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**THE BICENTENNIAL  
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Legitimacy on the Periphery**

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## FOREWORD

### *THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA 1815: Legitimacy on the Periphery*

*R*ESTORATION OF EUROPE AFTER NAPOLEON'S defeat was a complex process within which the most difficult tasks were reestablishing the system that dominated before Napoleon's wars and erasing of twenty years of new European experience that not only challenged the *Ancient Regime*, but was actually victorious in a significant part of Europe.

That is exactly the reason why the states that formed the basis of reactive forces, those ones united into the Holy Alliance, had to declare illegitimate all changes that occurred in the chain reaction after 1789, changes that Napoleon managed to spread beyond borders of France.

The Congress of Vienna was important for restoring the previous system and outlawing those changes that could jeopardize authority and legitimacy of the *Ancient Regime*. Austria and Russia were two states specially significant when the region of southeast Europe is discussed. Despite the urgent need to protect legitimacy of European order and prevent further changes of borders, events on the periphery of Habsburg and Ottoman empires, the Serbian revolution and later the Greek revolution, confirmed that the Congress of Vienna had failed, at least in that region at the periphery of Europe.

In order to understand better why it was easier to change borders at the periphery, it is necessary to go back several decades in time. During Napoleonic wars, besides fights over the Balearic Islands, Malta, Corfu, Kotor and trade routes passing over Levant, Mediterranean and the Balkans remained of less significance than fights and possible gains in Central or Eastern Europe, or in the Baltic region. It was just that second-rate position of the Balkans, of former Venetian and Turkish possessions, that enabled change of borders not envisaged by the Congress of Vienna.

In the first part of the issue – *The Balkans*, the papers are related to the territory of Ottoman Serbia in the period from the Peace of Belgrade in 1739 until the Serbian uprising against Ottomans in the sanjak of Niš in 1841. This part is

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mostly focused on the most important event of that period, the Serbian Revolution 1804–1830. Eventual success of the liberation movements in Southern Europe, including the Serbian Revolution, proved that the state of affairs in reconstructed European order is unstable in the long run. After the Second Egyptian–Ottoman War in 1841, apart from the uprising in Niš, Ottoman empire was also shaken by rebellions in Crete, Samos and Thessaly.

The second part – *The Mediterranean*, deals with former possessions of Venice, mostly under Austrian rule, except for the Ionian Islands that became a republic under protectorate of Great Britain. One of the most important new territories of the Austrian empire was the Kingdom of Lombardi–Venetia, created in the fashion of the Italian–Napoleonic tradition in order to maintain the dignity of a kingdom that was also under Austrian rule. While creating the Kingdom of Dalmatia Austrians also used Venetian and French experience but they created new Dalmatian identity firmly based on Roman and Christian heritage of Dalmatia. On the contrary, Great Britain did not want to create a new model in the case of the Ionian Islands, but applied Russian-Turkish protectorate model based on Venetian institutional foundations.

Development of national states during 19th century brought about the breakdown of legitimacy concept defended by the largest empires of the continent, so the majority of territories at the periphery of these empires, as a result of wars, turned into national kingdoms. The case of the United States of the Ionian Islands is an isolated one for, during the premiership of Lord Palmerston and with consent of queen Victoria and general public, Great Britain handed over the islands as a gift for the arrival of a new king and dynasty change.





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**Part I**

**THE BALKANS**



# EUROPEAN LEGITIMISM AND SERBIAN REVOLUTION\*

*Original Scientific Article*

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*The Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) promoted legitimist, aristocratic and clerical reaction, facing the consequences of various revolutions, uprisings and Napoleonic reforms. New international order was to preserve the stability of borders and mutual political and caste solidarity. On the other hand remained the permanent discontent of citizenship, and a new reality that lurked beneath the layers of intellectual reflections on the character and the rights of nations, whose leadership restored order and imposed boundaries considered as tyrannical and unjust. One example in this respect was the Second Serbian Uprising, the next stage of the Serbian revolution, begun in 1804. Although it was a local movement placed on peripheral boundaries of both Ottoman and Habsburg empires, the Second Serbian Uprising has emphasized the legitimacy of the nation. Previously, the first European liberals in Spain, although rebels against Napoleon, had advocated similar aspirations afterwards accepted by the Italian Carbonari and the Greek Filiki Eteria. The long-term successfulness of South European liberation movements, including the Serbian Revolution (1804–1830), was proof of long lasting unsteadiness of reconstructed European order.*

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**Key words:** Congress of Vienna, The First Serbian Uprising, The Second Serbian Uprising, revolution, Enlightenment

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THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA 1814–1815 WAS THE highest concentration of political power in the entire former known history. The future international order had to rely on large, unchanging entities, customized to the interests of aristocracy and clergy. The lack of understanding of all the current developments that did not match the new European architecture could be interpreted by previous tectonic disturbances that caused the conquests and reforms of Napoleon Bonaparte. Considering the future in major strokes, the European leaders were decisive in ending the processes which hindered the dynastical order, clerical supremacy and aristocratic exclusivity, reaching into the past until the revolts of the forties of the seventeenth century that culminated during the French Revolution. In the meantime, the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment have legitimized the power of reason, the thoughts of individual and collective emancipation, and, by the end of the eighteenth century, even the values of popular culture.<sup>1</sup>

By promoting the idea of international stability as a basis of internal hierarchical order, the Congress of Vienna intended to legitimize the aristocratic reaction, contradictory in relation to the spirit and messages of previous social and scientific revolutions. It even turned out that the legitimist vision was long-term achievable, even though already outdated by developments significantly deeper than official political decisions. These changes happened to be fundamental, especially those who were peaceful and gradual. Rationalism and Enlightenment have already strongly disputed the effectiveness and legitimization of political or social violence. The ruling legitimism haven't been brought into connection with righteousness, and that matter was already in a contrast with the sensitivities of the looming era of Romanticism. Overlooking the historical discontents originated from European complexities and accelerated modern transformations, the Congress of Vienna has established "the best of all worlds", modelled on an imaginary past and simplified current realities. As the European powers, and their subordinate partners, had to cope with the kaleidoscopes of nations, cultures and conflicting class interests, the stability of the "order restored" was imposed on the unstoppable stream of new collectivist ideas and interests.

1 Basic readings on the Congress of Vienna: Webster 1931; Rie 1950; Griewank 1954; Bourquin 1954; Gulick 1955; Kissinger 1957; Sked 1979; Kraehe 1983.

The European balance of powers system was also based on legitimistic theories of the divine right of the ruler and international alliances representing the particular dynastic and the privileged estates' interests. Stabilization of dynastic power and bureaucratization of government have contributed to the relatively peaceful international order during the eighteenth century, although even the enlightened rule, devoted to the living conditions improvement and social stabilization, was prominently elitist. On the other side of the Enlightenment's historical limits, the space of oriental despotism was beginning to disintegrate in provincial anarchy.

During the Enlightenment period the concept of the nation was profiled precisely in the resistance to the estate-system and clericalism, as in Italy, or in opposition to the metastasized Ottoman administration across the Balkans. Of a foremost importance for the future of the Balkans at that point were the Metternich's attitudes in relation to the principle of a cooperative system regulated by the principle of collective security in international relations. "Metternich believed that states could be united without reference to a common enemy, but rather on the conviction that all were pledged to uphold a peace that was injurious to none." He advocated diplomacy rather than war, and doubted that an external threat will ever endanger the European system. He distrusted the eighteenth century balance of power and militarism, but remained influenced by the late Enlightenment idealism of "political equilibrium", the concept of European states structured in a legally regulated system in which each particular sovereignty would be regulated at the supranational level (Sofka 1998, 148-149).

Another Enlightenment idealism has likely established a new imaginary model of a modern nation. The model emerged from the attempts to reconsider the Old Regime framework. Both nationalism and liberalism reflected the dissatisfactions within new social forces emancipated within the currents of economic and cultural transformation provided by official reforms aimed to improve general living conditions and interconnect the subjects with the state and institutions, thus also with the dynasty. Thereby the privileged structures firmly dedicated to the enlightening efforts have endangered their own traditional hierarchy, sometimes unconsciously encouraging ideas on national community originated in the common ancestry, history and culture.

Nationalism has basically appeared from attempts to dispute the feudal and clerical legitimism and mutual dynastic solidarity. The French Revolution and Napoleon irreversibly deepened the legitimistic and nationalist particularities in re-

gard to the “old regime” and its following restoration from 1814/15. First National movements in South and South-Eastern Europe have also revealed certain features of modernity. The Italian Risorgimento was rooted even in the Renaissance, although the movement was directly pointed to the Austrian rule and the political function of the Holy See. Greek nationalism recalled the ancient past, while remaining powerless to gather and mobilize the Diaspora, scattered throughout the Balkans, or important national remnants in Asia Minor. Croatian and Serbian nationalism emerged from the cracks of European “old regime” and the Ottoman Empire. Quest for national identity took place in several different systems: the Habsburg monarchy, the Venetian or Dubrovnik Republic, and the Ottoman Empire.

The French Revolution and Napoleon conquests have fostered acceleration in political and social development. The Congress of Vienna was facing both the legacies of previous modern revolutions, and the current political changes. The new order’s advantage was in huge political experience, and in gradual adaptability of leaders and administrations. Such abilities also reflected the changes in tentative assumptions of political power and international order. In the “world restored” the aristocratic republics have vanished, but various conspiratorial groups have survived. Regardless of the rule’s invading and alien character, the Napoleon’s usurpation has provided, in certain particularities, civic reforms and strains on feudal leftovers. In Italy and Greece, referred to the ancient heritage, the self-determination was legitimated in historical and cultural domain. The national autonomies in Serbia and Montenegro were becoming tolerable in comparison with the alternatives, as eventual suppression would have caused resentments related to the nature of the overall Ottoman rule. The principle of self-determination had to be somehow introduced in the international order of balance, establishing the counterweights to the principle of immutability of borders, including those of the despotic states. More balanced and less reactionary, such principle was more appropriate to the negotiating tendencies of international conflicts management than the apparently outdated theory of divine right. And that was, perhaps, the essence of vitality of those conservative responses that respected a need for gradual adjustment to contemporary challenges.

14 During the eighteenth century a noticeable interest in the phenomenology of nation has emerged. The nations were interpreted in terms of ancestry, history and tradition, and also of national spirit, character, poverty or wealth, even the

economy and institutions. Convinced that the community is shaped by language and learning, focused on cultural traditions as the ties that create a “nation”, Johann Gottfried Herder emphasized the importance of folklore and popular poetry. Through language, a nation cherishes traditions, and regulates human relations. However, the impulses of national history were more practical. From the mid-eighteenth century, the nation became the new medium of international policies. In Serbian and Croatian Baroque and Enlightenment patriotism was beginning to include members of all classes. And although the Serbian revolution 1804–1830 was essentially a peasant uprising against the late Ottoman feudalism and alien rule abuses, the general movement has affected a broader historical space that included the Habsburg monarchy. Since the culture of patriotism was gradually losing the previous feudal and aristocratic exclusivity, the idea of the nation was at first accepted by the Serbian citizenship in Austria, economically and culturally emancipated under the late provincial Baroque and during the Enlightenment. In wars, mutinies or simple trade activities, Serbian peasantry under Ottoman rule has established important ties with the citizenry in Austria thanks to the greater permeability of borders and economic growth in the eighteenth century, especially by mediation of merchants and prominent national political leaders from both sides, Turkish and Austrian.

The First Serbian uprising of 1804–1813 attracted the public attention that was occasionally beyond the importance of a local movement. Encouraging the spirit of Romanticism and the French Revolution influences, in attempts to win a broad international support, the uprising was legitimized by the establishment of first institutions. The weakness of the movement was in mutual clashes of the insurgent leaders, in failures to affect Austrian support as in the previous century, in Napoleon’s lack of interest, Russian deceptions, etc. Finally, the Napoleon’s attack on Russia opened the political space to a broad Ottoman offensive and reprisals in 1813.<sup>2</sup> But the repression still lacked had a long lasting effect. The Second Serbian uprising in 1815 has emerged in deep shadows of the Congress of Vienna, when a durable general peace has been established. The movement’s quick and long-term success was based on the implementation of prior experience, and the benefits of European peace, although the uprising has eventually disrupted the new international architecture. Indeed, the Second uprising was the first successful rejection

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2 Slightly comparable with the Russian role in Italy, see: Reinerman 1974.

of the restoration's principles, decisions and spirit. The liberation struggle for the provincial autonomy within the limits of the Belgrade *sanjac*,<sup>3</sup> as the first step toward national freedom, already Leopold von Ranke indicated as a Serbian revolution (Von Ranke 1829).<sup>4</sup>

The resolute step in the processes that were taking place also in Italy and Greece, the Second Serbian uprising has preliminarily undermined the principles of the Congress of Vienna, and subsequently, the Holy Alliance. In Vienna any official debate was held on the Eastern Question. The Congress was still pending when the Serbian insurgency broke in the immediate vicinity of the Austrian border with Turkey. European forces did not pay much attention. The uprising was local and marginal enough to become an eventual precedent. In the meanwhile the First Serbian uprising was crushed, regardless of the promised autonomy and Russian assurances that the rebels will remain within the international support. European officials did not consider the legitimacy and the nature of the Ottoman government as an immediate issue. The former factor in international relations, the Ottoman Empire has become a secondary object of European policies related primarily to the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean. The single clear European consensus in that matter was that Russia, a huge and despotic state, must not take the Black Sea straits and gain unrestricted access to global sea.

The Second Serbian uprising in 1815 was a small and local usurpation in new international order. Vienna press broadcasted only limited and belated news. And while the European public could have considered Serbia as a distant and confusing geographical notion, the key Austrian diplomat at the Congress of Vienna Clemens von Metternich stated that even the term Italy was nothing more than "a geographic expression". It could not be predicted, neither, that the Second Serbian uprising is becoming a paradigmatic announcement of the new order's future challenges, primarily a historical prelude to the Greek Revolution, while Italy has remained the Habsburg obsession founded in Austrian foreign policy priorities after 1699. The Greek War of Independence, in conjunction with similar movements through the Balkans and Italy, erupted already in 1821, indeed. However,

3 *Sandjak* or *sanjaq*, Ottoman district.

4 This short study originated from material supplied by Vuk Karadžić, a Serbian writer, historian and collector of popular literature who had been also a witness of the scenes he related during the First Serbian Uprising. The book was afterwards expanded into *Serbien und die Turkei im 19 Jahrhundert*, 1879.

the Serbian uprising took place spontaneously and even independently of Serbian insights into contemporary European state of affairs. Serbian rebels were wrongly convinced that these relations have not significantly changed since the previous, First uprising, whose collapse almost coincided with Napoleon's. Three months before the uprising, on 17 January 1815, the Austrian Emperor Franz I promised to the Serbian deputy *protas*<sup>5</sup> Mateja Nenadović (1777–1854), that he will support Serbian demands for autonomy in communication with Turkish authorities. The Russian government sent to the Congress of Vienna representatives a circular note in favour of the Serbs. Interpreting these reactions Serbian rebels counted on a future Austrian and Russian military aid, while being assured by their compatriots from Austrian territory that after the fall of Napoleon European powers will attack Turkey and resolve the Eastern Question.

The Second Serbian uprising broke out on April 23 1815 in Takovo.<sup>6</sup> This time, in Vienna, *protas* Mateja Nenadović was rejected by Russian insults and Austrian threats. Metternich explained to the Emperor that the uprising interferes with Austrian interests, particularly disturbing the border with Turkey, and that the Serbian rebels should not receive any assistance, neither the eventual refugees a shelter on Austrian territory. The Austrian position slightly tempered after the second audition of Nenadović with Franz I the 8th of May, but the new principal support was accompanied by mockery and disbelief. The Russians promised to intercede with Turkey in favour of the rebels, but they demanded that the Serbs immediately and mandatorily ask for peace (Gavrilović 1908, 118–131).

Borders with Turkey have remained under the strict Austrian supervision. Serbian volunteers from Austria who crossed into rebelled Serbia often clashed with border guards. Messages from Vienna warned that Europe is seeking peace and that no one will help riots and rebellions.

The success of the Second Serbian uprising, which broke out in a seemingly inconvenient moment, can be interpreted by local circumstances, particularly the weaknesses of the local Turkish authorities. The Ottoman provincial system has disintegrated enough during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century and could not be simply fixed, even with the support of European policies seeking for order and peace. Turkish retaliation from 1813 has deepened the mutual hatred,

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5 Archpriest or Protopope.

6 Near present-day Gornji Milanovac, central Serbia.

transferred to the general relations between the Serbian and Muslim communities. In 1815, Serbian rebels were additionally careful. Like all similar contemporary plots, the Serbian movement was conspiratorial. The essence of the organization were personal acquaintances. The leaders were the champions of the First uprising that survived the struggles with the Turks and the internal political and personal conflicts. New Serbian leader Miloš Obrenović was personally very brave, but to the extent that his example may influence the overall success. New leadership of the Second uprising consisted of “princes”, local popular representatives.<sup>7</sup> The “princes” have been more prone to an agreement with the Turkish authorities during the First Serbian uprising, but were partly and intentionally exterminated by the Turkish outlaws, the *Dahi*, usurpers of the Belgrade *sanjac*. The presence of different social layers indicate that the Serbian revolution had a pronounced social character, as an outbreak of anger against the violence of authorities and excessive taxation. The rebels were again mostly peasants, led by and volunteers and professional soldiers fled from Austria where they served defending the borders with Turkey, sometimes even in Austrian wars across Europe. For only three months they liberated the entire Belgrade *sanjac*, except the major cities. The political power was divided between the “princes”, veterans and wealthier merchants.

The legitimacy of the rebel authorities originated from autonomous popular institutions that have evolved in the absence of effective Ottoman provincial government which has collapsed in several occasions during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The first autonomous preferences in this regard have appeared in the fifteenth century, when the Serbian border guards in the Turkish service were compensated by internal popular autonomy. The local autonomies were keeping the continuity of national life based on myths about the glorious past of the medieval state, lofty ethical principles of the Battle of Kosovo (1389), and the synergy of popular superstitions and the Orthodox influences as the Church, left without its patrons in ruling families and the feudal class, mainly opted for cooperation with the Turkish authorities, especially from the second part of the sixteenth century. After devastating experiences of wars with Austria, the Turks restored the institution of the supreme prince of Serbia in the late eighteenth century, but the new collaboration efforts were soon suspended during the *Dahi* usurpation of the Belgrade *sanjaq*. However, the common people still remembered and respected

18 | <sup>7</sup> Knezovi or kneževi.

this function, and the function survived its new extinguishing, as well as in the period after the fifteenth century. Already during the Second uprising preparations, the most eminent figure in Belgrade *sanjaq* Miloš Obrenović (1780–1860) was considered as the future chief prince of Serbia, although he appeared at the revolution's forefront only after the resurrection has significantly developed. The people's high officials' assembly has confirmed his leadership, and he carefully defended the position at all the time the uprising has lasted. After the conclusion of the armistice with the Turks, when the first traces of autonomy were agreed, both the Serbs and the Turks considered Obrenović as the chief "prince", though he did not have any documents on the selection or appointment. And he was illiterate.

Prince Miloš Obrenović has consolidated his power in 1817. First, he removed Đorđe Petrović Karađorđe (1762–1817), the First uprising leader, both as his personal political rival and the main obstacle to the future gradual agreements with the Turkish authorities. Prince Miloš defended the ordered murder of Karađorđe by a state cause, a political necessity, but the decision had also origin in his quest for legitimism. Karađorđe was eliminated primarily as the former supreme prince of Serbia. The authority of the legitimate sovereign was entrusted him by the national assembly in Topola in 1808, after a series of victories over the Turks, and removal of real, potential, suspected or invented political opponents within the rebels. After that purge, Miloš provided his own election for the hereditary prince of Serbia, decided by the national leaders assembly, on November 6 1817. Miloš nevertheless remained cautious enough to stand before the Turks "always as an administrative, rather than a political figure, as a servant and clerk of the Porte, and not as a people's ruler" (Gavrilović 1908, 390–398). In a following favourable moment, even the Porte had to admit him as the appointed hereditary prince, but only in 1830, after Russian pressures and intervention.

The beginnings of Serbian Romanticism also originated from 1814/15 Vienna. A restoration of Serbian culture, during a quiet intermission of the national revolution, has additionally legitimized the national movement. The young writer and refugee from again conquered Serbia in 1813, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864) published in Vienna, in 1814, his first collection of Serbian popular poems. The following year, 1815, his new collection, more mature and complete, revealed authentic and rich talent of blind and illiterate popular poets. Jacob Grimm and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe have begun to learn Serbian to be able to read the poems in their original form. The cultural legitimacy eventually ap-

proached the Serbian revolution to the movements that followed in Greece and Italy, based not only on national requests, but also on legitimism that resembled the ancient heritage.

The Second Serbian uprising, as a continuation of the Serbian revolution, openly emphasized the legitimacy of the nation, and national exclusiveness. The rebellion was mostly unconscious opposition to the great powers attitudes, and a confirmation of persistent tendencies for gradual changes of boundaries, allegedly firmly fixed at the Congress of Vienna. It was the first and obvious example of the vicissitudes of the Holy Alliance order, even preceding association's formal conclusion. The example further confirmed Filiki Eteria in Greece and Italian Carbonari.

