

ZEMLJOPIS SRBIJE I SRPSKIH ZEMALJA:
AN EPISODE IN AUSTRO-SERBIAN RELATIONS,
1907—1912.

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In the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia on July 23, 1914, Vienna demanded in the third article that Serbia undertake »to eliminate without delay from public instruction in Serbia, both as regards the methods of instruction, everything that serves, or might serve to foment propaganda against Austria-Hungary.« This point was also emphasized in the introductory, explanatory statement which contended that Serbia »has permitted an unwholesome propaganda in public instruction, in short, it has permitted all manifestations of a nature to incite the Serbian population to hatred of the monarchy and contempt of its institutions«.¹ The purpose of this article is to examine an earlier aspect of this same problem which caused the Habsburg government to seek the removal of information from a Serbian elementary geography book it deemed offensive and derogatory to the empire. In addition, the issue had broader ramifications because it demonstrated the limited degree to which Serbian school children were being prepared for the idea of a possible Yugoslav state.

On November 27, 1907, the Viennese newspaper, *Reichspost*, carried an article entitled »Serbische Geographie«, based upon information it had received.² At issue were certain statements found in the third edition of a textbook by Mihailo Jović and D. J. Putniković, *Zemljopis Srbije i Srpskih Zemalja* (A Geography of Serbia and the Serbian Lands), which had been approved by the Serbian Ministry of Education in 1902 for use in the fourth grade of the elementary schools. Seven points were raised by the newspaper. First, in describing Serbia's western boundary, the textbook stated that beyond it lay Bosnia »which was provisionally administered by Austria«. Second, in enumerating Bosnia's population, it claimed that there were 1,600,000 inhabitants of whom one million were »pure Serbs« of three faiths, Orthodox, Moham-

¹ Sidney Bradshaw Fay, *The Origins of the World War* (New York, 1928), II, pp. 270, 272.

² All the Austrian documents cited in this article are found in *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv*, Politisches Archiv XIX, Serbien, Karton 75, Liasse XI-2, *Serbische Lehrbücher 1907—1912*. The *Reichspost* article is in the despatch Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 112-E, Belgrade, December 7, 1907, Beilage no. 4.

medan and Catholic. Third, Dalmatia's population was 600,000, »almost all Serbs«, but of two faiths »Catholic and Orthodox«. Fourth, in the Banat and Bačka lived Serbs of the Catholic faith who were called »Bunjevci«. Fifth, Croatia and Slavonia had 2,400,000 inhabitants, who were Serbs of the Orthodox and Catholic faith. Of these, two-thirds were Catholic and were called Croats. Sixth, in Istria, »the largest Serbian peninsula«, there were 300,000 inhabitants, of whom two-thirds were Serbian and one-third Italian. The seventh, and last item, referred to a section in the book entitled »Survey of Serbian Lands« which stated that there were 12,000,000 inhabitants in all the Serbian lands of whom 9,000,000 were Serbs. Although on this point the newspaper article only listed six Serbian lands — Serbia, Montenegro, Bačka, Banat, Croatia and Slavonia — the population of twelve million obviously included the inhabitants of the other lands claimed by Serbia, namely, Old Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia, Hercegovina, Dalmatia, Istria and Srem. The *Reichs-post* quoted the geography further that in each of these lands the »largest number« of people were Serbs, »which is why they are called Serbian lands«. The article concluded that if this was what the Serbian children were taught, »no wonder« there was continued agitation for the acquisition of these lands. Unless Austria had renounced her role as a great power, the Serbian minister of education must be called to account for this textbook, the article stressed.³

On November 28, 1907, the day after the article appeared in the *Reichs-post*, Alois von Aehrenthal, the Austrian foreign minister, brought it to the attention of Count Johann Forgach, his minister in Belgrade. From this article, it appeared, wrote Aehrenthal, that »the familiar interpretation of Serbia's politicians concerning 'Allserbenthum' and the 'Negation der kroatischen Nation' had also found its way into Serbian school instruction«. He asked Forgach to verify the information in the article and to provide him with a copy of the textbook.⁴

The appearance of this article came just at the time when Aehrenthal was considering the annexation of Bosnia-Hercegovina, an event which took place ten months later, in October, 1908. Aehrenthal had become the foreign minister in October 1906, after serving for seven years as the ambassador to Russia. A conservative in conviction, he favored the previous close association of Austria, Russia and Germany, as expressed in the earlier Dreikaiserbund. Upon his return to Vienna, he hoped to revive this understanding. In particular, he looked for continued Austro-Russian cooperation in the Balkans. The key to this, he believed, was to be found in Serbia and Bosnia-Hercegovina. In October 1907, at a cabinet meeting, he declared that the government's previous policy of dominating Serbia economically and politically had not been successful. Instead, he proposed that the government now »must urgently beg for such a conduct of Croatian, Dalmatian and Bosnian affairs as would place the center of gravity, for the Serbo-Croat peoples, within the Monarchy«. ⁵ In

³ Loc. cit.

