



Mihailo Petrović

ALAS

Life
Work
Times



Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts







SERBIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AND ARTS

MIHAILO PETROVIĆ ALAS: LIFE, WORK, TIMES
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 150th ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH

Publisher

Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Knez Mihailova 35, Belgrade

Acting publisher

Academician Vladimir S. Kostić

Editor-in-chief

Academician Marko Anđelković

Editors of publication

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Cover design

Dragana Lacmanović-Lekić

Prepress

Dosije Studio, Belgrade

Selection of artworks

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English translation

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Proofreading and editing

Jelena Mitrić

Printing

Planeta print, Belgrade

Print run: 500 copies

ISBN 978-86-7025-818-1

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The publication was financially supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia and Telekom Srbija.

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Exclusive editions, such as this monograph, call for the engagement, enthusiasm and cooperation of a number of individuals and institutions. We would like to use this opportunity and extend our gratitude to everyone who has taken part or in any way contributed to, or supported the creation and publication of this monograph.

First of all, we would like to express our gratitude to the authors of papers for their effort taken to provide expert and high level insights into some main points of Mihailo Petrović Alas' life and work, at the same time preserving an important aspect of being easy to read and appealing to a broader readership. In addition, we would like to thank to Ms. Snežana Krstić-Bukarica and Ms. Nevena Đurđević from SASA Publishing Section for performing a thorough proofread of the papers, thus making the writing even more articulate.

The monograph features a number of photographs and the copies of documents that have been obtained owing to the kindness of the SASA Archive, SASA Library, SASA Mathematical Institute, Archive of Serbia, Mr. Viktor Lazić from the "Adligat" Society, Mr. Jovan Hans Ivanović and his "Mihailo Petrović Alas" Foundation, "Mihailo Petrović Alas" Primary School, "Svetozar Marković" University Library, Belgrade City Museum, Zavod za udžbenike (Institute for Textbook Publishing) in Belgrade, Virtual Library of Faculty of Mathematics in Belgrade and Digital Legacy of Mihailo Petrović Alas.

The publication of the monograph was financially supported by JP Srbijagas, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, primarily through scientific projects in which the majority of the authors of the papers takes part, and Telekom Srbija. We would like to express our deep gratitude for their support.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Mirko Milićević from the publishing house "Dosije Studio" for excellent prepress preparation of the monograph.

S. Pilipović, G. Milovanović, Ž. Mijajlović

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

As soon as one first encounters the work of Mihailo Petrović, it becomes evident that he was a person that according to its numerous traits was a polymath. Above all, the academician Petrović was a gifted mathematician and a renowned professor at the University of Belgrade, but also a fisherman, writer, philosopher, musician, world traveler and a travel writer. He earned a degree in mathematics at the Belgrade Grand School and a licentiate degree in mathematics, physics and chemistry at the Sorbonne. At the age of 26, only a year after he had completed his studies, he defended his PhD degree in mathematics at the same university, as a student of the famous French mathematicians Henri Poincaré, Charles Hermite and Charles Émile Picard. In the same year (1894) he was elected to the position of professor at the Grand School to which he brought the spirit of the French mathematical school. It was at that point that his long and prolific journey through science began, whereas, owing to him, Belgrade achieved parity with other major European centers in mathematical sciences. He became an initiator and a leader of the Serbian mathematics and strongly contributed to the spirit of the modern European science in Serbia.

Petrović's expertise spanned several mathematical areas in which he achieved scientific results of world-class relevance: differential equations, numerical analysis, theory of functions of a complex variable and geometry of polynomials. He was also interested in natural sciences, chemistry, physics and biology, and he published scientific papers in these fields, too. In his scientific endeavor he managed to meet the most rigorous standards of the most developed European countries. In a brilliant rise, in a few years' time, up to the early 20th century, he wrote around thirty papers that he published in the leading European mathematical journals. It was due to this fact that he was elected a member of the Serbian Royal Academy as early as at the age of 30, and soon after he became a member of a number of foreign academies and prominent expert societies. He won the greatest respect of the global mathematical community: he was among few mathematicians (13) who delivered at least five plenary lectures or lectures as a visiting lecturer at the International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM). He delivered five such lectures (1908, 1912, 1924, 1928 and 1932). One such invitation has been considered by the mathematical community as an equivalent of an induction to a hall of fame. In addition, it has been considered that Petrović was a founder of new scientific disciplines, namely mathematical phenomenology and spectral theory. He invented several analogue computing machines, possessed technical patents and was the main cryptographer of the Serbian and Yugoslav Army.

