

HOW AND OF WHAT THE VASSAL SERB PRINCIPALITY BECAME IN A CENTURY THE S. H. S. KINGDOM, YUGOSLAVIA

BY

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“**T**he mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small”. The path of justice is often strait and stony, but trodden with due perseverance, uncompromising determination and unbending will, it leads ultimately to the goal. This is what has happened in connection with South Hungary, the so-called “Voivodina”, which in the November of 1918 was wrested from this country and attached to Yugoslavia by the Peace Edict of Trianon. Yugoslavia, which had been augmented by territory belonging to others, has now, unexpectedly, thanks to an irreparable elementary blunder, fallen almost entirely to pieces. What the Serbs built up with a century of self-sacrificing, purposeful, hard and often gory work, but also with a great deal of intrigue and duplicity, has collapsed suddenly like a house of cards, owing to their presumption and impotence. *The southern regions which were wrested from Hungary in defiance of right and justice, are now returning to the mother-country.* Some other parts of Yugoslavia will also seek to join neighbouring States. Croatia has arisen from the tomb and proclaimed her independence, and the Bulgaro-Macedonian areas in South-Eastern Serbia will probably attach themselves to Bulgaria.

Yugoslavia is thus being reduced to her component parts, and when we witness the process of disintegration for which she herself is to blame, we think it will perhaps interest our readers to learn how that State was pieced together.

In 1804 Karadjordje unfurled the flag of the first real, and to a certain measure successful, Serb war of independence, and after three years of bloody battles compelled the Sultan to yield to his demands. In 1807 some of the regions inhabited by Serbs were liberated from the yoke of the Turks, who had ruled over them for 415 years. This part was the foundation of the Belgrade Pashalic (vassal province) consisting of 12 districts and the nucleus of what subsequently became the independent Serb principality. Later on Karadjordje enlarged the area of the Pashalic by adding to it 6 other districts, so that when in 1813 the Prince, abandoned by Russia, was obliged to flee from Serbia before the superior forces of the Porte and take refuge in Austria, it consisted of 18 districts.

Milosh Obrenovitch, who in 1815 headed another rebellion, met with greater success. With the support of the Tsar, Nicholas I, he succeeded in inducing the High Porte to recognize him as prince of the vassal Belgrade Pashalic, which without the 6 districts added to it by Karadjordje, was 25.330 square kilometres in area. With the subsequent second conquest of those 6 districts, comprising about 12.000 square kilometres, its area increased to 37.330 square kilometres, and this enlargement of the vassal principality was recognized by the Sultan in 1833 by a special "hattisherif". This was the area of the Serb vassal principality, and so it remained until 1878, when *by a resolution passed at the Berlin Congress* it not only achieved full political independence, but also, thanks mainly to the intervention of *Count Julius Andrassy, Foreign Minister of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy*, was enlarged by the addition of the *Toplitza, Nish and Vronya districts*, in all an area of 10.972 square kilometres. These districts were ceded to the principality as a sort of smart-money to compensate the Serbs for another resolution passed simultaneously by the Berlin Congress, in terms of which the Austro-Hungarian Monarchs was given a mandate to occupy Bosnia and Hercegovina. In 1882 the National Diet of the Serb Principality, now 48.302 square kilometres in area, proclaimed Serbia a kingdom. This also took place with the support of *Count Julius Andrassy*.

TERRITORIES ACQUIRED DURING THE BALKAN WAR AND THE GREAT WAR

By the *Peace Treaties of London and Bucharest* Serbia acquired a further 39.486 square kilometres after the Balkan War of 1912—1913, so that it was then 87.788 square kilometres in area.

After the first Great War the component parts of the S. H. S. Kingdom created by the Paris Peace Treaties were as follows:

1. The two independent kingdoms of *Serbia and Montenegro* (Crna Gora);

2. Autonomous political units: *Croatia-Slavonia, Bosnia and Hercegovina*;

3. Certain Crown Lands belonging to the Empire of Austria, which in terms of the Peace Edict of Saint Germain of 10th September 1919 had to be ceded to Serbia: —

a) *Dalmatia*, but without Zara and the islands of Lastovo and Pelegruz,

b) *Carniola* without the part assigned to Italy (2.100 square kilometres),

c) *Southern Styria*,

d) 1.355 square kilometres in *Carinthia*,

e) Kastavshatina and the island of Krk (Veglia), i. e. $88 + 423 = 511$ square kilometres.

4. The areas which in terms of the Trianon Peace Edict of 4th June 1920 Hungary was compelled to cede to Serbia:

a) 9.380 square kilometres in the *Banate* (the greater part of that region — 18.000 square kilometres — was allotted to Rumania),

b) The *Bácska*, without the Baja Triangle, 8.755 square kilometres,

c) In *Baranya* the so-called Baranya Triangle, 1214 square kilometres,

d) In the district between the *Mur* and the *Drave* (Medjumurje) 775 square kilometres,

e) In the district flanking the *Mur* (Prekomurje) 950 square kilometres.

5. The areas which in terms of the Neuilly Peace Edict

Bulgaria was forced to hand over to Serbia. Those were the *Strumica*, *Bosiligrad* and *Caribrod* districts, as well as the region lying on the right bank of the Lower Timok north of Zajicar, in all 2.463 square kilometres.

I. Serbia entered the S. H. S. Kingdom with an area of 90.251 square kilometres. This territory was divided as follows:

Pre-war Serbia	48.302 sq. kms.
Southern Serbia	39.486 " "
The Strumica district	916 " "
The Bosiligrad district	816 " "
The Caribrod district	584 " "
The Lower Timok district	147 " "

II. Croatia, with 43.815 square kilometres, which consisted of

Croatia-Slavonia	42.552 sq. kms.
The district between the Mur and the Drave	775 " "
The Island of Krk (Veglia)	423 " "
Kastavshtina	88 " "

If to this we add Dalmatia with 12.731 square kilometres (without Zara) and the Island of Lastovo (110 sq. kms.), the total area of the Croat parts was 56.536 sq. kilometres.

III. Slovenia was pieced together of areas taken from the following regions:

From Carniola	7.855 sq. kms.
From Styria	6.039 " "
From Carinthia	1.353 " "
From the region adjoining the Mur	950 " "
Total	16.197 sq. kms.

IV. Bosnia and Hercegovina 51.119 sq. kms.

V. The so-called "Voivodina" 19.349 " "

VI. Crna Gora (Montenegro) 15.264 " "

Thus Yugoslavia (or the S. H. S. Kingdom) consisted of

1. Serbia 90.251 sq. kms. 4.133.478 inhabit.

2. Croatia-Slovenia-					
Dalmatia	56.536	„	„	1.054.919	„
3. Bosnia and					
Hercegovina	51.119	„	„	1.890.440	„
5. The "Voivodina"	19.339	„	„	1.346.527	„
6. Crna Gora	15.264	„	„	199.227	„
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Total	248.706	sq. kms.	11.984.911	inhabit.	

The numbers of inhabitants are those of the census taken on 31st January 1921. We have chosen these figures in preference to those of the census taken on 31st March 1931, because they tally roughly with the numbers of inhabitants living at the close of the World War in all the areas of which Yugoslavia was created. The rest of the statistics have been taken from Dr. Stephen Srkulj's "*Hrvatska Povijest u devetnaest karata*" (The History of Croatia in Nineteen Maps) (Zagreb 1937).

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