The Congress of Vienna has ignored the issues of nationality. The concept of nationality was still insufficiently developed and intelligible. Even in the case of Metternich who was supposedly acting in favour of German unity, he sought about the exclusion of France and Russia from Central Europe, and the limitation of Prussia in the new German Confederation. Maybe the new European order was based on a new hegemony, rather than on the balance of power, but, regardless of such assumption, 1815 is the one and only time in European history when statesmen sat down to construct a peaceful international system after a great war and succeeded; the only settlement, unlike 1648, 1713–1714, 1763, 1919, 1945, and many others, that was not accompanied or quickly followed by renewed or continued conflict, revived tensions, arms races, and competitive balance of power politics (Schroeder 1992, 705; Spiezio 1990, 165–181). Has the negligence of nationality opened a political space to the liberation movements in Serbia, Greece and Italy? Still, “the Final Act signed at Vienna on June 9, 1815, constituted the most comprehensive treaty that Europe had ever possessed in the nineteenth century and that its demarcation of national frontiers endured, except for one or two minor changes, for over forty years” (Rie 1950, 226–227).

The Congress of Vienna created a century of a peaceful prosperity (Kissinger 1956, 279–280). A century after the Congress of Vienna beginnings, the murder of Franz Ferdinand, the heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne, on 28 June 1914 in Sarajevo, assassination supported by a local Bosnian Serb secret organization and a faction of the official Serbian army, confirmed that the peacetime of general prosperity was extinguished by new and dangerous European

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## Rezime:

### *Evropski legitimizam i Srpska revolucija*

Bečki kongres (1814–1815) nagovestio je legitimizam, aristokratsku i klerikalnu reakciju koja je bila odgovor na različite revolucije, ustanke i Napoleonove reforme. Novi međunarodni poredak trebalo je da sačuva stabilnost granica i zajedničku političku i stalešku solidarnost. Međutim, promene do kojih je došlo nisu rešile nezadovoljstvo onih koji su obnovljene granice smatrali nepravednim. Primer toga je i Drugi srpski ustanak, koji predstavlja naredni korak Srpske revolucije započete 1804. I pored lokalnog karaktera ustanka koji

je izbio na periferiji Habsburške i Otomanske carevine, Drugi srpski ustanak predstavljao je potvrdu načela legitimnosti nacije, koje je upravo bilo osporeno od strane najznačajnijih evropskih država na Bečkom kongresu. Prvi evropski liberali u Španiji, i pored toga što su se pobunili protiv Napoleona, zalagali su se za slične težnje koje su potom prihvatili italijanski karbonari ili grčka Filiki Eteria. Dugoročan uspeh liberalnih evropskih pokreta u Južnoj Evropi, među kojima se može svrstati i Srpska revolucija (1803–1830) potvrda je dugoročne nestabilnosti obnovljenog evropskog poretka.

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***Ključne reči:*** Bečki kongres, Prvi srpski ustanak, Drugi srpski ustanak, revolucija, prosvetiteljstvo

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# THE HABSBURG MONARCHY AND SERBS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE UP UNTIL THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA (1739–1815)\*

*Original Scientific Article*

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*The principal objective of this article is to demonstrate some key segments in the development of political relations between the Habsburg Monarchy and the Serbian population in the Ottoman Empire up until the Congress of Vienna in 1815. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Monarchy played an active role in the instigation of Serbs to become involved in Austro–Turkish wars and to form strong liberation movements. The Ottoman feudal system was confronted with the developments that deeply disturbed the entire legal and socio-economic structure of the Empire. Their consequences within the territory of the Belgrade pashaluk struck the subservient Serbian Christian population, so called ‘rayah’, through exposure to ‘chiflik’ system, terror by authorities, forced migrations, epidemics and starvation. The movements which were most prominent in the territory of the Belgrade pashaluk led towards great liberation rebellion of the Serbs known as the Serbian Uprising of 1804.*

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**Key words:** Habsburg Monarchy, Belgrade Pashaluk, Ottoman Empire, janissaries, Serbian people, Austro–Turkish war

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*D*UE TO GRADUAL COLLAPSE OF THE FEUDAL system, the Ottoman Empire was less and less considered a threat to the Habsburg Monarchy, while the European courts revived their plans regarding division of Ottoman territory. After the Great Vienna War, the Habsburg monarchy used the new situation to set its final goal, the conquest of the area of Podunavlje and the Balkans. The fact that the Ottoman Empire was beginning to show serious signs of weakness in military terms, especially regarding weaponry and chain of command, even more fueled the Habsburg rulers' ambition to take different steps in foreign policy, with ultimate goal to occupy new territories under the guise of protection of the Christian population in the Ottoman Empire. After the unsuccessful siege of Vienna in 1683, prevailing opinion was that Orthodox population, which had for centuries been under the Ottoman rule, was eagerly waiting to start the uprising and gain freedom (Parvev 2015, 20). Following the achieved military success, the Habsburg monarchy was openly showing its ambition, supporting it with its scholarly historical and legal discussions.

In historical discourse on Habsburg dynasty authors focus their interest to the territory south of the Sava and the Danube since the Austro-Turkish War 1716–1718. After the war and the treaty signed in Požarevac in 1718, the Serbian territory south of the Sava and the Danube, once again after 1689, became part of the Habsburg monarchy. The twenty-year-long rule in the newly conquered country, “The Kingdom of Serbia” (*Königreich Serbien*), was arranged according to the principle of Timisoara Banat, with the administration consisting of representatives of the Court War Council (*Hofkriegsrath*) and the Royal Chamber (*Hofkammer*) (Bidermann 1972, 233; Mihneva 1996 81; Поповић 1950, 13, 49, 51; Гавриловић 1991, 13; Langer 1898, 157, 200; Hajek 1912, 7). Increasing the number of subjects in the country depopulated by wars was the primary task of the so-called Belgrade Administration. Apart from Belgrade, which was populated by Germans from the western German provinces, the rest of Serbia was mostly inhabited by Serbian population. This period was marked by the beginning of the first agitation to attract Christians, predominantly Serbian population of the Ottoman Empire, who were offered tax benefits, all in order to achieve greater population density and reconstruction of a great number of abandoned villages. Although the motives were partly linked to the achievement of fiscal policy, the monarchy was careful to solidify its border with the Ottoman Empire, creating a Serbian folk militia under the

command of local obercaptains, Vuk Isaković, Staniša Marković Mlatišuma, and Kosta Dimitrijević (Пецињачки 1976, 158–160, 165–167). Participation in these military formations and life at the border were the biggest reasons of sporadic migrations throughout entire period of Austrian rule (Katsiardi–Hering, Madouvalos 2015, 18), as was confirmed by several Austrian censuses conducted in Serbia.<sup>1</sup> In this way, the monarchy did not only strengthen the border and its influence among the Serbs in the Ottoman Empire, but also prepared the ground for further conquests. Due to the alliance with Russia, which was at war with the Ottoman Empire from 1736, Charles VI ordered the Habsburg army to begin preparations for the war. Military operations in 1737 were preceded by preparations and arrangements with the patriarch Arsenije Jovanović, to raise rebellion of Serbs in the Ottoman Empire. The outcome of the Austro–Turkish war of 1737–1739, in the form of the Treaty of Belgrade, was disadvantageous for the monarchy (Herzfeld 1919, 4–5), but also for the Serbs, who, led by the patriarch, faced the second great migration.<sup>2</sup>

After the period of peace, starting in 1739, there was a feudal anarchy in the Ottoman Empire, which brought to the surface all the defects of the Ottoman system. In such a milieu, the Serbs managed to build and strengthen their internal self-government in small local units called ‘knežina’ and villages. The process of ‘chiftlicization’, forced migration and difficult life only further contributed to the Serbs’ decision to re-engage in the Austro–Turkish war of 1788–1791 on the side of the Habsburg monarchy (Свирчевић 2003, 193). The Russian successes in the war against the Turks (1768–1774) forced the Habsburg Monarchy to reactivate in the area of the Belgrade Pashaluk and revive its operations after a long break. The intention of the Russian Empress, Catherine II of Russia, to liberate the Balkans from the Turks and bring its empire to the shores of the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea, caused a great discomfort in Vienna. After the failure in the war with Prussia, Habsburgs could not allow the failure in the Balkans. As each direct confrontation with Russia could cause its alliance with Prussia, Vienna decided on a policy of compromise with St. Petersburg (Zöllner 1984, 320). Therefore, in 1780, in Mogilev, a meeting between the Russian Empress, Catherine II, and the Austrian ruler, Joseph II, was held, leading to the alliance between the two empires

1 For the description and the structure of all the established captainaries in Serbia, see: Пецињачки 1977; Веселиновић 1984, 5–42; Пецињачки 1977а.

2 For more details about the Treaty of Belgrade, see in: Baramova 2015, 115–121.

in 1782. The basis of the agreement was the division of the Balkan Peninsula into the Russian and Austrian sphere of interest. Russia planned to create two new countries in the Balkans: Dacia, which would include Wallachia, Moldova, and Bessarabia, and Byzantium, with its capital in Tsargrad, led by Prince Constantine the Great, the grandson of the Russian empress. The Monarchy, for its part, wanted the territory from Wallachia to Olt, Nikopol, Vidin, Orsova, Belgrade, and the shortest line from Belgrade to the mouth of the river Drin to the Adriatic Sea (Поповић 1996, 117–123).

Serbia was not involved in the Russian plan, and was not a part of any combination. The Monarchy had a similar attitude, and did not support the creation of a new Serbian state, as it would mean the strengthening of Orthodoxy. Only one year after the establishment of the alliance, Russia attacked the Ottoman Empire and occupied Crimea. The Russians then offered Austrians to immediately jointly declare the war on the Ottoman Empire, but they refused, claiming not to be ready for war. Although it refused to take part in the war, the Monarchy immediately began scouting the area and strong political agitation among the Serbian population on the territory of the Belgrade Pashaluk. Austrian agents quickly established numerous contacts with the Serbian leaders, who were exposed to serious oppression by the Turkish authorities and the janissaries, and eagerly anticipated alliance with the Christian state, which would bring them liberation from Turkish slavery (Гавриловић 1978, 36–60). As time passed, relations between Russia and the Ottoman Empire worsened. Many unsolved problems culminated in 1787, when the Porte declared war on Russia. Already in 1787, in the Black Sea port Kherson, Catherine II and Joseph II agreed on further steps the two forces should take against the Ottoman Empire. The first war operations in which Russia had success started during the year. The Habsburg Monarchy did not immediately enter the war. It happened in February 1788 (Stadtmüller 1966, 80). Turkish authorities closely followed the development of the situation in the Belgrade Pashaluk. To prevent possible insurrectionist movements in Serbia, the Turkish authorities, during the Austrian war preparations (1787), undertook violent disarming of the Serbian people. In extensive actions, which the Turks carried out in a number of villages under the pretext of looking for hidden weapons, the Serbian people were exposed to intense terror of the Turkish military and Bashibazouk units. Fleeing from the Turkish terror, many people fled across the Sava and the Danube to the Austrian side, making volunteer troops, “Free Corps” (*Freikorps*), under the com-

mand of Austrian officers. Austrian supreme command needed these troops to facilitate the operation of regular troops, and for causing a possible mass uprising in Serbia. Commander-in-Chief of the Serbian Free Corps was an active Austrian Major, Mihailo Mihaljević. When the attempt to make a foray into Belgrade and the surrounding fortifications with the help of the Serbs in early December 1787 failed, in early February, the Monarchy launched military operations against the Turks (Ђоровић 1993, 501–503).

Serbian volunteers actively participated in battles with the Turkish armed forces and raids on Turkish ships on the Danube. Koča Anđelković particularly distinguished himself among the Serbian volunteers who fought against the Turks. Born in the area of Jagodina, he was a former trader, who, in mid-1787, fled from Turkish terror to the Monarchy. At that time, Radič Petrović fought side by side with Koča, forming the first Serbian military unit, a company with Koča Anđelković and young Karađorđe Petrović.<sup>3</sup> Koča actively participated in battles against Turkish forces. After the attack of Austrian army and Free Corps on Smederevo, Koča refused to return to Austrian territory, but moved into the interior of Serbia with a group of Serbian fellow fighters. With his small troop, Koča attacked the Turks, and in a very short time liberated Požarevac, Hasan Pasha's Palanka, Batočina, and Bargdan, where he placed his headquarters. Solidifying his position in the Bagrdan Gorge, Koča conquered the Tsargrad Road, which was the most important Turkish road in Serbia (Пантелић 1930, 38–39; Гавриловић 1985, 31–45). Military success and great personal courage raised Koča's reputation among the people, so his troops grew to about 500 fighters in a short time. Having received manpower reinforcements, Koča continued attacks against the Turks. In a surprise raid, Koča and his fellow fighters attacked the janissary garrison in Kragujevac, achieving great victory. People named this whole war effort "Koča's Frontier". Taking Kragujevac and cutting the Tsargrad Road were the ultimate achievements by Koča and his fellow fighters. The Austrian command awarded Koča the rank of a captain and the gold medal, but denied him the much-needed military aid and weaponry. Serbian fighters were left on their own, fighting almost daily with numerous Turkish detachments (Ђорђевић 1979, 19–30). The entire 1788 was full of missed opportunities. The Austrians did not start decisive operations, and the Turks regrouped after

3 Arhiv Srbije (hereinafter referred to as: AS), Ministarstvo prosvete i crkvenih dela (hereinafter referred to as: MPs-P), 1841, f II, r 47, B No. 1672, Ivanjica 1 October 1841; Ibid, B No. 1564/1841.

first surprises, and launched a broad offensive. The first target was military unit of Koča Anđelković. In mid-April one janissary detachment, under the command of Deli Ahmet, began to suppress the Serbian rebels. Since Austrian command hesitated to begin decisive operations and failed to help Koča with arms and ammunition, while the Turks, on the other hand, constantly reinforced their forces, Koča's unit was getting into increasingly difficult position. The permanent attacks of the Turks, devastation of villages, hunger due to unproductive year, and Turkish preparations for a general attack on rebellious areas made Koča dissolve the unit and join a volunteer detachment under Austrian command, as the leader of one of the companies. Having eliminated the resistance of Koča's and other detachments, the Turks began to implement large-scale terror over the people. Fleeing from the Turkish scimitars, a large number of Serbs left their homes and sought refuge in the Habsburg Monarchy. It is estimated that just until the end of June, around 50,000 people fled to the Monarchy. After crushing Serbian detachments, in the summer of 1788, the Turks transferred the battlefield to the Austrian soil. Their offensive in Banat surprised the weak Austrian forces, so Turks occupied the entire southern Banat and entered Pančevo. In the battles with the Turks, while defending mining town of Brzasko, captain Koča was killed (Лышић 1993, 32–40; Пантелић 1930, 11).

Similar to Koča's detachment, another detachment was active in the Homolje, led by Marjan Jovanović. He gathered 300 fighters and from Homolje went to Resava, where his detachment, which had since grown to 700 people, roamed between Ćuprija and Požarevac. Jovanović's detachment remained in that territory until the beginning of May, when it was forced by strong Turkish pressure from Vidin to cross the Danube and move to the Monarchy. In early 1789, Jovanović's detachment returned to Serbia, but this time as a unit under the command of the Austrian army. In addition to Koča's and Jovanović's detachments, volunteer detachments under the command of Austrian army officers, Mihailo Mihaljević and Branavački took part in the fighting against the Turks. These detachments were from the beginning under the command of the General Staff of the Austrian army, and led actions coordinated with the movements of the Austrian army units (Јакшић 1937, 39–42). Mihaljević's detachment excelled in the battles for Šabac, in which the people of Šabac and Valjevo nahias took part, as well as in actions in Valjevo and Zvornik, while Branavački's detachment participated in the battles near Poreč, Brza Palanka, Kladovo, Negotin, and accros the river Timok (Pantelić

1930, 9). Volunteer detachments had great help from the people of the regions in which they conducted military operations. It was estimated that at the time of the uprising in 1804, there were about 18,000 soldiers who participated in war activities from 1788 to 1790, which represented significant force with great military experience (Ивић 1935, 67).

Turkish offensive in Banat did not last long. Insufficiently prepared for long-term warfare, Turkish army quickly lost its offensive power and failed to utilize its initial success. In fall, both sides agreed on a truce that lasted until summer 1789. The first months of 1789 brought major problems to the Austrian Empire. Their main competitor in the German world, Prussia, entered into an alliance with England and the Netherlands, which was directly aimed against Austrian interests. When the news came to Vienna that Prussia intended to draw Ottoman Empire into the alliance, the Habsburg Monarchy decided on a swift and decisive military campaign, in order to compel the Ottoman Empire to capitulate. In late August, the Austrian army crossed the border and immediately began to expel the Turkish troops. In late September the Austrians conquered Belgrade and began to advance into the interior of the Belgrade Pashaluk.<sup>4</sup> Despite significant victories they achieved in the war with Ottoman Empire, the Austrian court increasingly considered the termination of hostilities with the Porte and making peace. The reason for this lay both in the resistance of the Hungarian opposition, which did not support the warlike policy of Joseph II, and in the changes in Western Europe that emerged after the outbreak of the French Bourgeois Revolution. Austro-Turkish war finished with the peace treaty in Svishtov, signed on 4 August 1791. With that peace, concluded with the mediation of England,<sup>5</sup> Prussia, and the Netherlands (Shaw 1971, 187), the Monarchy renounced all conquest in the Ottoman Empire, with the exception of insignificant corrections of borders. This peace declared the amnesty for Christians, Turkish subjects from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Wallachia and Moldova, who participated in the war against the Porte (Поповић 1996, 121–123).

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4 For a quick conquest of Belgrade Field Marshal Laudon thanked the President of the Court Council of War, Count Hadik, who had given him the draft of the fortress, see: Regele 1949, 58.

5 For more details on the influence of international policy and diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire, with special reference to the British, see: Palmer 2011.

When the Habsburg monarchy signed the peace treaty of Svishtov, thus abandoning the policy of conquest of the Balkan Peninsula, it became clear to the Serbian intelligentsia that the liberation of Serbia could be achieved only by strengthening national movements and relying on own forces. As soon as the clear signs that the Habsburg Monarchy withdrew from the war appeared, Serbian elders began to think independently about the possibility of further armed struggle, and then the political battle to obtain self-government. In January 1790, the Tronoša Archimandrite, Stevan Jovanović, asked Habsburgs to help with troops and weapons, in order to clean Serbia from the Turks, but was rejected. When in late 1790 peace negotiations began, Jovanović expected, given previous promises, that the Austrian emperor would put pressure on the Porte, so Serbs in the Belgrade Pashaluk could get certain privileges. When all of that came to nothing, in 1791, Jovanović sent a proclamation to the Porte, demanding same rights for the Serbian people in the Belgrade Pashaluk as those Christians in Wallachia and Moldova already had (Ђорђевић 1979, 57; Ристановић 2000, 39–44).

Upon completion of the Austro-Turkish war, among the measures that the Porte took to consolidate power in the Belgrade Pashaluk, were: banning janissaries to return to the Belgrade Pashaluk and amnesty for the Serbs who participated in the war on the Austrian side. The power in the Belgrade Pashaluk was entrusted to Bećir Pasha, who executed a prominent janissary leader, Deli Ahmet, and issued firman prohibiting janissaries return to the Belgrade Pashaluk. Bećir Pasha's measures provoked rebellion of janissary pashas of Niš, but it was quickly suppressed. The janissaries who were withdrawn from Belgrade and called to Tsargrad rebelled on the way through Bulgaria and joined Kardzhali detachments that roamed northwestern Bulgaria. At the head of these detachments was a renegade from the Porte, Osman Pazvan-oglu.<sup>6</sup> The general situation in the Ottoman Empire rapidly deteriorated with the French invasion of Egypt in the summer of 1798. Aware of the fact that it could not at the same time wage war against the French and against separatist rebels, the Porte reprieved all the outlaws, among other Pazvan-oglu and janissaries. At the beginning of 1799, the Porte's firman on the return of janissaries to Serbia arrived in the Pashaluk of Belgrade. The return of janissaries meant a renewal of the Turkish terror and the beginning of a new evil (Ђорђевић 1979, 82). All the privileges granted by sultan's firmans in the period from 1793 to 1796

<sup>6</sup> AS, MPs-P, 1841, f II, r 47, B No. 1614, No. 456, Slatina 15 July 1841; *Ibid.*, No. 348, B No. 1816/1841, Zaječar, 6 October 1841.

were immediately abolished, and Serbian principal self-government was nipped in the bud (Гавриловић 1985, 47–50).

Overcoming the resistance of the sipahis and the people, the janissaries once again introduced *chiflik*, increased duties, while their violence threatened the safety of life and property. This situation affected all layers of Serbian people. During the two-year dahian rule, Serbian people in the Belgrade Pashaluk were so pressured by exploitation and abuse that the way out of this situation could only be sought in direct collision with the dahian system. Slaughter of local chieftains accelerated the maturation of the obvious contradictions between the Serbian nation and the Turks, and was the immediate cause of the outbreak of the Serbian uprising.

