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Protestantism in Serbia

BRANKO BJELAJAC

Developments up to the End of the Counter-Reformation

Protestantism began to spread into the northern Serbian province of Vojvodina only 20 years after it first emerged in Germany. Von Taube¹ speaks of 'hundreds of reformed parishes' in Vojvodina and Slavonia (in today's Croatia). The growing threat from the Ottoman Turks in the south, however, soon forced many Protestants to move westward. The earliest Reformed parish was established in Zrenjanin in Vojvodina in 1551 by Szegedy Kiss István, followed soon by six more in the region, but they were soon destroyed by the Turks,² who occupied lands from Zemun to Virovitica. Some towns and villages managed to preserve the 'new faith', but the Counter-Reformation soon brought a new wave of persecution, and Protestantism was almost expelled from Vojvodina by the end of 1550s. 'Christians were always in conflicts: Franciscans against the Calvinists and Lutherans ... who were more persecuted by the Catholic Church than by the Muslims.'³

As the Reformation spread through Europe in the sixteenth century its influence was felt in the southern parts of Austria. In Slovenia, the Roman Catholic canon of Laibach, today's Ljubljana, Primus Truber,⁴ came out in opposition to Rome. Clergy and government assailed him but nobles protected him until 1540, whereafter he was driven unto exile and became a Lutheran pastor in Kempten (Germany). 'Many of the sons of the nobles were sent to the universities of Wittenberg, Tübingen, and later Geneva. Several cities, such as Graz and Klagenfurt, joined Lutheranism as a form of protest against the Hapsburg policies.'⁵

The spread of Lutheranism in Carniola and Carinthia owed much to the nobleman Baron Johannes Ungnad von Sonneck (1493–1564). He controlled land in present-day Croatia as the governor of Styria, but because of his adherence to the Reformation he was compelled to flee to Württemberg in Germany, whose duke was supportive of Protestants. In 1560 Primus Truber and Baron Ungnad met in the town of Urach in Germany, near Tübingen, where Truber had become a parish priest and where Ungnad was living in the territories of the duke of Württemberg.

Truber was working on the translation of the New Testament into Slovenian,⁶ and in 1557 and 1560 he published the Gospels, Acts and Romans in Tübingen. When Ungnad was given a printing press by the duke of Württemberg and set it up at the duke's residence⁷ Truber joined him and for the next five years (1560–64) they printed Protestant books in the Glagolitic and Latin alphabets (the former for Croats in Dalmatia and the latter for Slovenians), and also in the Cyrillic alphabet, letters

being specially carved and moulded for this purpose in 1561.

Truber was looking for someone to edit Serbian versions of the books he was producing. Lutheran circles already knew about one Serb (or perhaps Montenegrin) named Demetrius, who had had contacts with Philip Melanchthon, who died in 1560. Sources say that Demetrius was an elderly cleric from Montenegro, who made an excellent impression in Lutheran circles.

Melanchthon liked him; and Nicholas Menningius wrote in a letter that he was an old man of exemplary piety and admirable morals, whose claim to be a deacon was undoubtedly genuine, though the Lutherans could not check up on this; he was certainly full of erudition about his Church. ... In order that the Orthodox might be properly informed about the Reformed religion, the Confession of Augsburg, which summarized Lutheran belief, was hastily but ably translated into Greek by a learned Hellenist; and a copy was given to Demetrius to deliver to the Patriarch, together with the personal letter from Melanchthon, which barely touched upon doctrine but suggested that the Lutheran and Greek Churches had much in common.⁸

When Demetrius returned from Turkey, he reported that there were enough Cyrillic Bibles in Turkey and that there was no reason to translate it again. Truber and Ungnad asked him to come in Urach to help with the printing,⁹ but he rejected the whole idea and left for Moldavia where he became secretary to the prince. Truber and Ungnad had to continue their search for suitable collaborators to produce books for the Serbs of Bosnia and Serbia.

In 1562 Truber finally found two Serbian Orthodox monks to help him: Jovan Popović from Serbia and Jovan Maleševac from Bosnia. Maleševac had worked as a scribe from 1524 to 1546 in the famous monastery of Trebinje (Herzegovina) where he had produced a handwritten version of the Bible in the Serbian language, using the Cyrillic alphabet. The two monks brought two big trunks full of Cyrillic books with them to Urach.¹⁰

In one of his letters to Ungnad Truber writes that the two monks stayed in Urach for six months and gave good service,¹¹ checking the translation of at least two books and the shape of the moulded Cyrillic letters. After the monks returned to Bosnia, however, Truber and Ungnad lost all contact with them, although they had hoped that the two monks might help them with the future distribution of Bibles and books in Serbian and Croatian in Bosnia and Serbia.

During the three years 1561–63 the printing press was publishing books in the Cyrillic alphabet as well as in the Latin and Glagolitic alphabets. The translation of the Bible followed the examples of the work of Erasmus of Rotterdam and of Luther's German Bible, with comparisons with translations into other European languages.¹² In 1562 a Croatian Bible was issued in Glagolitic and in 1563 in the Cyrillic alphabet. The language was a mixture of Croatian and Serbian. Leskien believes that the translators mixed the dialects of the Croatian and Serbian languages in the same translation in the 1563 edition on purpose, in order to be able to use the books over as wide a geographical area as possible. Two of the Cyrillic editions indicate in their titles that they are in the Serbian language, but their linguistic characteristics do not confirm this.¹³ In the meantime Truber continued to translate further instalments of the Slovene New Testament (I and II Corinthians and Galatians) and published them in 1561.

Baron Ungnad died in 1564 and the Urach press ceased to function. In three years of printing books in Cyrillic it produced about 10,800 copies of various titles

including the New Testament (in two volumes), articles of faith, catechisms, apostils, several books for children and letter test pages.¹⁴ We may assume that most of these copies were destroyed during the Counter-Reformation; and there is no evidence of their ever being distributed in Bosnia and Serbia, then under Turkish rule. On the recommendation of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II the printing press was taken over by the Roman Catholic Church and transported to Rome in 1556.¹⁵ There are only 40 copies of various of these books extant today, mostly in the possession of Serbian Orthodox monasteries in Hungary and Croatia.

The whole venture aimed at spreading Protestantism amongst all the Southern Slavs, even those under Turkish rule: hence the use of both traditional alphabets: Glagolitic and Cyrillic. ... Protestantism among the Slovenians and Croats was short-lived, but the books of Trubar and Dalmatin, the first written in Slovenian language, inaugurated a new chapter in the history of their peoples.¹⁶

The aim of the Slovenian and Croatian Reformers of distributing the Bible and the teachings of Luther in their own lands, and even further, in the lands under Turkish rule, was thus never realised. They succeeded in producing books in the Cyrillic alphabet, but whether the language was an unhappy mixture or whether there were additional problems involved (which we will probably never be able to discover), the actual books did not reach the Serbs in Bosnia and Serbia. Three more centuries were to pass before the publication of the first Bible in the Serbian language in 1868, a translation of Luther's German New Testament and Tremellius' Latin Old Testament, done by Vuk Karadžić and Đuro Daničić.

The Lutherans

The largest Protestant denomination in Serbia has always been the Lutherans. The first Lutherans are recorded as settling in Vojvodina after the withdrawal of the Turks in the second half of the seventeenth century. They came from Baden-Württemberg and the Schwarzwald. Between 1710 and 1722 several groups of Lutherans came to the Banat, eastern Vojvodina, to work in the coalmines at Kovin and also as craftsmen in neighbouring towns and villages settled by Germans.

During the second half of the eighteenth century the Austrian empress Maria Theresa and her son and successor Joseph II invited peasants and craftsmen to populate the southern part of the empire (now Vojvodina in northern Serbia). Maria Theresa limited the invitation to Roman Catholics. With his edict of 21 September 1781 on religious tolerance Joseph II abolished personal serfdom and guaranteed the peasants' freedom of movement and their right to own land.¹⁷ As a result the Slovaks, Hungarians and Germans emigrating to Vojvodina,¹⁸ who were mainly Roman Catholics at the beginning, later included Lutherans and Reformed as well. 'German colonists were invited by different rulers of the 18th and 19th centuries and settled in Volhynia and along the Volga, in Bessarabia and in the Dobruška, in the Hungarian Danube plain [Vojvodina], alongside Lutheran Slovaks and in the Serbian and Rumanian Banat: these were mostly Lutherans.'¹⁹

Vast areas of the Hungarian lands were uninhabited after Prince Eugene of Savoy drove out the Turkish population in 1717 and went on to liberate Belgrade. Many thousands of German peasants responded to the invitation to move into Vojvodina. They formed large settlements, built their own churches and schools and developed their own social life. Since many of them came from southern Germany they came to

be known as Swabians. The first Protestant parochial community was founded in 1793 in the village of Franzfeld (later named Banatsko Kraljićevo).²⁰ During the nineteenth century Germans continued to move into Vojvodina because of overpopulation at home and 'hunger for land'.²¹

The 'Danubian Swabians' were almost exclusively rural people. There were no real leaders among them. They played a much more passive role in history than, e.g., the Transylvania Saxon Lutherans. ... These German settlers prospered, for a while at least, materially, but they were forgotten by their home churches and drifted into what could be characterized as a religious fatalism or – using a more Christian terminology – passive submission to the will of God, coupled with a willingness to compromise.²²

German Lutherans in Vojvodina were soon joined by relatively small groups of Hungarian Lutherans and a larger group of Slovak Lutherans.

Until the end of the First World War Vojvodina was in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The adherents of the Protestant churches in Hungary, including Vojvodina, were given a constitution in 1893; it was later also adopted by the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (hereafter KSCS).²³ One report from 1910 speaks of 2,600,000 Reformed, 1,300,000 Lutherans and 17,000 members of smaller groups such as Baptists and Methodists in Hungary.²⁴ Some of their notable centres were in the towns of Novi Sad, Vinkovci, Stara Pazova and Nova Pazova.

The Protestant community in Belgrade developed independently from the communities in Vojvodina. In 1853 the Principality of Serbia adopted a law recognising non-Orthodox Christians and their religious freedom. Just ten days after this law was passed the first Protestant community in Belgrade was founded. In 1860 the state donated a chapel and a house for the minister. This chapel served for the next 50 years as the church for all Protestant Christians residing in Belgrade, regardless of their denomination. It had a church school attached to it which was 'well attended'.²⁵

During the First World War the church lost many of its members. After the War this community was taking care of all Protestant believers in Serbia proper (i.e. excluding Kosovo and Vojvodina), and of soldiers of Protestant faith in the KSCS. One report from 1928 speaks of 1500 members of the Belgrade community (meaning the whole of Serbia proper) and of 804 soldiers of 'Augsburg and Helvetian faith' – that is, Lutherans and Reformed.²⁶

After the Second World War the Hungarian Reformed met in a private house, while the Germans mostly left the country. Today there is a very small number of Reformed believers, meeting once a month.

The newly-created KSCS had been devastated by the First World War, and the Lutherans, like the rest of the population, needed outside help. In 1919 the National Lutheran Council in the USA started sending in Bibles, hymnals and catechisms.

In the Austro-Hungarian Empire Lutherans of various different nationalities had belonged to the same church organisation. After the First World War, however, in the new KSCS the Lutherans became a minority and faced the difficult task of grouping into one national organisation churches which had originated in Austria and Hungary and which were now scattered throughout Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia. The Lutherans found themselves in a Slav country, and coming from a German state-church tradition often did not act evangelistically, a definite disadvantage to growth. Moreover, all the various language groups tended to remain in their language areas, thus preserving their cultural and national identity. Even amongst themselves the

three Lutheran language groups showed little if any interest in uniting or cooperating.²⁷

In 1920 the government of the KSCS ordered all the Lutherans in the country, whether German, Hungarian or Slovak, to unite. All three language groups and the autonomous Belgrade community held a meeting in the town of Vinkovci. Unity was achieved only among the German-speaking and the Hungarian-speaking groups, however: the Slovak-speakers insisted on remaining autonomous. The two former groups elected a governing board and adopted the formal name *Evangelička crkva augsburškog ispovedanja u Krajevini SHS* (The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the KSCS). Its founding meeting took place in the Vojvodina provincial capital of Novi Sad in 1923. While the three nationalities managed to form one union in neighbouring Hungary, then, this was not achieved in the KSCS.

The Slovak Seniorates, disregarding the appeal for Lutheran unity, separated themselves from the German Seniorates and organized a separate church of the Augsburg Confession, officially known as the District of the Independent Evangelical Slovak Church in Yugoslavia, numbering 52,000 souls. ... At its session in June 1925 the Convention of the Slovak District went on record as favoring cooperation with the German district, with a joint presbyterium for the two churches, but leaving the Slovak district under its own and separate administration.²⁸

In 1925 King Alexander granted to the German Evangelical Church District (*Distrikt nemačke evangeličke crkve*) the power to elect and convene a Synod, which was held at Novi Vrbas in 1926. The Lutheran Church was governed by three bodies: a District Convention (*Skupština distrikta*) (which was a legislative body), a District Church Board (*Crkveni odbor distrikta*) (a governing body between annual conventions), and a Consistory (*Konzistorijum*) (to act on juridical matters). The same power was given to the Slovak branch as well.

On 16 April 1930 the Yugoslav parliament adopted a law on the Evangelical Church (*Zakon o evangeličko-hrišćanskim crkvama i o reformovanoj hrišćanskoj crkvi Kraljevine Jugoslavije*), which permitted it to maintain close relations with the Evangelical Church of Germany. In 1931 The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession changed its name to *Nemačka evangelička crkva* (The German Evangelical Church). 'By 1932 there were about 130 Lutheran parishes in Yugoslavia with probably half a million adherents ... the Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian population had become definitely anti-Protestant.'²⁹

The German Evangelical Church in the KSCS had its centre in Zagreb, and consisted of Germans, Hungarians and some Croats. The Hungarian branch, which had joined the German Evangelical (Lutheran) Church in 1918 (as confirmed at the 1923 meeting), became autonomous in 1945 after the war ended.

Developments in Germany under the Nazis influenced the Germans in Yugoslavia.³⁰ In this context the German Evangelical Church came under suspicion in communist times:

It was formally autonomous (autocephalous) but in reality its leaders and clergy worked for Germany and its intelligence service. Priests of this Church studied in Germany as students of the German Church and the German State. ... Naturally, the leaders and the clergy of the German Evangelical Church held responsible and important posts in German and

quisling military organizations and in the German intelligence service [during the Second World War].³¹

In 1944 the largely rural German Evangelical Church had 130,000 members³² (other sources speak of up to 200,000³³), but death and repatriation to Germany and Austria during the Second World War drastically reduced its size. The Lutheran leaders in Yugoslavia understood that their church must overcome its own history, which included some pro-Nazi sentiment.³⁴ Because of such sentiments one bishop was executed by the Partisans and church property was seized.

World War II was a catastrophe for the ethnic Germans. ... On the basis of a law which was issued by the Anti-Fascist Council for National Liberation of Yugoslavia on November 21, 1944, the entire ethnic German group was expropriated without payment ... there was no longer a German Evangelical Christian Church.³⁵

In the 1960s this language group had no more than 6000 members in Yugoslavia. The Slovak Lutheran Church became the largest Lutheran church in the region. This church had been part of the Lutheran church in Hungary during the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. From 1918 to 1941 it had been autonomous and had worked hard to maintain this autonomy. A high concentration of Slovaks in Vojvodina helped it to preserve its unity. At times it had as many as 60,000 members. Its centre was at Bački Petrovac; in the 1960s it had a presiding bishop and 30 priests who had all been educated abroad, chiefly in Austria, Germany and Czechoslovakia.³⁶ The Slovak Church is the largest Protestant body in Yugoslavia today, with about 40,000 members.

In 2001, as a sign of the new political era in Serbia after the ousting of Slobodan Milošević on 5 October 2000, the government reestablished the *Evangelička crkva u Srbiji* (Lutheran Evangelical Church in Serbia), with its seat in Subotica. The majority of its members are Hungarian-speaking, but it includes some remnants of the German population as well.

The Reformed

The Germans and Hungarians who came to Vojvodina after Joseph II's edict of 1781 included members of the Reformed churches. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire they had belonged to the Reformed Church of Hungary. '[One of the earliest] church parishes dates from 1745³⁷ in the town of Bački Petrovac. Calvinism is also noted among the Hungarians in the same period.'³⁸

At the beginning of the twentieth century the Kingdom of Serbia recognised the Calvinist Church as well as the Orthodox, Catholic and Evangelical (Lutheran) churches.³⁹ After the First World War this section of the old Hungarian Reformed Church had to reorganise its structure. The Reformed Church in the KSCS now consisted of Hungarians and smaller numbers of Protestants of other nationalities. 'This severe break-up of the old Church of Hungary has been a disaster for Protestantism as well as to the Presbyterianism of Eastern Europe ... which for four hundred years was the vanguard of Protestantism in Eastern Europe.'⁴⁰

After the establishment of the KSCS in 1918 all Protestant denominations were recognised and were to enjoy equal rights.⁴¹ Religious communities had considerable freedom for activity. The Constitution of 1929 (*Vidovdanski ustav*) recognised the current legally-existing Protestant communities despite strong pressure from the

Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches. According to the new Constitution religious communities were 'public institutions with a special position *vis à vis* the state and with special privileges';⁴² the latter referred to educational, social and humanitarian activities. Two kinds of religious community were defined: 'accepted' ('*usvojene*') and 'recognised' ('*priznate*'). The Reformed Church belonged to the more privileged, 'accepted' group.

In the beginning the Reformed Church (also known as the Calvinist Church, and its members as the Calvinists) had about 65,000 members with about 40 priests.⁴³ Its members mainly came from the Hungarian minority, and services were conducted in Hungarian. The second biggest national group was the Germans. They used the German language. There were also several congregations of Croats and Czechs. 'The Reformed Church numbers 47 congregations, and 60,000 adherents, 39,000 of whom are Magyar, 19,800 are German, 500 are Croatian, and 500 are Czech.'⁴⁴

Despite the official policy of freedom of religion, in the early 1920s the state seized without compensation 38 schools belonging to the Reformed Church and removed the teachers from their posts, ostensibly because education was to be secular in the new state, but probably because they were teaching only in the Hungarian language.

