy and the activity of cultural institutions such as Matica Srpska was, as interpreted by the Vienna political elite, an unacceptable phenomenon with the ultimate intention of irredentism. For this reason, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy pursued a noticeable anti-Serb policy manifested both towards its fellow Serbs and the independent Kingdom of Serbia. As for the Serbs in the Monarchy, they were exposed to the process of assimilation through the Hungarization of education and through the pressure exerted on the political elite of the Serbs to choose conformism and loyalty as their political expression. Although it was not the decisive creator of nationalist narratives in the Balkans, the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, supported by selected state projects of excessive territorial aspirations, defined the foundation of its Balkan policy – “divide and conquer.” The culmination of *Anti-Serbian* sentiment followed the assassination of *Archduke* Franz Ferdinand, on Vidovdan 1914, and was reflected in the orchestrated hysterical hatred towards the people who were to be part of the great Danube Empire long ago.<sup>2</sup>

### **Pre-war Temptations of Serbian Identity**

The Serbian national idea was rather complex at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The cause of this could be traced back to the historical circumstances in which the process of creation of the independent Serbian state and the life of the remaining but significant part of the Serbian corpus that still lived in the Ottoman or Austrian Empire took place. Polycentric expression of the Serbian national idea<sup>3</sup> precluded a simple

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<sup>1</sup> Hana, Arent, *Izvori totalitarizma*, Feministička izdavačka kuća, Beograd, 1999, p. 375.

<sup>2</sup> „Vesti iz mesta i naroda“, *Branik*, Issue 137, 13 (26) July 1914.

<sup>3</sup> See more in: M. Radojević, Lj. Dimić, *Srbija u Velikom ratu 1914–1918*, Srpska književna zadruga, Beograd, 2014.

national strategy, but on the other hand, stimulated the dispersion of the national vision and its state-building role.

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked by a further political crisis of antagonistic party life for the Serbs in Southern Hungary. Multinational demographic structure of the Hungarian population conditioned the democratization of society for the sake of its survival. The population of Hungary was almost divided in half regarding the number of Hungarian and non-Hungarian people. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of Hungarians was on the rise, outnumbering the population of other nationalities. The then non-Hungarians considered assimilation to be one of the reasons for this upward trend.<sup>4</sup> The multinational structure of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was a specific space in which the hegemonic nationalism of the Austrians and Hungarians was most often exhibited through exclusive political and party expression thus bringing the internal political situation in the country to national alienations. A weak but critical attitude towards the Hungarization of individual Hungarian politicians should be mentioned on this occasion. Of these, certainly the most significant was Oscar Jászi. He called Hungarian politics a “national megalomania” that should be compensated by realistic, humble but self-conscious reasoning about one’s own strengths and advantages.<sup>5</sup> Jászi further supported his position by not accepting the view that the Hungarians were also scared by the “Serbian bogey”. But notwithstanding these warnings, before the First World War, Hungary, as well as the whole of the monarchy after all, got stuck in the mud of its own nationalism that turned its large population of non-Hungarian people in Hungary into either political followers or political apostates.

Influenced by social ideas about the nation and national identity that were coming from Europe, a number of urban Serbs from Hungary

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<sup>4</sup> In the 1880–1910 period, the number of Hungarians in the Hungarian part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy increased by about 34%, while the number of ethnic groups increased by an average of 17% ... See also: Tibor, Pal, *Mađarsko političko javno mnjenje i srpsko pitanje na Balkanu 1903–1914*, doktorska disertacija, Filozofski fakultet, Novi Sad, 2010, p. 79 and 80.

<sup>5</sup> Oskar Jasi, *Budućnost monarhije, propast dvojne monarhije i sjedinjene podunavske zemlje*, Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad, 1996, p. 101, 102.

sought to devise new contents of their national struggle. “That nationalism should indeed be, both in substance and in form, pure, high culture. Culture in the best sense of the word. Morality, humanism, ethics, honesty. Validity and honesty and first class, not only Serbian but also human.”<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the cacophony of Serbian party politics and politicizing,<sup>7</sup> holding firm to their own positions, was not eager to accept new educational ranges because its own privileges and interest achievements were threatened. Although everyone called for democratization and modernization of political articulation, it was obvious that neither of them was there. Political distinction and opportunism caused considerable difficulties for the party political expression among the Serbs of the Monarchy on the eve of the “Great War.” The situation regarding the national identity of Serbs in Austria-Hungary was quite unstable, incomplete, at moments even lifeless. Numerous Serbian political elite became the comprador satrap of authorities.

However, that those who did not want to betray their national identity were more numerous is also indicated by the fact that the Hungarian monarchy experienced a stimulated manifestation of Serbophobia following the assassination in Sarajevo on 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1914.<sup>8</sup> The Monarchy did little to prevent it, justifying itself with a platitude that it could not control the patriotic emotions of its subjects.

With the outbreak of warfare, the Law on Emergency Measures entered into force in Hungary, which resulted in the dying down of all national activities related to both the party work, and the cultural and artistic fields.<sup>9</sup> The Serbs of the Monarchy were mobilized, but many prominent public and cultural workers were also confined and in-

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<sup>6</sup> Isidora Sekulić, *Kulturni nacionalizam*, Novi Srbin, januar–juni 1913, Sombor.

<sup>7</sup> Such a characteristic of political work was characterized by Jovan Cvijić as “political gypsying” based on “continuous feud” and “the entire work of theirs was dominated by personal motives, sometimes even uncouth vanity, they monitor one another and are often able to tell even the most incredible infamies about one another. Moreover, there is much mischief, malice, hatred”: Jovan Cvijić, *O nacionalnom radu*, Beograd, 1907, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> *Branik*, Posle atentata i pogroma, broj 122, 22. jun (5. jul) 1914.

<sup>9</sup> “So almost all of the political life has died ...” Arpad Lebl, *Građanske partije u Vojvodini 1887–1918*, Filozofski fakultet u Novom Sadu, Institut za istoriju, Novi Sad, p. 124.

terned.<sup>10</sup> The fear and atmosphere of the uncertain expectation of news of the outcome of military operations on the front lines prevailed. Accordingly, Hungarians and non-Hungarians, primarily Serbs, experienced positive or negative national feelings.<sup>11</sup> The euphoria of winning or hidden dejection, at the same time inspired by an identical event on the front, were the feelings that witnessed the continuity of a failed policy. Pressure on the Serbs was pronounced – “but for skin, the soul would fly out.”<sup>12</sup>

### Towards the Annexation

Nihilism, timidity, and prudence, as well as repression and the laws of war, completely got in the way of the political life among the Serbs in the Monarchy. In the fall of 1918, political events in Vojvodina<sup>13</sup> were marked as movements for national liberation and secession of Southern Slavs from Hungary. Given the high number and national potential of intelligence, the Serbs led this fight. These changes were conditioned by the breakthrough of the Thessaloniki Front, the military success of the Allied army, primarily the army of the Kingdom of Serbia, the military defeat of Austria-Hungary, the strengthening of the Yugoslav movement in other parts of the Monarchy, territorial claims of Italy, anarchy, the appearance of the so-called “Green Cards” etc. The protagonists of the more organized and radical appearance of the people from Vojvodina, though of different political identities, expressed a unique attitude about the necessity of breaking the state-legal relations with Hungary.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Nikola Milutinović, *Autobiografija*, Rukopisno odeljenje Matice srpske (hereinafter referred to as MDMS M 18453; “On September 21, 1914, Tihomir Ostojić was confined in Baj, then in Stona Belgrade, and younger officers were mobilized.”; Živan Milisavac, *Matica srpska*, Novi Sad, 1965, p. 131. “Vasa Stajić will continue his work in prison in Arad and Szeged or in Ilawa...”; Arpad Lebl, *Politički lik Vase Stajića*, Novi Sad, 1963, p. 287.

<sup>11</sup> *O prvim danima rata, po sećanjima dr Jovana Joce Laloševića*, Historical Archives Sombor, F-56, inv. no. 549.

<sup>12</sup> Isidora Sekulić, *Marica, Zapisi o mome narodu*, Beograd, 1985, p. 300.

<sup>13</sup> In this context, although Vojvodina does not exist as a political-territorial entity, we use this term, accepting the attitude of contemporaries, for the region covered by Banat, Bačka and Baranja.

<sup>14</sup> Ranko, Končar, Saša, Marković, *Vojvodina between Serbian and Yugoslav option during the establishment of the Kingdom SCS*, thematic proceeding of papers

The political situation was uncertain despite the Allies' decisive military victory. There was a very complex diplomatic game taking place and the Serbian politicians from Vojvodina sought an adequate decision. "Only now we are feeling the loss of not having our newspaper, so we do not know how to orient ourselves."<sup>15</sup> The undefined position of Vojvodina could have grown into a problem that cannot be overcome. "The very political position of Vojvodina remained unsolved. The future and the fate of our province remained an open question and this uncertainty has opened the door widely for all fraudsters and tendencies hostile to our national ideals."<sup>16</sup>

The Serbian army getting closer to the borders of the Monarchy was a decisive impetus for political activities of Serbs and other Slavs. They started establishing People's National Councils whose role was to take over administrative and civil administrations in urban and rural areas. The first Serbian National Council was established in Veliki Bečkerek on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1918. In Novi Sad, the Serbian People's Committee held its first public meeting in the ceremonial hall of Matica Srpska on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918. The establishment of these councils encouraged the expansion of the network of these new authorities. The initiators of these activities were the more prominent Serbs and they did not hide their pleasure with this act.

Decisive support in their activities was the views of the USA President, Woodrow Wilson, on the right of people to self-determination. "As soon as Wilson's points were announced, by which every nation is to be recognized the right to self-determination, the meeting was held at Dr. Joca Lalošević's home to organize the People's National Councils of the Serbs and Bunjevci in Sombor."<sup>17</sup>

US President Wilson's affirmative political ideas were of interest for the new Hungarian government as well, headed by Mihály Károlyi. It in-

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from the international conference" Yugoslavia through Time. Ninety Years since the Formation of the First State of Yugoslavia, Department of History of the Faculty of Philosophy in Ljubljana, Ljubljana, 2009, p. 93–105.

<sup>15</sup> *Letter of Joca Lalošević to Tihomir Ostojić*, 29 October 1918, ROMS, 5671.

<sup>16</sup> Jovan Lalošević, *Naše oslobođenje i ujedinjenje*, Historical Archives Sombor, fund 57, inv. no. 448, 1928; „Naše oslobođenje i ujedinjenje“, *Književni sever*, knjiga V, sveska I, Subotica, 1929.

<sup>17</sup> Joca Lalošević, *Oslobođenje Sombora*, Historical Archives Sombor.

tended to preserve the territorial integrity of Hungary. “But listen to us: we are all such people who we have always fought for the interest of the people, who have always preached brotherhood and equality of Bunjevci, Germans, Romanians, Slovaks, and Serbs, and who have suffered a great deal for this belief of ours pressed by the gentlemen of old Hungary.”<sup>18</sup> Károlyi offered some Serbian politicians from Vojvodina – Jaša Tomić, Kosta Hadži<sup>19</sup> portfolios in future ministries. Even though they hesitated, no one accepted the offer, but the newspaper in Pest published a statement by Kosta Hadži that could be understood as if the Serbs from Hungary had no separatist aspirations.

This political discourse of the new Hungarian political elite, based on the pre-war and war discriminatory experience, was more like the pamphlet supposed to skillfully conceal the apparent state failure in the past. This act of “perfidy” of the Hungarian government was written of by aforementioned Jovan Joca Lalošević (1870–1935), a prominent representative of Serbian bourgeoisie. Criticizing the efforts of the new Hungarian government as unacceptable hypocrisy without responsibility, he opposed the idea that the democratic liberties of the non-Hungarians in the Hungarian state were possible. Recent events did not confute him but indicated he was absolutely right. “The Hungarian government mentions the principles of wise President Wilson. But how do they portray the principles? In a false and distorted form. Wilson says that every nation has the right to decide for itself which political creation to join, to choose for itself who will govern it. The Hungarian government wisely remains silent on this, thus diluting the expressions so that no one thinks it is about political freedom. He says every nation is free to arrange what

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<sup>18</sup> “Political Pamphlet of the Hungarian Government by Mihály Károlyi, To All People of Non-Hungarian Language of the People’s Republic! Bunjevci, Germans, Romanians, Saxons, Serbs, Slovaks!”; Historical Archives, Sombor; Personal fund of Đorđe Antić, F–56, inv. no. 370.

<sup>19</sup> Some papers mention that the offer was also sent to Joca Lalošević. “Mihály Károlyi... offered some Vojvodina politicians (Jaša Tomić, Kosta Hadži and Joca Lalošević) portfolios in this future ministry.” Ljubinka Krkljuš, Lazar Rakić, *Vojvodina i stvaranje jugoslovenske države*, u monografiji Draga Njegovana, *Prisajedinjenje Srema, Banata, Bačke i Baranje Srbiji 1918*, Muzej Vojvodine, Novi Sad, 2001, p. 235. Lalošević did not receive any direct offer, but it is possible that Kosta Hadži offered him the position intended for him, but he refused it. Lazar Rakić, *Radikalna stranka u Vojvodini, 1902–1919*, Filozofski fakultet, Novi Sad, 1983, p. 184–185.

is best for it. That should be Wilson's self-determination of the people! It goes on to say that everyone can speak freely in their own language, that they will receive general voting rights, that the people will decide on the land and payment of the factory worker, and ends like this: 'People! It is the right to self-determination of people, according to the science of President Wilson.' Really? So just what? This is exactly what Wilson says, that tutored by other people, someone else's government may embrace self-determination."<sup>20</sup> On the threshold of Lalošević' criticism were also the attitudes of another prominent representative of the democratic political elite of the Serbs – Tihomir Ostojić (1865–1921). He criticized "the lamb gesture of the Hungarian government," actually a disguised "harmlessness" and hypocrisy that cannot disguise the nationalist policy it pursued. "Since November this year, the Hungarian people have not been a new people, but the same people as from before November. The terror of this people had the most severe consequences for us."<sup>21</sup> Not letting emotions and resignation prevail, and having in mind the need for a sober approach to the secession of Vojvodina, Ostojić congratulated the Hungarians for the election of their new revolutionary government. However, "they arranged it to be suitable for them, the Hungarians ... And we want to arrange here with us the other way, good for us. We have the right to demand from the Hungarians to leave us alone."<sup>22</sup>

Several weeks of preparation and networking of Vojvodina National Councils, election of representatives and their sending to Novi Sad bore fruit in the form of organization of Grand National Assembly of Serbs, Bunjevci and other Slavs on 25<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> of November 1918 in Novi Sad.<sup>23</sup> The Assembly was participated by 757 deputies from 211 municipalities. Among them were 578 Serbs, 84 Bunjevci, 62 Slovaks, 21 Rusyns, three Šokci, two Croats, six Germans, and one Hungarian.<sup>24</sup> The decisions made were of historic importance to the Serbian people and related to

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<sup>20</sup> Perfidiija mađarske vlade, *Srpski list*, No. 27, november 27, 1918.

<sup>21</sup> Tihomir Ostojić, „Nova taktika Mađara“, *Srpski list*, organ Srpskog narodnog odbora, 1918, no. 12.

<sup>22</sup> Tihomir Ostojić, „Političko priklapanje“, *Srpski list*, organ Srpskog narodnog odbora, 1918, no. 18.

<sup>23</sup> Joca Lalošević, *Naše oslobođenje i ujedinjenje*, Historical Archives Sombor, F-57, inv. No. 448.

<sup>24</sup> See more: Lazar Rakić, *Radikalna stranka u Vojvodini 1902–1919*, Filozofski fakultet, Novi Sad, 1983, p. 193

the joining of Banat, Bačka, and Baranja (Vojvodina) to the Kingdom of Serbia and support for the creation of a Yugoslav state.

From all of the above, we see that the crucial political document for the people that want to state-frame their national future was the view of the president of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson, presented in 14 points, on the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> of January 1918. Regardless of the fact that this view was not sufficiently clear when it comes to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, it affirmed and supported the idea of establishing a state for the people that made up the population of the multinational Monarchy. This political vision of Woodrow Wilson<sup>25</sup> was extremely sympathetic to the national interests of Serbs and historical circumstances that went in that direction. It should be noted that this was a kind of Perpetuum mobile of American politics, which has until recently been looking at European issues from Olympic heights<sup>26</sup> and viewing the Balkan states as Broadway-like.<sup>27</sup>

The active involvement of the United States in the war on the Entente side led to gradual domination of this great country in providing the resources to wage now already exhausting war. Both Great Britain and France were already severely facing the extreme limits of their own war waging capacities. American aid was crucial, but it encouraged increasingly deeper US involvement in the complex relationships of both allies and warring parties. After learning about conservative imperial views, Woodrow Wilson was unpleasantly surprised by their deposits of insurmountable antagonisms. For this reason, he first “decisively rejected backstage agreements”<sup>28</sup>, and then intended to offer some new solutions with the idea that war, as a concept of interstate relations, should disappear once and for all. His idealism intended to create a “world in which independent nations joined in harmonious order”.<sup>29</sup> New Aus-

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<sup>25</sup> See also: Clements, Kendrick, Woodrow Wilson, world statesman, Boston: Twayne, 1987.

<sup>26</sup> Gerald H. Davis, The Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Austro-Hungary 1913–1917, cited by Milorad Ekmedžić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije, 1790–1918*. knjiga druga, Prosveta, Beograd, 1989, p. 774.

<sup>27</sup> George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy 1900–1950*, Chicago, 1951, p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Andrej Mitrović, *Vreme netrpeljivih, Politička istorija velikih država Evrope*, Zavod za udžbenike, Beograd, 2012, p. 50.

<sup>29</sup> Václav Horčíčka, “The Relationship between Austria-Hungary and the United States in 1918”, *Prague papers on the history of international relations*, 1/2015, 57–92, p. 61.

trian Emperor Carlo also sought his place in this vision. His growing disagreement with the ambition of German Kaiser Wilhelm and his inert attitude on the battlefield hinted at some different intentions. The UK and France carefully observed these indigenous and non-solidary political acts of Austria towards Germany. In addition, Emperor Carlo became even more interesting when he made the first steps towards federalizing the state in the direction of respect for the Slav population. He thus acquired some significant Slavic politicians of the Monarchy, which could yield a kind of compromise that was in no way compatible with state interests of the Kingdom of Serbia.

Serbia, however, reduced to limited military forces, no longer had such an impact on global military-political developments and followed what was happening with some degree of anxiety. At the same time, it focused all of its political capacities on the affirmation of the Yugoslav unity and the leading role of the Kingdom of Serbia in this process. The most important role in affirming this idea was played by famous Serbian intellectuals<sup>30</sup> such as Mihajlo Pupin (1858–1935) who was also a close friend of the American president and whose role in this process was extremely significant. “President Wilson is an idealist, and his idealism commands my deepest respect and admiration... Go to Paris now and watch the proceedings at the peace conference, as I was doing during the last seven weeks, and you will find that America asks for no territories, for no mandates, and for no onerous compensations. It is the only great power there which preaches moderation, and demands unreservedly full justice for the little nations... America is today the only fearless champion of your claims to these Yugoslav lands.”<sup>31</sup>

In addition, to American public opinion quite appealing was the idea of the independent Czechoslovak state of *Tomáš* Masaryk (1850–1937), an exceptional intellectual, politician and diplomat. He carefully considered the ideas of Emperor Carlo, but also nurtured the idea of independence hoping that he would come to an understanding, primarily

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<sup>30</sup> See more: Ljubinka Trgovčević, *Naučnici Srbije i stvaranje Jugoslavije 1914–1920*, Srpska književna zadruka, Beograd, 1986.

<sup>31</sup> Mihajlo Pupin, *Sa pašnjaka do naučenjaka*, Matica srpska, Novi Sad, 1929, p. 160.

of the USA. The Declaration of Independence accepted by the Czechs and Slovaks, which formalized the emergence of Czechoslovakia, also referred to role models such as the American Declaration of Independence and Abraham Lincoln's principles of freedom.<sup>32</sup>

This persistent desire for an independent state and national freedom was an expression of centuries-old aspirations of people who lived under the authority of others. For this reason, and despite the intention of presenting itself as reformed and modern, in free democratic world the Danube Monarchy was given the stigma of a conservative monarchy with a discriminatory character of society. Such a performance of this state, quite realistic (*vis a vis*), influenced the abandoning of the idea of the Monarchy's survival to finally take precedence in official politics of the White House in Washington, notwithstanding that there were numerous expressions of doubt about its probity, especially in the UK.

It was a hint of the end of the centuries-old empire. It did, however, happen suddenly or too quickly for many, without an emotional outburst. "A shake of hands and friendship, which was often lasted for years, was brought to an abrupt end. Generally, they did not even say 'goodbye.'"<sup>33</sup> This sentimental parting was not acceptable for a new libertarian narrative cherished by Serbs as well. This partition was for them a national success and the beginning of a new libertarian epoch. A crucial role in this process, from the international aspect, was played by the view of the United States of America.

The great importance of the role of the United States of America in the annexation of Vojvodina to the Kingdom of Serbia and the creation of the Yugoslav state was recalled several years later by famous Serbian historian Stanoje Stanojević (1874–1937). He first pointed to the uncertainty and abandonment of the Yugoslav state unification plan the Kingdom of Serbia stated as its war objective in 1914. This was especially noticeable bearing in mind that "England and France at that moment

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<sup>32</sup> The Czechoslovak Republic, *The New York Times current history, The European War*, volume XVII, October– November–December 1918, New York, 1919, 492–496, p. 493.

<sup>33</sup> Manfred Rauchensteiner, *The First World War and the End of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1914–1918*, böhlau verlag wien.köln.weimar, Published with support from the Zukunftsfonds der Republik Österreich, 2014, p. 1016.

had a plan to weaken Germany as much as possible, but certainly maintain Austria.”<sup>34</sup> The position of Vojvodina, in the given circumstances, was further hampered as the ideas of it were still “blurry and indefinite,” despite the fact that “Serbs in those parts held the most credit for creating a modern Serbian nationalism and modern Serbian education.”<sup>35</sup><sup>36</sup> Further in his text Stanojević reminded readers that on the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Hungary wanted to gain allies for the idea of preserving its state and territoriality promising modernization, democratization, and respect for the rights of other nations. “That mood and such views were echoed and expressed in some of Wilson’s epistles.”<sup>37</sup> Still, the diplomatic calculation of Austria and insincere abuse of the democratic principles by the new Hungarian government were soon exposed as maneuvers to preserve integrity and escape from responsibilities. Support for the Yugoslav state and fulfillment of Serbian national interests was visible in the expert analysis at the Peace Conference. “It is primarily necessary to point out that the experts of the great powers, especially the main experts for our issue, Englishman Mr. Liper, and American Mr. Johnson, were unusually prepared for all questions that could have arisen. They studied our question to the smallest details, they knew all the literature about it and seriously studied all the books, brochures and memoirs.”<sup>38</sup> The aforementioned analyzes, solid knowledge and research effort, with the favorable political climate and the sympathy of the great powers, led to positive resolutions for the Serbian national interests even regarding the most delicate divides. This was most strongly contributed by the principle that “all people must be equal in their rights,”<sup>39</sup> promoted and adhered to by President Woodrow Wilson.

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<sup>34</sup> Stanoje Stanojević, „Vojvodina na konferenciji mira“, *Letopis Matice srpske*, knjiga 300, za godine 1914–1921, Novi Sad, 1, 76–89, p. 77.

<sup>35</sup> The first Serbian teacher school Norma was founded in 1778 by Avram Mrazović in Sombor. See more in: Saša Marković, *Srpski učitelj u Ugarskoj 1778–1918*, Pedagoški fakultet u Somboru, Sombor, 2016.

<sup>36</sup> Stanoje Stanojević, „Vojvodina na konferenciji mira“, *Letopis Matice srpske*, knjiga 300, za godine 1914–1921, Novi Sad, 1, 76–89, p. 82.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>39</sup> Andrej Mitrović, *Vreme netrpeljivih, Politička istorija velikih država Evrope*, Zastava za udžbenike, Beograd, 2012, p. 50.

## Towards the (Un)Expected Epilogue

The creation of the Yugoslav state following World War I and integration of Vojvodina into its framework through the Kingdom of Serbia instilled new hope. Still, the situation did not move from the national-ethnic segregation. The challenge of realizing the complementary national identity whose content is multi-layered and trans-ethnic was redundant and unnecessary for many, and unavoidable and possible for few. For both, which is the biggest weakness, the identity standpoint was conditioned by politicization and thus, despite the hopes of many, there was no discontinuity with the unresolved national issue from previous times. In doing so, Yugoslavia became a big project soaked in the spasm of its own shortcomings. Yet, differently motivated, decisive political actors of this project did not give up on it even in moments of apparent failure.

Following the Peace Conference, and due to intense pressure of public opinion, the United States of America accepted the policy of isolationism that emerged as a consequence of the conclusion that young Americans were dying for the interests of others and for geopolitical concepts they increasingly disagreed with the more they explored and understood them. This statement equally applied to the Balkans, which, in this context, with its egoistic and megalomaniacal ideas, became an unstable area (“Wild East of Europe”<sup>40</sup>) that can cause a world conflict anew. “The Balkans are a permanent political storm-center lying like a perpetual thunder-cloud on Europe’s southeastern horizon.”<sup>41</sup> Development of the Yugoslav state, with numerous national, constitutional, administrative, economic and broadest cultural contradictions found it quite difficult to cope with the perceived impression of instability and ineffective democratic processes.

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<sup>40</sup> Lothrop Stoddard, *Racial Realities in Europe*, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1924, p. 200.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

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**POLITIČKI STAVOVI SAD KAO ODLUČUJUĆE  
MEĐUNARODNO UPORIŠTE PRISAJEDINJENJA VOJVODINE  
KRALJEVINI SRBIJI 1918. GODINE**

Rezime

Ostvarenje nacionalnih interesa Kraljevine Srbije i Srba uopšte, krajem Prvog svetskog rata dobilo je odlučujuću međunarodnu podršku u stavovima Sjedinjenih Američkih Država, tačnije u programu od 14. tačaka, predsednika Vudroa Vilsona. Ove tačke predviđale su uvažavanje nacionalnih interesa malih naroda, a što je dovelo do pitanja opstanak Austro-Ugarske monarhije. Ovaj proces nisu onemogućile ni reforme koje je Monarhija zagovarala jer se ispostavilo da su bile politički pamflet. Prostor Vojvodine u kojem su Srbi živeli u kompaktnoj i respektivnoj zajednici, u tim okolnostima je politički bio artikulisan njihovim nacionalnim interesima. Ugled koji je Kraljevina Srbija stekla tokom borbi, bio je podrška namerama sunarodnika iz Vojvodine i snažan politički kapital kod SAD kao saveznika. Otud je prisajedinjenje Vojvodine Kraljevini Srbiji i stvaranje jugoslovenske države postalo realan istorijski proces koji je, nakon rata i bio vidljiv.

Ključne reči: politika, principi, prisajedinjenje, podrška, odgovornost

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## U. S. INFLUENCE ON THE PUBLIC AGENCIES SYSTEM IN SERBIA\*\*

**Abstract:** The authors analyse the concept and characteristics of Serbian public agencies which were introduced in the Serbian governance system with the enactment of the Public Agencies Act (2005) and other subject-specific acts. The Serbian public agency system is observed through the lens of the public agency system in the United States, which initially served as a model for developing the Serbian public agency system. After presenting the distinctive features of both systems, the authors focus on the legal position, organization, competences and powers of public agencies in the Republic of Serbia, where they are established as both organizations of governance and service providers. In the third part of the paper, the authors address the drawbacks and inefficiencies of the contemporary public agencies system and possibilities for its further improvement.

**Keywords:** public agencies, government, state administration, quasi-governmental administration

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## Introduction

The new public management measures were originally introduced by conservative political parties, first in the United Kingdom and then the United States, with the aim of enhancing the principles of (organizational) economy, strengthening the quality of public services, and thus gaining citizens' trust (legitimacy). This undertaking had to address the key questions: what activities the state should finance and undertake; what activities the state should finance but not undertake; and what activities the state should neither finance nor undertake. The requirements of the new public management affirm the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, productivity and profitability of the administrative system because the new public management applies the principles of the private sector to the operation of the public administration.<sup>1</sup>

In line with these global processes, public agencies were created in the United States at the end of the 19th century, by establishing a special agency in the field of transport – the *Inter-State Trade Commission*.<sup>2</sup> The Commission was established by the decision of Congress as an independent regulatory agency, fully independent from the executive authority, and it became the first example of an independent regulatory body.<sup>3</sup> However, US agencies do not have the same status because,

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<sup>1</sup> In the UK, changes in the public sector were introduced during Margaret Thatcher's government. One of the most important changes was the introduction of "Next Steps Agencies", which implied establishing a range of administrative agencies (over 120 in the year 2004) in order to restructure and rationalize the administrative system, and make it more efficient and effective in terms of economic efficiency. The new public administration system retained only those public functions and competencies whose presence in the system was deemed to be justified. On the other hand, some of the functions of the state administration were delegated to the newly established public agencies because public services were needed by the users, but were not directly provided by the state. Compare: K. Verhoest, S. Van Thiel, G. Bouckaert, P. Laegreid, *Government Agencies: Practices and Lessons from 30 Countries*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> A. Martinović, *Pravna priroda agencija u pravnom sistemu Republike Srbije*, Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta u Novom Sadu, 2, 2012, p. 392.

<sup>3</sup> The *Interstate Commerce Commission* (ICC) was set up in 1887, and the *Federal Communications Commission* (Telecommunications and Telegraphic Communications Commission) was established in 1934. The ICC regulated rail transport between federal states and later its jurisdiction and responsibility extended to oil transportation (1906), road transport (1935) and waterborne transport (1940). J. Vučković, *Položaj*

except for independent regulatory agencies, a number of agencies are part of executive departments (which are counterparts to ministries in Europe). European regulatory agencies were developed on the model of independent agencies in the US. Thus, the American experience has been transplanted to the European soil with certain adjustments, which equally applies to Serbia.

