

JOSIP JURAJ STROSSMAYER: A STATESMAN OF CULTURE

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Abstract: The paper deals with an interpretative upgrade to the existent scientific realizations about the personage and opus of Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer while providing for a contemporary, computer-assisted research and critical insight in the correspondent materials from the Anglo-American and Macedonian sources and/or Croatian funds in the English language, less known heretofore. The paper's intention would be to publicize a text on an interdisciplinary viewpoint on Bishop Strossmayer's undisputable theological, Maecenas-like, political, and educative role in Croatia, Macedonia, and beyond in the light of the 19th-century Croatian cultural renaissance, whose one of the promoters he was in the Habsburg Monarchy.

Keywords: Strossmayer, *Strossmayerana*, Anglo-American, Croatian, and Macedonian sources

I. INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS

Josip Juraj Strossmayer—a Habsburg castellan confessor, a beloved Đakovo-Bosnian and Syrmian prelate, a promoter of human rights, an advocate of ecclesiastic unity and a benefactor; a Viceroy Josip Jelačić's confidante, a reverential politician and educator; an excellent orator, man of letters, and historian... All

these determinants describe his cultural character equally cognitively, for there are just a few dignitaries of the Croatian 19th century who have really incorporated them in their influential personae, having revitalized the Latin Renaissance notion of a “universal man” (*homo universalis*), i.e., its Ancient Greek precursor (πολυμαθής), in the best way possible. Exactly following a pathway of the great minister, by virtue of this article we would like to continue a discussion of the different about the same. We would like to initiate a meaningful dialog about Strossmayer and his legacy in the international academia from various perspectives, e.g., theology, literature, and history, as well as from a viewpoint of economy, librarianship, law and other disciplines, as his imperishable opus indubitably provides for such an approach.

Therefore, we deem the proposed academic discourse necessary, internationally relevant, and purposeful, for it might fill a part of an evident gap in the subject segment of interdisciplinary cogitations on Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer and his heritage and correspondence (i.e., of the cultural, literary, and historicopolitical ones) by its thematic and an innovative, interesting, and competitive methodology. What is more, a part of this Strossmayer's patrimony is still untranslated in

Croatian and other languages, especially the one in the English language.

With such an orientation, this article might entirely fit into the developmental strategy of cultural studies as an institutionalized higher educational component. It might also promote the publication of new international research results in the form of peer-reviewed books while simultaneously contributing to the completion of picture of Bishop Strossmayer, an honorary Osijek descendant, whose name was bestowed on the Osijek University.

The article takes into consideration a fact that a bicentennial subsequent to Bishop Strossmayer's demise the very mentioning of his name arouses sincere admiration and gratitude of the informed Croatian and European audience and increasingly that of the global one as well due to his memorable achievements throughout 90 years of his active life. Nonetheless, there are some less informed circles wherein Strossmayer's adamant attitudes, and especially his "Pan-Slavism," still raise serious doubts. Thus, within the European Union as a community wherewith most of the European states are affiliated again (as it was the case with the former Habsburg Empire), we presently consider that the reinterpretations of his support to the equality are especially worth researching. Thanks to the levity of his own friendships, he established multinational correlations with the Czechs (František Palacký, František Ladislav Rieger), Slovaks (Ján Kollár), and many others. He made these brilliant moves to reinforce a general Slavic influence, intercede for a federal national organization, empathize with the unification of the kingdoms of Dalmatia and Croatia, and guarantee that Croatian, his mother tongue, be

introduced in the official public usage in his motherland at that time.

To realize this article, we have particularly analyzed Bishop Strossmayer's correspondence with the then British Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone (especially in the 1876–1892 period), as well as the Bishop's friendship with Lord John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, 1st Baron Acton, a renown British Catholic author, politician, and historian. As a sequel, the aim of our research was to illuminate the new cognitions about Strossmayer's role in the Croatian cultural renaissance, his attitude to the South Slav issue and Pan-Slavism, as well as a neohistorical analysis of the scope of his address at the First Vatican Council from an Anglo-American, Croatian, and Macedonian point of view and critical interpretation.

