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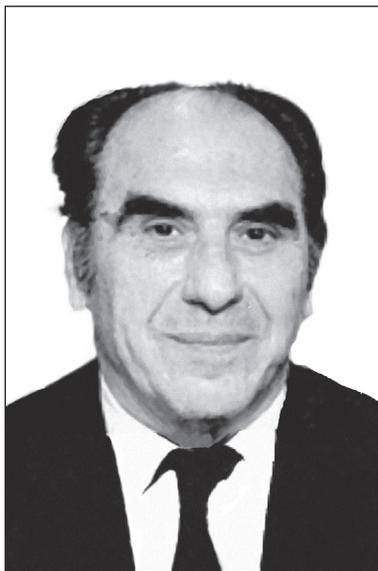
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## IN MEMORIAM



**Veselin A. Djuretić**  
(1933–2020)

Veselin A. Djuretić, a retired fellow of the Institute for Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, was born in the Montenegrin village of Mojanovići, Banovina of Zeta, Kingdom of Yugoslavia (today a settlement in Golubovci, an urban municipality of the City of Podgorica, the capital of Montenegro). He attended the elementary school in Golubovci, and the four-grade grammar school in Titograd (after the Second World War and revolutionary takeover, Podgorica was renamed after Josip Broz Tito). Having graduated from the Teachers' School in Nikšić, he served for three and a half years as a teacher in the counties of Bijelo Polje and Titograd, Socialist Republic of Montenegro, Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. He took part in three federal-level and one local campaigns of voluntary public works. He graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Sarajevo, Department of the History of Yugoslav Peoples with General History (Group 3) (1956–1961), and took his master's degree from the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Belgrade, Department of History, Department of the History of the Socialist Revolution in Yugoslavia (1962–1964), with the thesis "The creation and development of the first organs of power in Bosnia and Herzegovina". He completed a one-year specialist studies in Soviet history ("Organs of revolutionary power at the time of the October Revolution and civil war") at Moscow State University (1965–

1966). In May 1969, he received his doctoral degree from the University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Philosophy, with the thesis "Historical development of people's power in Bosnia and Herzegovina until the Second AVNOJ Session". Djuretić joined the Institute for the Study of the History of the Workers' Movement (subsequently Institute for Contemporary History) in Sarajevo (1961–1970), whose scholarship holder he had been as a student, and then the Institute for the Study of the Workers' Movement (subsequently Institute for Contemporary History) in Belgrade (1971–1982). He moved to the Institute for Balkan Studies SASA in 1983, remaining its member until his retirement in 2001. He was promoted to the highest scholarly rank (principal research fellow) in 1982, by the decision of the scholarly staff of the Institute for Contemporary History, which was confirmed by the Commission for Scientific Ranks of the Science Community of Serbia in 1985. At the Institute for Balkan Studies, he was assigned to the tasks of an principal fellow. Dr Djuretić initially was concerned with recent periods of national history. At the Institute for Balkan Studies, his area of interest was the history of Yugoslavia's international relations, and he served as director of the subproject "History of the Balkan peoples", part of the project "History of the Balkan Peoples and their Cultures" (from 1995).

As can be seen from his biography, Veselin Djuretić was well versed in the method of the then-ruling school of historiography, and in the social structure established and built after the Second World War. He was a prolific writer, as evidenced by his ample bibliography. He was particularly known for his openness, outspokenness and readiness to publish his research results at a time when such exposure required considerable intellectual courage, which did not go without consequences, such as the expulsion from the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, whose member he had been for thirty odd years (from 1954), serving also as a member of ideological commissions more than once. His book *The Allies and the Yugoslav War Drama* (1985) put forth a different perspective on the past of Yugoslavia and the Serbian people from the one hitherto offered by a historiography whose Diamat foundations had been laid immediately after the Second World War, as in other East European countries where communist parties took absolute power. Unlike the official historiography's black-and-white picture of the past based on ideological propaganda and Marxism-Leninism, Djuretić made an attempt to paint a more nuanced picture of the events of the Second World War based on documentary sources. The backbone of his interpretation may be said to be the position of the Serbian people in occupied Yugoslavia: "the relation of both [resistance] movements to reality was determined by the hostile relation of the occupiers to Serbs as a people". He sought to demonstrate that the "Serbian resistance manifested itself as something of a four-layer existential dialectic". It was from that perspective that he offered an overview of the roles played by all armed formations in which Serbs participated (it should be borne in mind, of course, that a vast part of the Kingdom of Yu-

goslavia's active and reserve officers corps as well as common soldiers spent the war years as POWs in German captivity). Djuretić emphasized that one should not lose sight of the fact that many had been mobilized or joined Tito's military formations only after King Peter called on them to do so, referring to them as "the king's partisans". Thus, unlike romanticized biographies in official encyclopaedias or family myths, he raised the extremely delicate question of the actual role of every individual in the war, i.e., in which military formation and until when a person had really been. Djuretić contended that "all Serbian wartime positions were objectively antifascist", but also that Josip Broz Tito, whom he saw in a manipulative light, had used "Russophile Serbs and others in the name of internationalism, and institutionalized the divisions within a single ethnic and linguistic entity, thereby laying a basis for the subsequent destruction of both Yugoslavia and the Serbian people". Djuretić had the courage to make his views known and to defend them with arguments against any authority whose views were, for one reason or another, different from his. We remember him as a man of energy and dedication to work, always ready to discuss history and politics, never holding back from engaging in public debates when he knew it would mean deconstructing propaganda models or felt it his duty to right the wrongs.

*Boris Milosavljević*