⁴ Aehrenthal to Forgach, no. 1711, Vienna, November 28, 1907.

⁵ Joseph M. Baernreither, *Fragments of a Political Diary* (London, 1930), p. 36. See also Freiherr von Musulin, *Das Haus am Ballplatz* (München, 1924), pp. 163—171.

other words the South Slav lands of the empire, not Serbia, should become the political center of the Yugoslavs. This goal could only be achieved by gaining the confidence and respect of the South Slavs of the empire in order that they not turn to Belgrade. Some authorities have stated that Aehrenthal really hoped that Serbia would recognize the advantages to be derived from joining the other South Slavs and in becoming a part of the empire.⁶ Although this seems almost like fantasy, given the subsequent history of Austro-Serbian relations, it is important because of the change that took place in Aehrenthal's thinking. Whatever his ultimate aims were, at this time he did decide on a first step, the annexation of Bosnia-Hercegovina, a move which, he believed, would consolidate South Slav unity within the empire even if it estranged Serbia. Aehrenthal assumed he could gain approval for the annexation from Russia by agreeing to support her interest in the Straits and from the other great powers by yielding the administration of the province of Novi Pazar. He worked hard for nine months to convince the various factions and interests in Vienna and Budapest of the wisdom of his policy, which he stressed would »put an end to all Pan-Serb dreams for the future.«⁷

Consequently when the *Reichspost* article appeared, Aehrenthal had already decided that Bosnia-Hercegovina should be annexed. Hence his comment to Forgach about the concept of »Allserbenthum« and the »Negation der kroatischen Nation«, which he believed was reflected by the textbook, unquestionable disturbed him. The thesis in the geography was completely in opposition to his policy. The Serbian children must not be taught that all the South Slav lands were Serbian and that Austria was their oppressor.

Within ten days Aehrenthal received a reply from Forgach in Belgrade. He had not been able to send a copy of the third edition, but he did have the new edition. This, Forgach reported, contained »even more offensive expressions and sentences.«⁸ He further stated that the Serbian irredentist tendencies of recent years had influenced the Serbian school principals. Yet, continued Forgach, as a result of the emergence of the »ephemeral Croatian-Serbian Coalition« of 1905 in the sixth edition, in contrast to the third, the existence of the »Kroaten« is recognized and they were no longer identified as »kato-lische Serben«. Forgach concluded that the Serbian book was modeled after »Italian-irredentist publications and elementary education«.

After briefly identifying the major questions raised in the textbook, Forgach ended his report with a harsh observation. »These passages suffice to characterize this textbook as an irredentist catechism concerned not with geography but with hate.« Forgach added that he had examined ten other textbooks — readers, histories and geographies — but that there were not any

⁶ Luigi Albertini, *The Origins of the War of 1914* (London, 1952) I, p. 192; Baernreither, op. cit., p. 36.

⁷ For the Bosnian crisis see Bernadotte E. Schmitt, *The Annexation of Bosnia 1908—1909* (Cambridge, 1937); Momtchilo Nintchitch, *La crise bosniaque et les puissance européennes* (Paris, 1937), 2 vols.; and for the economic aspects of this problem see Dimitrije Đorđević, *Carinski rat Austro-Ugarske i Srbije 1906—1911* (Belgrade, 1962).

⁸ Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 112A-F, Belgrade, December 7, 1907.

or only a very few offensive statements in them. On the other hand all five previous edition of the geography had derogatory comments about the monarchy.

This despatch included three enclosures — five typewritten pages identifying the crucial material in the textbook, a list of the other books Forgach had examined and a copy of the sixth edition of the textbook. As far as the controversial material is concerned, in the first two — thirds of the textbook,⁹ which contained a description of the Serbian kingdom, the only objectionable part was when the boundaries of the state were described. Again it was stated that to the west of the Drina river was Bosnia, which »Austria provisionally administered«. This statement was factually correct, because Austria was granted the right »to occupy and administer« Bosnia-Hercegovina by the Treaty of Berlin. The suzerain of the two lands remained the sultan, not the Habsburg emperor.