In a scientific-research sense, this article has taken a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to a truly abundant, distinct Strossmayer's activity, which has still not been completely presented to the Croatian, Macedonian, and the overall European public because its fragments are still enshrined in the world archives and libraries. This has resulted in the following premises:

a) economically and theologically, we have conducted a select textological analysis of the still obscure details about Strossmayer as a celebrated Roman Catholic bishop, under whose rational administration the Diocese generated an annual revenue up to 300,000 forints on some 300 km² of its arable lands, forests, and pastures;

b) historically and politically, we have continued to explore Strossmayer's inspiration and leadership of the People's Party, his governorship and manifested patriotism (especially with regard to the annexation of the Međimurje region and Rijeka to the Croatian

national matrix), but we have also repeatedly retrospectively his condemnation of the Croatian-Hungarian Settlement, which caused his resignation from the parliamentary life;

c) from a standpoint of the history of arts, the article testifies to Strossmayer's inomissible role in the establishment of the former Yugoslavian Academy of Sciences and Arts (presently, the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts), University of Zagreb, and the Old Masters' Gallery;

d) chronologically, it also provides for the publicist contributions to the research of Franjo Rački and Ferdo Šišić's legacies (based upon a contemporary perusal of the known and less known Anglo-American, Croatian, and Macedonian sources).

An innovative step beyond usual methodology is reflected in a fact that the article offers a cultural, linguistic-literary, and political-historiographic (re)interpretation of sources, being unconfined to the traductological hypotheses of select texts' representation to the Croatian and Macedonian scientific audience only. It also tries to contribute to the explication of Strossmayer's attitude to the "solution to the South Slav issue" and/or papal infallibility (which is frequently misattributed).

Finally, the paper used the Internet sources and/or those available in the archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Library of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, and the National University Library in Zagreb, as well as the private Croatian and American collections. Our intention was to offer a new applicative insight in Strossmayer's inclination to a South Slav unity (which remains controversial to some), corroborated by the facts like his assistance to the establishment of the

Cetinje printing office, *Matrix Slovenica* as well as to *Matrix Serbica*, and to the activity of the Miladinov brothers. Thus, this paper would like to also inspire the new scientific research in the paraphernalia of seven Strossmayer's official visits to Serbia in his capacity as a papal envoy (1852–1866), as well as in his successes concerning the establishment of relations between the Holy See and Montenegro (1866).

II. CROATO-MACEDONIAN "VERBAL HOUSES"

Even though Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer has never visited Macedonia, his pacifism and Pan-Slavism position him as Maecenas who supported the most significant folkloristic endeavor of the entire 19th-century Macedonian literature [1]. A collection by the Struga-based brothers Dimitar Hristov Miladinov (Димитар Христов Миладинов, 1810–1862) and Konstantin Hristov Miladinov (Константин Христов Миладинов, 1830–1862), titled *Български народни пѣсни* (*Bulgarian Folk Songs*) and popularly known as *Зборникот на Миладиновци*, was finalized in Đakovo and printed in Zagreb by Ante Jakić in June 1861. Therein, these national revivalists, who openly declared their Bulgarian ethnicity, have immortalized 584 Macedonian folk songs, in addition to the consuetudes, fables, nursery rhymes and an onomasticon. [2]

Nonetheless, the opus ideationally dates back to February 25, 1846, when Dimitar Miladinov scholarly communicated this collectorial intention of his in a letter to Viktor Ivanovich Grigorovich (Виктор Иванович Григорович, 1815–1876), a prominent

Russian Slavist, and it still arouses controversies. [3] The miscellany contains as many as 76 Bulgarian songs and was, consequently, even intended to be originally conferred a title of the "Macedonian folk songs" by Konstantin Miladinov himself. It is worth noting that the Bulgarian creations were actually bought out from Vasil Dinčov Cholakov (Васил Динчов Чолаков) upon Strossmayer's insistence, so the "Bulgarian" appellation appeared shortly prior to the book's publication, in Cholakov's letter to Franjo Rački. Likewise, to be historically correct, we must not fail to mention that Cholakov's missive also specifies Konstantin Miladinov's 100-forint debt. It was the exact sum Cholakov demanded for a dispatch of 100 Bulgarian songs and an authorization to Miladinov to attach the "Bulgarian" moniker thereto.

