

actively supported Franco and thus declared the winner. Supporting the Soviet Communists in Spain was both symbolically and financially expensive. Franco's victory was the key element for preventing Spain to more actively participate in the Second World War, but also led to an international isolation until 1953. Gradually opening up towards the European and American markets in the era of technocratic governance symbolized a gradual separation from Francoism during his lifetime. Industrialization, urbanization, and modernization prepared the transformation of the Spanish society after Franco's death (1975). The arrival of Juan Carlos, the formation of a democratic government, and the change of the Constitution 1975-1978, have brought the possibility of transforming Spain into one of countries that aspire to shape the reality of both local and European political situation (*The Third Wave*, 217-225).

The Challenge of Modern Identities and Spain in the European Union (225-278) are particularly important to the reader as the chapters simultaneously present the problems of the integration of Spanish and Serbian / Yugoslav society. An overview of the contrasts of local individual identities of Catalonia, the Basque Country, the Spanish national identity itself, is written carefully and presented to the readers in a transparent manner. The activities of the terrorist organization ETA, the Catalan nationalists and the attempts of Madrid to effectively define the identity of Spain by overcoming segmentation which was evident and which divided the society itself, are presented dynamically. The Yugoslav reality in the 1980's, the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the disorientation of Yugoslav communist oligarchy to transform society and to provide material progress, followed by a bloody civil war of former Yugoslav republics, are all presented in a genuine analysis by the author and deserve special attention. Foreign and domestic policy of Spain, its rapprochement to the United States, Germany, France, NATO (1982/1986), EEC (1986), the analysis of the Spanish society, the problems faced by technocratic government (since 1962), and the accession of Spain to the European political scene, have played a

particularly important part in positioning the society in the Western Balkans in the last 10 years. Particularly impressive is the way in which the author explains the position of Spain in the world of international relations, the challenges of globalization and terrorism from 2001 to 2004 (Al Qaida attacks in Madrid). *The identities of Spain* (279-282) is the epilogue of the important and interesting monograph by Nikola Samardžić, which analyzes the rich Spanish history, its ups and downs, identity problems and the differences, which have determined the development of Spain and offered a wealth and diversity as an essential priority and political value that has become universal. Therefore the book is recommended to readers as important and necessary for understanding the Yugoslav and Balkan history (especially of the end of the 20th century).

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NARRATIVISM AND INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

Branko Bešlin, *Eugene of Savoy and his era*, Novi Sad: Matica srpska, 2014, 655 pages.

(Бранко Бешлин, *Евгеније Савојски и његово доба*, Нови Сад: Матица српска, 2014, стр. 655)

Access to biographical studies of history with the linguistic turn, especially under the pressure of criticism, has for some time taken on a particular character of relativization. It does not only imply its empirical value, which post-structuralism certainly questions, but the tropological character and the way of giving meaning on the one hand, and conceptual disagreements of the advocates of a "new intellectual history" and the history of ideas on the other hand. Intentional access of positivistic reliance on reconstructive universality, as pointed out by Dominick LaCapra, has generalized the way of approaching the problem, thus losing its scientific value. Writing a biography no longer

presented the issue of reconstruction of the facts, but the question of interpretation, due to which the transferential connection between the subject of the study and its representation could not be avoided¹. Not at all by chance, and in accordance with what has previously been said, Tony Judt chose ethical criteria (following Foucault's paradigm) as the dominant issue of selection in a time of deep ideological conflicts in intellectual circles. Consciously separating the problem of objectivity, Judt himself takes the interpretative role of the historian to an extreme of a personal choice, fully assuming the role of the first in a series of signifiers using the Bartowski concept. The linguistic twist has brought a certain freedom of choice, especially concerning the characteristics of historical epochs, most vividly illustrated in the case of the ethics of war in early modern societies, and after the Holocaust, what essentially could not be linked. The key connecting element was certainly the narrative – the historian's selection of the appropriate tropology.