The two sections that caused the major concern were those entitled »Our Other Lands« (Druge naše zemlje) and »Survey of the Serbian Lands« (Pregled srpskih zemalja). The two main questions about the first of these centered on the classification of the population and comments about the administration of these lands. Thus the textbook stated that in Bosnia-Hercegovina

»there live 1,700,000 inhabitants, of whom more than one and one half million are pure Serbs of three faiths: Orthodox, Mohammedan and Catholic. The Orthodox are the majority and the Catholics the minority. The Mohammedans are the descendants of those rich Serbian landowners who accepted the Turkish faith in order to retain their possessions. Nevertheless they have preserved the beautiful Serbian language and many Serbian customs... Today Bosnia and Hercegovina are administered by Austria, which (in 1878) entered these lands to establish order. She persecutes and torments the Orthodox and Mohammedans but helps the Catholics; everywhere she builds Catholic schools, churches and monasteries; she helps Germans and Magyars to emigrate there; and she does not permit the people to call themselves Serbs but only Bosnians.«¹⁰

Whereas the third edition had stated that the inhabitants of Dalmatia were »almost all Serbs«, the sixth edition declared that there were »about 600,000 inhabitants, almost exclusively Serbs and Croats. In the northern part there are more Croats, but in the southern more Serbs. In the cities along the sea there also are some Italians. The Serbs and Croats are of two faiths — Catholic and Orthodox. There are twice as many Catholics as Orthodox... Austria administers Dalmatia.«¹¹

⁹ The primary source for this article is the sixth edition of Mihailo Jović and D. J. Putniković, *Zemljopis Srbije i Srpskih Zemalja: Za IV Razred Osnovne Škole*, which is Beilage III in Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 112A-F, Belgrade, December 7, 1907. Since the third edition of the geography was not available to the author, references to it are based upon the facts as stated in the *Reichspost* article and in Forgach's comments.

¹⁰ Jović-Putniković, op. cit., pp. 66—69.

¹¹ Ibid. pp. 74—75.

There was no reference to the »Serbs of the Catholic faith called Bunjevci« in the Bačka and Banat. Instead, the sixth edition declared that »more than one and one half million people live in Bačka and Banat. There are about one half million (500,000) Serbs and the remainder are Magyars, Germans and Rumanians... Bačka and Banat are administered by the Magyars, who force the Serbian children to learn Hungarian and [to attend] Hungarian schools, in order that they forget their beautiful Serbian language.«¹²

In discussing Croatia, Slavonia and Srem the statement was made that of the 2,500,000 inhabitants »the Catholics are two-thirds [of the population] and are called Croats. The Orthodox are called Serbs and they live primarily in Srem and Lika. They are one-third of the entire population... Croatia, Slavonia and Srem are under Hungary.«¹³

On Istria the assertion that it is »our largest peninsula« was repeated, but where the earlier edition had stated that two-thirds of the 300,000 Istrians were »Serbs«, the latest edition declared them to be »Croats«, with the remaining third Italians.¹⁴

In the second section, »Survey of the Serbian Lands« the purpose was to provide the evidence for the claim to these lands. It began with the subtitle — »Which Lands are Serbian« (Koje su srpske zemlje). »Our lands are Serbia, Montenegro, Old Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia, Hercegovina, Dalmatia, Croatia, Istria, Slavonia, Srem, Bačka and Banat.« Of these thirteen lands, »today Serbia and Montenegro are our only independent and free states«. Of the remainder, two, Old Serbia and Macedonia, are under the Turks; Austria rules the other nine. If all the Serbian lands were united, the Serbian kingdom would be eight times larger, the children learned.¹⁵

The section also declared that there were 12,000,000 inhabitants in these »Serbian lands«, of whom there were »9 million of our people... Our people have two names — *Serbs and Croats*, but they are all *one people because they speak one and the same language*«. ¹⁶ After listing each of the thirteen provinces and identifying the different ethnic groups living in them — Serbs, Croats, Magyars, Germans, Rumanians, Italians, Albanians, Turks, Bulgars, Greeks and Cincars — the textbook emphasized that »in every one of these lands the largest number of inhabitants are Serbs, which is why these are our Serbian lands«. Students using the books were also informed that there were six million Orthodox, two and one-half million Catholics and one-half million Moslems, and that »in all our lands our people speak one and the same language, which shows that they are one and the same people«. After a brief description of dialectical differences — *dete, dijete, dite; lepo, lijepo, lipo* — a two page history of »our people« was provided.¹⁷

