

THE SERBIAN RIGHT-WING
PARTIES AND INTELLECTUALS IN
THE KINGDOM OF YUGOSLAVIA, 1934–1941

Edited by
Dragan Bakić



INSTITUTE FOR BALKAN STUDIES
OF THE SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS

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Dragan Bakić

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one institution and its staff deserve special praise. It was in the Archives of Yugoslavia that the bulk of the research was done by the three historians that contributed to this volume (Dušan Fundić, Rastko Lompar and Dragan Bakić). As it happened, our archival investigations had to be carried out in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and, with all the restrictions imposed on accessing material in the reading room, it seemed that this would be virtually impossible to do. Indeed, it would have been impossible if it had not been for the understanding and unstinting support of the Director of the Archives of Yugoslavia, Dr. Milan Terzić, who appreciated the project's time constraints and made special arrangements for the team members to complete their research. Without his help, this volume would have never seen the light of day. Along with their director, we are indebted to the archivists Tamara Ivanović and Ivana Božović, in particular, for their kind assistance during the sweltering summer months of 2021 when most of our research was done.

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PART 4

Between Conservatism and Fascism:

Prominent Public Figures

(Svetlana Šeatović, Dragan Bakić, Vladimir Cvetković)

Radical Right-Wingers among Men of Letters: Vladimir Velmar-Janković and Stanislav Krakov

Svetlana Šeatović

Institute for Literature and Arts

Stanislav Krakov and Vladimir Velmar-Janković were active participants in the collaborationist regime in Serbia, and hence all of their work in culture, literature, journalism and politics before the Second World War has been reduced to that part of their life. Without critically assessing the overall significance of both authors, who were also politicians, most historians of Serbian literature tended to define their opuses through a right-wing prism or simply reduce their contributions to short bibliographical notes. It was only in the 1990s and, more intensively, in the opening decades of the 21st century that the names of Stanislav Krakov, a far more notable figure in terms of literary merit, and Vladimir Velmar-Janković, with his modest opus, became a more common topic of literary-historical and poetical interpretations without the political bias of the post-war period. Velmar-Janković fled to Spain, where he spent the rest of his life working as a psychologist; his wife and two daughters, Gordana and Svetlana, remained in Yugoslavia under the communist regime. Showing remarkable tactfulness and ability to adapt to the new situation, Vladimir Velmar-Janković's family survived the post-war years and adjusted to the new political environment. His daughter Svetlana met her father for the first time in 1965, in Paris, twenty-one years after he emigrated. Until the mid-1980s, Svetlana's career as a literary critic and editor at the publishing house Prosveta was marked by various forms of political pressure. From that time on, however, the literary opus of Svetlana Velmar-Janković received recognition, shaking off political bias and the legacy of her fa-

ther's collaborationist work as a deputy in the Ministry of Education and Religion in the cabinet of Milan Nedić. Svetlana's career as an author reached its peak in the 1990s; her works garnered the most prestigious awards (the NIN Award), were translated into other languages and became the subject of many scholarly studies and critical interpretations before her death in 2014.

Vladimir Velmar-Janković was born in the village of Čaglič near Pakrac (1895), then in Austria-Hungary, to the family of an Orthodox priest. He spent a part of his childhood in Varaždin, where he attended primary school before moving on to the high school Tökölyanum in Budapest. He graduated from the Law School of the University of Zagreb. After the unification of 1918, the Janković family moved to Belgrade. To honor his beloved parents, Vladimir Janković took the first three letters of his father's (Velimir) and mother's (Marija) names and added the acronym Velmar to his last name. In interwar Belgrade, he mostly focused on his cultural work, writing plays, essays, and reviews; from 1918 to 1924, he worked as a public servant at the Ministry of Finance and Agrarian Reform. In 1924, he began working at the Ministry of Education, first in the art department and then in the department for international cultural cooperation, quickly becoming its chief. He authored several prose works and a number of plays, which found their place in the repertoires of Belgrade theaters. As a playwright, he won some of the most prestigious awards in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. His most notable plays are *U vrtlogu* (*In the Maelstrom*), *Novi* (*The New One*), *Robovi* (*Slaves*), *Bez ljubavi* (*No Love*), *Sreća A. D.* (*Happiness Ltd.*), *Državni neprijatelj br. 3* (*Enemy of the State No. 3*), *Gradjanska komedija* (*Bourgeois Comedy*), *Dnevna vest* (*Daily News*). The staging of the play *Sreća A. D.* (*Happiness Ltd.*) elicited protestations from left-wing artists, public protests and finally a boycott of the National Theater in 1933. The fate of this play alone could be the topic of a case study on the relationship between left-wing and right-wing ideas in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, particularly the rise of Bolshevik propaganda in 1930s Belgrade, both in public life and in Serbian and Croatian literary circles.

Nova drama (*A New Play*) won the State Award, and his novel *Ivan Mandušin* (*Ivan Mandushin*) and short story *Dečak s Une* (*A Boy from the Una River*) were both well-received among critics. However, Vladi-

mir Velmar-Janković's most notable work is *Pogled s Kalemegdana: ogleđ o beogradskom čoveku* (*The View from Kalemegdan: A Treatise on the Belgrade Man*), a sociological essay written in 1936 and published in 1938, which brought Velmar-Janković the award of the Serbian Royal Academy. Jovan Deretić¹ described Velmar-Janković as a modernist who appeared in the 1920s, originally from Western Slavonia, who "[...] served as Milan Nedić's cabinet member during the occupation and later emigrated; he rose to prominence shortly after the First World War with expressionist prose, mostly focused on playwriting in the interwar period, making use of different genres in which he moved between the traditional and the experimental."² Deretić stresses that the play *Sreća A. D. Interkontinentalni spektakl u četiri čina s prologom* (*Happiness Ltd. An Intercontinental Spectacle in Four Acts with a Prologue*), 1933, which he judges to be Velmar-Janković's finest work that employs avant-garde devices, "questions two opposite totalitarian movements, fascism and communism" and argues that *Pogled s Kalemegdana* was built on the "same ideational underpinnings" as an attempt to assess the position of the Serbian people in Europe amid its simmering frictions on the eve of the Second World War.

The dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991 brought about a literary and historical reassessment of some marginalized authors, with new editions of their works. Vladimir Velmar-Janković's *Pogled s Kalemegdana* was reprinted for the first time since 1938 in 1991, with another seven reprints by various publishers and in high print runs, at least for a territory the size of Serbia (3,000 copies per reprint). The book *Ogledi o književnosti i nacionalnom duhu; Igrači na žici* (*Essays on Literature and the National Spirit; Tightrope Walkers*) – the second part being an unfinished novel with a plethora of autobiographical motifs from his stay in Rome after 1944 – was published by the Foundation of the Holy Hilandar Monastery (Belgrade, 2006) with a foreword by his daughter Svetlana and includes Velmar-Janković's collected non-fiction texts. Given

¹ Deretić authored the only *History of Serbian Literature* (*Istorija srpske književnosti*) to be reprinted to date: it was originally published in 1983, and an amended version appeared in 1996. This paper uses the amended edition with notes and new chapters posthumously published in 2007.

