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D. NIKOLIĆ, Three Votive Plaques from Upper Moesia • I. Komatina, A Hypothesis about the Origin of Závaš's Cross • J. HENDERSON & V. ŽIVKOVIĆ, Experiencing Disease and Medical Treatment in Renaissance Italy • F. GUIDA, The Second Eastern Crisis (1875–1878) • A. D'ALESSANDRI, The Opening of the Italian Legation in Belgrade in 1879 • J. I. TOMAŠEVIĆ, Movies about the First World War • M. RISTOVIĆ, The March on Rome and its Consequences • B. MILOSAVLJEVIĆ, Italy in the Writings of Slobodan Jovanović • J. RAFAILOVIĆ, Yugoslav-Italian Foreign Trade Relations 1919–1939 • M. T. MRAOVIĆ, Creation of an Alternate Reality • A. EREŠ, The Venice Biennale and Art in Belgrade in the 1950s • E. COSTANTINI, Relations between the PCI and the League of Communists from the Second Post-War Period to the Mid-1960 • M. DOGO, Belgrade 1969–1972 • B. ŽIVKOVIĆ, The Two Last Encounters between Broz and Berlinguer • P. DRAGIŠIĆ, The Yugoslav Perspective on Italian Eurocommunism in the Second Half of the 1970s 

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Italy in the Writings of Slobodan Jovanović¹

Abstract: Slobodan Jovanović made frequent stays in Italy since his earliest childhood, which contributed to his thorough and comprehensive understanding of Italian history, politics, science, culture and arts. His father, Vladimir Jovanović, maintained close contact with Mazzini, whose liberal nationalism he embraced and followed. Some of their closest family members resided in Rome during the First World War, because Vladimir Jovanović's son-in-law, Mihailo Ristić, served as Serbia's minister to Italy (1914–17). For about half a century Slobodan Jovanović was an interpreter of Italian political history, of its influence on Serbian and Yugoslav history, and of the work of Italian statesmen and theorists, notably Machiavelli. In the 1930s he taught a doctoral course on Italian public law and corporate system. After the Second World War he lived in exile in London. Some of the works he published there showed that some solutions in the constitution of socialist Yugoslavia, presented as an original invention, had already existed in interwar Italian corporate law.

Keywords: Slobodan Jovanović, Machiavelli, Machiavellianism, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Cavour, Crispi, Pareto, Portigliotti, Marchesini, Ferrero, corporate law

Slobodan Jovanović (1869–1958) was one of the most distinguished scholars and professors of the University of Belgrade, president of the Royal Serbian Academy, rector of the University of Belgrade, dean of its Law School, editor of the *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian Literary Herald).² Having completed his law studies in Munich, Zurich, Geneva and Paris (École libre des sciences politiques), he served as a diplomat responsible for providing protection and aid to

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² *Slobodan Jovanović – Life, Work, Times: on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his birth*, ed. K. Čavoški and A. Kostić (Belgrade: SASA, 2019); B. Milosavljević, *The World and Times of Slobodan Jovanović (1869–1958)* (Belgrade: SASA, 2021); B. Milosavljević, *Slobodan Jovanović. Teorija* (Belgrade: Balkanološki institut SANU, 2017); D. N. Basta, *Pet likova Slobodana Jovanovića* (Belgrade: JP Službeni list SCG, 2003); A. Pavković, *Slobodan Jovanović: an unsentimental approach to politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); M. Jovičić, *Slobodan Jovanović: ilustrovana monografija* (Belgrade: Vajat, 1997).

the Serbs outside Serbia at a department similar to the departments for Eastern affairs of the European foreign ministries, and as a diplomat in the capital of the Ottoman Empire. During the Balkan Wars and the First World War he was head of the press bureau of the intelligence division of the Serbian High Command. In his capacity as a legal expert he took part in the Peace Conference in Paris and in drafting the constitution of the newly-created state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. He was a founding member and chair of the Serbian Cultural Club in 1937, Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the country and then, from 1941 to 1943, in exile in London, where he lived until his death in 1958. His seventeen-volume collected works were published in the interwar period. He left behind an extensive body of work.

Slobodan Jovanović's contact with Italy began in his early childhood and subsequently developed through his thorough study of Niccolò Machiavelli's political theory, Italian culture, art and music, Italian political systems, the role of the Italian unification movement in the history of the Serbian unification movement in the nineteenth century, his interpretation of the relationship between the Italian and Serbian interests in the Adriatic and the Balkans, and finally, through his frequent travels to Italy, where he visited museums and art galleries, attended opera productions and concerts.

That Slobodan Jovanović's connection with Italy was quite personal can be seen from the memories his father, Vladimir, committed to paper. Namely, Slobodan Jovanović was born in Novi Sad, in what then was Austria-Hungary, in 1869. His father, a political émigré at the time, left for Switzerland after his son's birth, and then to France. Upon returning from Paris, he spent the summer of 1870 in Novi Sad with his wife Jelena and son Slobodan. Then the family left for Naples, where they spent the winter. At the time of his first stay in Italy then Slobodan was about a year old. His father made a note about their visit to Pompeii:

One day, during our visit to the excavated ruins of Pompeii, Jelena, carrying our little son [Slobodan Jovanović] in her arms, stopped by a wall and tried to get him standing against it; he wriggled free from her arms and began to walk. From then on he walked on his own holding someone's hand.³

It was in Italy, then, in Pompeii, that Slobodan Jovanović took his first steps. This early personal connection would be just a childhood anecdote had

³ V. Jovanović, *Uspomene*, ed. and preface V. Krestić (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1988), 270 [source: Archives of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ASANU), Dragoslav Stranjaković Papers, 14556/144].

his father not had deeper and quite important political connections with Italy.⁴ Having completed his studies abroad, Vladimir Jovanović made frequent stays abroad (the longest in Geneva), where he made many acquaintances and friends. While in London in 1862 he met Mikhail Bakunin, who introduced him to Giuseppe Mazzini.⁵ Owing to Mazzini's recommendations, he had a very interesting meeting and confidential conversation (in the spirit of Mazzinian ideas) with William Gladstone, the then British finance minister, of which he made a note.⁶ He had meetings with Mazzini in different places. He left us a detailed description of their secret meeting in a villa on the shore of Lake Lugano in 1863, which provides a vivid picture of Mazzini's well-known secretive working style:

After the meeting and conversation with [Marco] Minghetti, I left Turin for Milan. There I had a meeting with the editor of the magazine *Il Diritto*. At my request to tell me where I could meet Mazzini, he gave me the address of a lady in Lugano and told me that I would learn Mazzini's whereabouts from her. I promptly set off for Lugano. I arrived in Lugano in the early evening. I had to spend the night there, so I took a hotel room. I hastened to learn about Mazzini's whereabouts. When I knocked at the door of the house I had been referred to in Milan, a young man opened it. I showed him the address of the lady I wanted to speak with. He said that the lady resided in a villa by Lake Lugano and that he was ready to take me there. In reply to my question: was it not too late in the day for the visit and would it not be better to postpone it for the next day, he said that the lady had already been notified of my arrival by a telegram from Milan and that she instructed him to take me to her villa

⁴ Vladimir Jovanović (1833–1922) served as finance minister (1876–1878, 1878–1879, 1880), president of the Serbian Learned Society (1884–1886), predecessor of the Royal Serbian Academy, (lifelong) senator, member (1890–1903) and vice-president of the State Council, professor of political economy at the Great School in Belgrade (1863–1864), member of parliament, ideologue of the Liberal Party and the United Serbian Youth. He graduated from the Belgrade Grammar School (1850) and the Lyceum in Belgrade (as one of the best students). Provided with a state grant, he pursued his higher education (agronomy, finances, economics) in Hohenheim (Württemberg), when he made a tour of Germany and France. He left Serbia for political reasons for the first time in 1860 because of his disapproval of Prince Miloš Obrenović's style of rule. He lived and worked in London, Geneva, Novi Sad. He died in Belgrade in 1922. See H. Wendel, "Vladimir Jovanović 1833–1922", *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 11 Mar. 1922, p. 1; "Vladimir Jovanović", *Samouprava*, 2 Apr. 1922, p. 2.

