

International Scholarly Conference “The History of Yugoslavia:
Perspectives of Young Researchers from Post-Yugoslav Area”,
Institute for Recent History of Serbia, Belgrade, 15–18 October 2024

Between 15 and 18 October 2024, the Institute for Recent History of Serbia (INIS) organised a highly acclaimed and well-organised international multi-day scholarly conference for young researchers, PhD candidates, and young PhDs (with less than three years from doctoral dissertation defended) from the countries of the former republics of Socialist Yugoslavia with primary objectives to exchange knowledge and participants' latest research findings, share innovative methodology approaches, along with different research perspectives and ideas. The aforementioned is embodied in the wisely framed head title of the young academics' gathering (“The History of Yugoslavia: Perspectives of Young Researchers from Post-Yugoslav Area”), supported by rich and diverse programme committee representation.

The scholarly event occurred in Belgrade at the Archives of Yugoslavia. Since I had already conducted a 10-day archival research here on my doctoral research and dissertation a few months prior, it was positive and productive to return to the amazing research environment of one of the most (if not the most) important archives in the Balkan Peninsula. One of the decisive reasons for accepting the organiser's invitation to the conference, however, was what they have sincerely pointed out in their official invitation letter: “Younger generations of historians with their primary research interest onto the 20th century in the territory of former Yugoslavia are not sufficiently connected and acquainted”, even though we are geographically, thematical-

ly, and chronologically researching similar theme subjects. Speaking on my behalf, this is a fair and precise statement. The academic gathering of 31 researchers from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia, Croatia, and North Macedonia involved the exchange of knowledge, perspectives, research methodologies, and networking, as well as the base for new connections and acquaintances, which will serve as the foundation for future project collaborations and other partnerships.

The official programme and the content of the papers were chronologically divided into three days with multiple sections each day, totalling ten high-quality thematic panels moderated by esteemed historians from Serbia. After registration on an introductory day, the official beginning was solemnly opened with an introductory speech by Dr Mile Bjelajac, director of the Institute for Recent History of Serbia, Dr Milan Terzić, director of the Archive of Yugoslavia, and Dr Vesna Aleksić, member of the conference organisation board. The honour of the first paper presentations under the opening panel belonged to Vukašin Marić, Amer Maslo, Tamara Kosijer, and Nikola Koneski, followed by the second panel represented by Oliver Pejić, Daniel Siter (myself), and Vukašin Zorić. In the third panel, the last papers of the first day were presented by Nikola Zečević, Ajdin Muhedinović, and Tamara Stojanović. The official opening of the second day was carried out by Ratko Minić, Marino Badurina, and Aleksandar Andonov (fourth panel), followed by Neja Blaj Hribar, Milan Mrđenović, and

Sava Đurđević (fifth panel), and concluded with Bruno Raguž, Ivan Smoljan, and Ilija Kukobat (sixth panel). On the conference's final day, there were four panels. Luka Savčić opened the seventh panel, followed by Dora Tot and Ren Canying, while Ivan Bubalo, Luka Filipović, and Dimitrije Matic represented the eighth panel. Miloš Čorbić, Momir Ninković, and Ognjen Tomić presented their papers in the ninth panel, and the honour of the final presentation under the umbrella of the tenth panel belonged to Đorđe Lalić, Kaja Mujdrica, and Janez Osojnik. Questions from the listeners produced productive exchanges of different views in the discussions following each panel. Panels and, even more so, discussions provided an opportunity to reassess current themes, identify new research challenges, and define the framework for future collaborations.

The event was not just about academia. It was also about meeting new people, getting to know colleagues from the same profession and similar research interests, and establishing new projects and collaborations soon. Participants also participated in entertaining activities such as a historical quiz with tricky questions about topics related to the former Yugoslavia. We also had a professionally guided tour of Belgrade City, the Archives of Yugoslavia, and the Institute for Recent History of Serbia. Visiting the Museum of Yugoslavia and Tito's Mausoleum (*House of Flowers*) is, of course, always a unique experience.

This conference is set to become an annual academic tradition, as expressed and planned by the organiser. As I am also heavily involved in planning,

preparing, organising, and implementing conferences with international participation at two institutions in Slovenia, I know what it takes for an event like this to receive annual academic recognition and participation. Until now, everything has been done correctly: sufficient promotion before, during, and after the event, a published book of abstracts with keywords, and a short biography description for each participating author. In particular, I want to emphasise the conference's story and motives. The decision to publish a peer-reviewed conference proceedings book is a bonus upgrade. Moreover, the programme and organisational team must have the right people. With brilliant Nikola Koneski, Dr Ognjen Tomić (whom I had the opportunity to meet more closely), and every other element of the organising and programme committee, whose tireless energy and positive spirit ensured the success and impact of the event, I am sure it will follow in the same manner in the upcoming years as well. Considering everything, the event was a success, and I firmly believe plans for future years will also be fulfilled.

Last but not least, on behalf of my colleagues from Slovenia and everyone else, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who helped organise and implement this event. Sincere appreciation goes to the Institute for Recent History of Serbia and Archives of Yugoslavia, with their excellent employees, for their hospitality and positive energy. Next year is around the corner. We will be ready.

Daniel SITER