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## THE SERBIAN VOJVODINA AND MONTENEGRO: 1848–1849

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**Abstract:** The revolution of 1848–1849 had a significant effect on the Serbs in the Habsburg Monarchy, who established their own self-governing entity, the Serbian Vojvodina, within the monarchy. These events also attracted the attention of Serbs living outside the monarchy’s borders, especially those in Montenegro and, in particular, the Metropolitan of Cetinje, Petar II Petrović Njegoš. He wanted to assist his compatriots in the monarchy, and considered this action to be only the first step, albeit a very important one, in the ultimate fight for the liberation and unification of all Serbs within two independent countries: Serbia and Montenegro.

**Keywords:** Serbian Vojvodina, Montenegro, volunteers, Bishop-Prince Peter II Petrović Njegoš.

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### 1. Revolution and the Struggle for Vojvodina, 1848–1849

The beginning of the 1848 revolution in the Habsburg Monarchy followed the motto of ‘Freedom and Peoplehood’. Harboring these ideas and desires, Serbs joined with Hungarian revolutionaries on March 15 to celebrate freedom in all cities in the monarchy. They donned Hungarian cockades and uniforms, believing they would finally be recognized as an equal people and not just a tolerated religious group. In Pest on March 17, they channeled that enthusiasm into the Serbian National Program. In no way did they wish to infringe on the rights of the Hungarian people or the territorial integrity of Hungary. They only sought to have the basic premises of equality implemented for them, have Serbian delegates participate in the Hungarian parliament, use their language in correspondence in areas that were either majority or exclusively Serb, and have a certain degree of autonomy in regions with a predominantly Serbian population. Although the ideas of equality were espoused by all, they quickly became a stumbling block in Serb– Hungarian relations. This was of particular significance in southern part of Hungary, which would become the Serbian Vojvodina.<sup>1</sup>

The leaders of the Hungarian revolution believed that freedom for all would bind

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<sup>1</sup> On the opening events of the Revolution, the beginning of Serbian national programs and the proclamation of the Serbian Vojvodina at the May Assembly see: Savković 1952: 21–51; Ignjatović 1953: 70–79; Špira 1983: 3–57; Gavrilović a 2000: 7–33; Krkljuš 2002: 391–392; Mikavica 2005: 25–38; Mikavica, Gavrilović, Vasin 2007: 241–244.

people together more strongly than ethnicity.<sup>2</sup> This viewpoint, along with the Hungarian inclination to put their own people above all others in Hungary and the theory that everyone was a citizen of Hungary and therefore belonged to a single Hungarian nation, led to intolerance of other peoples. The reasonable demands by the Serbs in the monarchy were interpreted—even in very liberal Hungarian circles—as an attack on the integrity of Hungary, and their theories about the existence of a only one Hungarian political nation distanced them from other peoples, including the Serbs. A series of verbal conflicts led to open war, which was used by the reactionary Viennese court to gradually win these feuding peoples over to its side and enable the Habsburgs to remain in power while quashing every revolutionary and national movement, both Hungarian and Serb.<sup>3</sup>

By the end of March 1848, the first cracks between the two movements, Serb and Hungarian, began to appear when the Hungarians in Pest started voicing their opposition to the Serbian demands for equality and pressing their theory of a Hungarian political nation. As the Serbian demands presented in Pest were welcomed with enthusiasm in Serbian areas in southern Hungary, the movement started to become more nationalistic through efforts by the youth, and the call for equality of peoples in Hungary was disregarded. The next step widening the divide was the April talks between the Serbian delegation and the Hungarian government, which was represented by Lajos Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian liberals and the principal advocate of the idea of a Hungarian political nation. At the talks held in Bratislava of April 8, 1848, Kossuth stated that the new Hungarian laws and constitution gave freedom and equality to all in Hungary, which was only partly correct. One of the Serbian representatives at these talks, Đorđe Stratimirović, the future commander of the Serbian Army and head of the *Glavni Odbor* (central committee), noted this. He asked for, among other things, the Serbian Privileges to be honored and the Serbs given the status of a nation, whereupon Kossuth asked him what he meant by nation, and commented that a nation must have its own government and state, thereby implying there was only one political nation in Hungary. A fierce conflict between them then ensued. Stratimirović threatened that, if the Serbs were not granted the status of a nation, they would seek it elsewhere. Kossuth interpreted this as a betrayal, noting that, if this were the case, such a complex situation could only be resolved by the sword. This was how the grievous split between the Serbian and Hungarian movements began.<sup>4</sup>

