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## THE KINGDOM OF YUGOSLAVIA AND THE RETURN OF THE “PLANNED ELITE”: THE CASE OF PROF DR ĐORĐE JOANNOVIĆ<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The paper analyses the society of the newly created Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia, which aroused great expectations from various members of the intellectual elite. Majority of them, educated in the West as the “planned elite”, returned to the country to help its social development. Nevertheless, the case of the Viennese professor, the influential European pathologist and oncologist Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović (1871-1932), although different from others, can be considered paradigmatic. Returning to the country of his parents and leaving the comfortable life of Viennese scientific circle Joannović devoted himself to building several medical institutions in Belgrade, from the Faculty of Medicine to the Institute of Pathology. However, many who, like Dr Joannović, enthusiastically came to the new country, ready to work and contribute to its overall development, experienced severe disappointment, and even personal tragedy. In this context, the fate of the famous doctor and distinguished Viennese professor, the first Serbian oncologist, one of the world’s pioneers in the study of autoimmune diseases, the founder of many medical institutions and the world-renowned scientist, is one of the paradigms of the Yugoslav society. The strong connection with the students and the support he provided to them, his loyalty to the principles of university autonomy and his reluctance to put himself at the service of the authoritarian and repressive government brought him into conflict with the bearers of the state terror of the Sixth of January regime. From the conflicts and pressures to which he was exposed from the top of the government, the well-known and recognised European scientist sought salvation in suicide.

**Keywords MeSH:** the history of medicine, pathology, oncology

**Non MeSH:** the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia, Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović, state repression

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## Introduction

Created in the whirlwind of the First World War and proclaimed by the Act of 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1918, the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia was, from the first days of its existence, burdened, as it will be shown, by intractable problems concerning the fundamental aspects of the state life. Many of the abovementioned problems originated from the once-opposed legacies of the individual constituent parts of the newly created state.

In the same community, different traditions, uneven levels of development, opposing historical awareness, life and social habits were all of a sudden confronted.[1 p48] Along with the indisputable closeness that had an integrative effect on the Yugoslav community, regional differences persisted: “confessional, political, dialectal, cultural, regional, and experiential, having been acquired due to a long life within foreign countries”.[2 p.20] The problem which is of indirect, but still highly relevant interest for this paper is the low political culture of even the highest level of government officials, primarily viciously manifested in the attitude towards opponents in any field: politics, economy, culture, and science. That became particularly noticeable during the monarchic dictatorship from 1929.[3]

It also generated context-conditioned particular differences in individuals. These differences, in turn, reflected the mentioned different contexts in everyday life, sometimes being manifested as insurmountable obstacles to the normal functioning of institutions, society, and even individuals in it. Suppose the legacies of the Austro-Hungarian political system and that of the Kingdom of Serbia are viewed as two antipodes, as it was actually the case. Therefore, the following conclusion is inevitably drawn: undemocratic Austro-Hungarian bureaucracy was limited by the rudimentary rule of law. This fact generated a particular political culture and a “tendency towards order”. On the other hand, the democratic heritage of the Kingdom of Serbia was primarily opposed to the rule of law. Despite the undeniable reach in terms of political freedom, the society was burdened by violence and voluntarism. However, without the rule of law and the respect for an individual, in a civil state, democracy itself is impossible, which was demonstrated in practice in Yugoslavia.

This paper presents a life experience resulting from meeting these two heritages. It depicts the “Yugoslav period” in the biography of the doctor and university professor Đorđe Joannović, how he responded to the challenges while performing his scientific work and university duties in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, especially under the dictatorship of King Alexander and his right-hand man in the Sixth January regime, General Petar Živković.

### **Who was Đorđe Joannović: his life until he arrived in the Kingdom of SCS**

Đorđe Joannović was born in Vienna on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 1871. He came from a relatively wealthy landowner family. Father Hariton was a lawyer from the small town of Bedra (today's Novo Milosevo) in Bánság in southern Hungary.[4 pp5-22] Before leaving for Vienna, Đorđe Joannović's father was a municipal clerk in Kikinda and a member of the district magistrate. Even in the previous generation, the Joannović family

had close relations with the Jakšić family, which is why the chroniclers note the close ties between Hariton Joannović and the poet and painter Đura Jakšić. The help and support that Joannović provided to him was valuable for his further artistic work. [5 pp7-14]

After meeting one of the richest feudal lords in the area, the baron Simon, Hariton Joannović left for Vienna in 1861, where he worked as the secretary and manager of his vast estate. In Vienna, he married Marija Vlahović and sons Simeon (1869) and Đorđe were born.

