

The Fate of the Professors of Belgrade University under German Occupation, 1941–1944

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Abstract

The University of Belgrade was one of the most important educational and scientific institutions in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. On the eve of the Second World War it employed some 300 didactic personnel. The present article depicts the typical experiences of distinguished Belgrade University professors during the Second World War and the occupation of Belgrade in the years 1941–1944.

Overall, these fates were shaped by Nazi policy towards the intelligentsia of occupied countries, but they also depended on specific ideological and political attitudes, and particularly on the behavior of individual scholars. Professors who were reserve officers were taken into captivity after the Yugoslav capitulation. Later, several professors cooperated with the Serbian wartime administration. On the other hand, some gave direct or indirect support to the anti-Fascist movements participating in the country's Civil War (i.e. to the Partisans or the Royalists). But the majority of university teachers abstained from any public involvement, dedicating themselves to everyday life and survival. A large number of professors were placed under strict administrative control, with many being persecuted and arrested by the local police or Gestapo; two were shot in Banjica concentration camp.

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In the beginning of 1941, Yugoslavia was surrounded by the Third Reich and its allies, who following the defeat of France in June 1940 ruled over almost the whole of continental Europe. Austria was annexed in 1938, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria joined the Tripartite Pact in the beginning of 1941, while Italy annexed Albania and attacked Greece. In an attempt to save his country, Prince Paul Karađorđević of Yugoslavia signed the Tripartite Pact on 25 March 1941 in Vienna. But two days later mass demonstrations erupted in Belgrade, and a group of officers who had secured British support carried out a coup d'état and brought young Peter Karađorđević to the throne. Angered, Hitler ordered an attack on Yugoslavia, which was commenced on 6 April 1941. After a short war, the Yugoslav army was defeated and capitulated on 17 April. Large parts of Yugoslavia were divided between the German allies who had participated in the attack – Hungary, Bulgaria and Italy, with parts being incorporated into Italian-dominated Greater Albania. Much of the remainder was used to create the Independent State of Croatia (a German protectorate), while the Germans took over Serbia and the Banat, setting up a military administration centered in Belgrade (Pavlowitch, 2008, pp. 1–90; Onslow, 2005, pp. 1–57; Burgwyn, 2005; Williams, 2004, pp. 17–59; Petranović, 1992, pp. 38–131; Ristović, 1991 etc.).

The newly-established German authorities operated with considerable strength and brutality from the off, sparing no effort to enforce the “order” and “peace” necessary to secure lines of communication, efficiently exploit natural resources, and enmesh Serbia in the Nazi “*Neue Ordnung*” in Europe. Further, the German occupation policy in Serbia was based on anti-Serbian stereotypes from the times of the First World War and on the racist Nazi concept of the hierarchy of nations, in which Serbs formed the bottom tier. Accordingly, a domestic civil administrative apparatus was created, however it had no independence or jurisdictional powers, functioning under the strict direction and control of the German military administration. In the meantime, moved by traditions of liberty and anti-German sentiment, a national uprising erupted in Serbia in the spring of 1941, gaining momentum in the summer of the same year. It was conducted by two opposing ideological and political forces – the Royalist Movement, led by General Dragoljub Mihailović, and the Partisan Movement, which was supported by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and its leader, Josip Broz Tito. The German reaction was fundamentally brutal. Propaganda measures, punitive actions on the part of the Gestapo and the local Special Police, widespread threats and punishments (among others the taking of hostages and detainment of persons in prisons and camps), as well as killings and mass liquidations, commenced in the summer and reached a culmination in the autumn of 1941. A German “retributive expedition” carried out in the autumn of 1941 brought the very existence of the Serbian nation into question – the Nazis routinely killed 50 or 100 Serbs in retaliation for every German soldier wounded or killed, and mass shootings were conducted in Kraljevo, Kragujevac, and other locations. In total, more than 30,000 Serbian

citizens were killed, while the German military authorities explored the idea of a radical solution of the Serbian issue – a mass collective punishment for the Serbian people. This concept called for the annihilation of the intelligentsia and the most socially prominent citizens, the resettlement of the entire Serbian population, and the division of the country's territory between Germany's allies. By the end of the year, the uprising had been brutally suppressed, and from then on the scale of repression was reduced (Koljanin, 2011, pp. 65–87; Dimitrijević, 2011, pp. 88–102; Kurapovna, 2010, pp. 32–100; Dimitrijević, 2007, pp. 181–206; Nikolić, 2007, pp. 153–180; Nikolić, 2011, pp. 177–236; Wheeler, 2006, pp. 103–122; Pavlowitch, 2002, pp. 139–145; Petranović, 1992, pp. 132–288).