² Jovan Deretić, *Istorija srpske književnosti* (Beograd: Sezam Book, 2007), 1047–1048.

this revival of interest in the publishing industry, very little attention has so far been accorded to Vladimir Velmar-Janković's works in Serbian literary scholarship, whereas more recent historiography has made notable efforts to shed light on his ideological and political portrait.³

In the interwar period, Velmar-Janković was a contributor and editor of the *Novi vidici* journal, where he published essays and works in other genres; he was also a prominent member of the pro-fascist Yugoslav Action (*Jugoslovenska akcija*) and an associate of the National Defense (*Narodna odbrana*). The Yugoslav Action eventually merged with Dimitrije Ljotić's ZBOR, but Velmar-Janković, together with a group of former Yugoslav Action members, left Ljotić's party and ran in the elections of 1935 on the electoral list of Prime Minister Bogoljub Jevtić. He was active in the PEN Club and the Serbian Cultural Club (*Srpski kulturni klub*) and a member of the Yugoslav-German Society but, as Aleksandar Stojanović noted, "his involvement in the Serbian Cultural Club ended ignominiously when, after a few radically nationalist lectures, he clashed with Vladimir Ćorović, eventually retiring from active work at the club."⁴ In Milan Nedić's government, he served as a deputy at the Ministry of Education and Religion under Velibor Jonić and, in terms of propaganda, represented a very prominent figure during the German occupation (1941–1944), when he published numerous texts of a nationalist nature addressed to teachers and other educators. The educational activities of Vladimir Velmar-Janković focused on strengthening national and conservative ideas through the educa-

³ Marta Frajnd, "Komadi Vladimira Velmar-Jankovića kao dokument o problemima i dilemama jednog vremena," *Zbornik Matice srpske za književnost i jezik*, knj. 34, sv. 2/3 (1995): 411–418; Andreja Marić, "Eseji Vladimira Velmar-Jankovića: umjetničko djelo kao afirmacija ličnosti," in *Filologija i univerzitet* (Niš: Filozofski fakultet, 2012), 193–204; Bojan Djordjević, *Srpska kultura pod okupacijom* (Beograd: Institut za književnost i umetnost, 2008); Ljubinka Škodrić, *Ministarstvo prosvete i vera u Srbiji 1941–1944* (Beograd: Arhiv Srbije, 2009); Boro Majdanac, *Pozorište u okupiranoj Srbiji* (Beograd: Udruženje dramskih umetnika Srbije, Altera, 2011); Aleksandar Stojanović, *Srpski civilni/kulturni plan Vlade Milana Nedića* (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2012).

⁴ Aleksandar Stojanović, "Politička misao Vladimira Velmar-Jankovića," in *Srbi i rat u Jugoslaviji 1941. godine*, ed. Dragan Aleksić (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Muzej žrtava genocida, Institut za slavistiku Ruske akademije nauka, 2014), 20.

tion process: “Among the projects developed by the Ministry of Education and Religion with the aim of national revival, the most notable are the Serbian Civilian/Cultural plan as a general plan for the people’s future life and the State Educational Plan, which had the purpose of creating new national- and conservative-minded generations. The man behind these projects was the Minister’s deputy Vladimir Velmar-Janković, with the help of the Serbian university. Milan Nedić’s intention to establish a stratified parliament in occupied Serbia was thwarted by the occupiers themselves.”⁵

Vladimir Velmar-Janković left Serbia for good on 17 September 1944, before Milan Nedić’s cabinet and the Germans did. This piece of information and his later life are known to us thanks to a text written by his daughter Svetlana as late as 2006, in which she described three meetings with her father – in Paris (1965), Florence (1969), and Barcelona (1974). In conversations with her father, Svetlana learned that he was given a pass card for Rome in 1945 by an anonymous Italian partisan major who never attempted to find out who he was or where he was headed; another person who helped him was an unnamed Monsignor who took him to the Vatican where he stayed until 1947 under a false name, disguised as a friar; the same Monsignor then helped him flee to Spain. At the Vatican, Velmar-Janković pursued intellectual work; he was safe and had adequate if minimal means to ensure his livelihood. In Barcelona, he initially supported himself doing physical labor but, soon enough, his proficiency in German, French and English allowed him to become “an expert in coloring flowers, especially carnations. At that time, Spain was under strict sanctions because of Franco’s regime. The only goods that could be exported were flowers. That’s how I began working on exporting Spanish flowers to Hamburg, Germany, and Marseille, France.”⁶ Ironically, Velmar-Janković was first helped

⁵ Aleksandar Stojanović, “Ekstremna srpska medjuratna desnica – ideološka osnova srpskih kolaboracionista 1941–1945,” in Aleksić, *Srbi i rat u Jugoslaviji 1941. godine*, 124. See also Slobodan Kerkez, *Društvo Srbije u Drugom svetskom ratu 1941–1945* (Niš: Centar za balkanske studije, 2004); Slobodan Kerkez, *Obrazovno-kulturne prilike u Nedićevoj Srbiji* (Niš: Centar za balkanske studije, 2008), 137–145.

⁶ Svetlana Velmar-Janković, „Susret,” foreword in Vladimir Velmar-Janković, *Ogledi o književnosti i nacionalnom duhu – Igrači na žici (nezavršeni roman)* (Beograd, Zadužbina Svetog manastira Hilandara, 2006), 18.

by a communist and then by a member of the Catholic clergy – both of them members of camps he had written and fought against before he fled Belgrade in 1944. Once in Spain, he began writing psychology papers in the early 1960s, penning three studies in Spanish and founding the first mental health clinic in Barcelona called Orexis in 1972. He was killed in 1976 in a car accident in Barcelona. According to Svetlana, her father was working as a psychology professor in Barcelona already in 1965 under the false name Jorge Wukmir Galic. Svetlana Velmar-Janković said in 2001 for the daily *Glas javnosti* that she was in possession of her father's autobiography and planned to publish it when "it could not be used as a political argument for or against anyone."⁷ Unfortunately, the autobiography has yet to be published.

The basics of Velmar-Janković's ideological and political influence can be assessed by looking at the articles and political statements he published already in the 1920s. His views on the historical and state-building role of the Serbian people, the civilizational characteristics of the Serbs, the autochthonous nature of Serbian culture and the necessity of introducing planned lifestyle are highly distinctive. The history of the Serbian people laid out in his non-fiction texts and essays was the basis from which his most important work, *Pogled s Kalemegdana*, would develop. His vision of history has the characteristics of a Neo-Romantic image of his people's past, a feature that makes it similar to the culture of fascism that emerged in Italy. In 1929, he published in the journal *Narodna odbrana* a text titled "The State and Arts Policy", where he explains some important views derived from the fascist culture: "We are a new nation in Europe. We need to put in two-fold effort into everything and to technically and civilizationally catch up with the world around us and, at the same, convince the world that we have our own special aims of existence. It is therefore an even greater sin that the organization of our distinctive culture has not been given more momentum."⁸

A year earlier, Velmar had published a scathing article in the *Narodna odbrana* journal, "Between the Past and Future: Literature, Cul-

⁷ Svetlana Velmar-Janković, „Priznavao je samo Srbiju,” *Glas javnosti*, 8. mart 2001.

⁸ Vladimir Velmar-Janković, *Ogledi o književnosti i nacionalnom duhu*, 85.

ture, Politics”, in which he criticized the West, stressing the blind fascination of Serbian intellectuals and Serbian culture with Europeanism and heralding the ferocity that would mark his writings in the following years. He had an affinity for awareness of the regional characteristics and distinctiveness in Grigorije Božović’s prose; he stressed the importance of Sima Pandurović’s poetry and legacy. For him, Sima Pandurović was a poet of the homestead of the soul, capable of seeing into the human soul; however, it should be borne in mind that, in the late 1920s, among the young avant-garde writers, Pandurović was a poet and philosopher with extremely conservative views, an unforgiving critic who had early on broken with the authors that would rule the literary scene after the First World War. In the 1928 essay “The Importance of Ivo Vojnović”, Velmar-Janković presented this prominent Serbian poet, but also drew attention to the characters in Vojnović’s plays and their lofty morals as the models and symbols of the modern world. Velmar-Janković contributed to the *Misao* journal at a time when it was an extremely conservative literary and social magazine, opposed to the new avant-garde trends in art.