Hariton Joannović practised law in Vienna and amassed a considerable fortune, which is why he was able to provide his sons with a good education. After elementary school, Đorđe graduated from the prestigious Imperial-Royal High School (1881-1889) and enrolled in medical studies at the prestigious Medical Faculty in Vienna, which was then one of the central points for the study of medicine in Europe and the institution with a tradition of more than a century. He was taught by the leading medical experts of the time (Carl Toldt, August Vogl, Theodor von Billroth, etc.). As an excellent student, he was chosen in 1896 to be an assistant at the Institute for General and Experimental Pathology under the famous Viennese pathologist Richard Paltauf (1858-1924), a Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch student. [6 p418-419]

In that period, at the beginning of his career at the Institute for Pathological Histology and Bacteriology, he stood out as a great histological diagnostician. He wrote his first works on plasma cells. Thus, in 1899, he published his first scientific paper on the origin of tissue plasmocytes, which he viewed as a form of lymphocytes and wrote about “adventitial degenerated lymphocytes”. He proved the basics of his theory with the experiments on dogs. He soon published two papers more. One paper referred to a case of ossified atheroma, while the other was a histological diagnosis of bronchiogenic carcinomas. [7 p33]

In August 1904, after his habilitation, he was appointed assistant professor; in 1910, he was appointed associate professor; and in 1919, he was appointed full professor. Until the end of his career, which was both in science and teaching. His research predominantly focused on two medical problems: pathological anatomy and pathological physiology. At the beginning of his career, he devoted most experimental attention to pathological changes in the liver, the occurrence of jaundice, and the therapeutic effects of extirpation of the spleen. He presented his valuable research in 1903 in the paper “Experimental Research on the Pathology of Icterus”, and the Belgian Royal Academy of Medicine awarded that paper. Most of his experiments at that time were labelled experimental and were performed to detect various pathological conditions of the liver and histological changes in liver tissue in cases of jaundice. [7 pp33-34]

After the end of the war and the creation of the new state of the South Slavs, scientists and intellectuals educated in the West were invited to return and help the newly-founded community. [8] Quite a few responded, including Đorđe Joannović. On 6<sup>th</sup> September 1921, he informed the competent ministry in Vienna by letter, which on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1920 had confirmed his title of full professor of general and experimental pathology at the University of Vienna, that he had accepted the invitation to continue his work as a full professor of pathological anatomy at the newly established Medical Fac-

ulty of the University of Belgrade. Therefore, he definitely moved to Belgrade, where he would stay for the rest of his life, which ended eleven years later.

### **Life and Work in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia**

To realistically estimate Joannović's decision to move to Belgrade it is necessary get a glimpse at the environment in which Đorđe Joannović came. Everyday life in the Kingdom took place under the heavy shadow of enormous casualties and war invalids, having belonged to conflicting parts during the war, burdened even more due to the demographic, military, and financial exhaustion of Serbia and Montenegro after an almost uninterrupted series of six war years. The new country entered a new reality with six legal systems, two scripts, three major confessions, two languages of the majority nations, and the most diverse languages of discriminated and hostile minorities.