What was happening at Belgrade University at the time? First of all, it must be said that Belgrade University was not only one of the biggest and most important educational and scientific institutions in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, but also a crucial Serbian national institution as such. It had been officially established in 1905, however its foundations were laid in the 19th century. Its founding fathers were distinguished teachers and scientists who had been educated at famous European universities and other centers of scholarship. They brought back to Belgrade a knowledge of various scientific disciplines and fields, instilling the spirit of learning and research. Most of the professors employed at Belgrade University supported the war aims of the Kingdom of Serbia during the First World War, and made an immense contribution to the creation of Yugoslavia. Some of them continued to be politically active in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia during the interwar period, representing various political and ideological options, however primarily the liberal and democratic (Trgovčević, 2005, p. 67; Trgovčević, 1999, pp. 159–173; Trgovčević, 2003a; Trgovčević, 2003b; Đurović, 2004, pp. 255–276; Bondžić, 2004, pp. 19–53). On the eve of the Second World War, the University had approximately 300 didactic personnel. Put exactly, there were 93 regular professors, 68 associate professors, 68 contractual professors, and 81 readers and lecturers. The staff was rounded off by 140 assistant lecturers (*Pregled predavanja*, 1941).

After the demonstrations and coup on 27 March 1941, Belgrade University was closed and remained so throughout the occupation, in spite of attempts made by the Serbian administration to enable the enrollment of students and organize teaching. Several buildings of the faculties and institutes were demolished or damaged in the bombings conducted in April 1941, and acts of destruction – and robbery – continued in successive years. As has been stated above, none of the faculties were open during the occupation, there were no lectures, and no new students were enrolled; some shortened courses were occasionally held, however, as well as exams for final year and PhD students. Despite the opposition of the University authorities and the majority of professors, basic legal regulations governing the academy's functioning were changed – its autonomy was abolished and it was formally made subordinate to the Serbian civil administration. The intention was to establish an institution for the education of Serbian youth

in a strong national spirit, with the concomitant eradication of the influences of Communism, Freemasonry, Liberalism, and Western democracy. However, all final decisions were made by the German military and police authorities, and these simply did not allow the University to operate. The Germans did not want a large number of youth to gather in Belgrade, especially considering that pre-war Belgrade students were predominantly left-leaning. Furthermore, the German authorities decided the fate of the University's teaching staff primarily on the basis of their racial policy towards the intelligentsia of conquered nations; the Nazis viewed their stance as partially justified by the political and ideological attitudes displayed by the majority of the professors. Namely, the resistance of the University authorities and teaching staff to the reorganization of the institution clearly showed what the German and Serbian occupation authorities had assumed all along – that the didactic cadre was in the main anti-Fascist and anti-German, and contained a great many concealed or open opponents of the Nazi regime and ideology (Bondžić, 2012a, pp. 275–278; Škodrić, 2009, pp. 118–123; Bondžić, 2004, pp. 53–56; Petranović, 1998, pp. 424–432).

The individual fates of the University's didactic personnel varied. According to cumulative data, 206 teachers were dismissed or retired; 82 were imprisoned in camps in Germany and Italy as prisoners of war; 6 were interned; 2 professors became members of the Royal Government-in-Exile, while several cooperated with the Royalist Movement at home and abroad; 14 joined the Partisans, of whom 1 was killed; almost 50 were incarcerated at Banjica concentration camp, with two being executed; 8 died from natural causes; 5 provided indirect assistance to the Serbian occupation authorities, while several collaborated openly with the Serbian and German administration and performed managerial duties at the faculties. But most university teachers refrained from engaging in public activities, cooperating with the authorities, or taking up duties at the faculties. A large number of professors were subjected to strict control, which included political pressure, persecution, and arrests carried out by the local Special Police and Gestapo (Bondžić, 2012, p. 277; Petranović, 1992, p. 141; Đorđević, 1962/1963, p. 57). We will give some information about each of these groups, placing emphasis on those who were imprisoned and executed in Banjica.