¹² Ibid., p. 85.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 87—88.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 89. Similar information, some of it questionable, was also included about Macedonia, Old Serbia and Montenegro. Since these lands did not directly affect the empire, the Habsburg officials ignored the comments.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 90—91.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 92—93.

The subsection entitled »How Are Things in Our Lands Today« (Kako je danas u našim zemljama) caused special concern to Vienna. Only one-third of »our people« were free and united, the textbook declared.

»Until recently the Serbs and Croats hated one another as enemies. Austria liked it that these two brotherly peoples lived as cats and dogs. Thus she encouraged this quarrel in order that she could more easily rule over both. In this she was helped the most by Catholic priests. However, recently Serbs and Croats have begun to cooperate and confer with one another; henceforth they will be able more easily to defend their people from the enemy.«¹⁸

Habsburg administration in Bosnia and Hercegovina was also strongly condemned. The authorities, the textbook asserted, persecuted the Serbs, so that they were worse off now than they had been under the Turks. Not only was Austria attacked but the Magyars were condemned for forcing the Serbian children to learn Hungarian.¹⁹

However, the blame was not placed exclusively on the Austrians and Magyars. The textbook added that the three religious faiths disliked one another and that they called each other by epithets — that is, »Vlachs« for the Orthodox, »Šokci« for the Catholics, and »Turks« for the Moslems. »This is not good, because we are one and the same people and brothers of one blood«, and to emphasize the point, the book stressed Dositej Obradović's well-known dictum that »*he is my brother regardless of his religion*«. ²⁰

In the concluding subsection entitled »Our Future and Our Responsibility« (Naša budućnost i naša dužnost) the authors reminded the students that those lands under foreign domination were not free. They were admonished to know well these lands, to love their brothers, to reject dissension, because the greatest danger lies with the enemy. »The Kingdom of Serbia is the largest among all our lands. Serbia is free and it is a kingdom. It is located exactly in the middle of our lands and that is why it must be the nucleus around which all our lands will gather. She must be the mainstay of all our people«. ²¹

The implications for Vienna were clear. First, Austria was depicted as the real enemy of the Serbian nation and the power which held much of »our people« in bondage. Even the despised Turk now appeared more tolerant than the Austrian and Hungarian. Second, whereas in the third edition Serbian and Croatian hostility had been accentuated, harmony and understanding were now stressed. Serbian students thus were told that they and the Croats were »one and the same people«, but with different religions and alphabets, who were kept apart by the Austrians. Yet the clear thrust was that these were Serbian and not South Slav lands and that they should be liberated from Austrian rule. The Serbs, not the South Slavs of the empire, should be the nucleus of the Yugoslavs. This was the very antithesis of Aehrenthal's policy.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 94—95.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 95.

²⁰ Loc. cit.

²¹ Ibid., p. 96.

Forgach clearly perceived the issue. Thus in his second despatch of December 7, he asserted that Serbia did not even abide by the basic international courtesies with respect to neighboring states and that steps should be taken to remedy this. »Serbia's truly boundless impudence, the manifest spirit of hate, the attempts to poison and incite youth, and the active and passive connivance of the Ministry of Education, the teachers and the supervisory organs would completely justify on our part the most severe steps and far-reaching demands for apologies, satisfaction and punishment.« Were the exact contents of the book to become known, the Serbs would have to reckon with Austrian and Hungarian public opinion. Even abroad Serbia would be condemned. Thus there were two possible courses of action. One would be to expose this matter openly, which would incite public opinion against Serbia. The other would be for Forgach to undertake a »personal démarche... I would read to the minister-president [Nikola Pašić] selections from 'the Serbian geography', candidly give him my opinions, and explain to him that the tone of my report would depend upon his attitude and that of the royal government. I will make it clear to him that Serbia must choose between providing immediately complete and voluntary satisfaction, or being placed in an embarrassing situation [Zwangslage].« Forgach suggested that the latter course would avoid sensation yet produce the desired results.²²

