

THE EVOLUTION OF SERBIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY OF WORLD WAR I

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Serbian historiography about World War I was analyzed having in mind the historical position and role of Serbia in the area of Western Balkans, the developed themes on the ground of the origin and course of the war, and its relation to European historiography as it has been developing during the 20th century. So are formed the nine groups of main themes, with the subgroups, and identified the most important authors according to their achievements or the themes they have worked on and intellectual connections they have had with European historiography. Also are identified the main subjects which have been the object of revisionism.

Keywords: *Serbia, historiography, Great War, occupation, Montenegro, Thessaloniki Front, Yugoslavia, Yugoslav Question.*

EVOLUȚIA ISTORIOGRAFIEI SÂRBE CU PRIVIRE LA PRIMUL RĂZBOI MONDIAL (Rezumat)

Istoriografia sârbă despre Primul Război Mondial a fost analizată având în vedere rolurile istoric și geopolitic ale Serbiei în zona Balcanilor de Vest, dezbaterile provenite de la originea și desfășurarea războiului și raporturile cu istoriografia europeană în timpul dezvoltării sale de-a lungul secolului al XX-lea. Astfel, au fost alcătuite nouă grupuri tematice și au fost identificați cei mai importanți autori, luându-se în considerare realizările acestora, subiectele cercetate și relațiile intelectuale pe care le-au menținut cu istoriografia europeană. De asemenea, au fost identificate principalele subiecte care au constituit obiectul revizionismului.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Serbia, istoriografie, Marele Război, ocupație, Muntenegru, frontul de la Salonic, Iugoslavia, chestiunea iugoslavă.*

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„Studii și articole de istorie”, tom LXXXI, 2014, pp. 165-177

Introduction

It is not only the changing geo-strategical position and ideological content of the country and society which have deeply influenced the Serbian historiography, but also the general impact of dissolution of Yugoslavia. The disappearance of Yugoslavia like a major “consequence” of World War I, means a disappearance of the “starting point” for every modern Serbian history, i.e. historiography. The losing of Yugoslav framework for Serbian nation means that it is necessary to reinterpret not only World War I when it has been created, but almost two centuries of endeavors to liberate and consolidate Serbian and other South Slaves communities of the Western Balkans. Serbs on that territory have always been, and still are, the typical nation of diaspora. It is always necessary to have in mind that Serbian historiography has a Yugoslav dimension, even after dissolution of that country. The Yugoslav dimension is important as a part of Balkan dimension in Serbian historiography.

So, for Serbian historiography, the perception of the history of World War I has been changed because of the deeply changed reality, reality which has slowly become history in these last two decades. But, paradoxically, Serbian historiography has saved the general image and understanding, and more of the specific characteristics, of World War I, including the Yugoslav dimension. It could be said for all main themes developed about the Great War. Only the historiography which deals with the politics and general role of the Allies in the Balkans during that war has begun to change itself. Obviously, it is because of the experience of the history of last two decades when the previous Allies have taken a completely new role toward Serbs.

The pressure for changing the perspective regarding World War I, which influenced Serbian historiography, has come from outside, from the side of European historiographies. That pressure is obvious even on the level of the facts, and especially on some of the most previously intriguing and controversial questions, such as “war guilt” question, or question about the origins of World War I¹.

What can offer Serbian historiography like intellectual, scientific background for the new perception of the history of World War I? Could it be done living in the new reality, so different from the past? The more important question which is behind this is the following: is the new reality in which lives the Serbian community capable to reproduce the past which could be creative for the future?

¹ M. Bjelajac, *Novi (stari) zapleti oko uzroka Prvog svetskog rata pred obeležavanje 100.godišnjice (New (old) Controversies on the Origins of World War I on the Eve of 100th Anniversary)*, in „Tokovi istorije”, 1/2013, Beograd, 2013, pp. 15-63; M. Bjelajac, G. Jović Krivokapić, *Prilozi iz naučne kritike – srpska istoriografija i svet. (Uticaj jugoslovenske krize na stranu i domaću istoriografiju) (Examples of Scholar Debates – Serbian Historiography nexus World Production)*, Beograd, 2011. Collected articles, studies and essays represent the initial guide to the whole problem of revisionism inside previous Yugoslav historiography, identify whole range of subjects, questions and problems which arose with the constitution of small ex-Yugoslav historiographies.

General characteristics

In a general overview of Serbian historiography about World War I, it is possible to form divisions according to the period of publishing of the historiographical works, rather conventional. There was a post-World War I literature about the war, in the broader sense historiographical, with predominance of some testimonies like diaries, memoirs, but also in small portion scientific works². Then, there were scientific works of the socialist period of Serbia (inside Yugoslavia)³, which is possible to cut off other ex-Yugoslav historiographies with difficulties. In that period, at the end of the 1960s, during the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, the Serbian historiography has reached its highest level on the major themes of World War I. Further, there is historiographical literature of the last two decades in general, published in Serbia as in the ex-Yugoslav centres, but also in many other European scientific centres, and out of Europe. The main characteristic of the historiographical literature of the last period, which is in the broader sense historiographical and scientific, is its revisionism, which could be only sham revisionism, it must be said⁴. The truth is that some kind of "revisionism" began in the last fifteen years of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia/SFRJ. There have been the works from different sides, particularly national, which were more or less revisionist (in pro-Yugoslav and anti-Yugoslav direction), and there were new critical perceptions, inside the scientific historiography, of significant importance⁵.