After the failed talks in Pressburg, a National Diet, known as the May Assembly, was convened in Sremski Karlovci. It reached decisions of historic importance for the destiny of the Serbs. On May 1/13, 1848, the first day of the assembly, Metropolitan Josif Rajačić was elevated to Patriarch, and Stefan Šupljikac, a colonel from the Ogulin Regiment, was named voivode (military commander). On the third day of the assembly (May 3/15), the borders of the Serbian Vojvodina were delineated, which included Srem, Bačka, Baranja and Banat. It was anticipated that this region would enter into an alliance with Croatia. It was emphasized that, in Vojvodina, the Serbian people were politically free and equal under the auspices of the Habsburg Dynasty and Hungary, and would thereby not infringe on the

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<sup>2</sup> Špira 1983: 3–57; Gavrilović 2000a: 7–33.

<sup>3</sup> Špira 1983: 3–57; Gavrilović 2000a: 7–33.

<sup>4</sup> Popović 1954: 11–13; Kaper 1996: 60–63; Gavrilović 2000b: 53–54; Mikavica, Lemajić, Vasin, Ninković 2016: 421–422; Dimić 2018: 72–74.

integrity of the state. So that the Serbian Vojvodina would not be without a governing body, the Glavni Odbor was created, and to emphasize the principles of equality and equal rights, the Romanians were recognized as a separate people. After this, the delegations that would present the decisions made by the May Assembly to Emperor Ferdinand and the Croatian Assembly were designated, while a separate delegation was sent to the Prague Slavic Congress. Finally, a proclamation promising to honor all rights and specificities of non-Orthodox peoples in Vojvodina was issued.<sup>5</sup>

The delegations did not have much success in their endeavors. The Patriarch spent some time in Zagreb on his way to Innsbruck, where the emperor was in residence. While he was there, he administered the oath at the investiture of Josip Jelačić as *ban* (viceroy), thereby confirming the alliance of Vojvodina and Croatia. This was his greatest success. In Innsbruck, however, all the decisions made by the May Assembly were rejected due to the good relations at the time between the emperor and the Hungarians.

As Emperor Ferdinand I stated, ‘I cannot ratify the resolutions made at an illegal gathering by my subjects of the Eastern Greek faith together with many newcomers from Serbia. I am ready to fulfill all loyal desires of my subjects of the Eastern Greek faith that are brought to me in a legal manner. Only the Hungarian Diet, the Hungarian Cabinet, and your own legal diets are the channels through which you can communicate those wishes’.<sup>6</sup>

The emperor only acknowledged the right of the Serbs to a *sabor* (church diet) and not a national (political) assembly, effectively acknowledging the Orthodox faith but not a political nation. The events in the south were characterized as rebellion, and the Hungarians were permitted to quash it. Even though the emperor, influenced by the Hungarians, had taken this position, some in the court—particularly the generals—met with Rajačić and stressed that they did not share his opinion. A possibility thus presented itself for their cooperation with Rajačić, since this group was already preparing for the emperor’s abdication.<sup>7</sup>

Fearing a military conflict, the Serbs made increasingly frequent contact with Jelačić, the Croatian ban, and with the Principality of Serbia in particular, which sent arms, money, and volunteers to its compatriots in Vojvodina.<sup>8</sup> Even though the Hungarian government had declared the May Assembly illegal and requested a *sabor* instead, it still did not lead to military conflict. The commissar of the Hungarian government for the south of the country, Petar Čarnojević, a Serb, did not take enough initiative to quash his compatriots’ efforts, for which he was replaced by the stricter Móritz Szentkirályi. At the same time, in May and June 1848, orders arrived for the commander of the Petrovaradin fortress, General John Hrabowsky, to comply with Hungarian orders. He hesitated at first, but when the Hungarian side of the Military Frontier was subjugated to the Hungarian Cabinet, he came out openly against the Serbs. Smaller skirmishes and threats between the Hungarian National Guard and the Serbs in Bačka and Banat led the Serbs to pay a visit to General Hrabowski and ask for protection, but he informed them that ‘I can find no such Serbian people in Hungary or Austria, so I cannot offer them protection. Across the way is Serbia, and he who wants to

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<sup>5</sup> Ignjatović 1953: 70–79; Špira 1983: 3–57; Gavrilović 2000a: 7–33; Mikavica 2005: 23–38.