During the short April campaign of 1941, around 370,000 Yugoslav soldiers and officers, mostly Serbs, were captured (Petranović, 1992, p. 108). The professors who participated in the fighting as officers of the reserve were captured and sent to POW camps in Germany and Italy. Some were released within a few months, but others remained in captivity until the end of the War. We will give only a few examples here. Mihailo Petrović, a famous Serbian mathematician, was 73 years old but nevertheless responded to the call of duty; he was taken into captivity, released after several months, and died two years later in Belgrade (Milanković, 2005, pp. 463–467). The distinguished Serbian biologist and writer Stevan

Jakovljević (who had fought as an officer in the Serbian Army in the First World War) was captured in April 1941, spending the next four years in German and Italian prisoner of war camps. Released in April 1945, in August of the same year he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of Belgrade University (Bondžić, 2004, pp. 92–93).¹ Milan Bartoš, Adam Lazarević, Dušan Pantelić, Milivoje Marković, Radomir Živković, Miodrag Tucaković and Slobodan Drašković – all professors at the University’s Faculty of Law – were detained in Germany and Italy; thanks to the intervention of the authorities of their alma mater, Lazarević and Marković were released in 1942, but the others remained in captivity until the end of the War.² As a matter of fact, Yugoslav POWs included professors from all of the University’s faculties. Additionally, some who had gained prominence in politics were interned either domestically or abroad. A prime example would be Radenko Stanković, a distinguished Serbian cardiologist, a Professor at the Faculty of Medicine, a politician and senator, and the Regent of Yugoslavia for the underage Peter II between 1934 and 1941. Immediately after the breakup of Yugoslavia, he was arrested by the Germans and taken to Austria. There, they tried to convince him to form a Serbian Government, but he refused and was interned in Belgrade until the end of the War (Petranović, 1992, pp. 81, 134).

In May 1941, the Germans established military and administrative authorities in Serbia. It should be mentioned that from the beginning of the occupation several professors from Belgrade University provided assistance to the Serbian administration and collaborated with the occupier in various ways. And thus, in the summer of 1941 the Serbian Council of Commissars included Milosav Vasiljević from the Technical Faculty, Stevan Ivanić, a lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine, and Lazo Kostić from the Faculty of Law, while the Serbian Government of General Milan Nedić, formed in August 1941, had two professors of the University – Miloš Trivunac from the Faculty of Philosophy, who was put in charge of education (he served for less than two months), and Jovan Mijušković from the Faculty of Medicine, who was responsible for health until November 1942. Several professors supported the efforts of the Serbian authorities to build a political, legal, economic, cultural and educational system in the mold of the German “*Neue Ordnung*” (the jurist Ilija Pržić, the anthropologist Branimir Maleš, and others), however they were not involved in any formal capacity. Some agreed to perform administrative duties at the University and faculties, and participated in official cultural and public life. They had various motives for collaborating with the occupier: some were sincere supporters of Fascism, admired German culture,

1 Arhiv Srbije (AS), fond Beogradski univerzitet (BU), f. XLIV.

2 AS, BU, f. III, br. 1/41; AS, fond Pravni fakultet (PF), f. IV; AS, PF, f. XV, br. 8228/41; AS, PF, f. XVI, br. 52/42, br. 198/42, br. 2092/42.

or supported political conservatism; a few belonged to the pro-Fascist “Zbor” movement; but many only followed their own personal and professional interests, without attaching any importance to ideology. After the War, some of them went into exile, while several were severely punished by the Communist authorities: four were executed, twelve were arrested and sentenced, while 37 were removed from University (by that time, however, 18 had already emigrated) (Stojanović, 2012, pp. 163–176; Bondžić, 2012a, pp. 279–281; N.N., 1941c, pp. 1–4).³