The 1804 uprising in Serbia marked the beginning of social and national processes, leading to the creation of the new Serbian state and society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as an expression of a new, independent state formation in the recent history of the Balkan peoples. Serbian revolution that began in 1804 had a double meaning for international relations and the interests of the major powers involved in the Eastern issue: the specific, seen in the context of the political situation of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and general, viewed through the prism of a longer historical process that developed in the Balkans during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Павловић 2001, 4–45). The main task of foreign policy of Serbia during the uprising (1804–1813) was to protect the achievements of the uprising. Initially, it was thought that, with the armed opposition to dahias first, and then to Sultan himself, this could be achieved, if Tsargrad was willing or somehow forced to accept the guarantees of some of the European powers, primarily the Habsburg Monarchy or Russia. However, neither did the Porte agree to let some European power interfere in its internal affairs, nor did the Austrian and Russian courts want to give the rebellious Serbs some special rights that would challenge the sovereignty of the Porte on its territory. The Austrian court held that the rebellious Serbs could be given concessions and privileges they had in Belgrade Pashaluk before the arrival of dahias to power, but still considered Serbia a part of Turkish territory (Ивић 1937, 246–253).

The Vienna government's pretext was the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire and the friendship between the two empires. However, in order to keep its trade, the Monarchy held a liberal position towards the Serbian uprising, although it occasionally, for political reasons, ordered the closure of its borders on the Sava and the Danube rivers, and made preparations for the

possible occupation of the border fortresses of Serbia. Best favor to Serbian rebels was given by Emperor Franz, who, in March 1806, wrote a personal letter to Sultan Selim III, advocating the Porte's moderation in the pacification of the Serbian uprising (Јакшић 1933, 29). According to this Austrian policy, Serbian rebel leaders sought to win the protection of the Viennese court (1804 and 1805), without rejecting even the possibility of Austrian occupation of the already liberated territory of Serbia and acceptance of Serbs as its subjects. The rejected rebels turned to Russia, but this initiative achieved more in the moral and material, than in the political sense. Rebel leaders' efforts to make Habsburgs and Russia interested in the Serbian uprising resulted in the fact that the Porte, in refusing the mediation and guarantees of the Austrian and Russian courts, occasionally sent its emissaries to Serbia, which could be considered a certain gain for the Serbs (Pavlovitch 1961, 34–37).

Until the end of 1806, political relations between the Monarchy and Serbian rebels were of unofficial nature, which did not deny the sovereignty of the Porte, but, at the same time, led to the acceptance of the new situation and the maintenance of political and other ties with rebel leaders. The Monarchy regulated the border issues and disputes on the Sava and the Danube, trade disputes, issues of smuggling and crime, and the issue of navigation on the Sava and the Danube (Lampe and Jackson 1982, 111). The Monarchy did not solve all these issues in Tsargrad, but through direct talks with Karađorđe, as the supreme representative of the rebels. The building of stronger political relations between the Habsburg Monarchy and Serbia occurred in 1807, when these relations intensified in several aspects. The entry of Russia into war with Ottoman Empire, Napoleon's victories against the Prussians, the Treaty of Tilsit, the Russian–Turkish armistice in Slobozia, and especially the Rebellion of Tican in Srem (1807) were of great importance for further development of Austro-Serbian relations (Стојанчевић 2013, 199–200). In February and March 1808 in St. Petersburg, the French envoy and the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs designed the project on the division of Ottoman Empire, according to which Serbia became independent under the government of an Austrian prince, who would marry a Great Russian duchess. In addition to this project, sometime later, another one appeared, according to which the territory made up of Serbia and Macedonia with Thessaloniki was handed over to the Monarchy. At the same time, the Monarchy, relying on the tacit approval of

32 France, sought to persuade the rebel leaders to surrender Belgrade. The Petrova-

radin commander, Field Marshal Simbshen, who was particularly engaged in this task, promised compensation to the Serbs in the form of Austrian protection at the Porte (Jelavich 1983, 45–47).

Freed from direct Turkish pressure due to ceasefire in Slobozia and Russia's support in this, Serbs did not find it difficult to refuse the Austrian offer, even at the cost Austria closes its borders. Year 1809 brought a change of war fortune at the Serbian–Turkish front. The attacks of the Turkish army that occurred in the summer of the same year threatened to completely break down the defense of Serbian rebels. Having no faith in the Russian military help, Karađorđe turned to Monarchy for help in mid-August, offering it in return to occupy the Serbian territory. The Austrian court was not willing to have problems with the Porte, France, and even the Russians, and refused this offer, pointing out that it was ready to mediate at the Porte so that the pacification of Serbian uprising could be conducted in a gentle way (Djordjević and Fisher–Galati 1981, 14–20). Item VIII of the Treaty of Bucharest (1812) provided for the self-government of the Serbian people and the return of the Turks to Serbia. After a short hesitation, Serbs rejected the requirements of the Treaty of Bucharest, continuing the fight for full independence. The military inferiority of Serbia in relation to major resources of the Ottoman Empire, and its diplomatic isolation in Europe, after almost ten years of success in the war with Ottoman Empire, brought Serbia into a hopeless situation (Јакшић 1937, 23–30; Стојанчевић 1980, 192–194).

Left to themselves, Serbian rebels decided to start the last battle with the Turks. From the beginning of July to the beginning of October 1813, in all areas of the Serbian front, the rebels offered desperate resistance. The First Serbian uprising was brought to an end. The collapse of the First Serbian Uprising initiated a large migration of Serbian population into the Habsburg Monarchy and Wallachia. More than 120,000 people crossed into the Habsburg territory, and around twenty thousand into Wallachia. Nearly all of the northern Serbia, especially Šumadija, was practically deserted. Belgrade was also completely cleared of its Christian and Jewish inhabitants at the time (Илић, Михаиловић and Колаковић 1969, 421–423). The restoration of the Ottoman Empire in Serbia was complemented by horrific Turkish tyranny. Jihad meant a real catastrophe for the Serbian population of the Belgrade pashaluk. Many Serbian infants were seized into slavery, so entire nahiyas in the northern parts of Serbia were totally desolate (Поповић 1950, 78).

Following the departure of the great vizier Hurshid-pasha, it was Sulejman-pasha Skopljak who was consigned as the first in command of the Belgrade pashaluk. His appointment followed after Porta's declaration of amnesty and the appeal upon the Serbian refugees to return to the Belgrade pashaluk. After a period of war pillages and depredation, the Turks alleviated their antagonistic behavior towards the Serbian nation. The need to prevent the trade in Belgrade pashaluk from complete breakdown, as well as the fear from potential formation of hayduks and guerilla in the region of the main trade routes of the pashaluk, forced the Turks to relax their repressive measures towards the Serbian raya and reinstate a regular state in the occupied Serbia (Гавриловић 1907, 63–65, 70–74). The refusal of the Austrian Court to repatriate the exiled commanders of the uprising, urged Turkish authorities to invite rebels still hiding in Serbia to surrender. This was primarily directed to Stanoje Glavaš and Miloš Obrenović, who were, after the surrender, given a pardon by the Turkish authorities and as such became involved in the Turkish regime in the pashaluk. Glavaš was appointed main guardian of the Emperor's road from Ćuprija to Belgrade, while Miloš Obrenović was first appointed 'oberknez' of the Rudnik nahiyah, and then also of Požega and Kragujevac (Стојанчевић 1980, 159–160).

However, Turkish benevolence did not last for long and, as early as the first months of 1814, the terror of the Turkish authorities began again. Under a pretext of searching for weapons and the hayduks, Turkish military units infiltrated Serbian villages, leaving a devastation behind. In the same period taxes were raised for the Serbian rayah, and enforced community work – 'kuluk' was introduced to repair the Belgrade fortress and Turkish fortifications destroyed during the uprising. In mid-September 1814, the vicious regime of Sulejman-pasha Skopljak instigated Hadži Prodan's Revolt. Poorly organized, despite spreading to Požega, Kragujevac and Jagodina nahiyas, the revolt suffered a quick breakdown. The failure of Hadži Prodan's revolt triggered a cruel reprisal by the Turkish authorities. Stanoje Glavaš was one of many Serbs who were killed, and whose heads were displayed on the walls of the Belgrade fortress. The conditions in Belgrade pashaluk resembled, to a great extent, those of the dahiya's reign, when zulum and anarchy pervaded all around (Лаповић 1950, 70–74).

34 | Meanwhile, the Congress of great powers took place in Vienna, with a task to reinstate the order in Europe, thoroughly disturbed by the French Revolution and Napoleon wars. France's defeat and arrival of the allies in Paris (March 1814),

roused a hope for the Serbs that their faith would become of interest to the great European powers, and that the conditions in Serbia would improve (Ђорђевић 1995, 20, Стојанчевић 1966, 42–43). News of preparations for the Congress of Vienna echoed among the Serbs in the Belgrade Pashaluk, as well as among Serbian immigrants in the Monarchy. At the end of December 1814, Serbian delegates, Prota Matija Nenadović and Jevta Čotrić, were received by the Austrian Emperor Franz I, who promised them he would advocate the relieving of the difficult position of Serbs in the Belgrade Pashaluk at the Porte. However, different attitude of European courts regarding the survival of Turkish rule in Europe, as well as the return of Napoleon from the Elbe and new war with France, drew attention of European rulers. Meanwhile, a new armed movement of Serbs broke out in Belgrade Pashaluk, known as the Second Serbian Uprising. Relations between Serbs and great powers and the Ottoman Empire took a new turn.

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**Rezime:*****Habzburška monarhija i Srbi u Osmanskom carstvu do Bečkog kongresa (1739–1815)***

Ratovi evropskih sila protiv Osmanskog carstva donosili su nove potrebe, a gotovo nijedan rat nije protekao bez oružane podrške seljačkih masa. Ustajući i sam na oružje u vreme ratova na Balkanu, srpski narod trpeo je i sve posledice ishoda takvih ratova i politike sila koje su ih vodile. Sve do kraja 18. veka, srpski narod je ustajao na borbu u vreme austro–turskih ratova koji su se vodili i preko Srbije, podržavajući težnje Habzburške monarhije. Proces raspada osmanskog feudalnog sistema doveo je do jačanja versko-nacionalnih i društveno ekonomskih sukoba na Balkanu. Izložen svim ovim udarima, osmanski vojno-politički i feudalni sistem ulazio je u sve veću krizu, koja se naročito osećala u njegovim evropskim provincijama. Iz ove krize nastala je oslobodilačka borba srpskog naroda koja je dovela do velikog oslobodilačkog ustanka i nacionalno-političkog oslobođenja u 19. veku.

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***Ključne reči:*** Habzburška monarhija, Beogradski pašaluk, Osmansko carstvo, janičari, srpski narod, austro–turski rat

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# FAILED CONSPIRACY: Organisation and Preparation of the Serbian Uprising against Ottoman Rule in 1840–1841

*Original Scientific Article*

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*This paper shows and analyses preparations for Serb uprising against Ottoman rule in 1840 and 1841. It explains Niš rebellion of 1841 was just a part of uprising planned for much wider area, but accomplished only in The sancak of Niš. The role of prince Nikola Vasojević in uprising preparations was indicated. How the uprising was financed and what was the role of prince Miloš Obrenović remain unanswered questions. The paper is mostly based on Serbian, Russian, British, French and Austrian sources.*

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**Key words:** Niš Rebellion, 1841, Nikola Vasojević, uprising, prince Mihailo.

Numerous internal crises were shaking Ottoman Empire from Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 to establishing of Straits Convention in 1841. Reasons were twofold. Traditional Muslim elites in provinces provided armed resistance to centralization and administrative reforms conducted by the Porte, trying to preserve their former privileges. Christian population, *rayah*, was starting rebellions motivated by social, economic and national reasons, having nearby desirable examples of the Principality of Serbia and independent Kingdom of Greece. No doubt, the biggest challenge the Empire was facing were two Egyptian crises. Great European powers, with an exception of France during the Second Egyptian Crisis 1839–1841, followed in that period the policy of protecting Otto-

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man Empire and, after secession of Greece, of respecting its territorial integrity. Russia, which was considered protector of Balkan's Orthodox Christians, since bilateral agreement with Turkey concluded in Hünkâr Iskelesi in 1833 until Straits Convention between Russia, Great Britain, France, Austria and Prussia in 1841 was formal ally and the protector of the Bosphorus Empire. The principle of legitimism, proclaimed at the Congress of Vienna and for the first time contested regarding the Eastern Question on the subject of the Greek revolution, had been confirmed again. Under such circumstances, without support of one or more big powers, prospects of successful Balkans Christians' rebellion against the Ottoman rule were, objectively speaking, non-existent (Anderson 1956, 71–109; Shaw, Shaw 1977, 26–58; Popović 1996, 161–165).

Formal constitution and territorial defining of autonomous Principality of Serbia was finished in 1833. As a Christian and national Serbian principality and a state where villagers were land owners, Serbia was a role model for the rayah in surrounding Ottoman provinces. Hoping to improve their social and economic position and even to conjoin their territory to Serbia, Christians from neighboring Ottoman regions started several unsuccessful uprisings since 1833. Aware of current international relations, but also of the necessity to consolidate Serbia, Serbian ruler Miloš Obrenović did not support those uprisings, but at the same time maintained relations with both Christian leaders and local Turkish pashas, retaining his influence over them. The same policy towards neighboring Christians was continued by his son and successor, prince Mihailo Obrenović (Stojančević 1981, 238–240; Ljušić 1986, 381–393). Among those uprisings, the most important was the Serbian uprising in Niš, Leskovac, Pirot and Prokuplje that lasted from 17th to 23rd of April 1841<sup>1</sup>, and is known as the Niš Rebellion. It was fully elaborated in literature (Романски 1912; Дамянов 1992; Andrejević 2003; Stojančević 1971; Stojančević 1981), even its particulars (Nedeljković 2012). Certain authors considered the Niš Rebellion to be only a part of an uprising planned to include a much wider area which, due to certain conditions, was not accomplished anywhere else except for the sancak of Niš (Stojančević 1971, 159–161; Stojančević 1981, 242; Дамянов 1992, 27–29). Since wider background of the prepared uprising was not thoroughly researched, this paper has intention to, as much as conspiratorial character of this topic and scarce sources allow, elucidate in wider sense the

1 All dates in main text are given according to the new calendar, in the footnotes when sources of Serbian origin are cited according to both old and new calendar.

preparations and the organization of the Serbian uprising against Ottoman rule of 1840–1841, the one that started in April 1841 only in the sancak of Niš. For the purpose of clarity, the exposition is divided into two entities. In the first one new and already known facts regarding preparations and organization of the uprising are discussed, in the second one the role of self-proclaimed prince of the upland tribe of Vasojević, Nikola Radonjić Vasojević, is considered.

\* \* \*

The centralization of the state and reforms based on contemporary European models conveyed by sultan Mahmud II brought in 1830s a breakdown of power of hereditary Muslim elites in the Balkans – the captains in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albanian pashas in northern Albania, Metohija, Kosovo, basin of Južna Morava and Vardar. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire was defeated in the war against Russia and forced to form an alliance with its traditional enemy, it lost Greece formally and Serbia *de facto*. On the other hand, the position of Christians did not improve at all, on the contrary. At the beginning of the Second Egyptian Crisis in 1839, sultan Mahmud II died and was succeeded by sixteen-years-old Abdulmecid. Shortly after, in November of the same year, Imperial Rescript of Gülhane was proclaimed, in which the sultan promised the introduction of new legislation that would guarantee equal legal security of life, property and honor, equitable and statutory taxations and the imposition of general obligation to serve in the regular army. Anyway, provisions of this Imperial Rescript were not enforced immediately and everywhere, partly because of lack of actual administrative capacities, partly because of lack of political willingness. Therefore, the Imperial Rescript of Gülhane remained an unfulfilled promise, as far as regions and times discussed in this paper are concerned (Shaw, Shaw, 55–61, 83–88; Anderson 1956, 107–108; Stojančević 1971, 45–68; Popović 1996, 161). The consequences of this briefly enumerated events were twofold. Muslims of Balkan provinces regarded sultans Mahmud II and Abdulmecid as traitors of tradition and Empire foundations; their sympathies were predominantly on the side of the Egyptian outlaw and potential throne usurper, Mehmed Ali Pasha (Muhammad Ali of Egypt). Christians were disappointed by unfulfilled promises proclaimed by the Imperial Rescript of Gülhane and that reinforced their belief that realistic improvement of their position could be expected only if they extricate from Ottoman rule.

Mihailo Obrenović received the *berat* naming him Serbian prince in 1839 in Wallachia, where he resided in emigration together with his father. In November of the same year he traveled to Istanbul to visit the sultan, and via Edirne, Sofia and Niš came to Serbia in March 1840 to seize power (Ljušić 1995, 141–146). In March and April 1840, customs outpost Raška, which, among other regular duties, was also collecting intelligence on conditions in surrounding Ottoman provinces from secret informants, merchants and travelers, came to knowledge that news spread among Serbs and Turks of Novi Pazar kaza that sultan added to Serbia “Novi Pazar, Niš, Mitrovica, Vučitrn, Priština to Prizren and Bosnia”. Of course, such propaganda encouraged Serbian hopes and caused disquiet among the Turks, determined not to give up land without a fight. It is unknown who exactly was spreading such news.<sup>2</sup>

In May 1840 outpost Raška was informed that Serbs in vicinity of Novi Pazar are very upset because of tyranny. Several Serbian village chiefs from Turkey gathered in the same month at Vasilina Česma, point at southwest border of Serbia, and conveyed to the stationed clerks that Serbs cannot abide Turkish tyranny and that they were determined to defend themselves from it. They required from prince Mihailo to help with ammunition and flour and therefore they sent to him as their assignees merchants from Sjenica, Nikola Filipović and Bogdan Nikolić. In then Serbian capital Kragujevac they handed the prince an appeal asking “to rescue our people (of Sjenica, Novi Pazar etc.) from Turkish tyranny”. The prince answered them to expect no assistance from Serbia and that they would themselves be responsible for negative consequences such an uprising might cause. The two assignees returned to Sjenica. Since local Turks found out their reason for the trip to Serbia, their lives were in danger and towards the end of 1840 they were forced to escape to Serbia. Convinced that no “business” (uprising) – will take place, “at least in the next year” i.e. 1841, they asked the prince to let them transfer their families permanently from Turkey to Serbia for security reasons, which was granted. Not all their compatriots shared that conviction. Outpost Raška on February 22 1841 received news that “Serbs across the border, Turkish subjects, have united and are planning to attack the Turks because of Turkish tyranny”. Some

2 Arhiv Srbije (Archives of Serbia) (AS), Ministarstvo inostranih dela (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (MID)-Vnuterno odeljenje (Interior Department) (V), 1840, 1840, F 4 R 101, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, № 541, 1/13. 4. 1840 and s№ 696, 1/13. 5. 1840.

time later, on March 13, 1841, priest Mihailo Bačanin from the village of Trebići in Novi Pazar kaza, very close to the Serbian border, sent an appeal to Serbian authorities on behalf of “all local people to escape from Turkish tyranny and”, especially significant, “to be taken under protection of Serbian state”<sup>3</sup>

Baron Lieven, a Russian diplomat who was, in 1840, in an official mission in the Ottoman capital, received two collective complaints of Christians from Skopje and Prizren regions, written in June and August of that year. Complaining of various atrocities committed by Turkish authorities and the Albanians, Christians addressed the Russian emperor for protection.<sup>4</sup> In November 1840, a monk, Dimitrije Arsenijević from Monastery Gorioč in the village of Istok, Metohija, visited Kragujevac. On November 20 he submitted an appeal to prince Mihailo, obviously written upon dictation by some Serbian clerk because of its civic orthography, not used at the time in the region Arsenijević came from. It was emphasized in the appeal that Serbian people suffer “ultimate violence” from Turks, and “Christian monasteries” are exposed to never ceasing demands. Relatively close to Gorioč were monasteries Pečka patrijaršija, Dečani and Devič. The monk asked the prince to help him travel to Constantinople, so he could ask the Porte and Patriarchate to obtain “some mercy” for the local population and monasteries. He intended to seek protection from the state and ecclesiastical authorities in the Ottoman capital, for “violence that Turks now practice in those districts has no limits”. Several “districts” were mentioned, meaning *kazas* or *nahias*. Further on in the appeal, he mentioned “all the Serbs living in the Old Serbia” hoped prince Miloš will liberate them from Turkish rule, and now transferred the same hope to prince Mihailo. This statement is important for it is a testimony of the wish of the Serbs from that part of Turkey to join Serbia, but for further exposition in this paper even more important is the use of the term “Old Serbia”. In numerous sources of Serbian

3 AS, MID-Inostrano odeljenje (Foreign Department) (I), 1840, F 1 R 90, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, s№ 775 and 776, 14/26. 5. 1840; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ministry of Interior, i№ 710, 20. 5/1. 6. 1840; 1841, Delovodni protokol (Book of Protocol) (DP), № 389; Ministarstvo unutrašnjih dela (Ministry of Interior) (MUD)-Sanitetsko odeljenje (Health Department) (S), 1840, 1840, F 6 R 509; isto, 1841, DP, № 219, 255, 519, 1037.

