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Great War Legacies in Serbian Culture

Abstract: In the aftermath of the Great War, Ivo Andrić published a number of poems, essays and short stories describing the hard-won victorious outcome as transient to the dire reality of the inordinate loss of human lives and suffering. Yet, personal experiences, although perceived as ephemeral, helped to define the historical discourse capturing man's resolve to persist in his chosen mission. Over time, Serbian literature and fine arts sustained an unfinished dialogue of the past and the present, merging the individual voices with the collective voices to construct the national narrative. The young writer Miloš Crnjanski observed the sights of destruction and despair that seemed to pale in new literary works pertaining to the war. His novel *A Diary about Čarnojević* was closely related to his own perilous wartime journey as a conscript in the Austrian army. The vastness of Pannonian plains and Galician woods must have invoked a comparison of sorts with another historic chapter recorded in the collective consciousness of his nation: the Great Migration of Serbs led by Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević (Crnojević) in 1690. The very title of the novel contained a powerful reference to the migration, and its illustrious historic leader which has not been discussed or explored before.

Keywords: Great War, Serbia, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Empire, Ivo Andrić, Miloš Crnjanski, Ivan Mestrović, Ljubomir Micić, Arsenije III Čarnojević (Crnojević), 1690 Great Serb Migration

After the end of the Great War the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed in Belgrade on December 1, 1918. Belgrade became the capital of the new state as well as the center of an intense revival in many fields of cultural endeavors. According to the testimony of the young poet Rastko Petrović, Belgrade gave the impression of a deserted, war-ravaged city. In spite of its bleak appearance, Petrović noticed a new spirit of lively collaboration in many avenues of cultural life. Everyday meetings of men and women who were also poets offered assurance that one was not alone. *Cafe Moscow*, illuminated with candles at the time, became the meeting place for the leading figures of the literary and artistic world.[1]

The poets were not the only group to meet; there existed a broader context of spiritual association including visual artists and musicians alike, although the influence of young writers was decisive. Even a Croatian writ-

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[1] Jelena Milojković-Djurić, *Tradition and Avant-Garde: the Arts in Serbian Culture between the Two World Wars* (Boulder: East European Monographs; dist. by: Columbia University Press, New York, 1984), 9–10.

er, Gustav Krklec, eventually moved to Belgrade drawn by "the irresistible power" of the city, as he confessed. He wished to establish personal contacts with fellow writers and take part in literary life. Krklec stated that he and his contemporaries Donadini, Šimić and Krleža decided to write in the Eastern Štokavian dialect affirming their adherence to the Yugoslav ideology.[2]

Ivo Andrić left a valuable assessment of the literary scene that evolved following the end of the Great War. A young and knowledgeable writer himself, he knew well his fellow writers, their published works, and those still in progress. In the comprehensive study *Naša književnost i rat* (Our literature and the war) published in 1918 Andrić evaluated the aspirations and projected goals of Serbo-Croatian writers facing a new beginning and new endeavors.

In an introductory statement, Andrić suggested that his findings could be applied only to Serbo-Croatian literature in the regions that had been under Austro-Hungarian rule. However, his comprehensive evaluation included Serbo-Croatian literature as a whole. He noted that after four long years of incessant fighting, a new comprehension of life on all levels became apparent. A new era had begun and a variety of literary activities were gradually resumed. Every new publication was hailed joyfully, and there was a great demand for new reading material. Newly-published works were printed in high print runs and the number of translations of foreign writers substantially increased. Thus, the war that had initially silenced writers and their professional activities eventually encouraged a lively literary life in its aftermath.