Up to the Second World War he was the mentor of all doctoral thesis in mathematics defended at the University of Belgrade. Aforementioned is related to one of professor Petrović's greatest and most important achievements – he was a founder of the Serbian mathematical school that has produced a great number of renowned and successful mathematicians not only in Serbia but also around the world.

In 2018, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and mathematicians in Serbia celebrate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mihailo Petrović Alas. Throughout this year, the Academy has organized a large exhibition dedicated to Petrović, alongside a solemn gathering and a conference. This monograph commemorates this important jubilee of the Serbian mathematics. Given the fact that a lot of articles on Petrović have already been written, and that his collected works were published at the end of the last century, the editors and authors of the papers in this monograph were faced with a daunting task of finding some new details from professor Petrović's life and career. Even more so given that his body of work is immense, spanning different scientific areas and encompassing topics that at first glance one finds difficult to combine. As Dragan Trifunović, Petrović's biographer and a man who most thoroughly studied his life and work, noted on one occasion that almost an institute was necessary that would encompass professor's entire body of work. Therefore, we set a relatively modest goal to ourselves to shed light upon some main points of Petrović's life and work, times and circumstances he lived in, as well as to elaborate on the present developments in relation to the Serbian mathematical school, through a selection of papers. The authors of the papers steered clear of technical details and excessive use of mathematical language. Hence, the monograph is intended for a broader readership, in particular to those readers who are interested in the history of Serbian science and its evolvement at the turn of the 20th century, but also to those who want to gain a deeper insight into the life of a brilliant mathematician and a polymath, and, we can quite freely say, an unusual personality.

Ž. Mijajlović, S. Pilipović, G. Milovanović



MIHAILO PETROVIĆ ALAS:
LIFE AND WORK

TADIJA PEJOVIĆ AND THE LOGICAL BRANCH OF MIHAILO PETROVIĆ ALAS' SUCCESSORS

Zoran OGNJANOVIĆ
Mathematical Institut of SASA

“It is important to highlight a significant role Mihailo Petrović played during his work at the Serbian Grand School and later at the University in Serbia and Yugoslavia. Immediately upon his arrival from Paris to Belgrade and his appointment as Grand School professor in 1894, he set out to raise the quality of teaching, to develop scientific work and create scholars. He believed that no serious science, and in particular no development of science in our country, was possible without scholars. Thus, though faced with numerous difficulties, he managed to develop and form the Belgrade School of Mathematics that was at a par with foreign universities. This was particularly evident between the two wars. To illustrate, I shall list the names of doctors of mathematical sciences from this period alone. They were: Mladen Berić (1912), Sima Marković (1913), Tadija Pejović (1923), Radivoj Kašanin (1924), Jovan Karamata (1926), Miloš Radojčić (1928), Dragoslav Mitrić (1933), Danilo Mihaljević (1934), Konstantin Orlov (1934), Petar Muzen (1937), Dragoljub Marković (1938) and Vojislav Avakumović¹⁷¹ (1939). As you can see, twelve doctors of mathematical sciences in a short time period is indeed an impressive number, especially given the strict criterion for obtaining the doctoral degree. It should also be noted that all of the above listed scholars became solid scientists and later also university professors.” [TP1992, 260]

This is an excerpt from the writing of Tadija Pejović (1892–1982), professor at the Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics, University of Belgrade, and one of the survivors from the celebrated squad of 1,300