4 Российский государственный архив древних актов (РГАДА), Ф. 3 (Разряд III), Оп. 1 (Дополнения), ед. хр. 7, People's demands from Skopje and surroundings addressed to the Russian emperor, 15/27. 6. 1840; people's demands from Prizren and surroundings addressed to the Russian emperor, 13/25. 8. 1840. My gratitude to Danko Leovac, who provided these documents.

origin from the period 1839–1841 we examined, we never found another example of use of this term by Serbs from Serbia or Turkey. Finally, Arsenijević wrote his compatriots gave him empowerment to ask from the prince mercy or “riddance”. He confirmed his credibility by presenting original letters of recommendation by competent episcopate, most probably for the Porte or Patriarchate, and they are among the documents we examined. That fact proves authenticity of his statement. Since Arsenijević was Turkish subject, the prince helped him obtain from the Belgrade pasha a travel document for the journey to Constantinople, and paid his travel expenses. He ordered Serbian unofficial representative in Constantinople, Jovan German, to give support to Arsenijević and to facilitate his reception at the Russian embassy (Ljušić 2011, 47–49).<sup>5</sup> Mentioned data do not confirm an uprising was being prepared in Skopje, Prizren and Peć kazas in 1840, but definitely confirm that Christians were upset and discontented. Anyway, once the Niš Rebellion was crushed, a group of ten rebel “leaders or commanders” escaped on April 29 1841 to Serbia near Aleksinac. Among them was a monk, Antim Arsenijević from Dečani monastery, and reports of the Serbian border authorities state he happened to be in Vlasotince at the time of the uprising, collecting benefactions for the monastery.<sup>6</sup> The fact Antim was emphasized as one of the rebel leaders brings about the question was he really in Vlasotince for the named reason, or maybe came there because of the uprising, for that would imply certain connection between the rebels and the Serbs of Metohija. Unfortunately, that is the only contemporary source, so this question remains unanswered. According to a single, but fully authentic testimony from 1875, in uprising preparations on his territory, probably in Kosovo, a merchant from Priština, Vasilije Đorđević, was engaged, and for that reason he traveled to Belgrade.<sup>7</sup> Regrettably, no other data on his involvement are available. When organizing the uprising in Kosovo is discussed, several documents exaggerate the role of former Vučitrn teacher, certain Marko Avramović. Anyway, the author of all these sources is Marko himself. On the other hand, independent sources testifying on him present image of a self-seeking person, with plenty of criminal acts and frauds in his biography. Therefore we consider

5 AS, MID-I, 1840, F 2 R 33.

6 AS, MUD-S, 1841, F 3 R 163, Quarantine station Aleksinac to Ministry of Interior, № 366, 17/29. 4. 1840; Andrejević 2003, 112.

7 AS, Ministarstvo prosvete – Prosvetno odeljenje (Ministry of education – Educational department), 1875, F 9 R 103.

that his role in uprising organization in Kosovo cannot be trusted and accordingly will not be presented. Of course, that does not mean preparations and organizing did not take place there. The uprising had been prepared, but no rebellion erupted (Popov 1870, 435–436; Peruničić 1968, 237–238, 242–243).<sup>8</sup>

Since preparations and organization around Niš, Leskovac, Pirot and Prokuplje were presented in full detail in the existing literature, primarily according to deposition of one of the rebel leaders, Stanko Atanasković of Vlasotince (Stojančević 1971, 160–161; Andrejević 2003, 65–70; Nedeljković 2012, 17–18; Vučković 1957, 25–26),<sup>9</sup> we will discuss them just briefly, denoting certain additions and corrections. Chief organizer of the conspiracy was a priest from the village of Gradnja in Leskovac kaza, Đorđe Stojković<sup>10</sup>. The village of Gradnja is situated in the region of Poljanica, close to the source of Veternica river, south of Leskovac. Stojković entered Serbia near Aleksinac, in April 1840. Upon request by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was taken to Kragujevac on June 10. Together with the priest, the Commissioner of Aleksinac district sent to the capital several letters he received from Turkey.<sup>11</sup> There is a high probability that among them was an appeal from Christians of Leskovac and villages of Leskovac *nahia* sent to prince Mihailo. In it, they metaphorically announced their wish to adjoin Serbia, specified they can not stand Turkish tyranny any more, enumerated different examples of maltreatment and asked the prince to intervene at the Porte on their behalf (Milićević 1884, 47–48). Đorđe Stojković remained in the capital until June 16. For his temporary place of residence monastery Vračevšnica was first appropriated, later on Kalenić.

8 AS, Mitropolija beogradska (Metropolitanate of Belgrade) (MB), 1842, № 664; 1843, № 282, 315; MID-V, 1841, F 4 R 102; MUD-S, 1840, DP № 1312, 1570, 1578, 1866, 1873, 1881, 1943; 1841, DP № 257, 297, 508; MUD-Policajno odeljenje (Police Department) (P), 1839, DP № 1475; Pokloni i otkupi (Presents and Purchases) (PO), 74/3, 78/149; Ilija Garašanin, № 782; Arhiv Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti (Archives of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts) (ASANU), Društvo srpske slovesnosti, 1851, № 40; РГАДА, Ф. 3 (Разряд III), Оп. 1 (Дополнения), ед. хр. 8, Lieven to NN, 3/15. 4. 1841.

9 NB, GJ, R 558/V/12, Original from interrogation of Stanko Atanasković, 22. 10/3. 11. 1842, Beograd.

10 Existing literature erroneously cite his surname as Janković, according to a Turkish report translated into German, where Serbian names and toponyms were, as a rule, were misspelt (Stojančević 1971, 159; Andrejević 2003, 65; Nedeljković 2012, 17; Романски 1912, 92).

11 AS, MID-V, 1840, F 4 R 22; F 4 R 101, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, s№ 696, 1/13. 5. 1840.

Both monasteries are in vicinity of Kragujevac. Serbian authorities permitted him to return to Turkey on March 31 1841.<sup>12</sup> He spent eleven months in Serbia, working on the uprising organization. From Serbia, Stojković contacted certain prominent Serbs from surroundings of Niš, Leskovac, Prokuplje and Pirot and convened with them on several occasions in the second half of 1840 at the border near Aleksinac, sometimes in the presence of Aleksinac district commissioner and other Serbian officials of lower rank. The uprising was agreed upon at those meetings; people from Turkey, each one in his own region, were spreading conspiracy network. Familiar with all these activities and actively supporting them was priest in ordinary of prince Mihailo, Pavle Karano–Tvrković, an escaped leader of a former Serbian rebellion in Bosnia (Stranjaković 1932, 266–267; Popović 1950, 381–382, 405–410). Among persons Đorđe met with were Miloje Jovanović from the village of Kamenica near Niš, who was later killed in the uprising, Nikola–Koca Cvetković from Leskovac and Stanko Atanasković from Vlasotince. In December 1840, upon agreement with Đorđe, a delegation of five Serbs from Niš and surroundings came to the border near Aleksinac, aiming to go to Kragujevac and complain to prince about the position they were in, and ask from him advice and help. They reported to the border authorities that people in Niš and its surroundings were ready for rebellion. They were allowed neither in Serbia, nor in front of the prince. From prince's office they were informed not to expect any help, but to travel to Constantinople and submit their complaints to the Porte, with support from local Serbian diplomatic representative (Andrejević 2003, 67–68).<sup>13</sup> Available sources do not explain if any of them really visited the Ottoman capital. Anyway, Russian diplomat baron Lieven who was at the time in Constantinople, on January 25, 1841 informed the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, count Nesselrode, that situation of Christians is desperate in all of the Balkans, and critical in The sancak of Niš, since Christians are exposed to all forms of maltreatment. He emphasized that Muslims in the Balkans were united against reforms, they opposed the Imperial Rescript of Gülhane, and as a special enemy of the Christians he singled out the commander of The sancak of Niš, *muhasil* Mustafa Sabri Pasha. After that,

12 AS, MB, 1840, № 351; 1841, № 160.

13 AS, MID-I, 1840, F 1 R 90, Head of the Aleksinac County to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, № 2121, 30. 11/12. 12. 1840; Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Head of the Aleksinac County, i№ 1737, 7/19. 12. 1840; MID-V, 1840, F 4 R 22, Ministry of Interior to Prince Mihailo, s№ 1884, 7/19. 12. 1840.

baron Lieven was sent from Constantinople to Serbia to mediate in solving some Serbian internal political problems. He passed through the sancak of Niš, gathering on his way information on local situation, and on February 24 he wrote that Christian population in the sancak of Niš should be given financial support and efforts should be made to have Mustafa Sabri Pasha replaced. In that record he mentioned Nikola Srndaković, one of the leaders of the Niš Rebellion from region of Zaplanje in vicinity of Niš, but it remains unclear if some money was sent to him or anybody else.<sup>14</sup> Baron Lieven entered Serbia near Aleksinac on March 16, spent some time in Kragujevac, on March 28 went to Belgrade, and via Zemun he proceeded to Russia.<sup>15</sup> By all accounts, in Serbia he received Nesselrode's instruction to warn prince Mihailo not to meddle at all into possible rebellions in the Ottoman Empire. He told the prince that no connections between the rebels and official Serbia may be revealed, situation was different and required different approach than that in 1833, when after Serbian rebellions in Turkey prince Miloš adjoined six nahias to Serbia. On the other hand, Lieven suggested to the prince to maintain secret connections with Christians in the Ottoman Empire, explicitly mentioning Milivoje Jovanović. During his stay in Serbia, Lieven personally talked to the priest Đorđe Stojković and another conspirator, Stamenko Cakić from the village of Jastrebac near Vlasotince and, according to the account of Stanko Atanasković, he gave them certain encouragement regarding the planned uprising. Whether from them or somebody else, Lieven received one report saying that the uprising was prepared and that in each town and many villages the most prominent people were appointed to be rebel leaders. He was aware of the fact that at the beginning of April, just before the uprising, a delegation of eight conspirators from Turkey visited Belgrade and secretly conveyed to prince Mihailo all complaints on Turkish terror. According to Lieven's cognizance, the uprising was organized not only in Niš, but also in Priština and Prizren sancaks.<sup>16</sup> That same delegation of eight or only some of its members also addressed in Belgrade the Russian consul asking for

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14 РГАДА, Ф. 3 (Разряд III), Оп. 1 (Дополнения), ед. хр. 8, Lieven to Nesselrode, 13/25. 1. 1841; Lieven's note 12/24. 2. 1841. My gratitude to Danko Leovac who provided these documents.

15 AS, MUD – P, 1841, DP, № 1041, 1088.

16 РГАДА, Ф. 3 (Разряд III), Оп. 1 (Дополнения), ед. хр. 8, Nesselrode to Lieven, 2/14. 3. 1841; Lieven to Prince Mihailo, 17/29. 3. 1841; NN to Lieven, 1/14. 4. 1841; Lieven to NN, 3/15. 4. 1841. My gratitude to Danko Leovac who provided these documents.

Russian support, but he unambiguously denied it, advising them to surrender to sultan's will (Кудрявцева 2002, 186).

Russian politics should be considered in a context of the fact that in 1840, in negotiations with Great Britain and later Austria and Prussia, Russia waived its right to renew the Treaty of Hünkâr Iskelesi (Unkiar Skelessi) that was expiring in 1841, in order to spoil British-French entente and isolate France in the Second Egyptian Crisis. Filip Brunov, Russian diplomat who led negotiations with Great Britain in 1840, and baron Lieven suggested to Nesselrode even in 1840 that it would be favorable for Russia to have an outbreak of Christian rebellion that Turks would crush, for Russia could use it to prove Turkey that it still, despite its contract obligations, controls Christians, and by that also the Ottoman possessions in Europe. Lieven even considered Russia should incite such a rebellion, in case none is forthcoming. Nesselrode denied these suggestions, fearing for the faith of Christians, for Russia objectively could not save them from Turkish reprisals.<sup>17</sup> Lieven's opinion on desirable Russian policy explains why he, against Nesselrode's instructions, gave certain encouragement to the conspirators.

According to testimony of Stanko Atanasković, priest Đorđe Stojković and Stamenko Cakić also talked to princess Ljubica, mother of prince Mihailo, who promised them "big help". She told them to secretly deliver written and signed statements with complaints and requests, and to unanimously start the uprising afterwards. One such statement that we managed to find was signed by 27 persons from Leskovac nahia, first among them Stanko Atanasković. They "on behalf of all the Serbs in Bulgaria" adduced to the prince, to whom the statement was addressed, they can no longer tolerate tyranny so are determined to commence the uprising and asked him to "embrace them under his rule".<sup>18</sup> This deed of princess alone is enough to raise suspicions on possible involvement of prince Miloš in the whole conspiracy. Mentioned statement is indeed addressed to the prince, but it does not specify which one, so it could have been addressed to either Mihailo or Miloš. The text itself is such that it can be interpreted equivocally, intended for Mihailo or Miloš. The single document of Serbian origin known to us that indicates

17 РГАДА, Ф. 3 (Разряд II), Оп. 1 (Дела, относящиеся до внутренней и внешней политики России), ед. хр. 101, Secret correspondence Brunov-Nesselrode on Eastern Question 1840; Ф. 3 (Разряд III), Оп. 1 (Дополнения), ед. хр. 7, Lieven to Nesselrode, 15/27. 9. 1840.

involvement of prince Miloš in the conspiracy is the letter of princess Ljubica to her husband, written on January 22 1841 in Kragujevac. First she informed him that “certain letters from Vidin” arrived lately to Kragujevac and in them “some people” report they have reliable knowledge prince Miloš intends to cause wobbling in all of Bulgaria and, after conquering Niš and Vidin, to adjoin them to Serbia. The rest of that letter markedly proves those statements are a result of plot by unnamed prince’s enemies.<sup>19</sup> This letter can be interpreted as a princess Ljubica’s warning to her husband that the secret was disclosed. Romanian historian Konstantin Veliki presented solid arguments, although not undeniable proof, that prince Miloš, together with a Wallachian dignitary, organized the so called First Braila rebellion in July 1841. As a matter of fact, in the Wallachian border town of Braila one company was assembled with intention to cross the Danube, start the uprising in Bulgaria and join Niš region rebels. In overall commotion, prince Miloš would arrange to return to the Serbian throne, while his ally hoped for the Wallachian throne (Велики 1968, 75-82). The attempt failed, and also commenced only after it became general knowledge Niš rebellion was crushed. Anyway, it has to be taken into account that the Niš Rebellion started before the plan, and during the summer of 1841 certain rebel commanders tried to revive uprising in the sancak of Niš. Finally, it was just in 1841 that the Porte insisted that prince Miloš move out of Wallachia. Therefore, indications on prince Miloš’s involvement in the conspiracy do exist, but so far cannot be proved for the period before 1841.

Based on the authentic and reliable records from a book from the Church of St Jovan in the village of Gornji Matejevac, financial aspect of uprising preparations in the sancak of Niš is known. Organizers had at their disposal 18,000 emperor ducats, 30,000 zwanzigs and 15,000 rubles. This huge amount, at the meeting held on March 30, 1841 in that church, in the presence of thirty conspirators including the author of the record, a teacher from the nearby village of Draževac, Marko Popović, and Stanko Atanasković, was entrusted to three men from that village, Žika Đorić, Iga Šićerkov and Randel Eličić. The uprising commenced prematurely on April 17, and the rebels were not well supplied with weapons and equipment, so the money remained unused. According to a statement of Žika Đorić of May 8, 1841, they buried the money in some cellar when they realized that the uprising had failed. Stanko Atanasković and another man present at that

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19 AS, PO, 70/197.

meeting, Stojan Čavdar, asked in 1845 from mentioned three to give them the money to take it to Serbia, to hand it over to the State Treasury, for it was, as they stated “people’s money”, so they should entrust it to the Serbian prince, for he will sometime in the future use it for their liberation. Žika, Iga and Ranđel did not deliver the money, but reported Stanko and Stojan to Turkish authorities. It is not known what happened with the money. Marko Popović finished his writings in 1845 with the message that anyone who read them in the future, at the time Gornji Matejevac was adjoined to Serbia, report these three to the Serbian court, so they be requested to return the money. Prevailing opinion in the literature is that the money was collected from voluntary contributions of people of the sancak of Niš (Andrejević 1988, 246–257; Andrejević 2003, 71; Nedeljković 2012, 18). That explanation does not seem probable. Even if organizers managed to collect that sum from people, they would collect it in Turkish groschen, kind of money that was usual in everyday use, and not in ducats, rubles and zwanzigs. Therefore, it leaves open a question who and when gave the money to the rebellion organizers. Legacy that the author of this record left to future generations clearly testifies that the wish of all rebels was to adjoin Serbia.

Stanko Atanasković finished a part of his deposition on uprising organization with the words that an anonymous spy disclosed preparations to the Turks, so organizers, fearing retaliation, decided to start clashes earlier than planned. Muhasil of Niš, Mustafa Sabri Pasha, reacted right away. Having in mind that he had not enough army available, he employed irregular troops comprised of local Albanians, little artillery he had in Niš and managed, with horrible brutality towards Christians, to crush the uprising. It was only later that the Porte concentrated in Niš huge military power, and that supports the opinion it was convinced that the rebellion was not just a local one (Andrejević 2003, 75–122; Stojančević 1971, 151–159; Nedeljković 2012, 19–23). Quick defeat of the Niš Rebellion, followed by terrifying burning and plunder of Christian settlements, and absence of any help decidedly prevented outbreak of rebellions elsewhere. According to the report of Mustafa Sabri Pasha to the Porte, it is evident he knew pretty much everything about uprising preparations: that the organizer was priest Đorđe, that he stayed long in Serbia and met with the prince, baron Lieven and the Russian consul, that the delegation of Christians from regions of Prizren, Skopje, Đakovica, Peć and Novi Pazar visited Serbia and submitted its appeals, he knew names of members

50 | of that delegation, even that prince Mihailo did not support the uprising, but some

influential people from Serbia did. He informed the Porte that twelve “priests” from all provinces were sent to incite rayah uprising in Bosnia (Романски 1912, 91–93). Having that in mind, it is evident he expected an uprising on the whole territory of Old Serbia. Accordingly, from Ottoman point of view, his reaction was understandable.

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As far as it is known to us, until now in Serbian historiography only Vladimir Stojančević presented hypothesis that duke Nikola Vasojević took part in preparations of the general uprising against Ottoman rule by “Serbian people of Novi Pazar, Priština and Peć sancaks in 1840 and 1841, as well as regions of upper Lim basin”, although without concrete proofs (Stojančević 1972, 155). We consider that assumption to be correct, so here we will try to support it with certain arguments.

Nikola Vasojević (1797–1844) was born in the village of Lopate in Vasojević tribe. Since 1804 he lived with his family in Russia, where he finished military school and became a military engineering officer. He had a captain rank in 1830 when he happened to be in Constantinople, where he met members of Serbian delegation that negotiated autonomy of Serbia with the Porte. Upon their invitation he switched to serve Serbia, where as an engineer he worked on determining and mapping of Serbian–Turkish border. He did not stay long in Serbia, but switched to Ottoman employ as a military engineer in charge of terrestrial roads. His duty enabled him to travel throughout European Turkey. According to his own statement, from June 1835 to September 1837 he constantly resided in Preveza with his family, but was traveling frequently. During an official trip to Shkodër (Skadar) and Shkodër sancak in 1835, he visited Montenegro and met metropolitan Petar II Petrović Njegoš who, at that occasion, issued a charter on Vasojević’s alleged noble origins. That enabled him to take the title of “prince” (knjaz)<sup>20</sup>. On the following year he was in Bitola and Debar. Finally in 1837, upon recommendation of British consul in Preveza, colonel Saunders, he was given post of British vice consul for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania, resident in Novi Pazar (Durković–Jakšić

<sup>20</sup> For further exposal it is important to highlight the difference between terms “knez” and “knjaz” in Serbian language of 19th century. “Knez” mostly denoted village chieftain of Serbs in Turkey, while “knjaz” (prince) denoted a country ruler. In Serbia, the title “knjaz” was held only by Miloš and Mihailo, while title “knez” disappeared once Serbia achieved autonomy.