Revisiting his condemnation of Serbian intellectuals for their infatuation with Europe, in the article “Literary Revisions”, published in *Narodna odbrana* in 1931, Velmar-Janković lambasted *Srpski književni glasnik*, a prestigious and highly influential journal in Yugoslav literary life, because of its destructive influence on the Serbs’ religious sentiment: “The *Glasnik* crowd has always been non-religious and un-Orthodox. In this they are the offspring of a politically brutal century that destroyed the true forces of the national church and subjugated them not to the state but to petty politics, a century that fundamentally shattered our religious spirit and brought about the disastrous decadence of Serbian Orthodoxy, the consequences of which are being fatally felt only now.”⁹ Velmar-Janković wrote that Jovan Skerlić “had been on the best path to warm up the cold atmosphere with his ethos, however tribune-like it might have been, but he didn’t have time.” He saw Slobodan Jovanović as the most steadfast pro-Westerner among the *Glasnik* crowd. Finally, the role of *Srpski književni glasnik* had been to “de-

⁹ Ibid., 107.

spiritualize” the people, but there was some intellectual content in all of that. Velmar-Janković’s religious devotion is strongly present in his vision of what he thought authentic Serbian culture should be, and it is as much a reflection of his resistance to Western European rationalist philosophy as a reflection of his family background (his father was a priest), notwithstanding all other forms of education he had completed at the Tökölyanum and in Austria-Hungary.

In his most important work, *Pogled s Kalemegdana*, Velmar-Janković wanted to show the depth of the fall of Serbian culture and the Serbian-born man after the unification of 1918 in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The underlying premise was based on the complexity of the origin of the Serbian man, which he called the model of the Belgrade man as a form of modernization and industrialization of society that obliterated the authentic national identity and culture. Although some historians have described this work as a book on matters of race, confusing it with right-wing and racial ideas that came from German fascism,¹⁰ Velmar-Janković in fact attempted to describe the synthesis and evolution of the Serbian people. In the introductory part, he claimed that the work was written for the friends with whom he had discussed these matters and that its main objective was to have an “orientation purpose” and offer some starting points for debates about fundamental questions of public life and life in general. The author emphasized that the book was not intended for those partial to “demagoguery and pathos”, deftly sidestepping any demagogic and political labels regardless of his political past and involvement in public life. The book was written in November 1936 and published two years later, but already when he was writing it, Velmar-Janković felt that an age of “great discomobulation and imminent dangers” had begun. The work is dedicated to the Monument to the Unknown Hero at Avala, the symbol of Serbian suffering in the Great War and the sacrifices paid for the creation

¹⁰ Stojanović, “Politička misao Vladimira Velmar-Jankovića”; Aleksandar Stojanović, “Radoslav Grujić o prenosu moštiju srpskih svetitelja aprila 1942. iz NDH u okupiranu Srbiju,” *Tokovi istorije*, 1 (2012): 69–86, A. Mihailović, *Uspomene iz okupacije 1942–1944*, ed. Bojan Djordjević (Beograd: Narodna knjiga, 2004); Olivera Milosavljević, *Potisnuta istina: Kolaboracija u Srbiji 1941–1944* (Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji, 2006).



Vladimir Velmar Janković
(Courtesy of Wikipedia)



Cover page of
Pogled s Kalemegdana
(1938 edition)

of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In the mid-1930s, those sacrifices began to be forgotten, and many intellectuals, those of a national orientation and those who had become so after being disappointed in the Yugoslav community, highlighted this problem.

Looking out from Kalemegdan, dubbed by the Turks the “hillock for rumination,” the author developed his premise of the Belgrade man and the position of the city, which had made its inhabitants vulnerable to the blows of the western and eastern winds, i.e., the onslaught of European and Balkan culture with notable traces of Turkish and Oriental heritage. Retracing the history of Belgrade from the Celtic, Roman and Hungarian to the Ottoman period, the author focused on the city’s decline and rebirth as a metaphor for the Belgrade man: “The settlement of modern-day Belgrade was created in strife. It was populated by resilient rural people engaged in a struggle that often resembled agony. And that struggle is still ongoing.”¹¹ Commenting on the city’s structure, the author highlighted the mentality of a newcomer town, one that had welcomed non-natives from all quarters even before the Great War and especially after the unification and formation of the new state. As Velmar-Janković noted, at that time, in 1936, newcomers from all over Yugoslavia made up two thirds of the city’s population, imbuing it with the energy of constantly buzzing and simmering place. On the other hand, the author berated the challenges of new trends, the disruption of rigid patriarchal principles and, more generally, ethics, seeing them as novelties imported from Europe.

As the city was nonetheless made by the sons of peasants from Šumadija, Velmar-Janković turns to the main subject of this study: an exploration of the main elements that make up the spiritual bedrock of the Serbian national community: “This nexus of the spiritual underpinnings of the Serbian national community is made up of: Christianity through Orthodoxy, the national church of St. Sava, the patriarchal-heroic vision of life, respecting our ancestors and the notion of the old Serbian state, humanity contained in epic poetry and other oral traditions, preserved in the family and the rural homestead, cultivated in

¹¹ Vladimir Velmar-Janković, *Pogled s Kalemegdana* (Beograd: Biblioteka grada Beograda, 1991), 23.

the common people's vernacular. The great international influences that permeate our spirituality and have a strong impact on it are Byzantium and the Ottomans."¹² Of these two great historical influences, the stronger one seems to have come from the Turks because Velmar-Janković relativizes the Byzantine factor, ignoring its influence on the entire body of medieval Serbian literature and culture: "Also, the Byzantine influence in Serbia was peripheral and did not fully overshadow the preexisting underpinnings; although kings or rulers who harbored aspirations to the imperial throne in Constantinople tended to look up to Byzantium, in legislation, art, local customs and the overall mentality, there are significant features of independent life and views that defy the prevalence of the Greek language."¹³

Notably, Velmar-Janković completely rules out the influence of the Western European cultural circle, in which the Serbs entered with the rise of the Enlightenment and its most prominent local figure Dositej Obradović. From the literary and culturological perspective, it is unclear why Velmar-Janković chose to ignore this segment of Serbian culture and literature and the political ideas that trickled in through the Enlightenment and Romanticism in the nineteenth century. Except the minor role of Svetozar Marković and socialist ideas, which left their mark in Serbian Realism, there were hardly any influences beyond Western European ones. In the twentieth century, Serbian literature was heavily influenced by French Parnassianism and Baudelaire and, after the Great War, by Italian Futurism, German Expressionism, French Surrealism and Dada, all of which were directly associated with Serbian Surrealism. The trend of social literature informed by left-wing ideas emerged in the 1930s, and the time when Velmar-Janković wrote his treatise was the period of the closest ties with European culture and literature in every regard. The reason behind Velmar-Janković's interpretation was his uncompromising anti-European position and understanding of the Balkans as a civilizational circle in its own right:

Of all parts of Europe, the Balkans is the least European. And of all the Christians in the Balkans, the Serbs and Bulgarians are the least Euro-

¹² Ibid., 58.