² J. Tomić, *Jugoslavija u emigraciji (Yugoslavia in the Emigration)*, Beograd, 1921; V. Prodanović, *Srpska pisma iz Svetskog rata 1914-1918 (Serbian letters from World War 1914-1918)*, Osijek, 1923; Borivoje Jeftić, *Ubistvo u Sarajevu, Sećanja i utisci (The Assassination in Sarajevo, Memories and Impressions)*, Sarajevo, 1923; Jovan M. Jovanović, *Stvaranje države Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca (The Creation of the State of Serbs, Croats and Slovans)*, knj. I, SKZ, Beograd, 1928; Jovan Cvetković, *Ujedinjenje Crne Gore i Srbije (Unification of Montenegro and Serbia)*, Dubrovnik, 1940; V. Čorović, *Istorija Jugoslavije (History of Yugoslavia)*, Beograd, Narodno delo, 1933, (cyrillic); Lazar Marković, *Jugoslovenska država i hrvatsko pitanje (1914-1929) (Yugoslav State and The Croatian Question 1914-1929)*, Geca Kon, Beograd, 1935; Veselin Masleša, *Mlada Bosna (Young Bosnia)*, Belgrade, 1945; Dr. Srđan Budisavljević, *Stvaranje Države Srba Hrvata i Slovenac (The Creation of the State of Serbs, Croats and Slovans)*, Zagreb, 1958; Drago, *Gavrilo Princip*, Beograd, 1959; D. Ljubibratić, *Vladimir Gaćinović*, Beograd, 1961. Joso Smodlaka, *Zapisi dra Josipa Smodlake (Notes of dr Joso Smodlaka)*, (editor Marko Kostrenčić), JAZU, Zagreb, 1972; See also B. Aleksov, *Poturica gori od Turčina. Srpski istoričari o verskim preobraćenjima*, in *Historijski mitovi na Balkanu (Historical myths in the Balkans)*, conference proceedings, Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu, Sarajevo, 2003, pp. 225-259.

³ Jorjo Tadić (ed.), *Dix années d'historiographie yougoslave, 1945-1955*, Belgrade, 1955; J. Tadić (ed.), *The Historiography of Yugoslavia 1955-1965*, Belgrade, 1965; *The Historiography of Yugoslavia, 1965-1976*, Belgrade, 1975.

⁴ See ref. 1.

⁵ Miroslav Jovanović, Rade Radić, *Kriza istorije. Srpska istoriografija i društveni izazovi kraja 20. i početka 21. veka (Crisis of History. Serbian historiography and social challenges at the end of 20th and beginning of the 21st Century)*, Beograd, Udruženje za društvenu istoriju, 2009, (cyrillic); Kosta Nikolić, *Prošlost bez istorije (The Past without History)*, Beograd, ISI, 2003; Lj. Dimić, Đ. Stanković, *Istoriografija pod nadzorom. Prilozi istoriji istoriografije (Historiography under Surveillance. Contributions to the History of Historiography)*, 2 vols., Beograd, Službeni list SRJ, 1996, (cyrillic); Đ. Stanković, *Izazov nove istorije (Challenge of New History)*, 2 vols., Beograd, Vojska, 1992-1994, (cyrillic); Đ. Stanković, *Iskušenja jugoslovenske istoriografije (Challenges of Yugoslav Historiography)*, Beograd, Izdavačka radna organizacija „Rad“, 1988.

With the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Serbs and other ex-Yugoslav communities lost their natural monopoly on writing their own history, have necessarily made their own national historiographies with a dramatic abbreviations of their Yugoslav past. These historiographies look very much like smaller, local histories, with lots of misinterpretations because of the attempts to avoid omnipresent, in space and time, Yugoslav dimension.

But, on the contrary from the other ex-Yugoslav historiographies on World War I, Serbian has not yet touched the main achievements in the general perception of the history of World War I. Taking new, independent national position the ex-Yugoslav historiographies, not necessarily but very often, have undertaken the revisionist activities. If Serbian historiography succeeded in saving itself from that dramatic maneuver, it would be some victory.

Many of the important subjects, or questions, issued from the Balkan and Serbian perspective of World War I, went through above mentioned different phases, which have been in many ways restrictive because of the different reasons.

Generally, historical science of the post-World War I period took the syntagmas from the political/military vocabulary such as “immediate causes of the war”, “blame for the outbreak of the war”, “war aims”, “war guilt” question, then added the other like the origins of World War I. So did the historiography of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes / Yugoslavia, and these syntagmas survive till today. They made the points around which the main themes on World War I have been developed.

Main Themes

Having in mind all the complexity of the events, ideas, personalities, processes, characteristic for World War I, even in the Balkans, and especially on Serb and Serb/Yugoslav territory, it is possible to divide the whole corpus of literature about that phenomenon into several groups:

1. The origins of World War I and Serbia (could be seen as a long-term, so called historical, confrontation of Habsburg Monarchy towards Ottoman Empire and later small Balkan communities and states, or, as a short-term set of events which led to war)⁶.

⁶ Milorad Ekmečić, *Dugo kretanje između klanja i oranja. Istorija Srba u Novom veku (1492-1992)*, (*The long-term moving between slaughtering and ploughing. History of Serbs in New Age 1492-1992*), Beograd, Zavod za udžbenike, 2007, (cyrillic); Dušan T. Bataković (ed.), *Histoire du peuple serbe*, Lausanne, L'Age D'Homme, 2005; A. Mitrović, *Strane banke u Srbiji 1878-1914 (Foreign Banks in Serbia 1878-1914)*, Beograd, Stubovi kulture, 2004, (cyrillic); Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans 1804-1945 (Istorija Balkana 1804-1945)*, London, Longman Publishing Group, 1999, (Serbian edition Beograd, CLIO, 2001, cyrillic); M. Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790-1918 (The Creation of Yugoslavia 1790-1918)*, I-II, Beograd, Prosveta, 1989, (cyrillic); V. Ćorović, *Istorija Srba (History of Serbs)*, vol. I-III, Beograd, BIGZ, 1989; *Istorija srpskog naroda (History of Serbian People)*, Šesta knjiga (Sixth book), Drugi tom (Second tome), *Od Berlinskog kongresa do ujedinjenja 1878-1918, (From Berlin Congress to Unification 1878-1918)*, Beograd, Srpska književna zadruga, 1983, (cyrillic); I. Božić, S. Ćirković, M. Ekmečić, V. Dedijer, *Istorija Jugoslavije (History of Yugoslavia)*, Drugo Izdanje, Beograd, Prosveta, 1973 (English edition New

2. Assassination in Sarajevo and the outbreak of World War I, including “war guilt” question (which occurred during the war and has been sanctioned at the end of it, becoming one of the main theme of European, and also Serbian historiography)⁷.
3. War aims of Serbia or the Serbian Yugoslav program (which Serbia has written at the very beginning of the war, independently, but in accordance with the Allies)⁸.
4. Military operations (1914-1915, the retreat of the Serbian army in 1915, the formation of the front of Thessaloniki, the liberation of Serbia and other Yugoslav territories, recruits, volunteers, war-prisoners)⁹.