Unlike the US, which has a different legal and political experience and background, introducing agencies into the institutional system of European countries can create problems. Namely, in the US, agencies have significant regulatory powers, which need to be adequately and permanently controlled.<sup>4</sup> In the US, the term “agency” is used very broadly, as a designation for any public authority or body. Unlike departmental agencies, whose officials are appointed and discharged by the President of the United States (with the approval of the Senate), independent regulatory agencies (committees, directorates, offices, etc.) enjoy a higher degree of autonomy in the governance system.<sup>5</sup> US agencies are also vested with a quasi-judicial function of resolving certain types of disputes.<sup>6</sup> In this sense, regulatory agencies are not only the executors of administrative activity but also the holders of administrative powers, after which they appear in the role of the so-called independent governing bodies (agencies), and may also have certain judicial, legislative or regulatory powers.<sup>7</sup>

There is no single view on the legal nature of independent agencies, whether they are legislative or administrative authorities or the fourth branch of government, as was stated in the 1937 Report of the Special Commission appointed by US President Roosevelt. The latter statement challenges the principle of the separation of powers among the three

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*javnih agencija u sistemu podele vlasti*, dok. disertacija, Pravni fakultet u Beogradu, 2013, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 51. I. Koprić, A. Musa, V. Đulabić, *Evropski standardi regulacije službi od općeg interesa*, Hrvatska javna uprava, 3, 2008, p. 647–688.

<sup>5</sup> The Independent Regulatory Agency is, as a rule, administered by a committee or commission composed of a larger number of members appointed by the President of the United States. B. Smerdel, *Evolucija predsjedničke vlade u SAD – kongresni veto*, doktorska disertacija, Zagreb 1984, p. 258.

<sup>6</sup> B. Schwartz, *Administrative Law*, Boston – Toronto 1984, p. 1–32.

<sup>7</sup> P. Dimitrijević, *Upravno pravo*, opšti deo, Sven, Niš 2013, p. 139.

branches of government (the legislative, the executive and the judicial) enshrined in the US Constitution.<sup>8</sup>

Regulatory agencies adopt their regulations in relevant administrative procedures. In the US, agency procedures are unified and standardized. Before the adoption of the Administrative Procedure Act (1946), there was no standardized procedure for passing regulations in federal agencies.

The regulations of the US federal agencies may be: a) legally binding (such regulations have an external effect because they determine the rights and obligations of the State and people outside the agencies), and b) legally non-binding (such regulations include the interpretation of regulations and general policy provisions determining the direction in which the agency intends to use its quasi-legal powers). The legally binding regulations are legislative enactments regulating public conduct (which are as legally binding as the laws adopted by Congress) and procedural regulations regulating the organization and functioning of the administrative agencies. The US Administrative Procedure Act prescribes the procedure for enacting legislative acts, as the most important ones, while other regulations (procedural, interpretative and general policy provisions) are issued in special procedure.<sup>9</sup>

## 1. American Agency Tradition and Experience

1. **Constitutional Concept.** Due to the long tradition of the American agency model, the US is perceived as a paradigm of a regulatory state where most of the administrative functions are vested in various agencies. Generally, agencies may be divided into two groups: agencies led by the State Secretary which have the powers of a ministry, and agencies as autonomous bodies which have regulatory or executive powers.

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<sup>8</sup> B. Smerdel, *Evolucija predsjedničke vlade u SAD – kongresni veto*, doktorska disertacija, Zagreb 1984, p. 285.

<sup>9</sup> *The US Administrative Procedure Act* (1946) provides for three different procedures for the adoption of agency regulations: free, informal and formal proceedings. Otherwise, these procedural rules may be amended by the Congress or the US President, in which case special “hybrid” procedures arise. For more details: M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 120.

An important difference between the US and European agencies lies in the fact that in the United States virtually all regulatory activities are in the jurisdiction of agencies, whereas in Europe the formulation of goals and rule-making are in the jurisdiction of legislative or executive authorities while the operative tasks are in the jurisdiction of agencies.<sup>10</sup>

In order to better understand the agency model of governance operating in the United States, it should be noted that the basic principle of the US legal and political system is the principle of *the separation of powers*, envisaged in the US Constitution and supplemented by the system of *check and balances*, which prevents the excessive independence of any branch of government (legislative, executive or judicial) and allows for their mutual control. This principle is based on the principle of *the rule of law*, which is exercised in practice by the separation of power, as defined by Albert Venn Dicey.<sup>11</sup>

In the US legal system, the separation of powers functions as follows: the legislative power is exclusively vested in the US Congress, the executive power is vested in the US President, and the judicial power is vested in the courts (of federal and state jurisdiction). As this principle operates on the basis of a strict division of powers among the three branches of government, including certain powers of mutual control (checks and balances), the executive power (embodied in the US President) has a highly specific organizational structure. The executive power is exercised by the President of the United States, with the assistance of secretaries of certain administrative departments who make up his informal cabinet.<sup>12</sup> The principle of check and balances comes to the fore when appointing the heads of these departments because the president can do so only with the consent of the Senate, which is (as a rule) required to approve the presidential appointment.<sup>13</sup> The President may

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<sup>10</sup> T. Christensen, P. Laegreid, *Regulatory Reforms and Agencification*, Stein Rokkan Centre for Social Studies, Working Paper No. 6, 2005, p. 140.

<sup>11</sup> I. Loveland, *Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Human Rights*, Oxford University Press, London 2006, p. 56.

<sup>12</sup> The Cabinet does not represent a collegial body, as is the case with a government composed of ministries, so it has no responsibility to the Congress. M. Jovičić, *Ustavni i politički sistemi*, Pravni fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, Beograd 2006, p. 626.

<sup>13</sup> Members of the cabinet are mainly elected by the presidents from the ranks of their closest associates and personal friends. As a rule, they are not experts in their areas, but their role is of a political nature.

at any time replace members of his cabinet and appoint new ones, if he considers that they do not pursue his policy. This creates a strict hierarchy of bodies that are accountable to the President. These authorities are formally considered to be agencies, regardless of whether the term “agency” is included in the name of the authority, as defined in the 1946 *Administrative Procedure Act* and confirmed by the US Supreme Court decisions.<sup>14</sup>

The United States have a long tradition in the development of agencies. The first agencies were introduced into the US legal system by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1887, Congress formed the *Interstate Commerce Commission* as the first independent regulatory agency; it had wide administrative and regulatory powers, and was tasked to solve problems professionally, efficiently and independently, without undue political influence. Subsequently, a large number of other independent regulatory agencies were created with the aim of effectively regulating the economy and other areas.<sup>15</sup> The basic desire was to professionalize and depoliticize the public administration by ensuring managerial autonomy and autonomy in policy implementation.<sup>16</sup>

The number of agencies increased in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially during the economic crisis of the 1930s and the *New Deal*, instituted by President Franklin Roosevelt, when a number of independent regulatory agencies (*IRAs*) were created, due to the need to solve economic problems and create conditions for the preservation of order and the development of the American society. In fact, these agencies were designed to effectively deal with economic problems because the President was upset by the sluggishness and inefficiency of the complex US administration. The next set of agencies was created under President Lyndon Johnson and continued during President Richard Nixon’s term of office. These presidents created numerous organizations outside the existing cabinet structures (ministries). These agencies could act more

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<sup>14</sup> J. Vučković, *Položaj javnih agencija u sistemu podele vlasti*, dok. disertacija, Pravni fakultet u Beogradu, 2013, p. 35.

<sup>15</sup> M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 221.

<sup>16</sup> Agencies also deal with individual cases (e.g. violation of anti-monopoly regulations), have control of the Congress or the President (not direct), but the Federal Court is entitled to assess the constitutionality of their activities, in addition to other forms of control.

autonomously but they were directly accountable to the president. They were much more oriented towards the business sector than to the public sector. Congress constantly endeavoured to exercise control over the administration because there was fear that the growth of agency autonomy might reduce the possibility to control them.

It is estimated that more than two thousand different types of agencies, employing nearly three million employees, are operating in the US system today. Agencies are given broad powers, which Congress will endeavour to limit by defining the rules of procedure for passing regulations, decision-making in individual cases, as well as the procedure for judicial review of these decisions.<sup>17</sup>

Given their overall number and diversity of issues they regulate, agencies have become an important factor in organizing the citizens' everyday life. In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a tendency to simplify procedures, accompanied by the analysis of efficiency and management costs, which led to reducing the number of agencies and abolishing individual agencies. However, the number of agencies in the US administrative system is still large, and their impact on everyday life is still significant.

One of the basic characteristics of agencies is efficiency, which is due to the expertise and their specific organizational structure. Expert staff in agencies can resist the direct political influence, and this has affected their institutional position. In the American legal tradition, political influence is not hidden and it is even considered legitimate because it focuses on practical solutions to particular problems. Besides, it is presumed that these bodies composed of experts will be able to reduce the political influence to a reasonable extent, or redirect it towards finding a specific solution to the problem at hand.

Agencies are established on the basis of the law passed by Congress, by means of which the newly established agencies are delegated relevant authorities. Congress determines the scope of agency activities; the ex-

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<sup>17</sup> The US Administrative Procedure Act (APA) codified the precedent right contained in the appellate and the Supreme Court judgments, but it is also envisaged that a number of special laws regulate the work of the agencies, with the possibility of introducing a more stringent regime for controlling their work. Administrative Procedures Act, available at [https://biotech.law.lsu.edu/Courses/study\\_aids/adlaw/](https://biotech.law.lsu.edu/Courses/study_aids/adlaw/) (accessed on 2 August 2019).

ecutive power controls their work, especially when it comes to agencies under its direct control, and the courts control whether the agencies in performing their activities comply with the Constitution and laws.

2. **American Agency Organisation.** In the first part of Chapter 5, the 1946 *Administrative Procedure Act* defines agencies as “any authority in the US Government, whether within or under the control of another authority, not including the Congress, the courts, and the District of Columbia.”<sup>18</sup> This definition of agency is broad because it encompasses a large number of different authorities and bodies.

When talking about types of agencies, they first of all include different administrative sectors (departments) headed by a head officer appointed by the President. The administrative sectors (departments) can be organized as agencies with different names, such as: *service*, *administration* (directorate), *bureau* (office), etc. They are headed by a head officer appointed by the President and approved by the Senate, although they may also be appointed by the head of the respective department which the agency is part of. The examples of agencies within individual departments are the Food and Drug Administration in the Healthcare Department or the Federal Research Bureau in the Justice Department.<sup>19</sup>

There is also a large number of important agencies outside the administrative departments but they are still part of the executive branch.<sup>20</sup> They are headed by a supervisor who is also appointed by the President.<sup>21</sup> Several dozen executive agencies are outside the department’s

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<sup>18</sup> In the 1992 case *Franklin v. Massachusetts* (505 U.S. 788), the US Supreme Court took the stance that the Administrative Procedure Act also excluded the US President from this definition. M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 87.

<sup>19</sup> M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 88.

<sup>20</sup> It is estimated that there are about seventeen such agencies (also known as independent executive agencies), some of which employ tens of thousands of people, and some just a few hundred. These are: the *Central Intelligence Agency* (CIA), the *Small Business Administration* (SBA), the *National Aeronautics and Space Administration* (NASA), the *Environmental Protection Agency* (EPA), etc. Notably, when the CIA was established in 1947, the Department of Defense lobbied for that agency to be under its control, or within its composition. The Congress rejected this because it considered that the body dealing with espionage must first of all be under civil control. The same situation occurred when NASA was founded in 1958.

<sup>21</sup> Agencies headed by directors, which are under the direct control of the President (which means that he can replace the directors at any time if he is dissatisfied

cabinet and they are directly accountable to the President.<sup>22</sup> They also constitute the executive power, through which its work is operationalized, considering that there are no ministries in the US legal system, as is the case with the countries of the European-continental legal system, as well as Great Britain.

The agency's work is entirely under the control of the President, as well as the courts of general (not specialized) jurisdiction. The US President has the right to bring the so-called "executive decisions," which have the power of a federal law; thus, the President can abolish any decision of the agency.

US agencies appear in different areas, under different names: administrative departments, agencies within administrative departments (services, bureaus, administrations), agencies outside administrative departments, independent regulatory agencies, and independent state corporations.<sup>23</sup>

The first two types of agencies are part of the executive power and they are subject to the direction and control of the US President. The third type of agency performs tasks at the federal level, independent of external influences of other institutions. Independent state corporations perform tasks in areas that are most frequently in the hands of the private sector.

(1) Administrative departments are the basic type of administrative bodies and they are a special type of agency. Their heads (*secretaries*) form the President's informal cabinet, except for the officials in charge of the justice department.<sup>24</sup> Apart from the administrative departments, other agencies are of great importance as well.

(2) Administrative departments include certain agencies, for example: the *Food and Drug Administration* within the Health and Social Ser-

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with their work) are different from agencies headed by a collegial body (regulatory agencies); from the aspect of the separation of power, this creates certain dilemmas in the American jurisprudence in view of the legal position of these regulatory agencies.

<sup>22</sup> K. Verhoest, S. Van Thiel, G. Bouckaert, P. Laegreid, *Government Agencies: Practices and Lessons from 30 Countries*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 69.

<sup>23</sup> M. Davinić, *Pojam, vrste i aktivnosti federalnih agencija u pravnom sistemu SAD*, J. Ćirić (priredio), „Uvod u pravo SAD”, Institut za uporedno pravo, Beograd 2008, p. 72–73.

<sup>24</sup> M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 87–88; R. Marković, *Ustavno pravo i političke institucije*, Službeni glasnik, Beograd 1999, p. 219.

vices Department, the *Federal Bureau of Investigation* within the Justice Department, the *Federal Aviation Administration* within the Transport Department. These agencies can have different names (such as: *service, administration, bureau, office*, etc. They are headed by senior officers, such as the *administrator* or the *director*, appointed by the US President (based on the opinion and the approval of the Senate) and the head of a department.

(3) A large number of agencies are located outside the administrative departments, but they are still within the executive power (such as: the *Central Intelligence Agency*, the *Environmental Protection Agency*, the *Social Security Administration*, etc.). They have a great deal of significance and financial means. The heads of these agencies are appointed by the US President, based on the opinion and the approval of the Senate.

(4) In addition to the agencies that are part of the executive authority and under the direct control of the US President, as the chief executive officer, there are agencies outside the executive branch of government. These are *independent regulatory agencies*, which do not belong to any administrative department, nor are they under the direct control of the US President or the head of any department.<sup>25</sup> It raises the question whether they are part of the executive branch.

These agencies are collective bodies because they are headed by several persons appointed by the US President, but members of one political party (primarily the president's party) can make only a simple majority in this collective body, while the others must belong to another political party. In addition, all members of this collegial body are appointed for a specific period, and they can be discharged only if there is a clear reason, which is not the case with the heads of other agencies.<sup>26</sup>

In the United States, there were about 15 such agencies in 2004. These independent bodies had to be established in order to regulate certain areas at the national level (e.g. railway transport, banking, oil

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<sup>25</sup> J. M. Beermann, *Administrative Law*, Aspen Law & Business, New York 2000, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> When President Bill Clinton replaced George Bush Sr. as president of the United States in 1992, he fired all appointed officials in agencies under his control, who did not themselves resign. He brought his party members or sympathizers to their place. This is not possible in independent regulatory agencies. Referenced by: M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 90.

industry, steel production, etc.) which were very complex, dynamic and politically risky to be regulated by Congress.<sup>27</sup>

The independence of regulatory agencies in relation to the US President (as the head of the executive) is based on the fact that the US President cannot replace persons heading independent agencies, that it may be difficult to influence their work, etc. However, the independence of these agencies is not absolute because the president appoints the chair of the agency (based on the opinion and the approval of the Senate) from the ranks of its members. Although the presiding agency official cannot make decisions on behalf of the agency alone (given that a simple majority of the collective body members is needed for any decision), the position of the agency chair is very influential and often crucial to the position of other agency members.

(5) *Independent state corporations* are institutions which are established for the provision of services traditionally performed by the private sector (e.g. mail delivery, electricity supply, securing transport services, etc.). Due to the social significance of these activities, they are not (or not completely) left to the private sector; thus, they are regulated and provided by the state. Similarly to independent regulatory agencies, the committee members are appointed by the US President (based on the opinion and the approval of the Senate), but here the independence of the manager is much higher; his authorities are similar to the authorities vested in a private company director.<sup>28</sup>

The US agency model is a complex system because agencies do not exist only at the federal level. They are both at the state level and the local level. The state and local agency levels are very important for the autonomy of the agencies because they are managed by independently elected officials, and this independent electoral status guarantees a substantial autonomy in relations with the governor.

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<sup>27</sup> The *Federal Communications Commission*, the *Federal Trade Commission*, the *Nuclear Regulatory Commission*, the *National Labor Relations Board*, and the like. Compare: J. M. Beermann, *Administrative Law*, Aspen Law & Business, New York 2000, crp. 3; M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 89.

<sup>28</sup> M. Davinić, *Pojam, vrste i aktivnosti federalnih agencija u pravnom sistemu SAD*, J. Ćirić (priredio), „Uvod u pravo SAD“, Institut za uporedno pravo, Beograd 2008, p. 71.

Agencies perform a range of tasks and functions at all levels (federal, state and local), thus greatly affecting the citizens' lives.<sup>29</sup> Federal agencies are the most widespread form of agencies and they play a major role in the functioning of the entire state apparatus. They make policy-related decisions in diverse areas. The activities of these agencies may include: distribution of social assistance, issuance of licences and permits, regulation of citizen activities, and organization and management of state property. Congress generally directs the work of federal agencies, leaving these authorities enough space to use their discretionary powers. Federal agencies are established by the legislative acts of Congress, which also determines their mandate.

3. **Agency duties.** Federal agencies were first set up to stabilize the economy operating on the basis of private initiative, to mitigate the extremes of the "free" i.e. unregulated markets, and to provide financial security for citizens. The process of transferring powers to agencies in the United States began at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by adopting by-laws (regulatory acts), and this practice was justified by court decisions. Agencies were formed on the basis of legislative act by means of which Congress delegated authority to the agencies. In a decision of 1927, the US Supreme Court took a position that the delegation of authorities was allowed only if Congress had approved the power of the agency under the law.<sup>30</sup>

Federal agencies have the right to make regulations (quasi-legislative powers), but also the powers to resolve specific administrative matters (administrative powers) and quasi-judicial powers.<sup>31</sup>

Agency activities and tasks can be divided into several groups. The first one is the distribution of social assistance.<sup>32</sup> The US started per-

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<sup>29</sup> B. Ginsberg, T. J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, *We the people, An Introduction to American Politics*, W. W. Norton & Company, New York – London 1997, p. 11.

<sup>30</sup> B. M. Jacq, *Administrative Law*, Aspem Law, New York 2000, p. 11.

<sup>31</sup> The Supreme Court's judgment of 1932 states that there are no obstacles to the transfer of judicial powers to agencies, as long as Congress allows judicial review of the acts of agencies arising out of these powers.

M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava Sjedinjenih Američkih Država*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 91 onwards.

<sup>32</sup> The agency's assistance in carrying out these tasks is significant because agencies are organized to work efficiently, if they are skilled and trained to determine the programs and conditions for obtaining assistance to people in need (the elderly, people

forming this activity through agencies at the time of the economic crisis in the 1930s, and continued providing such assistance in the 1970s and 1980s. Today, given the global economic crisis, the provision of social assistance is more important than ever.

Agency activities are also significant in the field of issuing permits and licenses for performing activities in certain areas of social life (telecommunications, energy, environmental protection, traffic, etc.). Agency work is primarily aimed at companies that provide services in these areas, most frequently by evaluating the agency's compliance with the conditions and prescribed criteria for the provision of services, which is a requirement for the company to obtain a license. In addition, agencies often limit the duration of these permits in order to encourage companies to perform their jobs in line with high quality standards. Finally, agencies usually decide on the prices (fees) they can charge for their services.<sup>33</sup>

Among other things, based on their wide discretionary powers, agencies issue decisions regulating different citizen activities and, thus, they determine the public policy in different areas of social life. For example, agencies in charge of public health protection prescribe strict rules on working conditions in companies and specific workplaces, the equipment that workers have to use depending on the work they perform, provide an annual list of the most common work-related illnesses and injuries which workers need to report, etc.<sup>34</sup> Also, the *US Food and Drug Administration* prescribes rules important for citizens' nutrition, with the aim of preventing various diseases, ensuring that food meets relevant sanitary and health safety standards for consumption, ensuring the quality of medicines used by humans and animals, and ensuring that

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with special needs, people with disabilities, poor members of the population, etc). M. Davinić, *Pojam, vrste i aktivnosti federalnih agencija u pravnom sistemu SAD*, J. Čirić (priredio), „Uvod u pravo SAD“, Institut za uporedno pravo, Beograd 2008, p. 83.

<sup>33</sup> For example, these activities are performed by agencies such as the *Federal Communication Commission*, which is responsible for broadcasting activities, or the *Federal Energy Regulatory Commission*, which issues licenses for the construction and operation of hydroelectric power stations. M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava Sjedinjenih Američkih Država*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 93.

<sup>34</sup> *Occupational Safety and Health Administration*. Available at: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) (accessed on 31 March 2019).

all food and medicine products should be presented to the public in an accurate, true and timely fashion.<sup>35</sup>

As stated agency activities cover all of the areas important for the functioning of society and its citizens: distribution of social assistance, licensing, regulation of citizens' activities and organization, and management of state property. The main activity of a large number of federal agencies is the protection of natural resources (forests, lakes, national parks, etc.) which are owned by the state.<sup>36</sup>

In order to perform all these activities, agencies have specific mechanisms at their disposal, such as rulemaking and decision-making on controversial issues in accordance with the Federal Administrative Procedure Act.<sup>37</sup> The adoption of regulations is a distinctive feature of the so-called regulatory agencies and it represents a certain type of quasi-legislative authority. However, the powers that are vested in certain agencies inevitably bring confusion into the operation of this principle.<sup>38</sup> Although the legislator has set a framework in which agencies make regulations, they still have quite broad discretionary powers to deal with certain issues. Thus, they can issue decisions regulating the activities of individuals and organizations, they can ensure the application of these regulations in practice, and they may impose certain sanctions in the event of absence of relevant regulations.

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<sup>35</sup> Available at: <https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/fda-rules-and-regulations> (accessed on 31 March 2019).

<sup>36</sup> M. Davinić, *Pojam, vrste i aktivnosti federalnih agencija u pravnom sistemu SAD*, J. Ćirić (ur.), „Uvod u pravo SAD”, Institut za uporedno pravo, Beograd 2008, p. 84.

<sup>37</sup> Although the 1946 US Administrative Procedure Act actually set the standards for the work of these agencies, in some ways, it also set the framework beyond which agencies could not move, without excessive involvement in editing the way the agency operates.

<sup>38</sup> In American legal theory, this is the so-called the Doctrine of Delegation, according to which, in order to address everyday problems in different areas, Congress may delegate appropriate authority to agencies so that they can successfully perform their functions. However, Congress may do so in a limited number of cases, whereby the Supreme Court is responsible for accessing the merits in each case. Primarily created by the Supreme Court decisions, this theory starts from the functional interpretation of the US Constitution embodied in the stance that the founders of the Constitution actually had in mind the creation of an operational government. M. Davinić, *Koncepcija upravnog prava SAD*, Dosije, Beograd 2004, p. 223.

## 2. Serbian Agencies System

1. ***Concept and Characteristics.*** Public agencies were introduced in the administrative system of the Republic of Serbia by the adoption of the Public Agencies Act (2005) and other subject-specific legislative acts (the Public Services Act, the Public Administration Act, the Planning and Construction Act, the Telecommunications Act, the Broadcasting Act, the Security Information Agency Act, the Waste Management Act), as well as by certain Government regulatory acts (e.g. the Decree on the General Secretariat and other Government Services). However, there are significant differences in their legal position, organization, competences and powers. Public agencies are established as bodies of authority, organizations and services, which determines their status in the Serbian administrative system.

Agencies are considered to be autonomous in performing their activities because they have the status of a legal person which is acquired by their entry into the public (court) register. However, it does not apply to all agencies.

Public agencies are established by the decision of a competent authority (such as the Government acting on behalf of the Republic of Serbia, in the capacity of a founder). The founder of a public agency may be either the Government (acting on behalf of the Republic of Serbia) or an Autonomous Province and a local self-government unit. The founder may not administer or direct the operation of a public agency, nor can the founder make the work of a public agency comply with the work of the state administration bodies.

A public agency is an organization which is established for the purpose of performing a wide range of developmental, professional or regulatory activities of general public interest, particularly given the fact that such bodies may be more efficient in performing these activities than the bodies of state administration and, principally, if they may be financed from the fees paid by the users of the public agency services.

There is a large number of different public agencies, such as:

1. Privatization Agency
2. National Agency for Regional Development
3. Urban Planning Agency

4. Business Registers Agency
5. Bankruptcy Supervision Agency
6. Medicines and Medical Equipment Agency
7. Republic Broadcasting Agency
8. Energy Resources Agency
9. Security Information Agency
10. Anti-corruption Agency
11. Licencing Agency
12. Military Security Agency (MSA) and Military Intelligence Agency (MIA), etc.<sup>39</sup>

Public agencies may concurrently perform developmental, professional and regulatory activities as well as other devolved functions pertaining to the purpose of their establishment. They are fully *autonomous* in their work, which is a result of the professional nature of the assigned tasks. They are *independent* in terms of their operations, which implies that neither the founder nor the service users may have a prevalent influence on the decision-making processes of the public agency authorities. Last but not least, they are also *financially independent* as they are primarily funded from the fees paid by the service users.

A public agency may be founded if the developmental, professional and regulatory activities do not require a constant and direct political supervision, if the agency may perform the assigned tasks more efficiently than a state administration body, and particularly if the agency activities may be fully or predominantly funded from the fees paid by the service users.

Public agencies are a specific kind of quasi-governmental entities which are assigned to perform specific administrative functions. By means of subject-specific acts, public agencies may be delegated some

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<sup>39</sup> The Public Agencies Act (*Official Gazette of RS*, no. 18/2005 and 81/2005). In addition to this Act which provides a general national legal framework concerning public agencies, there are subject-specific legal acts which regulate the organization and the activities of every single public agency. In term of legality, professional conduct, political neutrality, impartiality, the use of the official language and alphabet, the educational requirements and professional qualification of public servants performing the assigned public administration duties, and the specific administrative proceedings, the operation of a public agency is subject to the applicable law governing the operation of the state administration.

specific powers to perform certain state administration functions (those which they may be vested with), such as:

- 1) the *regulatory* function – adopting regulations governing the enforcement of legal acts and other general acts enacted by the National Assembly and the Government (these regulations must comply with the regulations adopted by the state administration bodies);<sup>40</sup>
- 2) delivering first-instance decisions on administrative matters (where the director of a public agency delivers the decision whereas the competent Ministry in charge of public agency activities reviews appeals against the administrative decision);
- 3) issuing public documents and keeping public records; and
- 4) providing administrative supervision.

The managing bodies of a public agency are the Managing Board and the Director. In order to achieve the goals and objectives of the established public agency, it is possible to set up territorially deconcentrated units.

The competent Ministry is in charge of supervising the public agency operations in the course of performing the delegated state administration activities.

**2. *The Legal Status and Types of Public Agencies.*** Being subject to different legal regimes, public agencies may be difficult to classify into distinctive categories and types. According to their legal status, public agencies may be classified into four or five groups: public agencies established as quasi-governmental public entities with specific public authorities (public services); public agencies established as other or-

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<sup>40</sup> The regulatory activities of a public agency include adopting regulations on enforcing legal acts and other general acts enacted by the National Assembly and the Government. By their nature and designation, the regulations issued by a public agency must comply with the regulations enacted by the of state administration bodies. The regulations are adopted by the Managing Board of a public agency and they are published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia. Before publishing the regulations, the public agency is obliged to obtain an opinion on the constitutionality and legality of the regulations from the competent Ministry in charge of the public agency activities; in turn, the competent Ministry is obliged to serve the public agency with a recommendation explaining how to make the regulations comply with the Constitution, a specific legal act, regulatory act or other general legal act enacted by the National Assembly and the Government.

ganizations which have a special position outside the state administration framework; public agencies established as state agencies, i.e. as “the Government professional services”; public agencies established as special (state) administrative organizations in the state administration system; and *sui generis* agencies which may not be classified into either of the four groups.

***Agencies established as public services*** have the status of a legal person whose rights, duties and liabilities are regulated by the law (the Public Services Act) and the statute. They are founded by the Republic of Serbia. The competent bodies of administration perform the administrative and professional supervision over the activities that the agency has been vested with. Agencies of this type are: the Agency for the Regional Development, the Tobacco Agency, the Urban Planning Agency etc.

***Agencies established as other organizations outside the state administration framework*** have the status of autonomous and independent organizations with public powers. They are autonomous organizations, for which reason they are also called agencies *sui generis*. The legal position of these agencies is regulated by subject-specific legislative acts. The examples of this type of agencies include the Telecommunications Agency and the Public Broadcasting Agency.

***Agencies established as professional services of the Government*** perform professional, operative, organizational, administrative and technical activities for the Government. They do not have administrative powers to decide on administrative matters, to perform administrative supervision and other administrative functions. Thus, they are outside the state administration system, both in terms of their overall organization and their immediate operation. Examples of this type of agencies are the Agency for the Accreditation of Health Institutions, the Agency for the Development of State Administration, the River Traffic Development Agency, Energy Agency, the Environment Protection Agency etc.

***Agencies established as special organizations*** have a legal position of state authorities which perform professional activities. These agencies include the Security and Information Agency and the Recycling Agency.

According to their legal nature, public agencies may have a dual character: they may be part of the state administration system (such as

the agencies founded by the Government or the agencies established as special administrative organizations),<sup>41</sup> as well as the system of quasi-governmental public administration (such as public agencies founded by an autonomous province or a local self-government).<sup>42</sup> The argument that public agencies do not fall into the system of state bodies because they are autonomous organizations is unacceptable because the principle of autonomy is the organizational principle of the state administration, whereas there are agencies which have a status of special (administrative) organizations of the state administration. Consequently, administrative agencies are entities which are fully autonomous from the state which has established them; on the other hand, public agencies are not non-autonomous quasi-governmental entities (such as institutions and enterprises).

All previously explained forms of public agencies in Serbia have strong similarities with their U.S. counterparts, and are a result of strong influence of U.S. legal system on contemporary Serbian institutions.