On the other hand, some university professors left the country together with the Yugoslav Royal Government in April 1941 and went on to take part in the political life of the Yugoslav emigration during and after the Second World War. There is no doubt that the most important of these was Slobodan Jovanović, Emeritus Professor of the Faculty of Law and a prominent jurist and historian, who served as Deputy Prime Minister with portfolio in the Royal Government from 27 March 1941 to 11 January 1942, and as Prime Minister from 11 January 1942 to 26 June 1943. Another member of the government was the jurist Božidar Marković. In turn, the jurist Mihailo Konstantinović played an important role not only in the political life of the Yugoslav emigration, but also in building the new Yugoslavia after the War. The historian Dragoslav Stranjaković, philologist and Germanist Pero Slijepčević, and jurists Milan Žujović and Slobodan Drašković were members of the Central National Committee of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. S. Drašković was captured by the Germans and imprisoned in April 1941; although later released, he stayed abroad and remained in exile after the War. Let us also mention the distinguished historian Vladimir Ćorović, who died in a plane crash in Greece in April 1941 while trying to emigrate (Bondžić, 2007, pp. 406–407; Žujović, 2007, p. 818; Popov, 2009, pp. 624–631; Krkljuš, 2011, pp. 209–210; Radojević, 2014, pp. 133–134; Nikolić, 2008, pp. 12–14, 105–111; Petranović, 1992, pp. 83–86, 134–139, 168, 176, 215, 234, 376–383, 594).⁴

During the Second World War many of the professors of Belgrade University sympathized with the Royalist Movement or the Partisans, however only a few openly gave support, and fewer still actually took part in the fighting – as a matter of fact, there were no well-known professors amongst the Royalist Movement at all, although 14 fought on the side of the Partisans. One, Simo Milošević, a parasitologist and Professor at the Faculty of Medicine, joined the Partisans as a regular fighter in the uprising of 1941, and was killed by the Royalists in July 1943. A prominent role was played by Pavle Savić, a physicist and a pre-war collaborator of Irène Joliot-Curie

3 AS, BU, f. IV-34, dosije B. Maleš; AS, Ministarstvo prosvete Srbije, f. III-39, dosije M. Vasiljević; Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), Državna komisija FNRJ za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača, 110-85-766.

4 AS, BU, f. II-62, dosije Slobodan Drašković.

in Paris, who served as a decoder at Tito's General Headquarters and was a member of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia. Other notable soldiers of the Partisan forces included the philosopher Dušan Nedeljković, the physicist Dragiša Ivanović, and Radivoje Uvalić, an economist and veteran of the Spanish Civil War. The Partisan Movement was also supported by Kirilo Savić from the Technical Faculty, Toma Bunuševac from the Faculty of Agriculture, the biologists Stefan Đelineo and Siniša Stanković, the jurists Jovan Đorđević and Borislav Blagojević, and others (Bondžić, 2012b, pp. 239–250; Gulić, 2012, pp. 251–264; Rašo, 2014, p. 676; Savić, 1978, pp. 224–281).⁵

It should be stressed, however, that the majority of university lecturers abstained from any public involvement and dedicated their efforts to everyday life and survival. They held various political and ideological views (primarily democratic, liberal and anti-Fascist), but didn't expose them in public. At the beginning of the occupation, more than 200 university teachers were dismissed or retired, however many were soon reinstated. Those who were suspected of being Jews, Freemasons or Communists, or openly displayed anti-Fascism, were permanently removed from the University. But both groups – i.e. those who remained in employment and those who were dismissed – faced a number of common concerns and problems during the occupation. Firstly, since their state salaries were insufficient for them to maintain themselves in war-torn Belgrade, they had to find alternative sources of income. Some relied on fees for professional services, such as lecturing, publishing books and articles, and so forth; many resorted to selling their possessions: furniture, jewelry, tableware, paintings, books, clothes, etc. The War confronted them with outright threats (occasional bombings, the risk of arrest), mundane and yet serious problems (the lack of shelter, food, or firewood), and even temptations of sorts (namely the burned out or damaged houses, which enticed some people to seek loot that would, if anything, aid them in their own survival). Like other residents, university teachers were given vouchers for only limited quantities of food, clothing, fuel, etc. Nevertheless, even under such destructive conditions, individual scholars steeled themselves to work and write on their fields of expertise (Bondžić, 2012a, pp. 282–283; Kandić, 2005, pp. 235–248; Milanković, 2005, pp. 455–475).

Just like other intellectuals and citizens in general, academics were subjected to strict control and huge propagandistic pressure by the local Serbian police and the German authorities, ably supported by the Gestapo.