corporals in World War I. He was the third doctor of mathematics at the University of Belgrade and, at the same time, the first doctoral student of Mihailo Petrović after the Great War. In 1923, he defended his dissertation on differential equations entitled *New Cases of Integrability of a Significant Differential Equation*. For the remaining part of his career, in addition to scientific research, Pejović also engaged intensively in pedagogical work and in developing high level educational institutions. One of the doctoral students of Tadija Pejović was Slaviša Prešić (1933–2008) [SP2018]. In 1963, Prešić, later a renowned professor at the University of Belgrade, defended his dissertation entitled *A Contribution to the Theory of Algebraic Structures* at the Belgrade Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics, and soon became the key originator of our school of mathematical logic. He was the doctoral supervisor of many of our logicians: Koriolan Gilezan (*Some Generalizations of Pseudo-Boolean Programming*, 1971), Janez Ušan (*On a Class of Quasigroups*, 1971), Svetozar Milić (*A Contribution to the Theory of Quasigroups*, 1972), Nataša Božović (*Unsolvable Problems in Group Theory*, 1975), Žarko Mijajlović (*A Contribution to Model Theory and Boolean Algebras*, 1977), Gradimir Vojvodić (*A Contribution to Research of Mixed-Valued Predicate Calculus*, 1979), Dragić Banković (*Reproductive Solutions of Equations*, 1980), Milan Božić (*A Contribution to Semantic of Relevant Logics*, 1983), Branislav Boričić (*A Contribution to the Theory of Intermediate Propositional Logics*, 1984, co-supervisor Kosta Došen), Miodrag Kapetanović (*A Method of Semantic Tables*, 1996), etc. who set up research groups not only in Belgrade, but also in Novi Sad, Niš and Kragujevac. In Niš, Dragoslav Mitrinović (1908–1995), professor at the School of Electrical Engineering in Belgrade, was supervisor to Živko Tošić (*Analytical Representations of m -Valued Logical Functions over the Ring of Integers Modulo m* , 1972) and Lazar Đorđević (*On a New Class of Cubature Formulas*, 1978), who were later professors at the Faculty of Electronic Engineering and headed research in the area of application of mathematical logic in electronics. In this way, though not directly but more in a methodological sense, Petrović and Pejović contributed to the development of one of the leading scientific disciplines in Serbia.

The development of mathematical logic in Serbia was the subject of a conference held at the Faculty of Mathematics in Belgrade in 2010 [ILS2010], while a comprehensive study of the same topic is given in the text by a group of authors [LiS2013]. Although as far back as in 1885 Ljubomir Nedić (1858–1902) defended in Leipzig the doctoral dissertation entitled *Die Lehre von der Quantifikation des Prädikats in der neueren Englischen Logik*, for more than half a century thereafter there was no serious study of mathematical logic in Serbia. It is only in the latter half of the 1950s that Vladeta Vučković (1923–2012), after obtaining his PhD under the supervision of Vojislav Avakumović (1910–1990), embarked upon research on the theory of recursive functions; in early 1960s, he published his first papers in magazines *Zeitschrift für mathematische Logik und Grundlagen der Mathematik* and *Publications de l'Institut Mathématique*. At the time, professor Mihajlo Marković (1923–2010) and Svetlana Knjazeva, a then teaching assistant who went on to become a professor, held the first course in mathematical logic at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. Still, the setting up of the Seminar for Algebra and Logic in mid-1960s represented the most significant step forward in the development of this area. At the initiative

of Slaviša Prešić, a group of mathematicians and philosophers (Svetozar Milić, Dušan Adamović, Dragica Krgović, Marica Prešić, Branka Alimpić, Aleksandar Kron and Svetlana Knjazeva) formed the Seminar within the Department of Mathematics at the Faculty of Sciences and Mathematics in Belgrade. As of 1970, the Seminar was moved permanently to the Mathematical Institute SASA and its name was changed to Seminar for Mathematical Logic. In this period, Slaviša Prešić also published a book entitled *Elements of Mathematical Logic* [SP1968] which became a compulsory read at faculties where curricula included mathematical logic. It can definitely be said that all domestic researchers in this area were at one point or another members of the Seminar; as a result, more than seventy doctoral dissertations in the area of mathematical logic were defended [MB2012]. After Prešić, the Seminar was chaired by Žarko Mijajlović, Zoran Marković, Aleksandar Kron, Kosta Došen, Đorđe Vukomanović and Predrag Tanović. At regular weekly meetings, members delivered lectures presenting their results, reviews, overviews of important monographs and longer specialised courses. Meetings very often featured guest lecturers, including leading world scholars in this area such as L. Henkin, J. Keisler, J. Burgess, J. van Benthem, H. Barendregt, etc. Over time, the Seminar for Mathematical Logic became the sprouting ground for a number of specialized seminars, some of which are still active today, i.e. the Seminar for Probability Logic (chaired by Miodrag Rašković) and the Seminar for General Proof Theory (chaired by Kosta Došen) in Belgrade, and the Seminar of the Centre for Mathematics and Statistics (chaired by Silvia Gilezan) in Novi Sad. Another important impulse to the development of mathematical logic in Serbia undoubtedly came from the post-doctoral studies of Žarko Mijajlović, professor at the Belgrade Faculty of Mathematics and doctoral student of Slaviša Prešić, in the USA where, at Wisconsin University, he worked for a period of time with one of the greatest living logicians, J.H. Keisler. After his return to Belgrade, Mijajlović, inspired by his freshly acquired knowledge, organized a large number of specialized courses, initiated research in the area of model theory, non-standard analysis, generalized quantifiers etc., and opened the door for a number of domestic logicians to make study visits throughout the USA, Canada and Europe. Žarko Mijajlović was the supervisor to the next generation of logicians, including: Aleksandar Jovanović (*A Contribution to the Theory of Ultraproducts*, 1982), Slobodan Vujošević (*A Contribution to the Theory of Heyting Algebras*, 1982), Miodrag Rašković (*Logics with Measure in Leibniz's Universe*, 1983), Rade Živaljević (*Ten Etudes about*