¹³ Ibid., 83.

pean. The European man, *homo europaeus*, is the product of ceasarian Rome and Catholic Rome, Roman law and the Latin-speaking community. He has survived Roman Catholicism and the Lutheran Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. He has lived through the unique experience of the Middle Ages and its deconstruction. The European civilization, as the spiritual expression of the West, emerged from those spiritual underpinnings; and, on the eve of the 19th century, from that West emerged the European man with his faith in the European civilization and progress, the omnipotence of science and technology, armed with his industrial tools and his capitalism. The Serbian man has built very little on those foundations in the past and barely anything since he became the man of Belgrade's life improvisations in the 19th century. Instead of the sole influence of Rome and the West, he endured the two-fold influence of the East, Byzantium and the Turks.¹⁴

Velmar-Janković's infatuation with the Balkans as a supra-national yet culturally authentic space is also apparent in the title of his unfinished non-fiction work *Duše sa Balkana* (*Souls from the Balkans*).

It is suggestive that, in his construction of the "Belgrade man", Velmar-Janković completely omits the mentality that comes from the Mediterranean and Adriatic areas and bears the distinctive characteristics of a fringe region, a synthesis of Western and Eastern culture. This can be understood as a consequence of his focus on Šumadija peasants as the bedrock of the Serbian national community, as he called it, and the continental Balkan hinterlands, but also as another testament to his rejection of the European cultural heritage as an influence on the "man of the Belgrade life orientation". In this sense, Velmar-Janković steps away from the then-famous anthropologist and ethnologist Vladimir Dvorniković and his work *The Characterology of the Yugoslavs*, which includes all ethnic and religious groups from the northernmost to the southernmost reaches of Yugoslavia. Sometimes Velmar-Janković draws on the distinctions and taxonomy proposed by Jovan Cvijić in his *Psychological Characteristics of the South Slavs*, coming closer to the views of this geographer and ethnologist of European renown. Velmar-Janković sees Serbian culture as an autochthonous

¹⁴ Ibid., 82.

phenomenon and champions the notion of a racial personality of the Eastern, Levantine type, which is completely different from Cvijić's and Dvorniković's claims.

This autochthonous culture emerged from a peculiar course of historical events, a topic to which Velmar-Janković accords a lot of attention. Inspired by the depictions and interpretations of the Serbian past in epic poetry, he exalts the medieval period in Serbian history – more specifically, the Nemanjić dynasty period that began with Stefan Nemanja, the founder of the state and the progenitor of the saint-bearing lineage, and his son Rastko, canonized as St. Sava, the first Serbian educator – as the supreme expression of Serbian authenticity. The Ottoman conquest of the Serbian state was for him a result of feudal selfishness. He sees 1389 as the moment when the Serbs lost their state, completely disregarding the period of the Serbian Despotate. For Velmar-Janković, the Ottoman period was a time when the Serbian people came together, united in the liberation idea. Interestingly, he does see something good in the period of Ottoman rule – it separated the Serbs from Western European material culture. Velmar-Janković perceived the Yugoslav state as the final stage of the Serbian revolution that had begun in 1804, in which Serbia had the role of Piedmont for the South Slavs. This was in line with the ideology of integral Yugoslavism, which treated the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian history as parts of the same Yugoslav past, although it is uncertain how much Velmar-Janković genuinely believed this because his complete focus on Serbian history and culture reveals a degree of disappointment in the process of Yugoslav nation-state building. The interpretations offered by Velmar-Janković in *Pogled s Kalemegdana* were a more elaborate and comprehensive exposition of the ideas and thoughts on the historical role of the Serbian people he had already proposed in periodicals.¹⁵

We can but wonder how Velmar-Janković saw his views on Serbian history, culture and politics after 1945, having been lucky enough,

¹⁵ “Istorijski idealizam srpskog naroda,” *Prosvetni glasnik*, br. 3–5, 1942; “Duhovna kriza sadašnjice,” *Novi vidici*, br. 1, 1928; “Za prvu orijentaciju,” *Novi vidici*, br. 1, 1928; “Glose o kulturnom tipu,” *Novi vidici*, br. 7, 1928; “Revizija osnovnih književno-istorijskih stavova,” *Narodna odbrana*, br. 35, 1. 9. 1929. All of these texts are collected in Vladimir Velmar-Janković, *Ogledi o književnosti i nacionalnom duhu*.

unlike other collaborationists, not to end up on trial in communist Yugoslavia. However, we can be certain that his position on the communists and their henchmen in culture never changed. Svetlana Velmar-Janković has recalled that, during their meeting in Paris, her father spoke against the surrealists, seeing them as champions of totalitarianism in the field of culture. Commenting on the surrealists associated with left-wing movements in France, Serbia and Yugoslavia, Velmar-Janković told his daughter:

Have you noticed that all leading surrealists – Breton, Aragon and your precious Marko Ristić – seem to favor totalitarianism in culture? Given the chance – and they might be, God help us – they would throw in jail or even camps all those who have different opinions on art – mark my words – on art, not ideology. Indeed, they only advocate ideologized art, as far as I know. It’s incredibly easy for them to latch onto communist ideas and close their eyes before the reality of communist countries. They are true to their name in this: they refuse to acknowledge the reality and instead endorse only the notion of a possible – or rather, impossible – reality.¹⁶

Stanislav Krakov was born in Kragujevac on 28 March 1895 to Sigismund, of Polish extraction, and a Serbian mother. He graduated from law school but never practiced law. He fought in the Balkan Wars as a volunteer at the age of seventeen and distinguished himself in the detachments of Vojin Popović, *alias* Vojvoda Vuk. He also took part in the Great War as an officer, fighting valiantly at the Thessaloniki (Macedonian) Front; after the war, he was honored with the Royal Order of the White Eagle, Order of the Yugoslav Crown, Order of St. Sava, Bravery Medal, Commemorative Medal of the Great Serbian Retreat (Albanian Commemorative Medal) and the Cross of Charity. With his plethora of decorations, he was one of highly revered figures in Serbian and Yugoslav postwar society. His first prose text to be published was “Smrt kapetana Randjića” (“The Death of Captain Randjić”), an excerpt from the novel *Kroz buru* (*Through the Storm*). It appeared in the *Misao* journal in 1919. Krakov was a member of the avant-garde Belgrade literary

¹⁶ Ibid., 13.



Lieutenant Stanislav Krakov
(Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

association *Alpha* and later also of the group associated with the avant-garde journal *Zenit*. His works drew on his personal experience of the wars of 1912–1918.

Krakov published the avant-garde novels *Kroz buru* (*Through the Storm*, 1921) and *Krila* (*Wings*, 1922) followed by the travelogue *Kroz Južnu Srbiju* (*Through Southern Serbia*, 1926), the wartime memoir *Naše poslednje pobede* (*Our Last Victories*, 1928) and the historical non-fiction works *Plamen četništva* (*The Flame of Chetnikdom*, 1930) and *Prestolonaslednik Petar* (*Heir Apparent Peter*, 1933). Travelogues¹⁷ are also a large part of Krakov's opus, although he never collected them into stand-alone books. They were later collated by the literary historian Gojko Tešić and published in the (collected) *Works of Stanislav Krakov* (*Dela Stanislava Krakova*, 2020) in two volumes titled *Kroz zemlju naših careva i kraljeva* (*Through the Lands of Our Emperors and Kings*) and *Čar Sintre i drugi putopisi: putovanja po Evropi i Sredozemnom moru* (*The Charms of Sintra and Other Travelogues: Travels through Europe and the Mediterranean*). All of his travel writings were originally published in the *Vreme* paper and other dailies from 1921 to 1939. Two of his works were published posthumously: the short story collection *Crveni Pjero i druge novele* (*Red Pierrot and Other Stories*) and his memoir *Život čoveka na Balkanu* (*Life in the Balkans*), which he wrote until his last day (both printed in 1992). Krakov was one of the pioneers of motion pictures in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and worked with the first modern moviemakers Boško Tokin and Dragan Aleksić. He wrote film reviews for the magazines *Vreme*, *Progres*, *Tribuni*, *Srpski književni glasnik* and *Jadranska straža*. According to his daughter, Milica Arsenijević Krakov, her father filmed a few now lost documentaries, and his film *Golgota Srbije* (*The Calvary of Serbia*) was shown as *Za čast otadžbine* (*For the Honor of the Fatherland*) in 1930 (shown again in 1992).