<sup>6</sup> Popović 2009: 121.

<sup>7</sup> Ignjatović 1953: 70–79; Špira 1983: 3–57; Gavrilović 2000a: 7–33; Mikavica 2005: 23–38.

<sup>8</sup> Dimić 2018: 23–277.

be a Serb may go there'.<sup>9</sup> It was the brink of war.

Fearing a military conflict, the Glavni Odbor in Sremski Karlovci issued a proclamation on Serbian rights and freedoms, but also called on the Serbs to take up arms to protect the city. A group of *Šajkaši* (river troops) answered and arrived in Sremski Karlovci on June 11, bringing with them eight cannon and ammunition.<sup>10</sup> These preparations proved to be extremely timely, since General Hrabowsky attacked the city the next day on July 12. The *Šajkaši* and people from Srem not only defended the city, but also became the most important factor in further sustaining and expanding the Serbian movement. In addition to these groups, the backbone of the movement was made up of Grenzers (frontier guards) from the Banat military frontier and Serbian volunteers led by Stevan Knićanin.<sup>11</sup>

The attack on Sremski Karlovci marked the beginning of the Serbo-Hungarian Conflict of 1848–49. Reacting to the news of the events in Srem, the Hungarian minister of the interior, Bertalan Szemere, stated that, 'We consider the Rascian (Serbian) Grenzer movement to be treason with no room for peace, nor bargaining, nor alliance. The destruction of this movement must be accomplished either by force of arms, by the Rascians' surrender, or by relinquishing the southern part of the state, which no Hungarian would do'.<sup>12</sup> Kossuth declared before Parliament that Serbs should be considered seditionists, who could only be answered with force or court-martial. All of this brought the two sides to war.

Thus, in the summer of 1848, fighting broke out in Bačka near the town of Szenttamás, resulting in heavy casualties on both sides. Due to these events, this town is now called Srbobran (Defender of the Serbs). Despite being attacked several times by the Hungarians in 1848 and early 1849, the Serbs held out and secured their position in Bačka. The situation was different in Banat, where Serbian attempts to take Bela Crkva, Beckserek and Vršac failed. In the early winter of 1848, the Serbian cause in Banat was dire straits. Despite small successes, the Serbs continually had to fall back in the face of Hungarian troops until they had withdrawn as far south as Pančevo. After the battles at Pančevo, which lasted from December 1848 to January 1849, the Hungarians withdrew toward Szeged. The Viennese court's heavy military engagement with the Hungarians enabled a Serbian offensive at the start of 1849. Bolstered by imperial units, the Serbian army succeeded in taking large swaths of Bačka, including Sombor, Subotica, and the whole of Banat along with Nagybeckserek, Bela Crkva, and Kikinda. But this success was short lived, as the Hungarian army regrouped and launched a new attack in March 1849. General Bem defeated the Imperial Army at Erdelj, while the Serbian army in Bačka and Banat suffered heavy losses at the hands of General Mór Perczel. His assault was halted at the beginning of April 1849 deep in Šajkaška region, near Titel, by Đorđe Stratimirović. A throng of refugees fled toward Srem.<sup>13</sup> The Croatian ban succeeded in penetrating Bačka in May 1849, and then entered Novi Sad, which led the Hungarian troops in Petrovaradin to shell the city on June 12, 1849, destroying 80 percent of its houses. Further damage was caused

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<sup>9</sup> Kaper 1996: 88–89; Gavrilović 2003: 102–103.

<sup>10</sup> Dobanovački 1895: 20; Gavrilović 2009: 505–506.

<sup>11</sup> Gavrilović 2014: 123–131.

<sup>12</sup> Špira 1983: 3–57; Gavrilović 2000a: 7–33.