5 Istorijski arhiv Beograda (IAB), Memoarska građa (MG), MG-655, sećanje Tome Bunuševca; MG-262, sećanje Selene Bunuševac; MG-708, sećanje Aleksandra Đelinea; IAB, Uprava grada Beograda (UGB), Specijalna policija (SP), IV-11/26, k. 193/16, dosije Dušana Nedeljkovića; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/39, k. 193/29, dosije Jovana Đorđevića; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/56, k. 194/15, dosije Tome Bunuševca; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-117, dosije Siniše Stankovića.

The most far-reaching propaganda campaign was undertaken in August 1941, after a bout of attacks on German soldiers and facilities in Serbia. The “Novo Vreme” newspaper – the mouthpiece of the occupiers – published an “Appeal to the Serbian People”, which was directed against the partisans, the Communists in particular, and called for obedience to authority and the existing system of law and order. The summons was signed by more than 400 politicians, intellectuals, businessmen, clergymen, and representatives of other professions. Among them were 80 professors, readers and assistant lecturers of Belgrade University (actually more than 100 didactic personnel in total, if we include lecturers from colleges and art academies) (N.N., 1941a, pp. 1–3; N.N., 1941b, p. 3). Only a handful of professors openly refused to sign the document (among them Miloš Đurić, a Professor of Ancient Philosophy and Ethics, and Professor Aleksandar Kostić from the Faculty of Medicine) (Maricki-Gadžanski, 2007, pp. 653–656; Bondžić, 2011, pp. 260–262).⁶ We could say that signatures to the “Appeal” were extorted under police pressure and intimidation, while some were most probably falsified. Whatever the case may have been, this brief propaganda success did not in any way alter the fact that the German authorities were patently distrustful of university professors and intellectuals in general.

Finally, a large number of professors were subjected to persecution and arrest by the local police and the Gestapo. When the uprising in Serbia flared up in the autumn of 1941, the German authorities supplemented military actions and retaliatory punishments administered on an *ad hoc* basis with the taking of hostages from amongst the most prominent intellectuals (Koljanin, 2011, p. 76). The Gestapo already had a list of “suspicious” intellectuals who were earmarked for incarceration (including Jovan Đorđević and Đorđe Tasić from the Faculty of Law, Viktor Novak, Siniša Stanković and Stefan Đelineo from the Faculty of Philosophy, and numerous others) (Božović, 1998, pp. 189–193), and on the night of 4/5 November 1941 its agents successfully arrested some 150 intellectuals and prominent citizens and detained them as hostages in the concentration camp of Banjica near Belgrade. Among them were more than 30 Professors of Belgrade University. They were accused of being Freemasons, and also of displaying anti-German attitudes and cooperating with the Communists. This group included Aleksandar Belić, a famous linguist and the President of the Serbian Royal Academy; Miloš Đurić, a philosopher; the historians Viktor Novak, Nikola Vulić and Vaso Čubrilović; Toma Živanović, Borislav Blagojević, Mihailo Čubinski, Ljubomir Dukanac, Đura Popović, Đorđe Tasić and Mihailo Ilić, jurists; the philologist Radomir Aleksić; Miodrag Ibrovac, a linguist; Tihomir Đorđević and Jovan Erdeljanović, both ethnologists; Aleksandar Deroko,

an architect; the mathematician Nikola Saltikov; Aleksandar Leko, a chemist; Vojislav Mišković, an astronomer and a Member of the Serbian Royal Academy; Siniša Stanković, Ivan Đaja and Živojin Đorđević – biologists and Members of the Serbian Royal Academy; Matija Ambrožić, Petar Matavulj, Milutin Nešković, Uroš Ružičić and Milan Fotić – physicians and lecturers at the Faculty of Medicine; Petar Kolendić, a historian of literature; Branko Popović, a historian of art; etc. (*Logor Banjica*, 2009, pp. 140–147; Begović, 1989, pp. 156–164; Begović, 1988, pp. 245–261).⁷ Along with other intellectuals, they were placed in specially prepared rooms (nos. 3, 25 and 26) where they enjoyed better conditions than other prisoners. During their imprisonment, they tried to organize everyday life, holding lectures on various topics, playing chess, and so on. One of the hostages, Dr. Vladislav Pavlović, a civil servant, kept a secret diary in which he recorded events and described the people whom he encountered. Pavlović noted the names of those who shared his captivity in the “special” cells, jotting down the titles of their improvised lectures, the texts of their satirical jokes and songs, and indeed every event and all the goings-on – religious ceremonies included – that he witnessed during his period of incarceration (Pavlović, 2003, pp. 1–115).⁸

