



**The Revolution of 1903
in Serbia in the eyes of
Russian Contemporaries**

THE REVOLUTION OF 1903 IN SERBIA IN THE EYES OF RUSSIAN CONTEMPORARIES

LA REVOLUCIÓN DE 1903 EN SERBIA EN LA MIRADA DE LOS CONTEMPORÁNEOS RUSOS

ABSTRACT

The beginning of the 20th century became for Serbia not just as “the next step on the time stairs”, but radically changed all further history of the country. The revolution on May 29, 1903, having finished “autocracy” of the last Obrenoviches, opened the page of “constitutionality and national foreign policy of Karageorgevich dynasty” [Yugoslaviya v XX v. 2011]. In the Serbian historiography this short period of history of the Kingdom of Serbia is often treated as “the Golden Age of the Serbian parliamentarism”. Some of authors even believe that at the beginning of the 20th century Serbians “created the modern system of parliamentary democracy”, having brought closer the country to “the European samples” in the political plan. Inside politics of the Kingdom of Serbia after the revolution of 1903 undergo of certain transformations. Serious changes concerned the Serbian political parties. In particular, the Liberal party morph into the People’s party; the Serbian Progressive Party was revived in 1906. The first elections after the revolution, also gave the vast majority to radicals, however split among the Serbian radicals which first symptoms were shown in 1901, raised at the Russian contemporaries doubts in ability of radicals to take the responsibility for effective management of the country “at that military terror which, apparently, finally triumphed now in Belgrade”

KEYWORDS: history, international relations, Europe, Serbia, Russia, Balkans, the Karageorgevich dynasty.

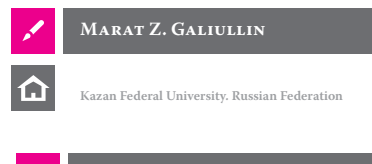
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RESUMEN

El comienzo del siglo 20 se convirtió para Serbia no solo como “el próximo paso en la escalera del tiempo”, sino que cambió radicalmente toda la historia del país. La revolución del 29 de mayo de 1903, después de haber terminado la “autocracia” del último Obrenoviches, abrió la página de “constitucionalidad y política exterior nacional de la dinastía Karageorgevich” [Yugoslaviya v XX v. 2011]. En la historiografía serbia, este breve período de la historia del Reino de Serbia a menudo se trata como “la edad de oro del parlamentarismo serbio”. Algunos autores incluso creen que a comienzos del siglo XX los serbios “crearon el sistema moderno de democracia parlamentaria”, habiendo acercado el país a “los ejemplos europeos” en el plan político. Dentro de la política del Reino de Serbia después de la revolución de 1903 se producen ciertas transformaciones. Los cambios serios afectaron a los partidos políticos serbios. En particular, el Partido Liberal se transforma en el Partido Popular; el Partido Progresista Serbio fue revivido en 1906. Las primeras elecciones después de la revolución, también dieron la gran mayoría a radicales, sin embargo se dividieron entre los radicales serbios cuyos primeros síntomas se mostraron en 1901, plantearon a los contemporáneos rusos dudas sobre la capacidad de los radicales para tomar la responsabilidad de una gestión eficaz del país “ante ese terror militar que, al parecer, finalmente triunfó en Belgrado”..

PALABRAS CLAVE: educación, facilitación, facilitación psicológica, facilitación docente, facilitadora, sujeto de actividad, subjetividad, anillo de atributos de facilitación pedagógica.

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is known that ordinary Serbians didn't appreciate old and young radical fractions as forces essentially various from each other, and as a result at all pre-war parliamentary elections radicals steadily had received 70-75% of votes and traditional division of political sympathies of the country into radicals and not – radical kept up to the beginning of World War I.

In fact, operation of the constitution of 1903 was continued, "only lawfully published and then illegally cancelled", the king Peter unlike the predecessors didn't interfere with political struggle. The revolution of 1903 and change of a dynasty caused also changes of a foreign policy of Serbia. Peter Karageorgevich actually shuffled off the state worries for the leaders of Radical party, which were oriented pro-Russian.

All these factors served as a certain impulse of political development that granted to contemporaries the right to say that "after a long stagnation the political life of the Balkan people is in a stage of development now and, by rights, has to be considered from this point of view" [Rot K., 1905]. However, contemporaries distinguished the most significant, the so-called "extra constitutional factor" – sharp strengthening of influence of officers-conspirators to the course of political process.

It had already found the reflection in formation of the provisional/transitional government about which we enquire from the message of the special correspondent of "Vossische Zeitung" [Za granitsey, 1903]. He had an opportunity to inspect the royal palace and to have a conversation with officers-conspirators soon after the revolution, therefore his message, having "a truthfulness print", was apprehended by the Russian public with special trust. (Ling et al., 2016) After murder of a royal couple one of the officers with four sol-

diers went to the house of the future Minister of Justice, Lubomir Zhivkovich. He threw doubt upon the words of unexpected guests about death of the king Alexander, saying that "he isn't so silly to believe such fables". Then one of his friends had confirmed everything, which were told by officers, L. Zhivkovich went accompanied by officers to the ministry. The same story happened with one of high-powered radicals Stoyan Protich who asked that he was left, at last, alone as he "was carried shackles standing enough" [Obozreniye inostrannoy zhizni, 1903 Obozreniye inostrannoy zhizni, 1903].

