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Toward Modernity – the Ideological and Cultural Frames of the Serbian Revolution in the 19th Century¹

Abstract: The research analyzes the Serbian Uprisings against the Ottomans as the transgression into Modernity. A special consideration is given to ideological and cultural changes in Serbia in the 19th century. The author explains how the overthrow of the Turkish rule made it possible to initiate the process of creating of the modern Serbian state, nation and culture. The paper analyzes selected works of Serbian authors and activists: Dositej Obradović, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić and Svetozar Marković who contributed significantly to the success of the Serbian transformation in their cultural and ideological spheres. The article concludes that the Serbian Revolution created a model of political and social progress in the Balkans.

Keywords: Modernity, Serbian Revolution, Dositej Obradović, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, Svetozar Marković

W stronę nowoczesności – ideologiczne i kulturowe ramy „rewolucji serbskiej” w XIX wieku

Abstrakt: Artykuł analizuje powstania serbskie przeciw Turkom jako proces przejścia ku nowoczesności. Szczególną uwagę poświęcono ideologicznym i kulturowym zmianom w Serbii w XIX wieku. Autor wyjaśnia, jak obalenie władzy tureckiej umożliwiło zapoczątkowanie procesu tworzenia nowoczesnego serbskiego państwa, narodu i kultury. W tekście poddano analizie wybrane teksty serbskich autorów i działaczy: Dositeja Obradovicia, Vuka Stefanovicia Karadžicia i Svetozara Markovicia, którzy swoją działalnością w sferze przede wszystkim kulturalnej i ideowej znacznie przyczynili się do udanej z perspektywy czasu serbskiej transformacji. Konkluzją artykułu jest stwierdzenie, że „rewolucja serbska” stworzyła model politycznego i społecznego postępu na Bałkanach.

Słowa kluczowe: nowoczesność, „rewolucja serbska”, Dositej Obradović, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, Svetozar Marković

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The 19th century for Serbian culture and statehood is widely considered as a crucial period in the transition to modernity. The decisive and wide-ranging efforts to create a nationwide cultural model, accompanied by *Western European inculturation*,² as well as breakthroughs for the Serbian state, have, over time, come to be referred to in national historiography as the key and fundamental revolutionary phenomena and processes.

Such was the nature of the anti-Turkish uprisings of the early 19th century, which are often described as the *Serbian Revolution*. Let us look at these fundamental events for the Serbs at that time from the angle of their potentially modernizing character and meaning. On this occasion, the following questions arise. Firstly, were the events in question inspired in some way or were they the echoes of fundamental modernization transformations in Europe? Secondly, in what sense (and to what extent) have the events described here (political, social, cultural, economic) created the basis for the formation of the idea of modernity among the Serbs during that period? And finally, thirdly, how to understand the relationship between revolution and modernity? Or in other words: can the revolution pave the way for modernity?³

Let me start by reminding you that at the beginning of the 19th century, as a result of two uprisings (1804–1813 and 1814–1815), the Serbs began the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire, under which a large part of the Slavic Balkans was occupied at that time.⁴ The role of the Serbs in this crucial process for the entire area occupied by the Turks as well as the importance of these actions for the revival of the Serbian state have contributed to these events being referred to as the Serbian Revolution. The first person to use this name was German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886). *Serbian Revolution* first appeared in 1829, in his work entitled *Die serbische Revolution. Aus serbischen Papieren und Mittheilungen*,⁵ of fundamental significance in the description of Serbian history of the beginning

² D. Gil, *Prawosławie – Historia – Naród. Miejsce kultury duchowej w serbskiej tradycji i współczesności*, Kraków 2005, pp. 89–90.

³ See: D. Kubik, *Rewolucja (Serbia)* [in:] *Leksykon idei wędrownych na słowiańskich Bałkanach, XVIII–XXI wiek*, ed. G. Szwat-Gylybowa, D. Gil, L. Miodyński, Vol. 2: *Historia, ewolucja, rewolucja*, Warszawa 2018, pp. 177–187 and D. Kubik, *Nowoczesność (Serbia i Czarnogóra)* [in:] *Leksykon idei wędrownych na słowiańskich Bałkanach, XVIII–XXI wiek*, ed. G. Szwat-Gylybowa, D. Gil, L. Miodyński, Vol. 4: *Nowoczesność, sekularyzacja, postęp*, Warszawa 2019, pp. 35–47 for more specific information about the idea of revolution and modernity in Serbia.