In the third part of the paper, we will address the drawbacks and inefficiencies of the contemporary public agencies system and the possibilities for its further improvement.

### 3. Public Agencies Reform

Public agencies are a modern organizational form whose efficiency and legitimacy have almost mythical proportions.<sup>43</sup> The public sector has been subject to extensive privatization. At first, the agencification process included economic activities, telecommunications, transport, energy, and then it expanded to social services, especially health and education. Agencification is given legal effect by means of contract, particularly for performing tasks related to security and public order. The state manages and regulates the provision of services that are in the pub-

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<sup>41</sup> S. Lilić, *Upravno pravo – Upravno procesno pravo*, Belgrade: Faculty of Law, 2008, p. 282.

<sup>42</sup> Z. Tomić, *Opšte upravno pravo*, Belgrade: Faculty of Law, 2009, p. 171.

<sup>43</sup> C. Pollitt, C. Talbot, J. Caulfield, A. Smullen, *Agencies: How Governments do things Through Semi-autonomous Organizations*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2004.

lic interest, and citizens as public administration partners begin to bear part of the responsibility for the general welfare.<sup>44</sup>

As agencies increasingly take over the functions of the classical state administration, they are almost becoming the basic organizational form of public administration. Concurrently, the issue of agency autonomy and control emerges as the basic issue of the agency model of government.<sup>45</sup> There is a need for further normative regulation of this matter which should set the boundaries of their activities and thus create a solid legal framework for the efficient operation of agencies. As a substitute for established forms of political accountability, institutional innovation is reflected in the creation of new forms of supervision, which are primarily reflected in citizen participation, transparency of agency work, performance assessment and exclusion of agency directors from political and private interests (ministers and tycoons). Agency management structures are given managerial freedom to decide on the organizational, personnel and financial elements important for the operation of agencies. Thus, agencies develop their functional specializations. However, this relatively broad agency autonomy in decision-making should be subject to performance management and assessment. This is required by the basic principles of a state governed by the rule of law, by the tenets of modern parliamentary democracy, as well as by the principle of the separation of powers into the innovative institutional arena, which has been notably affected by the agency redesigning process (agencification).

The problem is that agencification is not the subject of an organized strategy followed by appropriate legal regulation and control. All public agencies do not have the “independent” status in accordance with the law-proclaimed autonomy. Hence, there is a need to improve the legislative framework and a stronger commitment to respect the mandate of independent regulatory bodies. There are political and other pressures on the work of public agencies as independent bodies. It further imposes the need to ensure depolitization of agencies in the decision-making

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<sup>44</sup> T. Christensen, Per L greid, ur. *Autonomy and Regulation. Coping with Agencies in the Modern State*. Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar, 2006.

<sup>45</sup> C. Pollitt, Geert Bouckaert, *Public Management Reform, A Comparative Analysis*, 2nd edition. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004.

processes and transparency in their work, not just to change the name (for example, in France).<sup>46</sup>

At the same time, the state is rather passive in providing the necessary conditions for the independent operation of public agencies. This is particularly prominent in the transition countries (Serbia, Croatia, etc.), which lack relevant legal regulation on the agency model, with clear criteria for establishing and designing organizational forms and legal control mechanisms (appeal, administrative dispute, etc.).<sup>47</sup> Thus, the Constitution in Serbia does not regulate the position of public agencies. There was an unsuccessful attempt in Montenegro to institutionalize agencies in the so-called “Expert Constitution of Montenegro (2006).” The need to precisely regulate the position of agency administration rests on the particular situation in which public agencies have assumed huge responsibilities which exceed the scope of public administration affairs (of both state and non-state administrations), thus undermining the “classical” separation of powers, while the state has not established the clear boundaries of their responsibility and transparency of their work. Such a state of affairs endangers the rule of law and its principles and standards, and generates a risk of reaching a point where the power of the executive branch may become virtually unapproachable. Agency reform needs to simplify the multiplicity of agency models, which blur the transparency, control, and accountability of agencies. However, the reform also implies that agency capacities should be strengthened in a controlled manner, while their competences should be expanded, both in terms of their regulatory competences and in terms of entrusting administrative tasks to agencies.

Agencification, as a form of administrative decentralization, may turn into its opposite, by reducing the organizational divergence and moving towards centralization. Excessive decentralization and overwhelming establishment of agencies lead to the fragmentation of the entire administrative system. Fragmentation reduces transparency, control and accountability, and ultimately leads to weakening the power and influence of democratic institutions.

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<sup>46</sup> Verhoest K., van Thiel S., Bouckaert G., Laegreid P., *Government Agencies: Practices and Lessons from 30 Countries*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 101.

<sup>47</sup> F. Staničić, *Pravna narav regulatornih agencija u Republici Hrvatskoj*, *Pravo u gospodarstvu*, 5/2010.

Agencies have incurred a bad reputation as factors contributing to the lack of transparency in the governance system and weakened accountability, which eventually undermines parliamentary democracy as a whole and creates a phenomenon of democratic “deficit” or “deficit” of democracy. Agencies are perceived as “black boxes”, which consume public money without control and hire employees according to unclear criteria but turn out to be quite ineffective in their work. As their actual effectiveness is not measured and evaluated, they cannot be held accountable. For this reason, one of the goals of agency reforms in recent times has been the strengthening of political control over agencies due to the democratic deficit of the agency management model and the perception that agencies are distant from citizens. This reinforces the trend toward de-agencification, reflected in reducing the number of agency bodies, especially those with a higher degree of autonomy, for the benefit of executive agencies, which are under the direct influence and control of the executive authorities (the ministries).<sup>48</sup>

Media justifiably raise the ample questions about the scope of activities of specific agencies, the purpose of their establishment, and the actual forms of institutional control. As state public officials (ministers, state secretaries, etc.), politicians “symbolically” bear the responsibility for their departments, including the agencies that fall within the domain of agency policy. Yet, it is disputable to what extent they are really able to exercise control over the work of agencies. Administrative and judicial practice shows that a degree of political influence, direction and control over agencies was present, particularly in the early stages of agencies’ work, when the agency directors acted upon the directions of their “mentors” in the ministries. Over time, the political influence gradually subsided, and agencies seemed to have finally become autonomous bodies with an independent position in the institutional arena; in effect, the only change turned out to be a different center of political influence over the same agency. Agency reform implies redefining the legal relations between agencies and ministries, particularly in terms of specifying the control mechanism and preserving agency autonomy.

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<sup>48</sup> K. Verhoest, S. van Thiel, G. Bouckaert, P. Laegreid, *Government Agencies: Practices and Lessons from 30 Countries*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 65.

The main problem and task is the issue of maintaining control, co-ordination, and quality in the fragmented agency administration.<sup>49</sup> This further means that a system of control or, to be more precise, state impact on the agencies should be put in place to address any weaknesses, problems and risks of the agency model. However, the impact should actually be aimed and confined to the agency performance and results, which essentially implies a professional rather than a political influence, as the very substance of performance management. The key requirement in agency reform is that agency performance should be the only criterion for assessing its work and the issue of responsibility. Such performance control will urge the agencies to turn to their own resources and to focus more closely on their goals instead of viewing their effectiveness in abstract and broad terms.

Agency reform should contribute to controlling the performance and results of the entire administration. The performance control should be based on specific indicators, such as the number of complaints, the level of maladministration, observed mistakes or bad practices, etc. The reform should also include the economic dimension, considering that agencies cause an increase in administrative costs. The reform should further energize the efficiency and effectiveness of agencies' work, which ultimately affects the central government economy as a whole. The reform of public agencies should be based on the achievements of administrative cultures which are oriented towards performance/results control rather than the "criteria" of political voluntarism of the current political elite. Performance control through on-going studies and evaluation will set the entire agency system in motion and make it focus on accountability, both towards service users and the state (executive and legislative) authorities. Agency reform must reinstate the principles of the rule of law and restore clear rules of the game in the institutional arena, for the benefit of democratic institutions and the rule of law.

Many believe that this battle has already been lost in favour of the executive authorities of the state government, which have been structurally strengthened through executive agencies and the influence that

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<sup>49</sup> M. Power, *The Theory of the Audit Explosion*. Ferlie, Ewan, Laurence E Lynn, jr and Christopher Pollitt, (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Public Management* Oxford University Press, 2005.

it has or can have on them. We believe that the battle has not been lost, but that the existing system of agencification has to be reformed in a wise and flexible manner, by gradually activating a reversible process of de-agencification, which is necessary due to the agencies' excessive autonomy and the observed drawbacks of agencification. Therefore, the "deficit" of democracy must also be rectified through the executive agencies, which should be controlled by a wide range of instruments; one of them is the financial impact and different types of control (as in the United States).

### **Conclusion**

In contemporary societies, the activities of the public administration have increasingly become more complex and versatile. This resulted in a need to establish new forms of organization and to reform the administrative system in order to ensure a higher degree of professionalism and reduce the political influence in performing administrative activities, set up higher operational standards, simplify the administrative procedures, assure the transparency of decision-making processes and encourage competitiveness within the public sector. These are the requirements of "the New Public Management", which reaffirms the principles of efficiency, productivity and profitability of the administrative system. In majority of modern societies (such as the Serbian one), public agencies have proved to be most adequate for accomplishing these objectives (as demonstrated by their use in the USA).

But, despite undeniable advantages, the process of agencification has brought many risks and problems in the operation of the administrative system. The main disadvantages are reflected in the fragmentation of the administrative system, lack of transparency in the work of agencies both within agencies and in the institutional arena, reducing the level of supervision and control over agencies, as well as ministerial responsibilities, increasing dysfunctionality of agencies, limiting their autonomy, difficulties in balancing their autonomy in practice, and ensuring control and accountability of public agencies. From the idea of creating autonomous and independent bodies that have to make the administrative system more efficient and effective, agencies have become

the long arm of politics and state administration. Among other things, it distances them from citizens, who the agency administration should serve either directly or indirectly.

Hence, there is a need for agency reform, which is embodied in the concept of service management. The reform of public agencies should be based on the attainments of administrative cultures which are oriented to performance control rather than the "criteria" of political voluntarism of the current political elite. Performance control resting on on-going studies and evaluation will set the entire agency system in motion and make it focus on accountability, towards service users and the state (executive and legislative) authorities alike, for the ultimate benefit of democratic institutions and the rule of law.

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## **UTICAJ SAD NA SISTEM JAVNIH AGENCIJA U SRBIJI**

### Rezime

Autori analiziraju koncept i karakteristike srpskih javnih agencija koje su uvedene u sistem Vlade Republike Srbije prilikom stupanja na snagu Zakona o javnim agencijama (2005) i drugih posebnih zakona. Sistem javnih agencija Republike Srbije posmatra se iz perspektive sistema javnih agencija u SAD, koji je inače služio kao uzor za razvoj sistema javnih agencija Republike Srbije. Nakon prezentovanja različitih karakteristika oba sistema, autori se fokusiraju na pravnu poziciju, organizaciju, kompetentnost i moć javnih agencija u Republici Srbiji, gde su ustanovljene kao deo organizacije uprave i davaoci usluga. U trećem delu članka, autori se bave nedostacima i neefikasnošću današnjih sistema javnih agencija i mogućnostima napretka.

Ključne reči: javne agencije, vlada, državna uprava, kvazivladina administracija



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## SERBIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP – REMINDER OF THE BILATERAL TREATIES IN THE FIELD OF CRIMINAL LAW FROM A CENTURY-LONG PERSPECTIVE\*\*

**Abstract:** In the article, the authors analyse that in 2010, the process of negotiations between the Republic of Serbia and the USA on the conclusion of an agreement on the extradition of the perpetrators of the most serious crimes began. In negotiating the conclusion of such a bilateral agreement, the parties referred to the The Treaty for the extradition of fugitives from justice concluded between the Kingdom of Serbia and the United States of America, signed in Belgrade on 25 October 1901 and its applicability for over a century. The new bilateral treaty between the Republic of Serbia and the United States on the conclusion of the extradition agreement on perpetrators of the most serious crimes has been confirmed by the 2019 Confirmation of Treaties between the Republic of Serbia and the United States of America. The preamble to this law makes it clear that the Contracting Parties invoke the The Treaty for the extradition of fugitives from justice concluded between the Kingdom of Serbia and the United States of America, signed in Belgrade on 25 October 1901. The article also addresses the dilemmas associated with the implementation of the European Arrest Warrant, the practice of being an EU.

**Keywords:** Serbian–American Relationship, Bilateral Treaties, Criminal Law, extradition, European Arrest Warrant

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## Introduction

Ministry of Justice and Civil Service, Sector for International Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, published the Reviewed list of bilateral and multilateral agreements for facilitating international legal assistance in criminal and civil matters<sup>1</sup> in February of 2014. The author of this paper was particularly interested in the documents related to the establishment of bilateral relationships between Serbia (Kingdom of Serbia, at the time) and the USA rather early in modern history. It is worth mentioning that the earliest bilateral agreements the Kingdom of Serbia concluded are those concluded almost a century ago with the following sovereign states: Switzerland in 1887 (in effect since 1888), the Netherlands in 1896 (in effect since 1896), Great Britain in 1900 (in effect since 1901); USA in 1901 (in effect since 1902); Italy in 1922 (in effect since 1931), and Albania in 1926 (in effect since 1929).<sup>2</sup>

The Treaty for the extradition of fugitives from justice, concluded between the Kingdom of Serbia and the United States of America on

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<sup>1</sup> *Ažurirani spisak bilateralnih ugovora i multilateralnih konvencija od značaja za odvijanje međunarodne pravne pomoći u krivičnim i građanskim stvarima* (Reviewed list of bilateral and multilateral agreements for facilitating international legal assistance in criminal and civil matters), Belgrade, February, 2014 [http://www.prosecutorsnetwork.org/doc/Spisak\\_ugovora\\_februar\\_2014\\_MPDU.pdf](http://www.prosecutorsnetwork.org/doc/Spisak_ugovora_februar_2014_MPDU.pdf), accessed on July 18, 2019.

For more details in: *Međunarodni ugovori o pravnoj pomoći u krivičnim stvarima* (International agreements on legal assistance in criminal matters), Ministry of Justice and Civil Service, Republic of Serbia,

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<sup>2</sup> *Convention on extradition concluded between Serbia and Switzerland, November 16/28, 1887, in effect since 1888* ("Official Gazette", no. 83/1888); *Extradition treaty concluded between Serbia and the Netherlands, February 28 (March 11), 1896, in effect since 1896* ("Serbian Gazette", no. 275/1896); *Extradition treaty concluded between Serbia and Great Britain, December 6, 1900, in effect since 1901* ("Serbian Gazette", no. 35/1901); *Convention on extradition concluded between the Kingdom of Serbia and the United States of America, October 12/25, 1901, in effect since 1902* ("Serbian Gazette", no. 33/1902); *Convention on extradition concluded between the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Italy, April 6, 1922, in effect since 1931* ("Official Gazette", no. 42/1931); *Convention on extradition concluded between the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the Republic of Albania, June 22, 1926, in effect since 1929* ("Official Gazette", no. 117/1929).

October 12/25, 1901 (referred to as *Treaty* further in the paper), came into force in 1902 (“Serbian Gazette”, no. 33/1902). At the time when the Treaty was concluded, the document known today as the European Arrest Warrant was still an inconceivable concept.

### **Review of certain EU experiences**

The reality of the European Union has triggered numerous debatable issues, primarily those referring to the state sovereignty and protection of the citizen rights in each of the Member States. It is important to emphasize that the debatable issues, arising at the time of concluding the bilateral Extradition Treaty between the Republic of Serbia and the USA, in 2019,<sup>3</sup> are not, legally speaking, a point of exclusivity that creates new polemics between the two countries because the issues arising in the political context have already been discussed in numerous theoretical, scholarly and principally applicative debates.

The issue of the European integrations in the field of legal assistance in criminal matters primarily refers to the European Arrest Warrant.

The European Union, founded by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, have become closely related to the political ideas of the Member States with the purpose of determining certain issues, such as foreign affairs or justice, which used to be considered the aspects of national sovereignty in the past, so that these issues would be regulated at the European level with joined efforts.

The principle of free trade, based exclusively on the commercial agreement, which is one of the keystones of the European economic community, proved not sufficient for the creation of a true community of the states sharing common politics, laws and actions.

Therefore, besides the already concluded agreements on economy (The European Community, the European Coal and Steel Community and EURATOM) and on foreign affairs, the European states reached a mutual agreement on cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs. This resulted in the creation of the-so-called “third pillar” of the

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<sup>3</sup> *Law on ratification of the Extradition Treaty, concluded between the Republic of Serbia and the United States of America*, “Official Gazette of the RS – International agreements”, number 2, February 18, 2019.

EU, following the first pillar, concerned with economy, and the second pillar, related to foreign affairs.

The project on the construction of “the third pillar” could be realized only by guaranteeing the cooperation in the fields of social protection and peace and by providing the opportunities for their further development and improvement.

It was clear that up to the 1970s, a free exchange of people and goods, as supported by the Treaty, had required the guarantees considering security and consistent application of justice principles.

The levels of security were questioned not only by the economic entities but also by individual citizens, who feared that an uncontrolled freedom of movement, provided within the EU borders, would create a dangerous crack in the justice network, as regards the fact that this freedom was not balanced by an efficient coordination in criminal investigations and mutual and instant acknowledgement of the penalty-imposed by another country. In other words, criminals might benefit from potential differences in the justice systems of the Member States reflected in the possibility of avoidance of any sanctions or punishment, whereas the borders within the EU, otherwise removed for its citizens, were still recognizable by justice.

These requirements were initially fulfilled by the European Convention on Extradition, opened for admission in Paris in 1957. Anyway, the most significant reforms in the field of the criminal law cooperation were accomplished by signing the Maastricht Treaty, whose Part VI (“the third pillar”) supports the goal that “the citizens are to be provided with a high level of security regarding freedom, safety and justice by developing the cooperation of the Member States in the fields of politics and justice regarding criminal matters, as well as prevention and repression of racism and xenophobia”.

All this necessitated the establishment of the Europol in 1995, the European Judicial Network in 1998 and the Eurojust system in 2002. The next step was the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor’s Office in order to prosecute financial frauds against the EU and execute the European arrest warrants issued by the member states.

These acts were based on the mutual trust between the Member States. The execution of the judicial decisions made by another state or the transfer of investigations onto that state’s investigators would not

have been possible unless the Member States had been confident about the laws being essentially homogenous and fundamental guarantees being acknowledged.

The new forms of the international cooperation have always entailed the decline of national sovereignty, especially in the intricate field of crime repression and punishment.

The European Arrest Warrant, finally approved by the Council Framework Decision on June 13, 2002, was later adopted by all the Member States of the European Union.<sup>4</sup>

This new document met the demands of all the aforementioned entities regarding security, which became an issue after the elimination of borderlines between the member states. Namely, the rule that people and goods could move freely within the borders of the European Union had to be applied to court decisions and verdicts in order to prevent the already removed barriers, which created a possibility for the evasion of justice, from being raised again so that they would become an insurmountable obstacle for those who wanted to be protected by law.

Actually, the goal of the mutual adoption of court verdicts can be accomplished only by examining various European justice systems that are based on the common judicial culture. This principle can be founded exclusively on the mutual trust in the structure and functioning of the justice systems of other Member States of the European Union and in the juridical apparatus that should guarantee the right to a fair trial.

Therefore, the European Arrest Warrant surpasses all the previously used extradition systems since it presupposes a direct extradition of the wanted persons.

The main novelty that this document has in comparison to the traditional extradition mechanism is that it enables a near-automatic extradition, which further strengthens the relationship between courts by excluding any government interventions (or diplomatic influence).

However, this near-automatic characteristic does not obstruct the control of judicial authorities that are to execute the warrant with regard to court decisions made by another Member State. In fact, each author-

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<sup>4</sup> All the Member States were required to adopt the internal rules with the purpose of confirming their own laws with reference to the Council Framework Decision until December 31, 2003.

ity that has to execute the warrant will need to supervise the effects of the arrest warrant as it regards potential reasons for not executing it and considering other conditions determined by law.

The clause no. 8 in the Council Framework Decision says: “Decisions on the execution of the European arrest warrant must be subject to sufficient controls, which means that a judicial authority of the Member State where the requested person has been arrested will have to make the decision on his or her surrender”.

In short, automatism means that the court procedure is exempt from political power and is thus purely a matter of law and justice.

The principal characteristic of the European Arrest Warrant is undoubtedly the fact that it is applied extr territorially since it is executed in the territory of the state other than the state which has been legally authorized to issue that warrant.

Generally speaking, the norm of any international agreement requires that a state pass its own law on implementation, which is to be applied in the home legal system. Therefore, the status of this norm in the home legal system is equal to the home law that implements it.

Whereas the implementation law is usually the law in effect, the international treaty – or, in this case, the rules originating from it – is equal in status to the effective law in the home legal system.

Thus, the international rule implemented in the home legal system follows the general principles that are the foundation of the adopted acts in the chronological order. More importantly, it is the subject to the constitutional control.

The Maastricht Treaty was applied in no different way. One effective law implemented the Treaty so that the Treaty was accordingly of the same legal status as the effective law of the state in question.

The Framework Decision lists 32 crimes that are subject to the European Arrest Warrant. Consequently, the control of double incrimination is unnecessary, under the assumption that the crimes on the list are to be regarded as crimes in all European countries.

According to certain lawyers, the request to cancel the double incrimination would create a dangerous void in the legal system which would hinder the harmonization of various criminal legislations.

It might undermine “the principle of legality”, determined by Article 1 of the Serbian Criminal Code from 2005, whose application is

guaranteed by Article 32 of the Constitution. This could be particularly problematic regarding two constituent parts of “the principle of legality”, the one that requires that the criminal offence be described in accurate details, and the one which prescribes that an act is considered to be a criminal offence liable to a corresponding punishment only by the state law in effect.

Anyway, the last two principles are probably well protected by the Framework Decision. This is enabled by a previous comparison of a certain offence and its description, contained in the effective state law on the basis of which the warrant is issued by the judicial authority. However, this empowers the judicial authority that is to execute the warrant to check whether the criminal offence in question is congruent with the one on the list of 32 criminal offences prescribed by the Framework Decision.

Yet, the cancellation of the request for the double incrimination is based on the previous establishment of certain elements as common to each case of the criminal offence regarding the legal systems of the member states. This does not prevent the judicial authority from verifying whether *nomen iuris* corresponds to the criminal offence which is punishable according to the national legislation of one state.

In other words, the list of serious crimes liable to the issuing of the European Arrest Warrant does not exclude – but presupposes – the double incrimination.

Automatism in the application of the European Arrest Warrant would be regarded as related to the limitation of freedom considering the act passed by a foreign authority.

This lawyer’s justification causes a dilemma: the limitation of personal freedom would escape the constitutional control. Above all, there would be no guarantees in regard to the independence and autonomy of another state’s legal system. Then, it would mean that the other state’s act would not have to be explained. Finally, the possibility of appeal would not be guaranteed.

Other potential contradictions have not been found. Even the differences evident in the legal systems of the Member States do not appear to cause differences when applied.

Also, these difficulties would not emerge in those states which abolished life imprisonment, either by law, as is the case in Switzerland, or by the system of penitentiary institutions, as it has been done in Italy.

Articles 5 and 2 of the Framework Decision stipulate an adequate solution for the European Arrest Warrant issued for the crime punishable by life imprisonment (Serbia introduced a life sentence).

Article 5 states the following: “if the offence on the basis of which the European arrest warrant has been issued is punishable by custodial life sentence or life-time detention order, the execution of the said arrest warrant may be subject to the condition that the issuing Member State has provisions in its legal system for a review of the penalty or measure imposed, on request or at the latest after 20 years, or for the application of measures of clemency to which the person is entitled to apply for under the law or practice of the issuing Member State, aiming at a non-execution of such penalty or measure.”

The Framework Decision would particularly surpass the limitations provided by the European law with regard to the European arrest warrant which are connected to the actions mutually undertaken in the field of the judicial cooperation in criminal matters.

Actually, Article 31 e) of the Framework Decision guarantees the harmonization of the criminal cases as it regards organized crime, terrorism and drug trafficking.

However, Article 31 does not envision all possible forms of the judicial cooperation in criminal matters between the member states: it refers only to one probable applied procedure.

Therefore, the Council adopted new forms of international cooperation, which also enable mutual acknowledgment of the judicial decisions.

This provision actually states that the Council may “adopt the framework decisions with the purpose of integrating the laws and regulations of the Member States. The goal to be reached by framework decisions is the union of the Member States, but the Member States’ authorities decide upon the forms and methods. This shall not incur any direct consequence”.

A problem might arise from the content of the Framework Decision, no limitations within the “integration of the laws and rules of the Member States” and the applied procedures as long as they would result in the decrease of the Member State’s domain considering forms and methods.

In accordance with the aforementioned, it does not mean that the EU Treaty excludes other forms of cooperation apart from those leading to “the integration of the laws and rules of the Member States”.

On the other hand, the majority of the emerging risks and fears are not real.

Most of the assessments have not taken into account the fact that the Framework Decision would be implemented into the Member State’s legislation and that the Member State’s judicial authorities would always decide upon the extradition.

Also, the innovations that characterize the new institutions are seen as a deliberate evolution of the extradition procedure.

Certain objections have led to a revision of the debatable decisions made after the Convention on Extradition were adopted in Paris in 1957.

This agreement clearly states which authorizations depend on the judge who decides about the extradition and which of them depend on the judge’s assessment of the case.

Any decision related to the control of the warrant reliability, just as the one related to the control of the conditions necessary for keeping a person in custody, lies in the court competences of the issuing Member State.

Since the control by the judge of the executing Member State is just a formality, the issuing Member States’s decision about the arrest is not to be motivated by an explicit obligation.

Unfortunately, the European states still have different political attitudes towards important issues, which can be illustrated by their decision about the war in Iraq in 2003.

Yet, the European Arrest Warrant, which obliges all Member States to apply it, is expected to contribute to the melting of the distrust still present in the relationships between the Member States.

### **Instead of the conclusion**

These briefly presented dilemmas related to the application of the European Arrest Warrant may refer to any form of bilateral agreement between two sovereign states about extradition. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the negotiations about the surrender of the most se-

rious offenders between the Republic of Serbia and the USA started as early as 2010.<sup>5</sup> It was precisely the Convention of 1901 and its almost century-long application that were alluded to by the proponents of this treaty. A thorough browsing through the resources available on the Internet have resulted in the discovery of the text which, among other things, stated the fact regarding the extradition of one Bosnian citizen in 2016, in which case both states summoned the propositions prescribed by the Convention.<sup>6</sup>The new bilateral treaty was confirmed by the Law on ratification of the Extradition Treaty between the Republic of Serbia and the United States of America in 2019. The preamble of this Law clearly stated that, based on the Treaty on Extradition signed between the Kingdom of Serbia and the United States of America in Belgrade on October 25, 1901, and on the fact that both the Republic of Serbia and the United States of America continued to apply the propositions of that agreement, it was necessary to conclude a new extradition treaty in order that the cooperation between the two states in their struggle against crime be more efficient.

On the other hand, the experience gained with the application of the European Arrest Warrant is available and logical, and thus an interesting test for numerous European countries. It infiltrates into the prerogatives that have always pertained to the power of the state and have been an explicit expression of the national sovereignty.

The majority of the assessments of the European Arrest Warrant seem to deny the very principle of mutual trust in the particularity of the legal systems, the fundamental principle of a new form of cooperation. In short, they claim that the decision issued by one Member State would not provide sufficient guarantees as would another state's legal system. The reform would have certainly been more efficient and consistent if the basic rules had been postulated before the start of the mutual procedure.

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<sup>5</sup> US, *Serbia Discuss Extradition Agreement, Representatives of Serbia and the U.S. have begun negotiations on an agreement on the extradition of perpetrators of serious crimes*. May 21, 2010, <https://balkaninsight.com/2010/05/21/us-serbia-discuss-extradition-agreement/>, accessed on July 19, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> *Basic v. Steck*, 819 F.3d 897, 898 n.1 (6<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2016) (“On appeal, the parties agree that the 1902 Treaty applies in this case since Bosnia is a successor state of the Kingdom of Serbia.” *U: Extradition To and From the United States: Overview of the Law and Contemporary Treaties*; September 30, 2003 – October 4, 2016 <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/98-958.html>, accessed on July 19, 2019.

However, it was neither an easier nor a faster way. Nor was it an urgent goal to be achieved. It must not be forgotten that the European Arrest Warrant was created with the purpose of replacing a long and complicated procedure of the extradition system with one fast and efficient procedure, suitable for the struggle against new forms of crime and the offenders who might escape justice due to the creation of open borders.

Europe, and certainly Serbia as a European country, and the USA exist on two different continents. Yet, the struggle against crime and the most severe criminal offences has to be transnational.

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## **SERBIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP – PODSEĆANJE NA BILATERALNE UGOVORE IZ OBLASTI KRIVIČNOG PRAVA IZ VIZURE DUŽE OD JEDNOG VEKA**

### **Rezime**

Godine 2010. godine otpočeo je proces pregovora između Republike Srbije i SAD o zaključenju sporazuma o izručenju učinilaca najtežih zločina. U pregovorima oko zaključenja ovakvog bilateralnog, strane su se pozivale na Konvenciju o izdavanju krivaca zaključenu između Kra-

ljevine Srbije i Ujedinjenih Američkih Država, potpisanu u Beogradu, 25. oktobra 1901. i njenu čak duže od veka primenljivost. Novi bilateralni ugovor između Republike Srbije i SAD o zaključenju sporazuma o izručenju učinilaca najtežih zločina potvrđen je Zakonom o potvrđivanju ugovora između Republike Srbije i Sjedinjenih Američkih Država o izručenju, iz 2019. godine. U preambuli ovog zakona jasno je napisano da se strane ugovornice pozivaju na Konvenciju o izdavanju krivaca zaključenu između Kraljevine Srbije i Ujedinjenih Američkih Država, potpisanu u Beogradu, 25. oktobra 1901. godine.

