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ON THE SUPPRESSED TOPICS IN THE HISTORY OF SERBO-SLOVENIAN RELATIONS OR ON THE PROLOGUE TO THEIR CLOSENESS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Abstract

The text presents certain evidence of Slovenian–Serbian closeness during the Second World War, which, due to so-called higher interests – national/political/religious/ecclesiastical – has been neglected to such an extent that it now seems never to have existed. Thus, from the creation of communist/socialist Yugoslavia to the present day, Slovenia has carefully selected the topics through which it reveals its 20th-century history. In that process, one of the casualties was the history of Serbian–Slovenian ties during the Second World War, as confirmed in various spheres: from the joint struggle against the occupier and under the flag of the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland, to the suffering caused by the ideologues and defenders of the ethnocidal/genocidal Independent State of Croatia. The text also recovers from controlled oblivion the memory of the mass demonstrations held at the end of March 1941 in Belgrade and Ljubljana against the protocol on Yugoslavia's accession to the Tripartite Pact. These events undoubtedly shaped the future of the Slovenian and Serbian peoples during the Second World War, yet Yugoslav historiography carefully avoided them, only for them to become anachronistic in the

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contemporary era – due to new higher interests. The closest neighbors of the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Slovenia have also benefited from this, protecting their own interests, including shaping the terms of confronting their own Second World War legacy.

Keywords: Slovenia, Serbia, Slovenian–Serbian relations, Independent State of Croatia, Second World War, Yugoslavia

INTRODUCTION

Among scholars and interpreters of history, there have always been so-called small and large historical topics, classified according to various criteria, mostly as a consequence of the spirit of the time (*Zeitgeist*) and the spirit of the place (*Genius loci*). Ideological starting points, as well as the so-called capacity for experience, have often remained the main points of reference in their evaluation.

Of course, the typology of topics also depends on whether they are international or local in character, although many are, by their nature, glocal. Their significance may nevertheless be diminished for various reasons, especially when they are perceived as a threat to the higher interests of a particular community or group (political, national, religious, ecclesiastical, or state). When this is combined with malignant assumptions according to which everything good is "Us" and everything bad is "Others," as well as the tendentious channeling of the culture of memory, many topics can become undesirable, no matter how justified by the creators of collective representations of good and bad: of "friends" and "enemies," and thereby, consequently, of *friendly and hostile topics*.

All of the above are among the reasons why, until now, the characteristics of Serbian–Slovenian/Slovenian–Serbian ties during the Second World War, as well as their diverse interconnections, similarities, and closeness, have not been brought to the forefront of public attention. One reason for this injustice may also be found in the fact that in Slovenia, the events of the, officially, last world war are "often observed without taking into account the Yugoslav framework, as well as without placing them in a broader international context" (Godeša 2007, 174). At the same time, the impression is that a more comprehensive engagement by Slovenian historians with the Second World War began only after the breakup of communist/socialist Yugoslavia, that is, after

Slovenia matured as an independent state (1991). Until then, according to the same premise, it was not desirable to address certain segments of their own past. When this is intertwined with contemporary Slovenia's aspiration for good-neighbourly relations with states belonging to the same geostrategic formation, within which the religious/confessional element also exerts influence, the silencing of the truth seems to have become part of a compromise made in the name of higher interests. Thus, everything that might call the controlled past into question was suppressed, which suited a third party very well. For, however it may seem, Slovenian–Serbian closeness could also be understood as a danger to an objective understanding of the legacy of their closest neighbors – today the independent and sovereign Republic of Croatia (to which Slovenia has, for several reasons, grown closer in relation to the state of "primitive schismatics," as Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church were characterised in the Independent State of Croatia [hereinafter NDH], as well as in the years immediately preceding its creation (cf. Jovanović 2025)).