⁴ There is a vast amount of source literature regarding the course of these events, e.g.: R. Ljušić, *Tumačenja srpske revolucije*, Beograd 1992; D. Đorđević, *Nacionalne revolucije balkanskih naroda 1804–1914*, Beograd 1995; *Evropa i srpska revolucija 1804–1815*, ed. Č. Popov, Novi Sad 2004; in English: R. Seton-Watson, *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans*, London 1917; M. Boro Petrovich, *A History of Modern Serbia: 1804–1918*, New York 1976; Ch. Jelavich, B. Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States: 1804–1920*, Seattle–London 1977; D. Đorđević, S. Fischer-Galati, *The Balkan Revolutionary Tradition*, New York 1981; W. Vucinich, *The First Serbian Uprising 1804–1813*, Boulder–New York 1982; M. Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism. War and the Great Powers. 1804–1999*, New York 2001; S.K. Pavlowitch, *A History of the Balkans 1804–1945*, London–New York 2014.

⁵ L. von Ranke, *Die serbische Revolution. Aus serbischen Papieren und Mittheilungen*, Hamburg 1829.

of the 19th century, which was created with the notable support of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864), the principal chronicler of both Serbian insurrections, who provided him with the necessary materials and sources. Undoubtedly, the assistance of this Serbian activist and ideologist, whose role for national literature and culture cannot be overestimated, significantly influenced the perception of both uprisings and the popularization of their ideas in Europe at that time.

The name *Serbian Revolution* clearly defined the framework for the perception of two Serbian uprisings, especially in light of the European context of the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, marked by the revolutionary atmosphere and the romantic love of the peoples fighting for liberation. The use of this term by the German historian in relation to the events that took place – as it seems – on the margins of the history of the whole continent – refers, by analogy, to the French Revolution (1789) and definitely includes the Serbian struggles for freedom within the European ferment and the rebellion against slavery and fossilized order (sometimes they are called ‘Atlantic revolutions’ which fought for a new type of society and state). We also have to remember that the Serbian elite – strongly impressed by the liberal ideas spreading across Europe in the wake of the French Revolution – raised the issue of national rights and territorial autonomy already in 1790 at the ecclesiastical-national diet in Temesvár. Then, Serbian leaders in their petition *Gravamina et postulata* emphasized that a people could not be a distinct nation without their territorial autonomy, which had been earlier referred to by Montesquieu.⁶

Serbian ideologists and activists, as well as later historians following Leopold von Ranke, attempted to make the uprisings against the Turks part of European history. An attempt to do so was made by Svetozar Marković (1846–1875), the initiator of the socialist movement⁷ in Serbia in the second half of the 19th century. In his book *Serbia in the East (Srbija na Istoku, 1872)*, he referred to the French Revolution as an example of a revolution based on the assumption that the state was not “the property of privileged classes” (*svojina privilegisanih staleža*), but an alliance based on freedom. The meaning of the idea of revolution comes from his understanding of civilization. Its basis is, according to him, “developed thinking” (*razvijeno mišljenje*) and “developed feelings” (*razvijeno osećanje*),⁸ which allow people to develop, on the one hand, material culture and means needed to achieve prosperity, and on the other hand, spiritual culture with all its individual and social relationships. The shaping of European culture, however, was influenced by various factors that excluded the development of a huge part of the society. The European civilization produced – in the form of knowledge, technical inventions or social ideas and slogans – a great power that was in the possession of the minority.

⁶ D.T. Bataković, *A Balkan-Style French Revolution? The 1804 Serbian Uprising in European Perspective*, “Balkanica. Annual of the Institute of the Balkan Studies” 2006, No. XXXVI, p. 114.

⁷ See: S. Dimitrijević, *Socijalistički radnički pokret u Srbiji 1870–1918*, Beograd 1982 and M. Vukomanović, *Radnička klasa Srbije u drugoj polovini XIX veka*, Beograd 1972 for more specific information about socialism in Serbia in the 19th century.

⁸ S. Marković, *Srpske obmane. Srbija na Istoku*, Beograd 1973, p. 127.

It was – as Marković calls it – “useless force” (*snaga neupotrebljiva*).⁹ The social framework for the functioning of this unused potential of European culture has made it impossible for the lower classes to acquire education and the right level of ownership – that is, they prevented them from becoming civilized. Marković also notes that this false notion of civilization was at that time adapted in the collective life and social imagination of Serbia. Meanwhile, the only solution to this situation is to remove the obstacles which hinder the individual from unrestrained work and development.