U članku se autori takođe osvrću na dileme vezane za primenu evropskog naloga za hapšenje, iz prakse bitisanja EU. Jasno je da takve dileme mogu biti iznesene za svaki oblik bilateralnog sporazuma dve suverene države koji se odnosi na izručenje krivaca. S druge strane, iskustvo u vezi sa evropskim nalogom za hapšenje je dostupno i jasno i biće jedan interesantan test za mnoge evropske zemlje. Ne sme se zaboraviti da je evropski nalog za hapšenje stvoren u nameri da zameni dugu i složenu proceduru sistema ekstradicije jednim brzim i efikasnim postupkom koji je podesan za suprotstavljanje novim oblicima kriminaliteta, čiji počinioci otvaranjem granica mogu da izbegnu pravdu. On zadire u prerogative koji su uvek bili rezervisani za državnu moć i glavni izraz nacionalnog suvereniteta.

Reforma pravosuđa, kao kontinuirani proces, sigurno bi bila mnogo efikasnija i konzistentnija ako bi, pre stvaranja zajedničkog postupka, bila postavljena osnovna pravila.

Evropska unija i Srbija u njoj i SAD bitišu na dva različita kontinenta. Ali, borba protiv kriminaliteta i to njegovih najtežih oblika trebalo bi da bude transnacionalna.

Ključne reči: Srpsko-američki odnosi, bilateralni ugovori, krivično pravo, izručenje, evropski nalog za hapšenje

## EXTRADITION

*Treaty signed at Belgrade for the United States and Serbia October 25, 1901*  
*Senate advice and consent to ratification January 27, 1902*  
*Ratified by the President of the United States March 7, 1902*  
*Ratified by Serbia March 17, 1902*  
*Ratifications exchanged at Belgrade May 13, 1902*  
*Proclaimed by the President of the United States May 17, 1902*  
*Entered into force June 12, 1902*

32 Stat. 1890; Treaty Series 406

The United States of America and His Majesty the King of Serbia, being desirous to confirm their friendly relations and to promote the cause of Justice, have resolved to conclude a treaty for the extradition of fugitives from justice between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Serbia, and have appointed for that purpose the following Plenipotentiaries:

The President of the United States of America, Charles S. Francis, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the King of Serbia.

His Majesty the King of Serbia, M. Michel V. Vouitch, President of His Council of Ministers, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator, Grand Officer of the Order of Milosh the Great, Grand Cross of the Order of Takovo, Officer of the Order of the White Eagle, etc. etc.,

who, after having communicated to each other their respective full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed upon and concluded the following articles:

### ARTICLE I

The Government of the United States and the Government of Serbia mutually agree to deliver up persons who, having been charged with or convicted of any of the crimes and offenses specified in the following article, committed within the jurisdiction of one of the high contracting parties, shall seek an asylum or be found within the territories of the other: **Provided**, that this shall only be done upon such evidence of criminality as, according to

the laws of the place where the fugitive or person so charged shall be found, would justify his or her apprehension and commitment for trial if the crime or offense had been committed there.

## ARTICLE II

Extradition shall be granted for the following crimes and offenses:

1. Murder, comprehending assassination, parricide, infanticide, and poisoning; attempt to commit murder; manslaughter, when voluntary.

2. Arson.

3. Robbery, defined to be the act of feloniously and forcibly taking from person of another money or goods, by violence or putting him in fear; burglary, defined to be the act of breaking, and entering by night, into the dwelling house of another, with intent to commit felony; housebreaking or shopbreaking.

4. Forgery, or the utterance of forged papers; the forgery or falsification of official acts of government, of public authorities, or of courts of justice, or the utterance of the thing forged or falsified.

5. The counterfeiting, falsifying or altering of money, whether coin or paper, or of instruments of debt created by national, state, provincial, or municipal governments, or of coupons thereof, or of banknotes, or the utterance or circulation of the same; or the counterfeiting, falsifying or altering of seals, dies or stamps of state; of postage and revenue stamps.

6. Embezzlement by public officers; embezzlement by persons hired or salaried, to the detriment of their employers; larceny; obtaining money, valuable securities or other property by false pretenses, or receiving money, valuable securities or other property, knowing the same to have been embezzled, stolen or fraudulently obtained, when such act is made criminal by the laws of both countries and the amount of money or the value of the property fraudulently obtained or received, is not less than two hundred dollars or one thousand francs in gold.

7. Fraud or breach of trust by a bailee, banker, agent, factor, trustee, or other person acting in a fiduciary capacity, or director or member or officer of any company, when such act is made criminal by the laws of both countries and the amount of money or the value of the property misappropriated is not less than two hundred dollars or one thousand francs in gold.

8. Perjury; subornation of perjury.

9. Rape; abduction; kidnapping.

10. Wilful and unlawful destruction or obstruction of railroads which endangers human life.

11. Crimes committed at sea:

a. Piracy, by statute or by the law of nations.

b. Revolt, or conspiracy to revolt, by two or more persons on board a ship on the high seas against the authority of the master.

- c. Wrongfully sinking or destroying a vessel at sea, or attempting to do so.
- d. Assaults on board a ship on the high seas with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

12. Crimes and offenses against the laws of the United States of America for the suppression of slavery and slave trading.

Extradition is also to take place for participation in any of the crimes and offenses mentioned in this Treaty, provided such participation may be punished in the United States as felony and in Serbia as crime or offense as before specified.

#### ARTICLE III

Requisitions for the surrender of fugitives from justice shall be made by the Governments of the high contracting parties through their diplomatic agents, or in the absence of such through their respective superior consular officers.

If the person whose extradition is requested shall have been convicted of a crime or offense, a duly authenticated copy of the sentence of the Court in which he has been convicted, or if the fugitive is merely charged with crime, a duly authenticated copy of the warrant of arrest in the country where the crime has been committed, and of the depositions or other evidence upon which such warrant was issued, shall be produced.

The extradition of fugitives under the provisions of this Treaty shall be carried out in the United States and in Serbia, respectively, in conformity with the laws regulating extradition for the time being in force in the State on which the demand for surrender is made.

#### ARTICLE IV

Where the arrest and detention of a fugitive in the United States are desired on telegraphic or other information in advance of the presentation of formal proofs, complaint on oath, as provided by the statutes of the United States, shall be made by an agent of the Government of Serbia before a judge or other magistrate authorized to issue warrants of arrest in extradition cases.

In the Kingdom of Serbia the diplomatic or consular officer of the United States shall apply to the Foreign Office, which will immediately cause the necessary steps to be taken in order to secure the provisional arrest and detention of the fugitive.

The provisional detention of a fugitive shall cease and the prisoner be released if a formal requisition for his surrender, accompanied by the necessary evidence of criminality, has not been produced under the stipulations of this Treaty, within two months from the date of his provisional arrest and detention.

## ARTICLE V

Neither of the high contracting parties shall be bound to deliver up its own citizens or subjects under the stipulations of this Treaty.

## ARTICLE VI

A fugitive criminal shall not be surrendered if the offense in respect of which his surrender is demanded be of a political character, or if he proves that the requisition for his surrender has, in fact, been made with a view to try to punish him for an offense of a political character.

No person surrendered by either of the high contracting parties to the other shall be triable or tried, or be punished, for any political crime or offense, or for any act connected therewith, committed previously to his extradition.

If any questions shall arise as to whether a case comes within the provisions of this article, the decision of the authorities of the Government on which the demand for surrender is made, or which may have granted the extradition, shall be final.

## ARTICLE VII

Extradition shall not be granted, in pursuance of the provisions of this Treaty, if legal proceedings or the enforcement of the penalty for the act committed by the person claimed has become barred by limitation, according to the laws of the country to which the requisition is addressed.

## ARTICLE VIII

No person surrendered by either of the high contracting parties to the other shall, without his consent, freely granted and publicly declared by him, be triable or tried or be punished for any crime or offense committed prior to his extradition, other than that for which he was delivered up, until he shall have had an opportunity of returning to the country from which he was surrendered.

## ARTICLE IX

All articles seized which are in the possession of the person to be surrendered at the time of his apprehension, whether being the proceeds of the crime or offense charged, or being material as evidence in making proof of the crime or offense, shall, so far as practicable and in conformity with the laws of the respective countries, be given up to the country making the demand, when the extradition takes place. Nevertheless, the rights of third parties with regard to such articles shall be duly respected.

## ARTICLE X

If the individual claimed by one of the high contracting parties, in pursuance of the present Treaty, shall also be claimed by one or several other powers on account of crimes or offenses committed within their respective

jurisdictions, his extradition shall be granted to the State whose demand is first received: Provided, that the Government from which extradition is sought is not bound by treaty to give preference otherwise.

ARTICLE XI

The expenses incurred in the arrest, detention, examination, and delivery of fugitives under this Treaty shall be borne by the State in whose name the extradition is sought: Provided, that the demanding Government shall not be compelled to bear any expense for the services of such public officers of the Government from which extradition is sought as received a fixed salary; and, provided, that the charge for the services of such public officers as receive only fees or perquisites shall not exceed their customary fees for the acts or services performed by them had such acts or services been performed in ordinary criminal proceedings under the laws of the country of which they are officers.

The present Treaty shall take effect on the thirtieth day after the date of the exchange of ratifications and shall not act retroactively.

The ratifications of the present Treaty shall be exchanged at Belgrade as soon as possible, and it shall remain in force for a period of six months after either of the contracting Governments shall have given notice of a purpose to terminate it.

In witness whereof, the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty in duplicate and have hereunto affixed their seals.

Done at Belgrade this twenty-fifth (twelfth) day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and one.

CHARLES S. FRANCIS      [SEAL]  
DR. MICHEL VOVIČ      [SEAL]

115TH CONGRESS }  
*1st Session*

SENATE

{ TREATY DOC.  
115-1

EXTRADITION TREATY WITH THE REPUBLIC OF  
SERBIA

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MESSAGE

FROM

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES**

TRANSMITTING

EXTRADITION TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA (THE "TREATY"), SIGNED AT BELGRADE ON AUGUST 15, 2016



JANUARY 17, 2017.—Treaty was read the first time, and together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed for the use of the Senate

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U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

99-115

WASHINGTON : 2017

## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

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THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 17, 2017.*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of Serbia (the "Treaty"), signed at Belgrade on August 15, 2016. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty would replace the Treaty between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Serbia for the Mutual Extradition of Fugitives from Justice, signed October 25, 1901 (the "1901 Treaty"), which applies to the Republic of Serbia as a successor state to the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Treaty follows generally the form and content of other extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States. It would replace an outmoded list of extraditable offenses with a modern "dual criminality" approach, which would enable extradition for such offenses as money laundering, cyber-related crimes, and other newer offenses not appearing on the 1901 Treaty list. The Treaty also provides that extradition shall not be refused based on the nationality of the person sought and contains a modernized "political offense" clause. Finally, the Treaty incorporates a series of procedural improvements to streamline and expedite the extradition process.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA.

(III)

**Predrag Cvetković**, PhD, full professor\*  
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## **USA–SERBIA RELATIONS REINVENTED: FOUNDATIONS FOR A NEW NARRATIVE**

**Abstract:** It is of critical importance for Serbia as a nation to have substantially well-developed relations with the USA. It is a necessary condition for the constructive and effective participation of Serbia in the Euro-Atlantic integration process on equal terms. The success of this process inevitably depends on the development of Serbia as a democratic state. This development is possible only if Serbia–USA relations are furthered to a degree that satisfies the mutual and particular interests of both countries. In the Republic of Serbia, the issue of Serbia–NATO relations is largely perceived (in the public eye at least) as a political issue. A breakthrough in understanding the relations between the NATO and the Republic of Serbia will ensue by initiating the process of its legitimization and making it the subject matter of unbiased expertise. Taking a step forward in developing USA–Serbia relations requires a new approach, based on insisting on certain shared values, including (above all) trust in democracy and reliance on democratic principles. Those values promote protection and development of collective (horizontal) interests, such as human rights, freedom of expression, promotion of educational opportunities and qualities, environmental protection, and alike. Once properly developed, all these values will contribute to the development of democracy as the ultimate expression of human freedom.

**Keywords:** Republic of Serbia, Western Balkan, NATO, International relations, shared values

### **Introduction**

This article rests on three basic premises.

First and foremost, it is of critical importance for Serbia as a nation to have substantially well-developed relations with the USA. It is

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a necessary condition for the constructive and effective participation of Serbia in the Euro-Atlantic integration process on equal terms. The success of this process inevitably depends on the development of Serbia as a democratic state. This development is possible only if Serbia–USA relations are furthered to a degree that satisfies the mutual and particular interests of both countries.

Second, in the Republic of Serbia, the issue of Serbia–NATO relations is largely perceived (in the public eye at least) as a political issue. A breakthrough in understanding the relations between the NATO and the Republic of Serbia will ensue by initiating the process of its legitimization and making it the subject matter of unbiased expertise.

The third premise involves a methodological issue. Namely, taking a step forward in developing USA–Serbia relations requires a new approach, which implies:

- learning from the past rather than using it as an excuse for more or less obvious failures;
- staying away from *a priori* “pro” and “con” argumentation;
- insisting on certain shared values, including (above all) trust in democracy and reliance on democratic principles.

### **1. First Premise: SERBIA–USA Relations as the Vector for Democracy Development**

The history of the relations between USA and Serbia is well known. It has had its ups and downs, longer or shorter periods of “light” and “darkness”, and alternating periods of understandings and disagreements. History is something to learn from; it shall not be used as a *perpetuum mobile* generator of hate and struggle. It is true that formative moments are not only times of freedom and creativity but also times of struggle, uncertainty, instability and self-discovery.<sup>1</sup> All this happens among states. What is also true is that every obstacle and disagreement can be overcome when there is:

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<sup>1</sup> Ringmar, Erik (1996) *Identity, Interest and Action: A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, Cambridge University Press, New York.

- maturity of one nation `s leadership;
- enough courage to choose the right preferences for the future path, and most importantly
- a pool of shared values as the cornerstone which the described value-driven transformation rests on.

Consequently, the process of identifying the pool of shared values would serve as an incentive and an impetus for improving Serbia–USA relations. To do that, it is important to expand the perspective and consider the bigger picture which, as in everyday life, provides more space for analysis and a wider range of possibilities.

It has to be noted that the term “Eastern Europe”, when referring to the former communist countries, does not presuppose uniformity in the basic characteristics of those countries.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the position of Serbia, not only at present but also in retrospective analysis, differs significantly from other Eastern European countries. Despite all deficiencies of the communist system, being part of former Yugoslavia, Serbia was considered to be a “soft” version of a communist state, and even a role model for some other states (Bulgaria, Hungary). Therefore, the legacy of the relations between the USA and Serbia (as part of former Yugoslavia) resonates much more positively in comparison with other countries once trapped in “hard-core” communist regimes. In this legacy, one may find adequate examples of cultural and social values shared even in the times when *prima facie* the differences between the two states appeared to be insurmountable. Those values promote protection and development of collective (horizontal) interests, such as human rights, freedom of expression, promotion of educational opportunities and qualities, environmental protection, and alike. Once properly developed, all these values will contribute to the development of democracy as the ultimate expression of human freedom.

## **2. Second Premise: Serbia-NATO Relations (to legitimize the first premise)**

In the Republic of Serbia, the subject matter of Serbia’s relations with the NATO is largely perceived (in the public eye at least) as a polit-

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<sup>2</sup> These “Eastern Europe” countries had highly distinctive features, just as the “Western Europe” countries.

ical issue. The efforts aimed at introducing other types of discourse for discussing the issues at stake (the economic, institutional and technological ones) have been undermined by a propensity of political figures at all sides of the political spectrum to use the Serbia–NATO relations for the purpose of winning cheap political points. In such circumstances, there is no room for rational analysis. The lack of impartial and balanced consideration has not been a result of insufficient interest or a lack of expertise. The actual reason for inactivity lies in the implausibility of treating the issue of the Serbia–NATO relations as a legitimate question in its own right, as a multifaceted issue which is by no means single-sided. As a matter of fact,

- it encompasses diverse dimensions and standpoints;
- it is a question whose importance may not be confined to political games and interests;
- it is a question which calls for serious analysis because it is crucial for the future of the Republic of Serbia and its citizens.

Therefore, a breakthrough in understanding the relations between the NATO and the Republic of Serbia shall ensue by initiating the process of legitimization of this issue and making it the subject matter of proper and impartial expertise.

Taking a step forward in this direction presupposes the maturity of the political as well as the intellectual elite in the Republic of Serbia. Another important prerequisite for meaningful discussion on the aforesaid issue is the irrevocable, unambiguous and explicit political support for the dialogue to start. This support has to be real and effective rather than declarative. It shall not be burdened by long-standing prejudice or biases concerning the course and future direction of NATO–Serbia relations. Notably, it should be the kind of support which establishes a framework for an impartial, multidimensional and continuous analysis of these relations, an analysis which exceeds the time-frame of election campaigns and extends beyond the daily political goals.

The process of legitimizing the issue of NATO–Serbia relations will take time. It will face resistance and obstacles. However, once legitimized, this issue should be a focal point of interest of all relevant actors in political and broader social processes. The ultimate goal of the

dialogue is to define the outlines and the scope of these relations, and to examine how it could contribute to the development and affirmation of the Republic of Serbia as a modern democratic state committed to the Euro-Atlantic integrations.

The NATO and Serbia have already established partnership by entering into relevant treaties. Given the present circumstances and all kinds of constraints, the current state of this partnership is the result of what was possible and attainable thus far. However, only adapting the structure of Serbia–NATO relations to the existing environment simply does not suffice any more. The present and, above all, the future, call for an effort to define a vision with clearly established goals and time-frame for their implementation.

At the moment, military neutrality of Serbia is a political reality. It is a result of interpretation which may be attributed to the national interest. But national interest itself is not a static category frozen in time: at the end of the day, it is a matter of preference and priority. The national interest cannot be to maximize all possible national goals. It is a matter of prioritization, ranking the goals in the preferential order, whereby that order depends both on the present circumstances and the assessment of prospective ones. The same goes for the issue of neutrality.

In terms of international relations, neutrality provides the comfort to pander the momentum or to delay decisions. It is a legitimate position but its sustainability is disputable. It is hard to make neutrality sustainable in the globalized world and to promote it as the key and foundational quality of foreign policy.

Moreover, NATO can impact the political stability of the Western Balkan region by planting “the institutional and normative seeds necessary for the incorporation [of the region] into the Western security community”, to help with the facilitation, support and enhancement of political reform in the direction of democratic regimes.<sup>3</sup> The effect of NATO on a Western Balkan security community therefore is indirect:

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<sup>3</sup> Corneliu Bjola, “NATO as a Factor of Security Community Building: Enlargement and Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe,” *EAPC-NATO Individual Fellowship Final Report 1999–2000*, Central European University. Downloaded from [www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/bjola.pdf](http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/bjola.pdf). Quote from pp. 9–10.

NATO's influence extends primarily to encourage the domestic stability of democratic institutions. Consequently, domestic stability is a necessary condition for the security community. If states are to rely on dependable peaceful expectations of one another, stability within states ought to be as important a benchmark as stability between states; otherwise the possibility of cross-border violence and unrest looms large.<sup>4</sup>

Serbia–NATO relations cannot be viewed in isolation, through either of the two polarized conceptions: one well-known concept is that Serbia's membership in the NATO is unacceptable because of the bombardment campaign twenty years ago; the other one is that membership is the solution to all Serbia's problems. However, the following can be concluded without dilemma: developing cooperation with the NATO is a potentially important instrument to address the issues that Serbia has as a nation. The nature of cooperation between Serbia and NATO is not only military but also political. Any cooperation with institutions, organizations and countries with which Serbia shares the same values (democracy, cooperation, Euro-Atlantic integration) is welcome and needed. There is no country that can be isolated from any event happening anywhere in the world: the butterfly effect at work is the main feature of contemporary economic, social and political dynamic. Therefore, it is important to be part of the network, to coordinate efforts, to exchange information. These activities enable the states to adjust behavior in accordance with rapid changes, new risks and changes in the likelihood of existing ones. At the same time, the rights and benefits from cooperation with the NATO are counterposed with the solidarity obligation: participating in joint actions, sharing responsibilities in campaigns, and the like. The delicacy of bringing an adequate decision regarding cooperation with the NATO is even more obvious in Serbia due to historical circumstances; however, the strong and functional level playing field for expressing public opinion could play a crucial role in this process.

The membership in NATO has certain price: the degree of uncertainty surrounding a state's motivations is positively related to the price of membership: "If states are relatively certain about one another's pref-

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<sup>4</sup> Laurie Nathan, "Domestic Instability and Security Communities," *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.12, No. 2 (2006), pp. 275–299.

erences, there will be little reason to have a high entry price for an institution, because state motivations, benign or malign, will already be known.”<sup>5</sup> In this sense, the price of membership represents the degree of socialization necessary to accommodate the new member.

In terms of International relations, to legitimize the question of Serbia–NATO relations demands that Serbia must have sufficiently low discount rates; that is, it must care about the future relative to the present. States who are impulsive or impatient or who do not care about the future have high discount rates. Because such states value the short-term gains from cheating over the discounted long-term gains from cooperation, they cannot sustain cooperative relations with others. The international analogy to the impulsive individual is the rogue state. Rogue states are states controlled by irrational or impulsive leaders, or states with unstable political systems, or states in which citizens do not enjoy stable expectations. The main effort on the side of NATO and USA as the key NATO member states is to pursue and show that future brings enough benefits for Serbia to the extent that Serbian society and political elite appreciate future benefits from NATO membership more than present short term political profit.<sup>6</sup> To put the Serbia–NATO relations into this perspective shall deepen understanding of and justification for its mutually beneficial and thoroughly structured development.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. Third Premise: Methodology revisited

The process of improving USA–Serbia relations will take time. It will face resistance and obstacles. To deal with those circumstances, it is necessary to apply adequate methodology. The proposed methodological approach rests on the following principles:

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<sup>5</sup> Andrew Kydd, “Trust Building, Trust Breaking: The Dilemma of NATO Enlargement,” *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No.4 (2001), pp. 801–828. Quote from p. 803.

<sup>6</sup> Jack L. Goldsmith, Eric A. Posner, *The Limits of International Law*, 2007, pp. 32 passim.

<sup>7</sup> On the methodology of International law regarding the development and implementation of the norm see more in: Guzman, A.T., 2008. *How international law works: a rational choice theory*. Oxford University Press.

- learning from the past rather than using it as an excuse for more or less obvious failures;
- staying away from a priori “pro” and “con” argumentation;
- refining the existing pragmatic approach by substantiating it with some shared values, including (above all) trust in democracy and reliance on democratic principles.

The principles listed above are accompanied with an awareness of the necessity of cooperation whose ultimate aim is to eliminate potential risks and attain stability, which is the cornerstone of true democracy.

A fresh approach of both sides is critical. In the case of USA, it entails understanding the unique features of Serbia as the partner country: an innovative approach shall take into account the recent history of the countries’ relations. At the same time, the experiences from the not-so-distant past should be also given critical consideration in order to formulate the reinvented narrative of USA–Serbia relations.

One shall not be bothered with the fact that a minority of people in Serbia supports closer cooperation with the NATO: at some point, each majority used to be a former minority. What is needed is the proactive approach of the political and intellectual elite. The toolkit for explaining the genuine argumentation for advancing USA–Serbia relations includes:

- the flow of information,
- building a coalition on non-contentious issues (e. g. fight against terrorism)
- placing and promoting USA–Serbia relations in an objective, expert-endorsed and future-driven context, for the purpose of facing the existing and upcoming challenges.

One thing shall not be forgotten: building the new vision is the issue of a social process. It cannot be imposed using top-down direction.

The impartial, rational, balanced and ultimately effective analysis of Serbia–USA relations necessarily entails a certain amount of reasonable idealism which is deprived of categorical judgment and rests on the awareness that there are common and shared values; these values can and must be put into effect only by joint efforts and sincere commitment of both parties to the common cause.

The ultimate justification, purpose and meaning of developing the USA–Serbia partnership rest in securing a more stable and prosperous future for the generations to come.

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**Predrag Cvetković**

## **PREISPITIVANJE AMERIČKO-SRPSKIH ODNOSA: OSNOV ZA NOVI DIJALOG**

Rezime

Odnosi Srbije i SAD su suštinska pretpostavka napretka i razvoja Republike Srbije kao moderne države. Viđeni kao noseći element evroatlantskih integracija, navedeni odnosi imaju i svoju unutrašnjopolitičku dimenziju: uticaj i važnost za izgradnju Republike Srbije kao demokratske države. Opterećeni nedavnom prošlošću, često zamagljeni kratkoročnim i jednokratnim političkim ciljevima, ovi odnosi moraju da se izvuku iz matrice dnevopolitičkih nadgornjavanja. Napredak u razvoju odnosa između SAD i Republike Srbije zahteva novi pristup, zasnovan na insistiranju na određenim zajedničkim vrednostima, uključujući (pre svega) poverenje u demokratiju i oslanjanje na demokratske principe. Te vrednosti promovišu zaštitu i razvoj kolektivnih (horizontalnih) interesa, kao što su ljudska prava, sloboda izražavanja, zaštita životne sredine i slično. Pitanje odnosa Srbije i SAD neosporno uključuje i karakter odnosa Republike Srbije i NATO saveza. Tema odnosa Srbije i NATO-a se u velikoj meri doživljava kao političko pitanje. Napori usmereni na uvođenje navedenog pitanja u druge vrste diskursa (ekonomskog, institucionalnog i tehnološkog), onemogućeni su sklonošću političke javnosti na svim stranama političkog spektra da pitanje odnosa Republike Srbije i NATO-a koriste za osvajanje jeftinih političkih poena. Stoga, proboj u razumevanju odnosa između NATO-a i Republike Srbije mora da započne legitimisanjem ovog pitanja na način koji ga postavlja u okvir utemeljene ekspertске analize.

Nepriistrasna, racionalna, izbalansirana i iznad svega celovita analiza odnosa Republike Srbije i SAD trebalo bi da bude bazirana na konceptu razumnog idealizma: idealizma lišenog kategoričkog prosuđivanja, ali prožetog svešću da akteri dele zajedničke vrednosti; vrednosti koje mogu da se implementiraju samo zajedničkim naporima i iskrenom posvećenošću obe strane zajedničkoj stvari. Krajnje opravdanje, svrha i smisao razvoja partnerskog odnosa između SAD i Republike Srbije leže u obezbeđivanju stabilnije i prosperitetnije budućnosti za generacije koje dolaze.

Ključne reči: Republika Srbija, Zapadni Balkan, NATO, međunarodni odnosi, zajedničke vrednosti

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## TRANSFORMING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS INTO THE “INDUSTRY-READY” ONES

**Abstract:** Rapid technology development is shifting the ground beneath the educators, accreditors and students, while opening new opportunities for engineers, allowing them to address societal problems, and power the economy. This race is the biggest issue for the youth trying to balance their personal education and everyday opportunities that the industry is providing. This paper gives a brief overview of the higher education system in Serbia, explains the characteristics of a modern engineer and engineering teams, and gives an example of the synergy that could exist between the educational institutions and the industry.

**Keywords:** Technology, Industry, Education, Engineering

### 1. Introduction

Rapid technology development is shifting the ground beneath the educators, accreditors, and students, while opening new opportunities for engineers, allowing them to address societal problems, and power the economy.

The race between technology and education is one of the biggest issues for the youth trying to balance their personal education and everyday opportunities that the industry is providing. University education offers students the basic knowledge and broader point of view, but rarely expertise and skills that the industry needs. To fill this gap, students often apply to work in companies after they have attended just a few semesters. This way, they are trying to commercialize the basic education they have acquired during their studies, as well as to gain new and, to some extent, more relevant knowledge.

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Rapid technology development and the ever-shortened deadlines in the IT industry very often cause the students working in these companies to forget their goals and, sometimes, even quit their studies.

University education has always played an important role in the overall development of the youth and provided them with basic knowledge. For this to remain so, educational institutions and the industry have to align their goals and programs to ensure continuous development of experienced engineers, ready for everyday challenges. This is the only way to keep up with time and the new industrial revolution called the “21st Century”.

## **2. Electronic and Computer Science Engineering Studies in Serbia**

Nowadays, engineering faculties in Serbia are the top educational and scientific institutions in the field of electronic engineering and computer science.<sup>1</sup> They follow the development of engineering, information, and communication technologies worldwide, and are of particular social interest. The study programs of professional, bachelor, and master, as well as doctoral, studies, which are realized on Serbian universities, are regulated by the state law on higher education.<sup>2</sup>

The mission of all engineering faculties in Serbia is to provide students with the highest-quality education in the field of electronic engineering and computer science.<sup>3</sup> This is done by encouraging their creativity, responsibility, research interest and teamwork. On the other hand, faculties aim to provide companies with outstanding engineers who will be able to enhance the company’s productivity, innovation, and market competitiveness. This is mostly achieved with bachelor and master academic study programs.

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Electronic Engineering Nis – Courses, <http://old.elfak.ni.ac.rs/en/courses>; School of Electrical Engineering Belgrade – Courses, <https://www.etf.bg.ac.rs/en/studies>

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Electronic Engineering Nis – Courses, <http://old.elfak.ni.ac.rs/en/courses>; School of Electrical Engineering Belgrade – Courses, <https://www.etf.bg.ac.rs/en/studies>

<sup>3</sup> School of Electrical Engineering Belgrade – Courses, <https://www.etf.bg.ac.rs/en/studies>

## 2. 1. Bachelor's Degree Studies

The Bachelor studies program is organized in eight semesters – each course lasting one semester. During the first year, students gain general engineering knowledge.<sup>4</sup> They can from this point choose their study paths, mostly from the third semester, where each path represents one specific module, e.g., electronic engineering, computer science and informatics, control systems, telecommunication, power engineering, etc.

Each module combines different courses. Course requirements involve homework, colloquial, and final exams, and they all equally contribute to the final grade. The teaching process within the study program includes the basic knowledge the students need to master, professional practice and team projects which are done in cooperation with the teacher, and the final paper, as an obligatory assignment in the eighth and the final semester.<sup>5</sup>

Through this study program, students gain the competencies to design, produce, test, and maintain devices and systems, as well as necessary software logistics.

## 2. 2. Master's Degree Studies

The Master studies program is organized into two semesters.<sup>6</sup> At this stage, students choose courses from the lists which are based on their specific modules. Master engineers gain knowledge of the highest degree in the field of engineering. After the program, they should be competent to perform independent or teamwork and work on the development and maintenance of complex systems and products in the IT industry.