ON EXAMPLES OF CONTROLLED HISTORICAL (UN)AWARENESS OF THE SERBIAN AND SLOVENIAN PEOPLES AND OF THEIR CLOSE TIES IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In that context, the claim that the Catholic Church in Slovenia during the Second World War had better relations with Belgrade than with Zagreb, the principal centre of the NDH, deserves separate and more detailed elaboration (Griesser Pečar and Dolinar 1996, 60).[1] In support of this claim, many Slovenian–Serbian connections established at that time bear witness. Among the evidence is the fact that certain Slovenian priests acted as couriers between Serbia, Rome/Vatican, and London, as the seat of the Yugoslav government-in-exile. At the same time, they spread news about the systematic killing of the Serbian people in the NDH, which may be noted here only briefly by a remark that both the Slovenian and Serbian publics were duly informed of it. The reasons for the silence are to be found not only in ignorance

[1] This view is particularly significant because the Slovenian historian in question was assessed as having "a pronounced inclination toward the counterrevolutionary side defeated in the war" (Godeša 2007, 181).

and prejudice. Moreover, even the appeal of Slovenian priests of the Archdiocese of Belgrade for their pastor, Josip Ujčić, to appeal to the Vatican for the Serbian people to be saved from the Ustaša pogrom in the NDH has been neglected, although he did so several times. (The clergy's letter, written in Slovenian, is today preserved in the Archive of the Ordinariate of the Archdiocese of Belgrade, and bears no registry number. Slovenian historiography contains no reference or discussion of the letter's content.)

Chronologically speaking, *controlled memory* among Slovenes and Serbs – with the *imposition of oblivion* and the *prohibition of remembrance* – was, after the postwar agitprop period, followed in historiography by an environment in which topics important for a more dignified understanding of the Second World War were only partially researched (Stanković and Dimić 1996). Fortunately, since the end of the last century, the concept of "collaboration" has increasingly come into focus among Serbian and Slovenian historians (Pleterski 1991, 215–219; Petranović 1993, 207–215; Mlakar 2001, 113–122; Griesser Pečar and Dolinar 1996, 27–36; Griesser Pečar 2004; Čepič, Guštin, i Troha 2017, 226–238; Stojanović 2021, 385–405), along with a more frequent – more or less pronounced – acknowledgement of the existence of two liberation movements among the Yugoslav peoples, and not only of the victorious one led by the communists under Josip Broz Tito, the head of the so-called revolutionary camp. The other movement, however, was distinctly anti-revolutionary and anti-communist. It rallied under the flag of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and was initially composed of officers of the Army of the South Slavic monarchy, led by Dragoljub Draža Mihailović, whom the Allied powers regarded in the first years of the war as the only legitimate leader of resistance – a fact that historiography of the so-called left political provenance readily forgets. This would be superfluous to mention were it not for the strong ties between the Serbian and Slovenian peoples, precisely within that defeated Army, for whose *fate* responsibility also lies with the West, that is, with the division of the world into spheres of interest among the Allied countries, realised no later than 1943 (Nikolić 2018).

In fact, the prologue to the uncovering and *liberation of truth* in the Slovenian public sphere was the documentation of mass graves of the so-called "enemies of the people," scattered across Upper and Lower Carniola, as a consequence of the summary executions of the so-called Red Terror of 1945 (Hančić 2015; Možina 2021; see: Bobič 2024) (with

the unavoidable observation that Serbian historians have still shown no stronger interest in studying the fate of Serbs who were killed "in the name of the people" and then thrown into pits throughout Slovenia, thus finding themselves among the many thousands of murdered Slovenes). Still more striking is the complete ignoring of the existence of one of *Draža's cells,* located in the building of the Ordinariate of the Archdiocese of Belgrade itself. They were all arrested by the Gestapo, and then part of the Slovenes, who made up that cell, were executed in 1942 and buried in mass graves in Jajinci near Belgrade (Jovanović 2022, 302–303).