However, Andrić believed that the writers were in a difficult position to record and express in a timely fashion all that had happened:

> I only want to draw attention to the difficult moral circulus vitiosus of our writers … we all know how much has changed during these years of suffering for the whole mankind and all of us . . . Nonetheless, all this cannot prevent us from seeing the shallowness and dejection of the so-called literature written before the war and the triviality of its motifs. Presently, we can all appreciate … that a different literature is in the making, and this fact is the only positive side of the war.[3]

Due to such circumstances, Andrić thought it unjust to expect a well-rounded literary rendering of the war or its chronology in recent works. The writers experienced the tragedy of this period as deeply as anybody else, and time was needed to recapture the lost strength and gain the necessary perspective. Consequently, Serbo-Croatian literature acquired a transitory

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[2] Branimir Ćosić, *Deset pisaca, deset razgovora* (Belgrade: Geca Kon, 1931), 113.

[3] Ivo Andrić, "Naša književnost i rat", *Istorija i legenda*, *Eseji*, vol. 1 of Sabrana Dela (Collected Works) (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1977), 169.

character casting a long shadow of expectation for a promising future of literary creation.[4]

Andrić firmly believed that if the writers managed to sustain the intensity of their creative quest, as they had before the war, then they would accomplish an important goal:

> The main task of contemporary literature is to maintain a continuity of the former spiritual life, to preserve the ideals of one's youth that became ideals of the whole people, and to uphold them through suffering and iniquity into better days.[5]

In addition, Andrić noted that many writers and artists showed a marked interest in creating literary associations, artistic unions and professional bodies promoting cultural enlightenment and raising awareness of the arta.

Among the first to be founded, in 1919, was the *Grupa umetnika* (The Group of Artists) which included Serbian writers such as Ivo Andrić, Rastko Petrović, Danica Marković, Todor Manojlović, Sibe Miličić, composers Miloje Milojević, Stevan Hristić and Kosta Manojlović, and painters Branko Popović, Kosta Miličević and Mirko Kujačić, among others. The *Group* organized literary-musical evenings, and exhibitions featuring paintings of its members. Poetry remained a preferred literary genre as it had been even during the war years.[6]

The first recital, in November 1919, was promptly reviewed in the journal *Misao* (Thought). The reviewer, Velimir Živojinović, noted with pleasure that the recital offered a new and congenial collaboration of writers, visual artists and musicians:

> This was probably the first effort in our midst of a planned cultivation and presentation of literary and art works as a joint manifestation. It was also an introduction to the contemporary artistic movements in our cultural life ... as well as to the manifold conceptions that have prevailed in literature. A similar situation is in the fine arts, the visual artists presented in their works varied directions supported by the participating members of the Group.[7]

Similar efforts on a more expansive and larger scale led to the formation of the *Cvijeta Zuzorić Society of Friends of Fine Arts* in Belgrade in 1922. Writer Branislav Nušić, who had recently assumed the new post of secretary of the Ministry of Education, offered his efficient support. The *Society* planned to build an exhibition hall on a prestigious location in Mali

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[4] Ibid. 172–173.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Milojković-Djurić, *Tradition and Avant-Garde*, 10–11.

[7] Velimir Živojinović, "Akcija Grupe umetnika", *Misao* (December 1919), 317–318.

Kalemegdan Park. Most importantly, it aimed to sponsor exhibitions and concerts providing incentives and support to deserving young artists, composers and writers.[8]

The starting of the art magazine *Zenit* (Zenith) in Zagreb in February 1922 was yet another endeavour of congenial collaboration. The magazine was eventually moved to Belgrade in 1923. Its editors, Ljubomir Micić and Branko Ve Poljanski, managed to attract well-known writers and artists as regular contributors.[9]

Zenit published notable contributions discussing modern art by a plethora of art critics and writers including Ivo Andrić, Rastko Petrović, Miloš Crnjanski, Stanislav Vinaver, Avgust Černigoj, Marko Ristić, Sibe Miličić, Mihailo S. Petrov and Milan Dedinac. Moreover, it attracted the attention of foreign writers and artists including Anatolii Lunacharskii, Vladimir Mayakovski, Vasilii Kandinsky, Walter Gropius, Ivan and Claire Goll, Marcel Sauvage and Jean Epstein. Vignettes and drawings were supplied by M. S. Petrov, S. Miličić, J. Bijelić, F. Kralj, J. Havliček, L. Suss, K. Teige, A. Hofmeister, A. Wachsmann. Literary contributions were published in the original languages as submitted by various authors.