Mihailo Marković
(1923–2010)

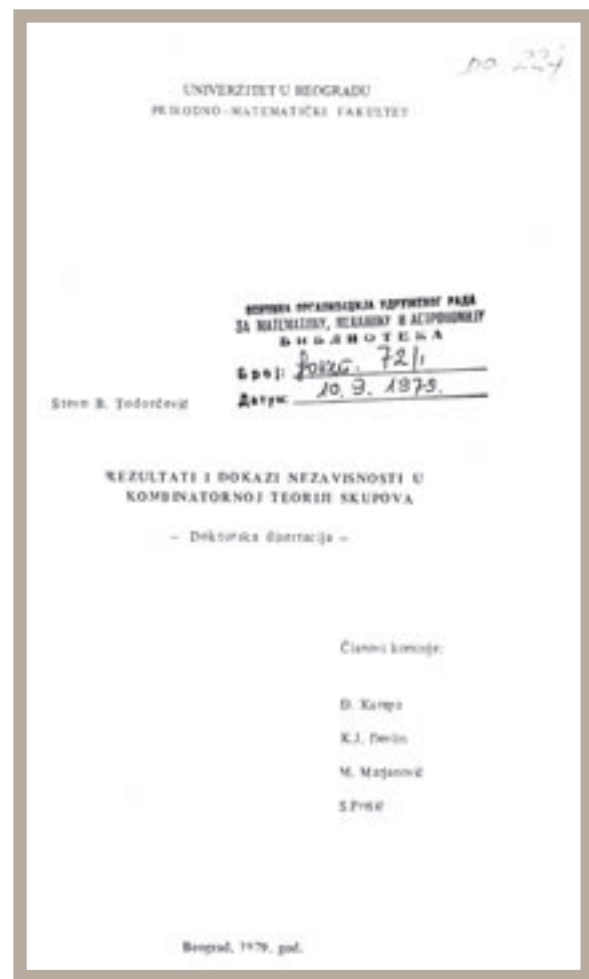


Đuro Kurepa (1907–1993)
(*Pregled NCD*, 2012)

Hyperfiniteness, 1983), Milan Grulović (*Forcing in Model Theory*, 1984), Milenko Mosurović (*On the Complexity of Description Logics with Modal Operators*, 2000), Predrag Janičić (*Building Decision Procedures into Systems for Automated Reasoning*, 2001) etc. who then developed the logical school further in different directions. Thus, the group studying probability logics, set up by Miodrag Rašković first in Kragujevac and later in Belgrade, at the Mathematical Institute SASA (Radosav Đorđević, Zoran Ognjanović, Zoran Marković, Nebojša Ikodinović, Aleksandar Perović, Dragan Doder, Angelina Stepić-Ilić) tops global research in this area, while Predrag Janičić chairs a group that deals with automated reasoning at the Belgrade Faculty of Mathematics (Filip Marić, Mladen Nikolić, etc.).