To cognize why was it so important for Strossmayer to also incorporate a Bulgarian part in the Miladinov collection, one should remember the Bishop's activity in the spirit of a desired Catholic and Orthodox ecclesiastic unification. It was exactly he who has initiated the Slavic Cyrillo-Methodian liturgical cult and the publication of Glagolitic missals while having simultaneously rendered his assistance to the establishment of the Montenegrin printing office in Cetinje and to the institutionalization of the *Matrix Slovenica*. Equally, it would be historiographically incorrect to extensively and literally misinterpret the 19th-century notion of the "Bulgarian" attribute at Macedonian expanse solely. Dimitar Miladinov's prefatory reference to "Western Bulgaria" thus precisely implies the territory of the present-day Republic of Macedonia as well. [4]

Laying the foundations of the Macedonian literary tradition, the Miladinov brothers' collection has

produced a resonant echo not only in the Slavist literati circles but also in the overall European cultural audience of the time, partially due to its inchoative 2,000-word Macedonian-Croatian dictionary addendum. Moreover, Konstantin Miladinov, the youngest of the Miladinov brothers and the one who had graduated in Greek philology from the University of Athens' School of Philosophy, wanted to publish the lexicon *in extenso*, but he had to dismiss the idea because of the voluminosity of the *Bulgarian Folk Songs*, the brothers' main work. [5]

However, the polemics about the instigation of the Miladinov brothers' miscellany have continued in the 20th century, since the 1983 Macedonian edition as the *Collection of the Miladinov Brothers*, reprinted in Skopje, removed every single "Bulgarian" reference therefrom. A republishing of the original in the year 2000 tried to restrain the passions but only triggered a vigorous protest by the Macedonian historians. Eventually, the Macedonian State Archive, financed by the Soros Foundation, displayed a Xerox copy thereof, having previously meticulously cut off the adjective "Bulgarian," so the cover page simple read *Folk Songs*.

In that respect, one may ask a question of Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer's ulterior altruistic motives behind his benefactorial succor to the two most prominent scions of the multimember Miladinov family and his sponsorship of their publication effort, compiled in Đakovo from September 1860 to January 1, 1861. Firstly, Dimitar Miladinov, subsequently a progressive teacher, was educated in Ioannina and in the Saint Naum Monastery in Ohrid (1829), thus sharing a congenial developmental line with the Croatian bishop. Secondly, Miladinov, as well as the Bishop, was an ardent collector, whose interest in the Macedonian

folkloristics was especially piqued by a decisive encounter with Viktor Ivanovich Grigorovich. Thirdly, Miladinov traveled to the Austro-Hungarian Empire (i.e., to the Vojvodina region) and was well-informed about the occurrences within the Illyrian movement and its tendency to culturally and politically unify the South Slavs. [6] Fourthly, Konstantin Miladinov, who was initially educated by his elder brother Dimitar, was sent to Russia in 1856, where he continued his confraternal work on the field-collected folk song miscellany, established contacts with the Slavic intelligentsia, and evinced his interest in Slavic philology, in addition to the Greek one. [7] In spite of his efforts invested in the preparation of the collection, Konstantin Miladinov contracted tuberculosis, but the publication of the book was also prevented by the Russian Orthodox Church, motivated by their pledged allegiance to the Constantinople Patriarchy.

While still in Moscow, Konstantin Miladinov contacted Bishop Strossmayer and reported about his intentions; moreover, Miladinov, having decided not to pursue his studies and depart from Russia, even met his prospective benefactor in Vienna in June 1860. Being one of the steadiest Slavic literary patrons of the 19th century, Bishop Strossmayer thus felt it natural to invite Konstantin Miladinov to sojourn in the Đakovo Seminary, in the edifice of the old Franciscan Monastery, and accept to finance the book's publication in Zagreb, which began in February 1861.