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<sup>4</sup> Faculty of Electronic Engineering Nis – Courses, <http://old.elfak.ni.ac.rs/en/courses>; School of Electrical Engineering Belgrade – Courses, <https://www.etf.bg.ac.rs/en/studies>

<sup>5</sup> Faculty of Electronic Engineering Nis – Courses, <http://old.elfak.ni.ac.rs/en/courses>

<sup>6</sup> Faculty of Electronic Engineering Nis – Courses, <http://old.elfak.ni.ac.rs/en/courses>; School of Electrical Engineering Belgrade – Courses, <https://www.etf.bg.ac.rs/en/studies>

### 3. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Engineering Industry

Technology is surpassing technological education every day. There are so many concepts, techniques and tools that an engineering graduate should know, but there is not enough time during their formal education. With the rapid technological advancement, the gap between education and market demand is getting wider and this is beginning to have serious consequences. Undergrad students are less motivated, as they realize the gap between what they have learned and the technology they need to use is not bridged over during their undergraduate education. On the other hand, employers are frustrated because undergraduates do not have the knowledge, expertise, experience or the design methodology the modern industry needs. The qualities of an engineer, their skills and awareness of the business as well as the working ethic should be defined first.

#### 3. 1. Qualities of an Engineer

In most cases, a good engineer is a person who is ready to build a personal expertise, continuously throughout their career. Since the changes in the technological world happen rapidly, a good engineer stays on top of recent developments in the industry and quickly improves his competence and knowledge.

Most of the time, engineers work with clients who have the finances and the ideas but not enough knowledge and expertise to explain in detail what they are looking for. So, to begin with, an engineer should have excellent communication skills. This involves the ability to translate complex technical language into plain English that most of the interlocutors can understand. Once the requirements are defined, a good engineer should pay attention to the details. The system should be seen from all possible angles and each potential error that can cause an entire structure to collapse should be reviewed thoroughly. This usually goes together with the ability to think logically.<sup>7</sup>

A good engineer can make sense of complex systems and understand how things work and how problems arise. They will combine ex-

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<sup>7</sup> Creating Electronics and Great Engineering Teams, <https://htecgroup.com/creating-electronics-and-great-engineering-teams/>

cellent problem-solving skills together with strong technical knowledge, used to solve any problem that comes their way. This is a highly creative individual who always thinks of new and innovative ways to develop new systems and get the existing ones to work more efficiently.

### 3. 2. Talents vs Hard Work

Great engineers are people who like to be challenged and who provide additional value and make a difference every day. They have the sense and the ability to feel the problem they should solve. Great engineering teams are built on talent, but without hard work, the chances of building impressive teams are small. Without hard work, neither one engineer nor a whole team of them would be capable of tracking the rapid development of technology using talent only.<sup>8</sup>

Hard work means two things. Firstly, from one point of view, every great engineer wants a chance to learn and grow. Learning and growing always come together with hard work. Secondly, happy engineers are those who feel challenged and noticed, and who believe they truly make a difference. So, talent is massively important, but so is the management of talent. Moving engineers from one project to another, release after release, and according to the priority is not productive. People build expertise and a strong sense of ownership for what they do, which leads to higher motivation and better output, so, it is hard work to patently select the right people for the right projects.

### 3. 3. Problem-Solving Skills

Engineering often implies developing projects from scratch. It means that, if the engineers want to develop something, they will need to select the appropriate components, to connect these components properly, to develop an application on top of it and believe that none of it would fail once the system is implemented. Keeping this in mind, systems built from scratch are susceptible to errors and solving any problems during the development, engineers need to develop a sixth sense for problem-solving.

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<sup>8</sup> Creating Electronics and Great Engineering Teams, <https://htecgroup.com/creating-electronics-and-great-engineering-teams/>

Sometimes, this is a small bug that can be fixed with a couple lines of code, but sometimes it is something coming from the lower system level and which should be examined with more patience. The knowledge of the system combined with the sixth sense for problem-solving is crucial here. Every engineer who wants to work in a great team needs to have a clear understanding of these requirements and must love the job they are doing. Somehow, engineering becomes a lifestyle. It is not a job that you choose to do from a sea of other jobs, but the one you have to love and be passionate about.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. 4. Dynamic, Collaboration and Planning

A system is a combination of different components. If one of the components does not work properly, the complete system could fail. To avoid this, a good engineering team needs to collaborate, get things done and communicate all the time.

Engineers need to pay attention to all the details and to select components that will meet all the requirements carefully. Usually, projects last for several months and the first thing that should be developed is the system architecture. Once the architecture is developed, the system can be completed, and all its components can be integrated and finalized. If something is missing, it could cause system failure, or the application could fail to run due to lack of performance. These are the pain points that could bring the engineers to the beginning and could cost a lot of time and money. This should be avoided by careful planning.<sup>10</sup>

To minimize risks and reduce the number of issues, the engineers introduced the system design phase, and each project starts with a requirements study and detailed system planning. During this phase, the engineers read the requirements, communicate with the client, communicate with each other, define system architecture, etc. The engineers do everything to avoid any problems that can come after several months of development and bring the project to where it started.

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<sup>9</sup> Creating Electronics and Great Engineering Teams, <https://htecgroup.com/creating-electronics-and-great-engineering-teams/>

<sup>10</sup> Creating Electronics and Great Engineering Teams, <https://htecgroup.com/creating-electronics-and-great-engineering-teams/>

After this phase, everything is defined. Major components are selected, and each team member can begin the implementation of their part. All parts need to work together, so engineers need to keep communicating and planning each task briefly.

#### **4. Industry Ready Engineers**

Transforming university students into the “industry-ready” ones, from the academic perspective implies producing a clear understanding of the qualities engineering graduates should possess, as well as promoting the changes in curricula, pedagogy, and academic culture needed to instill those qualities in the upcoming generation of engineers. Moreover, the companies must tightly cooperate with the educational institutions to provide modern equipment, tools, and practices, as well as their engineers’ time and experience, to prepare these students for what lies ahead of them. This way, once they finish their studies, they can come with good communication skills, curious learning capabilities, drive and motivation, business understanding, high ethical standards, and critical thinking – equipped with the knowledge and the skills to be life-long learners.

##### **4. 1. HTEC Summer Internship**

To help students bridge the gap between the academy and the industry, here in HTEC, summer internships are organized every year. After these six weeks, students leave packed-up with positive experiences, newly acquired skills, and the tips and tricks they picked up from their Project Managers, and delegated mentors. During the Internship, they work on projects which combine different technologies. The projects are designed to help the students learn more and ultimately become better engineers.<sup>11</sup>

To become an intern, a student should pass the technical task and two interviews, after which HTEC chooses the final participants. The selection process is similar to the real interview and provides a real-life

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<sup>11</sup> HTEC Summer Internship: Tradition with Notable Results, <https://htecgroup.com/htec-summer-internship-tradition-with-notable-results/>

experience which the students can utilize once they apply for jobs after graduation.

The methodology used during the internship and project implementation is Scrum, the same as on every other commercial project in the company, which gives the interns a chance to learn more about sprints and daily stand-ups. They are presented with all the tools HTEC engineers regularly use – Git for version control, BitBucket as a web repository, and Jira as an issue tracker.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, the human resources team organizes communication and presentation skills workshops to make collaboration even easier.

Each year, interns are assigned mentors from the corresponding technologies. The mentors are always available to the students and can help them resolve problems, set up the project and improve their development skills.

While the mentors are assigned to the interns to give them guidance in their respective technologies, the responsibility of the Project Manager is to organize the project well, to create tasks, to assign them properly, and to offer additional guidance when needed. During the Internship, because of the tight schedule, the sprints last one week each. At the beginning of each sprint, the Project Manager holds a planning meeting with the whole team and moderates a discussion and grooming sessions for every task in the upcoming sprint.<sup>13</sup>

The purpose of the Internship is to educate the students and help them understand how knowledge acquired at the university can be applied in real life. The whole internship is completely focused on the students' experience and on boosting their learning process. They have a lot of training and education not only on technical issues but also regarding the software development processes and public speaking. By the end of the internship, HTEC aims to provide students with enough knowledge, experience, and confidence to be able to work on commercial projects with the help of a mentor.

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<sup>12</sup> HTEC Summer Internship: Tradition with Notable Results, <https://htecgroup.com/htec-summer-internship-tradition-with-notable-results/>

<sup>13</sup> HTEC Summer Internship: Tradition with Notable Results, <https://htecgroup.com/htec-summer-internship-tradition-with-notable-results/>

## 5. Conclusion

In an engineering team, each project is a challenge. Some are smaller, some are bigger. But since the engineers are doing things from scratch, it is always challenging to get things done. Over the years, engineers have learned that it is important to work as a team – communicate, discuss, listen to each other and encourage others' opinions. Once engineers make a decision, they move together, as a team. Without looking back!

To instill these skills and qualities in future engineers, changes in approach will be required by the academy and the industry. Universities need to adjust their degree requirements and place more emphasis on teaching, promoting more cross-disciplinary instructions, and welcoming the involvement of the industry in supplying case studies, mentorship of students, and shared laboratory experiences.

Here in HTEC, above all else, we appreciate our engineers being good people. A great engineer is always an integral part of a great team, and an amazing team always represents the synergy of the amazing people working together towards the same goal, doing great things most efficiently.

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**Miroslav Božić**

## **TRANSFORMACIJA STUDENATA U INŽENJERE SPREMNE ZA RAD U INDUSTRIJI**

### Rezime

Brzi napredak u tehnologiji, istraživanju i praksi svakodnevno postavlja nove izazove ispred prosvetnih radnika, akreditora i studenata, dok inženjerima otvara nove mogućnosti za rešavanje društvenih problema i podsticanje ekonomije.

Ova trka najveću štetu pričinjava studentima koji pokušavaju da balansiraju između edukacije i konstantnih mogućnosti koje razvoj industrije pruža. S ciljem da steknu osnovna znanja i ekspertizu, studenti upisuju fakultete. Međutim, znanje koje stiču na studijama retko uključuje specifičnosti koje zahteva razvoj industrije. Kako bi ostali u koraku s vremenom, studenti neretko, već nakon nekoliko semestara, počinju sa radom u velikim korporacijama. Na taj način pokušavaju da komercijalizuju do tada stečeno znanje sa studija i steknu novu ekspertizu.

Obrazovne ustanove su oduvek imale veliki uticaj na celokupno obrazovanje mladih, a sa ciljem da tako ostane, fakulteti i privreda moraju izjednačiti svoje ciljeve i programe i time obezbediti konstantan priliv visoko obrazovanog kadra, spremnog za sve izazove koje moderno vreme donosi.

U ovom radu je dat kratak osvrt na sistem visokog obrazovanja u Republici Srbiji, objašnjene su karakteristike modernog inženjera i tima u kome radi i predstavljen je jedan primer veze između obrazovnih ustanova i privrede.

Ključne reči: tehnologija, industrija, obrazovanje, inženjering

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## **SERBIAN–AMERICAN HEROES: MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS AND THE MEN OF OPERATION HALYARD**

**Abstract:** The author notes that immigrants, or foreign born men, have played a large role in America's military. Among these men, Serbian-Americans serving in the military have had a record of being awarded with the Medal of Honor. Among them are people such as Rade Grbić, Anđelko Mandušić (Jake Allex), Joko Mestorović (James I. Mestorovich), John W. Minick and Lance Peter Sijan. Among the heroic deeds of WW2 was the famous Operation Halyard where Serbian-American participants, even though they didn't receive a Medal of Honor, managed to once again prove their bravery. The result was 512 men, both American and other Allies, being saved.

**Keywords:** Serbian-Americans, Medal of Honor, Operation Halyard, bravery, military

An essential theme in the history of the United States is that of the immigrant experience. As noted by the American Immigration Council, the country has long benefitted from the millions who have come to the United States seeking new opportunities. As of 2017, the AIC reported that more than thirteen percent of the population of the United States are foreign born, most of whom are naturalized citizens. The AIC statistics from that year reflect a growing percentage of immigrants in the United States, although the percentage is still below the historical peak of just below fifteen percent, achieved more than a century ago in 1890.

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Making up a significant share of the nation's workforce, immigrants have been an essential part of the nation's economic, political and cultural growth from the time of the founding of the United States and their contributions have been many and varied.<sup>1</sup> Among those contributions has been service in the armed forces of the United States. Foreign born individuals have served in the military since the American Revolution. Half of all military recruits in the 1840's were immigrants and twenty percent of the 1.5 million men who fought in the American Civil War were foreign born. At present, the number of veterans born outside the United States numbers about 530,000, or approximately three percent of the more than 18 million veterans nationwide. Additionally, nearly 1.9 million veterans are American born children of immigrants. Overall, the nearly 2.4 million veterans of immigrant origin make up about thirteen percent of all U.S. military veterans.<sup>2</sup>

Participation of Serbian-Americans in the military, as well as in the intelligence service, has been high, and many have distinguished themselves through their service and sacrifices. Among them was Colonel Nicholas Stepanovich, who was also an attorney. Colonel Stepanovich was named to the United States Ambassadorial Staff at the United Nations by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.<sup>3</sup> Colonel Tyrus W. Cobb, Ph.D., served in the Army, including combat and peacetime tours in Vietnam. The recipient of the Defense Superior Service Medal, Dr. Cobb served on the faculty at West Point, as a consultant for the National Security Council during the Carter and Reagan Administrations, and as a special assistant to President Reagan, accompanying him on several diplomatic missions. Dr. Cobb was also the founder and director of the National Security Forum and was recognized as a

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<sup>1</sup> American Immigration Council Fact Sheet. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-the-united-states>, October 4, 2017. Retrieved July 28, 2019; Migration Policy Institute, "Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration to the United States", March 14, 2019. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states>. Retrieved July 28, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> "Immigrant Veterans in the United States", Migration Policy Institute, May 16, 2019, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/immigrant-veterans-united-states>. Retrieved July 28, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.eserbia.org/library/media/149-serbian-americans>. Retrieved July 2, 2019.

Distinguished Nevadan at commencement exercises at the University of Nevada in 2017.<sup>4</sup>

Brigadier General (ret.) Teresa (Terry) A.H. Djuric, U.S. Air Force, received her commission in 1983, upon completion of Officer Training School. After operating space systems at three space wings and the Headquarters of the 14<sup>th</sup> Air Force Division, she was deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom in 2004 as Director of Space Forces. Command assignments included squad, group, wing and education centers levels; among General Djuric's numerous staff assignments were postings to U.S. Air Force Headquarters and the Department of Defense. Her final assignment, prior to her retirement in 2013, was as Deputy Director of the Space and Intelligence Office in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, where she worked on the development and procurement of future defense space programs. Highly decorated, General Djuric received the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal. She was also the recipient of the 2005 General James O'Malley Distinguished Space Leadership Award. General Djuric is now the commandant of cadets for the Virginia Women's Institute for Leadership and senior adviser to the president of Mary Baldwin University in Staunton, Virginia.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, Retrieved June 17, 2019; "Tyrus W. Cobb", <https://nationalsecurityforum.org/tyruswcobb/>, Retrieved July 2, 2019; Trent, John. "Two Notable northern Nevada figures will be honored as Distinguished Nevadans", April 13, 2017. <https://www.unr.edu/nevada-today/news/2017/distinguished-nevadans>, Retrieved July 2, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> "Brigadier General Teresa A.H. Djuric", <https://web.archive.org/web/20141005191126/http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/Biographies/Display/tabid/225/Article/108363/brigadier-general-teresa-ah-djuric.aspx>, Retrieved July 2, 2019; "Teresa A.H. Djuric", JROTC Wiki, [https://jrotc.wikia.org/wiki/Teresa\\_A.\\_H.\\_Djuric](https://jrotc.wikia.org/wiki/Teresa_A._H._Djuric), Retrieved July 2, 2019; "Teresa A.H. Djuric", April 6, 2018, <https://alchetron.com/Teresa-A-H-Djuric>, Retrieved July 2, 2019; "Executive Leadership," Mary Baldwin University, <https://marybaldwin.edu/leadership/>, Retrieved July 30, 2019.

## Serbian–American Medal of Honor Recipients

### 1905 – Rade Grbitch

The first recipient, and the only Serbian-American peacetime recipient of the Medal of Honor,<sup>6</sup> was Rade Grbitch, a seaman in the U.S. Navy. Born in 1870 in Austria, little is known about him. Described as a “Serb from Dalmatia,” he was reported to have enlisted in the Navy from Ohio, and was serving on the U.S.S. *Bennington*, where his actions following a boiler explosion earned him his medal, one of eleven awarded to sailors on the ship for their heroism that day.<sup>7</sup>

Commissioned in 1891, the *Bennington* was an older vessel that had seen service in both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. During the Spanish-American War, the gunboat had patrolled coastal waters in the Philippines, assisting in the suppression of a uprising.<sup>8</sup> A 1700-ton Yorktown class gunboat, the vessel had been built in Chester, Pennsylvania. While docked in San Diego, a boiler explosion on July 21, 1905 wrecked the ship, killing 62 officers and crewmen while injuring 40 others. More than half of the *Bennington’s* crew were killed or wounded as a result of the explosion.<sup>9</sup>

Rade Grbitch was on the ship’s deck when the explosion occurred and was uninjured. He reportedly ran down the forward hatch, shouting “This way out!” He went on to assist in rescue operations, carrying others to safety and volunteering to help repair a leak in the boiler room.

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<sup>6</sup> Usually presented to recipients by the President of the United States “in the name of Congress” the medal has often been called the Congressional Medal of Honor. The correct term is “Medal of Honor.” See Public Law 101-564, enacted on November 15, 1990.

<sup>7</sup> The Comprehensive Guide to the Victoria and George Cross, <http://www.vconline.org.uk/rade-grbitch/4592416346>, Retrieved July 8, 2019; “U.S.S. Bennington/Early Bennington, <http://www.uss-bennington.org/early.html>, Retrieved July 8, 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Jeff Smith. “The U.S.S. *Bennington* Policy or Personnel”. San Diego Reader, July 29, 1999, <https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/1999/jul/29/uss-bennington-policy-or-personnel/>, Retrieved July 8, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> U.S.S. Bennington/Early Bennington, <http://www.uss-bennington.org/early.html>, Retrieved July 8, 2019; U.S.S. Bennington/Early Bennington, “The Boiler Explosion on the ‘U.S.S. Bennington’”, <http://www.uss-bennington.org/early-gb4-explosion.html>, Retrieved July 8, 2019.

Several survivors testified that his actions helped save many lives.<sup>10</sup> On January 5, 1906, following the issuance of General Orders number 13, Grbitch was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions. His citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Seaman Rade Grbitch, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism on board the U.S.S. BENNINGTON, displayed at the time of the explosion of a boiler of that vessel at San Diego, California, 21 July, 1905.<sup>11</sup>

Grbitch died at the age of 39 on March 5, 1910. The cause of death is not known.<sup>12</sup>

### **World War I – Andjelko Mandusich**

During World War I thousands of Serbian-Americans joined the conflict. Many went to Serbia and fought there, while others joined the American Expeditionary Force and fought against Germany along the Western Front. Among them was Andjelko<sup>13</sup> or (“Big Jake Alex”) Mandusich, regarded by some as one of the greatest Serbian-American heroes of the First World War.<sup>14</sup> Mandusich was born on July 13, 1887 in

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<sup>10</sup> Smith, “The U.S.S. *Bennington*, <https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/1999/jul/29/uss-bennington-policy-or-personnel/>, Retrieved July 8, 2019; Mark Linsky, “When the U.S.S. *Bennington* blew up in the San Diego Harbor, San Diego Reader, November 12, 1987, <https://www.sandiegoreader.com/news/1987/nov/12/cover-explosion/>, Retrieved July 8, 2019; Oder, Brock N. “San Diego’s Naval Disaster,” *The Journal of San Diego History*, San Diego Historical Society Quarterly, Summer 1976, Volume 22, Number 3, <https://sandiegohistory.org/journal/1976/july/naval/>, Retrieved July 8, 2019.

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<sup>12</sup> “Rade Grbitch” <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/9208894>, Retrieved July 8, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Also listed as Aleksa Mandusich Jake Alex and Jake Alex Mandusich.

<sup>14</sup> “Alex Mandusich,” *Serbica Americana*, <https://www.eserbia.org/sapeople/military/124-alex-mandusich>, Retrieved July 11, 2019.

Sar Planina, Serbia. He emigrated to the United States in 1905, settling in Chicago. “Big Jake” enlisted in the Army shortly after the United States entered the war, and, by the time he and his unit arrived in France, Mandusich had earned the rank of corporal. A member of H Company, 131<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 33<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, Mandusich’s actions at Chirpilly Ridge earned him the Medal of Honor.<sup>15</sup>

The 131<sup>st</sup> Infantry was part of a combined British-American assault on the German positions at Chirpilly Ridge, north of the Somme River, part of the larger Battle of Amiens on August 9, 1918. The fighting was hard and bloody, but the Americans fought well and played a vital role in the capture of the German position. The number of casualties was high, and, at one point in the fighting, Corporal Mandusich realized that all of the officers in his platoon had been hit by enemy fire, leaving him as the platoon leader. German machine gun fire had his men pinned down, and, acting on his own, Mandusich began to advance on the enemy position. Despite the heavy fire, Big Jake was able to reach the German machine gun nest and, using his bayonet, attacked, killing five of the enemy before the blade of his bayonet broke. Using his rifle as a club, Mandusich was able to subdue fifteen other Germans by the time the rest of his platoon arrived. For his heroism and courage, Mandusich was awarded the Medal of Honor, which he received on December 31, 1919. His citation reads:

At a critical point in the action, when all of the officers with his platoon had become casualties, Cpl. Alex took command of the platoon and led it forward until the advance was stopped by fire from a machinegun nest. He then advanced alone for about 30 yards in the face of intense fire and attacked the nest. With his bayonet he killed 5 of the enemy, and when it was broken, used the butt of his rifle, capturing 15 prisoners.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Medal of Honor recipients, World War I, “Alex, Jake,” <https://history.army.mil/html/moh/worldwari.html#ALLEX>, Retrieved July 11, 2019; “Jake Alex,” <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/6532182/jake-alex>, Retrieved July 11, 2019.

<sup>16</sup> Serbica Americana, “Alex Mandusich,” <https://www.eserbia.org/sapeople/military/124-alex-mandusich>, Retrieved July 11, 2019; U.S. Army Center of Military History, Medal of Honor recipients, World War I, “Alex, Jake,” <https://history.army.mil/html/moh/worldwari.html#ALLEX>, Retrieved July 11, 2019; Congressional Medal of Honor

Besides the Medal of Honor, Corporal Mandusich was awarded the U.S. Distinguished Service Cross/Victory Medal with Four Bars; the Medaille Militaire and Crosse de Guerre with Palms from France, the Gold Karageorge Star with Cross Sabers from Yugoslavia, the Distinguished Conduct Medal from Great Britain and, from Italy, the Merito Guerre.<sup>17</sup> Mandusich died on August 28, 1959 and was interred at the Serbian Orthodox Monastery of Saint Sava in Libertyville, Lakeland County, Illinois.<sup>18</sup>

### World War I – James I. Mestrovich

Remarkably, just a day after Mandusich's heroic actions at Chirpilly Ridge, another Serbian's courageous actions earned him a Medal of Honor. At Fismette, a village nearly 70 miles northeast of Paris, Army Sergeant James I. Mestrovich (Joko Mestrovic) carried out an act of bravery that earned him his commendation. Born in Montenegro on May 22, 1894, Mestrovich emigrated to the United States in 1913. Although he enlisted in the Army in Pittsburgh, Mestrovich had also lived in Irving, California. Assigned to the Pennsylvania National Guard's Company C, 111<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 28<sup>th</sup> Division, Sergeant Mestrovich returned to Europe and joined the fighting in France.<sup>19</sup>

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Society, "Alex, Jake, <http://www.cmohs.org/recipient-detail/2495/alex-jake.php>, Retrieved July 11, 2019; *The Chicago Daily News Almanac and Year-Book for 1919*, James Langland, editor. Chicago, Chicago Daily News Company, 1918, p. 614. <https://books.google.com/books?id=f6l-dsvnjhEC&pg=PA614&lpg=PA614&dq=chipilly+ridge&source=bl&ots=3UC08tsrxE&sig=ACfU3U2V4Pv7kndzYDu6dyMDDfjwppB-C1A&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj5vtyK-9fjAhXPK80KH3AM04ChDoATA-JegQICRAB#v=onepage&q=chipilly%20ridge&f=false>, Retrieved July 11, 2019; Garey, E.B., Ellis, O.O., Magoffin, R.V.D., *American Guide Book to France and its Battlefields*. New York. The Macmillan Company, 1920, pp. 241-244, [https://books.google.com/books?id=Ub1CAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA242&lpg=PA242&dq=chipilly+ridge&source=bl&ots=-FUxaQ4qKX&sig=ACfU3U0WGHoDY6ZoFvtt\\_9tzGUK0Leec-6Q&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiwxsby\\_NfjAhUNAZ0JHesaCo04FBD0ATABegQIBxAB#v=onepage&q=chipilly%20ridge&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=Ub1CAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA242&lpg=PA242&dq=chipilly+ridge&source=bl&ots=-FUxaQ4qKX&sig=ACfU3U0WGHoDY6ZoFvtt_9tzGUK0Leec-6Q&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiwxsby_NfjAhUNAZ0JHesaCo04FBD0ATABegQIBxAB#v=onepage&q=chipilly%20ridge&f=false)

<sup>17</sup> Serbica Americana, "Alex Mandusich." <https://www.eserbia.org/sapeople/military/124-alex-mandusich>, Retrieved July 11, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> "Jake Alex," <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/6532182/jake-alex>, Retrieved July 11, 2019.

<sup>19</sup> "Army Sergeant James I. Mestrovich," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/find-uscis-office/immigrant-medal-honor-re>

Following the capture of the village of Fismes, the 28<sup>th</sup> Division was ordered to establish a bridgehead across the Vesle River at Fismette. After two days of fighting the 112<sup>th</sup> Division had occupied most of Fismette, and the division was relieved by the 111<sup>th</sup> Division on the night of August 9-10. Fighting continued on the 10<sup>th</sup>. The 111<sup>th</sup> had been in combat for six weeks at that point and the men had without rations for several days. Nonetheless, the 111<sup>th</sup> fought gallantly and held the town until the 112<sup>th</sup> Division returned to relieve them the night of August 18-19. It was while the 111<sup>th</sup> was advancing on August 10 that the company commander was wounded. While the men of Company C took cover from machine gun fire behind a stone wall, Mestrovich crawled through heavy shelling and machine gun fire to his wounded captain. Placing him on his back, Mestrovich and crawled back to safety where he gave his officer first-aid, saving his life.<sup>20</sup>

His citation reads as follows:

Seeing his company commander lying wounded 30 yards in front of the line after his company had withdrawn to a sheltered position behind a stone wall, Sgt. Mestrovich voluntarily left cover and crawled through heavy machinegun and shell fire to where the officer lay. He took the officer upon his back and crawled to a place of safety, where he administered first-aid treatment, his exceptional heroism saving the officer's life.<sup>21</sup>

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recipients/army-sergeant-james-i-mestrovitch-world-war-i, Retrieved July 12, 2019; Military Hall of Honor, "SGT James I, Mestrovich, <http://www.militaryhallofhonor.com/honoree-record.php?id=1796>, Retrieved July 12, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> "Fismes: Where the Line Stiffened." *The American Legion Weekly*, August 22, 1924. Old Magazine Articles, [http://www.oldmagazinearticles.com/ww1\\_battle\\_at\\_Fismette](http://www.oldmagazinearticles.com/ww1_battle_at_Fismette), Retrieved July 15, 2019; Lengel, Edward G., "Tragedy at Fismette, France, 1918." HistoryNet, <https://www.historynet.com/tragedy-at-fismette-france-1918.htm>, Retrieved July 12, 2019; Army Sergeant James I. Mestrovich," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/find-uscis-office/immigrant-medal-honor-recipients/army-sergeant-james-i-mestrovitch-world-war-i>, Retrieved July 12, 2019

<sup>21</sup> Military Hall of Honor, "SGT James I, Mestrovich, <http://www.militaryhallofhonor.com/honoree-record.php?id=1796>, Retrieved July 12, 2019; U.S Army Center of Military History, Medal of Honor Recipients, "Mestrovich, James I., <https://history.army.mil/html/moh/worldwari.html#MESTROVITCH>, Retrieved July 12, 2019.

Unlike Jake Alex Mandusich, Sergeant Mestrovich did not survive the war and received his medal posthumously. While the date of his death is known – November 4, 1918, just a week before the armistice – the manner of his death is a manner of conjecture. One account reports that he was killed in action on that date; another states that he survived several combat missions only to die from influenza. His body was returned to Montenegro and buried in the cemetery at St. Jovan (Sveti Jovan) Church in Bogisici, Montenegro.<sup>22</sup>

### World War II – John W. Minick

The lone Serbian-American recipient of the Medal of Honor in World War II was John W. Minick of Wall, Pennsylvania. Minick was inducted into the Army on August 2, 1943 as a private, but eventually earned promotion to Staff Sergeant. As a squad leader with Company I, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Minick's actions in the Hurtgen Forest in November 1944 earned him the Medal of Honor. Minick's unit was among those that engaged German forces defending a line that ran through the Hurtgen Forest. As part of their defensive perimeter, the Germans had planted antipersonnel mines throughout the area making it even more difficult to advance.<sup>23</sup>

The fighting on November 21<sup>st</sup> found the American forces making slow progress as they advanced against the German defenses. A constant artillery barrage, minefields and well-placed enemy positions made moving forward extremely difficult. Some units gained as little as two hundred yards. The one exception was Minick's 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, and,

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<sup>22</sup> Military Hall of Honor, "SGT James I, Mestrovich, <http://www.militaryhallof-honor.com/honoree-record.php?id=1796>, Retrieved July 12, 2019; Lengel, Edward G., "Tragedy at Fismette, France, 1918." HistoryNet, <https://www.historynet.com/tragedy-at-fismette-france-1918.htm>, Retrieved July 12, 2019; Army Sergeant James I. Mestrovich," U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/find-uscis-office/immigrant-medal-honor-recipients/army-sergeant-james-i-mestrovitch-world-war-i>, Retrieved July 12, 2019.