In the comparison of the two revolutions, there are some significant similarities. Firstly, at their source, there was the desire to overthrow the dominant property system at that time (that is, in the Serbian case, the Ottoman feudalism, which was anachronistic already in that period, and the feudal relations it had established), and secondly, in their course there was a deep social change in the perception of their own homeland (insurrections in Serbia have contributed to the spread of patriotic feelings).¹⁰ It is also worth noting that the Serbian Revolution – like the French one – had political and social objectives, namely the idea of national and civil liberty and equality, and the overthrowing of feudal relations by way of a radical solution to the agrarian problem. Of course, the indicated general similarities between the French and Serbian Revolutions do not exclude a whole range of significant social, political, economic and cultural differences between France and Serbia at that time. Let us recall here the views of historians: Benjamin von Kallay and Eric J. Hobsbawm, who agreed that any rebellion in the Balkans against Turkish rule (prior to the Greek Revolution of 1821) began as a revolt of the local community (or a local pasha) against the central authority of the Sultan. Regarding the Serbian Revolution, however, both historians differed in their assessment of Serbian national consciousness at that time – Kallay claimed it was strong,¹¹ and Hobsbawm thought the Serbs had no strong national consciousness at the time.¹²

It is also worth noting that ideas connected with broadly understood modernity appeared in the Serbian lands even before the outbreak of anti-Turkish insurrections. Their promoter became one of the most important Serbian ideologists of that time, Dositej Obradović (1742–1811), who in his numerous texts referred to the experience of Western European rationalism and Enlightenment. In his most famous work entitled *The Life and Adventures* (*Život i priključenija*, 1783, 1788) he advocated for the reformation of the whole of Serbian culture by accelerating the process of Europeanisation. Authority and common esteem (despite hostility towards him from many communities, including the Orthodox Church) gained through his activities, made him the first minister of education in the revolutionary government of Serbia. The condition for the existence and development of culture is, in his opinion, its openness. No culture should not close, either to neighboring cultures or even to more distant ones. The priority, of course, is open-

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ A. Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution française*, Paris 1907, pp. 511–538.

¹¹ B. Kallay, *Die Geschichte des serbischen Aufstandes 1807–1810*, Wien 1910, p. 259.

¹² E.J. Hobsbawm, *Doba revolucije. Evropa 1789–1848*, transl. S. Lovrenčić, Zagreb 1987, p. 128.

ness to patterns and models that can become the source of significant and bright transformations.¹³ Obradović saw the great chance of the Serbs in their need to become part of the European enlightened nations, from which one can and even should adopt modern solutions (in his rationalistic, utilitarian philosophy he emphasized the need of radical changes in education and the ecclesiastical policy). On the other hand, he also highlighted the effects of closing, persistence with old anachronistic customs and ideas. According to the Enlightenment symbols, for nations that do not want to open and adopt positive patterns, he predicted their fall in darkness and ignorance (and equates them with the “Asian and African peoples” who are closed to modern ideas).¹⁴ The ideological message and a kind of warning as well given by Obradović, especially accentuated and popular during the anti-Turkish insurrections (as Nićifor Ninković testified in his memoirs) was the belief that if the Serbs did not respect wisdom and learning, they would be Turks and torturers for one another.¹⁵ The overthrow of the Turkish rule is only the first step towards independence and freedom, since it will become more important to organize a modern state and society that will govern equality, tolerance and respect for the law.

For the Serbs themselves, the Serbian Revolution understood as another important step in the fight against the Turks and as “revenge for Kosovo”¹⁶ meant a diametric upheaval in key national issues. The uprisings, which at first were the rebellion of the unconscious peasants against the exploitation and rape of the janissaries, and not the movement against the Sultan, eventually led to the revival of the Serbian state – called in the Serbian historiography as “the resurrection of the state” (*vaskrs države srpske*). Thus, the Serbian revolution has significantly contributed to the resurrection of the national identity¹⁷ and the consolidation of two national groups inhabiting the so called Austrian Serbia and Turkish Serbia. It is important to mention that the Serbs from southern Hungary were very enthusiastic about the insurrection and they tried to provide financial support and military supplies for the fighting compatriots (the chief coordinator of all these efforts was Stefan Stratimirović, the Metropolitan of Karlovci). This was accompanied by the flourishing of various forms of culture, including literature – the struggle for national independence created in the people the need to bear witness to these important events; hence the flourishing of memoirs, e.g. Matija Nenadović¹⁸

¹³ D. Obradović, *Život i priključenija* [in:] idem, *Dela*, Beograd 2005, p. 88.