In his third despatch of December 7, Forgach centered his comments on the general state of relations between Serbia and the empire. In analyzing Serbia's actions Forgach wrote that »our press was the cause of this movement which deeply humiliated the Serbs and provoked their natures, so prone to hysteria«. Forgach attributed the Serbian feeling to the fact that the newspapers in the empire published anti-Serbian articles, many of which had actually appeared in other countries and which expressed their revulsion against the assassination of the Serbian king in 1903. The Serbs ascribed these articles to Austria, since they read only Habsburg newspapers. In other words, the criticism of Europe, wrote Forgach, was being attributed solely to Vienna. Yet he believed that the »highpoint« of animosity had passed and that the relations between the two states would now improve, although »provocations and intrigues« would still emanate from the Serbian court and government. »We will need much patience. We must avoid excessive irritability, and we will have to overlook comparatively many intentional and unintentional mistakes. For this small state, which can neither live nor die, deserves compassion.«²³

Aehrenthal concurred completely with his minister and agreed that a personal démarche should be made. Further measures would be dictated by Serbia's response and actions.²⁴ When Forgach finally discussed the issue with the Serbian prime minister on January 27, 1908, Pašić condemned the geography and deplored the incident. However, his government disclaimed responsibility for the book because it had been first published in 1902 under the

²² Forgach to Aehrenthal no. 112B, streng vertraulich, Belgrade, December 7, 1907.

²³ Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 112C, streng vertraulich, Belgrade, December 7, 1907.

²⁴ Aehrenthal to Forgach, no. 1822, Vienna, December 19, 1907.

former Obrenović dynasty. Nevertheless, Pašić promised to take this matter up directly with the Minister of Education. The authors would be instructed immediately to prepare another edition, excluding the objectionable passages. It would be ready for the beginning of the school year in the fall. To Forgach this solution was acceptable but not »brilliant«, given the relations with Serbia and the desire not to stir up further Serbian journalistic and public hostility.²⁵

On January 31, 1908 Aehrenthal expressed great satisfaction with the results.²⁶ Yet two and one half months later, the issue was suddenly revived precisely in the form which Austria hoped to avoid — in the Serbian press. On April 17, the best known Belgrade newspaper, *Politika*, carried an article which gave the essence of the disagreement. But, contended *Politika*, when the Minister of Education sought to persuade the two authors to revise the textbook, arguing that the controversy could adversely affect the commercial treaty being negotiated with Austria, the authors, members of the opposition Liberal Party, balked. They contended that no one had found fault with their book when it was published in 1902. Did Austria think Serbia another »Toronto Komitat« to whom she could dictate what should be taught Serbian school children? The following day another publication, *Dnevni List*, stressed the same theme contending that Austria apparently was not satisfied that she could impose her customs and veterinary regulations on Serbia, but she now also wished to censor the Serbian educational program. In addition, Forgach himself became the target of bitter attacks by many segments of the press.²⁷

In an attempt to clarify the record, on April 20, *Samouprava*, Pašić's Radical Party newspaper, printed an article, which actually was inspired by Forgach's threat to expose the entire matter. *Samouprava* stressed that Forgach's comments had been of a »private character« and that

»on this occasion Count Forgach took nothing amiss and did not demand that no mention should be made of lands inhabited by Serbs. He simply noted that in the book there are passages which impute to the Austrian government a hostile stand towards the Serbs, towards their nationality and religion. He noted that it is not necessary to teach youth to hate the neighboring state just as the Austrian government refrains from speaking inimically about the Serbian state and people in its textbooks. That was all.«²⁸

Hence the charge by *Politika* was unjustified concluded *Samouprava*. In commenting, Forgach pointed out to Aehrenthal that the article did not mention Pašić's promise that a new edition of the textbook would be printed. Forgach

²⁵ Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 5, vertraulich, Belgrade, January 27, 1908.

²⁶ Aehrenthal to Forgach, no. 124, Vienna, January 21, 1908.

²⁷ Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 20B, Belgrade, April 19, 1908, which also includes a translation of the *Politika* article. Forgach was not a popular representative in Belgrade, especially when his role in the Zagreb and Friedjung trials of 1909 became known. See T. G. Masaryk, Vasić-Forgach-Aehrenthal (Prague, 1911) and R. W. Seton-Watson, *The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy* (London, 1911).