⁵ V. Jovanović, *Uspomene*, 148–149.

⁶ The meeting with Gladstone seems to have taken place in 1864. In Jovanović's *Uspomene*, 118–121, 151, this meeting is described before the one with Mazzini (who recommended him to Gladstone). Mazzini's letter of recommendation to minister Milner Gibson is dated 1 February (no year). E. F. Richards, the editor of *Mazzini's Letters to an English family*, vol. III: 1861–1872 (London–New York: John Lane, 1922), 65–68, assumed the year was 1864 ("almost certainly 1864"). This volume also contains (pp. 67–68) Slobodan Jovanović's letter to Mrs E[linor] F. Richards, signed Slobodan Iovanovitch and dated Corfu, 5 April 1917.

as soon as I should arrive. So, we were on our way together [...] We arrived at the villa about half past eight (in the evening). My escort entered to announce my arrival. I was invited in immediately. I had to walk down a long hall to the stairs leading to the first floor of the two-storey villa. On either side of the hall was a row of rooms. As I walked down the hall I noticed that the door of a room was left ajar. When I got upstairs I was ushered in a salon. My escort said that the “lady” would join me right away and left. And indeed, the door of the adjacent room opened and Mazzini walked quickly into the salon and towards me, holding out his hand for a shake without a salutation. He looked somewhat different: his hair cut short, moustache a bit trimmed and dyed black, hair also dyed black. Had I run into him in that edition somewhere after London, I would not have recognized him easily. He explained that while on travel and in Italy he had to “disguise” himself so as not to be recognized and thwarted in his efforts by his political opponents, and also to spare his friends from being “compromised”. This was the reason why even his friends had to be accompanied by his trusted man in Lugano, having been directed to the latter at the address of a “lady”. As I walked down the hall of the house where Mazzini resided, he, he said, saw me through the slightly opened door of a room, and when he was sure that I was the visitor announced by the telegram from Milan, he signalled his man to take me to the salon and then rushed to meet me himself.⁷

Slobodan Jovanović emphasized that his father Vladimir had already been a nationalist, but it was owing to Mazzini that he embraced nationalist ideology, lending an entirely new, liberal note to his traditional patriotism. He was a “liberal patriot” exactly in the Mazzinian sense. In 1864 Vladimir Jovanović proposed Giuseppe Garibaldi for membership of the Society of Serbian Letters, the precursor of the Serbian Learned Society, the Royal Serbian Academy and the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In his history of Serbia Slobodan Jovanović analyses the reasons for proposing Garibaldi and Alexander Ivanovich Herzen’s son, Alexander A. Herzen, for membership of the Society in 1864.⁸ Since the proposals were seen as a demonstration against the government, the activity of the Society was suspended and Vladimir Jovanović was dismissed as professor of political economy at the Great School in Belgrade. There is a hypothesis that Vladimir Jovanović allegedly had ulterior motives for proposing Garibaldi for membership of the Society. The affair linked to these motives was

⁷ V. Jovanović, *Uspomene, 176–175*.

⁸ “In fact, they wanted these names to provoke a manifestation in favour of rebellious nationalism, which was represented by Garibaldi, and political liberalism, represented, if not by young Herzen than by his father.” See S. Jovanović, *Druga vlada Miloša i Mihaila* [1922; 1933], vol. 3 of his collected works: *Sabrana dela* [hereafter *SD*], 12 vols., ed. R. Samardžić and Ž. Stojković (Belgrade: BIGZ, Jugoslavijapublik and SKZ, 1990–91), 388. Cf. S. Jovanović, “Vladimir Jovanović” [1948; 1961], *SD* 11, 92.

probably a set-up, and it was linked to the arrest of the alleged conspirators against the life of Napoleon III in January 1864.⁹

Sharing the household with his father for some fifty years, Slobodan Jovanović had the opportunity to hear first-hand the impressions and accounts of an actor in historical events.¹⁰ This proved useful when he was writing a history of nineteenth-century Serbia, where he explained in detail the connection between the Serbian and Italian national movements. He was practically growing up with historical “Italian themes”, with the issue of Serbian-Italian relations in which his father was actively involved. We shall dwell here on his interpretation of Serbian-Italian relations in the 1860s laid out in his book *Druga vlada Miloša i Mihaila* (The second reign of Miloš and Michael [Obrenović]) published in 1922, the year Vladimir Jovanović died.

Slobodan Jovanović explains that Mazzini disagreed with the politics of Victor Emmanuel II and the Count of Cavour, which counted on the help of France to achieve Italian unification.¹¹ Namely, Mazzini believed that Italy had to free herself from Austrian rule on her own, because Austrian rule would otherwise simply be replaced by French rule. France waged a war with Austria over the Italian question in 1859. Jovanović points out that she “stopped half

⁹ See G. Stokes, *Legitimacy Through Liberalism: Vladimir Jovanović and the Transformation of Serbian Politics* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1975), 64–65. The text Stokes drew the information from – B. Miljković, “Društvo srpske slovesnosti od 1841 do 1864”, in *Članci i prilozi o srpskoj književnosti prve polovine XIX veka* (Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 1914), 79, n. 1 – cites as its source “oral communication of Mr Vladimir Jovanović”, but it is unclear if it was given to the author in person; V. Jovanović, *Uspomene*, 174–176, 180, 182–183; V. Đ. Krestić and M. Stanić, eds., *Zapisnici sednica Društva srpske slovesnosti 1841–1863* (Belgrade: SANU, Izdanja arhiva 2/II, 2011); B. Milosavljević, “Vladimir Jovanović. Filozofija, nauka, politika”, *Theoria* 59/2 (2016), 113–149.

¹⁰ Vladimir Jovanović translated H. G. Ollendorff’s textbook for learning foreign languages (published in 1875 and 1877), which could be used for learning Italian as well. In the foreign languages field of Slobodan Jovanović’s employee record card German, French and English are listed but, judging by the books he read and drew on in his work, he was fluent in or was able to use Italian and the classical languages (Latin and Greek). In 1871 Vladimir Jovanović and his wife concluded a life insurance contract with the Trieste-based (Austria-Hungary at the time) Assicurazioni Generali worth 12,000 francs. He paid the premiums regularly for 42 (i.e. 43) years, until 1914. Under the contract terms, the policy was scheduled to mature when he reached the age of 85 and the maturity value was to be paid out (in gold). His correspondence with the company shows his surprise and bitterness over its “insatiable greed” because it used all sorts of ways to evade its obligation (Istorijski arhiv Beograda [Historical Archives of Belgrade], Lični fond Vladimira Jovanovića (LFVJ), K-1/I, 12, 2).