In 1920 members of the Reformed Church met in the city of Novi Sad and elected a Synod to regulate daily church life. This Synod joined the World Reformed Federation in 1921.⁴⁵ At a meeting of representatives of the Reformed Church in Sombor in June 1922 a Reformed Seniorate (*Seniorat*)⁴⁶ was constituted, to bring together all the Reformed communities in Yugoslavia. Administrative matters were handled by the Presidential College (*Predsednički savet*), the Seniorate Council (*Senioratski savet*) (elected by the presbyteries of the Seniorate), and the yearly Session of the Seniorate (*Skupština seniorata*).

Right from the start the Reformed Church suffered from a shortage of pastors and teachers. The training facilities were in Hungary (Budapest) and in Austria (Vienna), but the Yugoslav government did not allow Hungarian citizens to come to Yugoslavia and become leaders of local congregations, so most of the pastors were laypeople. Meanwhile it was difficult for Hungarian-language schools to function. 'Magyar schools are discouraged and suppressed, Church property is frequently sequestered, and a shortage in the ministry is aggravated by the Church being forbidden to "call" ministers from Hungarian territory. Still the bush burns, and does not burn out.'⁴⁷

Under the title 'Home Mission Work' ideas of community organisation and social work gained ground among members of the local communities. In the mid-1920s Pastor R. Roehner founded a *Diakonieverein* in the city of Novi Vrbas. In the years to come it occupied an important place in the life of the church.⁴⁸ Interconfessional relations improved, particularly since Sunday Schools and church service halls were shared in several places. On 17 November 1929, on the initiative of the Methodists, Novi Sad hosted an Alliance meeting. The 'Alliance Weeks' ('*Nedelja alijanse*') were annual interdenominational prayer services held every night for a week; each night was in a different church with a different pastor or minister officiating. The members of the Alliance were the Evangelical, Reformed, Baptist, Free Brethren and Methodist denominations in this city. The meeting was attended by several Methodist, three Lutheran, one Reformed and four Baptist clergymen, and a number of laymen.⁴⁹ In the city of Veliki Beckerek (present-day Zrenjanin) the Reformed minister maintained close relations with the Methodist minister.⁵⁰

But the larger Protestant Churches also reacted positively to the Methodists, as they did in Germany and elsewhere, when they elected to follow Methodist practices in Sunday School and youth work, woman's work, temperance, and other forms of activity. The Methodists regarded all this as an indication of their own success.⁵¹

Some Reformed believers of Hungarian nationality were involved with the local Nazi government during the Second World War, and this had a negative effect on their relations with the postwar Yugoslav government. Reformed believers of German descent were expelled and some were executed. A shortage of educated ministers, as well as emigration for economic reasons, hampered the growth and development of the Reformed Church in socialist Yugoslavia.

There was some interdenominational cooperation, but only in bigger cities. The Reformed Church continued to try to serve its local communities through social work. Its activity was widely appreciated. Two prominent enterprises were an orphanage in the town of Feketić and the Korbaj Foundation which gave support to poorer regions of the country.⁵² However, the denomination slowly declined. It failed to evangelise even the Hungarian-speaking population, and generally experienced difficulties in the multiethnic but pro-Serbian KSCS and subsequent Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In the first two decades of socialist rule the Reformed communities in Serbia were under the close scrutiny of the State Security Services (*Služba državne bezbednosti*). As noted earlier, by 1999 the Reformed Church had been reduced to 19 congregations with no more than 16,000 members.

The Nazarenes

Although the Lutherans and the Reformed were the first Protestant groups to appear on what became Yugoslav territory, as colonists in the late eighteenth century, they were organised among the ethnic Germans, Hungarians and Slovaks, and gained only occasional and individual ethnic Serbian members.

The Nazarenes were the first Protestant group to make gains among the Serbian population. Their legal name today is *Hrišćanska nazarenska zajednica* (The Christian Nazarene Community).⁵³ There are conflicting reports about the size of the community today. Some authors say that the Nazarenes are nearly extinct,⁵⁴ partly because of their extreme isolationism and lack of central organisation. The Community has printed no literature, apart from a hymn book, and most of the time has had no links with any community abroad.⁵⁵ It is not a member of the Evangelical Alliance, or of any other Christian organisation in Serbia or Yugoslavia.

The Nazarenes in Yugoslavia are to be distinguished from the American denomination known as the Church of the Nazarene.⁵⁶ The Serbian Orthodox Church called them the '*Nazareni*'.⁵⁷ They were known by this name after the First World War in the KSCS and later in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Peter Brock also calls them 'Nazarenes',⁵⁸ and identifies them as an offshoot of the Swiss *Neutäufer* (Baptists). In the United States they are known as the Apostolic Christian Church of America (sometimes the New Amish). In Hungary, Brock argues, they were known as the Believers in Christ or the Disciples in Christ. In Yugoslavia today they call themselves '*verujući u Hrista*' ('Believers in Christ').⁵⁹

In his book published in 1894, Vladimir Dimitrijević argues that the Germans living in Vojvodina called the Nazarenes such names as '*Taufgesinnnte*', '*Neutäufer*' and '*Schismatiker*'. He gives the following explanation for the origin of the name 'Nazarenes':

When Lajos Hencsey [the first Hungarian disciple of Samuel Froehlich, the founder] came to Switzerland he met the disciples of one Jacob Wirtz who called themselves the Nazarenes. Lajos preferred this name rather than the Disciples of Christ (*die Gläubigen in Christo*) given by Froehlich [Froehlich]. Since he was the one to bring this sect here [i.e. Vojvodina], he also brought the new name.⁶⁰

The founder of the movement was the Swiss Samuel Heinrich Froehlich (1803–57),⁶¹ a Reformed pastor of the Swiss state church who was dismissed in 1830 by a church board over the issue of rebaptism. In 1831 he became a member of the Baptist Continental Mission Society (based in the UK) as their missionary in Switzerland with the task of starting new churches. He continued to preach that as a Christian one must live a sinless life. In 1832 he started a new church in the area, the '*Gemeinschaft Evangelisch Taufgesinnter*'. The annual Continental Mission report of 1836 states that in five years he founded 14 churches with 427 baptised members. He was strongly influenced by the movement known as 'the Geneva Revival' (1815–31) and also by the Mennonite movement. Documents of the Apostolic Christian Church of America say that during his seminary training Froehlich came under the heavy influence of Anabaptists and started to implement 'believer's baptism' as opposed to infant baptism.⁶² By the end of his life there were at least 30 fellowships belonging to his movement.⁶³

The central teaching of this small revival movement could be summarised as follows: the act of baptism cleanses the believer from all sin, and the day of baptism is the day of salvation. After baptism the believer is sinless and a perfect life is possible thereafter. The Christian Church is a body of believers consisting only of the baptised, who are able to live sinless lives. For Froehlich's followers any type of social life was forbidden – theatres, restaurants, bathhouses, newspapers, attending other churches – and complete obedience to the elders was required. However, within their own circle they enjoyed a rich social life. In general, Froehlich's ideas can be described as a legalistic variety of perfectionism.⁶⁴

In 1839–40 Froehlich converted three Hungarian locksmiths who had come to Switzerland in connection with their craft. Upon their return to Hungary they tried to organise and spread their new faith. Despite a slow start the first service in Hungary was held on 8 May 1840.⁶⁵ Later, after the revolutionary events of 1848⁶⁶ which affected Austria and Hungary, the Nazarenes started to work among the peasants and in professional circles.

Little is known about the early years of the Nazarenes among the Hungarians. One of the first cases of conscientious objection to military service dates from around 1857, when it was reported that three young Nazarene recruits had refused to take the regular oath. They were from the Bačka area.⁶⁷ In 1863 one József Tóth became a Nazarene in Subotica (today on the border with Hungary); it is said that he was gifted in converting people. In the city of Vásárhely the Nazarenes had a missionary station.

Some Hungarian Nazarenes were executed in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and others were sentenced to 10 to 15 years of hard-labour imprisonment as conscientious objectors to military service. From 1867, with the establishment of the dual rule of the Hungarians and Austrians, the war office allowed Nazarenes to be transferred to the army medical corps to work as hospital orderlies.

In 1872 two British Quakers travelled to Budapest and wrote to the UK Parliament in support of the Nazarenes: 'They are decidedly on the increase ... Their reverence for Holy Scripture is striking. They bear a faithful testimony against Oaths and War.'⁶⁸

At that time Vojvodina was considered southern Hungary and was inhabited by many nationalities: Hungarians, Germans, Serbs, Croats, Romanians, Slovaks and others. Nazarenes in Hungary found strength in their ability to influence all of them. Although in the early years the Nazarenes were predominantly Hungarians, Serbs later joined them in considerable numbers. Since many of the converts came from the Orthodox churches (Serbian and Romanian), Orthodox priests strongly opposed this 'new religion'.

It is interesting to note that in the 1890s the Russian nobleman and writer Lev Tolstoy became interested in the Nazarenes and their doctrine. His disciple and personal physician Dr Dušan Markovicky compiled an exhaustive study of them for him.

Describing the Nazarenes' doctrine Peter Brock quotes the Mennonite Encyclopedia:

The Nazarene doctrine is simple. The Bible is their only and absolute norm of religious knowledge. The reading of the Scriptures is considered an unquestioned duty: fulfilling its commands is the way of salvation. The principal command is to bear the cross for Christ's sake, and to practice self-denial and love. Absolute nonresistance, patient bearing of all insults, rejection of military service and the oath, and abstention from cursing, are among their principles. They baptize by immersion after the age of 18 years. Their church government also parallels that of the Mennonite denominations.⁶⁹

For many years in socialist Yugoslavia the Nazarenes refused to bear arms, swear oaths of loyalty or vote in elections. This changed in 1992 when the army offered a 'civil service' option with double the normal length of service. However, the Nazarenes still reject all state holidays and state oaths, including oaths sworn in court.

The first report we have about the spread of the Nazarenes among the Serbian population dates from 1865 in the town of Karlovci.⁷⁰ The Croatian owner of a local vineyard, a former Roman Catholic, attracted disciples including many Serbs. The police locked the leaders up but the 'sect' continued to spread in surrounding villages. It was reported that among the Serbs it was the poorer people and craftsmen who were joining the movement. Another report also traces the first Nazarenes among the Serbian population in present-day Vojvodina to 1865. Hungarian villagers in Omoljica, Bavanište and Pančevo influenced their Serbian neighbours to become Nazarenes. The movement was spreading. In about 1870 an Orthodox priest from Gračanica in Bosnia left the Orthodox Church and came to Novi Sad as a Nazarene disciple. A newspaper article of 1 January 1870 reports:

Remarkable and interesting is a recent phenomenon: the Nazarene movement, which has so far been found only among the German and Hungarian people, now seems also to be spreading among the Serbs of the Orthodox faith. This was confirmed recently at the Serbian congress in Karlovci. Such religious influences have had no impact on the Serbian nation up to now and have not spread among them at all, especially since their faith is seen as a wall protective of nationality and is defended as such.⁷¹

In 1871 the journal *Pravoslavlje* reported that in 1867 the Nazarene movement had started to spread among Croats and Serbs alike from the city of Karlovci. Its followers met in the evenings, read the Bible and sang from the *Harfa Sionska* (*The*

Harp of Zion) hymnbook, the only printed material they ever used apart from the Bible.⁷² The leaders were arrested, but the movement spread quickly in the villages of Krčedin, Surduk, Banovci, Golubinci, Surčin, Boljevci, Sasa and others.⁷³ It is possible that they witnessed person-to-person and held prayer meetings in the houses of interested neighbours.

This new situation in Vojvodina brought several Christian denominations together on at least one occasion. An interconfessional conference was held in the village of Crepaja, near Pančevo, in June 1887. Those present included 14 Serbian Orthodox priests, one Roman Catholic priest, six Lutheran pastors and two Reformed (Calvinist) ministers. Their only subject was to discuss how to stop the spreading of the Nazarene 'sect', which is a good indication of the significance of the Nazarenes at that time. The conclusion of the conference was to send a letter to the minister dealing with religion asking the government to respect its own regulations: no. 12,548 of 13 August 1868 and no. 563 of 13 January 1875.⁷⁴ Both of these dealt with interconfessional marriages and the changing of confession. Marriages and conversions were allowed only among recognised confessions; and the Nazarenes were not legally recognised.

In 1893 the government issued a regulation affecting the situation of both the Nazarenes and the Baptists. The regulation stated that neither was a recognised religion and *inter alia* that marriages performed by them were not legal. In this document the Nazarenes are called '*Sledbenici vere Isusove*' ('Followers of the Faith of Jesus'), '*Jovanova braća*' ('Brothers of John'), and '*Novoverci*' ('New Believers').⁷⁵

Serbian Orthodox sources of that time reported the alarming spread of the Nazarenes among Serbs in present-day Vojvodina. The statistical data for Hungary for 1891 show that there were 6829 Nazarenes in Vojvodina. Dimitrijević estimates that 1000 of them were Romanians, 2000 were Hungarians and Croats and 4000 were Serbs.⁷⁶ In 1893 the magazine *Srpski Sion*, which was supported by the Serbian Orthodox Church, estimated that about 4400 Nazarenes were Serbs by nationality. Another Serbian Orthodox publication from 1898 stated that out of 10,000 Nazarenes in Hungary (including Vojvodina) 4460 were of Serbian origin.⁷⁷

The son of the founder of the Nazarenes Samuel Froehlich (we know him only by his initial, A. Froehlich) talked to Dimitrijević in 1892 about the spread of the movement in other parts of the world:

There are 260 followers of Froehlich in France, about 1000 in Switzerland, mostly in Zurich, a number of them in Southern Germany, about 10,000 in the United States, in Serbia they have a meeting place in Belgrade where about 100 of them meet, and they are also spreading fast in Bulgaria as well. Therefore the total number of them is about 22,000.⁷⁸

In an interview in 1998 Aleksandar Birviš, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Belgrade, said that

At the end of the nineteenth century in the town of Sremski Karlovci the Nazarenes had a thriving church with about 80 members. However, since they believed in double predestination, they did not involve themselves in mission work, and they did not witness, not even to the members of their families. The last member of that church died in 1957, and I was invited to speak at the funeral service since no one was left to bury him.⁷⁹

The last numerical datum I have been able to find about the Nazarenes in Vojvodina is from 1912. It states that the fourth edition of their hymnbook *Harfa Sionska* was published in Novi Sad in 1912.⁸⁰ The circulation was 12,000 copies and all of them were distributed among the Serbian population. Although the number of the printed copies of their hymnbook does not reveal the actual number of Nazarenes it shows their influence and the spread of their movement at that time.

In Serbia the movement came to its largest expansion. The first congregation probably came into existence in 1867. The church and the political authorities in Serbia became aware of the movement and there were several inquiries investigating the reasons for the strong growth of the Nazarene churches. ... For the Nazarenes it has to be said that they were good and honest citizens who tried to live up to the example of the Christians of the first church. Nevertheless, the movement was regarded as a social evil because the Nazarenes were not prepared to swear oaths and to perform military service by bearing arms.⁸¹

The first disciples in Serbia proper can be traced to 1872, when the local postman from Obrenovac reported to the Orthodox metropolitan that one Pavle Rosić 'buried his household icons and told the local priest that he did not care about holy water but about the Ten Commandments'.⁸² In this report it is also stated that "The Nazarenes do not celebrate any holiday except Sunday. They have unshakable faith and they spread among the people the teaching that God has commanded that one should not kill anyone ...".⁸³ Rosić soon gained some disciples, mainly women. The Serbian Orthodox Church asked the local government to help to stop 'this new heresy'. Rosić was sentenced to four months in prison, but he never recanted. Furthermore, upon his release he continued to organise crossings of sympathisers over the river Sava into Srem, where the Nazarenes were holding meetings in the village of Progari. Soon after this Rosić brought several Nazarenes as guests with him into Serbia.

The Ministry of the Interior informed the Serbian Metropolitan Mihailo that Nazarenes from the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been discovered in Obrenovac and that the police had expelled them from Serbia. The Ministry also reported that the local population was on the brink of riot.⁸⁴ Only one month later, however, the local police reported that the Nazarenes were spreading in the surrounding villages. One of the converts stated that he had converted to the Nazarene faith because he was completely convinced that he was 'orthodox', and that there was no reason to force him to abandon his new faith.⁸⁵

The Serbian Orthodox Church asked the government to act in accordance with Article 119 of the Serbian Constitution, which allowed anyone to confess any religion freely. Its argument was that the Nazarenes were not recognised anywhere and thus were not to be considered as a legal religion, with the consequence that they would not be free to confess their faith or enjoy any religious rights.

Soon after these events, on 20 June 1876 Serbia declared war against the Ottoman Empire. Some Nazarenes reportedly refused to take up arms and were sentenced to capital punishment; however, the Prince of Serbia granted them clemency. Their sentence was changed to life imprisonment.

The Serbian Orthodox leaders later noted that this measure was 'a positive one' and that the Nazarenes stopped spreading. In one letter, dated 13 June 1877, the local priest informed the metropolitan that he had 'managed to baptise the children of one sectarian family with a help of the local police force'.⁸⁶ However, a supporter of the British and Foreign Bible Society work in Belgrade, Francis Mackenzie, a member of

the Free Church of Scotland and a landowner in Belgrade, visited the Nazarenes in Obrenovac, brought some financial help and visited the imprisoned believers. One month later he repeated the visit. The Orthodox priest in the town along with the local police reported this to the metropolitan who immediately wrote to the minister of education asking for the expulsion of all missionaries from Serbia.

One report of 1881 says that the Nazarenes moved from Obrenovac to Belgrade where they met regularly and held night vigils. In 1887 there was such a significant number of the Nazarenes that their presence and activities were recorded and reported in almost all the parochial districts in Belgrade. Every priest was responsible for writing down the names of all the people involved and sending them to the archbishop in Belgrade.

The leaders of the Serbian Orthodox Church kept on sending letters to the various ministries asking for strong governmental reaction. However, the government did not follow their suggestions, though they tried to mollify church leaders by ordering some measures at the level of local municipal government.