<sup>23</sup> Miller, Edward G. *A Dark and Bloody Ground: The Hurtgen Forest and the Roer River Dams, 1944-1945*. (College Station) Texas A&M University Press, 2003, p.143; Knighton, Andrew, "10 Heroes of the Horrifying Fighting for the Hurtgen Forest," War History Online, July 28, 2018, <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/world-war-ii/heroes-fighting-hurtgen-forest.html>, Retrieved July 15, 2019.

although at 36 he was older than the average squad leader, much of this was due to his leadership. Company I fought its way through the German lines and was the only unit to achieve its objective that day. Minick found a path through a minefield and eliminated an enemy machine gun position covering the nearby road. Minick then, on his own, attacked a group of bunkers and killed as many as twenty enemy soldiers. He moved on, not knowing that he had penetrated deeper into the German lines than any other unit had. Minick continued to move forward, coming within thirty yards of a German command post where he reportedly began to shout "Come out! Come out and fight!" A moment later his men heard an explosion. Minick had stepped on a mine and was killed.<sup>24</sup> His Medal of Honor was awarded posthumously on December 6, 1948.<sup>25</sup> The citation that accompanied the Medal provides a dramatic description of Minick's courage and heroism.

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pride in presenting the Medal of Honor (Posthumously) to Staff Sergeant John W. Minick, United States Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his own life, above and beyond the call of duty, while serving with Company I, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 121<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, in action involving actual conflict with the enemy on 21 November 1944, near Hurtgen, Germany. Staff Sergeant Minick's battalion was halted in its advance by extensive minefields, exposing troops to heavy concentrations of enemy artillery and mortar fire. Further delay in the advance would result in numerous casualties and a movement through the minefield was essential. Voluntarily, Staff Sergeant Minick led four men through hazardous barbed wire and debris, finally making his way through the minefield for a distance of 300 yards. When an enemy machinegun opened fire, he signaled his men to take covered positions, edged his way alone toward the flank of the weapon and opened fire, killing two members of the gun crew and capturing three others. Moving

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<sup>24</sup> Miller, *A Dark and Bloody Ground*, pp. 143-144.

<sup>25</sup> "John W. Minick," The Hall of Valor Project, <https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/2026>, Retrieved July 15, 2019.

forward again, he encountered and engaged single-handedly an entire company killing 20 Germans and capturing 20, and enabling his platoon to capture the remainder of the hostile group. Again moving ahead and spearheading his battalion's advance, he again encountered machinegun fire. Crawling forward toward the weapon, he reached a point from which he knocked the weapon out of action. Still another minefield had to be crossed. Undeterred, Sgt. Minick advanced forward alone through constant enemy fire and while thus moving detonated a mine and was instantly killed.<sup>26</sup>

### **Vietnam – Lance Peter Sijan**

Captain Lance Peter Sijan was the first and only graduate of the Air Force Academy to receive the Medal of Honor. He was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on April 13, 1942. His father, a restaurant owner, was of Serbian descent and his mother was Irish American. Following high school, Sijan attended the Naval Academy Preparatory School in Maryland. After completing that program, he was appointed to the Air Force Academy, where he graduated in 1965. From there, Sijan went to pilot training, F-4 crew training and survival school. After completion of his training, Sijan reported to Da Nang Airbase, Vietnam, for his first duty assignment. Sijan has been described as being six feet, two inches tall and athletic. In high school, in Milwaukee, he played football and was on both the swim and track teams. He also showed early leadership skills as president of his high school class and was interested in photography and drama.<sup>27</sup>

Sijan was assigned to the 480<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron, 366<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, where he flew the F4-C, a two-seat fighter bomber, as an aircraft commander and combat systems officer. Often serving as the

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Correll, John T. "The Courage of Lance P. Sijan," Air Force Magazine, July, 2004. <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2004/July%202004/0704sijan.aspx>, Retrieved July 24, 2019; Walker, Dale L. "The Legacy of Lance Sijan," June 15, 2014, <https://www.uso.org/stories/1734-the-legacy-of-lance-sijan>, Retrieved July 24, 2019. Walker, Dale L. "The Legacy of Lance Sijan," June 15, 2014, <https://www.uso.org/stories/1734-the-legacy-of-lance-sijan>, Retrieved July 24, 2019.

“GIB” or “Guy in Back,” flying as the rear seat pilot, Sijan had ambitions to move to the front pilot’s seat before his tour of duty ended.<sup>28</sup>

On the night of November 9, 1967, Sijan and his squadron commander, Lt. Colonel John W. Armstrong took off from Da Nang Airbase to carry out a night attack mission, Sijan’s fifty-second combat mission.<sup>29</sup> Their target was a river crossing at Ban Loboy Ford on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. A forward air controller marked the target with flares, and, with the target illuminated, Sijan released the bomb load. Moments later, the F-4 exploded, and dove into the jungle. (A later investigation determined that defective fuses caused the bombs to detonate prematurely, probably within fifty feet of the aircraft)<sup>30</sup> Both men were able to eject from the burning plane, but only Sijan is known to have survived. Armstrong’s fate was undetermined, and he was presumed to have been killed in action.<sup>31</sup>

Sijan did survive, landing on a heavily forested mountainside roughly three miles from Ban Loboy Ford. He was badly injured, having suffered a compound leg fracture, a skull fracture, a badly injured right hand and lacerations over much of his body. Circling rescue aircraft were unable to locate him, due to the heavy jungle canopy and because Sijan lay unconscious or delirious for more than a day. However, by November 11, Sijan had recovered sufficiently to activate a signaling device from his survival gear. The signal was picked up by American aircraft and voice contact was soon established. Rescue operations, involving more than 100 aircraft, were begun but were unsuccessful. Although Sijan could see the rescue helicopters, they had trouble sighting him and the rescue attempt was hampered by heavy anti-aircraft fire. North

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<sup>28</sup> Correll, “The Courage of Lance P. Sijan,” <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2004/July%202004/0704sijan.aspx>, Retrieved July 24, 2019;

<sup>29</sup> Walker, “The Legacy of Lance Sijan,” <https://www.uso.org/stories/1734-the-legacy-of-lance-sijan>, Retrieved July 24 2019; Correll states that Sijan had flown 66 combat missions to that time. Correll, “The Courage of Lance P. Sijan,” <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2004/July%202004/0704sijan.aspx>, Retrieved July 24 2019.

<sup>30</sup> Walker, “The Legacy of Lance Sijan,” <https://www.uso.org/stories/1734-the-legacy-of-lance-sijan>, Retrieved July 24 2019; Correll, “The Courage of Lance P. Sijan,” <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2004/July%202004/0704sijan.aspx>, Retrieved July 24 2019.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

Vietnamese patrols in the area also made it impossible to place rescuers on the ground. Finally, the rescue attempt had to be abandoned. The search and rescue effort was resumed the next day, but by then contact with Sijan was lost. He was listed as missing in action, and his fate would not be known for seven years.<sup>32</sup>

The return of prisoners of war in 1973 would reveal the rest of the story. Two prisoners, Robert R. Craner and Guy D. Gruters, were with Sijan as prisoners in a holding compound in Vinh, known as the “Bamboo Prison,” and it was their account of the time they spent with Sijan that would fill in the rest of the story. Remarkably, as badly injured as he was, Sijan survived for forty-six days, despite the fact he had no survival gear and had to subsist on jungle plants, licking dew from them and, occasionally, drinking from a mountain stream. Using a makeshift crutch and drifting in and out of consciousness and delirium, Sijan crawled and struggled along as best he could. Although he could have fired his pistol to attract the attention of North Vietnamese soldiers in the area, Sijan was determined to avoid capture. Finally, on Christmas Day, 1967, the unconscious and emaciated Sijan was found by a North Vietnamese patrol. Despite his physical condition, Sijan made an attempt to escape his captors, but was unsuccessful. He was taken to the Bamboo Prison, where he was tortured and interrogated. According to Craner and Gruters, Sijan gave his interrogators no information. In mid-January, the three prisoners of war were transferred to Hoa Lo Prison in Hanoi, better known as the infamous “Hanoi Hilton.” The trip took three days in monsoon rains, and Sijan was near death when they arrived. He died January 22, 1968, still determined to escape his captors.<sup>33</sup> His remains were recovered and returned him in 1974. Captain Lance Peter Sijan is interred in the Arlington Park Cemetery in Greenfield, Wisconsin.<sup>34</sup> His Medal of Honor was presented to his family on March 23, 1976.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> “Captain Lance Peter Sijan.” <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/9621/lance-peter-sijan>, Retrieved July 24, 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Lance Peter Sijan, The Hall of Valor Project, <https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/2174>, Retrieved July 24, 2019. Sijan’s experiences summarized above, have been recounted in detail in Malcolm McConnell’s *Into the Mouth of the Cat: The Story of Lance Sijan, Hero of Vietnam*. New York, W.W. Norton, 2004 (reprint edition).

Captain Sijan's Medal of Honor citation is a testament to his courage and fortitude.

The President of the United States, in the name of Congress, takes pride in presenting the Medal of Honor (Posthumously) to Captain Lance Peter Sijan...United States Air Force, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving with the 366<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron, as a Prisoner of War being held in Laos and North Vietnam. On 9 November 1967, while on a flight over North Vietnam, Captain Sijan ejected from his disabled aircraft and successfully evaded capture for more than six weeks. During this time, he was seriously injured and suffered from shock and extreme weight loss due to lack of food. After being captured by North Vietnamese soldiers, Captain Sijan was taken to a holding point for subsequent transfer to a prisoner of war camp. In his emaciated and crippled condition, he overpowered one of his guards and crawled into the jungle, only to be recaptured after several hours. He was then transferred to another prison camp where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length. During interrogation he was severely tortured; however, he did not divulge any information. Captain Sijan lapsed into delirium and was placed in the care of another prisoner. During his intermittent periods of consciousness until his death, he never complained of his physical condition and, on several occasions, often spoke of future escape attempts. Captain Sijan's extraordinary heroism and intrepidity beyond the call of duty at the cost of his life are in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Forces.<sup>36</sup>

Besides the Medal of Honor, Captain Sijan also was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions on August 22, 1967, as he

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

risked his life in order to carry out a successful attack on a North Vietnamese storage facility. “Despite heavy ground fire, he participated in multiple passes to deliver flares and ordnance directly on the target... Lieutenant Sijan<sup>37</sup> dealt a telling blow to the hostile forces by denying them vital war material and petroleum products. The professional competence, aerial skill and devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Sijan reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.”<sup>38</sup>

Sijan continues to be remembered today. His image is on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a ten foot marble memorial in the shape of an F-4 is present at Arlington Park Cemetery, a replica of his plane can be found at the General Mitchell Airport in Milwaukee, there is a Sijan Circle at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia, a Sijan Street at Whitman Air Force Base in Missouri, the Lance P. Sijan Chapter of the Air Force Association and Air Force cadets at Boston University have formed the Lance P. Sijan Squadron of the Arnold Air Society.<sup>39</sup>

His family has also kept Captain Sijan’s memory alive. A web page devoted to Sijan shares the story of his life, including a documentary film.<sup>40</sup> The family also maintains a Facebook page dedicated to Captain Sijan.<sup>41</sup> Other documentaries can be found on YouTube.<sup>42</sup>

Perhaps the late Senator John McCain best summed up Sijan’s valor. McCain also was a prisoner in the notorious “Hanoi Hilton” and in his book *Faith of My Fathers*, he wrote: “I never knew Lance Sijan, but I wish I had. I wish I had had one moment to tell him how much I admired him, how indebted I was to him for showing me, for showing all of us, our duty – for showing us how to be free.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Sijan was promoted posthumously to Captain on June 13, 1968. “Captain Lance Peter Sijan: Profile.” <https://www.military.com/history/capt-lance-peter-sijan-profile.html>, Retrieved July 24, 2019.

<sup>38</sup> Lance Peter Sijan, The Hall of Valor Project, <https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/2174>, Retrieved July 24, 2019.

<sup>39</sup> Correll, “The Courage of Lance P. Sijan,” <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2004/July%202004/0704sijan.aspx>, Retrieved July 24 2019.

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.lancesijan.com>, Retrieved July 24, 2019.

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/TeamSijan/>, Retrieved July 24, 2019.

<sup>42</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=lance+p.+sijan](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=lance+p.+sijan), Retrieved July 24, 2019.

<sup>43</sup> Quoted in Correll, “The Courage of Lance P. Sijan,” <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/2004/July%202004/0704sijan.aspx>, Retrieved July 24 2019.

## World War II – Operation Halyard

An Office of Strategic Services (OSS) operation, the Serbian-American participants in Operation Halyard were not recipients of the Medal of Honor. However, they were decorated in recognition of their courage and audacity as they planned and carried out the largest rescue of downed Allied airmen in July 1944. The story is even more remarkable since it was accomplished by OSS agents who, despite British opposition, planned and got approval for the mission, operated in Yugoslavia, supported by Serbian partisans and the courageous pilots who evacuated the downed airmen, all without loss of life.<sup>44</sup>

Following the capitulation of Italy in 1943, Allied forces began to direct their focus on destroying the oil refineries in Romania. Thousands of bombing raids attacked the Ploesti oil refineries which was a major source of fuel oil for Germany. Flying from air bases in Italy, the bombers had to cross Yugoslavia, which was occupied by the Nazis, in order to reach Ploesti. Losses were high as a result, and an estimated 1,500 air crews had to bail out over enemy territory.<sup>45</sup> For those air crews who had to bail out of their damaged bombers, the story was much the same as it was on other fronts. The enemy rounded up survivors who were sent to prisoner of war camps, sometimes rescuing them from angered peasants, furious over the relentless bombing raids. But, sometimes, the opposite occurred, and the fliers were rescued and sheltered by partisans.<sup>46</sup>

A good deal of the Serbian region of Yugoslavia was controlled by partisans, including the royalist Chetniks, led by Draza Mihailovich, and the Communist partisans under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito. The factions emerged in the chaos that followed after Nazi Germany invaded Yugoslavia in April 1941. Tito intended to rule Yugoslavia after Germany's defeat, but Mihailovich was his primary rival for power. Their num-

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<sup>44</sup> See Freeman, Gregory A., *The Forgotten 500: The Untold Story of the Men Who Risked All for the Greatest Rescue Mission of World War II*. (New York) Penguin Random House, 2007.

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/george-vujnovich-oss-agent-whose-operation-halyard-saved-allied-airmen-7899872.html>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.airspacemag.com/history-of-flight/the-great-escape-67380188/?page=1>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

bers estimated at around 10,000, the Chetniks lived in the mountainous region of western Serbia. The charismatic Mihailovich appeared on the cover of *Time* and the magazine hailed him as one of Europe's greatest guerilla fighters. Although the magazine's readers voted for Mihailovich as the publication's Man of the Year, the editors selected Joseph Stalin. The Allies also ultimately supported Tito over Mihailovich. As the result of the machinations of a communist double agent, James Klugmann, Great Britain threw its support to Tito and the British persuaded the United States to follow suit.<sup>47</sup> By 1944, the two factions were fighting each other as well as the Germans. However, it was Mihailovich who passed information about the downed airmen to the Yugoslav Embassy in Washington, from where it was passed on to American authorities. These actions helped set in motion the development of a rescue plan.<sup>48</sup>

The man who planned the rescue mission was the son of Serbian parents who migrated to the United States in 1912. Born in Pittsburgh in 1915, George Vujnovich distinguished himself academically, earning a scholarship to study in medicine at the University of Belgrade, where he met his wife, Mirjana, who was a teacher. The couple fled Belgrade after the Germans bombed the city in 1941. Separated by the war, George found his way to West Africa where he worked for Pan American Airlines. Mirjana ended up in the United States and went to work at the Yugoslav Embassy in Washington.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, once the United States entered the war, Vujnovich was commissioned as a second lieutenant and took command of an airbase in Nigeria, where he was recruited by the OSS because of his familiarity with Yugoslavia.<sup>50</sup> Eventually assigned to Bari, Italy, Vujnovich received the information about the downed airmen in Yugoslavia from his wife. Vujnovich began to design a rescue operation.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, pp. 148-151.

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/george-vujnovich-oss-agent-whose-operation-halyard-saved-allied-airmen-7899872.html>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019); <https://www.airspacemag.com/history-of-flight/the-great-escape-67380188/?page=1>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/george-vujnovich-oss-agent-whose-operation-halyard-saved-allied-airmen-7899872.html>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

Vujnovich worked out a rescue plan and presented it to his superiors, however, William Donovan, director of the OSS, knew there would be difficulties in getting it approved. Both the State Department and the British opposed the plan, as they viewed Mihailovich as a Nazi collaborator who could be feeding them false information. But the commander of the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force, General Nathan Twining, wanted to recover the downed airmen who had been sheltered by partisan forces. In July 1944, Donovan was able to persuade President Roosevelt to approve the mission, bluntly telling Roosevelt, “Screw the British! Let’s get our boys out!” However, as a concession to Winston Churchill, who did not want him to make direct contact with Mihailovich, Vujnovich was forbidden to go to Yugoslavia.<sup>52</sup>

Orders were dispatched to Italy creating the Air Crew Rescue Unit (ACRU), with two B- 25 bombers for use as needed and the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force was placed on call to provide whatever additional air resources that might be required. The order specified that ACRU’s mission would be carried out by OSS agents, with their activities coordinated from Bari. The command of ACRU was assigned to Colonel George Kraigher, who was a friend of Vujnovich from his time with Pan American. With a team he could trust, Vujnovich and his team could carry out their plan, which was filled with risk. Whether or not they could carry it out successfully remained to be seen.<sup>53</sup>

Unable to lead the mission on the ground, Vujnovich relied on his second choice to lead the rescue attempt, Lieutenant George S. Musulin. Born to Serbian parents in New York, Musulin grew up in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh, where he played on their national champion football team in 1937. He then went on to play professional football in Pittsburgh, St. Louis and Chicago.<sup>54</sup> A Captain in the OSS, Musulin had parachuted into Yugoslavia and worked with Mihailovich from October 1943 to May of 1944 before being withdrawn along with 40 rescued airmen to Bari. Musulin had also

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<sup>52</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, pp. 169-171; <https://www.airspacemag.com/history-of-flight/the-great-escape-67380188/?page=1>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>53</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, p. 171, 177.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.revolv.com/page/George-Musulin>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019); <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-2001-05-15-0105150035-story.html>, (Retrieved August 29, 2019)

advocated for a rescue mission and was delighted when Vujnovich told him he would command the ACRU. Musulin knew the mission would be difficult but that these airmen were clinging to the hope that they would be rescued.<sup>55</sup>

The mission would require three agents. Vujnovich and Musulin selected Sergeant Mike Rajacich, from Washington D.C., who was of Yugoslavian descent and spoke the local language. Rajacich had arrived in Bari a few days earlier but had served in Cairo and was highly recommended. He advised Musulin that if he needed another agent with the requisite language skills, he could rely on a mustachioed OSS agent named Nick Lalich. Born in Lorain Ohio, the son of Serbian parents and a graduate of Ohio State University and Columbia University, Lalich had served with Rajacich in Cairo. Although Lalich wasn't immediately needed, his availability eased Vujnovich's mind.<sup>56</sup>

The final member of the three-man team had to be a skilled radio operator. Although the OSS had the best radio equipment available, these devices were cumbersome, about the size of a suitcase, and temperamental; therefore, someone with radio expertise was essential to the mission's success. Vujnovich chose a combat veteran who had already served successfully behind enemy lines in Yugoslavia. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, and raided in Toledo, Ohio, Arthur "Jibby" Jibilian was a second-generation Armenian-American who had enlisted in the Navy Air Corps but had failed the require eye test for prospective fliers. Before he could try again, Jibilian was drafted into the regular navy, where he trained to be a radioman. While in boot camp, Jibilian took advantage of the opportunity to volunteer for the OSS, where he hoped his ability to speak Armenian would be useful. A few weeks before being selected for the ACRU mission, Jibilian had been on the ground in Yugoslavia with Tito's forces, gathering intelligence. However, he and his fellow agents were discovered by the Germans. After a week of narrow escapes, the agents managed to elude their pursuers. During this time, they learned about a dozen airmen who were in hiding from the Germans and were waiting to be rescued. With the help of some of Tito's partisans, they

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.; Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, p. 177; Leary, William M. *Fueling the Fires of Resistance: Army Air Forces Special Operations in the Balkans During War II*. Reprint. University Press of the Pacific, 2004, p.30.

<sup>56</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, pp. 177-178.

were able to locate the airmen and eventually contact the OSS in Cairo. An airlift was arranged, and the agents and airmen were flown to Bari. Once there Jibilian learned that there were still more airmen who needed to be rescued. He was determined to be part of the team that would bring them back.<sup>57</sup>

While the ground mission was to be an American effort, the British would assume responsibility for getting the three OSS agents into Serbia. Relations between the British and Americans were strained, since the British were unhappy with Roosevelt's decision to go ahead with the rescue effort. The three agents were instructed not to involve themselves with international relations; their job was to get the airmen out of Yugoslavia, nothing more. They were specifically ordered to make no promises military or otherwise to Mihailovich's partisans on behalf of the United States or its allies.<sup>58</sup>

The first effort to insert the three OSS agents into Yugoslavia by parachute took place on July 19, 1944. However, the flight commander could not get a confirming signal from Mihailovich's partisans when they were over the drop zone and the jump was aborted. A second drop was aborted due to anti-aircraft fire. However, Musulin was becoming suspicious about his British allies, and began to believe they were actively sabotaging the mission. Three more attempts failed, and Musulin became even more convinced that the British were interfering with the mission. Finally, Musulin demanded an American plane and crew. Vujnovich gladly complied, and on August 2, 1944, the trio of OSS agents successfully parachuted into Mihailovich's headquarters located at the village of Pranjane, about fifty-five miles south of Belgrade.<sup>59</sup> The Chetniks were elated by the arrival of the Americans. Richard Felman of the 415<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 98<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, described the meeting between the OSS agents and the Chetniks. "The one who was in the lead was the of a mob of Chetniks – they were kissing him and cheering him with tears in their eyes. He was in an American uniform

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid, pp. 177-186; <http://www.americainwwii.com/articles/rescuer-in-yugoslavia/>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>58</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, pp. 187-189

<sup>59</sup> Also spelled Pranjani; Ibid., pp. 187-192; Leary, *Fueling the Fires of Resistance*, p. 30.

and was one of the biggest chaps I'd ever seen. He walked over to us and put out his hands. 'I'm George Musulin,' he said.<sup>60</sup>

Musulín learned that there were 250 airmen waiting to be evacuated from Pranjane. It was just a matter of time before the Germans discovered the rescue operation, so there was no time to waste. However, the only available airstrip was located on a plateau on the side of a mountain, and it was too short for landing the C-47 planes that were to airlift the airmen. Three hundred workers and more than sixty ox carts were put to work lengthening the landing strip. The Chetniks were able to increase the length of the landing strip to 1,800 feet with a width of 150 feet. The airstrip was barely usable, but there was little choice left but to attempt to evacuate the airmen.<sup>61</sup>

The evacuation began on August 9, 1944 when six C-47s took off from Italy. Two of the planes developed engine trouble and had to return to their airbase, but four planes completed the flight and landed on the reconstructed airstrip. Each plane could carry just twelve passengers and lifted off just before midnight with a total of forty-eight passengers, the first of the downed airmen to be evacuated. The War Diary of the 10<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron described the mission as "extremely hazardous" and declared its success to the result of "the utmost in flying skill and teamwork."<sup>62</sup> Six more C-47s landed just after dawn on August 10<sup>th</sup> and evacuated another group of jubilant airmen. To give the Germans the impression that a normal air strike was in progress, twenty-five P 51 fighter-bombers attacked targets in the area, providing cover for the real mission of evacuating the airmen. An hour later a second group of C 47s arrived and flew out another group of evacuees. A total of 272 airmen and other Allied personnel were rescued during the operation, which was a clear success. Three more missions were flown to Pranjane, two in August and one in September, and another seventy-five airmen were evacuated.<sup>63</sup>

Musulín, however, had been ordered to return to Bari during the evacuation process. The leader of the mission to Yugoslavia had inad-

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<sup>60</sup> <https://specialoperations.com/32596/operation-halyard-forgotten-500-one-great-rescue-stories-wwii/>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>61</sup> Leary, *Fueling the Fires of Resistance*, p. 30.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, p. 239.

<sup>63</sup> Leary, *Fueling the Fires of Resistance*, p.31.

vertently created a political crisis when he authorized the evacuation of two Chetnik fighters who were severely wounded and needed urgent medical attention. The Serbs had done so much to aid downed American flyers that Musulin felt that he owed them the opportunity to be treated for their wounds back in Italy. However, when the two men stepped off the plane in Bari, they were seen by some of Tito's partisans, who recognized the pair as members of Mihailovich's Chetniks. The Army leaders in Bari were left with no choice but to order Musulin to return to Bari. Musulin resisted for as long as he could, but finally returned to Bari on August 26. There was talk of court-martialing Musulin for providing aid to Mihailovich, despite strict orders to refrain from doing so, but nothing came of it. Nick Lalich joined Rajacich and Jibilian in Pranjane and assumed command of the mission. Lalich obtained permission for the trio to remain in Yugoslavia, enabling the rescue mission to continue.<sup>64</sup> The final rescue mission was flown on December 27. Escorted by sixteen P-38 fighters, two C-47s left Bari and flew to an emergency landing field near Bunar. Like the field at Bari, this one was barely long enough for the transports to land, but they did so successfully. The planes were met by Lalich and the two other agents, who were evacuated along with twenty Americans and ten Allied military personnel.<sup>65</sup> The Halyard team took with them remembrances from their time with Mihailovich and his Chetniks; two double edged Serbian knives known as a *kama*, and a patch Mihailovich had worn for four years that read; "*Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava*" – "*Only Unity Saves the Serbs*" – which the Chetnik leader presented to Lalich.<sup>66</sup>

A total of 512 American, British, French, Italian and Russians were rescued between August 9 and December 27, 1944 as a result of the Halyard Mission.<sup>67</sup>

Because Operation Halyard was a secret mission, many years would pass before Vujnovich and his companions would receive the credit they deserved for their part in the rescue and evacuation of those air crews

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<sup>64</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500.*, pp. 238-239.

<sup>65</sup> Leary, *Fueling the Fires of Resistance*, p. 32.

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.generalmihailovich.com/2014/08/halyard-mission-legend-captain-nick.html>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

<sup>67</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*. P. 277.

whose planes had been shot down during the raids on Ploesti and other German oil refineries. Vujnovich received the Bronze Star in 2010 and Musulin received the Legion of Merit. Jibilian received a Silver Star and was nominated for the Medal of Honor but died before a decision about the award had been made. Mike Rajacich was awarded the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster and Nick Lalich was the recipient of the Silver Star.<sup>68</sup>

The Halyard team also lobbied unsuccessfully to save the life of Daza Mihailovich who had been arrested and sentenced to death following Tito's succession to power in Yugoslavia. Even so, their efforts contributed to a posthumous award of the Legion of Merit to Mihailovich in 1948 although the award was kept secret for nearly twenty years. The Halyard team and many of the airmen who had been rescued because of the efforts of Mihailovich and his Chetniks would remain bitter for years over the official view that Mihailovich had been a Nazi collaborator, which contradicted their experiences with the Chetnik leader. The efforts of Congressman Edward J. Derwinski, largely due to the urging of these airmen, led to the State Department's admission in 1967 that Mihailovich had been awarded the Legion of Merit on behalf of a nation grateful for his actions in saving more than 500 American servicemen.<sup>69</sup> Finally, in 2016, the cooperation between the Serbs and Americans was honored with the commemoration of a memorial to Operation Halyard in Pranjane.<sup>70</sup>

George Vujnovich, who started an aircraft parts business, died at the age of 96, on April 24, 2012. George Musulin joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1950, retiring in 1974. He died as the result of complications from diabetes February 23, 1987. Nick Lalich also worked for the CIA before becoming an advertising executive. He then joined the Department of Commerce and retired in 1984. He died at the age of 85 in May 2001. Arthur Jibilian earned a degree in business administration

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<sup>68</sup> <https://valor.militarytimes.com/hero/308776> (Retrieved August 27, 2019); <https://www.revolv.com/page/George-Musulin> (Retrieved August 27, 2019); [http://www.nbcnews.com/id/39710702/ns/us\\_news-life/t/nyc-man-gets-medal-wwii-rescue/](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/39710702/ns/us_news-life/t/nyc-man-gets-medal-wwii-rescue/) (Retrieved August 27, 2019).

<sup>69</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, pp. 267-269.

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1009844/us-commemorates-serbian-support-during-wwii/> (Retrieved August 27, 2019)

and worked in the private sector as safety director for an industrial company. He died on March 21, 2010 at the age of 86.<sup>71</sup>

The Medal of Honor and other citations awarded to each of these men contain words such as “extraordinary heroism,” “gallantry” “beyond the call of duty” and “intrepidity”. But these are just words. None of them, no matter how heartfelt, can fully capture the manner in which these men courageously rose to meet challenges that, even at the cost of their own lives, saved the lives of their comrades, endured terrible suffering and epitomized the phrase “above and beyond the call of duty.” But, beyond that, each of the individuals profiled here represent the true significance of the immigrant experience and the significant role that immigrants, Serbian and so many others, have played in the history of the United States, not just through military service, but through the variety of experiences, knowledge, dedication to hard work, the fearsome challenge of adapting to life in a new land, to withstand the animosity of those who perceived them as a threat to their economic or social well-being, and, most of all, to persevere, endure, adapt and ultimately contribute, each in his or her own way to shaping the United States. Now, as Serbia and the United States work to strengthen their relationship and to work together to promote economic growth and regional security, Americans in particular may want to reflect upon the many contributions Serbian immigrants and their descendants have made to the United States and to recognize the benefits of a mutually respectful and cooperative relationship.

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<sup>71</sup> Freeman, *The Forgotten 500*, pp. 271-272; <http://www.legacy.com/ns/george-vujnovich-obituary/157415604>; <https://www.nytimes.com/1987/02/26/obituaries/g-s-musulin-who-got-gi-s-out-of-yugoslavia-dies-at-72.html>; <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thenews-messenger/obituary.aspx?n=arthur-jibilian-jib-by&pid=146426580>. (Retrieved August 27, 2019).