<sup>13</sup> Kaper 1996: 175–270; Mikavica, Lemajić, Vasin, Ninković 2016: 417–445.

by winds that spread the fire. The extent of the destruction was illustrated by the destruction of five of the six Orthodox temples in the city. The city center went up in flames.<sup>14</sup>

Although the Serbs had fought for the Viennese, on March 4, 1849, the new emperor, Franz Joseph, promulgated the Imposed March Constitution, which promised to regulate the Serbs' position based on the Privileges granted at end of the seventeenth century. According to this, Vojvodina would not be a separate crown land, but was instead envisioned as a separate region attached to Croatia, Hungary, or Transylvania without the Military Border. On April 4, 1849, Hungary was divided into seven military districts. The Seventh Military District, which encompassed Srem, Banat, and Bačka, was put under the command of General Ferdinand Mayerhoffer, and Patriarch Rajačić was named commissioner for civilian affairs, effectively degrading the Serbian movement. Moreover, on July 11, the Viennese court released Patriarch Rajačić from his duties as commissar. The final Hungarian defeat came at the end of August 1849 with the arrival of Russian troops in Hungary and the Hungarian defeat at Világos.<sup>15</sup> On November 18, 1849, a separate region, The Voivodship of Serbia and the Banate of Temeş was created with Timișoara as the capital and German as its official language. The Military Border, with its predominantly Serbian populace, was not included the Voivodship, which is why even its contemporaries considered it to be Serbian in name only.

## 2. Attempts by Petar II Petrović Njegoš, Metropolitan of Cetinje, to aid the Serbian Vojvodina through volunteers

These events reverberated loudly among the Serbs, especially among the political elite outside the Habsburg Monarchy. Volunteers from the Principality of Serbia actively participated in combat against Hungarian troops. However, due to its dependence on the Ottoman Empire and the international circumstances at the time, Serbia, headed by Prince Aleksandar Karađorđević and the minister of interior affairs, Ilija Garašanin, never issued any official document about gathering volunteers or their involvement. This did not prevent volunteers from organizing or crossing north of the Sava and Danube Rivers.<sup>16</sup> The Serbian government's positive stance toward the volunteers can best be traced through newspaper reports, which were filled with reports about the Serbian Vojvodina. In June 1848, volunteers in Pančevo were mentioned: 'Much gratitude, honor, and glory to our Serbian brothers, who by these treasured deeds as volunteers, support us through glory and action. The cordons along the Sava and Danube against Serbia have been everywhere removed'.<sup>17</sup>

Mutual ties, enthusiasm, and the shared struggle of the Serbs from the monarchy (*Prečani*) and Serbs from the Principality (*Srbijanci*) was visible at every step. In May 1848, the newspaper *Srpske Novine* reported that the Serb delegation from Vojvodina traveled along the Danube near Belgrade by steamship, and it was greeted by an enormous and

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<sup>14</sup> Gavrilović 2006: 195–203; ROMS, 'M', 4376.

<sup>15</sup> Gavrilović a 2000: 7–33; Mikavica 2005: 23–38.

<sup>16</sup> Ristić: 1940: 30–35; Pavlović 1986: 27–39; Milićević 2000: 276–277; Mikavica, Lemajić, Vasin, Ninković 2016: 435–436; Dimić 2018: 395–396.

<sup>17</sup> *Srpske novine*, br. 56, 11/23. jun, Beograd 1848.

exuberant crowd led by the Metropolitan of Belgrade, Petar Jovanović, Voivoda Tomo Vučić Perišić; Minister of Education and Justice, Aleksa Simić; and other dignitaries of the Principality. The volunteers were commanded by Voivoda Stevan Knjčanin.<sup>18</sup>

Although Montenegro was far from Vojvodina, there was considerable interest in the events taking place there. The Metropolitan and Bishop-Prince, Petar II Petrović Njegoš, showed particular interest. He defined his romantic view of national liberty as a struggle for a higher cause. He found role models and ideals in legends about the heroism of Miloš Obilić, the 'Undefeated Emperor Dušan', and the 'Immortal Karađorđe'. He thought the path begun with the First Serbian Uprising must be followed. He and his contemporaries named Montenegro 'a aerie of Serbian liberty', 'Serbian land from time immemorial', 'a remnant from the ruins of our empire' or, most often, 'Serbian Montenegro'.<sup>19</sup> To prepare Montenegro for this mission, he set about strengthening its institutions and spreading awareness of unity among the tribes, thereby achieving national unity.<sup>20</sup>