Thus, among the topics that still need to be brought together are those that point to the diverse affinities between the Slovenian and Serbian peoples during the Second World War, linking many thousands of similar life stories (personal histories), often marked by similar or identical suffering in combat, in prisons and camps, or as civilian hostages of the Nazis. This was also the case in Kraljevo, where, in October 1941, as part of Nazi reprisals. several dozen Slovenes were executed together with about 2,300 Serbs and around twenty Croats and Bosniaks (Jovanović 2015, 57, 59, 71–74). However, this fact has not received a worthy analysis by Slovenian historians or has been placed within interpretative frameworks close to the communist regime. Such interpretations were also unfavourable toward the memories of Slovenian and Serbian intellectuals who, fleeing the advancing Bolshevisation of Yugoslavia, entered political emigration. Although they left testimonies to the extent to which Slovenian–Serbian relations were fraternally intertwined, these accounts too have, by no means accidentally, been neglected.

In fact, these relations were mentioned under the auspices of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia only within a rigid ideological context, as was also the case with Metod Mikuž (Mikuž 1956) in the book *Overview of the Development of the National Liberation Struggle in Slovenia*. Mikuž's approach might have been somewhat more understandable/acceptable had his work not been published as many as eleven years after the end of the war and – according to him – the "victory of the revolution," thereby openly appropriating the character of the National Liberation Struggle (which is untrue, since that struggle also included those – most likely the overwhelming majority – for whom communist manifestos meant nothing, but for whom only freedom mattered).

At the same time, it is indicative that Mikuž never provided an account of wartime events in the area between Ljubljana and Belgrade, as if the NDH had never existed. This, too, may be understood as harmful to the very people to whom he belonged, since he remained silent about their agony. Simultaneously, he minimised the scope of the organised killing of non-Croats throughout the NDH on an ethnocidal/genocidal basis (primarily the Serbian, Jewish, and Roma populations). This too was part of the price paid for constructing the "brotherhood and unity" of the peoples and nationalities of Tito's Yugoslavia, which exploded during its bloody disintegration at the end of the 20th century as a result of decades-long suppression of memory, that is, of *unsettled accounts* (to which none other than the Yugoslav communists contributed, above all the salon communists, alienated from those to whom they preached about an *earthly kingdom*).

A similar reserve in addressing events in the NDH and its relationship toward Slovenia and the Slovenes can also be found in the work of Mikuž's compatriot Zdravko Klanjšček. In his work *The National Liberation War in Slovenia 1941–1945*, first published in the 1980s, he states only that "in neighboring Croatia a quisling Ustaša state entity was created," and that "the position of Slovenia, although fundamentally identical to the position of other Yugoslav peoples and nationalities who also lost their freedom, was […] nevertheless different precisely because of the proximity of the mother states of the main aggressors against Yugoslavia" (Klanjšček 1984, 33). In doing so, Klanjšček neither addresses the existence nor the actual nature of the NDH nor notes that Slovenes were also killed within that entity under accusations of belonging to the anti-Nazi/anti-fascist movement, i.e., of being opposed to the Ustaša state. (In the same work, not a single concentration camp in the NDH is mentioned, in which Slovenes were also killed, primarily in Jasenovac, whereas Italian and German camps are listed, to which – it follows from Klanjšček's account – almost exclusively partisans, i.e., communists, were taken, which is also verifiably untrue.)

Regarding March 27, 1941, as a turning point among the Yugoslav peoples, Metod Mikuž states that "the popular masses, under the leadership of the Party," on that day gave it "its true content as soon as the bourgeois coup was carried out in Belgrade […]" (Mikuž 1956, 47). If it is taken into account that Mikuž – symptomatically – refers to the NDH simply as "Croatia," the question arises why some

historians to this day persistent in using that designation as a synonym for the Ustaša entity, created through the war enterprise of Hitler and Mussolini and also supported by the so-called Church among the Croats, led by the Archbishop of Zagreb Alojzije Stepinac (today a candidate for canonisation, which is more than debatable based on our insight into the process and testimonies of several Slovenian priests. This should also be taken into account when considering the neglect of Slovenian–Serbian closeness during the Second World War, encouraged by the organisers of Stepinac's beatification and canonisation (Jovanović 2025).