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**Gregori Mur**

## **SRPSKO-AMERIČKI JUNACI: DOBITNICI MEDALJE ČASTI I UČESNICI OPERACIJE HALIJARD**

Rezime

Autor napominje da su imigranti, ili ljudi rođeni van Amerike, igrali veliku ulogu u američkoj vojsci. Među ovim ljudima, Amerikanci srpskog porekla koji su služili u vojsci bili su česti dobitnici Medalje časti. Među njima su: Rade Grbić, Anđelko Mandušić, Joko I. Meštrović, Džon Minik i Lazar Petar Šijan. U junačke poduhvate Drugog svetskog rata spada takođe i operacija Halijard, gde su Amerikanci srpskog porekla uspeli da opet pokažu svoju hrabrost, iako nisu za to dobili Medalju časti. Rezultat je činjenica da je petsto dvanaest ljudi spaseno – i Amerikanaca i saveznika.

Ključne reči: Amerikanci srpskog porekla, Medalja časti, operacija Halijard, hrabrost, vojska



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## SERBIA AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Abstract:** This article touches upon my early interest in Serbia from the time when a warm friendship developed between Emperor Haile and Tito of Yugoslavia. I have subsequently become interested Serbia and the study of religion and the Orthodox Churches, I discuss the international relations of Serbia, in particular, with the USA where I reside. I discuss, although very briefly, the evolution of Serbian–US relations during the last two centuries and the contribution of the Serbian Diaspora to American religion and science and the evolving US–Serbian international relations.

**Keywords:** Serbia, United States, relations, Holocaust, culture

### Introduction

I was born in Ethiopia but now I live in the USA. I have been a professor at Harvard and Princeton. But because of my memory of Ethiopian–Yugoslavian relations, I became interested in Serbian relations with the United States where I now reside. My several visits to Serbia during the past fifteen years, and friendship with Prof. Darko Trufanovic, started in the United States where I now live. But allow me first to say a few words about my childhood memory. I remember that Ethiopia and Serbia have had both direct and indirect relationship. Their indirect relationship is based on the fact that they are both members of the Eastern Orthodox Church, major adherents of the Orthodox confessions. Because of that Ethiopia has initially been one of the strongest advocates for the recognition of Kosovo as Serbian.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It was reported that members of a Kosovo delegation were denied entry visas into Ethiopia in January 2010. They were purportedly planning to attend the African

The former state of Yugoslavia had excellent diplomatic ties with Ethiopia. Their bilateral direct relationship is based on a friendship that goes back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was heightened during the time of Tito. Tito appointed Haile Selassie the honorary citizen of Belgrade. He also donated a vessel for the Ethiopian navy. In return, Marshal Tito was given a villa in Addis Ababa that is now the Serbian Embassy. An interesting story about the relationship of the two leaders refers to the chapel in the Belgrade Palace that was redecorated a Christian place of worship upon the request of the Emperor during his visit to Belgrade in 1954. Tito's visit to Ethiopia was internationally noted.<sup>2</sup> (Please allow me to add a personal note: When I translated the Handel's *Messiah* into the Amharic language in 1960 and conducted it in Emperor Haile Selassie's palace in April 1961, the accompanying Orchestra was trained by a Mr. Milosevic, a Serb music teacher of the Ethiopian Police Orchestra. Mr. Milosevic, not only became one of my first Serb friends, but he also composed a music piece dedicated to me personally that I appreciated very much and still have in my possession.)

### **Holocaust in former Yugoslavia**

So, no wonder that I continue to be interested in your country and the developments in Serbia. I have served on the American Board of the *Jasenovac Research Institute*. I have also given a talk at one of the annual ceremonies of the Institute. The knowledge of the terrible Second World War Nazi crimes of genocide usually gets wide attention. However, until recently, the genocide perpetrated against the Serbs, Jews, and Roma at Jasenovac got little attention, and there was scarce information. In memory of the crimes of the Ustashe at Jasenovac in which crimes were committed against Serbs, Jews and Roma, and to correct the oversight the *Jasenovac Research Institute* and a memorial garden were founded in the USA, in Brooklyn, New York. It started with the First *Internation-*

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Union summit to lobby African nations to recognize Kosovo. But the Serbian Foreign Minister, Vuk Jeremic attended the summit. (Serbia, Kosovo Spar Over Ethiopian Visa Question, *Balkan Insight*, January 29, 2010.)

<sup>2</sup> TITO GREETES SELASSIE; *Emperor of Ethiopia begins 10-day visit to Yugoslavia* (*The New York Times*, Aug. 16, 1959.)

al Conference on Jasenovac and the Yugoslavian Holocaust in 1997 at a Kingsborough Community College meeting that has become published as *Jasenovac and the Holocaust in Yugoslavia: Analyses and Testimonies*.<sup>3</sup> The research Institute has received an award from former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. The award reads in part: “Whereas: Sixty years have passed since the end of the Holocaust. As the horror of those events recedes deeper into history, the responsibility of remembrance weighs more heavily on all of us. New York City is proud to join the Jasenovac Research Institute in commemorating the Holocaust in Yugoslavia with a ceremony at the Holocaust park in Brooklyn. Together we honor those who suffered and pledge to remain vigilant against the dark impulses that triggered this genocide.” On April 17, 2005, Jasenovac Day of Commemoration was also Declared for “extraordinary contributions to the City of New York.”<sup>4</sup> (see here below)



<sup>3</sup> *Jasenovac and the Holocaust in Yugoslavia: Analyses and Testimonies* (Edited by Barry M. Lituchy, Published by JRI, 2006, 408 pp.)

<sup>4</sup> OFFICE OF THE MAYOR, CITY OF NEW YORK (SEE DECLARATION POST HERE BELOW)

Simon Wiesenthal had said that: “The crimes of the fascist Ustashe against the Serbs in the notorious camp of Jasenovac must be known – crimes that are the worst ones along with those committed against the Jews in the Holocaust.”<sup>5</sup> So, the *Institute* attempts to educate the American people about the Holocaust in Yugoslavia during the Second World War. It promotes research designed to establish the truth about the crimes committed at Jasenovac against Jews and Serbians and Roma. It also seeks justice for the victims. The *Institute* has contact with the Jasenovac Memorial Site in the area of the former notorious concentration camp.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. recognizes the crimes committed against Jews and Serbs. In one of its documents, it estimates that the Ustashe regime murdered 77,000 and 99,000 people in Jasenovac from 1941 to 1945. They say, of these, 45,000–52,000 are Serbs, 12,000–20,000 are Jews and 15,000–20,000 are Gypsies (Roma); 5,000–12,000 Croats and religious opponents of the regime. These are figures somewhat similar found at the Jasenovac Memorial site – 80,000–100,000. But these figures are questioned by some who say the number of the Jasenovac victims is no less than a million.<sup>6</sup>

### Serbian in United States

Serbian immigrants first came to the United States in the late 1800's.<sup>7</sup> Many settled in the American south, although many went to the west and even as far as Alaska. Subsequently, many Serbs had immigrated to the United States as refugees from Communist Yugoslavia. Today, there are numerous Serbs in Chicago, New York, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and other American cities. One of the first Serbian immigrants to the USA was George Fisher who came to Philadelphia about 1815 and fought in what was known as the *Texan Revolution* and became a judge in Cali-

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<sup>5</sup> EIR NEWS SERVICE, APRIL 30, 1993

<sup>6</sup> “JASENOVAC” in HOLOCAUST ENCYCLOPEDIA, Unite States Holocaust Memorial Museum

<sup>7</sup> Dorich, William, “Who Are the Serbs?” World Affairs Council of Orange County. California, Irvine. 1995. Speech

fornia.<sup>8</sup> Another early Serb in the USA was a founder of an important shipping company called *Trans-Oceanic Shipping Lines* in 1800. Many Serbs found jobs in the mining industry, especially in Alaska where they also established an Orthodox Church. They volunteered to fight in the *First World War* as well as in the *Second World War*. There are several known decorated Serbian American veterans of the Second World War.

There are many successful, world-renowned Serbs in America. Nicola Tesla (d. 1943) is probably the most famous and best-known Serb in the United States. He was born and raised in the Austrian Empire and was educated to be an engineer. He emigrated to America in 1884 and became a naturalized citizen. He became famous an inventor. He worked at Continental Edison in the electric power industry. Tesla then set up on his own laboratories and companies in New York to develop a range of electrical and mechanical devices. His alternating current (AC) induction motor was licensed by the big American Westinghouse Electric Company. That made him even more famous and richer. According to his biography, “Tesla conducted a wide range of experiments with mechanical oscillators/generators, electrical discharge tubes, and early X-ray imaging.... built a one of the first wireless-controlled boat.... After his death he became less well-known. After a 1960 conference in his honor, he reemerged as a genius engineer and inventor.”<sup>9</sup>

To this day many of Tesla’s inventions are regarded as having been fundamental in the American scientific and industrial work. In recent times, many Serbs work in engineering and a number of them also worked on the Apollo project. One such Serb American scientist, Mihajlo Pupin, was said to have been a close personal friend of President Woodrow Wilson. In brief, there is a large number of Serb-Americans who have distinguished themselves in academia, art, music, media, business and numerous fields of study and endeavor. There are well-judges, scientists, writers, decorated high military leaders, US Senate and Con-

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<sup>8</sup> Slavkovic, A. B. *The Immigrant. The Judge Fisher Story*. Pittsburgh, PA: White Angel Media. 2006 3. John Livingston

<sup>9</sup> “Nicola Tesla, Serbian-American Inventor” by Inez Whitaker Hunt in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2019; Nicola Tesla and David Hatcher Childress, *The Fantastic Inventions of Nikola Tesla*, 1993; *Adventures Unlimited Press* (June 12, 2014)

gress members from many states. A list of such persons can be easily found in Wikipedia and other American biographical sources.

### **Serbian–American Relations**

Since the end of the nineteenth century, American Serbian relationship has gone through four stages – the first friendly and cordial diplomatic relationship after the Fall of the Ottoman Empire, the cold and somewhat indifferent relationship during the time of Yugoslavian Communism, the 1990’s most hostile position during the recent Balkan war, and the present renewed burgeoning partnership.

- a) It is thought that the United States first established diplomatic relations with the new Balkan nations after the fall of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th century. Among these nations Serbia was a key. The two countries became allies during World War I. The diplomatic relationship continued through World War II. According to the history of the relationship, the United States supported the royalist Serbian Chetniks over the emerging rival communist Partisans during World War II.<sup>10</sup>

The United States and the Kingdom of Serbian established diplomatic relations in 1879 when a Serbian Consulate General was opened. In 1882, it became official when the US Senate recognized a Convention of diplomatic relations that King Milan Obrenovic had declared. Ambassador Eugene Schuyler, a well-known academic (also known to have been a personal friend of Tolstoy) became the first US Ambassador to Serbia.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently the relations continued from 1918 to 2006 with the then Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the succeeding Socialist Federal Re-

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<sup>10</sup> *US Ambassador to Serbia, US Government Office*” Document, February 3, 2011; “Country Program Framework”; UNDP “Serbia”, August 26, 2015; Jozo Tomashevich, *The Chetniks*, Stanford University Press, 1975.

<sup>11</sup> “Eugene Schuyler,” *National Encyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White & Co., 1900), vol. 8, p. 339; “Tolstoy’s confessor long an exile in California,” *San Francisco Call*, 9 April 1911; R. J. Jensen, “Eugene Schuyler and the Balkan Crisis,” *Diplomatic History* 5: 1 (Winter 1981), 23–39.

public of Yugoslavia of which the now Serbia become the legal successor.

- b) Then, when the Partisans and Yugoslavia became one single communist State, with Josip Broz Tito as the leader, the diplomatic relations cooled. Subsequently, a large number of Serbian refugees, mostly anti-communist, sought shelter in the United States. They became the first major Serbian Diaspora in America. During that era of the Cold War the American Serbs sided with the USA and participated in American anti-communist activities.<sup>12</sup> Yet, Serbian emigration to the USA and Canada was regarded as a brain drain.
- c) After the breakup of Communist Yugoslavia, then known as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, American relations with the country, including Serbia, soured due to a great degree. Yet, in 1992, before the diplomatic relations became complicated, an American Serbian businessman by the name of Milo Panic even became Prime Minister of Serbia.<sup>13</sup>
- d) Subsequently, conflicting economic and political developments in the region became complicated. During this period, some Anti-Serbian parties are said to have bought public relations opinion in the USA that became damaging for the Serbian side.<sup>14</sup> So, after the Dayton Accord debacle, and some cordial relations during 1995–1998, the US imposed sanctions on the country and led a NATO bombing campaign (March 24 – June 1999), causing damage to the diplomatic relations between the two. It was a horrible tragedy. This was also a time of more and new Serb refugee migration to the United States.

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<sup>12</sup> Leffler, Melvyn P., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*. Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 201; Melissa Katherine Bokovoy, Jill A. Irvine, Carol S. Lilly, *State-society Relations in Yugoslavia, 1945–1992*; West, Richard, *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*. Faber, 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Profile of Milan Panic, Head of States and Governments, *A Worldwide Encyclopedia of World Leaders (1945–1992)*, p. 856; *Sudetic*, Chuck (12 December 1992), *Challenger Steps Up Attack on Serbian Leader*, *The New York Times*, February 12, 2016; *Vukotić, Manojlo (2014)*. *Milan Panić: The Mission of Peace*. Belgrade, Serbia: Vukotić Media (2014) pp. 17–31.

<sup>14</sup> Report from a personal friend.

In the year 2000, diplomatic relations between the United States and Yugoslavia were restored. However, in 2006 Montenegro seceded.<sup>15</sup> Then, Kosovo declared independence in 2008, a move that was recognized by the US against Serbian objection.

- e) As a geographical bridge between Western and Eastern Europe, Serbia occupies a key strategic position in the Balkans. Hence, in spite of the past conflicts, the bombing of Belgrade, and the American support for Kosovo, the United States recognizes that it can benefit from a strong relationship with Serbia, and as a security partner. The US supports Serbia's efforts to join the EU. There is an Ohio joint Military Education and Training partnership.<sup>16</sup> The US also supports Serbian ties with NATO as well partnership in UN operations and Serbia's Global Peace Operations Initiative. The US also recognizes the importance of Serbian partnership to defeat ISIS.<sup>17</sup> I have seen reports that say that the US has now invested about one billion dollars in recent assistance to Serbia.<sup>18</sup> But some American-Serb friends of mine have expressed doubt about this figure.
- f) Secondly, the US supports Serbian economic endeavors and reforms. The US supports the 2015 three-year agreement of Serbia with IMF. I understand many US investors, among them leading American beverage corporations and industrial and service groups, among them the IBM, Microsoft, and IT companies have established themselves in Serbia. In 2018, a Serbian-US agreement, a *Memorandum of Understanding*, was signed to improve infrastructure projects. In short, it can be said that the two have now burgeoning diplomatic, commercial, and military relations. Since 2016, *Air Serbia* now connects Belgrade to Kennedy Airport.

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<sup>15</sup> *The Economist*, May 23, 2006

<sup>16</sup> History of the Ohio-Serbia SPP, *U.S. European Command*, March 29, 2013

<sup>17</sup> Branislav Radeljić; Martina Topić (1 July 2015). *Religion in the Post-Yugoslav Context*, Lexington Books, July 2015.

<sup>18</sup> UNCTAD World Investment Report (2019).

## Serbian–American Culture

Serbian American Culture: The number of Serbs who came to the United States and became American is still more or less a guess. However, according to some sources there is today a sizeable Serb Diaspora in the USA. The first recorded document of Serbs in 1970 was that of automobile factory workers in Detroit. On the other hand, the popular Fiat 500L was manufactured in Kragujevac, Serbia and exported to Baltimore, in the USA. The USA also imports raspberries from Serbia. The census of 2007 estimated a total of 172,834 people of Serbian origin in the USA. Again, I have seen no proof of these figures.<sup>19</sup>

As a student of religious literature and history, and a scholar of the study of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, I am interested in the history of the Serbian Orthodox Church. I have come to learn that the Serbian immigrants of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century founded the Serbian Orthodox Church of North and South America with eparchies (dioceses) and a central church council made up of diocesan bishops. There is now believed to exist almost over 250 churches, chapels, monasteries in both North and South America today. The Serbian Church is believed to have the largest number of monasteries among all other Eastern Orthodox national churches, one for every 11 parishes. The earliest Orthodox churches were established in the Saint Francisco Bay Area. An important one was established in Alaska. The Serbs are said to have played very important early role in establishing Orthodox churches in America.<sup>20</sup> Among the early leaders were the American-born Father Sebastian Dabovich and the Serbian Archimandrite Firmilijan who served the Chicago Serbian community in the USA. One Sebastian Dabovich built the Saint Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Jackson, California in 1893. In the early days, these Churches were affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA. In 1921, a separate Serbian Orthodox Church Diocese of America and Canada was established. In 1926, Archimandrite Mardar-ije Uskokovic was installed as the Serbian Orthodox Bishop of America

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<sup>19</sup> American Community Survey, August 2103; Vujnovich, Milos M. Yugoslavs in Louisiana. Gretna: Pelican, 1974.

<sup>20</sup> Durniak, Gregory, Constance Tarasar, and John H. Erickson. Orthodox America: 1794–1976: Development of the Orthodox Church in America. New York: Orthodox Church in America. Department of History and Archives, 1975.

and Canada. He was succeeded by Bishop Dionisije Milivojevic in 1939. He opposed the proposal to reorganize the Church due to administrative problems that had arisen. However, in 1963 by the authorization of the Serbian Orthodox Church the reorganization took effect: Serbian Orthodox Diocese of Eastern America and Canada, Serbian Orthodox Church of Midwestern America, and the Serbian Orthodox Church of Western America. I am very happy to say that I have been invited to the Church in New York that I attended with my friend and neighbor, Prof, Vladimir Visnjic of Temple University whose daughter is Professor of Astronomy at Princeton University. Thus, I keep close friendship with many Serbs in the USA.<sup>21</sup>

### Conclusion

This article is based on a personal memoir and interest in the History of the Orthodox peoples of Europe, Jewish relations with the people of Serbia, and my own personal involvement and life in the American Diaspora. Equally important my interest in Serbia is based on the warm friendship I developed with Serbs, among them the music teacher Djordje Milojevic who collaborated with me on performing the Handel's *Messiah* in Emperor Haile Selassie's palace in 1961 and wrote a musical piece dedicated to me; Prof. Vladimir Visnjic, my neighbor at the *Institute of Advanced Studies*, Princeton, in 1979-80; and Prof. Darko Trifunovic, who from my first meeting with him in 2000 as a UN diplomat impressed me as a lover of learning and scholarship and a dedicated human being for the cause of world peace. It was Darko who first invited me to visit Belgrade and extended me the invitation to work with the Jasenovac Memorial project. Through these friends and other Serbs I have met in the USA at the New York Serbian Orthodox Church, I have developed a warm and respectful feeling for the people of Serbia and great interest in the knowledge of the history and culture of Serbia. The

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<sup>21</sup> For those who wish to pursue Serb immigrations to American and the subject of Serb-Americans, I recommend the *Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* which publishes scholarly articles in various aspects of Serbian cultural heritage, knowledge of Serbia and the Serbian Diaspora (Founded in 1978, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.)

Serb people I have met are sincere and respectful of Ethiopia more than many other people I know internationally. I have but warm feelings for Serbia and will continue to learn more about the country and the Serb Diaspora in the USA.

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**Efraim Isak**

## **SRBIJA I SJEDINJENE AMERIČKE DRŽAVE**

### Rezime

Ovaj članak se dotiče mojih ranijih interesovanja za Srbiju od vremena kad se toplo prijateljstvo razvijalo između cara Hajla Selasija i Tita. Nakon toga sam postao zainteresovan za Srbiju i proučavanja religije i Pravoslavne crkve. Između ostalog, bavim se i proučavanjem međunarodnih odnosa Srbije, konkretno sa Sjedinjenim Američkim Državama, gde i živim. Bavim se, mada u manjoj meri, i evolucijom srpsko-američkih odnosa tokom poslednja dva veka i doprinosima srpske dijaspore američkoj religiji i nauci.

Ključne reči: Srbija, SAD, odnosi, Holokaust, kultura

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## **SERBIAN–AMERICAN RELATIONS – AN ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE FROM A SECURITY PERSPECTIVE**

**Abstract:** The author notes the relations between Serbia and the USA, mostly from an economic point of view. The development of good political relations directly affects the economic relations between two countries. These economic relations between the USA and Serbia are then given an overview with notable examples of cooperation being mentioned. Among them are the donations that the USA sent during the First World War. Other noted examples include the loans that the USA gave to Yugoslavia as well as the donations in the troubling period of the 1990s and 2000s. After this, the author lists the advantages of economic cooperation but also notes Serbia's military cooperation with the USA, specifically the Ohio National Guard. Lastly some thought is given on the public opinion concerning USA donations in the country.

**Keywords:** economic interests, political relations, US loans, donations, military cooperation, Ohio National Guard

### **Introduction**

Relations between states can be political, security, economic, cultural, military, even friendly, but by no means “fraternal”. When we talk about the strength of relations between the two countries, we usually focus on political, security and economic relations. Political and security relations are always the dominant component in the relations of two states, but certainly in the age of globalization, economic relations between states, corporations and individuals are the dominant ones. Economic interests do not know about borders, religions, nations, at least not those economic interests that operate under the free market

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system. Economic relations are based on economic interests. Economic interests are often imbued with security interests. Economic operators pursue their economic interests in a securely stable environment.

Serbian-American relations begin on November 10, 1882, when Eugene Skyler submitted his credentials to the Kingdom of Serbia and became the first outstanding and plenipotentiary representative of the United States of America in the Kingdom of Serbia, which has lasted for more than 130 years.

Serbia and the US first became economic partners and then later allies in the two world wars. It should be borne in mind that until the end of World War I the US pursued an isolationist policy, in this connection we see that the importance of the treaty with the Kingdom of Serbia is greater.

The investments that came in the years after the Second World War in Yugoslavia showed how much economic relations accompany good political relations. Also, they have shown that economics is an instrument of geopolitics. Investments in Yugoslavia were a segment of the strategy for making buffer zones in relation to the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc.

Economic relations between the two countries were eroded during the 1990s. A radical shift towards the Eastern Bloc at sunset, by the then political elite in Serbia, led to the destruction of relations between the two countries. In addition to all the horrors of the 1990s, Serbia failed to upgrade and enhance investment, to participate in the information revolution, and investment from the process bypassed Serbia.

### **A brief overview of Serbian-American economic relations**

Serbian-American economic relations began by establishing diplomatic relations just over 130 years ago.

The result of several years of negotiations between Serbian and American representatives was the signing of a trade agreement and a consular convention in October 1881.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ugovori i konvencije Srbije i stranih država (od proglašenja državne nezavisnosti do 1. januara 1887) [Contracts and Convention between Serbia and Foreign States (from the Proclamation of State Independence to January 1, 1887)], Beograd 1887,

The beginning of economic relations between the two countries was marked by the first contract for the export of dried plums from Serbia to the USA.

We can safely say that the Serbian-American economic relations, apart from the commercial segment, are marked primarily by the humanitarian aspect. In this place, we will particularly highlight this humanitarian economic aspect.

During the First World War, campaigns and checkpoints were organized in the USA to raise assistance to its ally, the Kingdom of Serbia. This assistance was institutionalized through the Serbian Assistance Committee in the United States. American public opinion was delighted with the Serbian feats, but on the other hand was also horrified by the devastation that the Serbian people in exile in Greece had gone through. The American public stirred when it heard the news of the great victories of the Serbian Army and epidemic infectious diseases, so many Americans began looking favorably upon the Serbian people and army. Owing to the activity of Mihajlo Pupin, one of the greatest scientists in the world, the Serbian nation was viewed with great respect among the American elite and political circles. Apart from organizing the Serbian emigration to America, Pupin wholeheartedly helped the Serbian people by sending financial and material aid.<sup>2</sup>

During and after World War I, the United States sent millions worth of aid to the Serbian state and its people. The assistance was based on direct assistance to Serbia, through the American Red Cross, through material assistance. Until the United States joined the war, Serbia had received no direct financial aid from this country; however, it indirectly did get a part of the US funds through loans from Allied countries, who in turn got their funding in the form of loans from the United States. Material aid collected by the American Red Cross and numerous hu-

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275–290; Zbornik zakona i uredaba u Knjažestvu Srbiji izdanih od 20. jula 1882. do 19. Februara 1883. godine [Collection of Laws and Regulations Issued in the Principality of Serbia from July 20, 1882 to February 19, 1883], vol. 38, Beograd 1883, 107–125. The aforementioned documents were signed by Ćedomilj Mijatović, the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Eugene Schuyler, the first U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Serbia.

<sup>2</sup> Živojinović, D. R. (2010). U potrazi za zaštitnikom: studije o srpsko–američkim vezama 1878–1920. godine [Looking for a Patron: Studies on the Relations between Serbia and the United States 1878–1920]. Belgrade: Albatros plus.

manitarian organizations and individuals from 1914 to 1917 had a charitable character and was not based on bilateral agreements. Also, the United States has granted \$ 3 billion to allies in Europe, and some of that money had been distributed to Serbia. By the Supreme Council of Supply and Relief in the US, which was founded in late 1918, through this committee, the new state received 30 tons of harvest and a total of \$ 35 million in aid.

Along with sent humanitarian missions from the United States, President Wilson's diplomatic engagement enabled the annexation of Banat, and Vojvodina's predominantly Serb-populated population.

The second, more significant period of economic cooperation and assistance begins during and after the Second World War. Realizing the aggressive pretensions of the USSR on the countries of Eastern Europe. The United States had sent aid to Yugoslavia in an organized manner to save it, first and foremost, from starvation. In the aftermath of World War II, the US Congress approved development loans to Yugoslavia. The total amount of US aid given to Yugoslavia in the form of grants and highly preferential loans over the period from 1949 to 1961 (after the Yugoslav break from USSR socialism), according to the World Bank study, was about two billion dollars.

In Yugoslavia, large subcontractors were starting to work, producing parts for global brands such as Boeing. The Yugoslav economy and infrastructure was developing on Western and US loans. At the end of the sixties, foreign investments gradually – but under strict control – started to enter Yugoslavia. Over the period from 1948 to 1979, the Yugoslav domestic product grew at an average annual rate of 6.2%.<sup>3</sup> Such growth of 6.2% was certainly significantly facilitated by the US commitment to assist Yugoslavia with development loans, humanitarian aid, but also with the arrival of their companies and the establishment of component cooperation.

After the tumultuous period of the 1990s and the 2000 changes. Through the USAID programs, the United States has donated over \$ 1 billion to the development of Serbia's economy, infrastructure and democratic institutions. Humanitarian assistance has built the institu-

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<sup>3</sup> Radenković Ivan, Foreign Direct Investments in Serbia, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Southeast Europe, Standard 2, Beograd, decembar 2016

tions necessary to function. “Since 2001, USAID has donated over \$ 786 million to support Serbia’s economic and democratic development. This is only part of a billion dollars in assistance from the United States Government. In cooperation with the Government of Serbia, the private sector and civil society, USAID programs “they are working to strengthen the competitiveness of the Serbian economy, strengthen the rule of law and the state administration, fight corruption and improve the regulatory media environment.”<sup>4</sup>

Assistance through donations to Serbia has contributed to the development of a competitive economy, strengthening the rule of law, public administration, combating corruption and building a sustainable civil society.

The improvement of building permitting systems and procedures, in support of regulatory reforms, needs to be highlighted. “USAID helped Serbia adopt and enforce regulations that allowed businesses to operate and grow. In cooperation with the Government of Serbia, the private sector and civil society, USAID supported reforms that facilitated and made more transparent the permitting and inspection process. control<sup>5</sup>.” Concrete advancement in the field of building permits has enabled Serbia to record the growth of the construction industry and an increase in the business list in recent years. At the moment, the construction industry is significantly contributing to the overall share of Serbia’s GDP.

Through the strengthening of institutional capacity to attract foreign direct investment, 32 local economic development offices have been established.

USAID’s constructiveness has enabled many young and early-stage groups to start their own businesses. In 2014, four IT centers were established to help startups and talented IT professionals.

US companies rank high in foreign direct investment, with over \$ 4.5 billion invested. Today, US companies employ more than 20,000 Serbian citizens. Working conditions in US companies are at the highest level and are a very desirable employer in Serbia.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.usaid.gov/sr/documents/1863/glavni-rezultati-pomo%C4%87i-usaid-od-2001-godine-do-danas>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/US\\_Aid\\_Brochure\\_SRB-FINAL.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1863/US_Aid_Brochure_SRB-FINAL.pdf)

## **Advantages of economic cooperation between Serbia and the USA**

The advantages of foreign direct investment from the USA are reflected above all:

- through the arrival of development-oriented capital,
- development of competitiveness
- access to the western market
- development of cooperation network for multinational companies
- Compliance with the Labor Law and the provisions of the Law on Safety and Health at Work
- Exchange of know-how and innovation

We believe that there is much room for further economic cooperation. First and foremost in export-oriented branches. High potential lies especially in the export of home-made and organic products, whose customers are predominantly Western consumers.

Both sides need to work to strengthen the connection between private entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs.

## **Economic-military cooperation**

The Ohio National Guard National Partnership Program, USA, was promoted in 1993 with the goal of establishing and intensifying defense cooperation between the U.S. National Guard and the states created by the breakup of the USSR.<sup>6</sup>

Serbia-US military cooperation began with the signing of the Status of Force Agreement (SOFA).<sup>7</sup> This program is not only a military cooperation program, but a significant form of financial, material and personnel assistance. The agreement is operationally implemented through the cooperation of the Army of Serbia (VS) and the Ohio National Guard.

When we talk about the type of personnel assistance, we first of all mean that a large number of NCOs and Officers of the Army of Serbia

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.vs.rs/sr\\_lat/medjunarodna-saradnja/saradnja-sa-ohajom/program-drzavnog-partnerstva](http://www.vs.rs/sr_lat/medjunarodna-saradnja/saradnja-sa-ohajom/program-drzavnog-partnerstva), Retrieved August 22, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> See more: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL34531.pdf>

(VS) have been trained through SOFA. The knowledge and skills acquired by US Army members during their exchange and education in the United States contributes significantly to the improvement of the US military operations, and is a form of intangible investment by the US in the US military personnel. Joint exercises, trainings and seminars are a significant form of sharing experiences and acquiring new knowledge in line with contemporary challenges facing armies around the world.