At last, he began to beg as about mercy that "he was allowed to stay at home" and "looked for other ministers". (Salavati-Niasari et al., 2015) Avakumovich who arrived by train in Belgrade from Nish about 5 o'clock in the morning was directly accompanied by two officers from the station in the court carriage and was brought to the ministry. Thus, when all new ministers were assembled, the officers armed with revolvers ordered them to sign the decree in which they "declared" themselves as ministers. The correspondent claimed that the provisional government created by officers was under their pressure [Obozreniye inostrannoy zhizni, 1903] in what other Russian observers agreed with it and mentioned that conspirators held the country and the government "directly terrorized" throughout the year [Obzor vneshnikh sobyitiy. 1903].

2. METHODS

The research rests on solid historiographical base. First of all, among the sources are distinguished sources published at the beginning of the XX century in the periodical publications "Bozhy Mir", "Russky vestnik", "Russkoye bogatstvo"; and also materials in the magazine "Grazhdanin".

The research is based on the following principles: scientific character, i.e. creation of conclusions on the basis of analysis of a full complex of documents and scientific literature and acceptance in attention of all events and the phenomena in them; impartiality – the characteristic of the studied events and the phenomena of historical process without any preferences of the researcher; systematicity – accounting of variety of the factors in-

fluencing historical process as that objective and subjective, inside - and foreign policy and also local and global; historicism – consideration of historical processes and the phenomena in their continuous development and modification.

Statement of material was constructed on the detail - chronological principle.

The historical and genetic method applied in the research work gave the opportunity to reveal the general process of events. This method promoted identification of cause-and-effect relationship between the main economic and political problems of Serbia.

The concrete historical analysis allowed considering events and the phenomena in the context of the corresponding period when an assessment to events is given from the point of view of a concrete historical situation.

In the research was applied historical and system method. The system nature of socio-historical development means that all events, situations and processes of this development are caused and have cause-and-effect relationship, and they are functionally connected among themselves.

3. RESULTS

Contemporaries didn't doubt that "the Serbian coup was "exclusively business of military, which had received large money from the party of Karageorgevich". Also it was admitted participation in a conspiracy of civil statesmen, otherwise, according to contemporaries, it is difficult to explain, "how there would be immediately people ready to assume responsibility for just happened bloody crisis" [Cherikover S., Serbiya, Moskva., p. 35. no date.].

The observer had given quite curious arguments as the proof that new ministers were involved in a political conspiracy. First, "in Serbia disappeared the king, there was no dynasty, but didn't pass even half an hour - the government was appeared" which appeals were stuck on the walls of Belgrade 2-3 hours later revolution that "it would be impossible in case it would be necessary to convince ministers and to offer them explanations". Secondly, reaction of future ministers was disquiet who were not surprised of "just oc-

curred slaughter". Then officers invite them to gather immediately in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, adjacent to royal palace. Thirdly, the new ministry was created from the representatives belonging to the most opposite parties "who couldn't be seen together up to this moment, and this connection of representatives of so various parties makes impossible the assumption of "improvisation".

The Russian and European public were struck by reaction of the Serbian population which "belonged to made with genuine pleasure, hung out flags, did a noisy applause to officers: hatred to the killed to the king and the queen was so big". Subsequently by contemporaries it was repeatedly noted that "calm through the whole country was kept full" [Pimenova E., 1908]. According to the Russian contemporaries, "the people belonged with amazing indifference to this murder". Observers noted lack of disorders in the country, "the revolution was made at full tranquility of the country", both the people, and the government [Petrovich M.B., 1976].

4. DISCUSSION

The Russian contemporaries sincerely believed that the king Peter who occupied the Serbian throne "has all chances to be a good governor of Serbia" as long exile from the native land not only made him free "from spirit of an intrigue, mistrust and animosity with which last Obrenovich were imbued", but also gave the chance to him "to develop the political ideals" and also to understand, "to what the Serbian people aspire and what they wait from for the sovereign"

Besides, having carried out for many years in Switzerland, Peter Karageorgevich "having got used" to a democratic system of this country, "will get the same ideals of free self-government, as well as his new citizens". In conclusion, observers noted that "all true friends of Serbia could have only feeling the most live pleasures when the empty Serbian throne was occupied by such person as the king Peter" [Jelavich B., 2004].

According to authors of "the Russian Bulletin" expectations of Serbians concerning the new king were stated in the speech of the chairman of the Senate Velimirovich who

spoke about destruction of disagreement between a crown, on the one hand, and the people – on the other hand, and he hoped for the better future. According to contemporaries, Serbia as the country has everything that is necessary for prosperity of its population. In addition Serbia is rich. The only thing that wasn't enough for it till this time – “lacked it only tranquility and confidence in wellbeing of tomorrow, lacked firm, respected equally by the king and the people of laws” .