York, McGraw-Hill, 1974); V. Ćorović, *Istorija Jugoslavije (History of Yugoslavia)*, Beograd, Narodno delo, 1933, (cyrillic); V. Ćorović, *Odnosi između Srbije i Austro-Ugarske u XX veku (Serbian – Austrian-Hungarian Relations in the 20th Century)*, Beograd, Biblioteka grada Beograda, 1992, (cyrillic); A. Mitrović, *Prodor na Balkan. Srbija u planovima Austro-Ugarske i Nemačke 1908-1918 (A Penetration in the Balkans. Serbia in Austro-Hungarian and German Planning 1908-1918)*, Beograd, NOLIT, 1981, (Drugo izdanje/Second edition 2011); *Diplomska prepiska o srpsko – austro-ugarskom sukobu (Diplomatic Correspondence on Serbian – Austro-Hungarian Conflict)*, Niš, 1914; *Srpsko-austrijski i evropski rat: Diplomatski i drugi dokumenti (Serbian-Austrian and European War: Diplomatic and Other Documents)*, I, Niš, 1915; *Diplomska prepiska Kraljevine Srbije (Diplomatic Correspondence of the Kingdom of Serbia)*, knjiga I (volume I) (1. januar 1902-1. jun 1903) (1. January 1902-1. June 1903), editor V. Ćorović, Beograd, Državna štamparija, 1933; *Dokumenta o spoljnoj politici Kraljevine Srbije 1903-1914, I-VII (Documents on Foreign Policy of the Kingdom of Serbia 1903-1914, I-VII)* (Vol. II has 3 annexes), Beograd, SANU, 1980-2009.

⁷ M. Ekmečić, *Ogledi iz istorije (Historical Essays)*, Drugo izdanje, Beograd, Službeni list SRJ, 2002, (cyrillic); A. Mitrović, *Fric Fišer ili nemačko suočavanje sa istorijom (Fritz Fischer or a German Facing the History)*, uvodna studija, in Fric Fišer, *Savez elita (Alliance of Elites: On Continuity of Structures of Power in Germany 1871-1945)*, Beograd, NOLIT, 1985, pp. 9-53; A. Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu*, Beograd, SKZ, 1984, (cyrillic) (english edition: *Serbia's Great War 1914-1918*, London, Hurst & Co., 2007); A. Mitrović, *Prodor na Balkan. Srbija u planovima Austro-Ugarske i Nemačke 1908-1918 (A Penetration in the Balkans. Serbia in Austro-Hungarian and German Planning 1908-1918)*, Beograd, NOLIT, 1981 (Drugo izdanje 2011); V. Dedijer, *Sarajevo 1914*, Beograd, 1966 (1979) (English edition: *The Road to Sarajevo*, London, 1967), (French: *Sur la route de Sarajevo*, Paris, Gallimard, 1969); D. Bataković, *Prelude to Sarajevo: The Serbian Question in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1878-1914*, in „Balcanica”, vol. XXVII, Belgrade, Institute for Balkan Studies, 1996, pp. 117-155; See also: Velibor Buha, *Srbija u nemačkom i austrijskom tumačenju krivice za Prvi svetski rat 1919-1941 (Serbia in the Austrian and German interpreting of “war guilt” for World War I 1919-1941)*, MA thesis, Beograd, 2010; M. Bjelajac, *Novi (stari) zapleti oko uzroka Prvog svetskog rata pred obeležavanje 100.godišnjice...;* Milan Ž. Živanović, *Solunski proces 1917 (The Thessaloniki Process)*, Beograd, Savremena administracija, 1955.

⁸ Đorđe Stanković, *Nikola Pašić i jugoslovensko pitanje (Nikola Pašić and Yugoslav Question)*, 1-2, Beograd, BIGZ, 1985, (cyrillic); M. Ekmečić, *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914. godine (Serbia's War Aims in 1914)*, 1973, (cyrillic), (Drugo izdanje 1990), (Preface to Second edition is of great interest); D. Janković, *Srbija i jugoslovensko pitanje 1914-1915 (Serbia and the Yugoslav Question 1914-1915)*, Beograd, 1973.

⁹ Vojvoda Živojin Mišić, *Moje uspomene (My memories)*, S. Skoko (ed.), Beograd, BIGZ, 1985, (cyrillic); S. Skoko, P. Opačić, *Vojvoda Stepa Stepanović (Voyvoda Stepa Stepanović)*, 1-2, Beograd, BIGZ, 1985, (cyrillic); S. Skoko, *Vojvoda Radomir Putnik (Voyvoda Radomir Putnik)*, 1-2, Beograd, BIGZ, 1985, (cyrillic); S. Skoko, *Kolubarska bitka 1914 (The Battle at Kolubara 1914)*, Beograd, Stručna knjiga, 1990, (cyrillic); P. Opačić, *Srbija i Solunski front (Serbia and the Thessaloniki Front)*,

5. The occupation of Serbia (Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian occupation, devastation of the territory, extermination, deportation, concentration camps for the Serbs, refugees, collaboration)¹⁰.