The founder and editor Ljubomir Micić together with Boško Tokin and Ivan Goll wrote the *Zenithism Manifesto* published in 1922 in the eleventh issue of the magazine. The *Manifesto* proudly stated that *Zenithism* was a new art form initiated in the Balkans, and at the same time a manifestation of the universal freedom of the human spirit. *Zenit* was the first Balkan art magazine in Europe and the first European art magazine in the Balkans. *Zenithists* intended to fight for the triumph of the *New Art* opposed to the "declining and decaying Europe".

In their effort to gain recognition, the editors arranged an international art exhibition that was held in Belgrade in 1924. For this occasion more than one hundred art works from well-known artists were solicited, among others those of Archipenko, Delaunay, Moholy-Nagy, Zadkin, Kandinsky and Lisitskii were featured at the exhibit.[10]

The literary association *Albatros* managed to publish a series of books by young writers. Among them, three deserve special mention: *The Lightning-Rod of the Cosmos* by Stanislav Vinaver, *The Burlesque of Perun*, *God*

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[8] Cvijeta Zuzorić (1552–1648) was an educated woman and a famed poetess from Dubrovnik who actively supported writers and artists. The Pavilion that bears her name has been promoting public awareness of the fine arts ever since its foundation.

[9] Irina Subotić, "Avant-Garde Tendencies in Yugoslavia", *Art Journal* 49.1 (College Art Association NY, 1990), 21–27; Milojković-Djurić, *Tradition and Avant-Garde*, 27–29.

[10] Ljubomir Micić, "V imja zenitizma", *Catalogue of the First International Exhibition of Avant-garde Art* (Belgrade 1924), 3.

*of Thunde*r by Rastko Petrović, and *The Diary about Čarnojević* by Miloš Crnjanski. Moreover, Crnjanski's collection of poems *Lirika Itake* (The Lyrics of Ithaca), published in 1919, drew considerable attention of literary critics and public alike.

Crnjanski wrote some of his poems on the battlefields of Galicia fighting under the Austro-Hungarian banner or in hospitals while recuperating from wounds and illnesses. He recalled his own dire experience and that of his generation of young men questioning the devastating reality of war. A number of these poems were published in Zagreb in the journal *Savremenik* (The Contemporary) during the war, under his full name. Crnjanski openly sought to express his "patriotic, political and anarchist point of view".

Ultimately, he perceived these poems as commentaries referring to the epic poem *Odyssey* encapsulating the classical legacy of ancient Greece. Crnjanski found a measure of solace and self-confidence in recalling Odysseus' years of fighting during the Trojan war and his epic effort to return home to Ithaca. *Ithaca* poems pointed out Crnjanski's literary affinity with the classical tradition of ancient Greece perpetuated in Western thought.

> The Trojan and Mycenaean allusions in these verses were intentional. The poet considered the Odyssey the greatest poem of mankind, and the return from war as the saddest experience of any man. Although his own poems lag behind these monumental creations, this consideration was their main content. During the war, given the limited number of readers assembled around this journal, these poems remained a literary episode. After the war, in Belgrade, these poems resonated like an explosion. They were enthusiastically received and accepted without any merit on the part of the poet. There lies their mysterious fate.[11]

The *mysterious fate* of the lasting appeal of Crnjanski's verses was definitely the merit of the poet. The public recognized the lyrical eloquence of his verses, his keen ability to elucidate a wide range of social issues and his sincere concerns for the human lot.

Lyrics of Ithaca served well as a setting for his inspired poetic and lyric musings, and for the scrutiny of historical legacies of war and peace. Crnjanski decried the brutality of the war and pointed to the gallant resolve of legions of common soldiers to persist in their mission at any cost. These valiant and often overlooked fellow fighters bore the brunt of the war: celebrated victories were mostly the result of their selfless sacrifices and loyalty to their nation. Crnjanski suggested that various commemorations and the proposed *Vidovdan Memorial* should honor the people, the fighters, and not ladies and gentlemen.