In addition to direct scientific successors of Mihailo Petrović, Tadija Pejović and Slaviša Prešić, an important role in the development of our school of mathematical logic was also played by academicians Đuro Kurepa (1907–1993) and Mihailo Marković (1923–2010), as well as by Aleksandar Kron (1937–2000), professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Kosta Došen (1954–2017), member of the Mathematical Institute SASA and professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, and Zoran Marković, long-time director of the Mathematical Institute SASA. Đuro Kurepa achieved important results in the set theory already in his dissertation *Ensembles ordonnées et ramifiées*, which he defended at Sorbonne in 1935. Through his work on the set theory and the foundations of mathematics, Kurepa achieved global fame and made an immense impact in the territory of former Yugoslavia in particular. A number of mathematical notions, such as Kurepa tree and Kurepa's function, were named after him. Kurepa was one of few participants from Eastern Europe at the *International Symposium on the Theory of Switching* organised in 1957 at Harvard University by the renowned H. Aiken, where in a paper entitled *Sets-Logics-Machines* he discussed multiple-valued logics. Under Kurepa's supervision, academician Stevo Todorčević, who today is one of our most highly appreciated mathematicians globally, defended his dissertation entitled *Results and Independence Proofs in Combinatorial Set Theory* in 1979. The contribution of scholars from the Faculty of Philosophy to the development of mathematical logic began with the work of academician Mihailo Marković who defended his dissertation entitled *Formalism in Contemporary Logic* in Belgrade in 1955 and, a year later, received his PhD in London as well, where his thesis, *The Concept of Logic*, was promoted by A. Ayer. From 1962 until 1975, he headed the Department of Logic and Methodology. Aleksandar Kron who, together with Prešić, formed the school of modern mathematical logic in Serbia, studied intuitionism

at the University of Amsterdam in 1963–1964 under the supervision of E. W. Beth and A. Heyting. Before an examination board consisting of Mihailo Marković, Bogdan Šešić, Svetlana Knjazeva and Slaviša Prešić, Kron defended his dissertation entitled *Relation between Polyvalent Logics and Probability Theory* in 1965 at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, where he soon became assistant professor and later also professor of logic. From early 1970s, Kron began studying relevance logics, cooperating with A. R. Anderson and N. D. Belnap in Pittsburgh, while later he also studied modal and quantum logics, proof theory, etc. He organised specialized courses in these areas and helped the development of the next generation of logicians. Under the guidance of Aleksandar Kron, Kosta Došen graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in 1977 in the area of relevance logics, and obtained his PhD in 1981 at the University of Oxford, with a doctoral thesis on the proof theory entitled *Logical Constants: An Essay in Proof Theory*, supervised by M. Dummett and D. Scott. In 1972–1973, Kron, together with Zoran Marković, held a series of courses on semantics for intuitionistic logic at the Seminar for Mathematical Logic. The result of this cooperation was embodied in Zoran Marković’s master thesis in 1974, supervised by Aleksandar Kron. Continuing his work in this area, in 1979 Zoran Marković defended his doctoral dissertation, *Model Theory of Intuitionistic Logic*, at the University of Pennsylvania, supervised by S. Weinstein. Kosta Došen achieved globally recognised results in proof theory, category theory and substructural logics, which is why he was selected for entry in the International Directory of Logicians [IDL2009]. The following dissertations in Belgrade and Novi Sad were supervised by Došen: Branislav Boričić (*A Contribution to the Theory of Intermediate Propositional Logics*, 1984, co-supervisor Slaviša Prešić), Silvia Gilezan (*Intersection Types in Lambda Calculus and Logic*, 1993, co-supervisor H. P. Barendregt), Zoran Petrić (*Equalities of Derivations in Categorical Proof Theory*, 1997), Mirjana Borisavljević (*Sequents, Natural Deduction and Multicategories*, 1997) and Miloš Adžić (*Gödel on Axiomatization of Set Theory*, 2014).



The cover page of Stevo Todorčević’s doctoral dissertation *Results and Evidence of Independence in Combinatorial Set Theory*, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, University of Belgrade, board: Đ. Kurepa, K. Devlin, M. Marjanović, S. Prešić, Belgrade 1979.