Further reports from the heartland of Serbia showed that the Nazarenes were spreading: Aleksinac in 1887, Kragujevac 1889 (sixteen arrested); and the metropolitan's letter to the minister of education of 1895 speaks of the towns Aranđelovac, Jagodina, Paraćin, Zaječar and other places.⁸⁷

An Austro-Hungarian classified document of 22 December 1888 speaks of one member of the Serbian government who discussed the issue of religious freedom with the Austro-Hungarian ambassador Hengelmüller in Belgrade. He said that Lord Salisbury of the British government had reminded the Serbian government of Article 35 of the Treaty of Berlin guaranteeing the freedom of all religious groups. It seems possible that the British and Foreign Bible Society sent some sort of report concerning the persecution of the Nazarenes in Serbia and the difficulties which Protestants were facing from the government.⁸⁸

Further growth and the building of the *Sala Mira* (Hall of Peace) in Belgrade in 1891 facilitated development of the Nazarene group in Serbia. It was Mackenzie who secured permission to build as well as the funding. He asked the government for a licence to found a *Nedeljnu školu za predavanje veronauke* (Sunday School for the Teaching of Religious Instruction), which was granted. Apparently he immediately let the Nazarenes use the hall for their meetings.

The attacks were swift and hard. Mackenzie was accused of being a Lutheran-Nazarene agent. The Nazarenes were accused of having contact with Freemasons, their motives being propaganda and financial speculation, and moreover that they had political pretensions. In response Mackenzie wrote a booklet in 1892 in Serbian to explain that he was not himself a Nazarene, and that he disagreed with them concerning the bearing of arms.⁸⁹

At its session on 6 October 1895 the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church decided to order its priesthood to work towards the destruction of the Nazarene sect and to encourage the work of local priests further by issuing them written commendations for their anti-Nazarene efforts. It also decided to ask the Serbian government to proclaim publicly that the Nazarenes were not a legally recognised confession.

In 1902 the Belgrade metropolitan wrote to the Belgrade Church Court stating that priests and church courts were to fight against the Nazarenes. 'They are a religious and political tool of our enemies. They often come from the Austro-Hungarian Empire with a foreign passport and then propagate the idea that one should not take up arms, or that one should shoot into the air.'⁹⁰ The Nazarenes were accused of

being unpatriotic, antinational and thus anti-Serbian.

In 1903 reports came from the town of Smederevo that the Nazarenes had a strong community. Then in 1904 a group was arrested in Belgrade. In 1906 reports in the magazine *Hrišćanski vesnik*⁹¹ speak of Nazarenes in Soko Banja and in *Vesnik Srpske crkve*⁹² of Nazarenes in the towns of Niš, Leskovac and Kruševac. In 1910 the Belgrade daily newspaper *Pravda*⁹³ wrote about the Nazarenes in the town of Smederevo. There are also reports of harsh sentences in courts in Serbia in 1910 and 1911.⁹⁴

The First (1912) and the Second (1913) Balkan Wars put enormous pressure on the Nazarenes.

Sentences of up to ten years 'in chains' were imposed on Nazarene conscientious objectors in Serbia, but they continued to expand, and even reached Bulgaria. ... Their national and social origins and the potential for such movements' expansion provoked extremely severe persecution from both Austro-Hungarian and Serbian and later Yugoslavian kingdom.⁹⁵

Reports about their activities became less frequent. One of the reports even claimed that the Nazarenes were starting to attend Orthodox churches once again, as indicated in a report of 19 February 1913 from the town of Velika Plana.

The Nazarenes between the Two World Wars

The First World War lasted five years (1914–18) on Serbian territory. It probably caused the Nazarenes to diminish in number. All of those who were of military age (16–55) were drafted, and it is possible that some of them were either executed or sentenced for refusing to take up arms and fight.

The Nazarenes faced a very different situation in World War I. While many of their young men served in noncombatant branches of the [Austro-Hungarian] army, sometimes receiving military decorations for this service, others suffered imprisonment and even perhaps death for their opposition to bearing arms.⁹⁶

In 1915 the whole region including the remaining Nazarene population was devastated by a plague which ran through the country. Another indicator of their decline would be the relative silence of Orthodox sources, which had so viciously attacked the Nazarenes before the First World War in almost every possible way for a period of a full 40 years.

The Nazarenes were almost exclusively a peasants' sect, with few artisans and craftsmen. It was their common social status that united them and made it easier for them to evangelise among the poor.⁹⁷ 'Hungry people do not look at what is offered but take it with confidence, especially when the giving hand is blistered just like their own', commented George Schwalm, a Lutheran pastor in Pančevo, about the Nazarenes.⁹⁸

They were not recognised as one of the religions or denominations in the constitution or laws in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, nor in the new state, The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (founded in 1918), and the situation remained the same in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (founded in 1929). They were refused freedom of worship.⁹⁹ In both the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia 'the Nazarenes were perceived as a kind of social movement of the oppressed, as their ethical and religious perfectionism prompted them to strongly criticize the

prevailing religious and political order'.¹⁰⁰

They were stagnating in the period between the world wars, if not diminishing in number, and they did not maintain contact with other communities of Nazarenes abroad, in Switzerland, the United States, France, Germany or Hungary.¹⁰¹ There may be several reasons for this, including lack of organisation, theological mistrust of the foreign 'friends', constant attacks from the press.

In some cases Nazarenes were the founders or adherents of new denominations in the 1920s and 1930s. Dr Aleksandar Birviš, a renowned scholar and Baptist pastor in Belgrade, says that many of their adherents in the prewar days had left the Austro-Hungarian Empire because of persecution, while others had become Seventh Day Adventists or returned to the Orthodox Church.¹⁰² At least one Pentecostal church in Vojvodina was founded by two sons from a Nazarene family.

One event in 1924 aroused special attention in the West: the arrest of 160 Nazarenes because they refused to take the military oath. They were brought before a court martial since they were contravening the new 1919 Constitution, Article 12 of which stated that 'No one may withdraw himself from his civil and military duties by referring to the rules of denominations ...'.¹⁰³ A reporter wrote that 'There is perfect order, peace, and love in the camp where they are detained; it seems like a church. When they speak, their speech is about Jesus, when they read their literature is the Bible; when they sing they sing the Psalms.'¹⁰⁴ The outcome of the trial is not known since the government tried to diminish the significance of the whole case. It is possible that the large number involved led to a settlement by mutual agreement. Czako reports that at that very time a committee was founded in England for the purpose of defending Protestant churches in Eastern Europe, prompted particularly by the 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia.

The situation for the Nazarenes did not improve in socialist Yugoslavia. They were persecuted for their faith, and many cases were reported of conscientious objectors being sentenced to between five and ten years' imprisonment. When Yugoslavia introduced civil service in the military the number of Nazarenes sentenced to jail was reduced. The last known conscientious objector to serve a year in jail was Pavle Božić from Nova Pazova who refused to bear arms in 1996.

Some Remarks

The Nazarenes were the first Christian movement or denomination coming from the West to make headway among the Serbian population in present-day Vojvodina as well as in present-day Serbia proper. At the beginning it was a strong movement which spread to almost all parts of Serbia. It was predominantly a movement among the lower classes, peasants, artisans and craftsmen who were attracted by the Nazarenes' simple teachings. The Nazarenes rejected the outward religious life of traditional Orthodoxy (the veneration of icons and saints and making the sign of the cross) but promoted the inward spiritual life (searching one's heart, humbling oneself before God, frequent prayer).

The Nazarenes published nothing except for one hymnbook. They kept no records or archives. They propagated themselves through readings of the Bible only, regular prayer meetings and a pious life. However, one source mentions several books which they 'liked to read as well as the Bible': *Srce čovečije hram Božiji ili radionica Sotone* (*The Heart of a Man is a Temple of God or the Workshop of Satan*), translated from the German and published in 1893; *Car iz doma Davidova* (*The King from the House of David*), published in 1903; and *Putovanje poklonikovo* (*Pilgrim's*

Progress by John Bunyan), reprinted in 1911.¹⁰⁵

They had no formal pastors and church polity was basically congregational. Some brothers were elected elders. They met in homes, not only at the beginning but later too, probably because of severe persecution from the Orthodox Church and the civil authorities both in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in Serbia. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire the Roman Catholic, Reformed and Lutheran Churches were also involved in this persecution of the Nazarenes. Today they have church buildings.

They propagated nonviolence from the beginning, and the state therefore saw them as the enemies of civil law and order. They were often arrested, sentenced to imprisonment, and in some cases executed (especially in times of war).

The Austro-Hungarian, the Serbian and later the Yugoslavian authorities were all aware of their existence, but were not willing to grant them recognition as a legal religious community. 'It was the sect's potential for expansion and not its non-resistant principles that was the primary cause of the cruel treatment meted out for so long to its conscientious objectors.'¹⁰⁶

All the Serbian Orthodox authors I have consulted (Milin, Dimitrijević, Slijepčević) agree that the influence of the Nazarenes on the Serbian people and the Orthodox Church was significant. They introduced people to idea of reading the Bible (everyone agrees that this was the most commendable thing they did); they alerted the Orthodox Church to the fact that it was not satisfying the spiritual needs of the people in their parishes; and they turned the Orthodox Church against small but resistant religious bodies (a practice which the Orthodox Church would continue in the years after the Second World War against other Evangelical denominations).

Sadly, the reaction of Orthodox leaders was not to try to reach the people with the same kind of 'spiritual understanding' and inner piety as was observed among the Nazarenes, but rather to direct all their efforts towards the destruction and expulsion of this group. Until the Balkan Wars the Nazarenes were spreading rapidly, but seven years of wars (including the First World War) brought their growth to a standstill. The Nazarene's 'ethical and theological perfectionism' probably caused their numbers to diminish, especially as they reportedly cut ties with all foreign friends. Since they left no records and wrote no history the task of reconstructing what really happened is extremely difficult. The little that was written about the Nazarenes was often written by their enemies, who may have exaggerated¹⁰⁷ or diminished their numbers and influence.

The Nazarenes were the largest evangelical group ever to exist among the Serbian people. Within the broader Protestant family of denominations, the Adventists grew to similar numbers. No other Protestant or evangelical group has ever attained such numbers among the Serbian people. Notwithstanding all the obstacles and state persecution, there are still about 1500 Nazarenes in Serbia.

The Baptists

Three Ethnic German Craftsmen from Hungary in Germany

In the nineteenth century the Baptist movement spread from Hamburg, Germany, throughout all the German states and beyond, to Denmark, Austria, Poland, Hungary and some of Russia, and to Serbia, which was then in the Ottoman Empire. The theological school in Hamburg was a constant source of supply for the ministry, and the local church of Johann Gerhard Oncken (1800–84) numbered 1317 members in the 1860s.¹⁰⁸

Oncken was the founder of the German Baptists. He was converted in 1834 and knew Samuel Froehlich from the Baptist movement in Switzerland. Little is known about their personal relationship, but it is clear that it came to an end when Froehlich took a different position on the issue of baptism. However, it is documented that the Baptist movement later spread rapidly among former members of the Nazarene churches in Vojvodina (see below).¹⁰⁹

Three ethnic German craftsmen from Hungary came to Hamburg in the 1840s to help to rebuild the city after it was destroyed by fire. They came into contact with Oncken, and soon after were converted and baptised. In 1846 they returned to Vienna to try to spread the good news.

These men returned to Vienna with a German Baptist named Lorders in April, 1846, and soon gathered a Bible study group of seventeen persons. Marshall and Horning remained there while Scharschmidt and Rottmayer went on to Pest (today part of Budapest). ... In each city, the men gathered groups for Bible study and worship.¹¹⁰

The first Baptists in Serbia were a Hungarian couple from Novi Sad who were baptised in 1862 in Bucharest by a German preacher. Later they decided to go to Sarajevo. From 1878 they participated in the life of a small group of believers, mainly Austro-Hungarian officers and foreigners who were Baptists. One of these believers was Franz Tabory, who was a Bible colporteur in Sarajevo and throughout Bosnia.¹¹¹

In 1863 Oncken sent one of his 'most efficient workers', August Liebig, on a missionary journey through Bosnia and Serbia proper. During this trip he baptised several believers.¹¹² The converts moved to Sarajevo and joined a small church which soon became the stronghold of the Baptist witness in the whole of the Balkans.

... at the same time [after 1878] a strong Baptist Church developed in Sarajewo [Sarajevo], the Capital of Bosnia. It consisted mainly of foreigners, diplomats and Austrian officials. One can still see evidences of the witness of those Church members. The first Baptist Church in Bosnia had a rather good Sunday School, and was engaged in social activities as well.¹¹³

Continuing their missionary efforts, the Hamburg Baptists in 1869 planned to send Heinrich Meyer, a German from Hungary, to pioneer the Baptist work in Odessa, Ukraine. However, he got in contact with Edward Millard from the British and Foreign Bible Society (Vienna office) who offered him a position as a Bible colporteur in Zagreb, which he accepted. In 1872 he started a church there and soon afterwards moved to Budapest where he also planted a church in 1874.

The Church in Novi Sad

In 1875 yet another Bible colporteur, Adolf Hempt, who was also a former Nazarene believer from Novi Sad, invited Meyer to visit Novi Sad and a group of ex-Nazarenes who held regular meetings. About this visit to Novi Sad Meyer wrote:

The Lord poured out his grace on us in November in Novi Sad on the Danube. A few Baptists who had earlier belonged to the Nazarene Church had attempted to hold meetings, but not very seriously. ... They were revived. In a short time twenty persons received baptism.¹¹⁴

All this was pioneering work among the German-speaking population. Meyer continued to come to Novi Sad for eleven more years, and the Baptists from this part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire always remained in good and strong relations with the German Baptist Union. Many new believers returned to their villages and started small groups of Baptists.

In 1876 Meyer baptised Johann Tatter and his wife and they returned to his hometown of Bečej to start a mission station. The missionary activity was gaining momentum. In 1878 Meyer baptised a Hungarian couple who moved to the Bosnian town of Brezovo Polje where later a Baptist congregation was started. The largest growth took place in and around the ethnic German villages, but the Baptists tried to spread their work among other nationalities as lay preachers preached in other languages as well.

In 1892 the church in Novi Sad became an independent congregation. The church invited Julius Peter, a Prussian who had finished the Hamburg theological school and was a pastor of the Baptist Church in Vienna from 1884 to 1888, to become a pastor. He expanded the mission field of the church and remained pastor until he died in 1925. Although the church was predominantly German, its records show Slavic and Hungarian names also.¹¹⁵ This church soon became the centre of Baptist work in the whole region. By 1909 it had mission stations in the following settlements: Šajkaš (also known as Sveti Ivan), Feketić, Bečej, Crvenka, Torza, Sekić, Belo Blato and Gregurevci. At that time its membership (including the mission stations) was 94 people.¹¹⁶

In Novi Sad and in its stations the worship services were held mostly in German, but lay pastors often preached in the Slovak, Hungarian or Serbian languages, thus allowing other nationalities to join in worship. These preaching stations hired colporteurs and they walked from village to village to distribute Bibles and Christian materials. 'The Novi Sad Church, the hub of the German Conference, developed, even in its post-war Serbian form, as one pole or center of Baptist life in the country.'¹¹⁷

When the World Congress of Baptists held its first meeting in London in 1905 the report about the territories in present-day Vojvodina spoke of nine Baptist churches with about 100 baptised members, which was a rather small number per congregation.

The Beginnings in Belgrade

In 1889 in Novi Sad Meyer baptised one German woman from Belgrade. It is recorded that the first Serbian to be baptised into this denomination was Svetozar Barbulović. He lost his eyesight in the war with Turks in 1875–76 and went to Vienna for an operation, but it was not successful. In Vienna he met Pastor Julius Peter who baptised him in the early 1880s. He returned to Belgrade and started to work with Francis Mackenzie, the agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Belgrade.¹¹⁸ Barbulović was active and in 1892 he baptised another person of Serbian origin.

Mackenzie and Barbulović faced severe opposition from the Orthodox Church. When they opened the 'Sala Mira' (Hall of Peace) and invited an Orthodox priest to lecture he was arrested for cooperating with the sect. Mackenzie and Barbulović then invited girls for a domestic course, with the goal of bringing them closer to Christ. However, the government soon prohibited this activity.

In 1895 Petar Lehotsky, a Baptist from Slovakia (then upper Hungary), moved to

Belgrade. He visited the German woman frequently and they were joined by a couple of other believers who knew German. They held services secretly. In 1898 Lehotsky married a member of the Novi Sad church and soon after they started to join believers in Belgrade for regular church meetings in their house. It is recorded that several more persons were converted and baptised as a result of their activities in Belgrade.¹¹⁹

No other activity is known since Baptist work in Serbia was forbidden. 'In the kingdom of Serbia a German Baptist fellowship had developed in Belgrade by the 1890s. The multiethnic congregation was rather unstable and did not get a firm Slavic base until 1926.'¹²⁰ These house meetings continued until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. One Hungarian Baptist pastor who served in Belgrade as a soldier in 1916 wrote about the meetings:

I used the opportunity primarily to search out Serbian believers, whether soldiers or civilians. Thus it was that I found a [the] home of Peter Lehotsky on a street near the sugar factory. ... We met regularly there. A middle-aged Serbian lady attended these meetings and desired to be baptized. We prepared for this event. Two Romanians and a Hungarian soldier also asked to be baptized.¹²¹

The Work among the Slovaks

In 1898 Meyer baptised a Slovak, Josip Turocy, who moved to Bački Petrovac in Vojvodina the following year and began witnessing among the members of the Slovak population, using songs and other material he had translated into the Slovak language. In 1900 he saw three people become born-again Christians. They were baptised in Novi Sad. The next year saw four more people converted and the small group decided to buy a house as a house of prayer. Their growth exceeded expectations and in 1904 they bought a bigger house. In 1902 this group established its first mission station in the town of Gložan and in 1904 this station baptised five people in the Danube. The group invited Slovak preachers from Hungary proper to come and preach among them. They had good relations with the church in Békéscsaba.

The strong Slovak Baptist movement was a lay movement which began in farm villages by the efforts of Slovaks who returned from Hungary. ... The center of Slovak work was in Bački Petrovac, a station begun by Josip Turoci [Turocy] and assisted by pioneer missionaries from Hungary.¹²²

The Baptist witness among the Slovaks was successful in other areas of Vojvodina too. In 1900 one Serbian Baptist in the town of Belo Blato baptised a Slovak settler who started to work among his fellow Slovaks and in 1903 baptised twelve people. This Slovak believer, Jano Sjanta, was arrested and persecuted. The church in Novi Sad supported his work, as did a group of believers from the village of Šajkaš; they frequently visited Belo Blato. From there the work spread to Padina in 1906 and to Lug and Grabovo in 1907.