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[11] Miloš Crnjanski, *Itaka i komentari* (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1959), 9–11.

"Spomen Principu" (In memory of Princip) was written in 1919.[12]

Let the clamor on Balša and Dušan the Mighty go silent.
Noblemen, Despots and Generals were a disgrace.
The outlaw's blood should be acclaimed
To the murder set up the Vidovdan Memorial! …
And the glorious past is a lie.

* * *

O Balši, i Dušanu Silnom da umukne krik.
Vlastela, Vojvode, Despoti, behu sram.
Hajdučkoj krvi nek' se ori cik
Ubici diž'te vidovdanski hram! . . .
A sjajna prošlost je laž.

In this poem Crnjanski referred to the plans for the *Vidovdans Memorial* supported by the *Council for Organization of Artistic Affair.* The Council was founded in 1913, prior to the outbreak of the Great War. Crown Prince Alexander sponsored the *Council* assisted by a plethora of its distinguished members including the member of the Royal Serbian Academy Bogdan Popović, the famed Slovenian architect Josif Plečnik and the Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović, among others. The painter Nadežda Petrović served in the capacity as the First Secretary of the Council.

Ivan Meštrović, who submitted a proposal for the *Vidovdan Memorial*, had previously completed the equestrian statues of *Kraljević Marko* and *Srdja Zlopogledja*. He had also created an equestrian statue of yet another epic hero, *Miloš Obilić*, cast in bronze. Meštrović, inspired by the Kosovo epic poems, created a number of remarkable sculptures comprising the *Kosovo Cycle*, completed during his residency in Paris, in 1910–1912. He planned to incorporate these sculptures into the proposed *Vidovdan Memorial*. Meštrović fully accepted Auguste Rodin's objective that an art work should project an inner emotional context, *du dedans au dehors,* which would eliminate any verbal commentary. Shortly before the war, Meštrović emigrated to Britain, and eventually joined the Yugoslav Committee (*Jugoslovenski odbor*) in London. During the war, he organized several exhibitions of the *Kosovo Cycle* throughout Britain promoting the Yugoslav cause.[13]

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[12] The poem was included in a collection by Vladimir Jovičić, *Srpsko rodoljubivo pesništvo* (Belgrade: Nolit, 1976), 472. (All translations of the poems cited in this article are mine.) The young student Princip was understood as the mentioned killer by Crnjanski in this poem. Princip fired the shot that killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. Crnjanski suggested that Princip should be honored for his bravery aiming to help the liberation of his people from foreign occupation.

[13] Vladislav Kušan, "Moderna Skulptura u Hrvata", *Forum* 1–2 (January 1980), 293–296.

After the end of the Great War, Meštrović was commissioned to construct the singular memorial to The Unknown Soldier (*Spomenik neznanom junaku*) on Mt Avala near Belgrade. King Alexander suggested that the monument should recognize the Yugoslav people while paying tribute to the heroic war effort and mourning its many victims. Therefore, Meštrović incorporated eight caryatides representing women in national costumes as a symbolic portrayal of the Yugoslav union.

In addition, Meštrović sculpted the powerful monument of *Gratitude to France* in recognition of the generous help of the French government and people during the Great War. His memorable statue, *The Victor*, dates from the same period. Both monuments are set up within the walls of the Belgrade Fortress dominating respective vistas.

However, the creation of Yugoslavia and the tenets of South Slavic unity were not readily appreciated by some young poets. Most notably, Miloš Crnjanski's poem *Jugoslaviji* (To Yugoslavia) expressed doubts and disturbing accusations as regards the creation of the new state. The terse, fleeting verses resembled an outburst, as if shouting in disagreement:

Nijedna čaša što se pije,	None of the toasts raised,
Nijedna trobojka što se vije	None of the tricolors unfurled
Naša nije. ...	Is ours. ...