Economic underdevelopment was the most visible and brought about poverty, a low level of health culture, political anger, and widespread corruption - negative phenomena that the Kingdom of Yugoslavia had neither the strength nor the time to deal with in just over two decades of its existence. The basis of the economy was undeveloped agriculture with small peasant holdings as its carrier. Economically unsustainable farms of less than 5 hectares accounted for over 2/3 of all estates (67.8%) and could not feed even numerous members of their own households. [9 p321] Almost half of these estates had an area of less than 2 hectares, most often in the barren regions of Dalmatia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Only the estates more extensive than 10 hectares, about 12%, could feed the inhabitants in the Kingdom, providing a small market surplus and a small accumulation.[10]

A hungry, poor, underdeveloped village was the primary bearer of traditionalism, backwardness, illiteracy, superstition, and lack of enlightenment. Every day, people in the countryside had to deal with humiliating poverty and diseases, which had been already treated for a long time in the developed world. The struggle for bare survival left no space for the development of basic cultural needs, the modernisation of production methods, and the raising of the culture of living. Slight improvement in the middle of the twenties quickly turned into despair at the end of that decade resulting from a major economic crisis in agriculture, i.e. sudden, unstoppable fall in the prices of agricultural products. The price disparity between the excessively high costs of industrial products and the ever-lower prices of farm products was destroying the peasants. They sought salvation from complete ruin in borrowing, often for consumer purposes. They became victims of banks and moneylenders, who caught them in their credit networks with high-interest rates, deepening their economic misery. [11] A large percentage of people in the countryside, except a thin layer of wealthy peasants, worked hard without the help of modern technical inventions, earned little or nothing, lived miserably, often starved, and often fell ill. As V. Bajkić vividly described, "A peasant lives like a dog; in the winter, he gets a little under the skin due to lazing; but in the summer, his belly and back come together." [12 p80]

The data on the professional and social structure of the population clearly illustrate that more than 3/4 of all households in the first Yugoslavia earned a living from

agriculture, i.e., about 80% of the inhabitants. [13 p35] Taking into account the well-known fact that the same amount of work in agriculture creates significantly smaller surplus value than in other occupations, it is not surprising that the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was a stagnant, backward and poor society on the European periphery for the entire time of its existence, where any progress, even cultural one, was extremely slow. The degree of social mobility was worryingly low. [14]

Having agriculture as the main activity, only a small percentage of the active population was employed in the non-agrarian sector - industry and crafts (in 1921 about 7%, in 1931 about 11%); trade, loans, and traffic (3% or 4%); and public services, free trades, and the army (4%). Such a low share of non-agricultural professions in the total population structure, primarily intended to be the “engine” of development due to the educational level, was insufficient to initiate the necessary process of social modernisation essential for raising the level of health care and emphasising the importance of health prevention. [13 p36]

The most visible indicator of the devastating backwardness of a distinctly rural and autarchic society, whose economy was dominated by small peasant farms, was that more than half of the population (51.5%), according to the 1921 census, was illiterate. Needless to say, the data varied from area to area - in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia, the number of illiterates exceeded 80% - and the number also depended on the gender structure since illiteracy among women was much more present. According to the census data, in 1931, illiterates decreased to 44.6%. However, the percentage of the formally literate population who only knew how to sign but did not understand the context of what was read (functional illiteracy), remains unknown. [15]

The wide spread of social diseases (acute infectious diseases, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, malaria, alcoholism, chronic and degenerative diseases) convincingly testify to poor housing, nutrition, hygiene, low health education, prevention, and general culture. Tuberculosis, a dangerous chronic infectious illness closely related to unfavourable living conditions and starvation, killed at least half a million people in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. [2 pp93-97; 16 pp203-2016] However, the researchers note that the interwar years did improve housing conditions for the better. It primarily referred to introducing military beds into houses, changing the hearth for the stove, and introducing metal dishes instead of wooden ones. It was an indisputable yet insufficiently strong modernisation process that engulfed the village.

The Vidovdan constitution contained quite detailed provisions concerning health care. Article 27 stipulated that the state took care of the improvement of “general hygienic and social conditions” that affected public health, such as “special protection of mothers and small children”, “protecting the health of all citizens”, “the suppression of acute and chronic infectious diseases as well as the suppression of alcohol abuse”, and, finally, “free medical assistance, free provision of medicines, and other means for safeguarding the health of poor citizens”. Such an extensive constitutional provision, which in scope exceeded the guarantees contained in the Weimar Constitution, being a model for the section on social rights guaranteed by the constitution of the Kingdom of SHS, testified to the clear awareness of the framers of the constitution that the need for health prevention and protection of the population was urgent. [17; 18

p457] Nevertheless, despite some efforts, comparatively modest results were achieved during the following period. [19 pp9-39-48]