The Revolutions of 1848–49 occupied a great deal of space in the development of Njegoš's political thought when he formed his positions on the Serbian Vojvodina and on relations in the Bay of Kotor, which was a part of the Habsburg Monarchy. For the former, he advocated lending aid to the Serbs in Vojvodina. For the latter, he felt that those living along the Bay of Kotor should bide their time so as not to provoke a reaction from the Viennese court and create unrest along Montenegro's southern border. At the same time, he also made sure to not antagonize the Ottomans and especially their stewards in Mostar and Shkodër. However, this did not change his opinion that the Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire were the main opponents of and obstacles to the liberation of the Serbs. He thought that Serbia and Montenegro should take unified action against the Ottoman Empire and, in his opinion, with these revolutionary events, 'the right moment for this had come'.<sup>21</sup>

Njegoš took a negative view of the Hungarian Revolution, and thought it had been started by representatives of the old feudal society. He was especially critical of the idea of a Hungarian political nation and the opinion of the revolution's leader, Lajos Kossuth, that Serbs were a wild tribe (*Vaad Racze*). He thus decided to send volunteers and wrote of this intention to Ilija Garašanin, especially after the brutal murders of Serbs in Bačka. He proposed that the volunteers 'follow the way of the *hajduks*' and join Knjčanin's ranks. Garašanin, however, did not consider this to be rational because it could provoke the Ottomans to intervene if the Sultan used it as a *casus belli* in dealing with Serbia. Since Russia had found itself aligned with the Viennese court in order to protect its interests in preserving the status quo in Europe, Njegoš was unable to find support for his proposals from there as well.<sup>22</sup> Even his Yugoslav ideas of Croatian and Serbian liberation, of which he wrote to Ban Jelačić, were not feasible.<sup>23</sup>

Regardless of the negative attitude toward Montenegrin volunteers, and specifically their organized arrival in the Serbian Vojvodina, there were some who made their way north

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<sup>18</sup> *Srpske novine*, br. 48, 14/26. maj, Beograd, 1848.

<sup>19</sup> Simeunović 2006: 138; Mikavica, Vasin, Ninković 2017: 161.

<sup>20</sup> Mikavica, Vasin, Ninković 2017, 161–162.

<sup>21</sup> Stojančević 2006: 27; Mikavica, Vasin, Ninković 2017: 176.

<sup>22</sup> Stojančević 2006: 27.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*: 27–28.

of the Sava and the Danube. There they fought alongside the Grenziers and the Serbian volunteers. The best-known of these was a certain Vule Vujadinović, a Serb from Montenegro, who fought in a battle at Sremski Karlovci on June 12, 1848. He was an excellent shot, and he killed three enemy officers on a bridge as they entered the city.<sup>24</sup> After this battle, Njegoš made the utmost effort to send volunteers. At the beginning of July 1848, he had readied five hundred of them,<sup>25</sup> but as was previously mentioned, his plans fell through because of Ilija Garašanin. However, some individuals did make it to Vojvodina. In the summer of 1848, they fought in battles at Srbobran, Turija, and Feldwar (Bačko Gradište). The following were recorded by name: Stevan Stanojević, Stevan Vuksanović, Stevan Ostojić and Petko Davidović, while as soldiers: Jovan Tomašić, Boško Milutinović, Risto Sandić, Stevan Biorac, Ivan Petrović, Đorđe Rakić, Marko Ličanin, Stojan Mirković, Andrija Stevanović, Jovan Petrović, Jovan Antonović, Đorđe Janković, Nikola Pavlović, Petar Stanković, Dimitrije Stošić, Janko Stanković, Stojan Marković, Pavle Raičević, Đorđe Rakić. Sava Stanković. Marko Crnogorac, Stojan Najdanović, Nikola Stanković, and Ratko Nikolić fell in battle.<sup>26</sup> The news from the battlefield of the Srpska Vojvodina was that when Beckserek (now Zrenjanin) in Banat was taken in January 1849, Petko Crnogorac had led a detachment of volunteers from the Tomaševac camp under Knićanin's overarching command.<sup>27</sup>