1956, 28–32; Guberinić 1997, 11–32; Vasojević 1897, 191). On that same year Great Britain posted a consul in Belgrade, colonel Hodges.<sup>21</sup> Vasojević was officially subordinated to British consulate in Preveza. From there he started his journey to Novi Pazar in November 1837. He traveled via Shkodër and Cetinje, where he reconvened with Njegoš in the spring of 1838. During the dinner with the Metropolitan, he caused an incident with some derogatory remarks about prince Miloš. Njegoš informed Miloš about that, Miloš informed Hodges, and Hodges informed the Foreign Office. Among his superiors, that caused suspicion concerning his abilities, even his intentions.<sup>22</sup> Vasojević came to Novi Pazar for the first time probably at the end of March or in April 1838, to find accommodation. After that he traveled to Mostar and Travnik to officially present himself to local *viziers*, and returned to Novi Pazar in July, when the consulate became operative. In Novi Pazar Vasojević opened a school for Serbian children and, upon instructions of the Foreign Office, received complaints submitted by Serbs who complained about the position they were in. Already at that time he had an idea to found the Principality of Vasojević – Holmia and required from his tribe to submit to him as their ruler. Besides, he was spreading rumors he had authority from Great Britain and France to provide independence of Montenegro.<sup>23</sup> Arrival of the British Vice Consul in their town and his activities caused hatred among local Muslims, who accused him of conspiring with prince Miloš to usurp their land. Due to death threats, Vasojević was forced at the beginning of October to escape from Novi Pazar to Serbia.<sup>24</sup> He went to Belgrade, leaving his family in the border Serbian village of Baljevac, accommodated in the house of Lazar Tošić, Commissioner of Studenica District. He stayed in Belgrade until November 5 with Colonel Hodges. He ex-

21 The opening of British consulates in the Balkans inland resulted from British–Russian rivalry concerning the Eastern Question. It was only in 1837 that East India Company opened regular steamship line to India that led through the Mediterranean, with land transport over Suez isthmus, and through the Red Sea to the Indian ocean (Rodky 1923, 58–60). The Balkans and Ottoman Empire in general became hinterland of the emerging British “Imperial Route”.

22 AS, S/GB (Microfilmed reports of British consuls from Serbia), Foreign Office (FO) 78/337, Hodges to Foreign Office, 19. 5. 1838, Belgrade, p. 231; 78/339 Saunders to Foreign Office, 27. 1. 1838, Preveza.

23 AS, S/GB, FO 78/339, Foreign Office to Saunders, 11. 5. 1838; 78/337, Hodges to Palmerston, 12. 11. 1838, Belgrade, p. 321.

24 AS, S/GB, FO 78/337, Hodges to Foreign Office, 11. 10. 1838, Belgrade, p. 299; Nikola Vasojević to Prince Miloš, 21. 9/3. 10. 1838, Raška.

pressed bad opinion of prince Miloš, favoring his opposition, especially prince's brother Jevrem Obrenović.<sup>25</sup> He never returned to Novi Pazar, but at the end of November he visited Vasojevići. During his stay in the Ottoman Empire he met French travel writer Ami Boué, and helped him in his work (Durković–Jakšić 1957, 31–38; Guberinić 1997, 32–52; Radosavljević 2006, 352–354; Mijatović 1892, 68; Popović 1929, 295).

Suspicious concerning his loyalty and expulsion from Novi Pazar caused the discharge of Vasojević from British service in December 1838, something Hodges informed him of in January 1839.<sup>26</sup> That is why Vasojević on February 2 left from Baljevac to Preveza, to explain himself to Saunders. He traveled the route that included Novi Pazar, Peć, Đakovica, Shkodër, Berat, Ioannina, Preveza. He did not find the consul in Preveza, since he was on a leave. Vasojević returned to Serbia on May 8, 1839, crossing the border at the quarantine Mokra Gora. On his way back through Kosovo he received one complaint of Serbian chieftains and leaders from Vučitrn, Kopaonik and Kolašin nahias of Turkish terror and heard that they were determined to use force to defend themselves.<sup>27</sup> After he moved with his family (wife Anastasija, sons Altoman, Svetislav, Branislav, daughter Jelisaveta and stepson Nikola Ivanović Vasojević<sup>28</sup>) from Baljevac to Belgrade, he decided to travel to London and address Foreign Office regarding his position. Failing to achieve anything in the British capital, Vasojević came to Paris at the beginning of 1840 (Durković–Jakšić 1957, 36–38; Guberinić 1997, 52–65).

In Paris he submitted to the French government multiple memoranda. Presenting himself as a leader of independent upland tribes in the middle of European Turkey, he offered France to establish an influence zone and military alliance in case of war against Russia. Vasojević's memoranda were extremely anti-Russian. Especially significant is the memorandum of May 13, 1840. In it he claimed he

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25 AS, S/GB, FO 78/337, Hodges to Palmerston, 12. 11. 1838, Belgrade, p. 321.

26 AS, S/GB, FO 78/339, Saunders to Foreign Office, 8. 9. 1838, Preveza, pp. 62-63; Foreign Office to Hodges, 9. 11. 1838, p. 212-213; Foreign Office to Saunders, 24. 12. 1838, pp. 23-24; 78/365, Hodges to Foreign Office, 15. 2. 1839, Belgrade, p. 44 and Vasojević to Hodges, 1/13. 2. 1839, Baljevac.

27 AS, S/GB, FO, 78/365, Hodges to Foreign Office, 15. 2. 1839, Belgrade, p. 44 and Vasojević to Hodges, 1/13. 2. 1839, Baljevac; Vasojević to Hodges, ? 6. 1839, Mokra Gora, pp. 212-215; MUD-P, 1839, F 2 R 2; ASANU, Ispisi (Excerpts), I/III, kutija (box) 12, № 35/40.

28 Istorijски Arhiv Beograda (Historical Archives of Belgrade) (IAB), Uprava grada Beograda (Belgrade City Direction) (UGB), 1841, F 5 R 785.

had secret connections with Montenegrin metropolitan Njegoš, that he and his mountain tribes and the leader of Serbian and Bulgarian people made an alliance in order to free themselves from Turkish rule and “renew” an independent state, so now they asked for support from friendly powers, i.e. France, for their enterprise. He specially emphasized his connections with Orthodox clergy in Turkey. Slavonic and Albanian people (tribes he mentioned were comprised of Serbs and Albanians) empowered him to represent them in those matters (Stojančević 1972, 156–160, Guberinić 1997, 66–73).<sup>29</sup> Probably with the help of Ami Boué, in March of 1841 Vasojević published an article in the magazine of French Geographic Society, naming this region Holmia. Important is that in the article he used the term “Old Serbia” (Guberinić 1997, 74).

According to Guberinić, Nikola Vasojević was actively engaged in organization of an uprising against Turkish rule. For that reason in 1838 he visited the tribe Vasojević three times; in the spring of 1839 on his way to Preveza, he visited monastery Dečane and church Gračanica in Kosovo, where he made arrangements with monks and priests, and at the end of 1839, before the journey to London, he visited again Gračanica and negotiated with unnamed Albanian leaders (Guberinić 1997, 32, 39, 47, 52, 64). Confirmation of these statements we could not find in other sources, so we accept them reservedly.<sup>30</sup> Still, the fact that monk Dimitrije Arsenjević from Gorioč used in 1840 a yet unknown term *Old Serbia*, opens a promising possibility he heard and accepted it from Vasojević, and that again indicates Vasojević might really discuss certain matters with monks in Metohija and/or Kosovo.

In Paris Vasojević met the leader of Polish emigration, count Adam Czartoryski. He convinced him to help in forming the state of Holmia that would become a base for future operations directed towards liberation of Poland from Russia. Vasojević asked Czartoryski to provide support of the French government, money, Polish officers and weapons. Czartoryski accepted that secret plan. In May 1841, followed by several Polish agents, Vasojević started a journey via Italy towards

29 ASANU, Narratives, I/III, box 12, № 35/40, 35/42, 35/44.

30 Guberinić cited this according to an unpublished manuscript on Nikola Vasojević from 1977, whose author was Miloljub Spasojević, late director of Historical Archives of Kraljevo. Spasojević's writing was based on stories told by doctor Stevan Vasojević, great-grandson of Nikola Vasojević (Guberinić, 128). We have tried in 2015 to get in touch with Čedomir Spasojević, son of Miloljub Spasojević and an education inspector in Kraljevo, in order to examine his father's manuscript if still in existence, but to no avail.

Shkodër and Vasojevići. He was agitated and in a hurry. In a letter sent on May 15 to one of the Polish agents, he explained the reason: his scribe started the revolution in “Old Serbia” too early, doubting Vasojević would return. Vasojević was angry the rebellion started too early, but sent a message he would try to come to their aid (Cetnarowicz 1993, 68). The revolution Vasojević mentions was the Niš Rebellion, the one that started earlier than planned. This Vasojević’s message, put together with his memoranda on Serbian-Bulgarian-Albanian alliance could make solid indication he really was directly involved in uprising preparations in 1838 and 1839, and later indirectly, via some representative. In the meantime, the union between Czartoryski and Vasojević was discovered through an indiscretion and their plan failed. From Italy, via Corfu and Durrës (Drač), Vasojević arrived to Shkodër on August 26 and remained there until September 21, 1841. From there he went to Vasojevići. In October he was staying in Dečani where, according to Guberinić, he was making deals with certain Albanian leaders on the uprising. Allegedly, somebody revealed the plan to the Turks; by the end of 1841 Vasojević was arrested and taken to prison in Shkodër. Some other prominent leaders of Vasojević tribe were imprisoned at the same time. Nikola Vasojević was afterwards sent to prison in Constantinople. He managed to escape in 1842 and return to Vasojevići, where he remained until his death in 1844. He was killed during a trip to Montenegro and historians have different opinions on who the assassin was, but they are of no consequence for this paper (Durković–Jakšić 1957, 39–58; Guberinić 1997, 80–174, Cetnarowicz 1993, 60–72).

As a proof that conspiracy for uprising existed in much wider area than the sancak of Niš, apart from the mentioned report of Mustafa Sabri Pasha, the reports of French consul representative in Belgrade, Alfred Marey, from April 12 to April 29, 1841 were used in literature (Vučković 1957, 25–26; Stojančević 1971, 161–163; Дамянов, 27–29; Цветкова 1968, 272–278). The authors did not connect them to Nikola Vasojević. We consider that outside of context of his activities, they cannot be properly understood.<sup>31</sup>

Before analysis of Marey’s reports, following things must be emphasized: 1) Marey knew Serbian language; 2) he knew the difference between titles “knez” and “knjaz”; 3) whenever using these titles, he wrote them in Serbian, without

<sup>31</sup> In further exposition were used original reports, not literature, ASANU, Narratives, I/IV, № 36/53, Marey à Guizot, № 12, 12. 4. 1841, Belgrade; I/VI, № 38/2, Marey à Guizot, № 15, 29. 4. 1841.

translating them into French (“knez” and “kniaz”); 4) The title of the ruler of Serbia, Mihailo Obrenović, he was writing exclusively translated in French (“Prince”) or was replacing it with acronym S. A. (Son Altess). In a report of April 12, 1841 Marey wrote he was visited altogether four times, last time on April 9, by a person whose identity he knew but considered needless to reveal at the time, so he put just title “kniaz”. That mysterious “knjaz” was intelligent and could speak Russian, what was very unusual and stunned Marey. They were talking in Serbian. “Knjaz” told him the following. In several days, a revolution will start simultaneously in Bosnia, Herzegovina, a part of Bulgaria along Timok river, in Niš surroundings and in Western Albania (Arnautluk).<sup>32</sup> In each town and in many villages most prominent people were already chosen as uprising leaders (note that baron Lieven possessed literally same information). As a rebellion center was chosen Leskovac. Rebels had at their disposal 60,000 rifles and had a supreme leader, a man of great courage and intelligence, whose name he did not reveal. Montenegrin metropolitan was familiar with preparations, he promised he will tolerate them and actively support the uprising in case of danger. North Albanian tribe Mirdita also promised to support the uprising. An eight member delegation, with two members from each province, visited Serbia and in Kragujevac presented complaints on position of Christians separately to prince Mihailo and baron Lieven. Three members of the delegation, two described as “knez” and one priest, proceeded to Constantinople to submit complaints there. “Knjaz” was a member of that delegation of eight. He himself later talked once more with prince Mihailo in the presence of Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Đorđe Protić. The ruler told him he will “turn a blind eye” to uprising preparations and hinted he could also take part in that project. The rebels asked for French help, specifically: 50,000 ducats, six engineers, ten artillery men and twenty Polish officers. “Knjaz” asked Marey on several occasions to support opening of French consulate in Novi Pazar, and he complied, citing that several years back there was established British consul “Knjaz Vasojević” (“le Kniaz Vaçoévitch”); and added that he later lived in Serbia and a year ago went to England and Paris. Mysterious “knjaz” came to Marey sometimes alone, sometimes

<sup>32</sup> Region around Novi Pazar and Sjenica belonged to Bosnia, nearby area around Pljevlja, Prijepolje and Nova Varoš, those across Serbian outpost Vasilina Česma, to Herzegovina. Term *Arnautluk* encompasses the region of Priština, Peć, Prizren and Đakovica, Bulgarian regions along Timok and around Niš correspond to Vidin and Niš sancaks.

with a “Bulgarian” priest. In those talks, Marey in no way encouraged the uprising, just promised he will exactly relay information to his superiors.

On April 29 Marey reported the following. In the evening of April 27 he was again visited by “knjaz”. This time he revealed his name: the man was called Vaso Kepa (“Vaço Kepa”) and just came back discontented from the “Bosnian” border. Uprising in “Bulgaria”, i.e. the Niš Rebellion, in his words, started six to eight weeks earlier than planned, due to fear of revenge and reprisals. This time he said that the rebellion had to start in Novi Pazar, the moment certain “Montenegrin boss” gave a sign. Further he said that “twelve apostles” roamed Turkish provinces for eighteen months and recruited people for the uprising (note that Mustafa Sabri Pasha received similar information). Vaso Kepa is one of those twelve. Afterwards Marey, amidst Kepa’s narrative, inserted his sentence saying that there was in Paris at the moment certain knjaz Vasojević, who was in London before that. Marey did not know where he obtained the money for the journey, but he supposed he got it from Jevrem Obrenović or somebody else. In Paris he was trying to get attention for the dreary position of Slavs in Turkey. After that digression, Marey returned to Kepa’s narrative. He said that everything was ready, they had dynamic hands and “one” intelligent head, so they were lacking only money. To Marey’s question what was the goal of the uprising, Kepa answered it was an independent state. At the end, Kepa asked Marey to issue him a French passport, to replace the Montenegrin traveling document he possessed. He intended to go to Kladovo, and from there by boat to Constantinople. Marey did not fulfil his wish, suspecting Kepa was a Russian agent. In the reports of the French Consulate in Belgrade this person was never mentioned again.

Narrative of Vaso Kepa is pretty much compliant with formerly presented data on uprising preparations (territory included, delegation of eight members, reception with Lieven, twelve “apostles”, the premature start of the uprising). The only prominent discrepancy is the issue of finances: rebels from the sancak of Niš had at disposal a large sum of money, while Kepa complained they had no money at all. The reason for the discrepancy so far remains inexplicable. Kepa’s narrative is also consistent with activities of Nikola Vasojević (request for French support, sending of Polish officers, Serbian–Albanian–Bulgarian alliance, aspirations for forming an independent state, opening of consulate in Novi Pazar). Moreover, the fact that Marey in both reports quite prominently entered data on Nikola

Vasojević indicates he implicitly wanted to suggest that Vasojević is that “supreme boss” of the uprising.

Key question, anyway, is who was Vaso Kepa? He was a Serb, knjaz and spoke Russian. Since it is certain he was not Nikola Vasojević, then Vaso Kepa should have been his eldest son Altoman or his stepson Nikola Ivanović Vasojević. We consider name Vaso Kepa is actually a pseudonym with the meaning “small Vaso”, i.e. Vasojević. One letter from 1839 Altoman signed as “knjaz” (Guberinić 1997, 163). Still, he was born in 1818 (Guberinić 1997, 174), therefore should have been rather young and he resided in Belgrade, while Vaso Kepa, as one of “twelve apostles” roamed Turkish provinces for a year and a half and had Montenegrin travel documents. Nikola Ivanović Vasojević secretly left Belgrade in May 1840, when his mother approached police looking for him. In his own words, he went to Shkodër where he resided all the time before the return to Serbia, working for a salt merchant, certain Arso Milenković. He entered Serbia on October 30, 1841, not at border crossing, near border post Vrška Čuka. That border post was in the east part of the country, and could be reached from Turkey from Vidin, not from Shkodër. From there he went to Čačak region, Studenica district, to the outpost Raška. Through that outpost one can go from Serbia to Vasojevići, where at the time knez Nikola Vasojević was. There he was found and arrested as the culprit of former illegal crossing near Vrška Čuka. He was arrested by the Commissioner of Studenica district, Lazar Tošić, who knew him from the times when he stayed with the family in Baljevac. Nikola presented himself as a Russian subject, but the Russian consul in Belgrade refused to acknowledge him as a such, for he had no Russian passport. After three months spent in jail, he was released. That is all we know about him.<sup>33</sup> His staying in Shkodër is indicative on its own, having in mind plans of prince Nikola Vasojević. Nikola Ivanović Vasojević could easily go from Shkodër to Montenegro and get travel document from Njegoš, the one he used to come to Serbia. Vaso Kepa said from Belgrade he intended to go to Kladovo, and further to Constantinople. From Constantinople he could return by boat, disembark at Vidin and cross to Serbia near Vrška Čuka. One of principal conspirators personally spoke to French ambassador in Constantinople and informed him that uprising should also encompass “Albania” (Романски 1912, 90). With all that pre-

<sup>33</sup> AS, MID-V, 1841, F 4 R 1, Ministry of Interior to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, s№ 1737, 15/27. 11. 1841; MUD-S, 1841, DP, № 1659; IAB, UGB, 1841, F 5 R 785.

sented, it looks most probable Vaso Kepa was Nikola Ivanović Vasojević, stepson of prince Nikola Vasojević.

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Presented facts lead to following conclusions. Preparations for the uprising of 1840–1841 encompassed, besides the sancak of Niš, certainly region around Novi Pazar and Sjenica, most probably Kosovo and Metohija, and maybe surroundings of Skopje. The uprising started prematurely, because Ottoman authorities were informed about preparations. That is the reason it remained limited only to the sancak of Niš. Neither any of the big powers, nor Principality of Serbia did officially support the uprising. Baron Lieven and princess Ljubica did encourage conspiracy leaders to start the fight. Questions of the role of prince Miloš and that of financing the uprising remain open. The goal of the rebels was to liberate from Turkish rule and adjoin Serbia. It is assumed prince Nikola Vasojević was involved in the organization of the uprising and solid arguments support that assumption, but there is still no indisputable proof for final confirmation. Historical significance of this unsuccessful conspiracy lies in the fact it was the widest organized Serbian rebel movement between the First Serbian Uprising and the Great Eastern Crisis. The biggest question that remains open concerning this uprising is if it was somehow connected to similar Christian movements that erupted in Crete, Samos and Thessaly, with insurrections in Melnik and Serres, or these events represented same, but isolated, symptoms of general conditions in the Ottoman Empire.

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### ***Rezime:***

#### ***Propala zavera: organizacija i priprema srpskog ustanka protiv turske vlasti u periodu 1840–1841.***

Tokom 1840. i 1841. godine, pripreman je ustanak Srba protiv turske vlasti na području Niša, Leskovca, Pirota, Prokuplja, Novog Pazara, Sjenice, Kosova, verovatno Metohije i moguće Skoplja. Uzrok je ležao u žalosnom položaju hrišćana i izostanku neposrednog ispunjenja obećanja datih hatišerifom iz Gilane 1839. godine. Cilj ustanka bio bi prisajedinjenje navedenih oblasti Srbiji. Kneževina Srbija se prema pripremama ustanka držala zvanično neutralno, ali je neformalno tolerisala organizovanje ustaničke zavere. Postoje indicije, ali ne i čvrsti dokazi, da je u zaveru bio umešan bivši vladar Srbije, knez Miloš Obre-

nović. Podizanje ustanka ohrabрили su ruski diplomata baron Liven, nasuprot instrukcijama koje je imao od ruskog ministra spoljnih poslova Neselrodea, i majka kneza Mihaila, kneginja Ljubica. Pitanje finansiranja ustanka ostaje nerešeno. Mustafa Sabri-paša, turski upravnik Niša, doznao je od nepoznatog špijuna sve o pripremi pobune. Zbog straha od odmazde, ustanak je u Niškom sandžaku izbio prevremeno i Turci su ga sa lakoćom i uz veliku okrutnost ugušili. Izostanak pomoći iz Srbije, poraz ustanika i svirepi obračun sa hrišćanima u Niškom sandžaku uticali su da ustanak ne izbije u drugim oblastima. Knez Nikola Vasojević najverovatnije je učestvovao u pripremi i organizaciji ustanka, neposredno do 1840. godine i posredno, 1840–1841, preko svog pastorka Nikole Ivanovića Vasojevića. Za sada je nemoguće utvrditi da li je organizacija ustanka Srba 1840–1841. bila povezana sa ustancima koji su 1841. godine izbili na Kritu, Samosu i u Tesaliji, sa pokušajima pokreta u Makedoniji, oko Sereza i Melnika.