The aforementioned authors belong to a series of historians in whose works there is no mention of the fact that in Slovenian settlements occupied by the NDH a "planned Croatisation" was carried out (Možina 2021, 47, 51; Ferenc 1979, 405; Škiljan 2014, 284, with sources in notes 803–805), along with the sending of priests under Stepinac's jurisdiction to preach about *heavenly justice*. All in all, it has been necessary to wait for the awareness of these issues to emerge in the Slovenian public sphere as well. If this trajectory continues, "it may be possible to anticipate that, in biblical terminology, the "fullness of time" for bringing together all topics related to Slovenian–Serbian closeness is now approaching, closeness which should be traced from March 27, 1941, followed by the April War and the dismemberment of Yugoslavia. (Far from insignificant is also the fact that this closeness had already developed strongly in the interwar period, when Belgrade became an important *hub for many Slovenians* as well (Jovanović 2022).

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The present day has finally brought Slovenian and Serbian historians together around a position which, with regard to the collapse of monarchical Yugoslavia, is expressed by Jože Možina as follows: "In addition to the overwhelming superiority of Germany, Italy, and the satellite states, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was also confronted with Pavelić's, i.e., the Croatian stab in the back" (Možina 2021, 38, with source in note no. 111; cf. p. 42; cf. Godeša 2011, 171, 183), along with Croatian aspirations toward Slovenian territories. It is worth noting that said territories were considerably larger than those occupied, which, indicatively, has only recently been discussed in a TV report "Five Slovenian Villages that Survived the Second World War under the NDH" (Svenšek 2019), and in the even more strikingly titled article "'The NDH

Occupied Slovenian Villages': Will Slovenia Demand War Reparations from Croatia?" (Zore 2011). For the sake of accuracy, Možina's phrase "Croatian stab in the back" is also found in the *Proclamation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovenia* from April 1941, addressed to the Slovenian people, which stated: "Faithful to the treacherous tradition of the Croatian nobility, the Croatian capitalist gentlemen opened the doors to foreign conquerors and thus stabbed the peoples of Yugoslavia in the back"[2] (CCKPS 1941). Thus, the *Slovenian core territory* was further condemned to all kinds of suffering, torn apart between the forces gathered around Germany and Italy, and with the creation of the NDH prevented from remaining part of Yugoslavia and thereby from resisting the enemy – the future occupiers (at the same time Slovenian politicians were drawn into attempts to reach agreements with Hitler, alongside the futile self-proclamation of an independent Slovenia, which – like the establishment of the NDH – was assessed as a betrayal of Yugoslavia (cf. Petranović 1993, 207–211), although the Ustaša entity represented a long-prepared project that was ultimately brought to fruition).

ON THE PROLOGUE OF THE SHARED SUFFERING OF THE SERBIAN AND SLOVENIAN PEOPLES IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The extent to which the Slovenian and Serbian peoples were predestined to suffer in the Second World War is also evidenced by the fact that they were, each in their own way, entangled in the military coup of March 27, 1941 in Belgrade, which followed Yugoslavia's accession to the Tripartite Pact two days earlier (see: Janjetović 2006, 1021; Radić 2008, 72, with note no. 7). That pact allegedly "guaranteed

[2] The following was also stated: "Alongside the Belgrade čaršija and the treacherous Croatian gentry, the greatest responsibility for the national misfortune that befell the peoples of Yugoslavia is borne by the Slovenian capitalist gentry. These gentlemen, led by clerical leadership, have for years participated in a disastrous anti-people, anti-national policy. The Slovenian clerical gentry stood, with poisonous hatred, at the head of the entire anti-Soviet campaign and did everything to prevent a closer rapprochement between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. These gentlemen participated in the unfortunate accession of Yugoslavia to the Tripartite Pact and ultimately placed their stamp on the treacherous 'National Council'[…]" (CCKPS 1941).