Krakov began his career as a non-fiction author and journalist in 1921 as a contributor of the *Politika* daily. He later moved to *Vreme* and also served as the editor of the aviation journal *Naša krila* (1924–1939). From 1932, he worked as the editor-in-chief of *Vreme* and also as its

¹⁷ They were published for the first time five years ago as *Putopisi*, ed. Mirko Demić (Beograd: Dereta, 2017).

director. However, like in the case of Velmar-Janković, Krakov's entire legacy remained overshadowed by his role during the Second World War as a propagandist of the collaborationist government of General Milan Nedić, Krakov's maternal uncle. During the German occupation, he was the editor-in-chief of the papers *Novo vreme* (1941–1944), *Obnova* (1942–1944) and *Zapisi* (1943–1944). Like so many others, he fled Belgrade and sought refuge in Austria in September 1944. He later lived in Paris and died in Saint-Julien, Switzerland, on 15 December 1968. Historian Ljubodrag Dimić aptly summarized his life as follows:

The life of Stanislav Krakov was marked by four wars – the two Balkan wars (1912–1913), the Great War (1914–1918), and the Second World War (1941–1945). The first three, in which he spent seven years of his life, made him disabled, a hero and a winner. It was in these wars, as Rastko Petrović shrewdly noted, that he grew up and grew old. The Second World War obliterated all that Krakov had genuinely been – a fearless soldier, patriot, and a free-thinking man. As an associate of the occupiers, by the end of the war, Krakov had lost his honor, friends, homeland, past, present, future and everything else that had defined him and made his previous life meaningful. He became superfluous and a victim of the terror that history occasionally exerts upon its actors. The world he lived in came crumbling down in 1945 and was no more. It was the punishment for having “chosen” the wrong side in the war which was, at the same time, a showdown between fascism and anti-fascism, a bloody civil war with irreconcilably conflicted anti-fascist movements, ideologies and development models, and a revolution that led to a change of the political system.¹⁸

Like in Velmar-Janković's case, we learn of Krakov's years as an émigré from the testimonies of his daughter, Milica Arsenijević Krakov, in her foreword to the memoir *Život čoveka na Balkanu*: “My father's love for our country knew no bounds. Like before the war for Washington, so now he did not want to hear of any final home except

¹⁸ Ljubodrag Dimić, “Kontroverza Krakov. Život i sudbina čoveka na Balkanu,” in *Naši savremenici o Krakovu*, ed. Aleksandar Gatalica (Beograd, Službeni glasnik, Univerzitetaska biblioteka “Svetozar Marković,” 2020), 23. See also Nebojša Berić, “Sto-pama Stanislava Krakova,” in Gatalica, *Naši savremenici o Krakovu*, 189–254.

Paris, which had always been a *point de chute* and his temporary homeland. Every year, my dad opened a bottle of champagne with us, wishing that we would celebrate the next one in Belgrade. He worked diligently as a journalist and philatelist, but he was far from his beloved Serbia.”¹⁹ As Krakov’s daughter recalls, before the war, her father owned over 10,000 books, with 2,000 of those being incunabula; his postage stamp collection and some Swiss, French and Serbian families helped them survive the emigration. Once abroad, Krakov sold items and antiques he had brought with him but only to Serbs living abroad, or donated them to Serbian monasteries in the USA.

As we have seen, until the early 1930s, Krakov was actively involved in artistic, literary and movie production as a staunch advocate of avant-garde esthetics. From then on, his artistic work became overshadowed by his political activities and non-fiction writings. As for his political affiliation, Krakov’s sympathy for authoritarian regimes appeared quite early on, as the historian John Paul Newman notes:

In the 1920s he had praised Mussolini and Greek dictator Theodoros Pangalos for ridding their countries of the scourge of parliamentarianism, and he too had welcomed Alexander’s dictatorship. This was all quite conventionally authoritarian: praising strongmen like Mussolini and Pangalos and supporting the royal dictatorship hardly set him apart from the mainstream attitudes of, say, National Defence, an association of which Krakov had been a member. Nevertheless, in the 1930s, Krakov was increasingly becoming a political maverick; he had at one point attempted to establish a Serbian version of the Romanian Legion of the Archangel Michael, a South Slav ‘Iron Guard’ in which the members of the wartime generation such as himself could teach the younger post-war generation about the sacrifices of liberation and unification.²⁰

In his propaganda for creating a Yugoslav version of the Iron Guard, Krakov used all the advantages of his position as the editor-in-chief of *Vreme*. On 26 June 1932, he published a text that can be read as a pro-

¹⁹ Milica Arsenijević Krakov “Sećanje na oca,” foreword in Stanislav Krakov, *Život čoveka na Balkanu* (Beograd, Službeni glasnik, 2019), 7.

²⁰ John Paul Newman, *Yugoslavia in the Shadow of War: Veterans and the Limits of State Building, 1903–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 230.

grammatic manifesto of sorts: “Who are we, the Iron Guard of the people?” Dimić summarizes Krakov’s initiative as follows:

He defined the Yugoslavs as a people trembling in their awakening, a national wave swelling like lava, which surges as it rises to attack and for which no one knows when and where it will stop [...] To the question “Well, who are you?” Krakov replied “the awakened Yugoslav nationalism.” He identified the entire circle of like-minded thinkers, to which he himself belonged, as the “Iron Guard of the people” ready to “defend with their arms of steel and deliver a blow where it needs to [...]” He saw the “Iron Guard of the people” as a champion of truth and justice [...] He did not consider the Iron Guard either Hitlerism or fascism, which he would later be criticized for, but an authentic movement rooted in native Yugoslav patriotism. Krakov did not define the “Iron Guard” as a political party or a group of politicians but as an idea that should rise above all parties [...] The Iron Guard was meant to face the outside anti-Yugoslav front, which included Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria and Albania. That battle could be victorious, Krakov believed, only if the Yugoslavs rejected and overcame their fragmentation and mutual squabbles.²¹

The key texts published in *Vreme* in May and June 1932 were “Wake Up, Yugoslavia!” and “What Are You Waiting For, Yugoslavia” and contain information on his initiative for forming a Yugoslav Iron Guard.²² Krakov received a string of letters of support from public figures, with a particularly significant one being the text “We Aren’t Worn Out – We’re Ready. For the Heroic Masculinity of Yugoslavia” by the Chetnik *Vojvoda* Kosta Pećanac, who underlined the strength that still existed and the will to defend Yugoslavia, for which Serbia had given enormous sacrifices. Krakov’s comrades-in-arms in the previous wars were particularly supportive, recalling their “youthful tribe”. Besides the outside enemy, primarily Italy, dangerous internal enemies included Bolshevism and separatism. Krakov firmly believed in the Yugoslavs’ victory, and described his enemies as “thunder,” “storm,” “blare of trumpets.” His call to arms was primarily intended for the youth

²¹ Dimić, “Kontroverza Krakov. Život i sudbina čoveka na Balkanu,” 80–81.

²² Archives of Yugoslavia (Arhiv Jugoslavije, hereafter AJ), Belgrade, Stanislav Krakov Papers (Zbirka Stanislava Krakova), no. 102, box 6, folder 13 (hereafter 102-6-13).

because he, and others that held similar views, argued that “only a new man can be a Yugoslav nationalist”, believing that the young were not yet contaminated with Bolshevism and tribal antagonism.