After arriving in the Kingdom of SCS, Đorđe Joannović, together with Milan Jovanović Batut, Drago Perović and Vojislav Subotić, participated in the founding of the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade in 1920. Two years after he arrived in Belgrade, the Institute of Pathology and the Department of Pathology at the Faculty of Medicine were founded on his initiative. Joannović gave the first lecture to the students in Belgrade in 1923. He was one of the most respected professors at the Faculty of Medicine among his students and colleagues. [20 pp1-16]

In the following years, Dr Đorđe Joannović visited all renowned European medical institutions, thanks to the American scholarships. Based on the knowledge he gained on those trips, he created the concept of the new Institute for Pathological Anatomy, which housed numerous other institutes and laboratories necessary for the work of the Faculty of Medicine. In April 1926, numerous dignitaries from both scientific and political life attended the opening of the Institute of Pathology. Dr Joannović held the introductory lecture. The Institute's spacious building housed the Institute of Pharmacology and Toxicology premises, apartments for assistants, and the private apartment where Joannović himself lived as the director, devoted to science, research, and his vocation. His closest collaborators at the Institute were Dimitrije Tihomirov, Ksenofon Šahović, Marija Višnjić Frajnd, and Živojin Ignjačev.[7 38-45]

Apart from the institutional work at the Institute of Pathology, Joannović significantly contributed to the work of the newly established Faculty of Medicine, being one of the founders. He was elected dean on several occasions - 1923/24, 1926/27, 1927/28, and 1928/29. In addition to the numerous obligations regarding establishing the central medical scientific and teaching institution and the efforts to set up the system, he was also engaged in establishing the Physiological-Histological Institute and constructing the Institute of Pathology. The construction of the Internal Clinic and the Children's Clinic began during his tenure as the dean. Thanks to the efforts of Prof Dr Joannović, the Faculty of Medicine established connections with the leading European and world institutions of a similar profile, and the most influential world experts held lectures in Belgrade on their latest achievements in medicine. In particular, there was close medical cooperation with France, a key Yugoslav ally. Together with his colleagues from Paris, Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović founded the Yugoslav-French journal "Annals of Medicine and Surgery" in 1927. [7 pp55-57]

As for the basic directions of Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović's scientific research, they primarily focused on the causes and development of autoimmune diseases, such as auto aggression. He was the first Yugoslav scientist to investigate these phenomena and to prove them experimentally. He began his research on auto aggression during the First World War, researching the soldiers who had head injuries and who experienced certain changes in the brain after successful operations. As he concluded, the organism created toxins that affected the injured brain tissue. The scientific valorisation of the results of autoimmune diseases happened in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. [7 pp45-46]



The second and central scientific-research area studied by Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović was cancer research, and it can be reasonably claimed that he was the first educated scientist and oncologist in Serbia. Actually, he started dealing with this problem back in 1901 in Vienna. Globally, his achievements in experimental oncology and pathological morphology of tumours had a great resonance. Joannović's conclusions about some of the causes of cancer, related to the stimulation of certain chemical substances, had a revolutionary and pioneering significance for oncology. He pointed out the importance of nutrition and disturbed metabolism on cancer development. He determined the role of the thymus and nucleoproteins in the development of malignancy, the multiplication of cancer cells, and the importance of chronic inflammatory processes. He did not offer any solutions or hypotheses for the interdependence of cancer cell multiplication and immunity, but he believed that neoplasms created the body's immune response. Even before arriving in Belgrade, he had tried experimentally to determine the scope and possibilities of curing cancer by extracting removed tumours. In those experiments, he proved that immunity against malignant neoplasms appeared due to the resorption of the decay products of dead cells from malignancy. Joannović's idea of the immunological therapy was unique in the Yugoslav medicine at that time. The results he was getting gave him a reason for optimism when it came to cancer treatment, but that optimism turned out to be largely unfounded. Nevertheless, many of his findings were ahead of their time and on the trail of modern methods and interpretations. He attached great importance to prevention. In treatment, he prioritised the surgical knife and concluded that cancer is not only a local disease but a local symptom of a general disease. Furthermore, on the initiative of Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović, the Yugoslav Society for the Study and Suppression of Cancer was founded. It was the third such institution in the world, and he was the head of it. He strongly insisted on constructing the Institute of Oncology and Radiology building, which was completed after his death.

Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović, due to his outstanding reputation in the profession, was the representative of Yugoslavia in numerous international forums, organisations, associations, institutions, and conferences aimed at research, suppression, and treatment of cancer. [20 pp1-16; 7 pp46-52] For his scientific work, Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović was elected a member of the Serbian Royal Academy of Sciences on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1926. [6 p418-419] That was not the only recognition of his scientific and experimental work. He was, among other things, a member of the Yugoslav Medical Association, the All-Slovenian Medical Association, the Association of Yugoslav Physicians, the Main Medical Council of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Hospital Committees of the Ministry of Health of KY, The Belgrade University Senate, the Microbiological Society, the Biological Society, the Educational Council of KY, the Permanent Epidemiological Commission of the Ministry of Health, the Sanitary Maritime Council of KY, the Sanitary Council of the Serbian Medical Society, the German Pathological Society, the Vienna Medical Society, the French Society for Pathology, the French Society for Public Hygiene, the International Society for the Fight against Cancer, the German Society for the Fight against Cancer, the Committee of the International Institute for Geographical Pathology, the International Committee for Standardisation in Frankfurt,

and the International Committee for Combating Rheumatism. He was also the permanent delegate of Yugoslavia to the International Office for Public Hygiene in Paris, as well as the president of the Student Committee for building a student dormitory in Belgrade, the director of the Pathology Institute, the dean of the Faculty of Medicine and the lifetime president of the Fund for Helping Poor Students, to whom he told on every occasion that he would never "leave them stranded".[7 pp72-80] The impending events quickly put his claim to the test.

Nationalist passions and turbulent political life, whose amplitudes peaked during the election campaigns (1921, 1923, 1925, 1927), reached a climax in June 1928. In the parliamentary assassination, the radical MP Puniša Račić killed several Croatian MPs, among them the leader of The Croatian Peasant Party, Stjepan Radić.[14 pp166-170] Taking advantage of the tragic events in the Assembly, the king decided that "there should be no mediators" between him and the people, so he dissolved the compromised parliament, suspended the disputed Vidovdan constitution, and banned the work of political parties altogether. That was the beginning of the second phase of the life of the Yugoslav Kingdom, known as The Sixth January or monarchist dictatorship from 1929. Its main features were repression and terror in political and social life and total national unification. The ideological thread of the new reality was the ideology of integral Yugoslavia, implemented through violent national levelling. The goal was to form a new Yugoslav nation. For this purpose, the country's name was changed to Yugoslavia, and the new administrative division into nine counties (banovine) aimed to erase national names and the old historical provinces from people's minds and prevent further disintegration processes. National unification was accompanied by legislation, but all this could not erase the fact that the new reality was introduced with excessive violence. The great economic crisis and the collapse of the peasantry, which coincided with the beginning of the dictatorship, would become its worst ally. Corruption continued to strengthen, and the face of the new regime of violence and terror became General Petar Živković, the man with no reputation in the army and no political credibility. His only recommendation was unswerving loyalty to the autocratic monarch. [22 pp296-207]

### **Clash with the regime and (unexplained) death**

The student population became the main point of resistance to the new regime. Clashes between leftist-oriented opposition students, mainly under the auspices of the illegal and persecuted Communist Party of Yugoslavia, and fascist students from Dimitrije Ljotić's United Militant Labour Organization (*Zbor*) broke out on daily basis. [23 pp303-313] The authorities were mainly on the side of the rightists. That led to violent clashes between the students and the gendarmerie. Đorđe Joannović, as the dean and a professor, had excellent relationships with the students and enjoyed their respect and trust. The fact that he was the lifetime honorary president of the Fund of Poor Students, organised by the left-wing youth close to the Communist party, speaks of this. In the first year of the dictatorship (1929), more severe faculty disagreements, including Joannović himself, arose. The culmination of the political pressure on the



students of the Faculty of Medicine occurred in January 1932 due to the organisation of the St. Sava Ball. The students refused to invite the prime minister of the dictatorship, General Živković, to the event. The traditional invitation to King Alexander and Queen Maria was not disputed. Nevertheless, there was a possibility that critically oriented students, due to the intense repression, increased corruption, and violence of the Sixth January regime, would expose the monarch to inconvenience.[24]