The Gložan fellowship also became the mother fellowship for many new mission stations, in Čelarevo in 1906, in Kulpin in 1907, and in Šid in 1911. Fellowships in Čelarevo and in Kulpin were opened and supported by Slovaks who returned from the United States as Baptists.

The work grew to such an extent that the Slovak Baptists needed more leaders. They invited Mihail Koroc from Hungary proper to come and help. In 1909 he

formed an organisation for elders which developed into a Slovak conference in 1918. Slovak lay preachers and leaders opened most of the stations as they started Bible studies in their homes.

The Work Among the Hungarians

One of the first Baptist pioneers among the Hungarians in Vojvodina was the railway worker József Kalmar from the city of Sombor. He was baptised in 1898 in Kiskunhalas. He left his job and decided to commit himself to mission work among the Hungarians, of whom there were many in Vojvodina at the end of the nineteenth century. At first the work was an extension from Hungary. Kalmar and another convert József Kollar both began churches in their home towns.

The churches started by Kalmar and Kollar began to spread the Word. They developed mission stations among the Hungarian-speaking settlements. German-speaking pastors preached and guided their leadership conferences. While closely associated with the ethnic German churches, the Hungarians nevertheless maintained their own language congregations. Their relations remained close until 1940.

During the First World War a Hungarian soldier on the Russian front was captured with another soldier who was a Baptist believer from Budapest. After the war he returned to his village of Vojlovica (just southeast of Belgrade), joined the Slovak congregation and started a Hungarian ministry.¹²³

The Baptist Movement from 1918 to 1941

After the First World War the Baptist movement in Yugoslavia became more lively. There were several established churches in various language groups and converted believers returned from abroad with a desire to evangelise their own native land. There were also some Austro-Hungarian soldiers who had been baptised as prisoners of war in prison camps in Russia.

Now they returned and carried the Mission also into other parts of our country. In 1920 there were 70 small Baptist groups, with about 700 members and 400 Sunday school pupils, and about 100 members of the young people's groups. The Mission was at that time not yet organized and therefore developed within local limits.¹²⁴

The Baptist work was also enhanced by the appearance in Yugoslavia of representatives of the German Baptist Mission and of the Southern Baptist Convention from the USA.

The Involvement of the Southern Baptist Convention

The Baptist World Alliance committee met in London in 1920 and decided that the Southern Baptist Convention from the USA (hereafter SBC) should grant missionary support to the developing Baptist movements in Yugoslavia and other new countries in the region. The SBC started to send back to their homeland Yugoslavs who had become Baptists as immigrants to the USA. The most prominent among these was Vinko Vacek, an ethnic Czech, who left the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1911 to work in the Ford Motor Company in Detroit. In 1913 he became a Baptist and started to work in a church in Detroit where services were held in Serbo-Croatian, Russian, Polish and English. Vacek became involved in restarting the church in Zagreb in

1921, and later he decided to stay and lead the SBC mission over the whole country.

Among others who returned, Jovo Jekić (who became a believer in Vacek's church in the USA) moved to Croatia, Dušan Tatić moved to Belgrade, and a certain Nedučin to Kikinda in Vojvodina.

He [Jekić] ... returned to Yugoslavia in the autumn of 1919 and immediately began missionary visits. ... In his missionary work he used Bibles, Christian literature, and hymn-books from America, as he had in Detroit. The Yugoslavs who, like Jekić, had returned to Yugoslavia kept up a continuing correspondence with Pastor Vacek in Detroit informing him of their work and many opportunities for missions. Thus the Detroit pastor began to see the need to solidify and organize the Serbo-Croatian Baptist fellowships in Yugoslavia.¹²⁵

Because of the SBC agreement with the Baptist World Alliance to support the developing Baptist movements in this part of the Europe, Dr Everett Gill, Sr was sent to Europe (Bucharest, Romania) to oversee and assume the responsibility for this programme. The SBC also sent two missionaries to Yugoslavia (Vinko Vacek and Nikola Duljić). Gill was a frequent visitor of the SBC missionaries in Yugoslavia. However, the Foreign Mission Board gave only limited financial assistance toward the work. In 1927 Gill wrote in his report: 'We are spending a pitifully small sum in Yugoslavia; about half as much as a small country church with half-time preaching.'¹²⁶ The only significant investment in the work in Yugoslavia was in 1939 when a house was purchased in Belgrade with room for a church, a seminary and a missionary family.

Formation of the Baptist Union

The various ethnic branches of the Baptist movement in Yugoslavia tried to work toward greater unity. Their leaders held meetings in 1921 and 1923 trying to coordinate the whole Baptist movement and its activities. The first conference took place in Croatia from 27 to 29 March 1921. More than 50 delegates came from various parts of Croatia to Daruvar to meet one of the Czech brothers who came to visit them; he also brought some financial help.

Another meeting took place in January 1923 in Zagreb; John Hopper refers to it as 'The Second Serbo-Croatian Conference'.¹²⁷ At this meeting it was decided to start the publication of the first magazine in Serbo-Croatian, *Glas Evanđelja*. The meeting was organised by Nikola Duljić, one of the returnees from the USA. The SBC and its representatives joined in these efforts from the beginning since they realised the need for a unified organisation.

Just a month after the meeting in Zagreb, in February 1923, Vacek's co-worker Duljić held a training conference for mission workers from all the language branches in Novi Sad. Plans were laid to establish a retirement home for the aged from all ethnic groups. Vacek initiated and established a mutual mission fund, which the committee controlled with representatives of all the language groups.

The SBC Mission Board secretary, J.D. Love, along with their European representative E. Gill, came to meet representatives of the Yugoslav Baptists in Novi Sad in 1923. It was agreed to continue with the organisational preparations. That same year a conference was held in Zagreb; Dr James Henry Rushbrooke from the UK, a representative of the European Baptists and the Baptist World Alliance, was present, along with Gill. The conclusion of this meeting was that the preparations should be

continued.¹²⁸

On 16–17 January 1924 the founding Baptist Union conference was held in the village of Svilojevo in Vojvodina, in the Hungarian-language church. Every association presented a report on its missionary efforts, and the delegates also accepted the report concerning the purchase of the retirement home in Novi Sad. Vinko Vacek was elected president of the *Savez baptističkih crkava u Kraljevini SHS* (Union of Baptist Churches of the KSCS).

A second conference was held in September 1924 in Novi Sad. There were twelve Slovak delegates (representing a membership base of some 300), seven Croats (for some 175), seven Germans (for some 175) and five Hungarians (for some 125). In total, the delegates represented a membership base of about 800 believers. At this conference the Romanian believers asked for help in their mission work among the ethnic Romanians in Vojvodina. It was decided to instruct the Slovak churches to help the emerging Romanian branch. The conference also confirmed the leadership elected at the previous meeting.¹²⁹ 'By the end of 1924, representatives from seven nationalities had met together under their common Lord to search out his will for the spread of the gospel in their country. Serbs, Croats, Slovaks, Hungarians, Germans, Romanians and Macedonians raised their voices in prayer and praise.'¹³⁰

Continuous Work

Although all the language groups were united in the Baptist Union they continued to work separately. The Slovaks kept on with their practice of lay pastors and evangelists. Slovak Baptists numbered 283 in 1922. They elected their associational leadership which acted as the supreme body of appeal as well as the body for making further appointments. They decided which pastor would go to which mission station and planned evangelistic meetings. In the early 1930s they started the magazine *Novi rod*.

Wardin records that in 1925 Serbian–Slovak work began at the German church in Novi Sad and in 1933 Serbian work at the German church in Kikinda.¹³¹

In 1922 there were 117 Hungarian Baptists.¹³² Until 1940 work among the Hungarian believers was always connected with German-speaking pastors.

It is of particular importance to note, however, that those Hungarian churches which held services separate from their German or Slavic brethren demonstrated more success in reaching Hungarians. When the Hungarians in Kikinda formed their own fellowship apart from the German congregation and when the Hungarians in Vojlovica separated from their Slovak church, both Hungarian-language groups prospered.¹³³

One German Baptist, Oskar Keller, came to Subotica in the late 1920s and started a small Hungarian-speaking church. Through the years this church was able to start several smaller mission stations in the area. One small church in Padej was a daughter church of the one in Kikinda. In 1931–32, 27 converts were baptised.

The town of Straža in eastern Vojvodina became a centre for Romanian work when a convert returned from Romania in 1922; through his witness the first baptism occurred in 1924. This believer had gone to Romania to work in the coalmines and had been converted and baptised in 1917. Vinko Vacek went to help this work and in 1924 he baptised eight Romanian believers. Before the service the Baptists marched through the town to the riverbank, singing hymns, the converts dressed in white.¹³⁴

In the 1930s a Romanian missionary, Avram Balgradean, worked in Vojvodina

trying to bring more unity to the Romanian branch. He organised new work, directed conferences, wrote materials, and made frequent visitations and missionary journeys. The largest Romanian church in this period was in the village of Nikolinci, with about a hundred members. Petar Mateaš founded this church. He played a significant role in the new Baptist conference in the years after the Second World War.¹³⁵

In the period from 1924 to 1944 the German-speaking churches maintained steady growth. When the Germans were expelled from Yugoslavia in late 1944 they numbered 538 members in seven churches and many mission stations.¹³⁶ Their work in Vojvodina was organised through the missionary agency *Donauländermission* (Mission to the Danube Countries). They also published a monthly magazine *Der Evangeliumsbote*.¹³⁷

The president and founder of the Baptist Union of Yugoslavia, Vinko Vacek, died in 1939. At that time the number of Baptists was 2395. The work in the country was going well. Youth groups travelled and supported the growing groups of new believers.

They go in groups to villages where there are no Baptists, and hold a service in some home, whose head is well disposed toward Baptists. Almost everyone can play some instrument, be it trombone, guitar or hand organ. And they use instruments to attract people to the services. There is also a circulating library ...¹³⁸

On her arrival in Belgrade Lidiya Kalmykova, a refugee from the Soviet Union, started to look for a Baptist congregation to join. There was only a small number of believers who did not meet regularly. With help from Vacek and some other brethren, regular meetings now started to take place, and soon a church was founded. Kalmykova was baptised and remained active in women's work. In 1939 she was elected president of the *Baptistička ženska organizacija u Jugoslaviji* (Baptist Women's Organisation in Yugoslavia) which was connected with the Women's Missionary Union of the SBC.

A Schism in the Baptist Union

Ever since the London conference in 1920 had granted the SBC the right to direct the work among the Baptists in several countries of the region, including Yugoslavia, there was tension in the Baptist Union between those who favoured the German leadership and those who favoured the SBC.

German Baptists, also desirous of working in Yugoslavia and apparently unwilling to abide by the decision of the London Conference of Baptists in 1920 which directed the Southern Baptists to be responsible for the work in Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia, caused a schism in the Baptist Union in 1939.¹³⁹

The two major boards of the denomination in the United States divided Europe into two interest spheres. The northern-based American Baptists took Scandinavia and the north of Europe, and the SBC focused on the southern parts of Europe. The argument against greater American influence in Yugoslavia was that they came after the unifying work had started. Apparently, the SBC and the German Baptists were arguing about which would have greater influence in which part of Yugoslavia. In Zagreb and Belgrade pastors were always ethnic Czechs, and not Slovaks or Germans who predominated among the membership.¹⁴⁰ Political tensions were also

apparent. This is an excerpt from a book published in the USA in 1940:

With the coming of a missionary a new day dawned and the hearts of the Croatian Baptists were filled with rejoicing. But there was a dark cloud on the horizon. It has been gathering ever since the London Conference and is deep rooted in the *racial frictions* ever keeping this little country in internal strife, jealousies, and friction. It will take patience and compassion to bridge these dangerous differences. [Emphasis mine – BB]¹⁴¹

The Seminary

In 1938 John Allen Moore was appointed as the first Southern Baptist missionary to Yugoslavia. He came to Belgrade as an SBC Foreign Mission Board representative.¹⁴² The growth of the Baptist movement showed the acute need for leadership training. Mr Moore was watched closely by the police and it is remembered that in one instance the American ambassador to Belgrade had to intervene.¹⁴³

In the period from 1918 until the late 1930s trained Baptist preachers were rather rare in the country. Possibly because of their Nazarene background, in many areas it was not considered permissible that ‘people of the Bible’ should read any books besides the Bible. Trained and educated preachers were considered as worldly and not worthy to preach the Gospel.

Because of so many differences in nationality, language, and even in convictions, it was very hard to reach unity in the mission work, and brotherly co-operation between the different groups and smaller units. Many stormy conferences and discussions by and by smoothed out the differences in thinking and conviction. ... He [J.A. Moore] founded the first Baptist Theological Seminary in Belgrade, the capital of the country. This act was in the eyes of the more conservative elements a really revolutionary work, and it is easy to understand that the opening of this seminary was much criticized.¹⁴⁴

Among the Yugoslavs themselves there has been dissension also over an educated ministry, the majority opposing the new seminary at Belgrade on the grounds that educated leaders might influence government officials and cause trouble.¹⁴⁵

In 1940 in Belgrade Moore (of the SBC) purchased a building and started a small seminary. Students were to do all the manual labour in school, including working in the kitchen, washing clothes and stoking the stoves. Every student needed to know a trade so that he would be able to support himself later.

Each prospective student was required to sign a statement that he was taking this step on faith alone, and recognized that neither the Foreign Mission Board nor any church assumed responsibility for his support after graduation. ... There were four hours of lectures a day, two hours of manual labor, four hours of study, and three devotional periods. ... Saturday afternoons were devoted to house-to-house evangelism.¹⁴⁶

When Yugoslavia became involved in the Second World War in April 1941 the Moores were forced to leave and the seminary closed.¹⁴⁷ The Yugoslav Baptist paper *Glas Evandolja* also ceased publication during the war years. SBC sources state that the seminary was reopened when in fact a new school started up in Zagreb in 1954.¹⁴⁸

The Second World War

The German/Italian occupation of Yugoslavia in April 1941 divided the Union into several small groups. Andrew Dercher, a young Baptist missionary worker, was killed in Croatia during the war.¹⁴⁹ The Baptists in Vojvodina soon linked up with the Hungarian Baptists. Baptists in the eastern part of the country managed without great disturbances. The seminary in Belgrade was closed, although one student continued to take courses and study. The German churches were all closed at the end of the war. During the war the Union was shattered, and small, scattered groups of believers were separated from one another; but it was reestablished in 1945.

The few Baptist churches in the territory which passed to Hungary enjoyed freedom since Baptists have been recognized in that country. Truly, the war has been a deterring factor in Baptist work in Yugoslavia.¹⁵⁰

Subsequent Activities

The Baptists were the first 'recognised' evangelical denomination to work and establish churches in present-day Serbia. Their growth was constant and stable among all language groups until the Second World War.

Baptist activities in socialist Yugoslavia were fruitful. After some initial difficulties with the new populist government of Marshal Tito, in 1953 the state recognised many of the religious communities, Baptists included. Their work was institutionalised: they reestablished a union and adopted a constitution, and their employees were able to join state-supported pension schemes and take out health insurance. The Baptists reopened the religious school in Novi Sad in the 1960s, published several bulletins and magazines, and finally, in the 1980s, opened a publishing house. In 1967 the Baptists were the hosts for the Billy Graham evangelistic meeting held in Zagreb, where the local Catholic church helped by permitting the use of its stadium.

In the late 1980s the Baptist Union of Yugoslavia split into two Baptist organisations on doctrinal grounds: the *Savez baptističkih crkava u Srbiji* (Baptist Union) and the *Savez evandjeoskih hrišćana baptista* (Union of Evangelical Christians–Baptists). Today the former has about 1300 members and the latter fewer than 400. Ties were severed among the older leaders of denominations, but younger church members enjoy good cooperation in missionary activities implemented by the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Campus Crusade for Christ and other mission groups.

The Seventh-Day Adventists

The Beginning

The first Seventh-Day Adventists (hereafter SDAs) appeared on Serbian territory¹⁵¹ (Vojvodina) in about 1890.¹⁵² József Salay, a minister of the Reformed church in Veliki Bečkerek (present-day Zrenjanin), was open for cooperation with them. He wrote: 'We are friends with everyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as his life principle.'¹⁵³ They met on 19 June 1893 and discussed the possibilities of translation and distribution of SDA literature (seven tracts) in the Hungarian and Serbian languages. At that meeting they founded *Društvo za prevođenje, štampanje i širenje adventističke literature* (The Society for Translation, Printing and Distribution of

Adventist literature).¹⁵⁴ A wealthy Serbian merchant, Bogdan Popović, a member of the local Reformed church, financed the publications in the Serbian language. The SDA publishing house in Hamburg, Germany, was the publisher of all the materials.

One of the most successful individuals in spreading SDA materials was Mita Pavkov, the literature evangelist of the Reformed church in Vojvodina. This cooperation was enhanced by frequent invitations to SDA preachers to preach in Reformed churches and by the publishing of SDA health principles in the Reformed journal *Kereszteny*.

In 1899 SDA missionaries came from Germany; they used tracts and a book by Ellen G. White, *Put Hristu (Steps to Christ)*, which had already been translated.

Among the Serbs in Vojvodina, Adventism appeared in 1903, in Mokrin and Boljevci.¹⁵⁵

The First Churches

The first Adventist to preach in Serbian was Petar Todor in 1901. He gathered a small group of believers in Kumane (eastern Vojvodina), and soon became an elder of a church. By 1905 he had gathered ten believers.¹⁵⁶ The SDA book *Adventism*, published in Serbian in 1925, makes the claim that in 1903 several Serbian Orthodox Christians in Vojvodina, while reading the Bible on their own,

... came to an understanding that Christ was coming for the second time and that they should respect Saturday. Incidentally, they got in contact with some Adventists in Transylvania and while in contact with them received SDA literature, embraced the SDA principles, and founded SDA churches in Boljevci, Titel, Kumane and Mokrin.¹⁵⁷

However, it is more likely that missionaries founded the first churches, because it is reported that the central mission in Hamburg decided to send more workers to the mission field of the Balkans. Their converts were known by the local name *Subotari* (Sabbatarians).¹⁵⁸ In the period 1906–9 the SDA sent students who had graduated from Friedensau Bible school: Max Ludwig, A. Thomas, Robert Shillinger (who served as a missionary in the region from 1908 to 1948¹⁵⁹) and Albin Močnik (a Slovenian). The official Yugoslav SDA website also speaks of missionary work: 'The mission road to our country went through Hungary, Russia and Romania to Vojvodina where the first churches were founded in Mokrin near Kikinda and in Kumane near Zrenjanin'.¹⁶⁰ At about the same time believers from Vojvodina sent their first Serbian student to a Bible school in Hamburg, Angelina Lazić from Mokrin. She was able to help in translating more material into Serbian.