Krakov’s correspondence with his fellow writer Radoje Janković, then serving as the consul in New York City, sheds more light on his intention to form a Yugoslav version of the Iron Guard.²³ Janković wrote his first letter to Krakov on 22 July 1932 and encouraged him to establish an organization for the salvation of the country. He mentioned that this was the Iron Guard which should rouse the slumbering and encourage them with patriotic songs and programs; all of this was to be done discretely for the salvation of the Kingdom. On 24 August 1932, Janković wrote again to Krakov, proposing that they prepare the program of the Iron Guard with an anthem that would be more like a march and invite movement. Janković included a multitude of details and suggested commissioning Stanislav Binički or General Rakić to orchestrate the song for military purposes. Janković encouraged Krakov to keep writing passionate articles that would move the masses and promised to send him more letters with his suggestions. The third, undated letter contains the program of the “League of the Yugoslav Guard” in eight points, underlining the notions of action and preserving Yugoslavism and the state and describing the young as “a cure of indomitable potency.” “Our idea is to preserve earthly laws and rule,” Janković wrote. The anthem of the Iron Guard was the anthem of unity, its emblem was a white sword, and its most important task was to serve the nation and glorify God. The formation of the Iron Guard, however, never progressed past the theoretical stage.

Slightly later, in May 1934, Krakov traveled to Germany and, upon his return, delivered a lecture on new Germany. “His lecture was noted in the Belgrade public but even more so in the German press. The organ of the National Socialist Party gave a good review of Krakov’s lecture and even reprinted some passages. The political involvement of Stanislav Krakov betrays his antagonism toward Italy and reverence of Germany.”²⁴ As the editor-in-chief of *Vreme*, Krakov accompanied King Alexander on his state visit to France and witnessed the assassination of

²³ AJ, 102-1-3.

²⁴ Dimić, “Kontroverza Krakov. Život i sudbina čoveka na Balkanu,” 87.

the monarch in Marseille on 9 October 1934. The king's murder highlighted the need to safeguard Yugoslavia, and his death was "portrayed as the sovereign's sacrifice for a higher cause and ideology". In this new situation, integral Yugoslavs such as Krakov "monopolized patriotism and branded every criticism of the former regime a hostile act."²⁵

The establishment of the Regency headed by Prince Paul and the appointment of Milan Stojadinović as Prime Minister were the prelude for a more liberal policy and the replacement of integral Yugoslavism with "real Yugoslavism", a tacit acknowledgement that the first version had been a delusion. That had an impact on Krakov's position as one of the leading propagandists of integral Yugoslavism and the late King Alexander's dictatorship. The Executive Board of *Vreme* passed a decision to relieve Krakov of his duties as the newspaper's editor-in-chief. However, it can hardly be said that the new regime completely removed and isolated Krakov. Although the Executive Board decided to retire him from 1 January 1936, *Vreme* immediately signed a contract with Krakov,²⁶ hiring him as a contributor to prepare a special supplement on the German war industry and tourism. Krakov was authorized to sign contracts and ads for the special issue with public and municipal organs, charging 1,000 Deutsche Marks per page, and to keep 50% of the proceeds. He would cover all travel and translation expenses, and *Vreme* would take care of the prepress and printing. Krakov and *Vreme* signed a new contract, valid from 15 June 1936, for new special issues on Germany to be sold as supplements with weekend and holiday editions, ranging from four to eight pages and to be published every three to six months. He was also charged with collecting the material for the texts and sent to Germany to that end, where he would also sign contracts for ads with German companies in the war industry and tourism. He was entitled to an assistant. Article 16 of the Contract stated that *Vreme* could not grant the same or a similar "concession" to anyone else until 1 January 1937. Based on the receipts signed in the first six months of 1936, *Vreme* paid Krakov 12,840, 12,150 and 7,600 dinars as his salary, severance package and representation expenses.

²⁵ Ibid., 89.

²⁶ AJ, 102-1-1.

The importance that Stojadinović assigned to *Vreme* and the fact that he appointed his brother Dragomir as its editor clearly show that Krakov had become superfluous at the head of this media outlet. Although the regime tried, at least to an extent, to compensate him for the loss of his position, Krakov was undoubtedly a loser in the changes that came under Stojadinović's new cabinet. This had an impact on his financial situation, and on 8 March 1937, his wife sent a distressing letter to Prince Paul, asking him to provide financial assistance to her ailing mother, Milica Mihajlović, reminding him that she had risked her life in the war effort when she worked as an intelligence officer.²⁷ Krakov's wife sent this letter without his knowledge and asked Prince Paul for discretion, signing it only as "Stanislav Krakov's wife."

Around the same time (1935/1936), Krakov embarked on his impassioned anti-communist political activism. Dimić's study informs us that he, "together with like-minded people, such as Milan L. Popović, Vladimir Velmar-Janković and Danilo Gregorić [the future editor and commissar of *Vreme*], was one of the ideologues of the 'Yugoslav Anti-Marxist Committee', an organization that advocated extreme right-wing views. [...] By no means incidentally, this coincided with the 7th World Congress of the Comintern, the implementation of its decision on the establishment of a 'popular front' policy, Moscow's assessment that the world was divided between fascism and anti-fascism and that hence it was the duty of all communists in the world to stand up against the ideological blight spread by Rome and Berlin and intensify their struggle against fascist and pro-fascist regimes. From 1937 to 1940, the organization published its own organ (bi-monthly), printed brochures, leaflets and appeals with anti-communist content [...] and supported the struggle of General Franco in Spain."²⁸ Krakov joined Dimitrije Ljotić's ZBOR movement in 1937, which is unsurprising given his af-

²⁷ AJ, 102-1-1.

²⁸ Dimić, "Kontroverza Krakov. Život i sudbina čoveka na Balkanu," 93. Dimić states that this organization enjoyed the support of the Ministry of the Interior, the Council of Ministers (Government), the Central Press Bureau and the International Anti-Communist Entente (Aubert's League). See: *ibid.*, 94. It is therefore obvious how Krakov, Gregorić and V. Velmar-Janković ended up in the same bodies of Radio Belgrade in 1940.

finity for the far right and fascism; it also had to do with his anti-regime position under Stojadinović. “During the Concordat Crisis of 1937, Krakov critically reported on Milan Stojadinović’s government for the Sud Ouest news agency. His views were informed by his deep religious devotion, close ties with the Serbian Orthodox Church, his animosity toward Stojadinović and his internal and international policy”, Dimić explains.²⁹

Kravov served as the head of the propaganda department of the General Secretariat of Ljotić’s party. He compiled a three-page machine-typed program, in which he explained his understanding of ZBOR’s objectives and methods, clearly stating that he was modeling it after the things that had been done in that regard in totalitarian countries: “Hitler’s National Socialist Party in Germany and Mussolini’s fascist movement in Italy have shown the scope and meaning of the power of organized propaganda in political struggle and national revival. Propaganda is also the most powerful weapon of the Third International, and a nationalist movement cannot count on success in the struggle against communism unless it has at its disposal a well-organized propaganda machine.”³⁰ Krakov included a quotation from Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* about the main task of propaganda not being to academically inform the isolated but to attract the masses by pointing out facts, events and certain needs. According to Krakov, ZBOR’s propaganda department had the following duties: to orchestrate all of the party’s press, maintain ties with other nationalist media outlets in the country to ensure coordination or their involvement in ZBOR’s publishing activities, set up ZBOR’s organs in major towns, follow the local and foreign press, and publish books, brochures and pamphlets. Other tasks of the propaganda machine included disseminating leaflets, posters and circulars; organizing public meetings and lectures; campaigning in schools, universities and professional associations; spreading anti-communist propaganda through printed material; arranging to send ZBOR representatives to the major events of similar movements abroad and the visits

²⁹ Dimić, “Kontroverza Krakov. Život i sudbina čoveka na Balkanu,” 92.