Beograd, Književne novine, 1984, (cyrillic); P. Opačić, *Solunska ofanziva 1918.godine: srpska vojska u završnom periodu Prvog svetskog rata (The Thessaloniki Front: Serbian Army in the Final Operations of World War I)*, Beograd, Vojnoistorijski institut, 1980, (cyrillic); Nikola B. Popović (ed.), *Jugoslovenski dobrovoljci 1914-1918. Srbija, Južna Amerika, Australija, Francuska, Italija, Solunski front (Yugoslav volunteers 1914-1918. Serbia, South America, Australia, France, Italy, Thessalonica front)*, Beograd, 1980; B. Hrabak, *Austro-ugarski zarobljenici u Srbiji 1914-1915.god. i prilikom povlačenja kroz Albaniju (Austrian-Hungarian war-prisoners in Serbia 1914-1915, and during the retreat through Albania)*, in „Zbornik Historijskog instituta Slavonije”, br.2/1964; Series: *Srbija 1914. godine*, knj.3, Beograd, Zbornik radova Istorijskog instituta, 1984; *Srbija 1915. godine*, knj.4, Beograd, Zbornik radova Istorijskog instituta, 1985; *Srbija 1916. godine*, Zbornik radova Istorijskog instituta, knj. 5, Beograd 1987. *Srbija 1917. godine*, knj.6, Beograd, Zbornik radova Istorijskog instituta, 1988; *Srbija 1918. godine*, knj.7, Beograd, Zbornik radova Istorijskog instituta, 1989; *Srbija na kraju Prvog svetskog rata (Serbia at the End of the First World War)*, knj.8, Beograd, Zbornik radova Istorijskog instituta, 1990; *Dobrovoljci u oslobodilačkim ratovima Srba i Crnogoraca (Volunteers in the Liberation Wars of Serbs and Montenegrins)*, Beograd, ISI, 1996; Isidor Djuković, *Srpski ratni zarobljenici u Turskoj 1917-1918. godine (Serbia's war-prisoners in Turkey 1917-1918)*, in „Vojnoistorijski glasnik”, No.1/2001; B. Bjelajac, *Od Soluna do Rijeke i Celovca. Vojni i politički značaj operacija srpske vojske 1918- jun 1919 (From Thessaloniki to Fiume and Klafenfurt. Military and political Importance of the Operation of Serbian Army 1918 – June 1919)*, in „Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis”, 1/1997.

¹⁰ B. Bojić, *Srpske izbeglice u Prvom svetskom ratu (1914-1921)*, (*The Serbian Refugees in World War I 1914-1921*), Beograd, Zavod za udžbenike, 2007, (cyrillic); Božica Mladenović, *Grad u austrougarskoj okupacionoj zoni u Srbiji od 1916 do 1918 godine (Cities in the Occupied Serbia 1916-1918)*, Beograd, 2000; V. Stojančević, *Srbija i srpski narod za vreme okupacije 1914-1918 (Serbia and the Serbian People during the Occupation 1914-1918)*, Leskovac, 1990; A. Mitrović, *Srbija u Prvom svetskom ratu*, Beograd, SKZ, 1984, (english edition: *Serbia's Great War 1914-1918*, London, Hurst & Co., 2007); A. Mitrović, *Ustaničke borbe u Srbiji 1916-1918 (Uprising battles in Serbia 1916-1918)*, Beograd, Srpska književna zadruga, 1987; Đ. Stanković, *Izazov nove istorije (Challenge of New History)*, I-II, Beograd, 1992-1994; Milivoje Perović, *Ustanak na jugu Srbije 1917: Toplički ustanak (An Uprising in South Serbia 1917: Toplica Uprising)*, Beograd, 1954; Sladjana Bojković, Miloje Pršić (eds.), *Stradanje srpskog naroda u Srbiji 1914-1918. Dokumenta (Atrocities of Serbian people in Serbia 1914-1918. Documents)*, Istorijski muzej Srbije, Beograd, 2000; Đ. Stanković, *Koncentracioni logor Pleternica (1914-1916) (Concentration Camp Pleternica 1914-1916)*, in *Veleizdajnički proces u Banjaluci*, Banjaluka, 1987; Đ. Stanković, *Srpski studenti u koncentracionim logorima Austro-Ugarske (1914-1918) (Serbian Students in the Concentration Camps in Austria-Hungary 1914-1918)*, in *Studenti i Univerzitet 1914-1954 (Students and University 1914-1954)*, Beograd, CSI, 2000, pp. 1-19; Đ. Stanković, *Nikola Pašić i povrede međunarodnog prava u Prvom svetskom ratu od strane Bugarske (Nikola Pašić and International Laws in World War I : Bulgarian role)*, in „Vojnoistorijski glasnik”, No.1-2/2000, pp. 30-40; Đ. Stanković, *Srpska vlada i povrede međunarodnog prava Srbije od strane Austro-Ugarske u Prvom svetskom ratu (Serbian Government and International Law in World War I : Austrian-Hungarian role)*, in „Istorija XX veka”, No.1/2001, pp. 9-18; R. A. Reiss, *Comment les Austro-Hongrois ont fait la guerre en Serbie, Observations d'un neutre*, Paris, 1915; R. A. Reiss, *Rapport sur les atrocités commises par les troupes austro-hongroises pendant la première invasion de la Serbie présenté au gouvernement serbe*, Paris, 1919; Dr A. Van Tienhoven, *Avec les Serbes en Serbie et en Albanie 1914-1916. Journal de Guerre d'un Chirurgien*, Paris, 1918; C. Sturzenegger, *Die Wiederauferstehung Serbiens seine gloreichsten und dunkelsten Tage*, Bern-Berlin, 1920; P. Opačić, *Politika genocida Austrougarske protiv Srba u Prvom svetskom ratu (Austrian-Hungarian genocide policy against Serbs in World War I)*, in „Vojno-istorijski glasnik”, 1-2/1994, pp. 47-78; S. Bojković,

6. Serbia and the political campaign for Yugoslavia (organizations, policy, propaganda, the role of the elites, especially the intellectual and creative ones)¹¹.
7. The creation of Yugoslavia: enemies and Allies (especially France, Great Britain, USA, Russia, Italy, and also revisionist states and centres of power – Germany, Austria, Hungary, the Catholic and the Orthodox Church)¹².