Hence, the ceremony was cancelled by the decision of Prof Dr Joannović, which was why he was invited to the Cabinet of the Minister of Education to explain that act. At the meeting that Đorđe Joannović had with the Minister of Education, there was a bitter verbal conflict between him and General Živković. According to the testimonies from secondary sources, the discussion was interrupted by the former leader of the White Hand, the striking force of the Karađorđević repression and so-called white terror, Petar Živković. After uttering insults against Joannović, Živković slapped the distinguished professor because he could not alleviate critically oriented students.

The testimonies that speak indirectly about the abovementioned incident point out that the Viennese doctor was deeply shocked by General Živković's aggression and primitivism and did not respond to the insults. A student and an associate who saw him immediately after leaving the Minister of Education's office testified that Joannović said: "It's like I'm having the most terrible dream. I need to be completely alone..." [7 pp81-86]

The following day, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1932, Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović was found hanged in his apartment on the premises of the Institute of Pathology. The regime did not allow the autopsy, which Joannović's brother Simeon and the Faculty of Medicine requested, so the question arose as to whether it was suicide. Moreover, the police report on the investigation into the circumstances of the death of Đorđe Joannović disappeared. [20 pp1-16] An influential French newspaper learned from its sources that Joannović was asked to hold the ball and to guarantee that there would be no political diversions. In the heated atmosphere of the conflict between the regime and the students, Joannović could not do that, and with the insults and a probable slap, he was also pressured to retire early. [25 p161]

Two days after his death, a large procession of citizens saw off Prof Dr Joannović, whose body was sent to his parent's house in the village of Beodra in Banat, where he would spend his free time. The telegrams of condolence arrived from all over the world, and Patriarch Varnava, who knew Dr Joannović personally, set a precedent by approving the funeral to be performed by the clergy of the Serbian Orthodox Church, even though there was suspicion of suicide. Many interpreted the patriarch's gesture as the fact that he did not believe in the official version of suicide. Additionally, members of the illegal Communist party and leftist students organised demonstrations against the government due to the unexplained death of the famous professor. They blamed the top of the regime and King Alexander himself for that. They also expressed anger at the Faculty of Medicine towards Ksenofon Šahović, a close associate of Joannović, who was believed to have stalked him on behalf of the regime. Đorđe Joannović was buried at the village cemetery in Beodra on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1932, in the presence of thousands of people. [8 pp223-257; 7 pp87-108]

There was a lot of controversy in public about the causes of the death of Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović. From the vital question to which the investigation did not give a clear answer whether it was murder or suicide to what caused the premature death of the famous scientist. Some of the researchers divided the reasons for the suicide into academic and political. As for the academic reasons, it could be the ambition of Joannović's assistant and one of his closest collaborators, Dr Ksenofon Šahović, and his close ties with the Court.<sup>2</sup> However, there are much more logical arguments related to the political background and the pressures from the very top of the government that led to the suicide of the well-known scientist. Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović was an uncompromising advocate of university autonomy and regularly defended persecuted students, medically helping especially those who experienced beatings and torture in the state prisons. In that sense, he was already a hindrance to the regime. The immediate reason for the conflict with the top authorities was, as mentioned, the organisation of the St. Sava ball in January 1932. However, there is evidence and testimony that Joannović was in contact with a prominent activist of the secret organisation Black Hand, a Comintern agent and a Communist party member Mustafa Golubić.[27] If it is taken into account that the prime minister of the Sixth January regime, General Petar Živković, was the leader of the counter-organisation of the White Hand regime, the officers loyal to King Aleksandar Karađorđević, then the conflict between the top regime and the Viennese professor takes on a different dimension and political meaning. [25 pp223-257]

### Conclusion

Despite many unsolved problems (mainly due to their number), the newly created Kingdom aroused enormous enthusiasm among numerous citizens. Intellectual elites, especially, desired to shape it with their efforts, such as the realisation of a centuries-old dream and the pinnacle of enlightened emancipation. One of the idealists who left the chair and peaceful life in Vienna and came to help the country that he regarded as his own, and in which he was not even born, was Đorđe Joannović, being the respected doctor and university professor at that time.