³⁰ AJ, 102-7-19, “Predlog za stvaranje oteka za propagandu Jugosovenskog narodnog pokreta ‘Zbor.’”

of foreign delegates to ZBOR's conferences; maintaining ties with other nationalist parties and organizations in the country.

In terms of technical improvements, Krakov suggested procuring cars, trucks and motorcycles; attracting pilots and windsurfers to organize special groups for them; using artists and caricaturists for public rallies and meetings, and founding a stenographic and photographic department. For the most pressing propaganda expenses, the movement should have a kind of moveable treasury that could cover them at any given moment.³¹

From 15 February 1938, Krakov became a contributor of the *Ratnik* paper as per the decision of the General Staff and the paper's editorial board. According to the contract he signed with the editorial board, Krakov was commissioned to prepare special articles and texts of a "military-educational and national nature" for various celebrations and army jubilees; he was to have a monthly salary of 1,500 dinars and receive additional payments for technical and proofreading services.³² Krakov's appointment as a *Ratnik* contributor seems entirely logical given his remarkable military career, which had, admittedly, ended in 1921 but was nonetheless an asset, as was the fact that Milan Nedić, his uncle, served as the Minister of the Army and Navy at the time. This premise is further supported by the fact that, in the fall of 1938, Krakov became a member of the Institute of Defense, which had direct links to the Intelligence Department of the Army of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.³³ He also continued to maintain his connections with Germany and, in September 1938, attended the congress of the National Socialist Party in Nuremberg. Milan Jovanović Stoimirović, a prominent journalist and a propagandist of the ruling Yugoslav Radical Union, trav-

³¹ AJ, 102-7-19.

³² AJ, 102-1-1.

³³ Dimić states that Krakov's duties at the Institute of Defense included: "writing and preparing texts of national and military relevance and educational nature, improving the popularity of the paper and the topics it wrote on, editing the rubrics News and Notes and Ratings and Reviews [...] assessing the paper as a whole and reporting to the editorial board and other relevant persons, in written or oral form, on the positions taken and observations" – Dimić, "Kontroverza Krakov. Život i sudbina čoveka na Balkanu," 95.

eled with Krakov and his wife to Nuremberg – the Krakovs continued their journey to Poland so that Stanislav could accept an inheritance there – and he believed that Krakov had received a personal invitation to the congress from Hitler. He also noticed that Mrs. Krakov wore very expensive jewelry and assumed that Krakov, as a Germanophile, was receiving money from the Germans.³⁴

A year later, after the Second World War had begun, Krakov decided to make a grand return to journalism, and on 8 September 1939, launched the daily *Telegram* together with co-investors Radoslav Veznić, Borivoje Gavrilović and Jovan Lazarević. *Telegram's* editor-in-chief was Krakov himself, and the very first article of the founding manifesto stated: “This paper will be national in spirit and politically independent and will serve solely the interests of the State and the Nation.”³⁵ The concept of the newspaper was based on analyzing internal and external politics and particularly insisted on nationalist articles, as the editorial board called them, with the purpose of reminding the readers of glorious battles and jubilees that could help awaken national consciousness. This nationalist agenda was to include publishing fictionalized biographies of warriors, reportages, reminiscences about wars and memoirs, under the heading “from our past”. Interestingly, the *Telegram* daily would cover cultural and scientific topics “only as needed and as briefly as possible.”³⁶ It was probably a testament to the hard times that an intellectual, author, moviemaker and critic completely focused the paper on everyday politics and nationalist topics, which did not acknowledge culture even as a propaganda tool or a channel for encouraging national and state-building consciousness. As per a decision of the State Prosecutor, a *Telegram* issue was banned already on 22 November 1939 because of the text “The Banovina Borders Cannot Separate the Serbs and Croats”, which discussed the highly sensitive question of reorganizing the centralist system, with the founding of the Croatian autonomous province seen as the first step in

³⁴ Milan Jovanović Stoimirović, *Dnevnik 1936–1941* (Novi Sad, Matica srpska, 2000), 208.

³⁵ AJ, 102-10-24.

³⁶ AJ, 102-10-24.

this process; the text was said to have been disruptive to the work of the state authorities and its tasks.³⁷ *Telegram* encountered financial difficulties that the investors and founders could not resolve, and on 3 January 1940, Krakov asked Prime Minister Dragiša Cvetković to buy all shares in the paper so that the state would become its sole owner. That, however, came to nothing, and the daily went out of print in January, with Krakov and his co-investors remaining responsible for its many debts.

On 9 July 1940, Krakov became the director of Radio Belgrade and so found a new source of income.³⁸ His appointment to this important post was by no means an accident: it was a result of the shift in Yugoslavia's international position in the summer of 1940. Germany had just rolled over France and established full control of the European continent. Germany's non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union was in force. In this situation, the Yugoslav government had to be very mindful of Berlin's mood, so public figures known as supporters of Germany and the fascist ideology rose to prominence, including Krakov's political comrades with whom he had worked as early as 1937 in ZBOR, e.g., Danilo Gregorić, now in charge of *Vreme*. According to Mirjana Nikolić's study, it was Gregorić who suggested appointing Krakov as the director of Radio Belgrade.³⁹ Krakov's involvement came in a "period that began with normative (1939) and real etatization (1940). It was marked by repression and autocracy, as well as major changes in the economic, programmatic and organizational operation of Radio Belgrade. In these two years, this Belgrade radio station was characterized by stagnation, which was essentially a reflection of the overall situation in society and the disrupted relations in the Balkans and Europe. This was the prelude to the fascization of Radio Belgrade and the beginning of its existence as the German [...] Sender Belgrad."⁴⁰ Krakov followed the German example in performing his duties, and in October 1940 traveled to Berlin with the technical editor Franjo Mozer, where he

³⁷ AJ, 102-10-24.

³⁸ AJ, 102-1-1.

³⁹ Mirjana Nikolić, *Radio u Srbiji (1924-1941)* (Beograd: Zadužbina Andrejević, 2006), 84.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

procured two magnetic tape recorders and other equipment, as attested by a document issued by the Yugoslav legation in Germany.⁴¹

One of the novelties was the radio program “Words of the Nation”, broadcast every day from January 1941, which glorified Serbian history, heroism, the Serbian Middle Ages, patriotic poetry (verses by Branko Radičević, Jovan Dučić, Milan Rakić, Milutin Bojić, Vojislav Ilić), in the same vein as the “nationalist” articles in the *Telegram* had done. The program put special emphasis on Yugoslav unity, attempting to prove it by using many prominent figures as examples. At the session of the Executive Board of Radio Belgrade held on 4 February 1941, which discussed ongoing and organizational matters, it was concluded that Krakov had wrongly paid himself 9,600 dinars for the “Words of the Nation” program before he was allocated 100 dinars for each show. However, the Board decided to assign this sum as a bonus for Krakov for “the effort he had put in to make the program so well-received in the broadest masses of our people.” But that was not enough for Krakov, and he asked to have use of a company car when coming to work and going home. This sparked a sharp discussion, after which board member Milorad Vučković left the session. Krakov seems to have been partial to using his position to acquire material privileges. In this sense, it is interesting to note that his salary was a huge sum of 12,000 dinars; he also received additional funds as child support, which were determined every month and were not specified in his contract. The minutes of the session of Radio Belgrade’s Executive Board show that, at the time, the chairman of the Monitoring Board was Vladimir Velmar-Janković and its members Mihailo Milošević, Jovan Djordjević and Krakov.⁴² Velmar-Janković was certainly appointed to this office because of his political views, for the same reasons that made Krakov the radio station’s director.