At the end of 1941, the Germans completely suppressed the uprising in Serbia, thus making it unnecessary to hold hostages in the camp any longer. Accordingly, most of the imprisoned professors were released from Banjica by January 1942 (more than half were freed by the end of December 1941). While they had been detained in the camp, many appeals and pleas for their release had been received from families and friends – and from certain German nationals, too, in some cases – but it is now clear that the single most important factor which brought about their liberation (and, indeed, secured their survival) (*Logor Banjica*, 2009, Vol. 1, pp. 140–147)⁹ was the collapse of the uprising. However, some professors were arrested and taken to Banjica at later dates: Ksenofon Šahović, Milan Marković, Aleksije Lebedev, Milivoje Sarvan and Stefan Đelineo in November and December 1941; Gojko Grđić and Milivoje Kostić in December 1942; Dušan Dohčević in March 1943, and Milan Žujović in August 1943; Dragoslav Stranjaković in February 1944,

7 IAB, Befellshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD (BdS), B-648, B. Blagojević; IAB, BdS, D-287, M. Đurić; IAB, BdS, I-99, M. Ilić; IAB, BdS, A-164, R. Aleksić; IAB, BdS, A-7, M. Ambrožić; IAB, BdS, C-128, M. Čubinski; IAB, BdS, D-286, Lj. Dukanac; IAB, BdS, D-289, Ž. Đorđević; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/66, k.194/25, Đ. Tasić; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-117, S. Stanković; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/15, k. 193/5, S. Đelineo; IAB, MG-708, sećanje A. Đelinea; IAB, MG-465, sećanje V. Novaka; IAB, Zbirka memoarske građe Banjičkog logora (BL), 933, A. Deroko; IAB, BL, 192, S. Đelineo.

8 For more information on the camp in Banjica, cf.: Begović, 1989. The list of 23,637 inmates of Banjica has been published in: *Logor Banjica*, 2009.

9 IAB, BdS, B-648, B. Blagojević; IAB, BdS, D-287, M. Đurić; IAB, BdS, A-164, R. Aleksić; IAB, BdS, A-7, M. Ambrožić; IAB, BdS, C-128, M. Čubinski; IAB, BdS, D-289, Ž. Đorđević; IAB, BdS, D-286, Lj. Dukanac; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-2/25, k. 166/1.

and Siniša Stanković, again, in March 1944) (*Logor Banjica*, 2009, Vol. 1, pp. 147, 151, 231, 273, 586, Vol. II, pp. 21, 47, 63, 264, 428, 456; Begović, 1989, pp. 205, 244, 274, 275, 282, 358).¹⁰ It should be stressed that expressions of loyalty towards German and Serbian authorities – or in fact outright cooperation – did not prevent university professors from being arrested and incarcerated in the camp. For example, most of the professors arrested in November 1941 had signed the Appeal in August 1941 (A. Belić, V. Novak, M. Ilić, Đ. Tasić, I. Đaja, T. Živanović, M. Ibrovac, V. Mišković, etc.).

Further, certain professors of Belgrade University were arrested, but not sent to Banjica. They were jailed and interrogated on the basis of allegations, denunciations and imputations made by colleagues, associates, or police agents. And although they were accused of being Freemasons, Communist sympathizers, left-wingers in general, Anglophiles, and so forth, many succeeded in rebutting these charges, or otherwise concealing their real political activities and views. After being examined and spending several days or weeks in jail, they were released, nevertheless remaining under police supervision. For example, Branislav Nedeljković, a Reader at the Faculty of Law, was arrested in January 1942 by the Serbian Special Police on the basis of an anonymous allegation, however following an investigation and obligatory consultations with the Gestapo he was released in February 1942. Two other lecturers, Miljan Mojašević and Haralampije Polenaković from the Faculty of Philosophy, were arrested on 28 November 1942, duly examined by the Serbian Special Police, and freed on 1 December 1942, for it was not proved that they had cooperated with the Communists.¹¹