The same poem was an oblique reply to the recently published poem *Prolog* (Prologue) by Aleksa Šantić, a fervent supporter of the Yugoslav idea. Šantić, a venerated poet of the preceding generation centered in Mostar, in Herzegovina, was a lifelong supporter of the liberation and unification of the South Slavs. Šantić's newly-published poem celebrated the fulfillment of cherished ideas expressed with great poise and sincerity. The poem, first published in 1918 in the journal *Književni jug* (Literary South) in Zagreb, became very popular and subsequently appeared in a number of publications.[14]

Very important in the ongoing lively literary debate was the role of journals and in particular of the prestigious *Srspki književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald) founded in Belgrade in 1901. Newly established journals such as *Misao, Zenit* and *Putevi* promoted fresh literary voices.

Bogdan Popović, the distinguished editor of *Srspki književni glasnik*, also wanted to publish representatives of the *Moderns*, as the young writers were called at the time. Popović was aware that the new poetry was met with adverse criticism and underrated. He believed that poets rank higher

[14] *Književni jug* 8 (1918). The poem was subsequently renamed *Novo pokolenje* (New Generation) in several other publications.

than critics, since poets are always in the vanguard, "even when they wander in the mist".[15]

Popović invited Miloš Crnjanski to contribute a poem of his choice to the forthcoming issue of the journal. Crnjanski accepted the invitation and chose the poem *Sumatra,* accompanied by his commentary of the poem, at the request of the editor. "Objašnjenje Sumatre" (The Explanation of Sumatra) became a sort of a manifesto presenting Crnjanski's views in a broader poetic and social context that permeated the current literary horizon.

Crnjanski acknowledged that the newly-written poetry was indeed often rejected and unjustly criticized. Some poems were singled out as expression of modernism, triviality and decadence. Crnjanski refuted such accusations by stating that the new poetry was not separated from the realities of life *like a sleeping beauty in an ivory tower.* The horrific experiences of the Great War were still painfully remembered:

> There is a sense everywhere that thousands upon thousands passed past corpses, and ruins, and around the world, and returned home, searching for the thoughts, laws and life as they once were. For the old, customary literature, familiar and comfortable sensations, read-out thoughts. The lyrical poetry of eternal, banal metaphors, the likeable ease of verse, chrysanthemums that blossomed in our weekly literary supplements. But new thoughts have come, new raptures, new laws, new moralities!

Still, Crnjanski thought that the haunting sights of destruction and despair seemed to pale in any new literary work pertaining to the war. The battlefields of the Great War introduced a decisive divide questioning the trust in the humanitarian tradition of Europe and creating a veritable breaking point between the past and the present epochs.[16]

> The world has not yet heard the terrible storm above our heads. While down there it has shaken, not the political relations, or literary dogmas, but life itself. These are the dead that are extending their hands! They must be paid! … The newest art, especially the lyric poetry, prefers new sensibilities. Without crude quadruples and drummed up music of former metrics, we give the pure form of an ecstasy … To use all the colors, wavering colors of our dreams and foreboding, the sound and whispering of things, until now despised and dead … Once again we let our form be influenced by cosmic forms: clouds, flowers, rivers, brooks ... That is why our metrics are personal, spiritual, nebulous like a melody.[17]

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[15] Quoted after Mira Petrić-Petković, "Objašnjenje *Sumatre* na poziv Bogdana Popovića", in *Zbornik radova nastavnika i studenata*, ed. D. Nedeljković (Belgrade: Filološki fakultet, 1975), 294.

[16] Miloš Crnjanski, "Otkrovenje Rastka Petrovića", *Srpski književni glasnik* VIII-5 (1923), 380.

[17] Miloš Crnjanski, "Objašnjenje Sumatre", *Srpski književni glasnik* I.4 (1920), 266–267.

Sumatra

Now that we are carefree, light and tender,	Sad smo bezbrižni, laki i nežni
It strikes us: how quiet and snowy	Pomislimo: kako su tihi i snežni
Are the peaks of the Urals. ...	Vrhovi Urala.