¹¹ S. Jovanović, *Druga vlada Miloša i Mihaila*, SD 3, 466. Cf. *Italijansko javno pravo s naročitim pogledom na korporativno pravo*. Predavanja g. dr. Slobodana Jovanovića, profesora Univerziteta u Beogradu, držana na doktorskom kursu 1935/36 godine [mimeographed doctoral course lectures, Belgrade 1936], SD 8, 520.

way” in that war.¹² She liberated Lombardy, but left Venice under the Austrians: “her price for this incomplete help to the Italian people was the annexation of Nice and Savoy.”¹³ Therefore, Mazzini’s advice to the Italians was an alliance not with France but with the South Slavs because Austria was the archenemy of both. Mazzini believed that war should begin with uprisings in Venice and in the Balkans, which, in turn, would stir the Hungarians to rebellion, who “would get even with the Austrians for 1848”: “set on fire from all sides, the Austrian empire would collapse within twenty days. Turkey would collapse with it too, because the two despotic states supported one another.”¹⁴ As pointed out by Jovanović, Mazzini believed that an alliance with the Italians was in the interest of the South Slavs. If they did not liberate themselves in a joint chain action, they would have to wait for Russia to liberate them, and “the liberation given by the Russians, Mazzini believed, would be even more dangerous than the liberation given to the Italians by France”. If the South Slavs joined forces with the Italians in their struggle, the Italians would help Serbia in her struggle against the Ottoman empire. According to Slobodan Jovanović, Mazzini promised his father “an incursion of Garibaldi and his volunteers into Bosnia”:

As Mazzini saw it, Serbia should not make war with Austria; she should deploy her armies against Turkey. It would be enough that her units infiltrate into Austria, which would incite the South Slavic population there to rebellion and thus encourage the Hungarians to rise up. Vladimir Jovanović accepted Mazzini’s ideas and passed them on to the government in Belgrade. When he was in Pest with [Svetozar] Miletić, he received Mazzini’s last letter and warning: “We shall make war,” Mazzini wrote, “but if your compatriots wait for the success or arrival of our volunteers, some kind of peace... or whatever... this convenient opportunity will be gone. The time has come for the Serbs and South Slavs. If they work, they will be helped.”¹⁵

Svetozar Miletić and Vladimir Jovanović embraced Mazzini’s ideas and advocated an alliance with Italy and Prussia. They believed, as pointed out by Slobodan Jovanović, that making a link between Serbian unification and Italian and German unifications would remove all diplomatic obstacles “because all the powers that supported Italian and German unification – England, France and Russia – would have to accept a third, Serbian, unification.”¹⁶ They believed that the time was right for it because Austria was at war: “In the event of Austria’s defeat, which is certain, it is in the Balkans that she will have to look for com-

¹² S. Jovanović, *Druga vlada Miloša i Mihaila*, 467.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 467–468.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 468.

compensation for the loss of Venice and her lost position in the German union.”¹⁷ Miletić and Jovanović learned that Bismarck and Italy had been trying to draw Serbia into the events, but Prince Michael [Obrenović] took no action. The Austro-Prussian War ended in Austria’s defeat: “Austrian court and military circles promptly began to think about compensations that might be taken in Bosnia. Little by little, Austria shifted from west to east, and in her ambition to become a Balkan state, became a danger to our national unification.”¹⁸ The liberals were convinced that Prince Michael was to be blamed for the future tragedy because he had lacked the courage to act in a decisive moment.

Slobodan Jovanović does not depict these political developments only from the perspective of his father, Vladimir Jovanović, and the liberal opposition, but also from the perspective of the then Serbian government. Although Prince Michael refrained from involvement under the diplomatic pressure of Russia and France, there were negotiations with Italy and Prussia. The problem was that Italy was unwilling to conclude a treaty with Serbia: “she called on us to fight a war at our own risk.”¹⁹ Ilija Garašanin argued in a letter that Serbs were called to fight a war like bashibozuks [Ottoman irregular soldiers] who would be disbanded after the war just as Garibaldi’s volunteers. He wrote that the Serbian government’s proposals were “rejected and practically scorned by the Italian government.”²⁰ Nor could the Serbian government support Prussia’s plan for aiding the Hungarian legion recruited from prisoners of war: “We are called, Garašanin reasoned, to Hungarian aid, but there is no treaty whatsoever between Serbs and Hungarians. The Hungarians, in principle, won’t give up any piece of their land, even a single village.”²¹ The Serbian government needed to know whether Prussia and Italy planned to divide Austria between them after their victory or whether they would let it survive as a smaller country. They believed that Serbia would be able to join in if Prussia and Italy intended to partition Austria. If, on the other hand, they planned to let it survive, though smaller, she would take revenge on the Serbs:

Michael and his government had the impression that the division of Austria was not seriously taken into account and that Serbs were called to take part in a Hungarian uprising in which our gains were not assured in advance and which might well end with an Austro-Hungarian compromise, whereas we would bring Austria’s hatred on ourselves. On the other hand, in 1866 the liberals decided that nothing could be expected from Prince Michael and founded the

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 470.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

United Serbian Youth with the intention to encourage the independent liberation and unification of the Serbian people.²²

To understand Slobodan Jovanović's multiple connections with Italy, we should take into account his frequent stays in Italy and Italian-populated areas, the fact that some of his closest relatives resided in Italy during the First World War, that his friends travelled with him to Italy or regularly sent him letters and picture postcards while sojourning in Italy (Milan Ćurčin, Rastko Petrović etc.). Jovanović's close personal connection with Italy is important for understanding his understanding of Italian scholarship, history, politics, culture and art.

A Renaissance spirit, he especially appreciates the Renaissance; in its entirety: literature, sculpture, architecture and, especially, painting [...] Renaissance universalism and Da Vinci in particular are his great loves. [...] He is fond of the "golden mean". [...] And it goes from Plato, Cicero, Seneca, all the way to Dante... Mr Slobodan Jovanović is a "globetrotter". A tourist travelling the world in search of anything from the past that has been a success. Regardless of time and place, religions and systems, races, peoples and classes, national and international, "Latin", "Greek", "Nordic", "Anglo-Saxon", "Russian"; regardless of all of that and much more, he singles out only that which is of highest value and represents the spiritual gold standard of the history of humanity.²³

The surviving picture postcards Slobodan Jovanović sent to his family members, mostly his father Vladimir, sister Pravda, nephew Andrija (Andra), and brother-in-law Mihailo Ristić, a diplomat and minister plenipotentiary to Italy (1914–17), and his passport (1935–42), make it possible to partly reconstruct his stays in Italy between 1905 and 1939.²⁴ As some postmarks have faded it is not always possible to know if his own dates followed the Julian or the Gregorian calendar, although he generally used the calendar which was in official use in the country he was staying in. A picture postcard of 29 August 1905 suggests that he was in Venice. Another surviving picture postcard, of 22 August 1907, was sent from Paradiso on the shore of Lake Lugano, Switzerland, in which he arrived from Luzern, from where he had written to his sister in Abbazia (Opatija), Austria-Hungary (in Italy from 1920). He planned to travel to the Italian Lakes and Milan. It is possible that he made a stay at Hotel Baviera on the very lakefront of Lake Garda the same year (the letter is not dated). His picture postcards to his father in Belgrade (8 August 1908) and sister in Abbazia (19 August 1908) show that in August 1908 he was in Bologna, then in Florence (24 August), Naples (29 and 30 August) and Genoa (13 September; addressed to

²² Ibid., 471.

²³ B. Lazarević, "Lik Slobodana Jovanovića", *Letopis Matice srpske* 114, 353/3–4 (1940), 161–169.