The question of choice in the biography of Savoy was given in the light of the commitment of a person who deserved a few sentences in the history, as the author himself admitted (p. 595), and thereby belonged to a peculiar thematic area, outside the circle of a "national history" which has, due to its width and complexity of the research work, almost always bypassed. The audacity of Branko Bešlin stems from many years of study and university work on early modern European history, which has resulted in the absence of empirical research of archive material and reducing the biography to the level of interpretation. Empirical study seemed as a completely drained field due to the volume of published archival material available. Although the title of the monograph presented reminiscences of the glorious past, the epoch of elevation of biographical studies of history, it did not fully correspond to the content. Bešlin set

Savoy in the context of his glorified war glory, southeastern Europe, the stage of the clash of civilizations. That actually related the epoch of Savoy less to the Babin-Geroski style, but dominantly highlighted small nations who, in great biographies were nothing more but a mere trace. Therefore, the given perspective of interpretation aimed towards contextualization, in a sort of Braudellian manner, where Savoy himself occurred within the framework of a broader geographical area. The author used rich expressions, vivid descriptions, great details and, above all, linguistic precision and clarity to describe an environment that, at the appropriate moment, with refined subtlety, referred to relations with Eugene of Savoy himself. He experienced the geographical area that he described through autopsy and it enabled him to present descriptions of battles with an almost literal plausibility; he observed military conflicts both through the crash of military techniques, to which he paid considerable attention, and as the collision of worlds to which he carefully introduced the reader.

Special attention should be paid to the narrative itself. The positivist approach within the framework of reconstructive historiographical direction in no way reflected the author's commitment to uniformity including the intrinsic controversy. The impression of returning to Rankean historicism and the rejection of theoretical models actually fully revived the narration. Looking for a suitable tropological structure, organicistic arguments were completely omitted and a conservative ideology was rejected, with the intentions of conditional convergence with aesthetic historicism, as it was defined by White, throughout the affirmation of the subject, in this case through the specific relationship of the subject-historian and the specific meaning which was generated by his interpretation of the past. The selection of facts as a sort of commitment to the past, a subjective viewpoint, expressed

¹ On the problems of intellectual history and see discussion of LaCapra and Jacoby: Russell Jacoby, *A New Intellectual History*, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 97, Issue 2, 405-424; Dominick

LaCapra, *Intellectual History and Its Ways*, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 97, Issue 2, 425-439

intentionality particularly with an aim to perceive alterity, as the author himself pointed out (p. 26), represented the starting point of formation of the plot. The ease of reading and language precision were especially appealing, where the need to literary shape the narration was evident. As each narrative matched a certain literary form, it was not the intention of finding the problem in the historical empiricism, but rather of emphasizing the value of a style that was not neglected. The method of communication seemed very important to the author, so it was brought to the level of one of the essential features of the work. While in certain segments the biographical approach was prevalent and brought to the brink of traceability, further on the narration clearly distanced itself and changed into an almost entirely different form, a typical monographic, politically based positivism. The dualism of the title here also reflected the essence of the initial intentions. A change of form did not cause a change of style, not even when it again brought the very personality of Savoy into focus, but certain elements of the acceptance of the approach of intellectual history could be noted (p. 549-578). The story of Savoy could be seen as a multilayered description of a character, with the focus crucially directed to his wartime character, while, although in a subtle form, other aspects of his personality were highlighted to the extent in which he demonstrated them himself. The narrative about the relationship towards culture and architecture could be similarly seen from the perspective of the character of Savoy himself, who built a specific, preferred picture of his own past, undoubtedly in the spirit of invented tradition. The lack of written evidence, which was witnessed by historians, made a minor image of desirable character, which was reflected in the way of interpretation. Multiple layers which the author used and which allowed the separation of descriptions for the purpose of contextualization, the focus on the personality and the character were sometimes reinforced by a barely visible need of turning towards micro history. Details often built up the picture (p. 386-387), contributing to the composition, and presented Savoy himself more vividly, more realistically

and closer to the modern reader. The above mentioned tropological structure differed from all forms of classical historicism, representing one of the few aspects of the transitional type of narrative understanding of historiography in the spirit of new historicism.

By referring to the tradition within the approved reconstructive form and the corresponding terms, the author distanced the biographical approach from intellectual history. Indeed, a direct analysis of ideas was lacking, but as already noted it was indirectly dispersed through the narrative. The personality of Savoy and his private life in the context of historiographical considerations were considered as a futile job for Bešlin, who anyway pointed out that he was not writing a classic biography (p. 27). Therefore, he left or consciously built certain overtones of mysticism, which would arouse the suspicion of each curious reader, leaving a kind of emptiness. Darkness over the personality of Savoy represented a lack of the postmodern approach to biographical studies in the spirit of intellectual history. A psychological analysis or sexual orientation, one day in the life of the great soldier, were the topics which the author was not inclined towards and which he just left to the others. After all, the very topic for research of historiography of a small nation seemed almost exotic and rare, perhaps not as a paradigm of character of that historiography, but of breakthroughs and the challenges it posed.