Cooperation has been intensified, especially in the field of training and training of officers and non-commissioned officers, exchange and training of units, joint exercises, transfer of experience in the formation of NCOs, assistance to the civilian structures in case of natural and other disasters and disasters, and development of capacities for participation in multinational operations.<sup>8</sup>

Financial assistance by the US Army amounts to an estimated \$ 9.8 million. This makes the US by far the main foreign donor to the Serbian Armed Forces, far ahead of all other countries. In 2017, the United States donated 19 Hamvi armored vehicles, totaling \$ 3.8 million. With these donations, the United States remain the most active and largest foreign donor to the Serbian Armed Forces.

The cooperation of the two armies is also carried out through the sub-program Humanitarian Assistance. Through this program, members of NG Ohio and the Serbian Armed Forces work together to restore and renovate buildings of social importance. Through the Humanitarian Assistance Program, a \$ 415,000 Pirot Special Needs Residential Care Center has been opened. Another example is the donation of KBC Niš, which amounted to more than \$ 400,000, and increased KBC's operability from 5 cardiac surgeries per week to 12 interventions per week. The type of socially relevant and responsible donations through the Humanitarian Assistance sub-program is directly reflected in improving the daily lives of Serbian citizens.

Military-economic cooperation should not only be seen as material assistance, but should also be seen as a form of partnership, but should also demonstrate the need for regional stability and collective peace-keeping.

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<sup>8</sup> [http://www.vs.rs/sr\\_lat/medjunarodna-saradnja/saradnja-sa-ohajom/program-drzavnog-partnerstva](http://www.vs.rs/sr_lat/medjunarodna-saradnja/saradnja-sa-ohajom/program-drzavnog-partnerstva), Retrieved August 22, 2019.

## **Insufficient perception of US donations and assistance to Serbia by public opinion**

Despite significant indicators and joint programs, the role of the US in Serbia's development remains largely suppressed in Serbian public opinion. Top government officials stress the need and appreciation of the US government for helping Serbia and its citizens.<sup>9</sup>

According to one Radio Free Europe poll, most respondents believed that the Russian Federation was the largest donor to Serbia. The consequence of this attitude is a hybrid war and the active measures being taken against the civilian population in Serbia. The leaders of these activities are third countries, which are supported through infrastructure in Serbia.

Public discourse is continually burdened with the transmission of half-truths and lies about the nature of US interests in Serbia. As part of the hybrid war being waged in Serbia, through organized activities, it seeks to reduce the US contribution to Serbia's development. Propaganda activities seek to disrupt the attitude of the population towards the United States, as well as to further antagonize it to citizens and thereby prevent Serbia's integration into the EU.

The dominant discourse being used today seeks to reduce the facts to emotions, utilizing simple categories and insufficient awareness of the population.

The rational has replaced the emotional, the subjects and performers of active measures through their proxies in co-continuity are penetrating the widest section of the population.

On the other hand, there needs to be a change in approach to presenting and promoting donations coming from the US.

The "You are the World" campaign launched by the US Embassy in Serbia is a good example of the activities and opposition to the hybrid war in Serbia.<sup>10</sup>

The proposal for proactive action on the visibility of US donations unfortunately goes beyond the scope of this paper. The author, in his modest lines, proposes several theses:

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<sup>9</sup> One of examples: <http://www.rts.rs/page/stories/sr/story/125/drustvo/1170134/americki-hameri-za-srpsku-vojsku-.html>

<sup>10</sup> See more <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC14cWniWoO0K7Su1AdWbtSQ>

1. Promotion of US assistance by the institutions of the Republic of Serbia- strengthens domestic PR from local to central government
2. Raise the level of exchange of knowledge and information on accessing to the US market for Serbian companies and entrepreneurs
3. Organizing promotional events through local stakeholders with the aim of informing the wider population about specific assistance and support programs<sup>11</sup>
4. Change of approach in identifying priorities and partners for development projects

## **Conclusion**

In these modest lines, the author has tried, using significant examples, to point out the importance of Serbian-American economic cooperation and the importance of that cooperation for the Serbian people and the economic development of Serbia.

Serbian-American economic relations are more than anything marked by humanitarian and developmental characteristics. Economic assistance and development loans coming from the US encouraged the development of the Serbian economy and job creation. Economic cooperation and assistance, both coming and still coming from the US, was articulated through common interests.

Historical events remind us that these relations were very favorable at the time of a positive intersection of geopolitical interests, but also during the shared civilizational values of the two states. Mainly we are referring here to the I and II World War period and after these terrible events. When it was necessary to help post-war Serbia, that assistance came and averted a humanitarian catastrophe, most notably the population's famine and infectious diseases.

The period of arrival of US components and subcontracting, such as working with a giant like Boeing or Ferguson, further accelerated state development and job creation.

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<sup>11</sup> Very significant example KBC in Niš and public facility in Pirot.

What significantly distinguishes Serbian-US economic relations is their proactive course, following the events of the 1990s and the irresponsible policies of the then state leadership.

Economic relations are always somehow overshadowed by security and political interests, which often serve as fertile ground for propaganda and manipulation. Despite the malicious allegations, from the examples of economic cooperation embodied in foreign direct investment, USAID's programs and the program of economic-military cooperation are drawing conclusions. That Serbia, thanks to its economic relations and humanitarian aid, builds its post-transition society, Serbian citizens have jobs, humanitarian assistance contributes to the quality of life of Serbian citizens.

In the end, we see from this short section the importance of the day-to-day advancement of Serbian-American political, security and, ultimately, economic relations.

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**Darko Obradović**

**SRPSKO-AMERIČKI ODNOSI – EKONOMSKA PERSPEKTIVA  
IZ BEZBEDNOSNOG UGLA**

Rezime

Autor pominje odnose između Srbije i SAD, pretežno sa ekonomskog gledišta. Razvoj dobrih političkih odnosa ima direktan uticaj na ekonomske odnose dveju zemalja. Ovi ekonomski odnosi SAD i Srbije su pregledani i dati su primeri. Među primerima se navode i donacije koje su SAD poslale Srbiji tokom Prvog svetskog rata. Drugi poznati primeri podrazumevaju zajmove koje su SAD poslale Jugoslaviji kao i donacije tokom problematičnog perioda 1990–2000. Nakon ovoga, autor napominje prednosti ekonomske saradnje ali takođe i vojne saradnje Srbije sa SAD, konkretno sa Nacionalnom gardom Ohaja. Na kraju se razmatra pogled javnosti na donacije SAD u državi.

Ključne reči: ekonomski interes, politički odnosi, zajmovi SAD, donacije, vojna saradnja, Nacionalna garda Ohaja



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## ARCHIVES AS ACTIVE AGENTS OF MODERN SOCIETY: AN EXAMPLE OF THE *ADVENTURE IN THE BALKANS 1915* PUBLICATION

**Abstract:** Modern concepts of archives and archivists see them as active factors of modern society. Archives aren't seen anymore as solely a place to store documents that researchers can visit for their personal research, but rather they are gradually moving towards the view that archives are active participants whose goal, apart from the traditional one, is to give citizens a sense of identity, as well as to take part in forming their individual and collective memory. Until recently, archivists were confident in the myth of professional unbiasedness, neutrality and objectivity. Today they are aware that through archival networks you can control the past and that archivists constantly, through their work, reshape, reinterpret and recreate archives. They are aware of the great power of the archives, archival documents and archivists in creating identities, collective and individual memory as well as the great responsibility that such power carries with it.

In 2018, the Archives of Vojvodina published the manuscript "Adventure in the Balkans 1915" by American author Douglas Meriwether Dold, whose copy is stored among its archival holdings. At the center of the story is a humanitarian mission of American students that, in 1915 at the request of their professor Mihajlo Pupin, came to the war-torn Serbia in order to help the suffering Serbian people. One of them was Douglas Dold who lost his eyesight during the mission and who was a witness to the devastation of Niš in November of 1915, which he wrote about in his testimony. In most cases archives, by publishing their work, think that it is enough that their publications were given life. The Archives of Vojvodina has decided to take a more active approach so that the notion of Serbian-American friendship may reach wider social circles, as in Serbian so also in American society, reminding us that the current rela-

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tions between the two countries are just a part of a longer process that during its one hundred year long existence was mostly based on cooperation, mutual respect and understanding.

**Keywords:** The Archives of Vojvodina, archival documents, archives, Adventure in the Balkans 1915, post-production strategy

## 1. Introduction

In today's society, information has become one of the dominant resources, the one not consumed, but enlarged through use. The modern information society relying on information and communication technologies brought about a new understanding of wealth, so today, wealth is also viewed from the aspect of possession of information. Phrase: "Who owns the information, he owns the world" comes to light in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Seen from that perspective, archives that "lie" on the information are one of the wealthiest parts of modern society and one of the most potent factors in the battle against the modern era plague: disinformation. Disinformation is not the invention of today. Namely, a strong technical development that characterizes the modern age has enabled endless manipulation of information, allowing its widespread distribution in thus altered form to a large number of people.

Modern concepts see archives and archivists as active agents of contemporary society. Archives are no longer viewed solely as mere guardians of documents that researchers visit to study. The perception moves towards the understanding of archives as active agents whose purpose is, in addition to the traditional one, to give citizens a sense of identity, or to participate in the shaping of their personal and collective memory. Until recently, archivists raised the myth of professional impartiality, neutrality, and objectivity. Today, they are aware that archives can be used to control the past, that archivists constantly reshape, reinterpret, and recreate archives by their work. They are aware of the great power of archives, archival material, and archivists in creating identity, collective and personal memory, but also of the great responsibility this power comes with.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more on *Archives, Documents and Power*, see: *Archival Science*, International Journal on Recorded Information, Volume 2, Issue 1–2, 2002; *Archival Science*, International Journal on Recorded Information, Volume 2, Issue 3–4, 2002.

Today, archives in Serbia are institutions which are still dominated by the traditional paradigm and a conservative, one can freely say even elitist, view of the role of archives in society. Modern age requires that archives use modern technologies, to make continuous improvements, do strategic planning, have a proactive attitude towards changes, be characterized by transparency, mobility, quick responses, interdisciplinarity in problem-solving, to get out of isolation and be more open to society, etc. Archives in Serbia were dormant in the 1980s, and they find it difficult to understand that the scenario and the stage and the audience of the archival profession have also changed. Resistance to novelties is particularly strong if efforts to change come from the outside of archival circles.

By accepting the postmodern concepts of archives being “of the people and for the people”, and that archives need to be taken to the people and people to be encouraged to come to use archives<sup>2</sup>, and by grasping the new era that requires new methods of work, the Archives of Vojvodina has begun to change the concept of specific segments of its activity. In addition to applying modern technologies that bring closer data on archival material and the material itself to users now more than ever, significant changes have been introduced into the segment of the Archives’ public relations with the aim of opening the institution, increasing the visibility of its activity, as well as transparency of its operations. One of the examples of these changes is the *Adventure in the Balkans 1915* publication.<sup>3</sup>

## **2. *Adventure in the Balkans 1915* Publication**

Desiring to revive the memory of the courageous and humane members of the Columbia University expedition who, at the invitation of their professor, world-renowned scientist Mihajlo Pupin, sailed from the USA to distant war-torn Serbia in a humanitarian mission to help the Serbian people in June 1915, the Archives of Vojvodina published

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<sup>2</sup> Terry Cook, *Archival Science and Postmodernism: New Formulations for Old Concepts*, <http://www.mybestdocs.com/cook-t-postmod-p1-00.htm> (29/05/2019).

<sup>3</sup> Dold, Douglas Meriweather, *Adventure in the Balkans 1915*, bilingual, prepared by Ljiljana Dožić, translated from English by Ivana Đokić Saunderson, Novi Sad, 2018.

the manuscript of Douglas Meriweather Dold “Adventure in the Balkans 1915” in the year marking the end of the First World War and joining of Vojvodina areas to the Kingdom of Serbia in 1918. A copy of the manuscript is kept in the Archives of Vojvodina, and the original is in the Library of the Columbia University in New York.

The manuscript of Douglas Dold is a vivid, authentic testimony of the difficult occupation days of Niš in November 1915: the entry of the occupying troops, Bulgarian and German, desolation, reprisal against the population, famine, uncertainty and fear. Despite losing his vision almost entirely during his humanitarian work in the Balkans, Douglas Dold, together with his American friends, stayed to support the Serbian people in these difficult moments providing unselfish help to those in need, not forgetting the principles of humanity even in moments when he himself was in a seriously endangered health condition. At the end of November 1915, due to growing health issues, Douglas Dold left Serbia and returned to the USA. The Yugoslav state posthumously awarded him the Cross of Mercy for medical services provided during the First World War.

In most cases, by publishing their editions, archives consider that it is sufficient that they gave them life. With the publication *Adventures in the Balkans of 1915*, the Archives of Vojvodina decided to take an active approach, wanting for the story of Serbian-American friendship to reach as wide a circle of people as possible, both in Serbian and American society, reminding that the current relations between the two countries are only a part of an extended process that has been largely based on cooperation, mutual respect, and understanding during the century of existence.

### **3. Post-production Strategy**

When we found Douglas Dold’s manuscript in the archival material, we were cognizant of its significance going beyond local frameworks. Preliminary research in the context of the manuscript showed that it was an expedition initiated by Mihajlo Pupin himself and that the expedition itself had been insufficiently studied in historiography. It was enough to realize that we have an uncut gem in our hands. It was up to us to cut it and show it to the public in all its glory.

The first step was a detailed study of the Columbia Relief Expedition: its establishment, the arrival in Serbia, the humanitarian work of its members. The result of this research was the work entitled “The Balkan Adventure of Douglas Dold,” which was presented by Ljiljana Dožić at the 2016 International Conference in Novi Sad. The next step was to publish the manuscript by Douglas Dold. However, it was not before two years later that the manuscript saw the light of the day.

When in the summer of 2018 Dr. Nebojša Kuzmanović took the helm of the Archives of Vojvodina, he immediately realized all the potential of the manuscript, and one of his first decisions was to publish the testimony of Douglas Dold as soon as possible. As a man who spent a period of his life working in publishing, he knew that publishing and post-production of such content should be carefully planned. On his initiative, a strategy for the post-production of “Adventure in the Balkans 1915” publication was developed.

Development of the post-production strategy included the following steps:

1. Defining the goal. Short-term goal: to inform the public about the publication. Long-term goal: for the story about Serbian–American friendship to reach as wide a circle of people as possible, both in Serbian and American society, reminding us that the current relations between the two countries are only a part of an extended process that has been largely based on cooperation, mutual respect, and understanding during the century of existence.
2. Defining the target group: scientific and professional public, descendants of the Expedition members, Serbian diaspora in the United States, high school students, and university students in Serbia.
3. Choosing communication channels and tools. Communication channels: television, internet, newspapers. Communication tools: exhibition of archival documents, book promotion, press releases, interviews, TV shows, authors’ works, publication promotion at the book fair, etc.

4. Determining the phases and time frame. The phases of the post-production strategy were determined. The first phase: getting the support of the US Embassy in Serbia for the publication. The second phase: organizing and the opening of the *Adventure in the Balkans 1915* exhibition and promotion of the book of the same name. Uploading content to the website of the Archives. The third phase: contacts with libraries in the USA, the Serbian Orthodox Church in the USA, and the Serbian embassy and consulates in the USA. The fourth phase: research and personally addressing the descendants of the Expedition members. The fifth phase: research and personally addressing the scientists (historians) in Serbia and the USA. The sixth phase: hosting the exhibition and book promotion in Serbian cities. The time frames of the phases were also determined. The first and in one part the second phase (the organization and opening of the exhibition) took place before book publication, but they were directly serving the strategy, i.e., achieving the best results in post-production.
5. Budgeting.
6. Measurement. The tracking indicators were determined as the number of visitors to the exhibition and book promotion, the number of publications in the media, the number of shared copies of the publication, the number of visits on the Internet (the website and Facebook page of the Archives), the number of personal contacts and feedback received. It is important to note that not all results of the publication post-production work are accurately measurable.

#### **4. Implementing Post-production Strategy**

##### **4. 1. Phase I**

Knowing that the story of the *Columbia Relief Expedition* and the testimony of Douglas Dold goes beyond local frameworks, we wanted for it, among other things, to find its way to the American audience. Therefore, the first decision was to print the future edition as a bilingual

one, in Serbian and English. Following this idea, we knew that the USA support would be significant for the life of the future publication. For this reason, the Director of the Archives of Vojvodina, Dr. Nebojsa Kuzmanović, contacted the US Embassy in Serbia, and support was received from US Ambassador to Serbia, Kyle Scott, who, having understood the importance of our publication for U.S.–Serbian relations, decided to write a foreword to it.

#### 4. 2. Phase II

Exploring the context of Douglas Dold's manuscript, we collected a large amount of material relating to the formation of the *Columbia Relief Expedition*, the arrival of its members in Serbia and their humanitarian work. By browsing the internet archives, we managed to identify all the members of the expedition, and even to document their identities by photographs. From this material, we prepared a thematic exhibition of archival documents "Adventure in the Balkans 1915, Pictures – *Memories* – Remembrance" that was officially opened in the gallery space of the Archives of Vojvodina on November 20, 2018. The exhibition was also visited by US Ambassador to Serbia Kyle Scott. The exhibition and publicity it received in the media were a great introduction to the book promotion.

The promotion of the book "Adventure in the Balkans 1915" was held on December 3, 2018, in the Archives of Vojvodina, and one of its participants was the US Ambassador to Serbia Kyle Scott, which gave this event significant publicity and a special place in the media often hardly reachable for cultural institutions.

Immediately after opening the exhibition and book promoting, the complete content was posted on the Vojvodina Archives website within the portal dedicated to the First World War, with the aim of reaching as wide a circle of interested users as possible.<sup>4</sup>

#### 4. 3. Phase III

Libraries are the keys to the world, says a proverb. That is why libraries were one of the first goals upon publishing. In addition to Serbi-

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.arhivvojvodine.org.rs/portal/> (30/05/2019).

an libraries, we paid special attention to some important libraries in the United States.

After publishing the testimony of Douglas Dold, we first sent the publication to the *Rare Book & Manuscript Library* (Columbia University Library) in New York, which keeps the original manuscript, and with which we have already established contact to gain insight into the copyrights and possibilities of publishing the manuscript in Serbia. The following on the list was Virginia University Library, The Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections *Library* which keeps the second version of the original manuscript of Douglas Dold. Finally, we contacted the Congress Library in Washington, which resulted in the establishment of cooperation between us and this institution within the framework of the DMEP (Duplicate Materials Exchange Program) program for the exchange of publications.

We have established a special contact with the *National World War I Museum and Memorial* of the United States located in Kansas (Missouri), which brought us to Nancy Kramer, the author who published the book about Serbia in the First World War: "Retreat to Victory in 1915". The Archives of Vojvodina have plans to translate this book into Serbian and publish it in Serbia.

Being aware of the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the life of the Serbian diaspora in the United States, we contacted the Serbian Orthodox *Eparchy of Western America* and Serbian Orthodox *Eparchy of Eastern America*, which resulted in the publication of the news about the book "Adventure in the Balkans 1915" on the *Serbica Americana* website.<sup>5</sup>

We also contacted the Serbian Embassy in Washington and Consulates General in New York and Chicago.

#### 4. 4. Phase IV

Upon completion of the previous phases, in February 2019, we started research on the descendants of the Expedition members. The research lasted three months and was extremely difficult due to limited research resources. The research was carried out on the Internet, and

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eserbia.org/sa-culture/book-reviews/1266-avantura-na-balkanu-1915?fbclid=IwAR0PpKgFKo7Ox8ykkIbS1V09w09Vh1KOPszGOIGS9I6F-PktihBJINaAXuA> (30/05/2019).

one of the main search bases we used was the Ancestry<sup>6</sup> website. The problem with the websites for researching family origin is that the use of their contents is not free, and we as an institution were unable to pay for such services. As the ultimate research result, we managed to find 25 descendants of the Expedition members. Some of them are first degree descendants, although most are second-degree descendants (grandchildren). The books were sent to them in May, and we are expecting their feedback.

Unfortunately, Douglas Dold did not have direct descendants, but our research led to some interesting results. Namely, we learned that William Colby, son of Elbridge Colby, one of the Expedition members, was the director of the CIA in the period 1973–1976 under the administration of Richard Nixon. The research only confirmed the earlier knowledge that the Expedition members were prominent community members and members of the upper strata of American society.

#### 4. 5. Phase V

The fifth phase began at the end of May, and the first step within it is the research of US historians who deal with topics covered by our publication and who might be interested in its contents. It is planned to establish contact with them and, if possible, to achieve certain types of cooperation. Also, it is planned to establish contacts with historians in Serbia.

#### 4. 6. Phase VI

The beginning of the sixth phase is planned for the autumn of 2019. The plan is to establish contacts with interested cultural institutions, as well as for the exhibition and book promotion to be hosted in several places in Serbia.

### **5. Measurable Results of Work Done So far**

When developing the post-production strategy, we also considered whether it is possible to numerically express and, if so, how to measure

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ancestry.com/> (30/05/2019).

the results of our work. We knew that some segments were not measurable, but we determined specific indicators that could be tracked, such as:

- The number of visitors to the exhibition and book promotion – about 160 visitors. The exhibition was open for three weeks;
- The number of publications about the exhibition and the book in the media:
  - electronic media: until the date of writing of this paper (May 30, 2019) there were a total of 40 publications in electronic media related to these contents. These were announcements of the exhibition opening and book promotion, reports and statements from them, guest appearances in various TV shows (videos posted on the Internet) and others. The contents were published by different web sites, from the Provincial government's official website, through the provincial media service RTV, electronic edition of daily newspaper *Dnevnik*, to local media and electronic portals;
  - the electronic book is also found on the platform for electronic publications Issuu, which has 85 million readers;
  - print media: by May 30, 2019, there were six articles in print media, mostly published in Novi Sad daily newspaper *Dnevnik*. Considering that one of our target groups is high school students and university students, we were especially delighted by the excellent article about the book published in *Politikin zabavnik*.

It is important to note that none of these announcements were sponsored and that all published articles had a neutral or positive tone.

- the number of visits to reports dedicated to the exhibition and the book on the website and Facebook page of the Archives of Vojvodina:

- website - on the website of the Archives of Vojvodina there are nine publications with the stated contents. According to official statistics, these publications had a total of 3,088 views by May 30, 2019. The book and exhibition are uploaded to the Archives website in electronic form for, but there are no official data on the number of views;
- Facebook page – on the official Facebook page of the Archives, there were 14 posts with these contents that reached 12,170 users had 178 reactions (likes, comments, sharing). It is important to note that one of these posts was sponsored and that as such it managed to reach 7,791 users;
- the number of shared copies of the publication – the book circulation was 1,000 copies, and 680 copies were distributed in the previous campaign (the Archives of Vojvodina does not sell its editions);
- the number of personal contacts and feedback (descendants of the expedition members) – as previously mentioned, during our research, we found 25 descendants of the Expedition members. Given that the publication was recently sent to them, we are still expecting their reactions.

## **6. Conclusion**

Archives as institutions that hold millions of data and information, which form our memory in the 21st-century disinformation era are facing special challenges and temptations. Under the influence of modern business principles and dynamic environment, but also the demands of society, they are forced to change their attitude towards the public and become active agents in their community. Modern society has imposed on the archives to accept and apply strategic planning of their activity, and also the strategic planning of public relations and marketing as part of it. Whether we want it or not, archives are on the market of cultural products. The time of brutal fight for sources of financing has come, and

in today's world, the funds go to the successful ones. Funds are channeled based on the utility criteria, that is, serving to the public interest. Cultural institutions can no longer be measured exclusively by academic achievements. The broader question is whether these achievements serve the public and how this can be measured.<sup>7</sup>

In the conditions of the increasingly harsh market for cultural products, archives, with their specific products and information, must pay special attention to the placement of these. The path from information to properly placed information and feedback is long; the base of this process must be to plan, and the goal must be to show that archives do not have to change their mission and vision to adapt to society, but that they can reach the new "audience" and better serve the public interest using new methods and tools of communication and continuous strategic planning of their activities. The advantages of strategic planning of activities are to enable a better understanding of changes in the environment, a proactive attitude towards changes, better coordination of activities, higher quality communication between employees, and better organization. Marketing and marketing communications are an essential component of this strategy. Specific theoretical and empirical research has shown that strategic marketing planning allows the positioning and survival of cultural institutions and ensures a good reputation and image, or the creation of a strong brand of a cultural institution.<sup>8</sup>

The Archives of Vojvodina are trying to adapt to the new conditions of modern 21st-century society with their actions, making the main changes in the opening to society and fostering public relations. Knowing that these relationships are not established and do not take place by themselves, special attention is paid to planning its activities. One of the first such projects was the planning of post-production strategy for "Adventure in the Balkans 1915" publication. The results obtained so far that indicate a significant increase in visibility encourage us to continue this way and to apply such an approach in the future to other publications of our institution.

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<sup>7</sup> Jillian H. Poole, *Managing for Money: A Handbook for International Cultural Institutions*, Belgrade 1999, 47.

<sup>8</sup> Read more: Mirjana R. Starčević, *Strategic Planning of Marketing in Culture Institutions*, Doctoral Dissertation, Belgrade 2014.

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**Nebojša Kuzmanović**  
**Ljiljana Dožić**

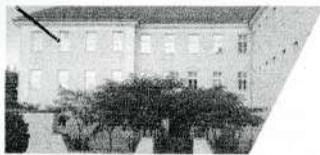
### **ARHIVI KAO AKTIVNI ČINIOCI MODERNOG DRUŠTVA: PRIMER PUBLIKACIJE AVANTURA NA BALKANU 1915.**

#### Rezime

Savremeni društveni koncepti arhive i arhiviste vide kao aktivne činioce modernog društva. Arhivi se više ne posmatraju isključivo kao puki čuvari dokumenata koje istraživači posećuju radi njihovog proučavanja, već se njihovo poimanje pomera u pravcu shvatanja arhiva kao aktivnih činilaca čija je svrha, pored tradicionalne, da građanima pruže osećaj identiteta, odnosno da učestvuju u oblikovanju njihove lične i kolektivne memorije. Do nedavno, arhivisti su uzdizali mit o profesionalnoj nepristrasnosti, neutralnosti i objektivnosti. Danas, oni su svesni da se kroz arhive kao mesta ukupnog ljudskog pamćenja može kontrolisati prošlost, da arhivisti svojim radom konstantno reoblikuju, reinterpretiraju stvarajući „novo pamćenje“. Svesni su velike moći arhiva, arhivske građe i arhivista u kreiranju identiteta, kolektivne i lične memorije, ali i velike odgovornosti koju ta moć nosi sa sobom.

Arhiv Vojvodine je 2018. godine publikovao rukopis „Avantura na Balkanu 1915.“ američkog autora Dagleasa Merivedera Dolda, čiju kopiju čuva u okviru svog arhivskog fonda. U središtu priče je humanitarna misija američkih studenata koji su 1915. godine na poziv svog profesora Mihajla Pupina došli u ratom zahvaćenu Srbiju da bi pomogli postradalom srpskom narodu. Jedan od njih je bio i Dagleas Dold, koji je tokom misije izgubio vid i bio svedok stradanja Niša u novembru 1915, što je i opisao u svom svedočanstvu. U većini slučajeva arhivi publikujući svoja izdanja smatraju da je dovoljno što su im dali život. Arhiv Vojvodine se odlučio na aktivan pristup, sa željom da priča o srpsko-američkom prijateljstvu dopre do što širih krugova ljudi, kako u srpskom tako i u američkom društvu, podsećajući da su trenutni odnosi između dve države samo deo jednog dužeg procesa koji je tokom postojanja većim delom bio zasnovan na saradnji, međusobnom poštovanju i razumevanju.

Ključne reči: Arhiv Vojvodine, arhivska građa, arhivi, *Avantura na Balkanu 1915*, postprodukciona strategija



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УСТАНОВА АРХИВ ВОЈВОДИНЕ				
Нови Сад				
ПРИМЉЕНО 13.06.2019.				
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The President

Donald John Trump

The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20500.

Dear Mr. President,

By the end of last year, the Archives of Vojvodina (Novi Sad, Serbia) published a bilingual Serbian-English book titled "Adventure in the Balkans 1915" by the American author Douglas Meriwether Dold. This is the first complete publication of the manuscript which is located in the Columbia University Libraries, whereas a copy of the manuscript is stored in the Archives of Vojvodina. By publishing this book, the Archives of Vojvodina wanted to recover the memory of the brave and humane members of the Columbia University expedition that, in June 1915 at the request of their professor, the world renowned scientist Mihajlo (Michael) Pupin, sailed from America to the distant war-torn Serbia, in a humanitarian mission to help the Serbian people. At his request, twenty-four American students, mostly from Columbia University, decided to answer his call and take part in the Great War, not to fight however but rather their intention was to help, nurture and heal. Their decision is worth not only respect but admiration as well. Guided by the desire to help the Serbian people in their struggle with epidemics, hunger and war atrocities, while voluntarily risking their lives, they proved that the fight for humane ideals and justice has a higher universal meaning. Many of them, even after the official end of their humanitarian expedition, decided to stay in the Balkans and continue with their humanitarian work as part of the Red Cross. One of them was Douglas Dold, a doctor from New York, who lost his sight during this expedition. He described some of his memories from Serbia in the manuscript "Adventure in the Balkans 1915".

During the publishing of this book, we had support from the American Embassy in Serbia and the Ambassador of the USA in Serbia, His Excellency Kyle Randolph Scott, who wrote a foreword for this book.

When the research was conducted, we were successful in identifying all twenty-four members of the expedition. After this we conducted another kind of research with the goal of finding the descendents of the members of the expedition, hoping that we may show them the heroic and humane deeds of their ancestors. This way we wish to continue the traditional Serbian – American friendship.

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Mr President, we are aware that you are a true friend of the Serbian people. We think that you would be interested in this book because it is a confirmation of Serbian – American friendship throughout history and a testimony of our common battle on the side of justice and freedom. That is the reason why we wish to send you a copy.

Most respectfully,

Novi Sad, June 13. 2019.



Nebojša Kuzmanović, Ph.D.

Director of the Archives of Vojvodina

Novi Sad, Serbia

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