Zločini austrougarskih trupa u Srbiji avgusta 1914 (Crimes against humanity of Austrian-Hungarian Army in Serbia in August 1914), in „Vojno-istorijski glasnik”, 1-2/1994, pp. 455-473; M. Bjelajac, *Ratovanje Srba i Hrvata na prostoru Podrinja 1914 (susret dva sveta) (Serbs and Croats battling in the area of Podrinje 1914. The encounter of two worlds)*, in *Valjevo 1914-1918*, Valjevo 2000, pp. 114-130; B. Hrabak, *Arbanaški upadi i pobune na Kosovu i u Makedoniji od kraja 1912. do kraja 1915. godine (Albanian uprisings in Kosovo and Macedonia from the end of 1912. till the end of 1915)*, Vranje, 1988.

¹¹ A. Mitrović, *Struktura ratnog finansiranja Srbije 1914-1915 (The financial structure of conducting the war in Serbia during 1914-1915)*, in „Tokovi istorije”, 1-2/2000; Đ. Stanković, *Nikola Pašić, saveznici i stvaranje Jugoslavije (Nikola Pašić, allies and the Creation of Yugoslavia)*, Zaječar, 1995, (cyrillic); Ubavka Ostojić Fejić, *SAD i Srbija 1914-1918 (USA and Serbia 1914-1918)*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1994; D. Vujović, *Francuski masoni i jugoslovensko pitanje 1914-1918 (French masonry and Yugoslav question 1914-1918)*, Beograd, Biblioteka opšta izdanja, 1994; Ljubinka Trgovčević, *Naučnici Srbije i stvaranje jugoslovenske države 1914-1920 (Serbian scientists and the creation of Yugoslav state 1914-1920)*, Beograd, Narodna knjiga i SKZ, 1987, second edition (cyrillic); *Politički život Jugoslavije 1914-1945 (Political history of Yugoslavia 1914-1945)*, Beograd, Treći program, 1973, (in broader Serbian historical culture these essays and articles are famous, much appreciated, much used, essential for the initial understanding of Serbian position in World War I and so called First Yugoslavia); A. Mitrović, *Jugoslavija na konferenciji mira 1919-1920 (Yugoslavia at the Peace Conference 1919-1920)*, Beograd, 1969.

¹² D. T. Bataković (ed.), *La Serbie et la France: une alliance atypique. Les relations politiques, économiques et culturelles, 1870-1940*, Institut des Etudes Balkaniques, Editions spéciales, vol. 104, Belgrade, Académie serbe des Sciences et des Arts, 2010; D.R. Živojinović, *Vatikan u balkanskom vrtlogu: studije i rasprave (Vatican in the Balkan whirlwind: studies and discussions)*, Beograd, Albatros Plus, 2012, (cyrillic); D. Živojinović, *La Dalmazia o morte – italijanska okupacija jugoslovenskih zemalja 1918-1923. godine (Dalmatia or death - Italian occupation of Yugoslav territories 1918-1923)*, Beograd, Zavod za udžbenike, 2012, (cyrillic); D. Živojinović, *Nadmeni saveznik i zanemareno srpstvo: britansko-srpski odnosi (1875-1941) (Haughtily Ally and neglected Serbian cause: British-Serbian relations (1875-1941))*, Beograd, Albatros Plus, 2011, (cyrillic); D. Živojinović, *Nevoljni ratnici – velike sile i Solunski front 1914-1918 (Unwilling warriors – Great Powers and Thessaloniki Front 1914-1918)*, Beograd, Zavod za udžbenike, 2010, (cyrillic); D. Živojinović, *U potrazi za zaštitnikom: studije o srpsko-američkim vezama 1878-1920 (In search for protector: studies on Serbian - American connections 1878-1920)*, Beograd, Albatros Plus, 2010, (cyrillic); D. Živojinović, *Nevoljni saveznici Rusija, Francuska, V. Britanija i SAD 1914-1918 (Unwilling Allies, Russia, France, Great Britain and USA 1914-1918)*, Beograd, Službeni list SRJ, 2000, (cyrillic); D. Živojinović, *Vatikan, Srbija i stvaranje jugoslovenske države 1914-1920 (Vatican, Serbia and the Creation of the Yugoslav state 1914-1920)*, Beograd, Službeni list, 1995, (cyrillic); N. B. Popović, *Srbija i carska Rusija (Serbia and Tzarist Russia)*, Beograd, Službeni list, 1994, (cyrillic); A. Mitrović, *Albanci u politici Austro-Ugarske prema Srbiji 1914-1918 (Albanians in the Austro-Hungarian policy towards Serbia 1914-1918)*, in *Srbi i Albanci u XX veku (Serbs and Albanians in the 20th Century)*, knj. LXI, Beograd, SANU, 1991, pp. 79-105; M. Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790-1918 (The Creation of Yugoslavia 1790-1918)*, I-II, Beograd, Prosveta, 1989, (cyrillic); A. Mitrović, *Prodor na Balkan. Srbija u planovima Austro-Ugarske i Nemačke 1908-1918...; D. Živojinović, Vatikan i prvi svetski rat 1914-1918 (The Vatican and World War I)*, Beograd, 1978, (second edition 1996); D.R. Živojinović, *The United States and the Vatican policies, 1914-1918*, Boulder – Colorado, Colorado Associated University Press, 1972.

8. The view from outside: French/British perception of Serbs before and during World War I¹³.
9. Yugoslavism/anti-Yugoslavism: ideas, movements, processes, personalities¹⁴.