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*Ključne reči:* pobuna u Nišu, 1841, Nikola Vasojević, ustanak, knez Mihailo

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**THE BICENTENNIAL  
OF THE CONGRESS  
OF VIENNA 1815:  
Legitimacy on the Periphery**

**Part II**

**THE MEDITERRANEAN**



# BRANDING A PROVINCE: The Restorationist Dalmatia

Original Scientific Article  
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*The Habsburg presence in the Eastern Adriatic imposed a new geopolitical paradigm, the one opposed to the previous Venetian and French imperial models. Vienna court made effort to make distinct Dalmatian identity and enable as efficient control from Vienna as possible in order to prevent unionistic wishes of Pest or Zagreb. Roman heritage, with Diocletian's Palace as one of the most significant monuments, was important basis for creation of identity of Dalmatia. The visit of imperial couple, Franz and Carolina, was marked by admiration of classic heritage of Dalmatia. Vienna created a myth that connected the emperor with things Roman and Christian in a new branding of the province that was based upon two important pillars: Christianity in the Roman times and classicism that achieved modern fulfillment through important state architectural undertakings during 19th century. The "creation" of Dalmatia involved most famous Dalmatian saints, whose Dalmatian character and specificity were specially highlighted. The period after Vienna congress was very important for Dalmatia for Vienna policy towards it did not change significantly until the end of the Empire.*

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**Key words:** Restorationist Dalmatia, Classicism, Habsburg's imperial myths

WITH THE FALL OF NAPOLEON, THE WHOLE OF Dalmatia became an Austrian borderland province and remained such throughout the century until the establishment of Yugoslavia in 1918. The Vienna Congress simplified Adriatic geopolitics with the Austria as the only local maritime power. However, the dynasty lacked the clear vision over the Dalmatia's prospective. Dur-

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ing the Metternich's period the Kingdom of Dalmatia was second to none among Habsburg lands in terms of economic backwardness. Yet, Dalmatia provided the Habsburgs with the imperial legitimacy of ancient Roman universalism as an essential content of the Austrian restorationist mentality.

The Habsburg presence at the Eastern Adriatic imposed a new geopolitical paradigm as opposed to the previous Venetian and French imperial models. The dominance over Dalmatian coast was essential for the Venetian early-modern maritime and commercial imperialism. When the Ottomans occupied the Dalmatian hinterland in the sixteenth century, Venice became the only power to resist their threat by conducting a policy of centralization of trade and politics (Mallet and Hale 1984, 434–454).<sup>1</sup> Venice, together with its Christian allies the Habsburgs and the Papal State, prevented the Ottoman penetration to the Adriatic and further into the Christian West (Setton 1991, 9). Despite the diplomatic un-consistency in regard to Turks, Venice remained unyielding in protection of the Adriatic Sea where the Habsburgs were perceived as a greater threat than the Ottomans. The Republic's claim to the Adriatic as its '*mare clausum*' had been asserted by Venice by the very end of the Republic.

With the final fall of the maritime Republic in October of 1797, its former eastern-Adriatic provinces Dalmatia and Istria were given to the Habsburgs in exchange for French gains in Belgium and Germany. Yet, the First Austrian Rule in Dalmatia (1797–1805) turned out to be short-lived and transitional. After the battle of Austerlitz and by the subsequent Treaty of Pressburg (Bratislava) signed on December 26, 1805, the victorious Napoleon decided to incorporate the provinces into his recently carved Kingdom of Italy (*Regno d'Italia*). The Napoleon's foreign politics and the military build-up changed early modern political environment. The ensuing Anglo-French struggle for power in the new arena was marked by relentless use of force but also by a French political ideology of liberal reformism and narrative. The French administration made modern improvements in administration, the judicial system, education and building roads, but it also carried an

1 Dependent on the bastion fortifications and fleet Venice pursued a defensive approach to the Turkish threat at the Adriatic. After the initial setbacks against the Turks, during the sixteenth century the maritime and the trade-oriented Republic became increasingly un-confrontational and dependant on commercial gains within the Ottoman Empire.

excessive cost of lives and material goods that had been unknown from Turkish wars.<sup>2</sup>

At the Vienna Congress in 1815 Dalmatia was given to the Austria on the ground of its historical claims over Dalmatia. The Habsburgs had claimed the mastery over Dalmatia for the very moment that Ferdinand I was crowned for the king of Hungary and Croatia in 1527. When in 1804 Francis II created the title of an Emperor of Austria for himself as Francis I, he also added a “King of Dalmatia” (*Dalmatiae Rex*) to it. In 1814–15, the Kingdom of Dalmatia was formed from the regained territories, now including the former Republic of Ragusa and stretching down to Budva in the southeast.

The new regime initiative in Dalmatia was bounded by the lack of geopolitical Mediterranean program. The Habsburg’s naval presence in the Adriatic was barely noticeable, before the founding of the Austrian Lloyd commercial fleet in early 1830-ies. Although Habsburg rulers, particularly Maria Theresa and Joseph II had expressed their political interest in the Adriatic, the land mentality in Vienna was further strengthened during the Restoration. After the Congress the Monarchy came out so enlarged that the continued efforts were needed to all parts of the country to melt in the whole. Metternich’s political legacy shows that gains in the Congress considered the maximum that could be held. As a continental power oriented toward the *status quo* in Germany and Italy, Austria lacked a maritime prospective. The Central European orientation conflicted with the Austrian initiative in the Balkans and at the Mediterranean. Metternich avoided any aggressive policy of the Monarchy which he perceived as a saturated state. The Chancellor protected the Ottoman Empire and condemned the Greeks’ revolution as a detrimental model of national uprising that could threaten the very existence of the Austrian multinational commonwealth as well.

He further isolated Dalmatia by preventing the unionist Zagreb and Pest bringing together the lands of St. Stephan crown. In order to withstand the union between Dalmatia and the Kingdom of Hungary–Croatia, Austria dismantled the Illyrian Provinces in 1822 and asserted the Dalmatia’s status of a crown-land (*Kronland*), a separate territorial unit within the Monarchy. The Kingdom of Dalmatia was governed directly from Vienna through imperial and royal governors

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2 On French rule on the Eastern Adriatic, including the Illyrian Provinces, see: Bundy 1987; Zwitter 2010; Vrandečić and Marko Trogrlić 2011; Trogrlić and Vrandečić 2015, 264–276.

sent to Zadar, the provincial capital. The doctrine of the Austrian region-building substituted the revolutionary French concept of “nation” that would in due time gave bust to the state-sponsored regionalisms such as the Dalmatian autonomist that opposed the Croatian nationalism (Gross 1995, 270–292).

Such an isolationist perspective affected the Dalmatian common life. The Province remained an isolated customs territory with export-import levies in the trade even with the Austrian countries, as it was a foreign country. Moreover, the newly-acquired districts of Dubrovnik and Kotor enjoyed military recruitment exemption by 1869. During the period, the ruling elite in the province consisted mainly of Italian functionaries and German officers. The total population of Dalmatia numbered 298,000 in 1818 and almost 100,000 more in 1840. Austrian mercantilism, more interested in taxation than in trade and production, created famine in the 1820s, followed by epidemics in the 1830s. This resulted in hundreds of deaths and a drift of the surplus agrarian population to the tiny urban centers on the coast (Peričić 1980, 3–32). The province consumed twice much money in relief efforts and administrative expenses as it paid in taxes.

Resistance to the Austrian absolutist police state gave rise to nostalgia for the French period and support for the Italian Risorgimento. Police archives in the capital Zadar noted several Carbonari sections in Dalmatia such as the *Greci del Silenzio* and the Guelphs who linked the province into the international network of revolutionary liberalism. However the liberal opposition was limited to the few suspects that Supreme Court in Vienna in 1822 acquitted as drunkards rather than dangerous political radicals (Brunelli 1922–1923, 38–44). During the Austrian Restoration, the former Dalmatian Francophiles, the pillars of the former regime, denounced their Jacobin past by writing on the “immature democracy” of the fallen French government. They searched for state jobs and praised the restored Habsburg rule for reinstating law, morality and order, blaming the liberal optimism of the former administration for ‘arrogant liberty’ and being an ‘infamous democracy’ (Ivellio 1828, 23).

The new state-promoted ideology rested on the two pillars: classicism and ancient Roman Christianity. Dalmatian classicism of Enlightenment acquired European-wide glory in the works written by the French architect Charles-Louis Clérisseau, the Scottish architect Robert Adam and the Italian traveler Abbe Alberto Fortis. They had visited Venetian Dalmatia and collected antiquities and searched for Roman remains. The Roman legacy of the province loomed even larger in the

classical ideology of the Habsburg era. The conservative, a-national, yet multicultural Dalmatian legacy over the centuries resembled the Habsburg identification with ancient Mediterranean Rome. Although the Habsburg Emperor Francis II had to cede aforementioned title of Holy Roman Emperor in 1804, and took the more humble name of Francis I, Emperor of Austria, the Habsburgs continued to claim the allegiance of the ancient Mediterranean *imperium*. The Palace of Diocletian in Split, the ancient excavations in Salona, and the other time-honored monuments province-wide supported the Habsburg claims to supranational and integrative imperial power. In 1818, the imperial couple Caroline and Francis I visited Croatia and then Dalmatia to see its classical beauty. Francis was received by his subjects in Dalmatia as a long-awaited Emperor, with new epigraphic, commemorative monuments such as triumphal arches, sculptures, pyramids and, most frequently, with literary compositions in poetry, drama and prose. The artistic response invented various Imperial epithets for Francis I such as Titus Novus.<sup>3</sup>

Extensive excavations in Dalmatia started from the very beginning of the Austrian restoration and continued throughout the nineteenth century. Small wonder then, that Split, home of Roman monuments and, allegedly Roman descendants, assumed the most distinguished place in the Habsburg classicist ideology. The Palace in Split played a pivotal role in the commitment to classicism and fascination by the antique period. The Emperor visit triggered the studying and preserving the Diocletian's Palace by the local authorities. In 1821 was built the Museum of Archeology next to the eastern wall of the Palace.<sup>4</sup>

The militaristic Habsburgs incorporated the myths of emperor, Romans, and Christianity into the new Dalmatian canon.<sup>5</sup> During the restoration, the theme of the “enlightened despot,” exploited by the Dalmatian enlightened writers, turned into the populist myth of the Austrian ruler as a “good father.”<sup>6</sup> In 1814, in a speech to his fellow citizens, Carlo Lanza (1781–1834), the *podestà* of Split and the first

3 For more on the classicist representation see: Šikić 2012, 305–319.

4 The Archeological Museum was opened as the second in the Monarchy, after that in Vienna. During the 1830s, the museums of the family Danielli–Pellegrini and the public museum were opened in the Dalmatian capital Zadar.

5 On the canon see more in: Vrandečić 2009.

6 Apertura del Liceo di Zara celebrata il giorno 5.11.1806: Discorso recitato dal sig. B. Benincasa capo-divisione della pubblica istruzione presso la provveditoria generale, nell'atto d'installare i professori del Liceo. Zadar, 1806, 28–27.

director of the Archaeological Museum addressed Francis I as the “most merciful of our Fathers.”

Austrian dynastic classicism used Christianity as well as a great theme of the Restoration.<sup>7</sup> In 1814, upon the entrance of the Habsburg troops into Dubrovnik, Urbano Appendini (1777–1834), a local piarist scholar, noted that the nineteenth century would be another “*secolo della religione*”. The classicism of the Restoration valued order and Christian morality based on charity, sacrifice, and piety (Ivacich 1837, 2–3). In his pamphlet *Trionfi della religione di Cristo* written in 1828, the complacent Dalmatian writer Nikola Ivelio (Niccolò Ivelio) denounced “arrogant Latin liberty.” To Ivelio, arrogance and liberty had been detected as the principal sources of the French Revolution: “The French armies full of impetuous fanaticism invaded the foreign states and prolonged anarchy which degenerated into atrocities” (Ivelio 1828, 23).

Ever since the fifteenth century, the Habsburgs had been regarded as “apostolic rulers,” e.g. protectors of the Catholic Church worldwide. Angelo Pietro Galli, the bishop of Hvar, looked to the doctrine of Tertullian, the ancient philosopher, to find a theocratic base for the dynastic rule of the Habsburgs. Thanks to the new ruler Francis I, Russian General Suvorov and the British fleet, the Italian states were finally liberated from the *infame democrazia* (Bonicelli 1802, 13–35). According to Bishop Galli, Francis I ruled as the guarantor of security and tradition against the “tyrannical yoke of passions” (Galli 1802, 88–90). For Nikola Jakšić (Niccolò Giachich), Emperor Francis I represented the “supreme *podestà*” who restored “national sentiment.” His final victory over Napoleon would herald the progress of national culture and social order based on a triple foundation of laws, customs, and religion (Appendini 1814, 23). The writer Rados Antonio Michielli-Vitturi regarded Charles V and Ferdinand II, the early modern Habsburgs rulers, as the standard-bearers of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. Michieli-Vitturi respected the new, rational role of the Church and worshiped Maria Theresa as an “immortal lady” (Michieli Vitturi 1818, 17–23).

Yet, from the time of Maria Theresa and her son Joseph II, the Habsburgs had changed course and followed the reformist Fabronius ideology similar to French Gallicanism, which advocated state control of the Church. Although Emperor Francis I hastened to renovate the Palace of Diocletian and to establish the

70 | 7 On the theme see: Zorić 1992, 339–457.

Archeological Museum in Split, the Habsburgs procured the reformist bull *Locum Beati Petri* (1828) which abolished a handful of Dalmatian bishoprics, closed the monasteries, and stripped the archbishop of Split of his medieval title, *primus totius Croatiae et Dalmatiae*.

The Dalmatian ideologues of the regime promoted the themes of regional historicism with a local proud. Numerous Illyrians, including Claudius II, Aurelian, Probus, Carus, and Diocletian, the Roman generals who acquired the imperial diadem, were extolled and romanticized as Dalmatian national heroes. Dalmatian classicists cherished their ancient monuments including temples and palaces as unique historic treasures. The best-known Dalmatians, St. Jerome, Marco Antonio de Dominis, Johannes Lucius, and Ruder Bošković, were extolled side by side with Leibniz, Newton, and Locke (Giovannelli 1789). Nikola Jakšić, the *poeta cesareo*, always apostrophized Emperor Francis as the “Austrian Titus,” in the context of Dalmatian historical features such as Illyrian navy and Dalmatian legions. In contrast to Napoleon, the vain Nabucco who – according to the writer Pietro Bottura – had gone with the one battle, the Austrian Emperor Francis I represented glory comparable with that of the Roman emperors – Augustus, Titus, Trajan, and the Antonines. The Habsburgs seemed the only legitimate heirs of Constantine the Great, Justinian and Charlemagne (Bottura 1835, 56–83).

In contrast to the pagan Illyrians who had provided a focus for “national” identification during the Enlightenment, the docile Illyrians – Romanized and Christianized – became role models during classicism. Whereas in the Jacobin mythology of the French, St. Domnius assumed the role of the populist protector of the entire *Dalmata gente*, under Austrian classicism he was added to the extended Pantheon of “Dalmatian national saints”. The cult of the *santi nazionali dalmati* included not only St. Jerome, St. Domnius, and St. Helena, the most famous Dalmatian saints, but a long list of other Illyrian martyrs. Andrija Ciccarelli, a priest from the island of Brač, enumerated all of them, in order to make Dalmatians proud of their “national saints” (Ciccarelli 1814, 34–66). The Dalmatian Pantheon of Ciccarelli included thirteen Salonitanian martyrs, most of them murdered at the time of Diocletian, such as St. Caius, St. Gabinius and his daughter Susana, and Maximus, Claudius, Prepedigna, Alexander and Cuzia, all relatives of Diocletian.

In the classical period St. Jerome (Hieronymus) was honoured as “the glory of the Dalmatian nation” (*slava dalmatinskog naroda*).<sup>8</sup> His classical education, his use of reason, and his keen intelligence typified the Dalmatian virtues of zeal, temper and dedication. Yet, according to Ciccarelli, St. Helena, the mother of the first Christian Emperor Constantine the Great, who discovered the true Cross, became equal in virtue to St. Jerome. Although foreign scholars claimed Britain or Bithynia, an ancient Roman province in the northwest of Asia Minor, as Helena’s birth place, Ciccarelli praised the *amor nazionale* of Simon Begna, Rafael Levaković, and Andrija Kačić, native historians, who argued that the Dalmatian island of Brač (the Greek Brittanide) was St. Helena’s homeland (Ciccarelli 1814, 64). Ciccarelli turned the small village of Škrip, the presumed birth place of St. Helena, into the “Bethlehem of the Dalmatian church.”<sup>9</sup>

The examples of such gestures continued afterwards throughout the end of the Monarchy. Friedrich August, King of Saxony, had a holiday in Dalmatia in 1838, writing on a variety of provincial classical topics. Throughout the “long century” many members of European ruling dynasties as well as European celebrities visited the Palace. Yet, in 1909 the nationalist politician Thomas Masaryk stopped at Split and stated to the local sympathizers that he was more interested in going to see peasant’s huts in Dalmatian hinterland than in stopping at the Palace. The manifestation of modernism symbolically ends Austrian classicist Dalmatia and forecasted the social and national clashes.

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8 Josip Frane od Paule Novak po milosti bozjoj i apostolskog sidalista Arhibiskup Zadarski crkvenjancima i svemu puku pravovirnom pocinjuci vladanje 1823. Zadar, 1823, 4–11.

9 The myth of St. Helena was ‘Slavicized’ by the fifteenth century. According to the Slavic-speaking priest Serafin from Nin, St. Helena was born at the island of Brač. (*Sveta Giele u Brazu se rodi*). For more on the legend see: Capor 1831, 26–28.

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## Rezime:

### *Brendiranje provincije: reformacijska Dalmacija*

Habzburško prisustvo na Istočnom Jadranu je predstavljalo novu geopolitičku paradigmu, suprotnu prethodnom venecijanskom ili francuskom imperijalnom modelu. Dvor u Beču se potrudio da stvori poseban dalmatinski identitet i omogući što efikasniju kontrolu iz Beča, čime je onemogućio unističke želje iz Pešte ili Zagreba. Rimsko nasleđe, među kojim je Dioklecijanova palata bila jedan od najvažnijih spomenika, bilo je važna osnova stvaranja novog identiteta Dalmacije. Poseta carskog para 1818. Franca i Karoline obeležila je divljenje klasičnom nasleđu Dalmacije. Beč je formirao mit koji je povezao cara *Austrian Titus* sa dva najvažnija stuba: hrišćanstva još iz rimske epohe i klasicizma koji je imao svoju savremenu realizaciju kroz značajne državne arhitektonske poduhvate 19. veka. U „stvaranju” Dalmacije su „učestvovali” i najpoznatiji dalmatinski sveci, čiji su dalmatinski karakter i posebnost bili naročito isticani. Period nakon Bečkog kongresa veoma je značajan za Dalmaciju jer se politika Beča prema njoj nije značajno promenila sve do kraja Carstva.

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**Ključne reči:** Dalmacija, Franc I, Split, klasicizam, habzburški imperijalni mitovi

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# HABSBURG VENETIA FROM STATUS QUO TO STATE OF EXCEPTION (1815–1854)

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*This paper is intended to provide a concise overview of the political and institutional situation in the Habsburg Venetia between the re-establishment of the status quo after the Congress of Vienna (1815) and the state of emergency that began in the aftermath of the events of 1848 and lasted until the middle of the following decade. I will also briefly discuss the question of the end of Austrian presence in Italy in 1866. Through a structured and comparative examination of international bibliographic resources and a detailed analysis of complementary archive materials, the value of examined events that only apparently seemed local will be reinterpreted in the light of an overall governmental strategy designed by Vienna for the various territories of the Empire, allowing thus another view of history of the domains that had previously belonged to the former Venetian Republic visible simultaneously through rather unusual manifestations such as the size of power, society and law. The final result will be a useful guide for all those who want to deepen their knowledge of one of the most fascinating and interesting regional components of that unique European cultural mosaic that was represented by the Danube monarchy.*

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**Key words:** Congress of Vienna, Habsburg Empire, Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia, Venetia, status quo, state of emergency, social control, crime, criminal justice, Military Commission d' Este.

## *After the Congress*

*T*OO OFTEN IN THE PAST, UNINTENTIONALLY or sometimes even intentionally, we failed to think of the Venetian Provinces (as well as of Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia in general) as of a region inserted into an “imperial dimension” rather than only into Italian national perspective. However, this imperial dimension cannot be neglected when trying to thoroughly assess actions of the Habsburg central administration and, hence, their peripheral administration too, not only in everyday life, but also in the particular field marked by work on the projects of reform in an attempt to improve the governing system.

Retrospectively, it should be remembered that mainly from 1750 onwards, firstly Maria Theresa, and then Joseph II, adopted a series of legislative measures that introduced a concept of an “organized state” to the Austrian monarchy, weakening thus its different composing territories, i.e. weakening the prerogatives of their higher classes and territorial nobility, but continuing to guarantee their existence and trying to tolerate their peculiarities at least partially.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding more specifically the Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia on the other hand, “after the Congress of Vienna, a new kingdom was founded (Stiftung) by enacting a new legal creation. This new creation was consciously linked to the Italian–Napoleonic tradition in order to maintain the dignity of a ‘kingdom’ also under the ‘Austrian rule’ (Mazohl Wallnig 2000, 98): the political and social reality of these regions, in fact, he had little in common with that of other regions of the Empire, since it didn’t have that combination of traditions linked to the person of the prince or to the classes, which was essential for forming a “*Land*”. There was neither an “autonomous royal state tradition” such the one existed in the Czech Republic or Hungary” (Mazohl Wallnig 2000, 100).