¹⁴ D. Kubik, *Nowoczesność (Serbia i Czarnogóra)...*, p. 36.

¹⁵ D. Obradović, op. cit., p. 158.

¹⁶ In 1804 Gavrilo Kovačević, a Serbian intellectual published a solemn poem dedicated to the insurrection, linking it with the 1389 Battle of Kosovo (*Sraženije strašno i grozno između Srblijima i Turcima na Polju Kosovu / Terrible Calvary of the Serbs and Turks on the Field of Kosovo*). On the other hand, Petar II Petrović Njegoš, a Prince-Bishop and great poet, in dedication to his masterpiece *The Mountain Wreath (Gorski vijenac, 1847)* defined “the inquisition of the Turkicized” (the mass execution of Montenegrins who had converted to Islam) as the significant event preceding the Serbian uprisings.

¹⁷ See: D. Gil, *Ewolucja i funkcje idei narodu w Serbii od schyłku XVIII wieku*, „Slavia Meridionalis” 2017, No. 17 for more detailed information about the Serbian nation and national identity.

¹⁸ M. Nenadović, *Memoari*, Beograd 2001.

(1777–1854), Nićifor Ninković¹⁹ (1788–1850), travel literature, e.g. Đorđe Magarašević²⁰ (1793–1830), correspondence providing a picture of that crucial time.

The uprising of backward and unorganized populations against the economic exploitation of local pashas, which over time has transformed into a national revolution for freedom and independence, has triggered a number of modernization processes in Serbian lands. First of all, the Serbian revolution was the beginning of a long-lasting process of the birth of a modern state and of the Serbian nation. Serbia first gained more independence within the Ottoman Empire, the patriarchal system and institutions collapsed, and their own ruling class and a new power structure were formed. Already at the very beginning of the anti-Turkish upheaval, Karađorđe in his official correspondence with the local insurgents' commanders and with the representatives of the great powers used to call himself „The Serbian commander” or „The supreme commander in Serbia”. In 1806 he also authorized an official Serbian delegation to meet both the Habsburg and Russian emperors to act in the name of the „Serbian nation.”²¹ One year later knez Sima Marković, the president of the Ruling Council (*Praviteljstvujušči sovjet*) – when the Russian army reached the Serbian border on the Danube to support fighting Serbs – declared that “Serbia considers itself as an independent state.”²²

The achievements of the Serbs in the political sphere at that time do not, however, show how these spectacular and ground-breaking events for the Serbs really looked like. To understand this language of historical generalities, it is enough to reach for the memoirs of that time, which allows us to translate them into the language of the realities of that period. Prota Matija Nenadović, one of the most important Serbian commanders during the uprisings, recalled that time in his memoirs (*The Memoirs*, 1867), which shed light on many of the phenomena and processes that had just started. In his notes he made clear, for example, the establishment of diplomatic relations with Austria, the establishment of the first legal code or the governing council, i.e. the first Serbian executive body. Thus, the contact of the insurrectionists with the Austrian emperor simply followed from a letter written by an uneducated and semi-illiterate Serbian warlord who asked for military assistance. The ecclesiastical legislation was the legal model for the emergent state authorities, from which the most important paragraphs were taken and which seemed anachronistic even at that time. The proceedings of the first Serbian executive body took place at a linden table, where a monastery cross and a Gospel Book stood.²³ The above examples – given by Nenadović, the eyewitness and participant in the anti-Ottoman uprisings – show in a bright way how modernity in Serbia emerged at the time of insurgency.

¹⁹ N. Ninković, *Žizniopisanija moja (1807–1842)*, ed. T. Popović, Novi Sad 1972.

²⁰ Đ. Magarašević, *Putovanje po Srbiji u 1827. godini* [in:] O.D. pl Pirh, *Putovanje po Srbiji u godini 1829*, Đ. Magarašević, *Putovanje po Srbiji u 1827. godini*, ed. P. Protić, Beograd 1983, pp. 253–304.

²¹ R. Perović, *Prvi srpski ustanak. Akta i pisma na srpskom jeziku (1804–1808)*, Beograd 1978, pp. 124–125.

²² M. Vukićević, *Karađorđe*, Beograd 1907, p. 476.

²³ M. Nenadović, op. cit.