that during the war Germany and Italy would not seek the passage or transport of their troops across Yugoslav territory," confirming "their decision that they would always respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia" (*Politika* 1941).[3] However much the communists appropriated March 27, and its legacy (cf. Timofejev 2011, 234–237), they *quickly forgot* not only that in April 1941 they celebrated Stalin's system of government and his non-aggression pact with Hitler (1939), but also that they had held pro-Nazi positions (Radić 2008, 72, with note 7), *reinforced* by years of Comintern stipends (it remains unclear why Yugoslav communists would have sought war against the Reich if such a course had run counter to Stalin's pact with Hitler, which remained in force until June 22, 1941, when Germany attacked the USSR).

It would be unfair to overlook how, on March 27, the Yugoslav capital, in the largest mass gathering it had ever witnessed, echoed with the cry "Better the grave than a slave," after which, on April 6, the first attack by German aviation followed. Alongside Minister Fran Kulovec, the first Slovenian victim of the Second World War, nearly three thousand residents of Belgrade were killed, along with a significantly larger number of wounded. (As a *nota bene*, it needs to be pointed out that in certain parts of Yugoslavia, there was no publicly expressed empathy for the suffering of its capital, and thus of its multi-ethnic population. Even in present-day literature published outside Serbia, the event is often reduced to the generalised phrase "the bombing of Belgrade," without any indication of the catastrophic consequences of that act.) Recalling the aforementioned slogan would be superfluous if not for the similarity with a verse by France Prešeren, written in 1835 in the poem *The Baptism on the Savica*: "Less terrible is the night in the bosom of black earth than under the bright sun the days of slavery." According to our knowledge, this is the first time a connection between the two has

[3] The title and subtitle of the text are cited. Branko Petranović and Nikola Žutić emphasise that the funds given to Yugoslav politicians before the coup were not bribes for action but a means to strengthen propaganda against Germany. Based on certain sources, they state that money was handed to some Serbian politicians, as well as to members of the Slovene People's Party ("Slovenian clericals") (Petranović i Žutić 1990, 89, with source in note no. 2); see also: Stafford 1977, 399–419; cf. Vodušek Starič 2002; Godeša 2011, 156–157; 178). On the activities of the so-called Catholic political circle immediately before the April War and the occupation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, see Barker 1981, 7–28; Godeša 2006, 152–187; Godeša 2006, 209–215.

been suggested. If further research confirms that Prešeren's words were indeed used, this would be a valuable contribution to historiography (one that could disrupt the official version of history not only of the Serbian and Slovenian peoples).

It is worth recalling that the echo of this libertarian cry quickly spread to Ljubljana as well. This fact has also remained little known. More precisely, it has been consigned to oblivion because it has not been insisted upon. Fortunately, Bojan Godeša has recently provided details of multiple significance for understanding the history of the constituent peoples of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/ Kingdom of Yugoslavia. According to him, Slovenian public opinion – unlike the Croatian, for example – did not welcome Yugoslavia's accession to the Tripartite Pact. This became particularly evident after March 27, 1941, when demonstrations were also held in Ljubljana, as they were in Belgrade. According to Godeša, the student demonstrations against accession to the pact were attended by supporters of all political groupings: "After the coup, supporters of the Slovenian People's Party and the Ljotićevci [sympathisers of Dimitrije Ljotić] also joined the general mood. Through the organisational secretary of the banovina committee of the Yugoslav Radical Union, Franc Kasa, Snoja called on Catholic youth to take to the streets […] Thus, the whole of Ljubljana became one enormous manifestation for the new government. People embraced and kissed, shouted and sang. At almost every corner, gatherings with patriotic speeches were held. Around ten o'clock, the new government's list was announced. All traditional parties were represented […]" (Godeša 2011, 160–161).

(For the sake of truth, it should be noted that in Ljubljana, some feared the consequences of the coup, which is difficult to address properly without fuller examination, especially if one takes into account the rapidly shifting political currents that prevailed from April 1941 onward, together with attempts to defend national interests, as was also the case in Serbia.)