However, the modern administrative state, not completely implemented in the hereditary provinces of the monarchy, paradoxically existed in the Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia in 1814, when the Austrians returned and it already had been functioning for a few years<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the intent in the Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia must have been precisely the one to “transform and translate the old traditions of the *Ancien Régime* and of the empire into a new ruling situation within a

1 For this and other fundamental institutional passages, see: De Benedictis 2001, 62–68.

76 | 2 For such considerations, see: Meriggi 1981, 217–218 and Meriggi 1987, 270.

modern state, and to use the Napoleonic model for this purpose” (Mazohl Wallnig 2000, 100).

*Rebus sic stantibus*, it seems rather clear that in such situation also the public administration system must have differ visibly from the one prevailing in other Habsburg constituent lands, which was basically homogenous, especially for the fact that no administrative or judicial power laid within “the hands of nobility” (Mozzarelli 1981, 280).

In any case, the primary objective of such institutional system (i.e. imperial) which, despite the ‘modernizing’ reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph the Second still had in fact various characteristics of the jurisdictional state of the old regime, was to guarantee those social balances and cultural values that were predominately traditional and conservative: a great number of collegial bodies in charge for most diverse political issues on the agenda (in the broadest sense of the term) were one of the most noticeable features in this regard.

Talking about jurisdiction let me paraphrase the historian Raffaele Romanelli: clearly there were significant differences between the Habsburg Empire and nation states. “The illegality of an imperial state form was opposed to the acclaimed legality of a modern state” (Romanelli 2008, 39). The empire was not an “empire of law” (Romanelli 2008, 39) but an orderly hierarchy of loyalty. Some consequences of this feature, although changed in time, still played an important role in the period examined here.

Besides, the scenario that is only sketched here, is in the focus of my recent study about an institutional figure who played a major role in the Venetian society during the period of the so-called “second Austrian administration” (1815–1848). This figure, almost unknown until now, was the one of the “District Commissioner”. However, since its introduction in 1819, due to its vast tasks, the figure of a district commissioner intruded significantly into network of local power developing an essential function as a link with the political organs and the police, being tasked as well with cooperating with the judicial authorities (which was of paramount importance given the persistent features of an ancient regime institutional system, as mentioned above). The above-mentioned study closely analyzes the cultural and professional dimension of men who were appointed to this position in the course of three decades, describing their role in the public order and the ‘social control’; it outlines general and fundamental characteristics of the so-called ‘Metternich

system<sup>3</sup>, and, above all, the lesser-known peculiarities of Italian and Venetian version of it. For instance, the privileged relationship of mutual respect between the Viceroy Ranieri and the chancellor, the tendency of Lombardocentrism that was, on the other hand, more balanced until 1835 due to the presence of Emperor Franz (the Emperor and Metternich almost never agreed on what to do), which was to the benefit of the Venetian Provinces<sup>4</sup>.

The attention should be given exactly to the concept of “social control” with a consideration that in certain way announce a new research that I am dealing with at the moment.

In fact, despite the fracture induced by a somewhat painful change at the helm of the Empire in 1835 – the death of Franz I and the ascent to the throne of his son Ferdinand who was unable to govern on its own for health reasons and was assisted by the ministers Metternich and Kolowrat and Franz’s brother, Archduke Ludwig, the period from 1815 to 1848 was marked by a relative institutional and overall stability<sup>5</sup>. Hence, it allows a deeper research of functioning of the Austrian administration in Venetia in those years, not in order to gain an “absolute truth”, but rather an “evidence, a most certain testimony of the concrete situation of that time” (Broers 2013, 13). At the same time, one should try to avoid the trap inherent to the profession of historians, that is to avoid to “chase the conflicts and reasons that stand behind the changes” (Broers 2013, 12), which in our case would be the revolution of 1848–49 and the beginnings of the Italian Risorgimento.

## *Emergency*

That being said, there is no doubt that in the second half of the century the consensus enjoyed by the Austrian authorities suffered a decline. Although the important economic factors certainly played their role (famine and recessions were already present at least two years before the revolution), the attention should be

3 Where the unity of the territories held together by a bond of loyalty to the dynasty is contrasted to the relentless uniformity of Napoleonic administration. The inherent variety alive in the various provinces of the Empire was no longer seen as an annoying residual and as a failure of uniformizing and modernizing projects of Joseph II, who died too early to complete his work, but as a constitutive feature of the Empire itself. All of this is meticulously analyzed by Marco Bellabarba in his recent book on the history of the Habsburg Empire. See: Bellabarba 2014, 64.

4 On this issue, see: Rossetto 2013.

78 | 5 Regarding this, see: Rossetto 2013.

placed on government so to assess the extent of such consensus on the behalf of the population, and, specifically, of the ‘upper classes’.

In fact, the Restoration had revived the old governments in Lombardy–Venetia too, but it hadn’t been able to completely guarantee actual levers of power to that local nobility which was still deeply anchored in the old regime (contrary to the abovementioned old governments, this one was not revived). Moreover, it could not adequately respond to the desire for supremacy of the fast growing bourgeois elite, or to appease the fears of both of these components against the lower classes and the peasants (especially against that fraction that bordered the ‘margin’). Finally, there was also the fear against a certain social ‘disorder’ (this argument has been treated innovatively and originally in the Anglo-Saxon historiography by John Davis<sup>6</sup> and Steven Hughes<sup>7</sup>, while Claudio Povolo gave an in-depth study of the subject narrowing it down for Lombardy–Venetia in his two books *La selva incantata* from 2006 and *Il movente* from 2011).

This was also the reason why, after the destabilization produced by the “collector of tensions” such was the period 1848–49, tensions coming from more or less far away and including threats of the ‘social disorder’, the general Austrian governor Radetzky (clearly having informed Vienna although not in the very first moment), decided to respond to that threat weighed more or less directly on the landlords of the Venetian plain (Lower Padua and, above all, Polesine). When duly urged to react, drawing on the state of siege, he employed summary procedures and used extensively the death penalty primarily on one part of the so-called ‘marginal society’.<sup>8</sup> Until then, these measures were utterly alien to the imperial judicial system (as regards the scope of common, not political, crimes).

Rather than the robberies and thefts committed in those areas during the revolutionary period, it was the harshness of repression carried out by a body created specifically for the occasion, the so-called ‘Military Inquiry Commission of

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6 For the most interesting texts about this, see: Davis 1988 and Davis 2000.

7 Regarding this, see: Hughes 1994.

8 Regarding this, the solutions was always sought in the adoption of either preventive measures, such as the so-called ‘political precept’, deportation, forced recruitment, or the repressive measures, precisely like those envisaged by the Criminal Code; the application of the latter, however, did not produce the desired effects, not only for the guarantying features of the legislation in force, but also for the low skills of some of those figures that were called upon to apply it, despite some significant changes made in July 1833.

Este' (because it had its headquarters in the Euganean town, although its activity was rather an itinerant one) that represented and symbolized the new temporary political and institutional orientation (mainly but not only for the crimes for which the Commission was in charge). Comparing this to the usual *modus operandi* of the bodies of the Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia, it can be concluded that the latter were more accustomed to “adopt the dynamics that animated the social forces and not quite to direct them or to correct them according to specific objectives” (Povolo 2011, CXIV).

This phenomenon of relatively short duration (four years), was, however, characterized by such intense action that had a truly disruptive effect on local communities involved. Actually, between 1850 and 1854 more than a thousand people were processed for acts related to robberies or grave burglaries, whereas only a handful of these people was acquitted, while one third of them was shot and two-thirds ended up sentenced to long imprisonment.

Trying to get on top of these problems, it is clearly revealed that historiography completely lacks an updated and specific studies which would, while focusing on the combination of local crime/heroes, insist on the activity of that particular body of punitive justice that was the Commission d'Este and on the effects it had on the Venetian rural communities in mid-nineteenth century. The only references on the subject, although limited, are traceable in two works on the topics that are only bordering this issue and that are, however, produced some thirty years ago. Still, they retain the merit of understanding the “importance of the work of the mentioned institution for analyzing broader legal, historical and anthropological issues”<sup>9</sup>.

There are also some less refined researches dated at the same time and produced by local scholars, which are in any case to be kept in mind since they combine pros and cons of anecdotal type of investigation.<sup>10</sup>

Research on this subject primarily puts the emphasis on the analysis of political impact of the actions of a special state body of punitive justice in a customary legal system such as the one of the mid-nineteenth century rural Venetia, even in the moments as peculiar as the situations of public judgments delivery or executions; secondly, it allows profiling of criminal figures that were protagonists of

9 Regarding this, see: Brunello 2011 (1981) and Ginsborg 1991, who also witnesses a live interest of the Anglo-Saxon historiography in this matter.

80 | 10 As an example, see: Lugaresi 1986, Piva 1984 and Soster 1960.

proceedings conducted by this body, as well as the possibility that the communities affected by their activities, particularly the representatives of female gender, could have perceived them as local heroes; finally, it facilitates the study of the cultural and social dynamics that made some districts of the country more resistant to penetration of investigations, with a persistence in denying any wrongdoing while facing the threat of the extreme torture following the confession of accomplices coming from other more or less contiguous environments.

## ***Conclusion***

But I want to move on to conclude this brief intervention in a less specialized (less historical and institutional) manner, highlighting what Claudio Magris notably affirms in that beautiful *fresco* on the peoples and cultures of Central Europe – his book *Danube* (even though on the background of a work that remains fundamentally literary)<sup>11</sup>: the absolutist or, better, neo-absolutist policy adopted by the Habsburgs between 1849 and 1860, and more generally, the trend towards a centralizing and uniform modernization, both represent an exception in the secular routine of Habsburg sovereignty, which rather “managed the resistance that medieval universalism and particularism set against the modern state ... and, instead of invading and overwhelming cultures and societies, tried to touch them as little as possible” (Magris 2011, 286–287).

Consequently, the term “Austrian” applied to the Empire, to quote Magris once again, indicated an abstract strength of an idea rather than actual reality and it was, at the end of the day, a result of a subtraction – once the individual nationalities were removed, this was element that remained common to each of them and not alike any of them.<sup>12</sup> Although, I think it would be better to say that what was removed were the individual “small motherlands” that used to constitute the Empire since, as rightly pointed by Brigitte Mazohl, the category ‘nation’ as a fundamental constitutional element had not yet been fully punctuated either at an ideal or legal level, and since (just as in the case of other ‘national’ aspirations

<sup>11</sup> This should never be overlooked, because literature fundamentally differs from historiography, even though it shares some common elements with it, most important of them being the corpus of written texts: literature is an art and as such the best tools to interpret and evaluate it are of aesthetic nature, just to take some of the considerations of the American scholar Richard Posner in his *Law and Literature* in 1998.

<sup>12</sup> Regarding this, see: Magris 2011, 391.

within the monarchy) the national-ethnic categories mingled with those political-legal and those of historical rights.<sup>13</sup>

This all happened right in the nineteenth century and in territories so peculiar as those constituting the so-called Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia which, on the one hand, kept essentially alive the backbone of the Napoleonic state model (although reformulated through, for example, the ability to appeal to a number higher collegial instances, as already mentioned)<sup>14</sup> while on the other, it was still considered a part of a whole that had Vienna as its referent point of cohesion and of forced balance. It suffered all the consequences of the tragic fate together with the Empire<sup>15</sup> that, as recalled by Marco Bellabarba in his recent book, became a political structure *sui generis*<sup>16</sup> with the Peace of Prague of 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1866 which confirmed the final loss of the Venetian region and the cessation of all federal bonds between the German states, together with the following compromise (*Ausgleich*) with the Kingdom of Hungary. Such a political structure, to cite the Austro-American historian, Robert Kann, can still be called ‘Habsburg Empire’ only figuratively<sup>17</sup>.

13 Mazohl Wallnig 2000, 110–111.

14 According to Meriggi 1983, 198: “If Napoleon had made the justice executive (administrative), the Austrian Government made the executive administration juridical”.

15 “It is obvious, that the ‘transnational’ conception of the Austrian Empire (concept inherited from the Holy Roman Empire) built on the basis of the traditional rights of the *Länder* imposed on the historical level, was no longer possible in the concept of the in the nineteenth century. Conversely, the ‘nations’, as constitutional elements in the variety of the rights of the *Länder*, could not be instructed with speed and ease desired by the logic of a nation state that was progressively imposing itself. This was, and remained, the fundamental contradiction and the secular mortgage of Austria until its definite sunset”, Mazohl Wallnig 2000, 110–111.

16 Regarding this, see: Bellabarba 2014, 149–151.

17 See: Kann 1998, 411. See: Bellabarba, 2014 on this matter, as well as on the matter of the neo-absolutist project of Franz Joseph, on his connections with the military world and with the long-lasting situations of the state of siege, then on the policies Schwarzenberg and Bach governments, one the project of constructing a *Gesamtstaat*, namely a unitary Austrian state, as well as on its substantial failure which was due to being practically disabled to influence the foreign policy and thus to enjoy a favourable international environment.

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**Rezime:**

***Habzburška Venecija od statusa quo do vanrednog stanja (1815–1854)***

Cilj ovog rada jeste da pruži u uvid u politički i institucionalni kontekst u Veneciji između Bečkog kongresa (1815) i vanredne situacije koja je usledila kao posledica promena uzrokovanih Revolucijom 1848. godine i nastavila se i u narednoj deceniji 19. veka. Dakle, rad se odnosi na središnju fazu istorije Habzburške monarhije, odnosno na praćenje istorije Italije od Pariskog mira i Bečkog kongresa do nastanka Kraljevine Italije 1866. Radi produbljenog razumevanja referentnog perioda, autor je smatrao neophodnim da se posebno osvrne na kraj austrijske uprave u Italiji 1866. godine. Kroz uporednu analizu različitih istorijskih diskursa, među kojima su i publikovani arhivski izvori, događaji za koje se činilo da imaju isključivo lokalni karakter i značaj interpretirani su u ovom radu kroz prizmu opštih tendencija austrijske politike. Ovakav pristup omogućio je drugačiji istorijski uvid u način upravljanja Venecijom preko promena u političkom, administrativnom i pravnom sistemu. Rezultati ovog rada biće važan doprinos budućim istraživanjima regionalnih – čini se fascinantnih i interesantnih – osobenosti i mehanizama upravljanja koje je Habzburška monarhija primenjivala na različitim teritorijama, od kojih je Kraljevstvo Lombardija–Venecija, interpretirano u ovom radu, samo jedna od teritorija.

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**Ključne reči:** Bečki kongres, Habzburška monarhija, Kraljevstvo Lombardija–Venecija, Venecija, status quo, vanredno stanje, društvena kontrola, kriminal, krivično pravo, Vojna uprava D'Este

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# THE IONIAN ISLANDS AFTER NAPOLEON\*

*Original Scientific Paper*  
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*The Congress of Vienna and the Second Treaty of Paris marked not only the year of the final Napoleon defeat but the sealing of the European system that was supposed to last. The Ionian Islands were the British prey during the Fifth and the Sixth Coalition against Napoleon and, after the 1815, their status under British protectorate was established. The islands were a free and independent state under the immediate and exclusive protection of the British Crown. The Lord High Commissioner – the new Provveditore Generale appointed by the British Monarch, was to regulate the forms of the convocation of a Legislative Assembly. The result of that was a new Constitutional Charter of the States that had to be ratified by the British Crown. The situation at the Ionian Islands, which had changed already four administrative systems since 1797, was very unpromising with the civil war fought between different islanders' sides. By the Treaty of 1815, the Ionian Islands were supposed to have far more control of the internal affairs but the situation on the ground was encouraging to the very rigid Constitutional Chapter of 1817. The consular dispatches that are the most important archival source show the fear of the anarchy. The experience of internal fights among islanders was important for understanding of the attitude of the Great Powers towards the Greek Revolution at its first stage in the early 1820s. Both Greeks of the Mainland and the islanders from the former Septinsular Republic (Repubblica Settinsulare) shared a lot of common experience in both governing and fighting since the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.*

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*In the years after the 1815 with the outbreak of the Greek Revolution, their cooperation and experience had an important role in changing of the Ottoman borders.*

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**Key words:** Ionian Islands, Great Britain, Treaty of Paris 1815, Congress of Vienna, Corfu, Cephalonia, Zakynthos, Napoleon, Ali Pasha, Thomas Maitland, Lord Byron, Lord High Commissioner

FOR SEVERAL DECADES, FROM BEGINNING OF 1770s till the end of the Napoleon's Wars in Europe, the Ionian Islands<sup>1</sup> were Mediterranean islands with most frequent changes of administration. To understand history of Ionian archipelago it is necessary to go back to the year 1744 and the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca that turned Russia into a Mediterranean power. The Russian fleet under count Alexei Orlov was already in warm waters during the war against the Turks, which provoked a strong reaction of the allies. The presence of Russian fleet caused commotion in Peloponnese that was in Turkish hands for less than half a century, since the Peace of Passarowitz 1718 (Ingrao, Samardžić and Pešalj 2011, 9–38). Uprisings of the Greeks that followed were not limited just to Turkey and its Balkan provinces, but they had a significant impact on the nearby archipelago that was the last and the most important Venetian territory<sup>2</sup> outside of the Adriatic Sea. The reason why the Russian appearance in those waters brought disturbance among a part of Greek population was not a simple one, and reactions could not have the same intensity on each of the islands in Venetian possession (Dajč 2013, 102). Venice became aware of a growing Russian influence and tried to build good relationship with them without disturbing the peace with Turkey. This was rather obvious given the generous trade privileges given to Russia that caused complaints from the countries with much longer trade tradition.<sup>3</sup> Peloponnese had influence on the Ionian Islands because for grain islands depended on it and

1 The Ionian Islands in Venetian possession consist of: Corfu, Zakynthos, Cephalonia, Lefkada, Ithaca, Paxos and Cythera, but also continental ports: Parga, Preveza, Vonica, and Butrinto.

2 The archipelago stayed in Venetian possession until 1797.

3 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/1 Zante, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1783, Peter Sergeant to Lord Grantham.

nearby Turkish provinces. Besides, commercial, later turned into political, links established between archipelago aristocracy and the Russians had a prominent role in the years following Venetian loss of independence with the Treaty of Campo Formio. The example of Cephalonia (Panzac 1992, 189–206) is especially significant, although some noble families of Corfu (Grimsted Kennedy 1969, 120–201) achieved more than others in Russian service.

The islands were one of transit and dormant parts of Mediterranean until the last quarter of the century and the appearance of the Russians, as already stated. But the event that gave the Ionian Islands one of the most prominent roles in control over the Mediterranean was certainly French annexation in 1797. From that moment on, the Ionian Islands together with Malta were one of the most important war targets for members of anti-Napoleon coalitions (Milosavljević 1995, 5–26). In the same period, during the last years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the first signs of British fear from the possible Russian control of the Ionian archipelago were visible (Milosavljević 1995, 5–26). Also in 1798–1799, as a result of Napoleon's eastern expedition, for the first time an alliance was formed by arch enemies: Russia and Turkey. Their most significant success was conquest of the Ionian Islands, complemented by the fall of Corfu after a long admiral Fyodor Ushakov's offensive. This conquest was not just a military victory of Russia-Turkey alliance, but also showed that it was very difficult to defend possession of the islands without good links with continental neighbourhood, the one dominated by Ali Pasha of Yannina.<sup>4</sup> He had a very important role in history of the Ionian Islands, especially since the Mediterranean wars and the first French conquest of the islands. French started to import large quantities of timber and grain even before 1797.<sup>5</sup> Greek merchants were in charge of the transport, while the merchants from islands Spetses and Hydra had a particularly prominent role. The power that Ali Pasha had was also due to the wars waged in the southern Italy. Anyway, his authority in the matters of the Ionian Islands was most obvious given that he was a person the islanders feared most, for several reasons: most of the grain was imported from the lands under his control; he openly expressed his conquering ambitions towards ports and islands themselves, especially towards Lefkada and Corfu. Ali Pasha ac-

4 Also known as Ali Pasha of Tepelena, was one of the most important *ayan* in the late 18th and 19th century.

5 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/1 Zante 10<sup>th</sup> August 1790, Spiridon Foresti to Duke of Leeds.

completed his plans at least as far as continental ports are concerned, for he took them all except for Parga (Kocić 2013, 205–221).

In the period that followed, the Russian and Turkish conquest with assistance of the British ships was a turning point in the history of the Ionian Islands, and it also set the example for the Christian uprisings that marked first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Balkan provinces of Turkey. After the fall of the Corfu fortress in 1799, the key issue was organization of islands themselves. Citizens of the Ionian Islands also took part in shaping future constitution: through their representatives in Istanbul and Saint Petersburg (Milosavljević 1995, 147) they tried to increase their odds to ensure the power was shared. Such a situation resulted from the social tensions between aristocracy who had been privileged under Venetian rule, and the more numerous citizen class led by the merchants, who themselves got rich and became an important factor. Besides, long-lasting French rule brought some novelties the effects of which no one could have predicted. Once the golden books with lists of local aristocracy were burnt, everything indicated the system was changeable. The diarchy of two states that held islands in protectorate was a unique case in relations between Russia and Turkey, something that happened never again. The new constitution, often referred to as *Turkish Constitution*, came as a result of very active lobbying of a part of island aristocracy, who advocated abolishment of the changes introduced in 1799. The constitution was ratified in November 1801, to great joy of island's aristocracy. Consequently, the constitution incited frequent clashes between islanders in period to come.