The first national conference for Adventists was held in 1908, in Beodra-Miloševo; 200 believers attended.

Publishing Activity

In 1909 Petar Todor started the first SDA magazine *Posljednja objava*, but it ceased publication the following year because of Todor's ill health.¹⁶¹ In 1910, because of the growing demand for a publication, the leadership of the emerging SDA South-Slav union decided to publish a new magazine *Serbski radenik*; in 1914 it changed its name to *Sionska straža*; in 1917 to *Misijski poslanik*; and again in 1922 to *Adventni glasnik*.

In 1909 the Hamburg Publishing House opened a branch bookshop in Novi Sad and the same year published two books. In 1919 this bookshop became independent, when a local publisher, Gavr Šašić, became a church member and took it over. It became a publishing house in 1927 under the name *Preporod*.

It is interesting to note that in 1912 the Serbian Orthodox Church published one of E.G. White's books, *Education: Biblical Principles of Christian Education*, in Serbian translation, under the title *Biblijsko vaspitanje*. It was originally published only in 1903. The translator was Dr Pavle R. Radosavljević, at that time adjunct professor of experimental pedagogy at New York University.¹⁶² Excerpts from White's book were first published in the Serbian Orthodox theological journal *Bogoslovski glasnik*, but it was later decided to print the whole book.¹⁶³ The decision might be explained by the facts that E.G. White was relatively unknown at that time in Orthodox circles, and that the translator held a prominent position, was an expert on the subject and had recommended the book.

The Belgrade Church

In 1909 Max Ludwig was transferred to Belgrade where he founded the first SDA congregation in the capital on 15 December.¹⁶⁴ Ludwig also preached in Kikinda and Novi Sad. Milin writes that one Orthodox priest, Ljubimir Mitrović, wrote a report about the SDA meetings in Belgrade in 1911; 11 people attended, from Žarkovo, Zemun, Kikinda, Barajevo and Belgrade.¹⁶⁵ It is reported that in 1912 Ludwig had 15 followers. That same year he moved to Novi Sad where he stayed until 1933.¹⁶⁶

In 1914 the Belgrade believers were all arrested and interrogated in connection with conscientious objection to the bearing of arms and serving in the military (as were the Nazarenes), but when they declared that they had no objection to these activities they were released.

Their first question was: Do we allow our members to serve in the army and bear arms? I answered that we do. Then they said that our faith did not conflict with the concerns of the state laws in question, that we were free to gather and that they would not prevent us from doing so.¹⁶⁷

Other Churches

The rapid spread of SDA believers in Vojvodina led to the founding in 1911 in Novi Sad of the *Sjeverna crkvena oblast* (Northern Church Conference), the second-largest organisational unit in the SDA structure. (The largest unit was the union, followed in order by the conference, the district, the county and the local area.)

In 1913 Robert Shillinger, one of the original missionaries sent, wrote a report about visiting local congregations in Vojvodina:

In December [1913] I visited local churches in Sivac, [Banatsko] Novo Selo, Lok, Alibunar, Belgrade, Čurug, Kumani, Velika Kikinda and Zemun. I also visited groups in Petra and Melenci, where there is a great interest in the truth. I had the opportunity to ordain an elder in Belgrade, brother Jeftić, and we merged the church from Zemun with this one in Belgrade – it was a good practical move. Brother Jeftić has good contacts in Serbia [Serbia proper], and he and others were able to sell 4,000 copies of *The Signs of the Times*. In 1914 I also visited Turija, Vršac and Novi Sad. We have baptised 40 souls and there are at least 30 more for the next quarter.¹⁶⁸

The Situation after the First World War

In the period immediately after the war there was great fervour for missionary work, especially in the new territories. The western and southern parts of the new kingdom were proclaimed as a new mission field.¹⁶⁹ Literary evangelists M. Nedić, N. Sevkić, Ž. Dimić and Živa Krdžalin left Serbia for Skoplje, Macedonia. By 1921 they had baptised two new believers. In 1922 they were joined by a lay preacher, Mirko Kavur, and the next year Pastor Nikola Slankamenac, from one of the oldest SDA families in Novi Sad, arrived. Another worker went to Prilep. In 1923 Albin Močnik baptised seven believers in Prilep (it is recorded that one of them was 110 years old¹⁷⁰) and three in Skoplje, thus beginning a new local assembly.

In the meantime in Serbia (and elsewhere in Yugoslavia) SDA activities were officially forbidden. In the process of transition from the old legal system to a new one, there was a legal void from 1921 until late 1922, and many of the SDA groups were not recognised. However, membership records show that the SDAs baptised another 158 members in 1921.¹⁷¹

Between 1905 and 1925 churches were founded in Belgrade, Kumane, Mokrin, Novo Miloševo, Zagreb [now in Croatia], Maribor [now in Slovenia], Niš [in Serbia proper] and Novi Sad.¹⁷²

A central organisation was founded at a 1925 conference in Novi Sad: the *Jugoslovenska unija crkve adventista sedmog dana* (Yugoslav Union of Seventh-Day Adventists) with four administrative areas, called assemblies. As of 1924, major publications were printed in both the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets in order to reach all the regions of the new country.

The year 1931 was important for the further development of the movement. First, two new districts were founded: the *Zapadna crkvena oblast* (Western Church Conference) for the parts of the country which are now Croatia and Slovenia and the *Južna crkvena oblast* (Southern Church Conference)¹⁷³ for the area of Serbia proper, its province of Kosovo, and Macedonia.¹⁷⁴ Second, the seat of the union was moved from Novi Sad to Belgrade.¹⁷⁵ Third, the publishing house also moved to Belgrade, and the work became more centralised and coordinated. Finally, the SDA opened a theological school in Belgrade for the education of the growing number of pastoral candidates and lay preachers. The school held a one-year training programme for preachers, but after the first year it was closed by the Belgrade police. The union then moved the school to Zagreb, Croatia, where it was burned down and closed in 1942.

He [Močnik] founded in Belgrade a 'Saturday School', a 'missionary school' for the preparation of the missionaries and colporteurs, the 'Samaritan Society', and others. This author attended many of their lectures while studying theology in 1934 and 1935 in Belgrade.¹⁷⁶

SDA churches were allowed to function during the first year of the Second World War in Yugoslavia (1941), but in 1942 they were all closed and their work forbidden; publications ceased to appear. Until the end of the war every conference continued to act independently, nurturing low-profile house meetings.

The Reform Movement of the SDAs

The second Adventist Church in Yugoslavia, the Reform Movement of the SDAs, began as a split within the SDA movement. In 1920 in the cities of Pančevo and

Banatsko Novo Selo and their surroundings the leadership registered the spread of a new teaching which included refusing to bear arms or swear oaths, and even celibacy.¹⁷⁷ After initial warnings to abandon this teaching, the concerned group was excommunicated from the Union of SDA churches. They took the name *Reformni pokret ASD-Medjunarodna zajednica* (the Reform Movement of the SDAs – International Society)¹⁷⁸ and continued to organise themselves almost identically to the Union of SDAs.

According to Močnik, in 1925 they had 53 congregations with about 860 members. Later they joined a worldwide SDA splinter group, the Reform Movement of the SDAs. In 1924 and 1925 they started their own publishing projects, still publishing books by E.G. White. In 1929 they baptised 59 people. Today they have no more than 500 members, and one of the major differences between them and the Union SDAs is that they are strict vegetarians.¹⁷⁹ In 1954 the Reform Movement in Serbia split and formed two new groups: the *Unija reformnog pokreta ASD* (the Union of the Reformed Movement of the SDAs) and the *Reformni pokret ASD – Mejdunarodna misijska zajednica* (the Reform Movement of the SDAs – International Missionary Society).

The SDA churches in Serbia today have about 8000 members in 200 congregations. They are the largest group of Protestants in Serbia with a mostly Serb membership (the Lutherans and Reformed are mostly Slovaks and Hungarians).

The Methodists

The Croix-Bleue (Blue Cross) Temperance Societies in Vojvodina

In 1877 Pastor Louis-Lucien Rochat founded the Croix-Bleue Temperance Society in Geneva (it was known by this name from 1881).¹⁸⁰ The society planned to help alcoholics in the same way that the Red Cross was helping wounded soldiers. Soon after it was founded the society spread to several countries and in 1894 came to Hungary. The exact date of its organisation in Vojvodina is not known, but it was probably shortly after that date. Local branches of the society worked primarily among the Germans who had settled in the region in the late eighteenth century. 'They urged total abstinence for members but did not condemn the moderate use of alcohol by others. The Croix-Bleue urged cooperation among all Christians in the accomplishment of this goal, and was distinctly religious and Christian, but non-denominational in its approach.'¹⁸¹ Croix-Bleue societies were organised in Novi Vrbas, Srbobran, Feketić (Crno Brdo), Novi Sad and Kucura, and they were supervised from the national headquarters in Budapest. In their meetings they used the German Methodist hymnbook *Frohe Botschaft* and also a Methodist magazine *Der Christliche Apologete*, sent from the USA.¹⁸² Members of the Srbobran society wrote a letter to a Vienna address given in the magazine, asking for a preacher to visit their meetings.

The First Witnesses

The Vienna Methodist preacher Robert Möller accepted an invitation and in September 1898 visited Novi Vrbas and preached at a meeting of the temperance society which was allowed to be held in the local Reformed church. He also preached in Feketić, Sekić and Kucura. On his subsequent visits he preached from the standpoint of the Methodist Church, which caused dissatisfaction at the Croix-Bleue

national headquarters, since they desired to remain nondenominational. However, the invitations kept coming, and according to Möller 'the people of Bačka requested the Methodist Episcopal Church to station a Methodist preacher among them'.¹⁸³

In 1899 the North German Annual Conference appointed a young preacher, Franz Havranek, to come to Srbobran. It is reported that his ministry was opposed by the Lutheran Church, which asked the civil authorities to limit Havranek's activities.

In 1900 in Novi Vrbas Havranek admitted the first probationers (membership candidates) and first administered the Lord's Supper. However, later that year he was recalled, probably because of his personal discouragement and fear of persecution.¹⁸⁴

Another Methodist preacher, Otto Melle, came as a volunteer from Germany, where he left his congregation behind. His 1900 Christmas Bible quiz in Novi Vrbas (at a service which was not permitted by the authorities) is a memorable event in the history of Yugoslav Methodism.

A number of people testified later that they made the decision to become Methodists and to commit themselves to the Christian way of life during that Christmas puzzle-service [quiz]. The meeting resulted in a wave of revivals in the various Bačka towns and villages ...¹⁸⁵

A report to the North German Annual Conference in 1904 spoke of seven stations, fifteen full members, 61 probationers and 71 new probationers. The first church was founded in Vrbas in 1904.

That same year, the Methodists also started work among the Hungarians. Johannes Jakob (John Tessenyi-Jakob) formed a Hungarian Bible class and later that year the first Hungarian church (preaching station) was formed in Srbobran. The preaching was by a former alcoholic and member of the local temperance society, Markus Kuszli.

In 1906 Wilhelm Lichtenberger became a pastor of a mission station in Novi Sad. It is interesting to note that his father was a Bible colporteur for Serbia for 50 years.¹⁸⁶ In 1907 new stations were founded among the German population in Jarak, Šove and Pribičevićevo (present-day Zmajevno).

A New District

In 1907 a new district for Hungarians was organised by the North German Conference with three (of its four) circuits being in northeastern Vojvodina (Bačka). Otto Melle was the first district superintendent. There were new chapels and mission stations built despite some persecution in 1907–8.

Work among the Hungarians did not develop well, especially in Srbobran, Bečej and Čurug. Most of the Hungarians remained loyal to the Roman Catholic or the Reformed Churches, so Methodism never took root among them. In 1911 an Austro-Hungarian conference was held in Vienna where it was reported that four circuits in Hungary had 313 members and 20 preaching stations.¹⁸⁷

The next annual conference meeting was held in Novi Sad in 1912 where significant progress was reported in membership (9 per cent growth). At that conference it was agreed to start two publishing projects, the magazine *Der Evangelist für Oesterreich-Ungarn* and a publishing house *Keresztesy Könyvesház* which issued a Hungarian Methodist periodical *Békebarang* (*Bell of Peace*). An Austro-Hungarian Conference was founded in 1911, but with the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the First World War it soon became obsolete.

In 1913 Otto Melle visited America and attended the World Christian Student

Association Conference at Lake Mohonk, New York, and also travelled and spoke in various German and English-speaking Methodist congregations. On one occasion he was presented with US\$50,000 from an inheritance. The money was later used to build two chapels and to support ministers during the war.¹⁸⁸

During the years 1912–14 the new conference experienced a rapid increase in membership. In 1912 the growth was 13 per cent and in 1913 another 14 per cent. Bishop John L. Nuelsen, an American of Swiss descent, who was the bishop of the Methodist Church for Europe, wrote about plans to expand the work into Serbia proper: 'However, the work was still not strong enough to warrant expansion to neighboring Serbia, though such expansion was contemplated.'¹⁸⁹

During the First World War the churches did not suffer much, but their growth was arrested. In 1915 the total membership increased by only four, while in 1916 and 1917 they reported a loss of about 40 people.

During the First World War the Methodist Church engaged in social work. The believers in Srbobran organised an orphanage, which functioned 'with considerable success'. Hundreds of families in Belgrade received food parcels for Christmas, as did hospitalised Russian refugees.

In Serbia proper, in the town of Bajina Bašta, the Methodists took over from an English mission an orphanage which cared for 60 children, and kept it operational throughout the war.

The Situation after the War

Even with its remarkable percentage growth before the war the total number of members of the Austro-Hungarian Mission Conference still did not reach 1000. With the dissolution of this conference, all the Methodist churches in the new country of Yugoslavia were united in the Yugoslavian Mission Conference of 1922 in the town of Vrbas, Vojvodina.¹⁹⁰ According to Mojzes, in the new conference the membership rose from 430 to 600 in the first two years after the war, with the opening of ten new stations. By 1923 the Annual Mission Conference registered 1300 members in the Methodist Church¹⁹¹ of Yugoslavia.¹⁹²

*The Merger with the American Board*¹⁹³

In 1922 the number of Methodists grew rapidly, adding some 220 new members, as a result of the addition of the stations of the American Board in Macedonia and Kosovo. The American Board had been present since 1873 in the European lands of the Ottoman Empire.

In a report from Kosovo dated 8 July 1885, W.W. Sleeper wrote about the possibility of opening a 'second church in the town of Eleshnitsa', while the work continued in Nevrokop. The missionaries were able to preach the Gospel, and sell many Scriptures. Sleeper reported that there were 'many open doors but the laborers are few'.¹⁹⁴

The Congregational mission headquarters were in what is today southern Bulgaria; but they also founded a girls' school in Macedonia along with ten churches, and a station in Kosovo.¹⁹⁵ When the Ottoman Empire dissolved and new countries emerged in the Balkans

The American Board was not able to take proper care of these churches when the Macedonian churches were separated from the headquarters

located in Bulgaria as a result of a new political structure. Therefore the Board arranged a transfer of these churches to the Yugoslavia M.E. Mission Conference with cooperation from the Board of Foreign Missions of the M.E. Church in New York. Thus, two fairly different groups of churches were united into one Mission Conference, but the merger was successful¹⁹⁶ in every respect.¹⁹⁷

Another source also gives reasons for this transfer of churches:

The stations and out-stations in Serbia [Serbia], once occupied by the American Board are not being given up; they are being turned over to a Board with larger resources and with eager enthusiasm. At the same time the change harmonizes with the desires of the Governments concerned. It always looks suspicious to one of the Balkan governments to have an organization working on the boundary and in a neighboring state. ... The definite responsibilities of the Methodist Board will begin on January 1, 1922.¹⁹⁸

Further Growth

Growth came largely through the geographical spread of the mission to other towns rather than through the strengthening of existing churches. Governmental recognition and a certain amount of freedom also gave impetus to their work. The period of the 1920s was perhaps the most successful in the history of the Methodist Church in Yugoslavia. Mojzes identifies several components facilitating this growth: (1) the concerted use of the ministerial force; (2) the forming of large congregations, like the one in Mramorak, which was able to spread the work into the neighbouring town of Pančevo, and also across the Danube to Smederevo in Serbia proper; (3) the incorporation of the Congregational congregations in the south of the country (now Macedonia); (4) selectivity in identifying the stations which were successful and willingness to close the unsuccessful ones, which permitted the Methodists to concentrate on the areas where they had a positive response ('work was attempted in distant places, such as Čačinci in Croatia and Kosovska Mitrovica in Serbia [Kosovo], which could not be served properly because of cost and inconvenient transport'¹⁹⁹); and (5) the policy of self-support: local missionary work was always budgeted and planned in advance, and although the funds planned were small, people's giving levels often meant that the target was exceeded.

In 1925 the Yugoslav government moved to prohibit Methodist work, which prompted the American Methodist bishop for Europe, J.L. Nuelsen, to intercede on behalf of Yugoslav Methodists with the American government; the latter, in turn, approached the Yugoslav government. The result was an alleviation of the situation in Vojvodina where the local governments were instructed to show greater tolerance of the work of the American Methodist mission.

The Alliance Week

As noted earlier in the section on the Reformed Church, on 17 November 1927 in Novi Sad the Methodists organised one of the first interdenominational conferences in the new country, although it was confined only to the ministers and laymen of that city. Besides several Methodist ministers, three Lutheran, one Reformed and four Baptist clergymen also attended. The Methodists generally tried to remain in good

relations with other denominations, although in many towns and villages they were not able to do so.