Another significant area within which major changes occurred at that time was the education system.²⁴ Serbian education at that time was, of course, connected with the ongoing struggle for national liberation from Turkish domination, and therefore education was developing as part of national emancipation. The growing self-consciousness of the Serbs sparked the necessity to create, from scratch, an education system intended for the wide masses of society, which had before been largely illiterate. On the basis of the Act of 1811, primary schools (*male škole*) were established, while teachers were reminded of their civil duties and responsibility for their teaching work. This act obliged teachers to work according to their own abilities, and what was taught was elementary writing and reading skills, as well as arithmetic and orthodox chant.²⁵

A special role at that time was played by the Great School (*Velika škola*) in Belgrade, which was supposed to prepare staff suitable for the needs of the emerging young state. In 1812, the first state officials graduated from the school, and by the fall of the first insurrection in 1813, the school had two generations of graduates with 40 people in total. One of them, Lazar Arsenijević Batalaka (1793–1869) in *The History of Serbian Uprising (Istorija srpskog ustanka, 1898)* stated that the status of this school was written by “love for the fatherland and the need of the state.”²⁶ The first professor and organizer of the school was Ivan Jugović (1772–1813), but also Dorđe Petrović-Karađorđe (1768–1817) and Dositej Obradović played a crucial role. The first students were sons of elders, such as Karađorđe, Jakov Nenadović (1765–1836) and Vasa Čarapić (1768–1806). An important place on the map of education that was shaped at that time was the education system organized by the Orthodox Church, which was also interested in educating its staff. At this point, the theological school (*bogoslovija*) founded in 1810 in Belgrade should be mentioned. Two years later, the first four students graduated from it and were assigned to become deacons.²⁷

The role of education as an important factor in the development of Serbian culture during this period was recognized by Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864), a Serbian reformer and leading figure of the 19th century who tried, though unsuccessfully, to subordinate the development of education to state regulations. In 1832 he even declared, in the *Letter to Miloš* (leader of the Serbian second uprising), his readiness to work on the organization of education in Serbia, emphasizing the need for its significant reforms. “In my opinion,” argued Karadžić, “Serbia now feels the greatest scarcity of and need for people capable of serving the nation.”²⁸ The appropriate educational organization and its quality improvement by introducing the knowledge which Serbia needs “in the current situation”

²⁴ D. Kubik, *Oświata (Serbia)* [in:] *Leksykon idei wędrownych na słowiańskich Balkanach, XVIII–XXI wiek*, ed. G. Szwat-Gyłybowa, D. Gil, L. Miodyński, Vol. 6: *Oświata, tradycja, uniwersalizm*, Warszawa 2019, pp. 53–64; D. Kubik, *Kształcenie (Serbia i Czarnogóra)* [in:] *Leksykon idei wędrownych na słowiańskich Balkanach, XVIII–XXI wiek*, ed. G. Szwat-Gyłybowa, D. Gil, L. Miodyński, Vol. 5: *Kultura, kształcenie, humanizm*, Warszawa 2019, pp. 108–128.

²⁵ D. Kubik, *Oświata (Serbia)*..., p. 56.

²⁶ L. Arsenijević-Batalaka, *Istorija srpskog ustanka*, Beograd 1898.

²⁷ D. Kubik, *Oświata (Serbia)*..., p. 56.

²⁸ V. Stefanović Karadžić, *Pismo knezu Milošu* [in:] idem, *Izabrani spisi*, Zagreb 1978, p. 94.

should therefore contribute – in his opinion – to good management of the state. In the letter mentioned above he also proposed reorganization of the Great School, which should be a school specifically for selected boys who can write and read and who are aged between 15 and 20 years. In this school, there would be three teachers to teach, for three years, the following subjects: history, geography, statistics, Serbian grammar, arithmetic, rhetoric, law, logic, physics, etc. Such an education system would provide, according to Karadžić, suitable staff for Serbia to a greater extent than those who graduated in Pest – as he said – even twelve schools.²⁹ He also envisaged the possibility of sending more talented students to continue their education in various European countries, which education would be paid for government money. As for lower-level schools, he believed that it was necessary to gradually introduce in them textbooks written according to European standards so that they could be accepted by Turkish and Austrian Serbs.³⁰

In the 1830s, the education system in a revived Serbian state did not yet have a definite and strong position in public affairs (it was not before 1830 that the Serbian education was legalized under the *hatisërif*). From 1834, education was combined with legislation within the same government department, and shortly after that it was moved to the department of foreign affairs, then headed by Dimitrije Davidović (1789–1838), a politician, a diplomat and a well-deserved organizer. By virtue of the Act of Serbian Principality (*sretenjski ustav*) of 1835 – the first modern Serbian law patterned on the French laws of 1814 and 1830 and the Belgian ones from 1831 – education was excluded from the responsibility of the Church. It was a significant contribution to the process of secularization of Serbian schools. In 1838 an educational institution named High Office of Enlightenment and Health was established (*Visoka kancelarija prosvëštenija i saniteta*), headed by Stefan Stefanović (1797–1865).