²⁸ Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 21A-B, Belgrade, April 21, 1908, which contains a translation of the *Samouprava* article.

would immediately bring this to Pašić's attention. »That is very important«, Aehrenthal noted on his minister's despatch.

The following day, April 22, Forgach met Pašić and stated that he »must« insist on the publication of a new edition, minus the offensive passages, before the school year began, as had been pledged. Pašić »promised« to speak to the Minister of Education »immediately« about a new edition and to inform Forgach after the Orthodox Easter.²⁹ When Forgach next saw Pašić, in May, the prime minister apologized that he had not been able to pursue the matter because of his deep involvement in the current election campaign. Yet he reassured Forgach that his earlier commitment of a new edition was firm and should the authors refuse to prepare one, their textbook would be »forbidden« for use in the schools. Forgach was satisfied, but he informed Aehrenthal he would verify its implementation.³⁰

A new edition was not published nor does it appear that Forgach brought up the matter again. It seems that the Young Turk revolution and its direct bearing on the fate of Bosnia-Hercegovina, which hastened Aehrenthal's plan to annex the provinces, intruded. Thus on September 11, 1908, Alexander Wekerle, the Hungarian minister president, who, in the past, had been kept informed on the question, wrote Aehrenthal to ask if a new edition had been published, notwithstanding the fact that Pašić had been replaced as prime minister. If not, Wekerle proposed that the new Serbian government of Petar Velimirović be held accountable for the »promise« of Pašić to have a revised textbook before the school year began.³¹

Three years later, on February 21, 1911, Count Karolyi Khuen-Hederváry, the Hungarian minister president, repeated Wekerle's inquiry by asking what had been the final resolution involving the textbook.³² In his reply of April 20, Aehrenthal stated that the issue of the textbook had been suspended because of the »anomalous situation which had developed between the Monarchy and Serbia in consequence of the annexation of Bosnia and Hercegovina«. ³³ On the same day, April 20, Aehrenthal wrote Stephan von Ugron, Forgach's successor in Belgrade, that in view of the »normal relations« which now existed between Austria and Serbia, he should determine what had been the final disposition in this case.³⁴ Due to a ministerial change and other difficulties within Serbia, it was not before November that Ugron could report on his discussion with Milovan Milovanović, the new prime minister. Because the problem was more than three years old, Milovanović was »vague« in his reply. but stated that he would consult with Pašić over its resolution. Ugron had the impression that the prime minister wished to handle this matter »dilatatorily«. ³⁵

²⁹ Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 22A-C, Belgrade, April 23, 1908.

³⁰ Forgach to Aehrenthal, no. 24B, Belgrade, May 4, 1908.

³¹ Wekerle to Aehrenthal, no. 1981, Budapest, September 11, 1908.

³² Khuen-Hedervary to Aehrenthal, no. 625, Budapest, February 11, 1911.

³³ Aehrenthal to Khuen-Hedervary, no. 857, Vienna, April 20, 1911.

³⁴ Aehrenthal to Ugron, no. 858, Vienna, April 20, 1911.

³⁵ Ugron to Aehrenthal, no. 92, Belgrade, November 7, 1911.

The pressure on Vienna now came from Budapest. The Hungarians were having difficulties with their minorities — Rumanians, Serbs, and Slovaks — especially after Count Albert Apponyi's educational reforms. The charge that the Magyars were forcing Serbian children in the Bačka and Banat to learn Hungarian was a sensitive internal issue. The animus in Serbia against the Magyars was serious, hence Budapest's concern.

When Ugron did not get a satisfactory response from Milovanović, he spoke to the general secretary of the foreign office, Jovan M. Jovanović, and sought »a definitive solution« as soon as possible. Ugron reported that both Milovanović and Jovanović regarded the question as unpleasant and embarrassing and that Milovanović expected great opposition from his ministers.³⁶ After further inquiries from Budapest, Aehrenthal, on December 16, 1911, took his strongest stand. He instructed Ugron to inform Milovanović that Austria had permitted »enough time to pass« and now it expected a »meritorious reply«. Austria would only be satisfied with a new edition without the offensive passages.³⁷