The greatest difficulties in the 1920s were experienced with the Pentecostals, in particular in the city of Vrbas/Novi Vrbas where the local Methodist leadership assumed that they were trying to bring disunity into the church. The culmination was when the assistant minister of a local Methodist church 'became an adherent of this movement'.²⁰⁰

Mojzes reports that the Methodists experienced difficulties with other denominations as well:

Each of the denominations in Yugoslavia, characteristic of the fundamentalist evangelical pattern, claimed to be the only true avenue to salvation. The Methodists, the least exclusive of the smaller church groups, suffered from this sort of propaganda by the Baptists, Adventists, and Pentecostals who were not above recruiting their membership from among the recent Methodist converts.²⁰¹

The Alliance Week was held regularly in Novi Sad as an annual interdenominational prayer service week. Services were held every night for a week, each night in a different church with a different pastor of the Lutheran, Reformed, Baptist, Brethren and Methodist denominations.

The Salvation Army

In connection with the work of the Methodist Church in Yugoslavia, Milin²⁰² mentions that the Salvation Army appeared in Belgrade in 1934: he personally remembered their meetings, with singing, preaching and altar calls. The Salvation Army's work was initiated by a Bible colporteur, Wilhelm Lichtenberger. At their early meetings a woman ministered to the female visitors and a man to the male visitors. Their work continued to develop until the Second World War, but after the war their work was forbidden in Yugoslavia, and they left for Canada.

Reduced Growth

As a result of the worldwide economic recession in late 1920s and early 1930s many young people left the region in search of work and the Methodist Church lost capable young members. Some of the pastors did not receive promised support. For example, one man had come from Argentina with the promise of a good salary from an American Methodist congregation, but it did not arrive. Meanwhile the original members of the church were ageing and began to die off.

Salaries were so low that very few ministers were received into the Conference in the 1930s. With several of the active ministers leaving for seminary training the situation became difficult.²⁰³ In the mid-1930s the situation in the church polarised. In the north (Vojvodina, where most of the members were Germans) the church started to spread steadily, but in the south (Macedonia, where most of the members were Slavs), it suffered setbacks.

The work in Vojvodina became concentrated in three main centres: Veliki Bečkerek (now Zrenjanin), Vršac and Mramorak. The Methodists held annual evangelisation meetings for a week or ten days conducted by a guest preacher from abroad or by a pastor from some other congregation, with mixed results over the years. The most frequent visitors were Methodist ministers from Switzerland and

Germany, but they also came from Austria, Hungary, America and Great Britain.

A particular problem arose in Vršac where the local Czech population expected preachers to use the Serbian language.

This need was recognized, but no one was available as the Vojvodina pastors in the main spoke Serbian poorly. This mistake or neglect was costly, even before the war, for the Churug [Čurug] station in Bachka [Bačka] had to be abandoned when the German families moved to another village and the population remained strictly Serbian. After the Second World War, German colonies ceased to exist in Yugoslavia, and the Methodist work suffered heavily because no Serbian work was in existence.²⁰⁴

The Period of the War

There was very little fighting in Vojvodina during the April 1941 invasion of Yugoslavia by the Axis powers. As a result the religious work was virtually undisturbed, especially because the Methodists worked basically among the Germans and Hungarians. The new government did not place any restrictions on church activities. In accordance with their traditions, the members of the church tended to keep out of politics and avoid taking any political position.

A large number of [the] German population in Yugoslavia became enthusiastic supporters of Germany and National Socialism ... the number of 'Nazis' in the Methodist Churches is difficult to establish, probably not a majority, but an influential minority in some local congregations, making the work of non-Germans difficult. In at least one case Anti-Nazis transferred to the Free Brethren Church.²⁰⁵

When the Soviet Army and its allies the Yugoslav Partisans neared Vojvodina in their westward advance some 520 Methodists left for Germany, and in some instances not a single member of some German-speaking churches remained in Yugoslavia. All the preachers in Vojvodina also left except for the superintendent and his assistant.²⁰⁶ In 1944 many of the churches stopped services and were abandoned, while in other places the congregations were afraid to meet. In a few months the once lively Methodist movement in Vojvodina came to the verge of extinction. The new government placed the remaining Germans in concentration camps and the work of the Croix-Bleue temperance societies was forbidden.

Implementing personal evangelism methods and holding evangelistic rallies every year, the Methodists experienced significant growth in the 1920s. However, their work was oriented toward the German and Hungarian-speaking Yugoslav nationals, and not much work was done among the Slovaks, Serbs or Romanians. Dedicated missionary work existed only while funds were provided, and thus the economic recession in the late 1920s hampered the work of the Methodists in the new areas: Serbia proper and Kosovo province. The Methodists were the first to offer inter-denominational prayer meetings and, as they claim, they have always been open for cooperation.

Very early in their history in Serbia they engaged in social work, probably as an outgrowth of the early Croix-Bleue temperance society activities. They did not publish books, apart from a hymnbook and a periodical.

As was the case with the other denominations, Methodists of German descent left

the country or were persecuted in 1944–45, and this had a devastating effect on the movement in Yugoslavia as a whole.

It seems that the north (Vojvodina) and the south (Macedonia and Kosovo) actually never achieved the unity needed for a proper development of a centralised organisational structure. The national (ethnic) structures in the north and in the south were also completely different. While the Methodists in Vojvodina worked in a fertile environment, the Methodists in Macedonia suffered from sustained persecution by the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The secession of Macedonia from Yugoslavia in 1991 meant that the Methodists were further divided. Today the Methodists have about ten congregations in Serbia,²⁰⁷ with no more than 400 members (overwhelmingly Hungarians, Macedonians and a few Serbs); all of them are in Vojvodina.

The Brethren Assemblies²⁰⁸

The First Church

The Brethren Assemblies in Serbia were born at the turn of the twentieth century when missionaries from Great Britain and Slovakia came to the northern part (Vojvodina) and started mission work among the Slovak ethnic minority. Today, most of the Brethren believers are Slovaks, and most of them are located in Vojvodina (one assembly is in Belgrade). There are about 450 believers in 13 assemblies.²⁰⁹

British Brethren missionaries Frederick and Kate Butcher, who lived in Bratislava, in what is now Slovakia, for 40 years, had followed the earlier migration of Slovaks to the south. In 1900 they came to the area of Bački Petrovac, where there were no fewer than 50,000 Slovaks, 12,000 in Bački Petrovac itself.²¹⁰ As a result of their ministry, the first assembly was formed in that town in 1900. The Butchers soon returned to Bratislava and continued to work in Eastern Europe.²¹¹

In the early years of the twentieth century another missionary, Edmond Broadbent from Suffolk in England, travelled extensively in Eastern Europe. He was followed by James Lees, a miner from Ayrshire, who continued to visit various communities over a long period of years.²¹² He was often accompanied by a brother who spoke Serbian, and they travelled throughout Vojvodina and Serbia proper. Together they engaged in evangelistic and pastoral work, 'the authorities permitting them to travel almost anywhere'.²¹³ Lees was also involved in helping the Slovak national Jan Siracky in his work in Novi Sad, Bački Petrovac and elsewhere in the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1912 Dr William Dudgeon, also from the UK, engaged in medical work in Ūskub²¹⁴ (most likely a Turkish name for Skoplje), the ancient capital of Serbia, working in the military hospital, witnessing and making some converts.

After the First World War the assembly in Bački Petrovac was often visited by Jan (or John) Siracky from Slovakia, who finally moved in to work among the Slovaks in the area. He moved to the United States in 1923, but in 1927 the USA Brethren commissioned him for work in Eastern Europe.²¹⁵ Siracky translated tracts into the Slovak language and worked on other evangelistic literature.

In the 1930s one Serbian brother, Petar Mojsović, came from Czechoslovakia and started work among the Serbs in Novi Sad; another assembly emerged. To support himself he worked as a confectioner and opened a sweet shop. Mojsović published a small gospel magazine in Serbian until the Second World War. He was widely known for his Bible teaching, and many non-Brethren would come to listen to him and study, as he was open to interchurch cooperation.²¹⁶

As the assembly in Bački Petrovac continued to grow, brethren regularly visited it from Czechoslovakia, such as Franz Kresina and Michael Sadlon. Kresina supported work in the nearby city of Kisač, and later travelled also to Belgrade, Novi Sad and other places. Kisač soon grew to become the second largest Brethren assembly in the country. Many from Britain paid visits for ministry and evangelistic meetings, including Martin W. Baker, Jacob Shneidrook, H.J. Humphries, S.R. Hopkins, F.A. Tatford and William E. Grunbaum.²¹⁷

With the work commencing in the western part of the country (in Zagreb and some places along the Adriatic coast) the first conference of the Yugoslav Brethren assemblies was held in 1937 in Novi Sad. Tatford reported that brethren from many lands attended the meeting.

Because of the conditions during the Second World War, contacts were restricted, but nevertheless a new assembly grew up in Serbia near the Romanian border.

The Personal Ministry of James W. Wiles

‘Because he had the Balkan countries laid on his heart’,²¹⁸ in 1913 James W. Wiles, a member of the British Brethren, resigned his position at the King Edward Grammar School in Birmingham, and with his wife, Louise, came to Yugoslavia to take up a post as a professor of English in the University of Belgrade. With the outbreak of war in 1914 he became an interpreter and secretary to Dr Morrison, head of the Red Cross contingent from England to Serbia. In this capacity he was able to move freely across the whole of Serbia proper, among prisoners of war and among the wounded, of whom there were plenty as the war went on. He was able to distribute thousands of the New Testaments and coordinate work with two other British brethren who helped in the hospitals, probably working as chaplains.

In 1920 Wiles resigned his position at the University of Belgrade to become the secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society for the Balkan Peninsula. The report for 1928 states that he was able to distribute 250,000 Scriptures, including 29,000 Bibles, throughout the Balkans. He remained in this position until 1939, when his wife died and he returned to England. In 1922 he was introduced to the Yugoslav king Alexander I, and Tatford records other important meetings as well. It is said that among some remarkable conversions was that of a Serbian bishop, who witnessed to an audience of 3000 people in the University hall in Belgrade.²¹⁹

Remarks

The Brethren are the smallest of the older denominations in Serbia and their numbers are declining even today. From the very start their work was oriented primarily toward the Slovak ethnic minority in Serbia/Vojvodina. Their missionaries and representatives, coming as they did from Czechoslovakia, did not need to learn another language, and the materials were also available in the Slovak language. Some attempts to broaden the base of believers, including for example the Serbs in Novi Sad in the 1930s, ended with the Second World War. An evaluation of the situation among the Brethren today would perhaps also have been true of the past:

There are those who tend to be very conservative and suspicious of every ‘new way of evangelism’ (e.g. the ‘Jesus’ film, radio ministry) and try to remain ‘the small flock’ which is faithful to the ‘original’ Brethren. ... Unfortunately, there are not many young people who are able to carry on

the preaching and teaching ministry. Also, the mission work was neglected for many years, so the Brethren did not send a single missionary to the other parts of the country for decades.²²⁰

There are, perhaps, other reasons why the Brethren assemblies have not grown as much as other Protestants and evangelicals have in the same region in the same period of time, but we may suggest the following. First, their orientation towards the Slovaks alone, who were a minority population in the province, although they were the majority in that particular area. It was only recently, in 1992, that the Brethren started a small mission in Montenegro (among Montenegrins).²²¹ Second, their complete financial and pastoral dependence on the British and Slovak Brethren, and a consequent lack of opportunity for independent initiative. Third, a striving to preserve the 'genuine' teaching of the founders, and a fear of the widening of the movement. Fourth, a shortage of theological education, which when combined with the fact that the believers were of peasant background, did not offer much opportunity for them to 'go to the cities' and witness to Serbs, Hungarians, Germans, Romanians and others. Fifth, although James Wiles may have contributed significantly to the general spiritual condition of the population of the whole peninsula, his personal ministry did not bring much fruit in terms of church planting and church growth. Once again, incidentally, we see an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society active in promoting the Gospel in the region.

The Brethren established a Christian Evangelistic Centre in Bački Petrovac in 1992, together with a Pocket Testament League.

The Pentecostals

The Pentecostal movement in Yugoslavia developed in four groups which joined to form one organisation in 1950: *Kristova duhovna crkva malokrštenih* (Christ's Spiritual Church, practising infant baptism); *Kristova duhovna crkva nogopranih* (Christ's Spiritual Church, practising believers' baptism and adding foot washing to the Lord's Supper); *Kristova pentekostna crkva* (Christ's Pentecostal Church), also practicing believer's baptism; and a group of Romanian-speaking Pentecostal churches.

Christ's Spiritual Church (Infant Baptism)

The beginnings of the Pentecostal movement in Serbia can be traced to before the First World War, when some believers in a German-populated area of Bačka (Vojvodina) attached themselves to this rising movement.²²² One report speaks of the city of Subotica, but without giving any date.²²³ Nikola Knizl, who learned about the 'spiritual movement' when he was in Germany, returned to his village and began similar meetings. The first converts were members of the local Lutheran church, mainly German nationals.

The church in Beška has grown significantly in a short period of time, and after the First World War it had 400 members. From Beška the teaching spread into the surrounding area. New churches have been founded in Zemun, Belgrade, Dobanovci, Vrdnik, Brestać, Subotica and Vinkovci [now in Croatia].²²⁴

At the 1939 European Pentecostal Conference held in Stockholm, Sweden, Johann

Filippi spoke about his early days in the ministry.²²⁵ Another delegate was John (Janoš) Lerch who came from the USA where he had joined the Pentecostal movement in the early 1930s. Later he started a Pentecostal church in Osijek, Croatia.

In 1923 the Swedish Pentecostal magazine *Evangelii Hårold* carried a story from Georg Steen who had recently visited Vojvodina and Belgrade.²²⁶ Steen wrote that he found some Pentecostal churches, mostly of German background, but that among the believers he saw Hungarians, Croats and Serbs as well. He described the situation in particular places: Beška had about 50 believers (32 of them being 'baptised in the Holy Spirit'); Novi Vrbas had 15 believers who all came from a Methodist background and were all 'baptised in the Holy Spirit'. The church in Novi Sad had 18 members but was without a leader. His conclusion was that since every nationality used its own language (Hungarian, German, Serbo-Croat, Romanian) it was truly hard to envisage a unified work. He also spoke about religious divisions along national lines, the Serbs all being 'Greek Orthodox' and the Germans and Hungarians being of the 'Augsburg Faith' (Lutheran) and Reformed.²²⁷

During the period of growth in the 1920s and 1930s the church in Beška served as a headquarters for the *duhovne zajednice* (spiritual communities), as they were called. In 1932 a Pentecostal church was founded in Belgrade. Small groups of Bible-believing Christians in the larger Belgrade area had their first contacts with Pentecostal teaching in the early 1930s. In 1935 the believers in Belgrade started regular prayer and worship services in the neighbouring town of Zemun.

When the war broke in 1941 the River Sava became the state border, so the group in Belgrade continued to meet in the homes of individual members. Since the church grew in numbers even in the midst of the war, when the war ended in 1945 the group started to use the premises of the Salvation Army, until that Christian organisation was banned.²²⁸

This Pentecostal group accepted the infant baptism of new members, probably because its early members came from the Lutheran Church. However, they also practised believers' baptism if the individuals concerned had not been baptised earlier.

Christ's Spiritual Church (the 'Foot-Washers')

Another Pentecostal group with the name 'Christ's Spiritual Church' emerged in the town of Vrdnik around 1925, apparently independently of the 'infant baptism' church. They practised 'believers' baptism' but also performed foot washing during the Lord's Supper, following the example of Jesus at the Last Supper, and were hence often referred to as the 'foot-washers'.

There is no other information available about this group, apart from some indications that it has had regular contacts with the Church of God in Cleveland, Tennessee, since 1968.

Christ's Pentecostal Church (Believers' Baptism)

The first church of this branch of Pentecostalism in Yugoslavia was founded in 1933 in the village of Veščica, Prekmurje (now in Slovenia) when a Slovenian woman, who had moved to America, returned with her Hungarian husband and began to win converts in her home village. They had been members of the Assemblies of God church in Waukegan, Illinois.

Before the war, the Assemblies of God were one of the largest Protestant denominations in this entire area [Europe]. Before World War II, Assemblies of God missionaries and ministers from the United States were instrumental in establishing national churches in Yugoslavia²²⁹

Soon after the beginning of their work they sent Peter Dautermann and Petar Krnjeta to Vojvodina, where Jon Petruc was already active among the Romanian population.

Some Difficulties

Because of difficulties in gaining recognition from the government, 'Pentecostals frequently called themselves Baptists in order to get around the ruling'.²³⁰ Milin reports that when their church was forbidden in Osijek (now in Croatia) it 'camouflaged' itself by calling itself becoming *Dobrotvorno društvo Filadelfija* (the Philadelphia Charitable Society).²³¹

Gustav Kinderman, of the US Assemblies of God, experienced some difficulties:

Prior to World War II it was almost an utter impossibility for a clergyman or a missionary of any faith, other than the Greek Orthodox, to enter Yugoslavia for the purpose of propagating the gospel. The writer of this article speaks from experience, for he was one of the many ministers of the gospel who tried to break through the rigid controls. The Orthodox Church had such a control over the Ministry of Religion office in Belgrade that no Yugoslavian Consular Office abroad could issue entrance visas without its authorization.²³²

The first full international contacts were established in 1938. A delegation of four Yugoslavs went to the First European Pentecostal conference held 5–12 June 1939 in Stockholm, where they had an opportunity to address the assembly at several sessions.

By the beginning of the Second World War there were about 20 churches, approximately half of which had German membership and the rest Hungarian with some Serbs.

The Romanian Pentecostal Churches

The first Pentecostal church among Romanian nationals in Serbia (Vojvodina) was founded in Uzdin in 1932.²³³ The founder was Ilija Brenka, a member of the Nazarene congregation. In 1925 he met Jonica Spariosua who came from the USA for a brief visit to see his family in Uzdin. They continued contact and Spariosua sent additional materials to Brenka who embraced the new beliefs and in 1932 started services in his own home. This church eventually had about 60 members. Brenka also founded a group in Kuštilj in 1934–35.

Apparently a church in Vladimirovac also started in 1932.²³⁴ There is no information on how one Paja Buzdika embraced the Pentecostal teaching, but in 1932 he started holding meetings in his house. This church had 12 members in 1944.