The revolutionary significance of the events of the beginning of the 19th century in the form of two uprisings against Turks was noted – in context of socialist ideas – by Svetozar Marković (1846–1875). The Serbian revolution contributed not only to the beginning of the process of the disintegration of the Turkish Empire and to the political and administrative changes, but – above all – led to the “wiping out of an entire class of inactive people who lived a completely different life and saw the Serbian people as their property.”³¹ The initiator of the socialist movement on the Serbian lands saw the uprisings from the beginning of the century as having not only a national-political and military aspect, but also a social one. However, that didn’t exhaust the role of these events, as they have also initiated, according to the ideologist, changes in the national culture accompanying the reorganization of the social structure: the role of cities in the socio-economic sense is increasing (also the influx of different forms of culture and customs, Western European goods and displacement of the Eastern way of life), followed by the disintegration of the patriarchal system in the Serbian province.³²

²⁹ Ibid., p. 95.

³⁰ D. Kubik, *Kształcenie (Serbia i Czarnogóra)...*, pp. 112–113.

³¹ S. Marković, op. cit., p. 70.

³² Ibid., p. 71.

The contemporary Serbian historian Jovan Đorđević, quoting Jose Ortega y Gasset, notes that the revolution does not mean that something is changing in society but that the whole society is undergoing a major transformation.³³ Because when something changed or is changing, we talk of a reform, but when things change in the whole society – then we talk of a revolution. On that basis, Đorđević understood the revolution as “a definite and comprehensive complex of qualitative changes throughout the social sphere.”³⁴ The revolution broke out among the masses, so it was bottom-up and dynamic (the men fighting in the uprising often switched from guns to ploughs on the same day). It represented an intermediate stage between the patriarchal model and the fight for independence and national freedom, as well as modernity in the social and state-political sense.

The events of the early 19th century, as well as the accompanying phenomena and processes of a political, social, cultural and economic nature, in consequence – as we tried to outline briefly – began Serbia’s long and bumpy road towards modernity. A whole century was needed to break down the enormous civilizational backwardness of the Serbs, caused by centuries-long Turkish occupation, hence the revolutionary significance of this period in the pursuit of modernity is often extended by some Serbian historians to a considerable part of the 19th century. The ideological patrons of this groundbreaking process were Dositej Obradović and Vuk Karadžić, who contributed significantly to the success of the Serbian transformation in their cultural and ideological spheres. Many later activists, ideologists and Serbian writers have referred (often critically) to their ideas and suggestions, thus making a significant contribution to Serbia’s modernization and its culture.

The final outcome of the Serbian revolution in the context of Serbia’s transition to modernity can be regarded as impressive. As a result, “the nucleus of an independent state” was established (which until the Berlin Congress in 1878 would increase the scope of its independence), the foundations of a modern state in the form of political and state institutions were created, and Serbia gained (as an “undisputed Piedmont-type political center”³⁵) a decisive role in the process of uniting the South Slavic nations. The Serbian people have undergone a radical transformation, mainly in terms of social stratification (especially the rapid development of the bourgeois class and the rise of the political elite). Fundamental changes also took place within the political and state institutions. The agrarian reform carried out in 1807 opened the way for the creation of socio-economic relations of a capitalist character. Taking into account also the “ideological influence of France,” it can be said that the Serbian Revolution was “anti-feudal and bourgeois.” All these breakthrough events and processes in Serbia, initiated during the anti-Turkish uprisings, referred as the Serbian Revolution, will be an impulse for further modernization in Serbia also later, mainly in the second half of the 19th century. Issues concerning the state and its status and policies will be addressed

³³ J. Đorđević, *Ustavnost i revolucija* [in:] *Zbornik radova o sudstvu i zakonitosti u prvom srpskom ustanku*, Beograd 1979, p. 18.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³⁵ D.T. Bataković, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

by many activists and ideologists of socialist views, such as Svetozar Marković and the liberals, e.g. Vladimir Jovanović.

With the Serbian Revolution and its ensuing changes, based on ideas which were revolutionary in form and modern in its nature, a model of political and social progress in the Balkans has also emerged. All this contributed to the creation of a strong modern Serbia, which will play a crucial role in this region of Europe at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

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