At the beginning of fall 1848, Njegoš also offered assistance to Ban Jelačić in the form of volunteers. His plan was to send a few hundred Montenegrins by ship to Rijeka or Senj, where the ban would receive them and send them onwards to the Serbian Vojvodina. He even tried to procure a large ship for this purpose in September 1848.<sup>28</sup> His three proxies reached Jelačić at the end of September 1848,<sup>29</sup> which Njegoš mentioned in a letter to the ban on December 20, 1848, declaring, 'I wish it were possible to send you the assistance of a few Montenegrins; they are ready to heed your command and render you assistance'.<sup>30</sup> At the beginning of 1849, he still had not abandoned his intentions when '...the Bishop-Prince, via the Ban, wanted to send a few hundred men to aid the Serbian Vojvodina, but this seems to have been halted due to winter weather'.<sup>31</sup>

During the fall and winter of 1848, Njegoš had to concern himself with the uprising in Grbalj, which he assisted with armed contingents.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, there was open discontent in Herzegovina in Nikšić and Trebinje, where people were ready to take up arms against the Greek Bishop-Prince Josif and Jovan Anđelopul. Njegoš sent some of his troops there to calm things down and monitor the situation because, at the time, he was in good relations with Ali-pasha Rizvanbegović of Herzegovina.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Durković-Jakšić 1948: 17–18.

<sup>25</sup> *Srpske novine*, br. 59, 22. jun/4. juli, Beograd 1848.

<sup>26</sup> Durković-Jakšić 1948: 16–17.

<sup>27</sup> *Srpske novine*, br. 7, 21. januar/ 2 februar, Beograd 1849.

<sup>28</sup> *Srpske novine*, br. 84, 17/29. septembar, Beograd 1848.

<sup>29</sup> *Srpske novine*, br. 89, 5/17. oktobar, Beograd 1848.

<sup>30</sup> Njegoš 1980: 173–174.

<sup>31</sup> *Napredak*, br. 17, 30. decembar 1848/11 januar 1849, Sremski Karlovci.

<sup>32</sup> *Srpske novine*, br. 95 (26. oktobar/7. novembar); br. 102 (19/27. novembar); br. 111 (21. decembar 1848/2. januar 1849), Beograd.

<sup>33</sup> *Srpske novine*, 6p. 101, 16/28. novembar, Beograd 1848.

### 3. Petar II Petrović Njegoš and decorating the Serbs of Vojvodina

In the end, it became clear to Njegoš that he had to give up on the idea of sending volunteers. So instead, he turned to lending 'moral' support to the Serbian Vojvodina by awarding the Obilić Medal for Bravery to Đorđe Stratimirović and Stevan Knićanin. The Obilić Medal had been crafted in Vienna in 1846/47, and Njegoš emphasized that, 'it represents the character of the greatest hero ever to appear on Earth thus far'.

When presenting the medal to Vozhd Đorđe Stratimirović on November 8/20, he proclaimed:

'Nobly born sir Đorđe Stratimirović! Receive this gift from me! This is the image of Obilić, the image of the greatest hero to appear on Earth thus far. What image can evoke the pride of so many glorious Serbian patriots, if not this one? It is a unique legacy of combat from your brethren in the hawk's aerie. Which token would befit your heroic bosom more beautifully than this? Accept it then, with all the forthrightness and jubilation with which I send it to you, with the most cordial brotherly salutations'.<sup>34</sup>

In September 1850, Stratimirović thanked him personally in Cetinje for the honor bestowed. On that occasion, Njegoš presented Stratimirović with the Yatagan of Smail Agha Čengić.<sup>35</sup>

Njegoš especially appreciated the help given to the Serbian Vojvodina by volunteers from Serbia. He stressed this when writing to Prince Aleksandar Karađorđević on May 29, 1849: 'Your noble sacrifice and great aid to our brothers in the Vojvodstvo have brought you honor for all Serbdom to see and etched your immortal name in the annals of history'.<sup>36</sup> He especially held Knićanin in high esteem, praising him by saying, 'Forever may his sharp saber wielded by his virile muscles overwhelm and sever the heads of his foes. The Hungarians cursed it like the Turks cursed the saber of Milić. As one, Serbian brothers, as one, gray hawks! Do not stumble over the chains of the enemy'. When writing to Matija Ban in the spring of 1849, he said of Knićanin, 'Since last year [1848], Knićanin has been loudly acclaimed as a great hero; It is deservedly awe-inspiring that on the flat plains of Banat his irregulars regularly strike with such force. Our people in Šumadija are courageous, and they have found a courageous leader'.<sup>37</sup> Finally, when awarding him the Obilić medal on January 14/26 1849, he wrote in an accompanying letter: 'Nobly born Sir Stevan P. Knićanin! The pride of our lineage. You have fully upheld the name of the Soldiers of Dušan and Karađorđe. I and every Serb pay you great homage. You have sacrificed and have gone to the aid of your suffering brethren; for this I shall forever love and honor you. And in pure approbation of your exploits, I send to you a gift of the image of the immortal Obilić. He is a fitting adornment for the bosom of the victor of Tomaševci and the savior of Pančevo. So receive it, young duke of Serbian knights, with all the forthrightness and jubilation with which I send it to you, with the most cordial brotherly salutations'.<sup>38</sup> Knićanin thanked him