²⁴ ASANU, Slobodan Jovanović Papers, 14891/4, S. Jovanović's passport issued by the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, in Belgrade, 4 July 1935.

his father but specified that it was for Pravda). The following year he wrote to his sister from Venice (8 March 1909) and the year after that from Riva (3 August 1910). On 8 July 1911 he wrote to his father from Milan (where he stayed for a day and then set off for the Italian Lakes), and to his sister Pravda and nephew Andra Ristić from Rome (8 August), Riva (12 August), Rome again (30 August) and Naples (8 September). It seems that he was also in Brescia the same year (15 August 1911).²⁵

During the First World War Slobodan Jovanović's brother-in-law Mihailo Ristić served as minister plenipotentiary in Rome (1914–17). Slobodan Jovanović, as head of the press bureau of the High Command, was retreating with the army. He sent letters from Kragujevac to his sister in Rome (one through Major Radoje Janković), telling her about the tragic toll of a typhus epidemic in Serbia:

The disease has spread across Serbia and a prophecy we heard this winter is sure to come true, that there will be mass death after the war. I hear every day that someone I know died.²⁶

Jovanović retreated with the army across Albania and was evacuated to Corfu, and then he went to Thessaloniki. He wrote from Thessaloniki to Mihailo Ristić in Rome. His parents, Vladimir and Jelena, remained in Serbia but left Belgrade for Niš and then for Vrnjačka Banja. Vladimir Jovanović maintained correspondence with his daughter, who was in Rome and Paris with her son. They corresponded through the Red Cross in Switzerland (Pravda wrote some of these letters in German). On the letterhead of the Legation of Serbia to Italy (Légation de Serbie) dated 2 September 1915, Pravda's son Andra wrote to his grandfather:

We returned to Rome on 29 August after a month in Rocca di Papa. We had quite a good time there but Anzio was much better. The weather in Rome is quite nice now but nights are fresh and we have to keep the windows in our sleeping rooms closed at night. In your letter to Maka [mother Pravda] you say that the Uncle [Slobodan Jovanović] has been called to London. Thinking about it, it occurred to me that in that case you and Babutina [grandmother Jelena] might come with him to Rome and stay with us because it will be quite unsafe in Serbia if the Bulgarians attack, which could very well happen.²⁷

²⁵ During the summer of the following year, 1912, he travelled to the north of Europe (Rü- gen, Helsinki, Klampenborg, Copenhagen, Kronborg Castle, Antwerp, Uppsala and, as it seems, Stockholm, Hamburg etc.).

²⁶ Arhiva Kulturnog centra Dom porodice Pavlović (AKCDPP), Slobodan Jovanović to Pravda Ristić (in Rome), Kragujevac, 9 Feb. 1915. Mentions the death of the Dr Selimir Djordjević, director of the Town Hospital of Valjevo.

²⁷ AKCDPP, Andra Ristić to Vladimir Jovanović (grandfather), Rome, 29 Aug. 1915.

From 1917 Jovanović was in Corfu again. Some of the letters he sent and received while there have survived. In 1922 a letter he had sent to Mrs Richards in England in 1917 was included in the book she edited, *Mazzini's Letters to an English Family*.²⁸

Then he went to France, first to Beaulieu and then to Paris, where he took part in the Peace Conference in 1919 as a legal expert and president of the Section for International Law of the Delegation of the Kingdom of Serbia and then the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. He was also one of the technical delegates authorized to represent the Delegation in some bodies of the Peace Conference. He was appointed as Serbia's representative to the Commission on the Responsibility of the Authors of the War and on Enforcement of Penalties. The central problem for the new state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes that arose at the conference was that the great powers demanded the right to protect minorities in smaller states. At the government session of 21 September 1919 held in Belgrade Slobodan Jovanović pointed out that the idea of minority protection had come from President Woodrow Wilson, but that the Italians demanded the same kind of protection for Macedonia (South Serbia), part of the Kingdom of Serbia before the First World War.²⁹

The available archival material does not allow to say when exactly Jovanović first visited Italy after the war; perhaps it was the second half of the 1920s. His passport and picture postcards allow us more precision for the second half of the 1930s. He travelled by train from Belgrade to Rijeka/Fiume via Zagreb. He crossed the border at Sušak on 17 August 1935 and embarked on the steamship *Kumanovo* to Venice, entering Italy the following day, 18 August. The picture postcards he sent show that he was in Florence on 24 August. A surviving photograph shows him with Milan Žujović and Dragiša, Nataša and Tatjana Vasić in front of the Florentine Basilica di Santa Croce. He wrote to his nephew Andra from Florence, Siena (30 August), Pisa and Venice (4 September). He left Italy in Venice on 6 September, taking a ship back home. He entered the country in Split on 7 September. Two years later, on 18 August 1937, he travelled to Venice via Sušak again (steamship *Crown Prince Peter*). He sent picture post-

²⁸ Slobodan Iovanovitch to Mrs E. F. Richards, Corfu, 5 Apr. 1917, in Richards, ed., *Mazzini's Letters*, 67–68.

²⁹ In early September 1919 the text appeared of a convention on minority protection specifying the obligations of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. It did not exempt from international guarantees the territory of Serbia as it had been before 1912, i.e. before the Balkan Wars, but as it was in 1914. See the minutes of 3 September 1919 and the minutes of the meeting of the Council of Ministers of 21 September 1919, in *Zapisnici sa sednica delegacije Kraljevine SHS na Mirovnoj konferenciji u Parizu 1919–1920*, ed. Bogdan Krizman and Bogumil Hrabak (Belgrade: Institut društvenih nauka, Odeljenje za istorijske nauke and Kultura, 1960), 180, 374, 376.

cards from Venice (21 and 22 August), Pisa (27 August), Florence (30 August), a letter to his nephew (1 September) and a picture postcard (4 September). He planned to travel from Florence to Bologna and Venice, from which he sent another picture postcard on 8 September. He left Venice aboard the steamship *King Alexander I* two days later and arrived in Yugoslavia, in Sušak, the following day, 11 September 1937. The Swiss visa he was issued in Belgrade in 1939 states “tourism” as the reason for travel. He crossed the border at Rakek–Postojna (Postumia–Ferrovia, today in Slovenia) on 18 August. He left Italy the same day at the Domodossola railway station (Domodossola Ferrovia) and proceeded to Switzerland, arriving in Lausanne on 19 August. A few days later he took the train back to Italy (via Domodossola again). He wrote to his nephew Andra from Venice on 24 August, leaving Italy the following day for Yugoslavia. A few days later the Second World War broke out and Slobodan Jovanović stopped travelling abroad.

* * *

“Italian themes” recur in Slobodan Jovanović’s writings over a long span of about fifty years. They include Italian political history and its influence on Serbian history, research into and interpretation of the activity of Italian politicians, statesmen and theorists, above all Machiavelli, and all references in his work to Italy and Italian politics, including his memoiristic writings.

Jovanović’s first text which analyses Italian foreign policy is his review of the book *The Adriatic Balance of Power* by Charles Loiseau.³⁰ It was published in the “Literary review (Foreign Literature)” section of the *Srpski književni glasnik* in 1901.³¹ Jovanović discusses Loiseau’s view that it is in Italian interest to leave the Triple Alliance. Italy’s motives for joining the Alliance was the establishment of French protectorate over Tunisia in 1881, which has disturbed the balance of power in the Mediterranean to the detriment of Italy: “established in Tunisia, she [France] came so close to Sicily that Italy was no longer sure of being able to defend the island against her.”³² Bismarck assured Italian statesmen that it was only with the support of Germany and Austria-Hungary that they would be able to resist the French expansionist ambitions in the Mediterranean and encouraged them to follow the example of French colonial policy in Africa. Having failed in Africa, Italy shifted her attention to the Adriatic Sea:

³⁰ C. Loiseau, *L'Équilibre adriatique (L'Italie et la question d'Orient)* (Paris: Perrin et Cie, 1901).

³¹ S. Jovanović, “Ravnoteža na Jadranskom moru, od Šarla Loazoa, 1901”, *Srpski književni glasnik (SKG)* III/1 (1901), 61–67.

³² Ibid.