Interwar period – (formulating the main syntagmas, writing first memories, notes, souvenirs, historical analyses and interpretations; conclusions)

The historiography between the two world wars, which has been more Yugoslav than Serbian in its general characteristics, shared the destiny of the state and country which history had to write and explain. There was not enough time for the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to explain itself. The effect of its historiography was very poor, and doubled by the communist regime's condemnations in post-World War II Yugoslavia¹⁵.

However, many excellent and useful works have been done in that period, having in mind the main themes of World War I. French and British historiographers gave an important contribution to the understanding of the Serbian role in the war and the making of Yugoslavia¹⁶. That great generation of French and British

¹³ Emile Haumant, *La Yougoslavie, études et souvenirs*, Paris, 1919; E. Haumant, *La Formation de la Yougoslavie*, Paris, 1930; Jacques Ancel, *Manuel historique de la question d'Orient (1792-1923)*, Paris, 1923; Idem, *Peuples et nations des Balkans. Géographie politique*, Paris, 1926 (second edition 1930); Auguste Gauvain, *Les origines de la guerre européenne*, Paris, 1915; A. Gauvain, *L'Europe avant la guerre*, Paris, 1917; Idem, *La première guerre balkanique 1912*, Paris, 1918; Idem, *La deuxième guerre balkanique 1913*, Paris, 1918; Idem, *La question yougoslave*, Paris, 1918; Idem, *L'Europe au jour le jour*, tome I-XIV, Paris, 1917-1923; Robert William Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, s.l., 1908; Idem, *The Southern Slav Question*, 1911; Idem, *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans*, 1917; Idem, *Sarajevo: A Study In The Origin Of The Great War*, 1926; Idem, *The Role of Bosnia in international Politics 1875-1919*, 1932; Pierre Combret de Lanux, *La Yougoslavie, la France et les Serbes*, Paris, 1916; René Pinon, *L'Europe et l'Empire Ottoman*, Paris, 1909; Idem, *L'Europe et la Jeune Turquie*, Paris, 1911; Idem, *L'Empire de la Méditerranée*, Paris, 1912; Idem, *François-Joseph, essai d'histoire psychologique, 1830-1916*, Paris, 1917.

¹⁴ M. Ekmečić, *Ogledi iz istorije (Historical Essays)*, Drugo izdanje, Beograd, Službeni list SRJ, 2002, (cyrillic); M. Ekmečić, *Dijalog prošlosti i sadašnjosti (A Dialogue between Past and Present)*, Beograd, JP Službeni list SRJ, 2002, (cyrillic); M. Ekmečić, *Encounters of Civilizations and Serbian Relations with Europe and More than just Military Allies from 1914*, Novi Sad, Toma Maksimovic fund for Aiding Serbs, 1998; M. Ekmečić, *Stvaranje Jugoslavije 1790-1918 (The Creation of Yugoslavia 1790-1918)*, I-II, Beograd, Prosveta, 1989, (cyrillic); M. Ekmečić, *Ratni ciljevi Srbije 1914. godine (Serbia's War Aims in 1914)*, 1973, (cyrillic); M. Ekmečić, *Srbija između Srednje Evrope i Evrope (Serbia between Central Europe and Europe)*, Beograd, Politika BMG, 1992, (cyrillic); M. Ekmečić, *Osnove građanske diktature u Evropi između dva rata (The Foundation of Dictatorships in Europe between two world war)*, Sarajevo, 1965. See also: M. Stefanovska, *Ideja hrvatskog državnog prava i stvaranje Jugoslavije (The Idea of Croatian State Right and the creation of Yugoslavia)*, Beograd, 1995.

¹⁵ See also Jorjo Tadić (ed.), *Dix années d'historiographie yougoslave, 1945-1955*, Belgrade, 1955; official Yugoslav Communist Party attitudes, via some personalities and directly, towards so called First Yugoslavia, and implicitly towards World War I can be found on p. 491 and afterwards. Anyway, the attitude has been somehow vague, having in mind that the Second Yugoslavia has not been possible without First Yugoslavia.

¹⁶ See ref. 12.

slavists, not only researched and wrote the histories of all Yugoslav communities, but has advocated the Yugoslav cause in their own countries and in front of the international community. Some useful diplomatic documents have been published during World War I, and between 1924 and 1939. The important military documents were published in the 31 volumes series under the name *The Great War of Serbia for Liberation and Unification of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes*¹⁷.

The most important individual endeavor in Serbian/Yugoslav historiography was that of Vladimir Ćorović, who has written in that period his vast manuscripts on Serbian and Yugoslav history actually ending with World War I, and also very extensive texts about the relation between Serbia and Austria-Hungary. Only one history of Yugoslavia has been published in 1933 (Ćorović, V., *History of Yugoslavia*), the other two – in 1989 and 1992¹⁸. *History of Yugoslavia* is very explanatory for the whole set of questions about the origins of World War I. Written in the best manner of French *l'école de méthode*, it possesses a great equilibrium and puts stress on the similarities, unity, not differences. The other manuscripts, of the same quality and the interest for the origins of World War I, have shared the same destiny like the country in 1941, and finally have been published in the 1980s and the 1990s. By publishing these books, quality has been revealed, rather than some obscure forbidden manuscript¹⁹.

After World War II – (post-war period, taking the attitudes towards immediate and remote past, first signs of revisionism in the seventies)

The questions put in the front row of general research and analysis of World War I were revived in Europe in the sixties, especially with the works of A.J.P. Taylor and Fritz Fischer, which had an important echo in the Balkans, especially in Serb historiography (inside Yugoslavia)²⁰. Being in obvious opposition, these two interpretations about the origins of both world wars, about German war aims and continuity and discontinuity of German policy toward world power, influenced historical concepts and interpretations of the most outstanding names in Serbian historiography of the 20th century, such as Milorad Ekmečić and Andrej Mitrović.