The Ionian Islands were recognized not only by parties in Russia-Turkey alliance, but also by two most important powers in the Mediterranean: Great Britain and France. Acknowledgment of their autonomy was important for two reasons: security of islands and admitted priority in commerce, but also international recognition of autonomy of these islands that become example for other Balkan Christians. Details of relations between Russia and Turkey were arranged by the Convention of March 21, 1800 (Milosavljević 1995, 148), which formally stipulated the supreme command of the sultan over islands. However, much more important for the islanders was that the internal organization was left to citizens of the islands, alluding the original proclamation of admiral Ushkov in autumn 1798.<sup>6</sup> It was stipulated that the islands would have the same status the

6 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/4 Corfu 14<sup>th</sup> July 1800, Spiridon Foresti to Lord Grenville.

Republic of Dubrovnik had had within Ottoman Empire. For the security of the islands themselves, it was important that Turkey took obligation to guard citizens and their property against North African pirates who were very active in these waters. Possibilities given to islanders caused a lot of friction between different interest groups. The first constitution the citizens of the Ionian Islands got after 1799 was known after admiral Ushakov, that constitution was very progressive and didn't give nobility option to take over complete control over islands. Disgruntled nobility was not happy with it and wanted to abolish the rights given to second rate citizens in 1799 (Milosavljević 1995, 167). What creators of the 1801 constitution overlooked were large differences among different islands and their residents, but even more the differences between citizens of the archipelago and merchants who were not willing to accept their marginalization in political life of the islands (Vaudoncourt 1816, 410). The last constitution was passed in 1803 due to count Demetrio Mocenigo and support of Russians, who used dispense of constitution to consolidate their position in archipelago and slowly squeezed Turkey, something that became obvious after Tilsit agreement between Napoleon and Alexander in 1807.

Legal status of the Ionian Islands and their autonomy wouldn't be of much importance for citizens if they couldn't use it for commercial development. Ionian merchants used neutrality of their country for the successful increase of their commerce in the Mediterranean. What was the extent of their progress was shown best in the port of Livorno, since that port was most of the time under French control and Greek merchants from the Ionian Islands used it for their trade expansion (Galani 2010, 179). On the other hand, exchange with Crimea also became very important. The flag of independent the Ionian Islands in the period from 1800 to 1805 enabled huge commercial prosperity for this archipelago (Panzac 1992, 189–206). The Ionian Islands were important as a military base that could control naval routes in the Adriatic, in the Ionian Sea and in waters around Peloponnese, but also as producers and exporters of different products, the most important being oil and currants. The oil was the most important product in Corfu and Paxos while the leading role in producing and exporting of currants was held by Zakynthos and Cephalonia (Vaudoncourt 1816, 426–433). These products were very important during Venetian rule, but also during the administrations that followed, as was the case of Great Britain after 1814, one of the biggest importers of currants,

especially those from Zakynthos.<sup>7</sup> Besides, at times of naval and trade blockades the control over these islands facilitated greatly the import of necessary raw materials from Turkish provinces, grains and wood for navy and merchant shipyards being most important among them.<sup>8</sup>

The Tilsit agreement also marked the passing of the Ionian Islands under the French control, for the second time after August 1807. That change is interesting, for Alexander I decided to hand over the Ionian Islands and Cattaro, despite large number of Russian ships and soldiers present there.<sup>9</sup> Judging by reports sent by English consul in Zakynthos, later the plenipotentiary minister, Spiridion Foresti, we know that Corfu senate was formally informed of Tilsit agreement on August the 10<sup>th</sup> by count Mocenigo. Little before the French navy fleet from Otranto entered Corfu.<sup>10</sup> Right after their arrival, French proclaimed new government led by Governor Commander General Berthier. Once this government became stable, cessation of the Septinsular Republic's constitution, in power until French arrival, was proclaimed. At the same time, it was confirmed that the islands were to be controlled by the government led by General Berthier.<sup>11</sup>

Correspondence between English military and diplomatic representatives and London shows that after signing of the agreement between Alexander I and Napoleon and the official hand over of the islands, the plans of bringing the islands under British rule started already in 1807<sup>12</sup>. From this matter, it was utterly important the diplomatic mission of British captain William Leake at Ali Pasha's court (Leake 1835, 11). His reports show that the Turkish pashas, Ali Pasha in the first place, found very inconvenient that French became their closest neighbors. At that time, as well as in the years to come, Ali Pasha was very skillfully manipulating

7 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/9 Kew Surry 23rd November 1807 William Mayer to G. Kerimord.

8 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/9 Kew Surry 23rd November 1807 William Mayer to G. Kerimord.

9 Fleet consisted of 14 ships of line and a number of frigates and smaller warships, while ground forces from southern Italy to the Ionian Islands and Cattaro counted 13,000 men.

10 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/9 Corfu 11<sup>th</sup> August 1807, Spiridion Foresti to Lord Colingwood.

11 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/9 Malta 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1807, Foresti to George Canning.

12 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/9 Malta 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1807, Foresti to George Canning.

French and English expectations. At the time of French comeback to archipelago he was unhappy they took possession of towns Parga and Preveza, the latter being most important port for commerce with Epirus. The new period of French rule finished for majority of islands after important British naval victory over French in waters of Zakynthos on October 2, 1809.<sup>13</sup> After that victory, Lord Byron came for the first time in those waters after Spiridion Foresti convinced him to change his route and instead to Smyrna, come first to the Ionian archipelago (Beaton 2013, 4). English fleet took over all the islands from French very quickly. This time, the French were better organized than in 1798 and withdrew majority of their soldiers to Corfu, which had been well fortified and supplied to withstand long siege.

The period 1809–1814 was a very peculiar period for the Ionian Islands since there were two different administrations simultaneously: the French one at Corfu and the British one at the rest of the islands, while in continental ports that for long time under jurisdiction of the Ionian Islands, there was the Turkish administration. The connection of islands and mainland was necessary for obtaining the islands' grain supply from Peloponnese and from Epirus. That was the reason why Ali Pasha role was very important. This was one of the most significant reasons while the role of Ali Pasha had such a weight in this entire period.

The period after September 1809 provides a full picture of the obvious and indisputable influence of Great Britain. How well islanders perceived that shift of power witnessed the letter which Ithaca citizens sent to the first secretary of British government George Canning, in October 1809, only few days after British fleet took control of the island.<sup>14</sup> Islanders knew very well which the victorious side was at sea and who would be their best protector. It is interesting to note that Russian influence in two major islands, Cephalonia and Zakynthos, was weakened heavily after surprising Russian departure in 1807.

Later on, after the First Treaty of Paris in 1814, islanders gladly remembered British administration because of the independence proclaimed to the citizens during the 1809 offensive. However, during the last years of Napoleonic wars the Secretary of State and Colonial Secretary of Great Britain was Lord Bathurst and his vision of islands' future didn't include giving independence to the Ionian Is-

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13 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/11 Zakynthos 17<sup>th</sup> October 1809, Spiridion Foresti to George Canning.

14 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/11 Ithaca 11<sup>th</sup> October 1809, Gerasimo Draculi, Spiridion Carracia, Demetrios Basopelo to George Canning.

lands (Paschalidi 2009, 76). Being afraid that the ideas of the French Revolution could spread, he belonged to the group of conservative and rigid politicians and the most prominent British statesmen that shaped colonial policy of the Crown. The First Secretary in charge of foreign policy, Lord Castlereagh (Paschalidi 2009, 78) shared opinion with Lord Bathurst concerning foreign policy and those countries that were considered zones of British influence. British army was formally invited by islanders to free them from French<sup>15</sup>, but actually neither the majority of islanders did invite them, nor did they get independence or liberation that was promised. After successful military missions in 1809 and 1810, all islands except Corfu and Paxos came under British control, and there were no indications their status would change during Napoleonic wars.<sup>16</sup> The islands were very important for British plans as ideal military base for protecting Strait of Otranto, invasion to eastern shore of Apennine peninsula or expeditions into the Adriatic Sea and threatening French in those waters. The islands were ruled by military commanders with assistance of councils of selected citizens in whose election major role was played by reliable British people, like Spiridion Foresti.<sup>17</sup> Great Britain made preparations to take Corfu and Paxos from French just after 1814, and to sort out their status after that. Their attempt was successful but the fortress was never conquered as in 1799 as general Donzelot surrounded the fortress just after he got the instructions to do so in June 1814.<sup>18</sup>

Great Britain was the only power on the winning side at the Congress of Vienna that did not belong to the future Holy Alliance, and its more modern approach in contrast to others can be seen from its stance towards that issue, simply from the fact that British politicians did not consider any solution to be the only one or the best one. The Cabinet members had different visions of the islands' future: commander of British forces in the Mediterranean, Campbell, and Lord Bathurst were in favor of annexation of the islands (Tumelty 1952, 14). Such standpoint made clear that possession of the Ionian Islands, together with bases

15 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/11 Zakynthos 17<sup>th</sup> October 1809, Spiridion Foresti to George Canning.

16 The National Archives, War and Colonial Department and Colonial Office 136/5 Corfu 27<sup>th</sup> February 1816, Maitland to Bathurst.

17 The National Archives, War and Colonial Department and Colonial Office 136/5 Corfu 27<sup>th</sup> February 1816, Maitland to Bathurst.

18 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/15 Corfu 21<sup>st</sup> June 1814, James Campbell to Viscount Castlereagh

in Gibraltar and Malta, enabled control over Mediterranean and part of its fairways all the way to Peloponnese. Other influential politicians, like Lord Castlereagh, were pleading islands to be surrendered to Austria. That possibility was abandoned primarily because of the Austrian position that insisted not to become islands protector, but to take full sovereignty over them. Sir Edward Church was advocating independent islands under protection of Great Britain. An important role at the Congress of Vienna was played by Russian minister of foreign affairs, Ioannis Capodistria, who was not delighted by the idea of annexation of the islands, either by Britain or Austria. He proposed islands should be independent and under protection of just one of the victorious powers. However, he represented a power that had those islands under its protection and was willing to try that again. The Congress of Vienna was coming to its end and status of the Ionian Islands was still unsolved, almost 6 years after promises Great Britain gave to islanders. Eventually, the opinion of Lord Castlereagh outweighed others, and he concurred with Capodistria except that he interpreted protection of the Ionian Islands in a manner that suited British interests. In November 1815 in Paris the Second Treaty of Paris was signed also pertaining to the Ionian Islands.

The formal cause for conquering Zakynthos, and later on the other islands, was invitation of the islanders. Spiridion Foresti was among the most important citizens of Zakynthos, with enough influence over his compatriots to make Zakynthos the first island to invite British fleet to liberate them from French<sup>19</sup>. The Treaty of Paris recognized the Ionian Islands as single, free and independent state, but at the same time under exclusive protection of the British Crown, and stated that the British Monarch “will employ a particular solicitude with regard to their legislation and the general administration of those States will therefore appoint a Lord High Commissioner to reside there, invested with all the necessary power and authorities for this purpose” (Tumelty 1952, 21). The Lord High Commissioner was responsible for the forms of the convocation of a Legislative Assembly and a new Constitutional Charter for the Ionian Islands with the ratification of the British Crown (Tumelty 1952, 21). Despite detailed description of the flag and coat of arms of the islands that were supposed to follow the suite of former Septinsular Republic (1800–1807), many things remained unclear, especially those concerning internal constitution of the islands and British interference. One of the biggest

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19 The National Archives, Foreign Office 42/11 Zakynthos 17<sup>th</sup> October 1809, Spiridion Foresti to George Canning.

paradoxes was that that old Constitutional Charter remained in power until new one passed, but neither the old one existed nor the bodies that declared it had authority to do that anymore. The last constitution to be passed was the ‘Turkish’ or ‘Byzantine’ constitution, and it was finally passed by Corfu senate that, at that time, was not authorized to do that.

The Treaty of Paris left the Ionian Islands in a limbo between British protectorate and independence. That is confirmed by the fact decisions were referring to current constitution that wasn’t ratified. The islands got their constitution only in 1817. To what extent situation was unclear it is best evident from the debates in the House of Commons arising throughout 1816, when a group of MPs led by Sir Charles Miles Lambert Monck very openly solicited full independence of islands and requested forming of parliamentary commission that would investigate situation in the Ionian Islands. Major argument was that Great Britain gave promise of liberation, but didn’t do much better than French the islanders had been freed from (Paschalidi 2009, 87). Sir Monck was especially critical towards period 1810–1814 that passed without Great Britain showing any intention whatsoever to help the Ionian Islands gain autonomy. For him, the Treaty of Paris turned British promise of 1809 into deception. Further, he claimed: “They were told that they enjoyed independence; but it was the will of a power to appointed their protector. Their legislature was declared free; but there was a British commissioner, who was empowered to regulate its proceedings” (Paschalidi 2009, 78). However, Monck and his argument that the Ionian Islands were not a colony like those across the ocean and that it was necessary to give them representative forms of rule didn’t gain majority in the House of Commons. The period between the Treaty of Paris in 1815 and the proclamation of the constitution in 1817 was very important for the method of British rule in the Ionian Islands was formed precisely in that period. From the correspondence between Thomas Maitland and his colleagues in the Secretary of State prior to his arrival to the Ionian Islands in February 1816 it can be concluded that the instructions he received and affirmatively responded to were to control the islands not as independent territory, but as a colony.<sup>20</sup> Appointment of Thomas Maitland or “King Tom” (Bayly 1989, 198), as the first Lord High Commissioner in the Ionian Islands was called, shows quite clearly what was the nature of administration in the years immediately after 1815. He was the second

<sup>20</sup> The National Archives, War and Colonial Department and Colonial 136/300, London 26<sup>th</sup> November 1815, Bunbary to Maitland.

son of James Maitland, Earl of Lauderdale, and in his four decades of service one of the most successful colonial officials. His first significant experience was gained in India. Later on, he took part in the war against Toussaint L'Ouverture in Hispaniola, where he had to retreat in front of Black Napoleon. Best recommendation to get position of Malta's governor in 1813 was his very successful five-year service in Sri Lanka. The governor appointment brought him a lot of respect in London for the efficient administration of the island (Lord 1896, 47). What is evident is that he gained his experience in the environments that hadn't have much in common with the Mediterranean, but he was just the administrator that could guarantee protection of British military and trade interests in the Mediterranean region.

The archival sources in the War and Colonial Department and Colonial Office, namely the archives with the original correspondence with the Ionian Islands<sup>21</sup> and the correspondence Lord High Commissioner had with London in the period 1816–1817 convey an intention of shared power with local population. Having thoroughly analyzed all the past administration systems (Venetian, French, Russian-Turkish, then French again) King Tom deduced that the islanders were not capable of controlling the islands on their own. To this connection was his observation that they fought unmercifully against each other, like in class wars.<sup>22</sup> This was a rather remarkable consideration for the Soviet and Russian historians came to the same conclusions a century after Thomas Maitland had written it. Examples he gave had range from America and Malta, where he was proponent of firmer control that in most important lost colony, to Madras and Sri Lanka, and finally concluded administration functions best when all responsible officials are English.<sup>23</sup> Aforementioned correspondence and the constitution of 1817 show that for Lord High Commissioner it was necessary to stand above all levels of power: legislative, judicial and executive.<sup>24</sup> The beginning of the constitution was very encouraging for the Greeks regarding some less important matters. For instance,

21 TNA the National Archives, Kew Garden, London, United Kingdom. Records on War and Colonial Department and Colonial, following boxes are important for the Ionian Islands: CO 136/1, CO 136/15, CO 136/187, CO 136/375, CO 136/376, CO 136/377.

22 The National Archives, War and Colonial Department and Colonial Office 136/5 Corfu 27<sup>th</sup> February 1816, Maitland to Bathurst.

23 The National Archives, War and Colonial Department and Colonial Office 136/5 Corfu 27<sup>th</sup> February 1816, Maitland to Bathurst.

24 The National Archives, War and Colonial Department and Colonial Office 412/330, Constitution Chapter the Ionian Islands.

the Article 3 stated that the official religion was the Greek Orthodox Christianity, with a respect for all other Christian denominations. The following article cited Greek as official language, while the Article 5 contradicted it stating that in the circumstances where Italian was already in use, it was not possible to use Greek; hence Italian was to remain in use until further notice. Civil authorities were comprised of Legislative Assembly, Senate and judicial authorities. The Articles 6 to 23 regulated the General Organization, namely the key governmental bodies. Apart from the introductory part, the constitution consisted of six sections<sup>25</sup> that regulated administration of the islands into tiny details. This constitution would have been very liberal with high degree of liberties and responsibilities, if it hadn't been for the Lord High Commissioner who had the actual power: he had the right to name the officials, the right of veto and even the right to dissolve all forms of rule. The islanders had their representatives on the state positions in the new Republic of united islands, but under a very strict control. Furthermore, the islanders that were electable were exclusively those considered to be friendly to the British authorities.

Archive reports from first two to three years when the entire archipelago came under British rule yield obvious change in plans for organization of the islands after the war. After final Napoleon's defeat Great Britain remained with no important rival at the seas and showed no intention to lose any of the territories or to endanger the control it had over them. Same as when the joint naval actions of Great Britain, Russia and Turkey took place by the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, British considered the Ionian Islands the utterly important territory for securing navy and merchant routes and protection of British interests. The important change took place in the same year when the Treaty of Paris was signed – the Ionian Islands received the treatment of an overseas colony, not of an independent country that invited Great Britain to liberate them. Insufficiently precise provisions of the Treaty of Paris made it possible for the British to avoid the promise of the islands' independence from 1809 and to manipulate in a manner that suited the Cabinet of that time. Key person in implementing the colonial control under the cloak of a formal protectorate over the independent republic was the first Lord High Commissioner Thomas Maitland who prepared and passed the constitution of 1817, the one that gave institutional basis for administration of the Ionian

<sup>25</sup> The Senate, the Legislative Assembly, the Local Governments, the Ecclesiastical Establishment, the Judicial Authority, Miscellaneous.

Islands same as in some overseas colonies. The nature of the responsibilities given to the islanders echoed those given to locals in some overseas colony. However, the experience the citizens of the Ionian Islands gained in the turbulent decades of Napoleonic Wars in the Mediterranean, as well as the links established between the islands and continent, especially Epirus and Peloponnese, turned islanders into very enterprising and capable people. Some of them, like the families Capodistria and Mocenigo managed to win some of the most prestigious positions in other European countries. The rigid authority embodied in the figure of a toughened colonial official who didn't release the power of unavoidable changes following the French Revolution and the first national revolutions, was taken by surprise by Greek Revolution. The new circumstances showed his own inability when the rigid measures he had established for controlling situation failed to prevent the citizens of the Ionian Islands from joining the Greek Revolution.

Two contemporaries illustrate the spirit of those times and help us understand it: Thomas Maitland and Lord Byron. They both came pretty much at same time to the Ionian archipelago and both died in the same year – Thomas of old age and Byron due to the siege of Missolonghi. The former was remembered as a successful colonial administrator, while the latter launched the largest wave of Hellenophilia among higher British military officials whose echelons took decisive role in the last years of the Greek Revolution and in forming of Greek independence. British administration in the Ionian Islands, established in years following The Treaty of Paris could not be abandoned, but events after 1821 in vicinity of the Ionian Islands and experience gained in those islands definitely changed opinion regarding Greek ability to run a state.

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### *Rezime:*

#### *Jonska ostrva posle Napoleona*

Bečki kongres i Drugi pariski mir nisu samo obeležili slom Napoleona, već su bili restauracija sistema za koji se očekivalo da će trajati. Jonska ostrva su bila vojni plen Velike Britanije u toku Pete i Šeste koalicije protiv Napoleona, koja su nakon 1815. postale zvanično protektorat Velike Britanije. Arhipelag je bio nezavistan i slobodan entitet ali pod direktnom upravom Visokog komesara, koji je u svojim ovlašćenjima zamenio venecijanskog Generalnog providura. Visokog komesara potvrđivao je britanski monarh. Njegova najznačajnija uloga je bila u pripremanju Ustava koji je morao biti potvrđen u Londonu. Ustav koji su ostrva dobila 1817. davao je značajno manje sloboda nego što je bilo dogovoreno između Velike Britanije i Rusije 1815. Konzularni izveštaji koji su najvažniji izvorni materijal korišćen u ovom radu pružaju sliku u stanje na ostrvima iz koje se može zaključiti da je najveći strah postojao od izbijanja

**pobuna i anarhije koja ostrvima nije bila strana. Upravo je strah velikih sila od izbijanja sukoba među samim ostvljanima doprineo usvajanju rigidnog ustava 1817. Ostrvljani su zahvaljujući čestim promenama administracija u periodu od 1797. stekli veliko iskustvo u administrativnim poslovima koje je postalo još značajnije u periodu nakon izbijanja Grčke revolucije 1821.**

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***Ključne reči:*** Jonska ostrva, Velika Britanija, Pariski mir, Bečki kongres, Krf, Zakintos, Kefalonija, Napoleon, Ali Paša, Tomas Mejlend, lord Bajron, Visoki komesar.

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