The new school of Italian politicians seem to be less ambitious and, consequently, more pragmatic. They do not believe that today's Italy can continue the politics of ancient Rome. It will be enough if they manage to continue the politics of the old Venetians, who are closer to them in every respect.³³

If Italy's future is tied to the Adriatic rather than to North Africa, then her main adversary is not France but Austria-Hungary with which she is in alliance. Based on these arguments, Loiseau advises Italy to cooperate with "whoever has reasons to resist German expansion to the East", France, Russia and the Slavic states in the Balkans. Jovanović's critical analysis of Loiseau's ideas points to the logical contradiction of his line of argument. Namely, Loiseau, convinced that Italy will inevitably enter into conflict with Austria-Hungary in the Balkans, advocates Italy's rapprochement to the Slavic states. On the other hand, he overlooks Italy's role as protector of the Albanians, which is why "her rapprochement to the Serbian states is out of question" given that Albanians have been occupying Serbian parts and putting the Serbian population in Kosovo and Metohija under pressure.³⁴

The same year Slobodan Jovanović wrote an obituary of the Italian statesman Francesco Crispi, emphasizing two periods of his political activity and analysing the consequences of his politics:

Once the passions inflamed by his bellicose and turbulent life calm down, the judgement about him will depend on whether it concerns Crispi the revolutionary or Crispi the minister of united Italy. And just as the Crispi who worked for the unification of Italy deserves sympathies so the Crispi who exhausted and disgraced her deserves some sternness in judgement. But what both Crispis had in common is the same temperament – the temperament of a condottiere.³⁵

About ten years later the same journal published his text about Crispi's inheritance, i.e. about the archival material (documents, letters, parts of his diary) published in Berlin. The material mostly concerns foreign policy up to the fall of Crispi's first government in 1891.³⁶ The book begins with Crispi's visit to Bismarck in 1877. Jovanović's review gives a succinct overview of the political situation in which Italy was at the time.³⁷ He points out that Bismarck "only

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Bruno [S. Jovanović], "Frančesko Krispi", *SKG* III/4 (1901), 317–318. Crispi (1818–1901) was a friend and associate of Mazzini and Garibaldi and served as prime minister of Italy. He was born in Sicily to a family of Albanian Christian Orthodox origin.

³⁶ S. Jovanović, "Krispijeva spoljašna politika (*Memoari Frančeska Krispija* – uspomene i dokumenti – izdani od T. Palamengi-Krispija [Tommaso Palamenghi-Crispi, German translation published in Berlin 1912]", *SKG* XXVIII (1912), no. 9, 662–667; no. 10, 751–757.

³⁷ Ibid.

partially” accepted Crispi’s offer of an alliance, agreeing to conclude an alliance against France but not against Austria-Hungary, counting on the latter as Germany’s future ally. He made it plain to Italy that she had to make peace with Austria-Hungary if she wanted a firmer alliance with Germany: “He did not think that Austrian expansion into the Balkans should be curbed; if Italy believes that the entry of Austria-Hungary into Bosnia and Herzegovina would be harmful to her interests, there’s Albania – let her take her as a compensation.”³⁸ Italy fared quite badly at the Congress of Berlin. Austria-Hungary was given a mandate to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, and France to occupy Tunisia, of which nothing was said in the Berlin Treaty, but which was arranged behind the scenes. “France, until then popular with the Italian people, suddenly became detested...”³⁹ Under such circumstances, Italy in 1882 joined the German-Austro-Hungarian Alliance (concluded back in 1879). She was not content with it, however, and upon the expiration of the five-year treaty in 1887, it was renewed under modified terms. Basically, Jovanović points out, Germany and Austria-Hungary were not able to help Italy in a naval war with France. Bismarck suggested that the treaty be supplemented with an Anglo-Italian alliance. He negotiated with the British in person. Jovanović finds this to be “one of the most interesting places” in the book:

Bismarck resorted to threats. If England does not join the Triple Alliance in some way, Germany may well be forced to work out whatever sort of agreement with France and Russia. In that case, she will have to support the French demands as regards the Egyptian question and, possibly, let Russia take the Bosphorus and Dardanelles [...] A less able diplomat in Bismarck’s place would have simply been puzzled by Italy’s political ambitions in the Mediterranean which, at first glance, seemed to be nothing but a burden to her allies. But Bismarck tried to draw some benefit even from them for his plans against France.”⁴⁰

When Crispi took the helm of Italian foreign policy (1887) the Triple Alliance was seen as a “marriage of convenience” in which Italy had entered out of political necessity and with little enthusiasm: “The Italian people began to feel resentment about that alliance which, unnaturally, made Italy a friend of Austria.”⁴¹ Crispi took a different stance, as Jovanović suggests. He believed that the alliance had to operate on a daily basis and consult about all foreign policy issues so that it could be obvious that Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy supported

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

one another.⁴² Jovanović emphasizes that initially the intentions of the Triple Alliance, the only alliance in Europe at the time, were not understood: “allied Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy stood opposite unallied France, England and Russia.”⁴³ The material published in the book on Crispi, Jovanović argues, shows that the Italian government seriously believed for a while (in the summer of 1889) that France would attack her militarily. He asks if the intention of Crispi’s attacks on France was to provoke a war against the will of Germany and Austria: “Bismarck was not Napoleon III and he would not let himself be drawn into a war.”⁴⁴ Be that as it may, Jovanović concludes, Crispi was “one of the strongest pillars of the Triple Alliance whose personal courage and strength considerably contributed to the consolidation and preservation of the alliance which was so fateful not only for Italy but for all of Europe.”⁴⁵

Machiavelli was certainly the most important of Jovanović’s “Italian themes” and he analysed his personality and his work in several studies. In the first chapter of his capital book on the state (*Država*), which had four editions (1906, 1914, 1922, 1936), he draws attention to Machiavelli’s importance: “It is interesting that the word *Stato* began to be used to denote the state in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, when the first modern states were created, and that it was introduced into political science by Machiavelli, who is considered to be the father of the modern science of the state.”⁴⁶ Jovanović’s separate study of Machiavelli was published in 1907, at first in the *Srpski književni glasnik*, and then by the publisher Geca Kon. It had two more revised and supplemented editions (1912 and 1935).⁴⁷ He also wrote about Machiavelli in his reviews of

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ It may be interesting to note that A. Pavković (*Slobodan Jovanović*, 86), in his interpretation of Jovanović’s *Država*, refers the reader to the book *The State: its nature, development and prospects* by the Italian scholar Gianfranco Poggi (b. 1934), who has taught at several universities in Europe, the USA and Australia. He finds it pertinent to draw a comparison between the two books because Poggi does not neglect the contribution of the *Staatslehre* approach to the study of the concept and phenomenon of the state, and, just like Jovanović, “considers the state to be an object of systematic, multidisciplinary study”.

⁴⁷ ASANU, S. B. Cvijanović Papers, 10864/7, Corrections and additions to the study of Machiavelli. S. Jovanović, *Makiaveli* (Belgrade: Knjižarnica Gece Kona, 1907; Offprint from SKG XVIII (1907); *Makiaveli*, 2nd rev. ed. (Belgrade: Knjižarnica S. B. Cvijanovića, 1912); *Iz istorije političkih doktrina. Platon. Makiaveli. Berk. Marks* (Belgrade: Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A. D., 1935); SD 9, 85–147.