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<sup>34</sup> *Napredak*, br.17, 30. decembar 1848/11. januar 1849, Sremski Karlovci; *Srpske novine*, br. 2, 4/16. januar 1849, Beograd; Durković-Jakšić 1948: 25.

<sup>35</sup> Durković-Jakšić 1948: 26.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Durković-Jakšić 1948: 27–28; Njegoš 1980: 175; Mikavica, Vasin, Ninković 2017: 175–176.



with a reply no less cordial: ‘O most holy Monarch, lord of Montenegrin heroes! The precious image of the immortalized Obilić that I have dared with pride, of which only the knights of Dušan and Karađorđe are worthy, to affix to my chest because it was you, the supreme guardian of Serbian liberty from the mountains of Montenegro, and from the aerie and birthplace of Serbian knights, who, with fatherly love, granted it to me’.<sup>39</sup>

When the Serbian movement in Vojvodina fell into deep crisis in April 1849, Njegoš began recruiting volunteers again. Unlike the last time, he now had the counsel of Russia. His aim was to equip about a thousand Montenegrins and send them to Banat, which is why he concluded a year-long truce with the Pasha of Shkodër to ensure he would not attack during their absence.<sup>40</sup> However, these volunteers could not be quickly made ready, and in the meantime the fighting in Vojvodina ended and they were no longer needed.

Njegoš did not hide his displeasure at the end of the 1848–49 Revolution. In an April 1849 letter to prince Aleksandar Karađorđević, he concluded that ‘the Vojvodstvo is hanging by a thread.’ Njegoš realized that not only was the Serbian movement in the monarchy dead, so was the Croatian one, which together he thought of as Yugoslav. He wrote of this to Medo Pucić in Dubrovnik: ‘I held out some hope in the beginning, but today I see that, for now, Yugoslavhood is an ideal, ringing out beautifully yet empty. What are the Banovina [Tripartite Kingdom] and the Vojvodstvo but empty historical words?’<sup>41</sup> Njegoš’ contemporaries were witnesses to his objectives regarding the Serbian Vojvodina and his overall romantic ideas of concepts of liberation, which is why Patriarch Josif Rajačić, Milorad Medaković, Ilija Garašanin, and Prince Aleksandar Karađorđević concluded that ‘there is no Serb who yearns more for Serbian advancement, who finds more joy in Serbian successes, and who honors immortal Serbian men with more spiritual zeal’.<sup>42</sup>

Translated by *Elizabeth Salmore*

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<sup>40</sup> *Napredak*, br. 34, 10/22. maj 1849, Zemun.

<sup>41</sup> Durković-Jakšić 1948: 32–33.

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**ВЛАДАН ГАВРИЛОВИЋ**

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**СРПСКА ВОЈВОДИНА И ЦРНА ГОРА: 1848–1849**

**Резиме**

Револуција 1848/1849. године је имала великог утицаја на српски народ у Хабзбуршкој монархији, који је створио своју самоуправну јединицу Српску Војводину (Војводовину). Револуционарни догађаји су имали одјека и међу Србима који су живели у Србији и Црној Гори, а посебно код цетињског митрополита Петра II Петровића Његоша. Он је настојао да помогне сународницима у Војводини. Сматрао је да је помагање њихове борбе само први, веома важан корак, у коначној борби за ослобођење свих Срба и стварање самосталних српских држава – Србије и Црне Горе.

**Кључне речи:** Српска Војводина, Црна Гора, добровољци, владика-кнез Петар II Петровић Његош.

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