This enthusiasm stood in the way of the fact that during less than two and a half decades of its existence, the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia failed to find a *modus vivendi*, a minimum of internal consensus in international relations, in the matter of the state organisation, democratisation, and the foreign policy direction. All of that strongly impacted economic, social, and cultural policies. The political and intellectual elites exhausted themselves in defining the state framework, neglecting the social content, and failing to provide creative answers to the challenges.

Many of those who, like Prof Dr Đorđe Joannović, enthusiastically came to the new country, ready to work and help its social development, experienced severe disappointment, and some of them even personal tragedy. In this context, when it comes to

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<sup>2</sup> Dr Šahović also expressed open hostility and an insufficiently clarified role in the campaign that would force one of the most prominent European and German oncologists Dr Ferdinand Blumenthal to the escape from Yugoslavia, who had taken refuge in Yugoslavia in 1933. [26 pp143-158]

Yugoslavia, the fate of this famous doctor, the distinguished Viennese and, afterwards, a Belgrade professor, the first Serbian oncologist, one of the world's pioneers in the study of autoimmune diseases, the founder of a large number of medical institutions and the world-renowned scientist, is one of the paradigms of that era.<sup>3</sup> Joannović matured intellectually and politically in Central Europe, inheriting its best traditions. He readily responded to the “inner call” to devote himself to solving some of the most important of a considerable number of problems of the country he considered his homeland - the health care problem. Joannović's career also was an upward trajectory in Belgrade, but later, he would undergo the experience that Pero Čingrija expressed as early as in 1920: “*Che desillusionne*”! He ended his life tragically in an encounter with the darker and, at that time, dominant side of the legacy of the environment to which he had come to make his selfless contribution.

### **Kraljevina Jugoslavija i povratak “planirane elite”: Slučaj dr Đorđa Joannovića**

U radu se analizira društvo novostvorene Kraljevine SHS/Jugoslavije koja je probudila velika očekivanja različitih pripadnika intelektualne elite. Mnogi od njih, školovani na Zapadu kao „planirana elita“, vrtiće se u zemlju kako bi pomogli njen društveni razvoj. Ipak, slučaj bečkog profesora, uticajnog evropskog patologa i onkologa dr Đorđa Joannovića (1871-1932), iako je bio različit od drugih, može se uzeti i kao paradigmatičan. Vrativši se u zemlju svojih roditelja i napustivši komforni život bečkih naučnih krugova, Joannović se u Beogradu posvetio podizanju čitavog niza medicinskih institucija, od Medicinskog fakulteta do Patološkog instituta. Međutim, mnogi od onih koji su, poput dr Joannovića, sa entuzijazmom došli u novu državu, spremni da rade i doprinesu njenom sveopštem razvitku, doživeće teško razočarenje, a neki i ličnu tragediju. U tom kontekstu sudbina poznatog lekara, uglednog bečkog profesora, prvog srpskog onkologa, jednog od svetskih pionira studija o autoimunim bolestima, osnivača mnoštva medicinskih institucija i naučnika svetskog glasa, jedna je od paradigmi jugoslovenkog društva. Čvrsta povezanost sa studentima i podrška koju im je pružao, odanost principima autonomije univerziteta i nesklonost da se stavi u službu autoritarne i represivne vlasti, dovešće ga u sukob sa nosiocima državnog terora Šestojanuarskog režima. Iz sukoba i pritisaka kojima je bio izložen iz vrha vlasti, poznati i priznati evropski naučnik spas će potražiti u samoubistvu.

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<sup>3</sup> Another well-known European oncologist, Dr Ferdinand Blumenthal, who had moved to Belgrade in the summer of 1933, fleeing Germany after the Nazis came to power, met a tragic fate in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In his first appearances in Belgrade, Blumenthal said that he was continuing the journey on the research path of Dr Joannović, the world-renowned scientist. [28 pp847-851]

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