But two other professors of Belgrade University perished in Banjica. The first, Đorđe Tasić (born in 1892 in Vranje), was a distinguished jurist and a Professor at the Faculties of Law in Ljubljana, Subotica and Belgrade. He specialized in state law, public law, the philosophy of law, sociology, rural sociology and other fields, also acting as President of the Society of Sociology and the Social Sciences. Furthermore, as a member of the Agrarian Party, he was an anti-Fascist and a left-winger. He was arrested for the first time on 4 November 1941 and released on 27 November 1941. In December 1942, in spite of strenuous efforts to remain in the employ of the Faculty, he was forced to retire. In the meantime, police agents accused him of being a Marxist, Communist, Freemason and Anglophile, however they had no evidence, and he successfully rebutted all the charges. Ultimately, and despite the fact that he was one of the signatories to the “Appeal” of August 1941, he was arrested for a second time, on 25 August 1943, and executed

¹⁰ IAB, UGB, SP, IV-117, S. Stanković; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-2/25, k. 166/1; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/15, k. 193/5, S. Đelineo; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-2/25, k. 166/1; IAB, BdS, M-1718, Milan Marković.

¹¹ IAB, UGB, SP, IV-13/24, k. 203/3, Branislav Nedeljković; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/13, k. 193/4, Haralampije Polenaković; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/13a, k. 193/4, Miljan Mojašević.

the next day (*Logor Banjica*, 2009, Vol. 1, p. 140; Kandić, 2005, pp. 255–262; Begović, 1989, p. 160).¹²

The other professor who lost his life in Banjica was Mihailo Ilić (born in 1888 in Belgrade). Like Tasić, he was a prominent jurist and a Professor at the Faculty of Law. He occupied himself with administrative law and the history of political theories. An anti-Fascist and a left-winger, he was a member of the Republican Party, an advocate of civil rights, liberal democracy, republicanism and federalism. Ilić also founded the “Politika i društvo” publishing house, and worked as the editor-in-chief of the progressive weekly magazine “Napred”. He was arrested in November 1941. German intelligence had observed him even before the War, concluding that he was an influential left-wing activist and therefore potentially dangerous to the Third Reich. Police agents accused him of being a Communist, a Freemason, an Anglophile, a sympathizer of the Soviet Union and a prominent opponent of Fascism and the Third Reich. Although they had no proof to support these allegations, he was kept in Banjica until 20 March 1944, when he was shot. The numerous pleas for clemency submitted by his family were ignored (*Logor Banjica*, 2009, Vol. 1, p. 143; Jevđević, 2007, pp. 151–152; Kandić, 2005, pp. 262–268; Begović, 1989, Vol. 1, p. 160–161).¹³ Both Ilić and Tasić were targeted by the Germans as avowed and hostile enemies of the Third Reich and Fascism, and, unlike other professors of Belgrade University, they were not released from the camp, but executed.

We should also mention that on several occasions the Gestapo sent prisoners from Banjica to Mauthausen. Miloš Radojković, a Professor at the Faculty of Law in Belgrade, was deported there from Banjica on 25 March 1943. He survived and returned home soon after the end of hostilities, in May 1945 (Zečević & Ćirić, 2015, p. 427; Kandić, 2005, pp. 270–272). But many others were not so fortunate. Among them was Dimitrije Đurović (born in 1882 in Danilovgrad, Montenegro), a distinguished philologist who was employed as a Professor at the Military Academy and the Trade Academy in Belgrade, and for a brief period as a Professor of Russian at the Faculty of Theology in Belgrade. His research focused on issues of Slavic philology, and he wrote ten monographs and many scientific articles, being fluent in Russian, Czech, Polish, Bulgarian, German, English, French, Italian and Latin. Đurović was arrested in the summer of 1943, condemned as a Freemason and Communist, and sent to Banjica in December 1943. He was deported to Mauthausen in August 1944 and forced to work in the Wiener Graben quarry and in KL Gusen. Dimitrije Đurović

¹² IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/66, k. 194/25, Đ. Tasić; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-15, k. 192/26; *Logor Banjica: Logoraši*, 1, p. 140; Lj. Kandić, *Istorija Pravnog fakulteta u Beogradu*, pp. 255–262; S. Begović, *Logor Banjica 1941–1944*, 1, 160.