In 1933 Pentecostal teaching was spreading among the Nazarene believers in the village of Margita. In 1936 a delegation of believers went to Timișoara, Romania, where Gheorghe Bradin, the founder of the Pentecostal movement in Romania, held meetings. Other groups active during the 1930s were in Jaša Tomić and Seleuš. The Romanian churches organised themselves into a union in 1946 and started to cooperate with each other.²³⁵

The Aftermath of the Second World War and the 1950 Unification

During the war Pentecostal churches were suspended and their work forbidden. All their property was seized. Their members often joined other Protestant congregations or held house meetings.

The first signs of recovery were seen only in 1950 when 'Christ's Spiritual Church' was founded in Osijek, uniting all four movements into one organisation. However, this did not last long since the 'foot-washers' and the practitioners of infant baptism withdrew. The remaining group took the name *Kristova pentekostna crkva* (Christ's Pentecostal Church).²³⁶ They practised believers' baptism.

There were several other attempts to unite the movements, mostly by the government, which wanted just one organisation to deal with. By the late 1990s those practising infant baptism were nearly extinct, while the 'foot-washers',²³⁷ with some seven congregations and 300 members, are now probably affiliated with the Church of God in Cleveland, Tennessee. The rest of the Pentecostal churches joined the *Savez pentekostnih crkava Jugoslavije* (Union of Pentecostal Churches of Yugoslavia), which was not affiliated with any particular denomination abroad, but represented a loose organisation with about 53 congregations and at least 3600 members.²³⁸

The churches originally attached to the US Assemblies of God made three separate attempts in the 1960s and 1970s to organise their work, but success was never long-lasting. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia the main contacts with the Assemblies of God headquarters were maintained by the Croatian Union, partly because of the lack of organisation and structure in Serbia. In 1998 four splinter church groups from the Union of the Pentecostal Churches reregistered with the authorities as the *Skupštine Božije* (Assemblies of God) of Yugoslavia.

Remarks

The Pentecostal churches grew predominantly among the German population and once again the work was devastated in 1945 because the Germans left or were persecuted. From the beginning there were two major groups, one emerging as a result of the work of German missionaries (or travelling ministers), and the other as a result of the work of immigrant missionaries returning from the USA. The situation of the Pentecostals was thus similar to that of the Baptists.

The Pentecostals worked openly to convert members of other Protestant denominations: Lutherans, Methodists and Nazarenes. Their major growth occurred only after the Second World War, when the Union was formed.

In the formative period they had no publications and offered no theological education. These began only in the 1950s. The Pentecostal churches often faced difficulties and some persecution. They often tried to present themselves, with some measure of success, as 'charitable societies' or Baptists, since those organisations were recognised and accepted in society at large.

Although the Union of Pentecostal Churches today is only a loose organisation, its total membership and number of communities are second in size only to the Adventists, among the younger Protestant denominations. Because of frequent demonisation in the local media, most of the local congregations changed their names in 1998 to *Protestantska evanđeoska crkva* (Protestant Evangelical Church), but have remained Pentecostal in their theology and practice. It was believed that this move would ease the tension created by some militant Orthodox and nationalist groups.

Serbia Today: Statistics

The 1991 census gave the population of Serbia as 9,778,991 (Serbia proper 5,808,906, Kosovo 1,956,196 and Vojvodina 2,013,889), while the CIA *Factbook* gives an estimate of 10,526,135 in 1998. The ethnic breakdown of the population is: Serbs 66 per cent, Albanians 18 per cent, Hungarians 4 per cent, Montenegrins 2 per cent, Others 10 per cent. Religious orientation is: Orthodox 65 per cent, Muslim 19 per cent, Roman Catholic 4 per cent, Protestant 1 per cent, Other 11 per cent.²³⁹

According to a partial survey conducted in Serbia in 1996 there were approximately 8000 evangelical Christians of various denominations, or 0.15 per cent of the population.²⁴⁰ For the total number of Protestants of other denominations there are various sources and data available.

Table 1

	Lutheran	Reformed	Methodist
Operation World ^a	28,700 (in 1993)	8500 (in 1993)	1200 (in 1993)
World Church Handbook ^b	30,090 (in 1995)	5900 (in 1995)	1200 (in 1995)
Lutheran World Federation ^c	48,500 (in 1998)		
Reformed web-site ^d		16,000 (in 1999)	
United Methodist Press Release ^e			400 (in 1999)

^a Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1993), p. 588.

^b Peter Brierly (ed.), *World Churches Handbook* (Christian Research, London, 1997), pp. 908–12.

^c Walter Sawatsky, 'Editorial', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol. XVIII, no. 5, October 1998, p. ii.

^d Available from <http://www.netministries.org/see/churches/ch01797?frame=N>, accessed 12 April 1999.

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- ¹⁶ S.L. Greenslade (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 3 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1978), p. 135.
- ¹⁷ 'Austria, empire of', in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1971 edition.
- ¹⁸ Kurt Hutten, *Iron Curtain Christians: The Church in Communist Countries Today*, trans. by Walter G. Tillmans (Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1967), pp. 382–84.
- ¹⁹ Vilmos Vajta (ed.), *The Lutheran Church: Past and Present* (Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1977), p. 70.
- ²⁰ B. Saria, 'Protestantske crkve' ('The Protestant churches'), *Narodna enciklopedija* (Belgrade, 1928), p. 593.
- ²¹ Reimar Keintzel, 'Yugoslavia, Lutheranism in', in Julius Bodensieck (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, vol. III (Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1965), pp. 2564–66.
- ²² *loc. cit.*
- ²³ 'Balkan state formed on Dec. 1, 1918. Ruled by the Serbian Karageorgevic [Karađorđević] dynasty, the new kingdom included the previously independent kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro and the South Slav territories in areas formerly subject to the Austro-Hungarian Empire: Dalmatia, Croatia-Slavonia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Vojvodina. ... In an effort to combat local nationalisms, King Alexander I proclaimed a royal dictatorship and renamed the state Yugoslavia (q.v.) in 1929. He was determined that Serbian, Croatian, or Slovene nationalism should give place to a wider loyalty, Yugoslav ("South Slav") patriotism.' 'Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, Kingdom of', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1971 edition.
- ²⁴ K.S. Latourette, *The Nineteenth Century in Europe: The Protestant and Eastern Churches*, vol. 2 of *id.*, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age* (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1959), pp. 203–5.
- ²⁵ Saria, *op. cit.*, p. 593.
- ²⁶ *loc. cit.*
- ²⁷ George H. Muedeking, 'Being salt and light', *Lutheran Standard* (Minneapolis), 6 December 1977, pp. 28–29.
- ²⁸ Adolf Keller and George Stewart, *Protestant Europe: Crisis and Outlook* (George H. Doron, New York, 1927), pp. 349–51.
- ²⁹ Keintzel, *op. cit.*, p. 2565.
- ³⁰ The KSCS changed its name to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929.
- ³¹ Rastko Vidić, *The Position of the Church in Yugoslavia*, trans. by Veselin Kostić (Publicističko-izdavački zavod 'Jugoslavija', Belgrade, 1962), p. 27.
- ³² E. Theodore Bachmann and M. B. Bachmann, *Lutheran Churches in the World* (Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, 1989), pp. 329–33.
- ³³ David Steele, 'Configuration of the small religious communities in the former Yugoslavia', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol. 15, no. 3, June 1995, pp. 24–40.
- ³⁴ Muedeking, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- ³⁵ Hutten, *op. cit.*, p. 384.
- ³⁶ *loc. cit.*
- ³⁷ Saria, *op. cit.*, gives a starting date of 1733, but without any reference.
- ³⁸ Tomislav Branković, 'Protestantske verske zajednice u Srbiji' ('The Protestant congrega-

tions in Serbia'), *Gledišta*, no. 3–4, 1996, pp. 117–26.

³⁹ *loc. cit.*

⁴⁰ J.N. Ogilvie, *The Presbyterian Churches of Christendom* (A. & C. Black, London, 1925), p. 101.

⁴¹ Stuart W. Harris (ed.), *Eyes on Europe* (Moody Press, Chicago, 1970), p. 138. See also: John Caldwell Thiessen, *A Survey of World Missions* (InterVarsity Press, Chicago, 1955), p. 432; Branković, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁴² *ibid.*, p. 120.

⁴³ Vidić, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁴⁴ Keller and Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

⁴⁵ Ivan Cvitković, *Savez komunista i religija (The Communist League and Religion)* (NIŠRO Oslobođenje, Sarajevo, 1989, p. 203).

⁴⁶ A 'seniorate' is a body of presbyters, and the highest authority in the church.

⁴⁷ Ogilvie, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

⁴⁸ 'Reformed Church in Yugoslavia', in Ans J. van der Bent (ed.), *Handbook: Member Churches, World Council of Churches* (fully revised edition, WCC, Geneva, 1985), pp. 192–93.

⁴⁹ Paul B. Mojzes, *A History of the Congregational and Methodist Churches in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia* (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1965), pp. 442–43.

⁵⁰ See the section on Methodists below.

⁵¹ Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

⁵² Saria, *op. cit.*, p. 595.

⁵³ Lazar Milin, *Crkva i sekte (The Church and the Sects)* (Sveti arhijerejski sinod Srpske pravoslavne crkve, Belgrade, 1974), p. 58.

⁵⁴ David Steele, 'Configuration of the small religious communities in the former Yugoslavia', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol. XV, no. 3, June 1995, pp. 24–40. Peter Brierly (ed.), *World Churches Handbook* (Christian Research, London, 1997) (p. 911) reports only four Nazarene churches with an estimated 440 members. In his unpublished church-demographic report on the FRY from 1998, Greater Europe Mission missionary John Lehn reports the existence of only two Nazarene churches, with no more than 200 members. However, in 1999 Pavle Božić, a member of the Nazarene community in Stari Banovci, indicated that their number was 1500–2000, including both 'moderates' and 'conservatives'. The government does not recognise this internal split, which occurred in the late 1940s, so both groups are considered as one religious community. According to Božić, he is one of the last among the Nazarenes in Serbia today to be a conscientious objector to bearing arms, since both groups accepted 'civil service' introduced in 1992. Pavle Božić, interview with the author, 24 July 1999, Amsterdam.

⁵⁵ Recently Nazarenes have been reading books like *Adinina pisma (The Letters of Adina)*, *Kvo vadis (Quo Vadis)* and *Ben Hur*. They have also established some loose ties with certain groups in the United States.

⁵⁶ This denomination was founded on 8 October 1908 in Pilot Point, Texas. 'The Church of the Nazarene is a Wesleyan denomination ... they were products of a spiritual awakening which during the previous half-century had cultivated among many denominations the doctrine and experience of Christian perfection, or entire sanctification.' Timothy L. Smith, *Called Unto Holiness* (Nazarene Publishing House, Kansas City, Kansas, 1962), p. 9.

⁵⁷ This tradition is continued, for example, in the book by the well-known Serbian church historian Đoko Slijepčević, *Nazareni u Srbiji (The Nazarenes in Serbia)* (Izdavačko i prometno preduzeće A.D. 'Jugoistok', Belgrade, 1943).

⁵⁸ Peter Brock, 'The nonresistance of the Hungarian Nazarenes to 1914', *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, January 1980, p. 53.

⁵⁹ Jovan Maksimović, *Zmajevno nazarenstvo (Zmaj is a Nazarene)* (Štamparija Save Radenkovića i brata, Belgrade, 1911), p. 5.

⁶⁰ Vladimir Dimitrijević, *Nazarenstvo – njegova istorija i suština (The Nazarene Faith: Its*

History and Nature) (Srpska manastirska štamparija, Novi Sad, 1894), p. 105.

⁶¹ Albert Märki, *Die Gründung der Gemeinschaft Evangelisch Taufgesinnter*, May 1995, available from <http://www.etg.ch/bund/gesch.htm>; accessed 25 May 1999. See also Cvitković, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

⁶² *Apostolic Christian Church of America*, available from <http://bibleviews.com/AC.html>; accessed 18 June 1999.

⁶³ During the second half of the twentieth century many of the churches in Switzerland associated with this movement became 'normal Evangelical churches'. The mass media, social advancement and education, missionary orientation and other influences brought the group into closer contact with the broader Evangelical milieu. Georg Otto Schmid (for reference see footnote 64) states: 'In the last few decades the "Taufgesinnte" have developed into a denomination which has become similar to other evangelical denominations and theologies in Switzerland, so that today the "Evangelische Täufergemeinden (ETG)" can be understood as one independent (i.e. free from state control) evangelical denomination among others.' Their branch in Serbia remains very closed, however. One of the reasons may be that 'The Serbian group is under apparent "control" of the Hungarian Nazarenes who are financially supported by their people in the United States – the Apostolic Christian Churches. Some of those are still very conservative in their understanding and expression (tradition) ...' Peter Marti, Switzerland, private letter to Branko Bjelajac, 25 May 1999.

⁶⁴ Georg Otto Schmid, *Von der Fröhlichianern [Froehlichianern] zu den Evangelischen Täufergemeinden (ETG)* (1998), available from <http://www.ref.ch/zh/infokst/etg.html>; accessed 25 May 1999.

⁶⁵ Märki, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁶⁶ In 1848 a revolution started in Hungary. Its leaders' radical programme aimed to make Hungary a liberal state connected with the rest of the Austrian Empire only through the person of the monarch. At the same time there were revolts in other parts of the empire such as Lombardy-Venetia, and Vienna saw an uprising of students. Sardinia was at war with Austria. The imperial court fled to Moravia and the Emperor Francis I abdicated in favour of his nephew Franz Joseph. The Hungarian constitution was abolished and Hungary was incorporated into the united empire. Only later, in 1867, the Compromise was signed between Hungary and Austria, and the official name of the state became the Austro-Hungarian Empire. 'Austria, empire of', in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1971 edition. About the situation in 1848 in Hungary Kenneth Scott Latourette writes: 'In the revolutionary years of 1848–9 Protestantism seemed to be escaping further from its old fetters. Lajos (Louis) Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian bid for independence, was a Lutheran. However, the curbing of Protestant liberties followed the triumph of the Hapsburgs over the revolution. Protestantism was regarded as the chief leaven of liberalism ... and the effort was made (1859) to place the Protestant churches under the control by the state. In 1867 the Protestant churches were accorded their legal rights which they enjoyed under the laws of 1848.' Latourette, *op. cit.*, pp. 203–5.

⁶⁷ Brock, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁶⁸ Letter dated 22 September 1872 in Bevan Braithwaite, *A Friend of the Nineteenth Century* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1909), p. 205, as quoted in Brock, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁶⁹ *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, vol. III, p. 815, as quoted in Brock, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

⁷⁰ Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁷¹ From *Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung*, quoted in Dimitrijević, *op. cit.*, p. 136 (translated from the German by M. Imerovski – see footnote 109).

⁷² *Neue Zionsharfe: Eine Sammlung von Liedern für die Gemeinde der Glaubenden in Christo* (Druck von Zürcher u. Furrer, Zurich, 1855). It was translated from the German by the famous nineteenth-century Serbian poet Jovan Jovanović Zmaj.

⁷³ Dimitrijević, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁷⁴ *loc. cit.*

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 104.

- ⁷⁶ *loc. cit.*
- ⁷⁷ Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
- ⁷⁸ Dimitrijević, *op. cit.*, p. 104.
- ⁷⁹ Aleksandar Birviš, tape-recorded interview with the author, 1998, Belgrade.
- ⁸⁰ Đoko Slijepčević, *Istorija Srpske pravoslavne crkve (A History of the Serbian Orthodox Church)* (privately printed, Munich, 1966), p. 242.
- ⁸¹ Mārki, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- ⁸² Dimitrijević, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
- ⁸³ Đoko Slijepčević, *Nazareni u Srbiji do 1914. godine (The Nazarenes in Serbia until 1914)* (Izdavačko i prometno preduzeće A.D. 'Jugoistok', Belgrade, 1943), p. 13.
- ⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 15.
- ⁸⁵ *loc. cit.*
- ⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p. 48.
- ⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 32.
- ⁸⁹ F. Makenzi, *Radi opravdanja ili objašnjenje svega što se odnosi na nedeljnu školu za hrišćansku nauku u Sali mira na Englezovcu* (Belgrade, 1892).
- ⁹⁰ Letter no. 231 to the Belgrade Church Court, 28 January 1902, as quoted in Slijepčević, *op. cit.*, p. 53.
- ⁹¹ *Hrišćanski vesnik*, 1906, p. 356.
- ⁹² *Vesnik Srpske crkve*, 1906, p. 734.
- ⁹³ *Pravda*, 22 February 1910.
- ⁹⁴ R. Grujić, 'Nazarenstvo' ('The Nazarene Faith'), *Narodna Enciklopedija* (Belgrade, 1928), p. 446.
- ⁹⁵ Bojan Aleksov, *The Dynamics of Extinction: the Nazarene Religious Community in Yugoslavia after 1945* (M.A. thesis, Central European University, 1999), p. 3.
- ⁹⁶ Brock, *op. cit.*, p. 58. Brock directs the reader to John W. Graham, *Conscription and Conscience* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1922), pp. 356–57.
- ⁹⁷ Aleksov, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- ⁹⁸ Dimitrijević, *op. cit.*, p. 199.
- ⁹⁹ Adolph Keller, *Christian Europe Today* (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1942), p. 39.
- ¹⁰⁰ Aleksov, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁰¹ Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
- ¹⁰² Comment by Dr Aleksandar Birviš in an interview with David Steele, in Steele, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁰³ Ambrose Czako, *The Future of Protestantism: With Special Reference to South-Eastern Europe* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1925), p. 58.
- ¹⁰⁴ A reporter writing in the magazine *Obzor*, 14 September 1924, quoted in Czako, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Narodna Enciklopedija*, p. 446.
- ¹⁰⁶ Brock, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
- ¹⁰⁷ The Belgrade daily newspaper *Politika*, for example, reported on 18 February 1925 (no. 6042) that whole Serbian villages were joining the Nazarenes or Adventists, and estimated their number at 150,000. Quoted in Aleksov, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- ¹⁰⁸ Thomas Armitage, *A History of the Baptists* (Bryan, Taylor and Co., New York, 1887), pp. 829–30.
- ¹⁰⁹ This may indicate that the relations between the Baptists and the Nazarenes were much closer at the beginning. Some important leaders of the Nazarene church in Serbia were rebaptised by the Baptists and thus immediately became leaders in the young Baptist movement. See Mile Imerovski, *Baptist Origins During the Nineteenth Century in Present Day Yugoslavia* (B.D. paper, Baptist Theological Seminary, Rüsçhlikon, Switzerland, 1986), pp. 42–43.
- ¹¹⁰ John David Hopper, 'Baptist Beginnings in Yugoslavia', *Baptist History and Heritage*, vol. XVII, no. 4, October 1982, pp. 28–37.
- ¹¹¹ This believer worked with Edward Millard, a British representative of the British and