The similarity of the events conveyed by Godeša with one of the descriptions of simultaneous demonstrations in Belgrade seems unreal: "[…] As early as six in the morning, the streets were crowded with people, peasants in festive attire who kept arriving from surrounding villages, workers, intellectuals, pupils, and citizens, old and young, all had come out to give vent to their joy; all embraced one another, cried,

sang, and cheered. That day the greeting was 'Long live the King, long live Yugoslavia' […]" (Ristović 1997, 183).

To most contemporaries today, it would probably sound anachronistic, if not misplaced, that the Ljubljana Slovenec, on the occasion of the coup, was filled with news under headlines: "Ljubljana and all Slovenia demonstrate for the King and Yugoslavia" (*Ljubljana in vsa Slovenija manifestira za kralja in Jugoslavijo*), "Slovenian Catholic Academics to King Peter II" (*Slovenski katoliški akademiki kralju Petru II*), "Patriotic manifestation of Catholic educational organisations in Union" (*Domoljubna manifestacija kat. prosvetnih organizacij v Unionu*), "Carinthian fighters to His Majesty King Peter II" (*Koroški borci Njegovemu Veličanstvu kralju Petru II*), "War volunteers of the 'District Organisation of the Association of War Volunteers of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia' in Ljubljana" (*Vojni dobrovoljci 'Sreske organizacije Saveza ratnih dobrovoljaca Kraljevine Jugoslavije' v Ljubljani*), "Association of Reserve Non-Commissioned Officers of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Ljubljana Subcommittee" (*Oklic rezervnih podčastnikov. Združenje rezervnih podoficirjev kraljevine Jugoslavije, pododbor Ljubljana*) (*Slovenec* 1941, 2–4).

However, to what extent even the cited material can be placed in entirely different frameworks is confirmed by a claim published in 2018, according to which the coup in Belgrade aimed at the "overthrow of the Banovina of Croatia," and by which "supporters of Greater-Serbian policy wanted to destroy it with a coup d'état" (Batelja 2018, 17).[4] Thereby deliberately neglecting that the coup was accepted by four Croats and two Slovenes who were members of the coup government. Unfortunately, only those well-versed in history, as well as those familiar with the present-day realities in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, can fully understand the aims of the cited statement, regardless of the characteristics of the coup itself. The coup has been differently evaluated among Serbian intellectuals, even *portrayed in the darkest terms*, yet with an almost unanimous view that the West had already betrayed the Serbs before the coup (Živojinović 2011, 514), and that Yugoslavia became a sacrificed ally of London and Washington. It is also indicative that it was long suppressed that the Soviet Union did not object to Hitler,

[4] For the sake of fairness, one should not turn a blind eye to what Franc Kulovec allegedly said in resignation on April 2, namely that "the Serbs did not [alone] create Yugoslavia, but they destroyed it" (Rahten 2022, with source in note no. 85).

then its ally, attacking Yugoslavia, even though it knew of plans for its dismemberment.[5] (There were likewise no comments on the *killing of God* in Stalin's empire, nor on pro-Soviet territorial ambitions, expressed even when the Soviet Union attacked Poland, dividing it with Hitler [1939], and then killing thousands of Poles.)

For the sake of truth, the consequences of the March cry, also assessed as a "symbolic and hopeless defense of honor" (Janjetović 2006, 1021), were such that the living soon began to envy the dead, while the instigators of the coup, primarily in London, expected the struggle of Serbs and Slovenes against the Reich to be as lethal as possible, regardless of the cost it would entail. This was resisted by the Yugoslav government-in-exile and the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland (hereinafter: JVuO), led by General Draža Mihailović, who was unwilling to provoke reprisals against civilians (which made the movement led by Josip Broz Tito more useful to the Allies, especially the British). The same position was shared by members of the counterrevolutionary/anti-communist camp in Slovenia, who awaited the appropriate moment for more effective resistance in vain, because had the *cards been dealt differently* within the anti-Hitler coalition, the history of Yugoslavia would have been entirely different.