Crnjanski celebrated the healing presence of nature, real and imagined, that brought relief from the war memories and the debilitating fear of imminent death. He acknowledged the regained feeling of tranquility and awareness of being by recognizing Nietzsche's philosophical stance, *Bejahung des Dasein.* Everything was connected, distant and nearby places. As if in a dream, Crnjanski attained the vision of faraway landscapes, snowy peaks of the Urals, blue waters of the Indian Ocean and its enchanting island of Sumatra. The sights and beauty of nature expanded one's horizon beyond the familiar surroundings. The ideas centering around the vision of *Sumatra* aimed to promote appreciation and interaction with other cultures as well as appreciation of the other's points of view.[18]

In a conversation with the writer Branimir Ćosić, Crnjanski recalled his early poems and his first novel, *Diary about Čarnojević*, published in 1921:

> I matured during the last year of the war and during the war. In prison and on the battlefield, as a simple Austrian soldier, I suffered, fell ill, ran away, and fought. I slept among the dead bodies. Thus, I cannot and do not want to forget the war. During those five years, I wrote *The Mask*, *A Diary about Čarnojević*, and my poems … In the great chaos of the First World War, I became firm in my sorrows, pensiveness and gloomy feelings of solitude. Not even joyful events after the war could change me.[19]

Crnjanski's novel *A Diary about Čarnojević* was closely related to the poems collected in the *Lyrics of Ithaca* due to the shared temporal and thematic contexts. Crnjanski based the novel in part on his random notes written while fighting in Galicia. He chronicled his reassignments to several battlefields, transfers to hospitals, occasional reveling in nearby towns and villages, trying to desert and running away.

In his novel, Crnjanski recalled his recuperation in a hospital in Krakow. A nurse tending to his needs was taken aback by his emaciated body and feverish semiconscious state. She was placing bags of ice on his chest to stop the bleeding from his lungs caused by tuberculosis. She obviously took pity and confessed that she harbored wrong impressions about the Serbs. In

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[18] "Objašnjenje Sumatre" also reflected the idea of *Bildung* fostering understanding of distant cultures in time and space, as formulated by Novalis, Schelling, and shared by philosophers around the journal *Aetheneum*. The ultimate goal of *Bildung was* the expanding one's horizon by considering the point of view of others.

[19] Ćosić, *Deset pisaca, deset razgovora*, 81. Crnjanski referred to his *Diary* as "kupusara", a sizable messy notebook that he carried with him at all times.

turn, care from people that Crnjanski did not know or trust in particular did result in his recovery from serious illnesses and wounds.

Gradually, Crnjanski attained a new understanding of life in all its manifestations of generosity amidst unexplainable cruelties, fleeting moments of friendship and kindness, as well as melancholy and loneliness. Crnjanski projected powerful images of the endless wandering of soldiers and populations not questioning the strategies or goals of the war theater. He summed up his impression of the war years in a short sentence as: *Life without meaning.*[20] Yet he managed to endure by observing and recording as a writer and mediator of his art.

Crnjanski's own perilous journey crossing the vastness of Pannonia plains and Galician woods, must have invoked a comparison of sorts with another historic chapter recorded in the collective consciousness of his nation: the Great Migration of Serbs under Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević [Crnojević] in 1690.

The migration of Serbs to Hungarian territory took place in the aftermath of a protracted Turkish-Austrian war. Kara Mustafa Pasha led the invasion of the Ottoman troops against the Habsburgs reaching as far as Vienna. The siege of the city in 1683 lasted two months and the Ottomans were finally defeated chiefly due to the gallant intervention of the Polish king Jan Sobieski. All along, the Austrian army was aided by the Serbian militia, *uskoks* from Dalmatia and Croatian fighters.