Bešlin's narrative had a certain pictographic fictional character (chapter headings represented an obvious paradigm), which complemented the linguistic representation of the world in the best sense of the philosophical understanding of Arthur Danto, without losing scientific credibility even with the opponents of the linguistic upheaval. The aesthetics of the work was close to the successful experiment of Radovan Samardžić (pay special attention to p. 302-303). An erudite basis and a subtle terminological precision were especially prominent. The limitations of the scientific apparatus to only what was necessary represent the selectivity in the service of aesthetic criteria and the author's way of selecting what was relevant.

In the biographies of Savoy, as Branko Bešlin

noted (p. 12-13), there was a sense of apotheosis, sometimes an almost teleological relationship towards the object of the study. The invention of tradition was set as an implying form, which makes the author's inventiveness unlimited and highly desirable. In that context, Bešlin, not by a mistake, used his narrative to move away from the classic biographical approach, insistently placing Savoy in a wider context. That built a stronger literary perception, which was previously discussed, but excluded the determination towards the subject matter, thereby avoiding the risk of a bias. Once again the paradigm of the "epoch" in the very title of the work served as a safe, beaten path of the objective scientific approach. Choosing the narrative approach, the author deliberately woke the position of intellectual history (the history of ideas); rejecting the phenomenon of personality in the history, he elected the contextualization, and remained consistent to positivistic exactness. However, unlike conventional positivist fetishism of facts, left behind to speak for themselves, the importance attached to the interpretation approximated Bešlin's approach in the full sense to narrative historiography.

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Zoltán Györe, *Habsburg Monarchy 1526-1792*, Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet, 2014, 394 pages.
(Золтан Ђере, *Хабзбуршка Монархија 1526-1792*, Нови Сад: Филозофски факултет, 2014, 394 стр.)

The book *Habsburg Monarchy 1526-1792* presents the history of a very important state, which often and to some extent influenced the shaping of history of many European countries during the Modern Age. The author describes how the Habsburgs, as an average noble family, managed to grow into the most important European dynasty and create a truly impressive monarchy. The book by Zoltán Györe, PhD, Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, is of particular importance because until now

books related to the history of the Habsburg family from the 16th to the end of the 18th century have not been published in Serbian. Until 2014, there was a book by J.P. Taylor, *Habsburg Monarchy from 1809 to 1918*, in the Serbian language, but it only covered the period of the Napoleonic Wars until the First World War. However, 2014 was a turning point for the Serbian historiography related to the Habsburg monarchy, as three monographs were published dealing directly or indirectly with the history of that country. The first monograph book was by professor Györe. The second book by Charles Ingraio, *Habsburg Monarchy 1618-1815*, covered the history of the Habsburg state since the beginning of the Thirty Years' War until the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The third monograph was *Eugene of Savoy and his era* by Professor Branko Bešlin, which indirectly dealt with the history of the monarchy during the life of the famous military leader Eugene of Savoy. Professor Györe, as he notes in the preface to his book, intended to partially compensate the gap in the Serbian historiography about the history of the Habsburg Monarchy, so while writing the book, he primarily emphasized the political, economic and cultural history of the monarchy between 1526 and 1792. While writing, the author had another motivation – to finally provide his students with a textbook for an exam.

The book of 392 pages is divided into 34 chapters. The monograph contains 66 illustrations, which represent important personalities and important historical events related to the Habsburg house. At the end of the book there are appendices, such as the list of the rulers of the Habsburg Monarchy, the rulers of the Holy Roman Empire, and also the rulers of Austrian historical provinces. As an addition, there is a simplified genealogical panel of the Habsburg dynasty until 1792, as well as a selected chronology of the history of the Habsburg Monarchy.

The monograph begins with the early history of the Habsburg family in the 10th century. From the first chapter we learn that that dynasty originated from Switzerland, from where, in the next century, they spread their family's estates over