In April 1912 Ugron made a new démarche stating that Austria had waited four years for the revised textbook. This step was endorsed by Hungary.³⁸ On August 7, 1912 in the midst of the intense negotiations preceding the First Balkan War, the Austrian government achieved its objective. Emerich von Pflügl, the legation secretary in Belgrade, informed Vienna that the Jović-Putniković geography was no longer officially used as a textbook.³⁹ In its formal reply the Serbian note stated that the regulations concerning the use of textbooks had been adopted on May 11, 1905. In the first and second classes only two textbooks were employed, a primer and reader (bukvar and čitanka). In the third and fourth grades, aside from the readers, only two other textbooks were authorized — one for religion and the other a history of the Serbian people. »Consequently, a textbook for geography in the elementary schools in fact does not exist.« Thus the book in question could not be authorized given the regulation of 1905. In his covering despatch, Pflügl stated that geography was not a required course and that the Jović-Putniković book was one of four geography textbooks available for instruction. Budapest was so informed and the issue, it appears, ended here.⁴⁰

The question remains that if in fact the regulation of 1905 excluded the use of any officially required geography textbook, why did Pašić not so inform the Austrians in 1908 when the issue was first raised? Nor did Pašić ever state that the textbook was not used, a fact easily verifiable. Nor did *Politika* in its article deny that the textbook was used. Once the issue entered the newspapers, it exacerbated Austro-Serbian relations, which Pašić did not want. Even after the question was revived in 1911, eighteen months elapsed before

³⁶ Ugron to Aehrenthal, no. 101B, Belgrade, December 5, 1911.

³⁷ Aehrenthal to Ugron, no. 3262, Vienna, December 16, 1911.

³⁸ Ugron to Aehrenthal, no. 101 res., Belgrade, April 26, 1912.

³⁹ Pflügl to Foreign Ministry, no. 176 res., Belgrade, August 7, 1912, which also contains the original of the official Serbian note.

⁴⁰ Foreign Ministry to Hungarian Minister President, no. 3439, Vienna, August 21, 1912.

Vienna was informed of the 1905 regulation. The other possibility, supported by strong circumstantial evidence, is that the textbook in fact was being used unofficially. Its withdrawal would have been politically embarrassing to the Pašić regime. His government's strength rested in large part on its anti-Austrian orientation, after the two decades of pro-Austrian sympathies of the last Obrenović rulers. To yield would smack of the strong influence exercised in Serbian affairs by the Austrians between 1881—1903. In addition, acquiescence would have been a serious blow to his party's electoral campaign of 1908.

It is not possible to state with absolute certainty that the issue surrounding this textbook had a direct bearing on article 3 of the Austrian ultimatum of 1914. Yet, one may assume with a degree of certainty, that at least in part it had a cumulative effect. There is ample evidence, from other textbooks, to support the Austrian contention that inflammatory information about the Dual Monarchy was taught school children. Moreover, the information in the textbook did reflect the ideas and thinking of the political leadership in Serbia. Yet the geography was perhaps in intent not much different than similar nationalistic textbooks found in other Balkan and European countries. This fact, however, was not any consolation for Austria, perhaps even less so for Hungary, both of whom appreciated fully the inherent danger of Serbian nationalism to the empire.

For the supporters of Yugoslavism, Serbian nationalistic thought as reflected in the textbook was also not entirely reassuring. Although the extremist statements of the third edition, in which, among other points, Istria was referred to as »a Serbian peninsula«, and the Serbs were declared to be of »the Orthodox and Catholic faiths«, were omitted in the sixth edition, the reference to »our lands« at best was ambiguous. In the context of the events after 1903, that is, the pro-Yugoslav policy of King Peter, and the formation of the Croatian-Serbian Coalition and its program, it can be argued that the term »our lands« undoubtedly was supposed to reflect the development of Serbo-Croatian understanding and referred to the South Slav, not the Serbian, lands. Yet a careful reading of the textbook does not carry that impression. »Our lands« clearly implies Serbian lands in which other peoples — Croats, Magyars, Germans, Albanians, Bulgarians, etc. — lived. The textbook does not reflect a sense of the Yugoslavism such as that which emerged in the South Slav lands of the monarchy in the era after 1903. This is perhaps best demonstrated by the fact that neither Slovenia nor the Slovenes were discussed and enumerated under »our lands«. Yet in Istria, which was described, there were 55,000 Slovenes or about 14 percent of the population. In other words a significant portion of the pre-war generation of Serbian elementary school children were not given a background for the broad concepts of Yugoslavism. One may conclude therefore that the textbook is one barometer of the understanding of Yugoslavism among the generation of Serbian students who would reach their majority and become politically active for the first time after 1918.

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