- Foreign Bible Society who opened the Bible depository in Vienna in 1864. From 1848 to 1868 Millard managed to sell 3.3 million copies of the Scriptures in the Austro-Hungarian Empire through colporteurs who travelled on foot distributing Bibles and biblical literature from village to village. Millard helped several Baptist groups to start local churches (Vienna, Zagreb and later Sarajevo). Hopper, *op. cit.*, pp. 28–29.
- ¹¹² William L. Wagner, *New Move Forward in Europe: Growth Patterns of German Speaking Baptists in Europe* (William Carey Library, South Pasadena, CA, 1978), p. 115.
- ¹¹³ Franjo Klem, 'Yugoslavia', in J.D. Franks (ed.), *European Baptists Today*, 2nd rev. and enlarged edn (Baptist Theological Seminary, Rüschtikon, Switzerland, 1952), pp. 86–87.
- ¹¹⁴ Rudolf Donat, *Wie das Werk begann* (J.G. Oncken, Kassel, 1958), p. 435, quoted in Hopper, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- ¹¹⁵ Albert W. Wardin (ed.), *Baptists Around the World: A Comprehensive Handbook* (Broadman & Holman, Nashville, TN, 1995), p. 267.
- ¹¹⁶ Hopper, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
- ¹¹⁷ John David Hopper, *A History of Baptists in Yugoslavia* (Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1977), p. 167.
- ¹¹⁸ Franjo Klem, *Historija Baptista (A History of the Baptists)* (published by the author, Rijeka, Croatia, 1962), p. 103.
- ¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 105.
- ¹²⁰ Wardin, *op. cit.*, p. 268.
- ¹²¹ Mihály Boros to Franjo Klem, 2 February 1964, Document 1/3, Baptist Seminary Library Archives, Novi Sad, Yugoslavia; as quoted in Hopper, 'Baptist beginnings in Yugoslavia', p. 32.
- ¹²² John D. Hopper and Stephen [Stjepan] Orčić, 'Yugoslavia: the Baptist Union of Yugoslavia', in Keith G. Parker (ed.), *Baptists in Europe: History of Confessions of Faith* (Broadman, Nashville, TN, 1982), pp. 202–3.
- ¹²³ Hopper, 'Baptist beginnings in Yugoslavia', p. 34.
- ¹²⁴ Klem, 'Yugoslavia', p. 87.
- ¹²⁵ Hopper, 'Baptist beginnings in Yugoslavia', p. 36.
- ¹²⁶ Baker J. Cauthen *et al.*, *A History of Southern Baptist Foreign Missions* (Broadman, Nashville, TN, 1970), p. 200.
- ¹²⁷ Hopper, 'Baptist beginnings in Yugoslavia', p. 36.
- ¹²⁸ John Allan Moore, 'Yugoslavia, Baptist Union of', in Norman Wade Cox (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, vol. II (Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1958), p. 1552.
- ¹²⁹ *Glas Evandjelja*, February 1924, pp. 66–69.
- ¹³⁰ Hopper, 'Baptist beginnings in Yugoslavia', p. 37.
- ¹³¹ Wardin, *op. cit.*, p. 268.
- ¹³² *loc. cit.*
- ¹³³ Hopper, *A History of Baptists in Yugoslavia*, p. 170.
- ¹³⁴ Hopper, 'Baptist beginnings in Yugoslavia', p. 34.
- ¹³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 171.
- ¹³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 167.
- ¹³⁷ Klem, 'Yugoslavia', p. 87.
- ¹³⁸ Earl Hester Trutza, *Modern Macedonia* (Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1940), p. 157.
- ¹³⁹ Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists* (Judson Press, Philadelphia, 1950), p. 211.
- ¹⁴⁰ Dr Aleksandar Birviš in an interview with David Steele, in Steele, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁴¹ Trutza, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
- ¹⁴² Wardin, *op. cit.*, p. 268.
- ¹⁴³ Dr Aleksandar Birviš in an interview with David Steele, in Steele, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁴⁴ Klem, 'Yugoslavia', pp. 88–89.
- ¹⁴⁵ Torbet, *op. cit.*, p. 211.
- ¹⁴⁶ John Allen Moore, 'Yugoslavia', in Nan F. Weeks (ed.), *Europe – Whither Bound?*

(Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1951), p. 138.

- ¹⁴⁷ They later returned to help the Baptists of Yugoslavia to rebuild their seminary and churches after the Second World War: Hopper and Orčić, *op. cit.*, p. 205. 'Except for a few months, the Communist government did not permit the Moores to live in Yugoslavia, but they visited there regularly through the years.' J.D. Hughey, *Baptist Partnership in Europe* (Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1982), p. 97.
- ¹⁴⁸ 'A seminary, established in Belgrade in 1940 and closed by war six months later, was reopened in 1954.' Moore, 'Yugoslavia, Baptist Union of', p. 1552.
- ¹⁴⁹ 'He [Andrew Dercher] was a Yugoslav by birth, but had been educated in America. Before he returned to Yugoslavia he attended the Bible School in Los Angeles, because he wanted to preach the Gospel of Christ to his countrymen. Eyewitnesses say that he was caught and cut into pieces by members of a Catholic-Fascist military organization during the Italian occupation.' Klem, 'Yugoslavia', p. 89.
- ¹⁵⁰ Torbet, *op. cit.*, p. 212.
- ¹⁵¹ The oldest record of SDAs in the region comes from the Ottoman Empire's province of Monastir (nowadays the FYR of Macedonia) where they appeared in 1880. The colporteur for the British and Foreign Bible Society in the capital Skoplje, an SDA, was arrested for his work. The Austrian Andreas Zeefred (1840–1927) witnessed in jail to a fellow prisoner, an Albanian who after six weeks of Bible study embraced Christ and became the first SDA in the whole Balkan Peninsula. See Milan Šušljic, 'Propovediće se ovo evanđelje' ('This Gospel will be preached') *Glasnik hrišćanske adventističke crkve*, no. 4, 1980, pp. 12–19.
- ¹⁵² Cvitković, *op. cit.*, p. 214.
- ¹⁵³ In the magazine *Keresztyen*, as quoted in Šušljic, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁵⁴ Radivoje Vladislavljević, 'Obeležena stogodišnjica adventističke crkve u Jugoslaviji' ('The centennial celebration of the SDA Church in Yugoslavia'), *Glasnik hrišćanske adventističke crkve*, no. 3, 1998, p. 14.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Istina o subotarima (The Truth about the Adventists)* (No publisher indicated, Niš, 1964), p. 8.
- ¹⁵⁶ Vladislavljević, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- ¹⁵⁷ Albin Močnik, *Adventizam (Adventism)* (No publisher indicated, Novi Sad, 1925), p. 110.
- ¹⁵⁸ Radomir Grujić, 'Adventisti' ('The Adventists'), *Narodna enciklopedija* (No publisher indicated, Belgrade, 1928), p. 112.
- ¹⁵⁹ Mirko Golubić, *Istorija hrišćanske crkve (A History of the Christian Church)* (Adventistička viša teološka škola, Belgrade, 1970), p. 316.
- ¹⁶⁰ 'Istorijat crkve' ('A history of the Church'), an on-line article, available from <http://www.adventisti.org.yu/Istorijat-B.htm>; accessed 3 August 1999.
- ¹⁶¹ Draško Đenović, *Počeci izdavačke delatnosti adventista u Južnoslovenskim zemljama (The Start of Publishing Activity by the Adventists in the South Slavic Countries)* (unpublished manuscript, Belgrade, 1995), p. 2.
- ¹⁶² 'Predgovor', *Vaspitanje* (Preporod, Belgrade, 1980), p. 8.
- ¹⁶³ Bibliographical information: 'Biblijska pedagogija', *Bogoslovski glasnik* (Pravoslavne bogoslovije, Sremski Karlovci), 1912.
- ¹⁶⁴ Interestingly, the Belgrade daily *Politika* of 12 September 1923 writes that 'Their sect exists among us since 1905', referring to the Kingdom of Serbia (of which Vojvodina was not at that time a part). There is no other information to back up this statement and no other confirmation of this date.
- ¹⁶⁵ Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
- ¹⁶⁶ Golubić, *op. cit.*, p. 316.
- ¹⁶⁷ M. N. Jevtić, 'Iz Srbije', *Sionska Straža*, no. 9, 1914, pp. 2–3.
- ¹⁶⁸ Robert Shillinger, 'Putni izveštaj', *Glasnik hrišćanske adventističke crkve*, no. 6, 1979, pp. 5–6.
- ¹⁶⁹ In the same year that he was converted and baptized as an SDA member, 1919, Vilim Pleško became a literary evangelist in the western part of the new country. In the period

1925–27 he was an assistant preacher in Belgrade and from 1927–34 he was a leader of a team of literature evangelists for Vojvodina. See *Glasnik hrišćanske adventističke crkve*, no. 2, 1969.

¹⁷⁰ 'Izveštaj rada', *Adventni glasnik*, no. 1, 1922, p. 1.

¹⁷¹ *loc. cit.*

¹⁷² Rudolf Grulich, 'The small religious communities of Yugoslavia', *Occasional Papers On Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol. 3, no. 6, 1983, p. 5.

¹⁷³ Antun Lorencin was appointed leader of the Southern Conference. In 1939 he became the president of the SDA Union of Yugoslavia, and remained in that prominent position until 1967. For further information see *Glasnik hrišćanske adventističke crkve*, nos. 5 and 6, 1967.

¹⁷⁴ Cvitković, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

¹⁷⁵ Grulich, *op. cit.*, pp. 1–17. See also: Trevor Beeson, *Discretion and Valour*, rev. edn (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1982), p. 293.

¹⁷⁶ Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

¹⁷⁷ Močnik, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

¹⁷⁸ After the Second World War they were known as the *Nikolićevci* (i.e. the followers of Nikolići).

¹⁷⁹ Draško Đenović, tape-recorded interview with the author, 16 March 1998, Pančevo, Yugoslavia.

¹⁸⁰ Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

¹⁸¹ 'Blue Cross', in E.H. Cheerington (ed.), *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, vol. III (No publisher indicated, Westerville, OH, 1926), p. 975; quoted in Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

¹⁸² Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

¹⁸³ *ibid.*, p. 276.

¹⁸⁴ R. Möller, *Lebensweg* (Novi Sad), no. 3, 15 February 1923, quoted in Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

¹⁸⁵ Mojzes, *op. cit.*, pp. 280–81.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 284.

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p. 290.

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*, p. 291.

¹⁸⁹ John L. Nuelsen to F.M. North, 6 March 1914, in MBMAr, Correspondence file no. 310; quoted in Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

¹⁹⁰ Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

¹⁹¹ The formal name was *Metodistička crkva u Jugoslaviji* (The Methodist Church in Yugoslavia). In the United States of America it was referred to as the Methodist Episcopal Church of Yugoslavia, since it had ties with what was then called the Methodist Episcopal Church in the States. In 1939 this primarily northern US denomination united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church to form the Methodist Church. In 1968 this body joined the Evangelical United Brethren to form the United Methodist Church. 'Our history', an on-line article, available from <http://www.umc.org/abouttheumc/history/>; accessed 17 September 1999.

¹⁹² Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 413.

¹⁹³ The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was the principal missionary agency of the Congregational Churches in the USA.

¹⁹⁴ W.W. Sleeper, *Report of Samokov Station 1884–5* to the European Turkey Mission, 8 July 1885, original in the archives of the Burke Research Library, Union Theological College, New York.

¹⁹⁵ There is an interesting short note in Julius Richter's book which speaks of an urgent request by the Albanians to the American Board to found a station in the city of Koritsa, and continues 'There are also some out-stations in Servia, e.g. Prishtina [now in Kosovo province] and in Bosnia, e.g. Mitrovitza [now in Kosovo].' Julius Richter, *A History of Protestant Missions in the Near East* (Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1910), p. 170.

- ¹⁹⁶ In 1989–90 the Methodists in Skoplje split. One group formed a Congregationalist church. The families remembered who had belonged to which church back in 1922, as well as the property titles.
- ¹⁹⁷ Paul B. Mojzes, 'Yugoslavia', in Nolan B. Harmon (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of World Methodism*, vol. II (The United Methodist Publishing House, Nashville TN, 1974), pp. 2625–26.
- ¹⁹⁸ *ABCFM Annual Report*, 1921, pp. 62–63, quoted in Mojzes, *A History ...*, p. 423. (ABCFM stands for American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.)
- ¹⁹⁹ Mojzes, *A History ...*, p. 431.
- ²⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p. 443.
- ²⁰¹ *loc. cit.*
- ²⁰² Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
- ²⁰³ 'The level of theological education of these pastors was never high. It was accomplished either through private study, with examinations taken during Annual Mission Conferences, at either the Frankfurt Methodist Theological School in Germany or the Bible School in St Andrae, in Austria. Both these schools were willing to meet some of the expenses of the Yugoslav students, as none of them was able to pay.' Mojzes, *op. cit.*, p. 461.
- ²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 470.
- ²⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p. 486.
- ²⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 471.
- ²⁰⁷ 'United Methodist Church – Europe', an on-line article, available from <http://www.umc-europe.org/countries/jugomak.htm>; accessed 24 August 1998.
- ²⁰⁸ In Serbia and Yugoslavia they were also formerly known as Christ's Church of the Free Brethren, which in the 1970s was changed to *Hristova crkva braće* (Christ's Church of the Brethren). Until 1941 they were known locally as *Slobodna braća* (Free Brethren). In the 1993 edition of *Operation World* this denomination is called Christian Brethren. In his book *Religious Communities in Yugoslavia* (Jugoslovenska stvarnost, Belgrade, 1981), Radovan Samaržić speaks (p. 43) of The Church of Brethren in Christ from Bački Petrovac.
- ²⁰⁹ Miroslav Čizmanski, letter from Bački Petrovac, April 1999. See also: Miroslav Čizmanski, *The Plymouth Brethren Movement in Yugoslavia* (B.A. thesis, Trinity College, Florida, 1994).
- ²¹⁰ Dr Frederick A. Tatford, *That the World May Know*, vol. 9: *Red Glow Over Eastern Europe* (Echoes of Service, Bath, 1986), p. 245.
- ²¹¹ F. Roy Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement* (The Paternoster Press, Devon, 1968), p. 195.
- ²¹² After the Second World War Lees continued with his visits, bringing encouragement and material relief from Britain and the United States. See Coad, *op. cit.*, p. 194.
- ²¹³ Tatford, *op. cit.*, p. 251.
- ²¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 244, 252.
- ²¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 245.
- ²¹⁶ Rut Lehotsky, personal letter to the author from Novi Sad, 23 August 1999.
- ²¹⁷ Tatford, *op. cit.*, p. 249.
- ²¹⁸ *loc. cit.*
- ²¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 251. This report has not been corroborated by any other source. There is no report of any Serbian Orthodox bishop ever converting to Protestantism.
- ²²⁰ Čizmanski, letter.
- ²²¹ OMEFI (the Italian Brethren Mission Agency) reports that Vladimir and Mariana Čizmanski started a new witness in Podgorica, Montenegro, and that they had six believers. See *OMEFI Newsletter*, no. 2, autumn 1997. More recent reports indicate that they have opened a second mission in Herceg Novi, Montenegro.
- ²²² Grulich, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- ²²³ Cvitković, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
- ²²⁴ Josip Sabo, 'Istorijat Kristovih duhovnih crkava' ('A History of Christ's Spiritual

- Churches'), *Okružnica saveza kristovih crkava u FNRJ*, no. 1, 1960, pp. 1–5, here p. 4.
- ²²⁵ Levi Petrus (ed.), *Europeiska Pingstkonferensen i Stockholm (European Pentecostal Conference in Stockholm)* (Förlaget Filadelfia, Stockholm, 1939), pp. 22–23.
- ²²⁶ Georg Steen, 'Herrens verk i Jugoslavien och på Balkanhalvön' ('God's work in Yugoslavia and throughout the Balkans'), *Evangelii Härold*, no. 17, 1923, pp. 195–97.
- ²²⁷ *loc. cit.*
- ²²⁸ *Kratak pregled crkve u Beogradu (A Short Review of the Belgrade Church)*, a statement issued by the Holy Trinity Church, the Pentecostal church in Belgrade, 18 April 1992, on the occasion of the dedication of the new church building. This church had left the 'infant baptism' position in late 1950s, endorsing believers' baptism.
- ²²⁹ Irwin Winehouse, *The Assemblies of God: A Popular Survey* (Vantage Press, New York, 1959), p. 111.
- ²³⁰ Steele, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
- ²³¹ Milin, *op. cit.*, p. 134.
- ²³² Gustav Kinderman, 'Religious freedom in Yugoslavia', *Pentecostal Evangel*, no. 1, 1954, p. 9.
- ²³³ Mozor Marinike, *Pentekostalni pokret rumunske nacionalnosti u Jugoslaviji (The Pentecostal Movement among the Romanian Nationals in Yugoslavia)* (unpublished manuscript, Novi Sad, 1998), p. 12.
- ²³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 14.
- ²³⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 26–27.
- ²³⁶ David Barrett reports however that until 1954 they were known as the Religious Church of Christ. David B. Barrett (ed.), *World Christian Encyclopedia: a Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World, AD 1900–2000* (OUP, Nairobi and New York, 1982), p. 756. See also Cvitković, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
- ²³⁷ Their official name today is *Crkva Božija* (the Church of God).
- ²³⁸ Bjelajac, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
- ²³⁹ 'Serbia and Montenegro', an on-line article, *CIA Factbook*, available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/sr.html>; accessed 6 April 1999.
- ²⁴⁰ Branko Bjelajac, 'A report of evangelicals in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia 1996–97', *Religion in Eastern Europe*, vol. XVIII, no. 4, 1998, p. 35.