¹⁷ *Diplomska prepiska o srpsko – austro-ugarskom sukobu (Diplomatic Correspondence on Serbian – Austro-Hungarian Conflict)*, Niš, 1914; *Srpsko-austrijski i evropski rat: Diplomatski i drugi dokumenti (Serbian-Austrian and European War: Diplomatic and Other Documents)*, I, Niš, 1915; *Diplomska prepiska Kraljevine Srbije (Diplomatic Correspondance of the Kingdom of Serbia)...*; *The Great War of Serbia for Liberation and Unification of Serbes, Croats and Slovenes*, vol. 1, Belgrade, 1924, to vol. 31, Belgrade, 1939; *Dokumenta o spoljnoj politici Kraljevine Srbije 1903-1914...*

¹⁸ Vladimir Ćorović, *Istorija Srba (History of Serbs)*, vol. I-III, Beograd, 1989; Vladimir Ćorović, *Odnosi između Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u 20. veku (Serbian – Austrian-Hungarian Relations in the 20th Century)*, Beograd, 1992.

¹⁹ Radoš Ljušić, *O sudbini Ćorovićeve knjige (About the Destiny of Ćorović 's book)*, in *Odnosi između Austro-Ugarske i Srbije u 20. veku (Serbian – Austrian-Hungarian Relations in the 20th Century)*, Beograd, 1992.

²⁰ Till that period, during the 1950s and the 1960s, it has been the domination of military questions and small questions concerning the creation of Yugoslavia.

Both are among the most important Serbian historians who dealt with the origins of the Great War, its inner course, immediate and remote consequences. Not only because of the close attachment to the European and world tendencies in historiography, and not only because of the cool attitude towards the reigning ideology in the communist/socialist Yugoslavia/Serbia, but because both historians represent the highest level of Serbian historiography about and around the World Wars. Their importance lay in the fact that they highly developed conceptual and methodological level of Serbian scientific historiography about history of World War I. It could be said that both represent the top of socialist and post-socialist Serbian historiography, having in mind that their works haven't lost anything in consistency after the historical breakdown of Yugoslav idea, state, society (created in World War I, and survived World War II).

Milorad Ekmečić²¹ analyses in his works²² in general, and especially in his famous two tomes *The Creation of Yugoslavia 1790-1918*, which reflects a living mixture of Yugoslav nationalisms and represents their histories, all other centres of power who have ruled and have directed the history of South Slav people and territory, their deep impact on the historical destiny of small Yugoslav communities. It is the story about the way small agrarian communities, with tiny and corrupt elites, have arranged with enormous sacrifices to have their own framework for living. For them Yugoslavia represented not only the idea of freedom but the transformation from social, political and economic object to the subject of the European community. As Ekmečić shows us, with intellectual persuasiveness, it has been done not only against historical enemies, but also against historical allies and supporters in World War I. In *The Serbian War Aims 1914*, like in other works, he argued that Serbia has made decision for being involved in the creation of Yugoslavia completely by herself, only in the complicity with other Yugoslav communities, and in some kind of mute accordance with the Allies. He has extensively analyzed the similarities and closeness of Yugoslav communities, mutual perceptions and perceptions from outside.

In his works, Andrej Mitrović passed the same way as M. Ekmečić, trying to find the origins of the interwar regimes in Europe. From *The Age of Intolerance. The Political History of Great Powers of Europe 1919-1939* (1st ed., Belgrade, 1974; 2nd ed., Belgrade, 2012), he passed on detailed research and analysis of Austrian-Hungarian and German plans of reorganization of South Slav and Serbian communities and territories in 1908-1918, from the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina till the end of World War I. That is a detailed history of transformation of imperialistic plans into reality by means of war, in the line with F. Fisher's historiography, whom Mitrović introduced into Serbian historiography in the best manner²³. Combined with *Serbia's Great War 1914-1918* (Hurst & Co., London 2007), it is the

²¹ See *Wikipedia* on Milorad Ekmečić, in Serbian-Croat cyrillic and in English, with the great differences in information. English *Wikipedia* cited only one work of this prominent Serbian-Yugoslav historian. See also the site of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

²² See ref. 13.

²³ A. Mitrović, *Fritz Fischer or German Facing the History*, in Fritz Fisher, *Alliance of Elites: On Continuity of Structures of Power in Germany 1871-1945*, Beograd, 1985, pp. 9-53.

most detailed insight in diplomatic, military, social, economic, political condition of one small nation in big events. From European to Serb national history, Mitrović then came to a local history perspective in two works. He gave us two perspectives of the so called Toplica Uprising 1916-1918 (*Toplica Uprising: the Place in Serbian History*, 1st ed., Belgrade, 1993; *Uprising battles in Srbiji 1916-1918*, Belgrade, 1987).

In the 1960s and onwards two military historians, Savo Skoko and Petar Opačić, have made initial researches about military operations of Serbian Army, and continued to produce monographs on the most important topics of these aspects of World War I, adding the publishing of the documents and memoirs of the most important military personalities, such as Voyvodas Živojin Mišić, Stepa Stepanović and Radomir Putnik²⁴.

We could mention here two important works from the side of a Montenegrin historian Novica Rakočević. He has given to Serbian and Montenegrin historiography two everlasting books such as *Montenegro in the First World War (1914-1918)* (Cetinje, 1969) and *Political Relations between Montenegro and Serbia 1903-1918* (Cetinje, 1981).

The important question of foreign relationships of Serbia (and Montenegro) with European Powers, traditional and new ones in their involvement in the Balkans, have been hugely researched by Dragoljub Živojinović. Since the beginning of his career in the 1970s, he has been analyzing in detail in his numerous works the changing policies of the allies (Great Britain, France, USA, Russia, Italy) towards Serbia and her position and role in the Western Balkans. It has been done especially for World War I and around it. Živojinović has made a special contribution in researching the role of Vatican, USA and Italy in the Western Balkans during the war²⁵.