Ottoman forces continued with their warfare and in 1690 went into a strong offensive. Fleeing from Ottoman reprisals, Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević and a number of insurgents managed to safely reach Belgrade. At this point, the Austrian Emperor Leopold I asked the Serbs to resume the fight against the Turks. As the Ottoman pressure increased, the Patriarch dispatched his envoys to the Emperor explaining the gravity of the situation. Most importantly he also proposed the settlement of Serbian refuges on Hungarian territory while acknowledging Emperor Leopold I as the hereditary ruler. Upon the formal invitation by Leopold I with the official *Letter of Invitation*, Patriarch Arsenije III organized a national assembly in Belgrade (*Beogradski sabor*) on June 18, 1690 that endorsed the proposed plans for migration.

Based on the ongoing negotiation with the Patriarch, and in dire need of repopulating the designated regions of the Military Frontier and central Hungary Leopold issued his first *Chapter on Privileges*, on August 21, 1690 recognizing Serbs within the Habsburg Monarchy as a separate political entity (*corpus separatum*) under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

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[20] The novel *Dnevnik o Čarnojeviću* begins with the sentence: "Jesen, i život bez smisla" (Autumn, and a life without meaning).

After crossing the River Danube, around 30,000 Serbs led by the Patriarch arrived in Komarom and Szent Andre in October 1690. The Austrians sanctioned the Serbian migration counting most of all on the Serbian military help in the defense against the Turkish invasions as a powerful *ante murale*.[21]

While composing his novel, Crnjanski must have tried to reassess not only his immediate journey, but also the tradition of migrations of his nation that was repeated time and again. The recollection of the Serbian history provided a reassuring anchor in the midst of an unsettling time filled with violence and dark foreboding. Crnjanski came to realize that he was part of a shared tradition of his people that extended into his own time. These deliberations inspired as well his novel *Seobe* (Migrations), published in 1929.

In due course, it became apparent to this writer that Crnjanski's novel *A Diary about Čarnojević* included feasible references to the Serbian Migration under Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević (Church Slavonic version of Crnojević) not discussed or explored before. The very title of the novel contained a powerful rhetorical reference to an illustrious historic leader. Furthermore, the appearance of Egon Čarnojević in a dreamlike sequence in the novel attained a special connotation.

Egon Čarnojević was presented as a confounding personality, in all likelihood a former Russian naval officer. His fragmented recollections of his many journeys overseas provided another link to Patriarch Čarnojević and his descendants who resettled once again in Russia, more precisely in Ukraine.[22]

It is recorded, that in addition to the previous settlements in the central regions of Hungary under Austrian jurisdiction, another migration took place in 1740 under Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović, and then in 1752, from the Military Frontier of the Habsburg Monarchy to the Russian Empire. The Serbs settled in the region *Novaia Serbia* in Ukraine bordered by the River Dnieper not far from the Black Sea. This region presently includes Novomyrgorod in Dniepepetrovsk Oblast.[23]

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[21] *History of Yugoslavia*, ed. Vladimir Dedijer et al. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1974), cf. chapter "The great Migration of Serbs to Hungary" by Milorad Ekmečić, 212–215.

[22] Crnjanski's interest in the saga of the Čarnojević family prompted him to write about his visit to their family graveyard. A number of Patriarch Čarnojević descendants returned to the town of Kikinda in the Banat. His article, "Grobnica Čarnojevića" was published in the Belgrade daily *Politika* (n° 5623, Dec. 18, 1923). *Politika* published yet another article by Crnjanski, "Daća u Kikindi" (n° 5618, Dec. 13, 1923.

[23] Jelena Milojković-Djurić, *Srbi na putevima Balkana, Evrope i Sredozemlja* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike, 2011), 143–158. In the chapter "Poslednja seoba Vadima Černa – monaha Arsenija Crnojevića u Hilandaru", I discussed the emigration of a descendent of the Patriarch's, Aleksei Mihailovič Černusevič, born in 1889. I also wrote about his

Crnjanski continued to explore the historic resettlements and dispersions of the Serbian people. Prior to starting his novel *Seobe*, he studied folk songs and shorter epic poems recorded in the region dubbed *Vojna granica*, Military Frontier, and published in several collections.[24] After some thirty years, Crnjanski returned again to the topic of migrations in the second volume of *Seobe*, published in 1962. The topic of migration was also explored in his last novel, *Roman o Londonu* (Novel about London), published in 1971.