¹³ IAB, BdS, I-99, M. Ilić.

died in Mauthausen on 10 May 1945 (Đurović, 2004, p. 393; Zečević & Ćirić, 2015, pp. 184–187; Cupić, 2007, p. 68).¹⁴

Throughout the occupation, nearly 50 professors of Belgrade University were imprisoned in Banjica. The majority, however, spent between several days and a few weeks at the camp before being released. The exceptions were admittedly few: Mihailo Ilić was imprisoned in Banjica from November 1941 until March 1944, when he was killed; Đorđe Tasić was executed there after his second incarceration in August 1943; Viktor Novak was arrested on 4 November 1941 and spent five months at the camp, being freed on 28 March 1942; Milan Žujović was detained in August 1943 and released in December 1943; Stefan Đelineo was incarcerated at the camp for nearly the entire occupation, from 25 December 1941 until 3 October 1943 – the day after the camp was abandoned by the Germans; Siniša Stanković was arrested for the second time on 1 March 1944 and remained in the camp until 3 October 1943, too. In actual fact, both Stanković and Đelineo were left-wing intellectuals, openly sympathizing with the Communists, and they were supposed to be shot, however they managed to flee the camp at the last moment (*Logor Banjica*, 2009, Vol. I, p. 231; Vol. II, p. 456; Begović, 1989, Vol. I, pp. 162, 358; Vol. II, pp. 84–91, 100–101, 259–265).¹⁵

By that time, the occupation of Belgrade was drawing to a close. After hard fighting, on 20 October 1944, the Red Army and Partisan regulars captured the city and forced the Germans to retreat. The Partisans continued to fight for the complete liberation of Serbia and Yugoslavia. Concomitantly, the Serbian Communist Party assumed power in Serbia and started to establish the foundations of its regime (Petranović, 1992, pp. 642–657).

Belgrade University, being Yugoslavia's largest educational and scientific institution, and therefore viewed as the country's "factory of experts", was to play an important role in this "new age". Indeed, the process of its restructuring and restoration had begun already in November 1941, with special consideration being given to the academy's didactic personnel. Namely, the Yugoslav resistance did its utmost to observe and analyze the paths taken by individual scholars during the German occupation. Thus, the fate of the academics in "the new age" depended largely on their involvements during wartime. Those who had joined the Partisans as fighters (or in other ways supported Tito's movement) became important and influential coparticipants in the process of formation of the new postwar state and society (P. Savić, D. Nedeljković, S. Stanković, S. Đelineo,

14 IAB, BdS, D-357, D. Đurović; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/81, k. 195/6. Đurović was not a university professor at the beginning of the War, hence he has not been included in our statistics, but has to be mentioned as a distinguished intellectual and academic who perished in Mauthausen.

15 IAB, UGB, SP, IV-117, S. Stanković; IAB, UGB, SP, IV-11/15, k. 193/5, S. Đelineo; IAB, MG-708, sećanje Aleksandra Đelinea, sina S. Đelinea; IAB, BL-193, sećanje S. Đelinea; IAB, BL-750 Sećanje Petra Nikezića; IAB, BL-755, sećanje dr Žarka Fogaroša.

J. Đorđević, etc.). They proved especially useful at the University and its faculties, where they both authored and implemented the new Communist policy in science and higher education, while some were advanced to posts of considerable political and social importance (for example S. Stanković, who was appointed Speaker of the Serbian Parliament) (Bondžić, 2004, pp. 238–250).

But those university teachers who had collaborated with the occupier or the wartime Serbian administration, or sided with the Royalists, faced continuing difficulties and hardship. The new regime subjected them to strict control and made every effort to punish those who had been in any way active or influential during the War. Within a few months of the liberation of Belgrade, four professors of Belgrade University were sentenced for collaboration with the occupier and executed; twelve were imprisoned; 37 professors and assistant lecturers were removed from the University; and a large number of Fascist collaborators and supporters of the Royalist Movement emigrated. Over the next few years, all university teachers in Belgrade faced continued political control, however its severity was reduced, for the new regime soon embarked on a policy of compromise with the old intellectual milieu (Bondžić, 2004, pp. 80–85, 250–270).

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