Giuseppe Protigliotti's book on the Borgias (1927)⁴⁸ and Maria Marchesini's on Machiavelli (1934),⁴⁹ and in his book on totalitarianism published in emigration (*O totalitarizmu*, Paris: Savez srpskih zadruga "Oslobodjenje", 1952). In his study of Machiavelli, Jovanović focuses especially on his *Discourses on Livy* (*Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio*) and *The Prince* (*Il Principe*), which "created modern political science".⁵⁰ Jovanović portrays Machiavelli's times and milieu, and the importance and influence of Girolamo Savonarola, Cesare Borgia and other figures of the period. In Jovanović's view, Machiavelli in his *Discourses* "seeks to draw from Roman history all political experience and all political wisdom it contains".⁵¹ Especially important is Jovanović's analysis of the different meanings of the concept of "Machiavellianism".⁵² He points out Machiavelli's view that the state is not a part of a whole but a whole in its own right; and every whole must be an end in itself: "The basic idea of that politics is that the state is an end in itself. It does not have to serve religious ends as the medieval Christian state was supposed to."⁵³ Consequently, no internal factors prevent a modern state from moving towards the achievement of its interests until it runs into an external obstacle. To Machiavelli, the ruler is a military organizer and diplomat, which is why his monarchy is not truly modern, absolute monarchy but merely "a dictatorship for an indefinite period". Although aware of the main principles of the modern state, Machiavelli "was unable to rise to the true idea of monarchy, the monarchy founded on the principle of state sovereignty or on divine right, of which would speak a Bodin, a Bossuet, a Hobbes."⁵⁴

Jovanović makes a distinction between a narrower and a broader understanding of the concept of "Machiavellianism". In the narrower sense, the state is not limited by any moral rules in its relations with its citizens and with other states. In the broader, and prevailing understanding, moral rules do not apply to certain groups of politicians who contend for power within the state and can use any means in that struggle. Jovanović shows that the two different interpreta-

⁴⁸ G. Portigliotti, *I Borgia: Alessandro VI, Cesare, Lucrezia* (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1921 [1925, 1927, 1940]), 344; S. Jovanović, "Bordžije", SKG n.s. XXI/7 (1927), 556–557.

⁴⁹ M. Marchesini, *Saggio su Machiavelli*, preface by Natalino Sapegno (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1934); S. Jovanović, "Jedna nova knjiga o Makiaveliju (Maria Marchesini, Saggio su Machiavelli, Firenze, 1934)", SKG n.s. XLII/7 (1934), 564–566.

⁵⁰ S. Jovanović, "Makiaveli", SKG XVIII (1907), 14.

⁵¹ S. Jovanović, "Makiaveli", SD 9, 108.

⁵² Cf. K. Čavoški, *Makijaveli*, 2nd supp. ed. (Novi Sad: Orpheus, Kapitalna izdanja Series, 2012).

⁵³ S. Jovanović, "Makiaveli", SKG XVIII (1907), 276.

⁵⁴ S. Jovanović, "Makiaveli", SD 9, 124–125.

tions of Machiavellianism stand in mutual opposition.⁵⁵ The broader one, which allows politicians and political parties to do whatever necessary to succeed, implies that one can do in politics what is unacceptable in private life. Jovanović gives the following examples: deceiving the electorate by false promises, imputing motives and intentions to the opponents which they are known not to have, tolerating fellow party members one would not even shake hands with in private life, promoting the ideas that are contrary to one's intimate beliefs because they are currently popular and attacking other ideas because they are currently unpopular.⁵⁶ Jovanović points out that the broader interpretation contradicts Machiavelli's teaching on the state: "broader Machiavellianism is a fallacious doctrine, and fallacious from the perspective of Machiavellianism itself."⁵⁷ Namely, Machiavellianism puts the interest of the state above any other interest, including moral considerations. But exactly because this interest of the state, or reason of state, is paramount, it is of the utmost interest to the state itself who is at its head. It is because of that highest interest of the state that the use of immoral means in the political struggle within a state must not be allowed. He argues that we cannot know whether Machiavelli envisioned, let alone approved, Machiavellianism in the broader sense, because he could not take into account the factor of modern political parties:

Machiavellianism in the narrow sense unquestionably is a faithful expression of Machiavelli's ideas. That is true Machiavellianism, the Machiavellianism that Machiavelli himself invented and that, consequently, he is responsible for.⁵⁸

In the review of Portigliotti's book on the Borgias which portrays the pope Alexander IV, his son Cesare Borgia and daughter Lucrezia, Jovanović finds the part devoted to Cesare to be the most creative.⁵⁹ "That man whom Machiavelli saw as one of the greatest politicians of his time and whom Friedrich Nietzsche glorified almost as a superhuman figure seems in Portigliotti a perverse young man who only excelled in crime."⁶⁰ Contrary to Portigliotti, Machiavelli ("who not only knew him personally but was also associated with him in political affairs") described Cesare Borgia as a "very calculated and energetic politician who, it is true, had little scruples but operated very methodically."⁶¹ He finds that Machiavelli did have the imagination of an artist but "it is hard

⁵⁵ S. Jovanović, "Makiaveli", *SKG XVIII* (1907), 665.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 666.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 667–668, 669.

⁵⁹ Portigliotti, *I Borgia*; S. Jovanović, "Bordžije", 556–557.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 557.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

to believe that he was so misled as to see a great political master in an ordinary spoiled papal bastard".⁶²

At the very beginning of his review of Marchesini's book on Machiavelli, Jovanović points out that "she should be given credit for not trying to transpose Machiavelli to the present time and interpret him as a precursor of fascism":

It is in vogue these days in Italy to refer to Machiavelli as a forefather of the "black shirts", but Maria Marchesini in her essay makes no mention whatsoever of the fascists and their leader, Mussolini. She held, and with good reason, that Machiavelli would best be understood if placed in his own times and milieu.⁶³

Unlike the students of Machiavelli who believe that he had a "potential to become a great statesman, but the circumstances prevented him from developing and demonstrating his statesmanship abilities", Jovanović argues, Marchesini believes "that Machiavelli was a man of thought rather than action and that all his writings about current politics show that he had little sense of practical possibilities". Namely, Machiavelli's suggestions were right on the mark but "unfeasible in the Italy of his time".⁶⁴

Jovanović's study of Machiavelli was published twice in 1935: in his book *Iz istorije političkih doktrina* (From the history of political doctrines) and in volume XV of his *Sabrana dela* (Collected Works).⁶⁵ In the first of the two and in volume XVI of the second he also published an exhaustive study of Marx.⁶⁶ The chapter on anti-Marxists contains a subchapter devoted to the Italian sociologist Vifredo Pareto. Jovanović discusses the critique of Marxism in Pareto's book on the socialist systems.⁶⁷ Apart from the contradiction of Marx's theory of value, which he seeks to prove to be identical to the earlier thesis of John Stuart Mill, Pareto points out that the theory of class struggle is scientifically ungrounded:

In popular interpretation, the theory of class struggle amounts to the following. There are only two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The two classes carry on a fight to the death. The fight will end in the destruction of the bour-

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ S. Jovanović, "Jedna nova knjiga o Makiaveliju", 564.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ S. Jovanović, *Iz istorije političkih doktrina. Platon. Makiaveli. Berk. Marks* (Belgrade: Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A. D., 1935); *Iz istorije političkih doktrina. Knjiga prva. Sabrana dela Slobodana Jovanovića XV: Platon, Makiaveli, Berk* (Belgrade: Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A. D., 1935).

⁶⁶ S. Jovanović, *Iz istorije političkih doktrina. Platon. Makiaveli. Berk. Marks* (Belgrade: Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A. D., 1935); *Iz istorije političkih doktrina. Knjiga druga. Sabrana dela Slobodana Jovanovića XVI: Marks* (Belgrade: Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A. D., 1935).