In Zagreb, however, German troops were greeted with enthusiasm; no one seemed troubled even by the fact that Nazism had already shown its most inhumane features. Archbishop Stepinac enthusiastically welcomed the establishment of the NDH on April 10, 1941, demanding from the clergy of his diocese, and thus from his flock, all forms of loyalty to the Ustaša regime (Circular of Archbishop Stepinac to the clergy of the archdiocese, April 28, 1941, according to: Krišto 1998, 34–36, doc. no. 10), regardless of the blasphemous nature of the Ustaša movement, to which he had, demonstrably, already shown considerable favour. Yugoslav historians of communist provenance also remained silent about this truth, while on the other hand wishing to "Yugoslavise" March 27, 1941 – they considered it expedient, as did Metod Mikuž, and Zdravko Klanjšček, who emphasised: "The Yugoslav peoples rose

[5] Almost at the same time that Germany attacked Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941, the Treaty of Friendship between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia was signed in Moscow. However, due to the German attack, the Treaty was backdated, as Stalin did not want a war against the Reich, and he also cancelled the planned ceremony marking its signing (Nikolić 2014, 39; cf. Timofejev 2011, 236).

against that shameful Tripartite Pact," and a "wave of dissatisfaction swept the cities of Yugoslavia." He avoided saying what was happening in Zagreb at the time. Instead, he said that "Yugoslavia clearly made it known to the world that it would not accept fascism" (Klanjšček 1984, 25). It does not require much wisdom to realise why Yugoslavia was invoked.

Thus, there is no indication that during the collapse of Yugoslavia and the establishment of the NDH, the Ustaše captured Serbs and Slovenes exclusively, accompanied by the slogan "Long live Croatia!" (Dizdar 2007, 591; Petranović 1992, 109). Not a word is said about how the Ustaša authorities in the Jasenovac concentration camp regarded Slovenes as a kind of Alpine Croats, as indicated by the Latin letter "H," they had to wear as a sign of belonging to the Croatian national community (Deželak-Barič 2000, 158). Perhaps the reason for omitting this was not only the avoidance of Slovenian–Serbian unity even in suffering, but also the fact that this would have required mention of the orders issued by the Ustaša authorities for the Serbian population to wear white armbands (Vukčević i dr. 1993, 44),[6] blue (Jekić 2018, 30, with source in note no. 82; Šarac 2012, 70, note no. 139; Matković 2002, 180) or red bands (Kašić 1971, 183), marked with the letter "P" (for Orthodox faith) or with the inscription "Srbin – Serbe" (Živković i Kačavenda 1998, 98–99; Jelić-Butić 1977, 158–187; Tomasevich 2010, 433–440). (The public is, however, far more familiar with the fact that Jews in the NDH had to wear a yellow armband – with the letter "Ž" [Židovi], while they were also marked in other ways, something that could put even the quisling Serbia of the time to shame.)

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

What has been presented so far could also be understood as the most concise selection of carefully chosen topics that point to the multifaceted affinity between the Slovenian and Serbian peoples, as manifested during the prologue to the Second World War on the territory of Yugoslavia and in the months that followed. At the same time, the examples provided are only some of the evidence of how important

[6] Order of the Ustaša Headquarters in Požega of May 12, 1941, to the Municipal Authority of Velika that Orthodox Christians must wear a white armband on their left arm with the Latin inscription "Orthodox."

topics in Yugoslav historiography were marginalised, only to be covered over time by an *ever-thickening sediment of oblivion*, accompanied by *controlled memory*, which was initially meant to be one of the cornerstones of the "brotherhood and unity" of the Second Yugoslavia. This was followed by a period in which many such topics fell victim to new, *higher interests*, primarily state, national, political, religious, and ecclesiastical ones. It will remain an enigma whether at least something would have been different in present-day history had the issues raised in this paper been more frequently emphasised.