Aside of A. Mitrovića, who concentrated on the Austrian occupation zone, Vladimir Stojančević did it for Bulgarian in one conventional good work²⁶. In the last decades, historian Božica Mladenović has added to the research topics of occupied Serbia some socio-historical phenomena like the general and specific situation in the occupied cities during the war²⁷.

The most important series of scientific gatherings on World War I, with an international character, which resulted in six volumes of articles, was published in Belgrade just before the dissolution of Yugoslavia, between 1984 and 1990²⁸. Its number, diversity, high level of objectivity, made them of great importance.

²⁴ See ref. 8.

²⁵ See ref. 11.

²⁶ Vl. Stojančević, *Srbija i srpski narod za vreme okupacije 1914-1918 (Serbia and the Serbian People during the Occupation 1914-1918)*, Leskovac, 1990.

²⁷ B. Mladenović, *Grad u austrougarskoj okupacionoj zoni u Srbiji od 1916 do 1918 godine (Cities in the Occupied Serbia 1916-1918)*, Beograd, 2000.

²⁸ Slavenko Terzić (ed.), *Srbija 1914. Zbornik radova istorijskog instituta (Serbia 1914. Collection of Works of Historical Institut)*, vol.3, Belgrade, 1984, and the subsequent.

Post-Yugoslav Period. Main Characteristics

There have been a lot of changes in Serbian historiography during the 1980s, which afterwards pushed the things towards revisionism. New fields of research have been opened and analyzed in the domain of traditional political history, but also in other directions. Journals for social studies and theory have opened the debates and activated many protagonists, old and new, of “new history”. One of them was Đorđe Stanković, who explained the possibilities of multidisciplinary and methodological premises characteristic for “new history”²⁹. During this period, there have been a lot of serious discussions between the protagonists of national/nationalistic historiographies inside Yugoslavia. There have been some historians who argued that putting in question revolutionary dogma could influence, or could undermine the persistence of the federal state³⁰.

In the atmosphere of national/nationalistic euphoria during the 1980s (after the uprising in Kosovo 1981), there has begun the era of open revisionism, especially towards the whole phenomenon of Yugoslavia. There was the domination of themes like the reinterpretation of the history of World War II, the civil war in Yugoslavia during the 1940s, atrocities over civilians, terror of the communists over the defeated. It has been the trend compatible with euphoria of reinterpreting the same historical themes in East European countries after the collapse of communist regimes. Very often one extreme has been replaced with the other.

During the civil war and the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the only developed scientific work inside Serbian historiography, which deeply affected one of the main themes of World War I, was that of Dragoljub Živojinović. Since the middle 1990s till 2011 he published five (seven if we include two more works on Montenegro in World War I) voluminous books which are a revisited history of the role of the allies played during World War I in the Balkans, especially on the South Slavs territory. Deeply influenced by the new perception of Western Balkans of the same countries which have been deeply involved in the “Yugoslav cause” during World War I, Živojinović put a stress in his vast analyses on the documents that reflect negative policies, attitudes, actions of all allies from World War I. It is not a deep, new interpretation, but its rather making a new shadow on the old picture³¹.

It could be argued whether some revisionism has been operated in Serbian historiography or not, or is it some sham-revisionism. But having in mind the main themes about World War I, which have been established previously, in the 1970s and the 1980s, it is hardly possible to say that. On the top of his evolution, if we can say so, in the midst of socialist period, Serbian historiography gave the quality of general and specific perception of the Great War and its general impact on the

²⁹ Đorđe Stanković, *Nove mogućnosti istraživanja revolucionarnog faktora (New possibilities of researching the history of revolutionary factor)*, in „Marksistička misao”, no. 6/1981.

³⁰ Ivo Banac, *The Dissolution of Yugoslav Historiography*, in Sabrina Petra Ramet, Ljubisa S. Adamovich (eds.), *Beyond Yugoslavia: Politics, Economics and Culture in a Shattered Community*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1995, pp. 39-65.

³¹ See ref. 12.

Yugoslav area, combined with vast and serious analyses of the origins of World War I, which are for now unmovable rock.

The main revisionism of the history of World War I in the Balkans, and especially having in mind the position of Serbia and its role, comes from outside. The obvious reason for that is a new perception of the history of Serbia and Serbia's role, which has been once positive and now negative. Geo-strategy of the Balkans has been changed, along with the position of Serbia and her Yugoslav role, therefore the perception has changed and so did the historiography³².

Conclusion

More than Marxist philosophy and conception on history, it was the communist ideology which imposed limits on concepts, researches and analyses of historical materials concerning not only World War I. Even if there were researches by historians who argued that Yugoslavia was created not only against "traditional enemies" (Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, Ottoman Empire) but also against "traditional friends" (like Tsarist Russia or new European allies like Italy, after the London Treaty), that issue has not entered in political culture, collective memory or education system. Also the question whether Yugoslavia, as a major achievement of World War I, was an artificial Versailles system product or not, or the question of Serbian hegemony (which has arisen from World War I according to some opinions) in that artificial state, or the so called national question Yugoslavia (also based on the course of the events during World War I, but also on some fundamental differences) have not been answered in a proper way, even in the intellectual and scientific community.

These questions about the major "consequence" of World War I in the Western Balkans, i.e. the creation of Yugoslavia, were starting points for the revisionist wave during the 1980s and at the early 1990s, within the phenomenon of autorevisionism³³. With the dissolution of Yugoslavia, what used to be natural starting points for history writing became the most problematic or obscure questions in small, narrow, national/nationalistic histories. Serbian historiography has been saved from this in some way.

In the last two decades Serbian historiography has not been capable to reproduce the high level of historiography which has been produced during the late 1960s and during the 1970s and the 1980s. Having in mind the political, economic, social situation and cultural atmosphere, which have to be overcome, it is for the next generations to be prepared for new interpretations. In the end, is it possible to change history on the level of facts? Or is it possible to change only the perspective?

³² See ref. 1.

³³ Especially in the works of Dragoljub Živojinović, published and republished in the last two decades.