In the aftermath of the Great War, Ivo Andrić published a number of poems, essays and short stories, but did not start writing an extensive novel. In his poem *Iznad pobjeda* (Above victories), Andrić stated that the nature of any victory is ephemeral and non existing as opposed to the dire reality of death, loss of human dignity and debilitating suffering of mankind.[25]

After long years of captivity during the Great War, Andrić became a disillusioned man. According to Radovan Samardžić, Andrić could not have summoned, at this point, the strength for an objective evaluation of the cataclysmic events of a world war and its consequences.[26] Moreover, Andrić was painfully aware of a growing ideological divide in Bosnia that resulted in an outburst of hatred and violence.

In his story "Jedno pismo iz 1920" (A Letter from 1920) published the same year, Andrić left a poignant assessment of the situation in Bosnia shortly after the end of the Great War.[27] He framed the story in the form of a letter from an old school friend, who decided to leave Bosnia shortly after the end of the Great War. Andrić mentioned that the letter resulted after an unexpected meeting of two friends at the railway station in Slavonski Brod after midnight. While waiting for a train that was running without a set schedule, they talked about their lives, since they had not been in touch for a long time. His friend became a physician in Sarajevo following in the footsteps of his father, a well-respected medical doctor himself. His father was of Jewish descent and his family was well established in Sarajevo. The

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son Vadim, born in Sevastopol in 1912. The two of them emigrated from Russia after the 1917 Revolution. Prior to the October Revolution, Aleksei Černusevič served as Commander of the Russian Imperial Commercial Fleet stationed in the Crimea.

[24] Miodrag Maticki, "Graničarska epika u *Seobama* Miloša Crnjanskog", in *Književno delo Miloša Crnjanskog*, ed. Lj. Jeremić and A. Petrov (Belgrade: Institut za književnost i umetnost & BIGZ, 1972), 209–234.

[25] Ivo Andrić, *Nemiri* (Belgrade 1919).

[26] Radovan Samardžić, "Andrić i istorija", in *Delo Ive Andrića u kontekstu evropske književnosti i kulture* (Belgrade: Zadužbina Ive Andrića, 1981), 406.

[27] The story translated into English by Lenore Grenoble was published in the special issue of *Serbian Studies* (18.1) *An Anthology of Serbian Literature* edited by Vasa Mihailovich (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, Indiana University, 2004), 184–194.

father had succumbed to typhoid fewer during the war, and his mother had moved to Trieste to live with her relatives. After much thought, and with a heavy heart, his friend decided to sell the family home on the banks of the Miljacka, and all the books and possessions that the family once cherished. His friend confessed that he could not continue to live in a place where so much hate was all consuming.

The seemingly placid coexistence of Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim and Jewish communities, living side by side, had suddenly become a thing of the past. Andrić stated that after the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in June 1914, harsh persecution of the Serbian population had caused a precipitous change; almost in a single day the whole society had been transformed.

Many years later, during the Second World War, Andrić repeated his earlier deliberations about unforeseen hostilities and divisiveness occurring during unsettling times. He came to the conclusion that animosity in any society invariably occurs when an overwhelming enemy is nearby and great defeat certain. Under such circumstances, there appears violence and hatred followed by fratricide and mutual quarrels among all doomed peoples:

> As has so often happened in the history of man, permission was tacitly granted for acts of violence and plunder, even for murder, if they are carried out in the name of higher interests, according to established rules and against a limited number of men of a particular type and belief . . . In a few minutes the business quarter, based on centuries of tradition, was wiped out.[28]

Andrić repeated his understanding of the predicament of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian population on the crossroads between the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires in his novels *Travnička hronika* (Bosnian Chronicle) and in particular in his famed *Na Drini ćuprija* (The Bridge on the Drina).

Great writers, in crucial moments of social upheavals, have been able to safeguard the historic past, and the always present tradition, ever since the King of Ithaca set sail on the Mediterranean.

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