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О ЗАТИРАНИМ ТЕМАМА ИЗ ИСТОРИЈЕ СРПСКО-СЛОВЕНАЧКИХ ВЕЗА ИЛИ О ПРОЛОГУ ЊИХОВЕ БЛИСКОСТИ ТОКОМ ДРУГОГ СВЕТСКОГ РАТА

Резиме

Код проучаваоца и тумача историје су одувек постојале тзв. мале и велике историјске теме, класификоване по различитим критеријумима, углавном као последице духа времена (*Zeitgeist*) и духа места (*Genius loci*). Типологија тема зависи и од тога да ли је међународног или локалног карактера, иако многе по својим својствима могу бити и глокалне. Међутим, такав значај им је услед различитих порива умањиван, а посебно када су схваћене као претња по више интересе одређене заједнице (политичке, националне, верске, црквене, државне). Све наведено су неки од повода због чега до сада у фокусу пажње јавности нису објединьене особености српско-словеначких веза током Другог светског рата, као и њихове разноврсне испреплетености, сличности и блискости. Срећом, недавно су створени услови и за став појединих словеначких историчара по којем је стварање Независне Државе Хрватске (НДХ) био издајнички поступак не само према Краљевини Југославији него и према матици словеначког народа (као што је био и према српском народу). Све се догодило распадом Југославије, узрокованог нападом нацистичке авијације на Београд 6. априла 1941. године. Пролог свему је био војни пуч у Београду, праћен масовним окупљањем грађана југословенске престонице 27. марта 1941, а поводом приступања Југославије Тројном пакту (25. марта). Тада је београдским улицама одзвањао усклик „Боље гроб него роб". У нашем контексту је важно не само то, већ и ово што је скоро непознато – у Љубљани је био масовни скуп, с истим поводом. До сада није наговештено да можда није случајност што споменути

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усклик који се проламао Београдом наликује стиху словеначког песника Франца Прешерна, написаном 1835. године у песми Крст при Савици: „Мање је страшна ноћ у црне земље крилу него под светлим сунцем сужањски дани". Ако даља истраживања потврде да су уистину искоришћене Прешернове речи, биће то значајан допринос историографији, који би могао да поремети званичну верзију историје не само српског и словеначког народа. Када је реч о почетку рата на подручју Југославије, недовољно је познато да су приликом њеног распада априла 1941. године, тј. током стварања НДХ, на њеном подручју заробљавани искључиво Срби и Словенци – као припадници Војске Краљевине Југославије (јер су сматрани несигурним/непријатељским елементом, тј. противницима Трећег Рајха, а тиме и НДХ). У словеначкој литератури нема достојног слова ни о томе како су власти НДХ у исто време сматрале Словенце својеврсним алпским Хрватима, на шта је упућивало слово „X", које су Словенци носили у концентрационом логору Јасеновац (најчувенијем логору смрти у НДХ, као једном од доказа њене ентноцидне/геноцидне природе). Повод за пређуткивање и те чињенице је подстакнуто, намеће се утисак, намером за избегавањем словеначко-српског јединства и у патњи, потеклог од истог зла. Јер су власти НДХ наредиле српском живљу да око рукава носи траку с ознаком „П" (православна вера) или с натписом „Србин – Сербе". Те траке су биле обавезне на више подручја НДХ. Било је то у доба када су Словенци и Срби почели да се боре против нацистичке алијансе и под заставом Југословенске војске у отаџбини, предвођене Драгољубом Дражом Михаиловићем. Индикативно је што је тек у данашње доба тај покрет – поред партизанског/комунистичког – оцењен као ослободилачки. До сада наведено може бити схваћено искључиво као избор тема које се односе на почетак Другог светског рата, јер су словеначко-српске блискости с временом, током рата, постале сваковрсно богатије. Поводе због чега је о томе мало знано могуће је наслутити у уводном делу Резимеа.

Кључне речи: Словенија, Србија, словеначко-српски односи, Независна Држава Хрватска, Други светски рат, Југославија

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