Therefore from Peter Karageorgevich as from the king “is necessary a little to satisfy and even to make happy Serbians: it is enough to be honest, conscientious, truthful and benevolent, i.e. to have qualities which lacked to Obrenovich and which, on the general responses, are inherent in the king Peter” [Sundhaussen H., 2007].

Also according to the Russian researchers the task of the new monarch was facilitated also by the fact that the May revolution which ended with death of the last member of Obrenovich dynasty – the king Alexander and the queen Draga – not only removed from the agenda a question of rivalry of two dynasties, this, according to the researcher A.L. Shemyakin “the Serbian version of war of the Scarlet and White rose” . but also resolved a succession to the throne issue.

5. SUMMARY

In country government the coalition ministry under the chairmanship of Jovan Avakumovich stepped on the same day. In several days the Senate and the Assembly were called. In the declaration to foreign offices, concerning a question of revolution which the Serbian government defined as “some misunderstanding at court”, caused intervention of army and the conflict during which the king Alexander and the queen Draga died, told about the main task – “to correct deeds angrily” . However, in general the provisional government formed in Belgrade led by the liberal Avakumovich preferred not to focus attention on a delicate question of a revolution, saying that “the event on the night of May 29, of course, was awful, but it is necessary to take into account that the history of Serbia for the last twenty years was, in effect, history of the matrimonial relations of kings of Milan and Alexander” [Politika, 1903] .

The Assembly which was opened on June 1, having listened to explanations of provisional government, according to contemporaries, not only “enthusiastically welcomed a new state of affairs”, but even expressed gratitude to army and the government, and without any debate, unanimously elected the descendant of “the national leader” as the Serbian king. Peter Karageorgevich who accepted election and on telegraph promised “to be always the first representative of freedom of the nation and the most faithful constitutional guardian of the rights of the Assembly” . It is characteristic that two representatives of an office who were representatives of extreme radicals – Lubomir Zhivkovich (Minister of Justice) and Lubomir Stoyanovich (the Minister of Education and church affairs) – supported establishment in Serbia of the republic . Election of the new king, as well as participation of radical party in the upcoming elections, was arranged a number of the conditions which are allegedly developed by radicals at a separate meeting on which performance both above-stated ministers put the stay in the government into dependence. But as resignation didn't follow, and the radical party participated in elections, the Russian observer drew a conclusion that the king Peter accepted these conditions, or the radical party made a certain compromise .

Peter Karageorgevich who arrived in Belgrade on June 11 confirmed the intention to be “truly constitutional king” and “in the most careful way to respect and protect” the constitution; he wrote in the manifesto that “the constitution and all constitutional guarantees of freedom and the rights national ... for me a shrine” .

The newly elected monarch expressed the attitude towards army in the response telegram addressed to the Minister of War Jovan Atanzkovich; the last he asked to convey “heartfelt royal gratitude”. At this telegram there was also a foreign policy component: “I as the King and his Supreme Ruler, I will lead it on the way on which my immortal grandfather topped it with glory” .

6. CONCLUSION

However all these favorable circumstances, according to contemporaries, could yield result but only if – “that the king could remain above any parties that it directly or in-

directly wasn't connected with any group of people that, keeping full freedom of action, in all the acts it could be guided only by the constitution, own wisdom and the benefit of the people entrusted to it" [Inostrannaya khronika, 1911].

Soon after Peter Karageorgiyevich accession the Russian contemporaries reported: "already again disturbing news of internal discord and emergency measures which as if the king Peter had to accept for personal protection" reach from this country. At the contemporary of these events, E. Pimenova, we meet the main reasons for this displeasure: first, the king "quite inconsiderately" demanded delivery from treasury of 3,5 million francs allegedly as remuneration for the real estate which is taken away from its family. While to it were the difficult situation of Serbia is perfectly known, "it undermined to it national respect at once". This message corresponds to the truth only partly as from messages of other contemporaries we know that the king Peter at the accession to the throne categorically rejected the offer of the government on return of the property of the dynasty to it Karageorgiyevich confiscated at exile from Serbia of his father, the prince Alexander [Za granitsey, 1903].

Secondly, I caused "big grumble" proceeded, as well as at the time of Obrenovich, practice of appointment to the state positions "of" by means of court and family relations. The Serbian king Peter has to regret, apparently, for former quiet life in exile in Geneva [Tumanin V.E., Galiullin M.Z., Sharafutdinov D.R., 2016].

Finally, the conspiratorial question remained in force. Even before coronation, soon after arrival of Peter Karageorgevich to Serbia, representatives of foreign powers had expressed desire that if gang-killers of the royal couple were not punished, but, at least, removed from the places taken by them in public service. However, according to remarks of contemporaries, the king Peter "didn't hurry or maybe couldn't fulfill immediately this requirement" owing to what, according to contemporaries, the most part of envoys of foreign powers, led by England, defiantly left Belgrade.

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