⁶⁷ V. Pareto, *Les Systèmes Socialistes* (Paris: V. Giard & E. Brière, 1902).

geoisie. This is scientifically unacceptable. That classes exist is unquestionable, but not only two. It is also unquestionable that there is a struggle between classes – class struggle is just another name for social competition – but class struggle is not always and solely a war to extermination: it has other, more civilized and compromise-prone forms. [...] From the Marxist point of view, in class struggle the use of force is forbidden to the bourgeoisie and permitted to the proletariat. This is a peculiar ethics according to which the workers do not have to honour the contract with the employer and the employer has to honour it. The workers are permitted to strike, the employer is not permitted to fire them. The strikers are permitted to use violence; the state is not permitted to use its means of enforcement against them.⁶⁸

Jovanović finds Pareto to be more “concrete” than most sociologists because, rather than discussing “grand abstractions” (division of labour, class struggle etc.), he studies and interprets the “nature of the groups that rule in real life.”⁶⁹

In the academic year 1935/6 Jovanović taught a doctoral course on Italian public law at the Law School of the University of Belgrade. His lectures were published (mimeographed) in 1936 under the title *Italian public law with particular reference to corporate law*.⁷⁰ The introductory section contains a concise and clear account of Italian history in the nineteenth and twentieth century.⁷¹ Jovanović also gives an account of the unstable political situation after the First World War and the circumstances in which the “socialists, fully under the influence of Bolsheviks, staged anti-nationalist actions (e.g. public displays of disrespect for the national flag), which hurt the feelings of former soldiers”. On the other hand, “Mussolini appealed above all to former soldiers, but since there were many workers among them, even the first edition of the fascist programme was a mixture of socialism and nationalism.”⁷²

In his analysis of the Italian constitution, Jovanović argues that Italian jurists were of the view that Italy is an old state because the Constitution of the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont was extended to all annexed states and regions, i.e. the legal system remained unchanged, “only its territorial scope increased”. He analyses step by step and in detail the constitutional position of the king and the government:⁷³

The law of 24 December 1925 [...] restores to the crown the direction of government which had been taken from it by the parliament. The head of government is not accountable to the parliament but to the crown. [...] The political

⁶⁸ S. Jovanović, “Marks” [1935], *SD* 9, 327.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 328.

⁷⁰ S. Jovanović, *Italijansko javno pravo*, 517–604.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 532.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 535.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 541.

direction of the government, previously set by the council of ministers, is now the exclusive prerogative of the head of government. The other ministers are limited to managing administrative affairs.⁷⁴

Consequently, the head of government is accountable directly, personally and exclusively to the king, and the ministers are accountable both to the king and to the head of government. Jovanović also analyses various Italian legal interpretations of the form of government introduced by the law of 1925. Apart from the royal government, another constitutional body was the Grand Council of Fascism which had been established in 1922 and whose president was head of government by law. With this body, the Fascist Party and its organization was, as Jovanović puts it, “wedged” into the state. The Council had an advisory role (e.g. making lists of candidates for the offices of head of government, ministers and state undersecretaries). He analyses the Senate (upper chamber) and the Chamber of Deputies. In the next chapter he interprets “the attributes of the constitutional bodies” – A. Legislative bodies (law-making, approving the budget, overseeing the government); B. Senate as the state court; C. King as head of the executive branch (1. the power of issuing decrees; 2. diplomatic power; 3. judicial power). “Justice is dispensed in the king’s name,” but “everything that concerns the organization and jurisdiction of the judicial branch is regulated by law”.⁷⁵ Jovanović proceeds to describe the administrative system (individual rights, active administration, central active administration, advisory administration, local administration and self-government). The interpretation of the administration is followed by an analysis of corporate law. The idea of the corporate state is to coordinate the economy by establishing a link among major fields of production from the “standpoint of the national whole”:

Associations of a particular type are needed where the economic actors would be grouped not as they are in the syndicates, according to their place in the production process, but according to the field of production in which they operate either as employers or as employees.⁷⁶

So, corporations became state bodies, whereas syndicates were reduced to public legal bodies. Jovanović describes corporate organization – professional categories (entrepreneurs, workers and independent professions; professional associations – employers only or employees only); federations and confederations of employers’ and workers’ associations; syndical (syndical associations, syndical finances, oversight of syndicates). There follows a description of corporate bodies: “By decrees of the head of government twenty-two corporations were established in the course of 1934. They can be grouped into three groups

⁷⁴ Ibid., 546–547.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 565.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 577.

like three circles of production of unequal complexity.”⁷⁷ The first group encompasses the widest production circle (from agriculture to industry and trade – grains, fruit, vine growing, oil etc.). The second group encompasses corporations whose production circle is limited to industry and trade without agriculture (e.g. construction industry, metallurgy, mining, chemical production). The third group encompasses personal service and non-profit corporations (independent professions and the arts, domestic transportation, the sea and the air, hospitality, the theatre).⁷⁸ The corporate system was organized by the state through the ministry of corporations. Jovanović describes the activity of corporations in the chapter titled “Corporate action”, discussing the collective labour contract, its elements, conclusion, significance and legal effect, collective labour disputes, collective discipline of labour relations, safeguards of the corporate system under criminal law. He offers an interpretation of contemporary Italian public law in the chapter “The Post-war State” (England, France, Italy, Germany, Russia) of his book *Država (The State)* published in 1936.⁷⁹ In this chapter he analyses the views of, among others, Giovanni Gentile and provides a bibliography of the Italian authors he drew on.⁸⁰

In the works Jovanović published in the 1950s, while in emigration in London, he draws analogies between the Italian corporate system and Tito’s constitutional changes of 1952 and 1954.⁸¹ He also finds some similarities in

⁷⁷ Ibid., 593.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ S. Jovanović, *Država*. Book Two: *Državna organizacija. Poratna država*, vol. XIV of *Sabrana dela Slobodana Jovanovića* (Belgrade: Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A.D., 1936); *Poratna država*, offprint from the book *Država*, Part 4 (Belgrade; Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A.D., 1936).

⁸⁰ S. Romano, “Ordinamento giuridico”, *Annali delle Università toscane* (1918); A. Rocco, *La Dottrina politica del Fascismo* (Milan: La periodica lombarda, 1925); A. Rocco, *La Trasformazione dello Stato* (Rome: “La Voce”, Anonima Editrice, 1927); C. Costamagna, *Lo Stato corporativo quale Stato di diritto* (Rome 1928); G. Gentile, *Origini e Dottrina del Fascismo* (Rome: Libreria del Littorio, 1929); G. Bortolotto, *Lo Stato e la dottrina corporativa*, vol. I–II (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1931); B. Mussolini, “Fascismo”, in *Enciclopedia italiana* (La Treccani), vol. XIV (Rome 1932); G. Bottai, *Le corporazioni* (Milan: A. Mondadori, 1933); E. Ranelletti, *Corso di diritto sindacale e corporativo* (Milan: A. Giuffrè, 1933); G. Bottai, *Esperienza corporativa (1929–1934)* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1934); A. Volpicelli, *Corporativismo e Scienza del Diritto* (Florence: G. C. Sansoni, 1934); W. Cesarini-Sforza, *Corso di Diritto corporativo* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1935); E. Ranelletti, *Istituzioni di Diritto Pubblico* (Padua: Cedam, 1935); G. Zanobini, *Corso di Diritto corporativo* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1935).