Meeting of the Logical seminar in hall 2 in SASA.
 First row from the left: Đorđe Vukomanović, Aleksandar Kron, Miodrag Rašković.
 Second row: Miloš Laban, Radoš Bakić, Aleksandar Krapež, Zoran Marković, Žarko Mijajlović.
 Third row: Dragi Radojević, Slaviša Pešić



In this way, mathematical logic in Serbia developed as a product of interaction of two currents – one mathematical and the other philosophical. Research originating from doctoral dissertations and topics presented at the Seminar covers more or less the full scope of mathematical logic. Researchers have worked in the areas of model theory, proof theory, category theory, formal computability theory, set theory, Boolean algebras, non-standard analysis, intuitionistic and intermediate logics, modal logics, probability logics, lambda calculus and computational logics, switching theory and multiple-valued logics as applied in computer engineering, reversible logics, automated theorem proving, etc. As a result of internationally recognised results, and papers and monographs published in the above areas, Serbia is highly ranked in the *Scimago* country rankings published since 1995 by the University of Granada. Hence, in the area of mathematical logic, Serbia is mostly ranked 30th –35th in the world, while in 2015 it even shared the 21st –22nd position on the list, which is possibly the best result ever achieved by any of our sciences. This success is all the greater as *Scimago* rankings only take into account the researchers working in Serbia, while a large number of logicians educated in our country (Boban Veličković, Valentina Harizanov, Ilias Farah, Đorđe Čubrić, Željko Sokolović, Sava Krstić, Žikica Perović, etc.) now permanently occupy prestigious positions as professors worldwide. International cooperation is also taking place through projects, starting from “Types for Proofs and Programs,” part of the European Sixth Framework Programme



Cover page of *Publications de l'Institut Mathématique*



Kosta Došen and Peter Schroeder-Heister, 2016 (Family legacy of Kosta Došen)

(2002–2003), and *TEMPUS* project “Doctoral School towards European Knowledge Society” (2006–2008), through to “Computational Logics and Higher Algebra” (2016–2017), a bilateral project of Serbia and France, and a COST-action project “The European research network on types for programming and verification” (2016–2020) where research groups from Serbia were coordinated by Silvia Ghilezan.

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TADIJA PEJOVIĆ AND THE ROLE OF MIHAILO PETROVIĆ ALAS AND THE MATHEMATICAL CLUB IN THE FORMING OF THE MISASA

In his book of memories, Tadija Pejović [TP1992] highlighted the role that Mihailo Petrović played in the forming of the Mathematical Institute SASA, the formal setting up of which in 1946 the latter did not, however, live to see:

“The scientific work developed on a collective – individual basis, as each of us worked in his own area of expertise, but we all met once a month to discuss the scientific results we had achieved. In these meetings, the delivered lectures were discussed and views were expressed regarding the publication of a given lecture. The group before which individuals expounded their results comprised professors of Theoretical and Applied Mathematics and Astronomy at the University of Belgrade. They were: Mihailo Petrović, Nikola Saltikov, Tadija Pejović, Jovan Karamata, and later also Miloš Radojčić – academic staff of Theoretical Mathematics at the Faculty of Philosophy; Bogdan Gavrilović, Radivoje Kašanin, Petar Zajončovski and later Gojko Vujaklija – academic staff of Theoretical Mechanics at the Technical Faculty; Milutin Milanković, Anton Bilimović and Vjačeslav Žardecki – academic staff of Applied Mathematics at the Faculty of Philosophy; Ivan Arnovljević and Jakob Hlitičijev – professors of Mechanics at the Technical Faculty; Vojislav Mišković – professor of Astronomy at the Faculty of Philosophy. As of 1926, this group came to comprise the Mathematical Club of the University of Belgrade... Though the club had no written rules, it held regular monthly meetings, followed by joint dinners... The club was headed by Anton Bilimović... Over dinner, we shared academic jokes and quips. We organised dinners at taverns offering grilled meat specialties or fish and cheese pie. Very often dinners were also organised at Petrović’s vineyard on the Topčider Hill” [TP1992, 235–237]

“In the period from 1930 until 1941, the Mathematical Club of the University of Belgrade represented a very serious group, with no written rules whatsoever... With its magazine, *Publications Mathématiques de l’Université de Belgrade*, the Mathematical Club laid the foundations of today’s Mathematical Institute. Hence, the period of work and development of the Mathematical Club from 1932 until 1941 can be considered to represent the first stage of work and development of today’s Mathematical Institute in Belgrade.” [TP1992, 265–257]

[TP1992] Тадија Пејовић, *Моје усјомене и доживљаји 1892–1945*, Београд, 1992.