Amid the critical international situation, on 20 August 1940, Krakov received a note from the Institute of Defense instructing him, in the case of conscription and war, “as an auxiliary and advisory organ of the Institute of Defense, to cooperate as usefully as possible at [his]

⁴¹ AJ, 102-1-1.

⁴² AJ, 102-1-1.

РЕЧИ НАЦИЈЕ

Иницијативом директора Радио Београда г. Станислава Кракова, од 1 септембра Београдска радиостаница саопштила емисију „Речи нације“. Ово је јединствена тачка у емисијама радиостаница; јер нема сличне емисије на страним радиостаницама.

„Речи нације“ имају текст са нарочитим смислом, изради сабираним музиком. „Речи нације“ о смислу, значају и потреби „Речи нације“ г. Краков је био љубазан да нам да чланак, у коме објашњава у чему је била замисао ове нове, тојко прихваћене емисије.

Сутра око нас, у нашој врхунској, или у нашој промисли, налазимо величанствене трагове народног духа, онога духа који је створио бесмртну вредност нашег народа. Најзанимљивији пример то духовне снаге, чврсте као гранит, показује нам доба робовања, велики дугог робовања под туђином.

Јер када је османлиски вотап, прешавши преко Балкана и источне Европе, ра-



порно земљу плеза Лазара и по том државу деспота Стефана и Ђурђа и његових наследника, и када је задржао српски народ вековима подјармљен, уништавајући сваки траг слободног живота, која је то била магична снага која је одржала слост код нас да је она увек остала онај носилац народа Милутинов и Душанов?

Шта је то чуњаво срца вадом, шта подржавало одлучност, шта спровело до коначну борбу која је морала доћи? Каква је то била отпорна моћ која је сачувала Србе да не изгубе из историје онако као што су востали толики други велики и малији народи, а да им ни трага више није остало?

То су биле речи. РЕЧИ НАЦИЈЕ.

Све је објашњено могао да ушнине. Све је могао да окује. Све је могао да негује. Није могао једино речи. У колико, у збегу, на тајним скуповима, по срушеним преслама и махаластрима скуте је реч нишла од уста уста и уздицала срца. Реч народне несме, реч вере, реч поуздања, реч борбениости. И са збова крај фресса подуписменим настрани и одметли хајдучи могли су да нађу реч сјаја и величине свога народа, када су срцићуи прочитали у цркви у Ариљу:

...а дна краља Јунаго Урбана самодрнца Богом вјекс средних зема и поморских и многих зема...¹

Или у Новој Павлици код Раине:

„Благочестиви и христољубиви госнодин Стефан сини челника Мусе и Госпожде Драгани сестри великато и самодржавнато Господина Србаем и Подунављу светато княза Лазара...“

Или у Лескову где крај сјајног лица Јована Оливера стоје речи да је био:

„Србаем велик челник, нотом велики слуга, нотом велики војвода... и велики десног војда србские земље и поморскије и учестник Грком.“

И толике друге речи царске и краљевске, деспотске и кнежевске, које су немо говорале самоодлично прогоненим, бедним рајетинама да су они поносна, витешка раса која је увек срцем Балкана господарила.

Зоографи наши средњег века уписали су крај ликова наших и... дара речи нације за векове исто, онако, као што их је увекла деспотина Јефимија у окрво, а летописци у своје хронике.

И данас ако осушимо, ако погледамо, ако потражимо, ако се сетимо, налазимо свуда речи нације, громко и убуздљиве; речи које ће нам сумњу разглатати, које ће нам веру повратити, које ће нам на прази пут указати.

Уклесане у стене или пронађутане као носилници дах самртника чији је живот одлазио кроз млаз крви повет комадом челника; уписане у песмама наших носилаца или изговорене као гром у поклицима на бојноме пољу или у војничким и државничким посланицама наши: владар, речи нације су неодољиво наше благо, звук наших фанфара под којима смо корачали сигурно у победу.

И ако се у годинама носе рата, у опасливостима добра и несигурности, на ове вечне речи нације заборавамо, оне су биле увек присутне у дубокој познатој народној.

Сада су новено одјекнуле. Радио Београд снагодневно их разноси на својим таласима више свих њације: планина и река, више наших градова и села, шаље их у душе оних будних који их примају као нешто што је о њима било отишло.

Тосеби да кроз речи нације очува не само стари дух, какав је кроз столећа наш народ ишувало, већ да кроз дах и одметљивање на природности, мушечности и јунаке који су се за тај дах жртвовали. Радио Београд преноси речи нације читавом југословенском народу као најдрагоценије заповеште остављене од највећих његових синова.

СТАНИСЛАВ КРАКОВ

Stanislav Krakov,
“Reči nacije,” *Radio Beograd*,
br. 26, Božić 1941. (Krakov’s article
on his “Words of the Nation” radio
program in the Christmas 1941 issue
of the *Radio Beograd* journal)

assigned place between the Institute of Defense and the relevant command (institution),” and to immediately report to the Operative Department of the Command Staff as a correspondent.⁴³ We can assume that his contribution was to do with propaganda and the political preparation of the population for the war scenario.

Krakov seems to have had quite a good relationship with Prime Minister Dragiša Cvetković, from whom in November 1940 he rented a house at 11 Kraljevića Tomislava Street, with seven rooms and eleven other spaces for 48,000 per year.⁴⁴ Besides these private arrangements, on 6 November 1940, after his trip to Germany, Krakov sent a report to Cvetković, suggesting the formation of a Ministry of Propaganda, modeled after the Italian *Ministero per cultura popolare*, which had operated very systematically and had associates both at home and abroad. The task of such an institution should be “implementing a well-conceived, well-organized and well-directed propaganda campaign.”⁴⁵ Cvetković rejected this suggestion, and no such or similar ministry was ever formed in Yugoslavia.

After the coup of 27 March 1941 that toppled the Cvetković cabinet and the entire Regency regime, the new putschist government dismissed Krakov from his duties at Radio Belgrade both as an associate of the previous regime and a prominent sympathizer of Germany. Just one day after the coup, he was fired by the new Executive Board and replaced by Veljko Petrović.⁴⁶ Although Krakov had been informed of this decision on 3 April, he did not manage to pass his duties to his successor, and the decision remained unimplemented until the German invasion of Yugoslavia on 6 April. Krakov formally remained the director. He left Belgrade when the bombing began to search for the radio station that had been evacuated without his knowledge; he found it in the Ždrebanik Monastery near Danilovgrad, Montenegro, and returned to Belgrade. He managed to escape the Italian occupation authorities, which he had probably feared due to his hostile tone in the debates with the Italian press during his time at *Vreme*. Instead he re-

⁴³ AJ, 102-1-1.

⁴⁴ AJ, 102-1-1.

⁴⁵ Dimić, “Kontroverza Krakov. Život i sudbina čoveka na Balkanu,” 101.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 105.

ported to the German troops, who allowed him to return to Belgrade.⁴⁷ Like Velmar-Janković, Krakov then collaborated with the German occupiers – a topic that lies beyond the scope of this paper – but for both of these authors, like for many other intellectuals, it was their extreme right-wing affiliation that paved the way for collaboration under the government of Milan Nedić.

⁴⁷ AJ, 102-1-1.