⁸¹ “Another institution presented by the Titoists as their own invention is the Council of Producers. This body, which is supposed to deal with economic issues, exists side by side with the political parliament as a sort of economic parliament. What benefit this body brings, with its poor administration of which *Borba* wrote recently (see the issue of 4 November), is hard

outward manifestations (acclamations to the leader etc.), and in the international political circumstances of Tito's and Mussolini's rule.⁸²

Slobodan Jovanović published two texts on Guglielmo Ferrero, one in 1939 in *Letopis Matice srpske* (Novi Sad), the other in 1940 in *Politika* (Belgrade).⁸³ The earlier one is a review of the selection of Ferrero's works published by his son-in-law Bogdan Radica (1903–1993), a Yugoslav diplomat, writer and translator born in Split. The selection included Radica's conversations with Ferrero.⁸⁴ Jovanović points out that making the selection was not an easy job because Ferrero is "such a versatile writer – and historian, and sociologist, and storyteller".⁸⁵ Even so, Ferrero "has a basic thought which he elaborates to a lesser or greater extent in all of his writings".⁸⁶ Jovanović points to Ferrero's critique of contemporary culture, which has become more quantitative than qualitative:

Ferrero believes that quality should again be put above quantity, that we should become aware again that there are higher values than mere strength and that only the strength in the service of these values can be justified. Ferrero returns to Plato's old ideas of eternal truth, eternal beauty and eternal good.⁸⁷

Jovanović expresses a high opinion of Ferrero's insight into the epoch, "a particular kind of sensibility which enables us to feel a cultural epoch as a whole with its inner coherence and its distinctive style".⁸⁸

The holyday issue of the daily *Politika* in April 1940 published Jovanović's article "The Congress of Vienna in the light of Guglielmo Ferrero", pointing to Ferrero's view that "one of the bad consequences of the French Revolution was that it imposed the reign of force not only in the life of France but also in the life

to say. But what can be said is that the Council of Producers does not deserve to be described as an invention of the Titoists and a proof of their constructive socialism. A similar economic parliament, called the Council of Corporations, could be seen in fascist Italy, in Mussolini's times. And even before that, whenever a dictatorship was established in a country, people were told to forget about 'fruitless politics' and focus all of their attention to economic issues on which their welfare depends." See S. Jovanović, "O komunama", *Poruka* 25 (16 Dec. 1954), 11–13.

⁸² S. Jovanović, "Tito iznad blokova", *Poruka* 30–31 (1 Aug. – 16 Sept. 1955), 2–5.

⁸³ S. Jovanović, "Jedan izbor iz Guljelma Ferera" [*Letopis Matice srpske* 113/352/1–2, (1939), 21–25], *SD* 12, 459–463.

⁸⁴ B. Raditza, *Colloqui con Guglielmo Ferrero, sequiti dalle Grandi Pagine* (Lugano: Nuove Edizioni Capalago, 1939).

⁸⁵ S. Jovanović, "Jedan izbor iz Guljelma Ferera", 459.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 460.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 462–463.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 463.

of Europe.” He links Ferrero’s interpretations to the difficult historical moment in which Europe is (1940):

We should admit, together with Ferrero, that the Congress of Vienna, contrary to usual understanding, did not serve only the goals of political reaction; indeed, it was guided by a much higher idea, the idea of re-establishing international relations on a legal basis. No one has shed such a clear light on the work of the Congress of Vienna from that perspective as Ferrero did. Finally, one can agree with him that there are similarities between the present time and the time of the Congress of Vienna. As we have been told, and believed, for decades, that the politics of force is the only “realpolitik”, everything else being barren idealism, we have had too many opportunities to see that force indeed can achieve unexpected success but cannot create anything lasting alone, without the aid of law. It has brought about this state of temporariness and insecurity that we do not know how to get out of.⁸⁹

Slobodan Jovanović was invited to join the government after the coup of 27 March 1941, which he accepted “out of duty”.⁹⁰ It should be noted that he made a note about a planned trip to Italy after the formation of the government, in which he was given the office of second deputy prime minister (the first deputy prime minister was Vlatko Maček, leader of the Croatian Peasant Party). Namely, after the coup the Italian minister in Belgrade “informed Simović, on the instruction of his government, that Mussolini would be glad to act as an intermediary between our government and Hitler so that an armed conflict between German and our troops might be avoided”. Rome extended an invitation to the prime minister, Simović, or, if he was otherwise engaged, the foreign minister, Ninčić:

Both [Dušan] Simović and [Momčilo] Ninčić took this initiative of Mussolini’s seriously, assuming that it was in his own interest to eliminate the possibility of an armed conflict between us and the Germans because the Italian troops in Albania might get caught between our troops, who would attack them from the rear, and Greek troops, who had already been attacking them from the front.⁹¹

Since Simović and Ninčić could not leave the country in the new government’s first days in office, they offered the Italian minister to accept Slobodan Jovanović in their stead. Jovanović did not attend the entire meeting between Simović, Ninčić and the Italian minister: “he had the impression that the purpo-

⁸⁹ S. Jovanović, “Bečki kongres u svetlosti Guljelma Ferera. ‘Avantura’ i ‘Rekonstrukcija’”, *Politika* no. 37/11461 (27–30 Apr. 1940), p. 4.

⁹⁰ For more, see Milosavljević, *The World and Times of Slobodan Jovanović*.

⁹¹ S. Jovanović, *Zapisi o problemima i ljudima 1941–1944* [London: Udruženje pisaca i umetnika u inostranstvu, 1976], SD 12, 585. Cf. *Zapisnici sa sednica Ministarskog saveta Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1941–1945*, ed. K. Pijevac and D. Jončić, preface Lj. Dimić (Belgrade: Službeni list SCG and Arhiv Srbije i Crne Gore, 2004).

se of his mission to Rome would be to hear Mussolini's suggestions first hand". Rome promptly agreed to Jovanović, but "the nature of Mussolini's proposal was radically changed":

Mussolini now said he would be willing to intervene with Hitler *at our request*, but needed to hear our proposals first. So, Jovanović was to go to Rome with those proposals. Both Simović and Ninčić, as well as Jovanović himself, held that talks with Rome should not even start on such a basis – and the whole thing failed at the very beginning.⁹²

Jovanović also comments on subsequent interpretations of these "negotiations with Italy": "Communist propaganda kept spreading the rumour that 6 April [1941] found Jovanović and Ninčić at the airport, ready to fly, the former to Rome, the latter to Berlin. As it follows from all the above, the idea of Jovanović's trip to Rome had already been completely abandoned a few days before 6 April."⁹³

In the journal *Poruka* (Message) he founded in London, Jovanović published his foreign affairs analyses. In the article "The international position of Yugoslavia" published in 1953 he discusses the possible future of relations between Yugoslavia and Italy:

It is to be wished, however, that relations between Yugoslavia and Italy may be friendlier in the future. From the military point of view, the Adriatic is a whole: its security requires that both of its coastal states cooperate – the one that holds its eastern coast and the one that holds its western coast. To be added to these military reasons are political ones. It is better for Italy to have free Balkan peoples than satellites of either German or Soviet imperialism in her neighbourhood. Also, Balkan peoples, with the support of Italy, will even more effectively defend their freedom. Mussolini's big mistake was that he wanted to act as a conqueror in the Balkans. Before the world wars, Italy had defended the freedom of the Balkans. For example, she had opposed Austria-Hungary when she wanted to attack Serbia in 1913.⁹⁴

Jovanović devoted the greatest attention to Machiavelli and Machiavellianism, writing about it in his book on totalitarianism published in Paris in 1952. His separate study of Machiavelli had several revised and supplemented editions. He wondered over and over again whether the readers would understand the nuances of his interpretation. "Italian themes" also occur in his posthumously published writings about his father, Vladimir Jovanović, and in the notes he made during his membership of the Yugoslav government. Apart from "Italian themes", which belong to the scholarly, cultural and artistic heritage of

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ S. Jovanović, "Medjunarodni položaj Jugoslavije", *Poruka* 12 (1 May 1953), 3–4.

the world, Jovanović, as a historian, dealt with Serbian-Italian relations in which his father had played an important role in the 1860s because of his contacts with Mazzini.

Slobodan Jovanović, twice prime minister and deputy prime minister during the Second World War, died as an émigré in London in 1958. As though the first steps he made in life in such an unusual place as Pompeii had presaged the tragic end of the main character, of his philosophical theory of the state and the very state he responsibly served all his life. After such a cataclysmic event as the revolutionary takeover, they were buried so deep and overlaid with so many historiographical and propagandistic layers that their scattered genuine traces are not only painfully difficult to gather but, sadly, are placed again into misleading and anachronistic contexts.

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