For the morally obligated Konstantin Miladinov, frequently described as an eloquent, bearded and mustachioed juvenile of a fragile, martyr-like physique by Strossmayer's modest associates, to exercise an exclusive privilege to dine and converse with the Bishop during his

stay in the Đakovo hall of residence was a dream come true. Consequently, as a beneficiary, he dedicated the folk song collection to Strossmayer. [8] Respectful Croatian Zagreb-based papers, e.g., *Narodne novine*, *Naše gore list*, and *Pozor*, reserved their editorials for the event on December 19, 1860, having noted that the dignitaries like Đuro Deželić, Juraj Dobrila, Vatroslav Jagić, Antun Mažuranić, Petar Preradović, Tadija Smičiklas, and August Šenoa were also in the army of Miladinov's subscribers nationwide. The City of Osijek alone recorded 31 subscriptions. Thereby, an intriguing campaigning, lobbying, politicking, and scheming were truly not the only reasons for such a warm reception of the collection in most Slavic nations.

Subsequent to the *Bulgarian Folk Songs* publication on June 24, 1861, the elated Miladinov left Zagreb in mid-July of 1861, with an intention to depart to his birthplace of Struga; however, Konstantin Miladinov learned of his brother Dimitar Miladinov's incarceration in Constantinople on a fabricated charge of pro-Russian espionage already in Belgrade. A year later, both brothers died imprisoned in Turkey under still unclarified circumstances, though Bishop Strossmayer incessantly tried to dissuade Konstantin Miladinov from joining his brother. [9]

Two of Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer's personal appraisals of Konstantin Miladinov are publicly known. On the occasion of his reverend election to an honorary member of the Bulgarian *Slavyanska beseda* (Славянска беседа) society in 1884, the Bishop's epistle described Miladinov as an assiduous, innocent, modest adolescent and an inveterate patriot who deserved to live up to the liberation hour of his nation, together with his brother Dimitar. Furthermore, having cited the Miladinovs as an impressive example of sacrificial philadelphic

sentiments, Strossmayer asserted that Konstantin Miladinov's "redemptory" activity has factually accelerated an overall Macedonian emancipation. The second instance was a visit of the Bulgarian philologist and politician Ivan Dimitrov Shishmanov (Иван Димитров Шишманов, 1862–1928) to Đakovo in 1899, whereby Strossmayer repeatedly expressed his profoundest condolences on Konstantin Miladinov's tragic destiny. Having styled the junior as intelligent and studious, Strossmayer concluded that Konstantin Miladinov, if he had lived long enough, would have been a pride to his Bulgarian nation and a true asset to his Macedonian homeland.

III. A STROSSMAYERIAN IDEA AND THE CYRILLO-METHODIAN BEQUEST

Applying a positivist interdisciplinary method to our archival and bibliothecary-oriented examination of Croato-Macedonian cultural, historiographic, and literary correlations, we have to inomissibly mention that it was exactly Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer who advised Konstantin Miladinov not to use the prevalent Greek typeset in his *Bulgarian Folk Songs*. On the contrary, assisted by several seminarians, Miladinov was guided to rewrite the collection in Cyrillic script, with the addition of the Old Church Slavonic orthography. This was also circumstantiated by Štefan Kociančič (1818–1883), a Slovenian Roman Catholic cleric, historiographer, and philologist, the author of the most voluminous Slovenian translation of the Miladinovs' collection and the compiler of the largest Macedonian-Slovenian dictionary of the 19th century.

However, one aspect of Konstantin Miladinov's activity is to be especially emphasized: that of his lectures

delivered to the Đakovo seminarians in the Bulgarian, Old Church Slavonic, and definitely in the Macedonian language. With his valuable prescience of the Old Church Slavonic language accumulated in Russia, Konstantin Miladinov thus inaugurated Fran Kurelac's professorship at the Đakovo lyceum (1861–1866). Interestingly, Miladinov's Bulgaro-Macedonian familial origin excellently complements a Strossmayerian unifying idea of a revived Cyrillo-Methodian bequest, as the Old Church Slavonic is also known as the "Old Bulgarian" or "Old Macedonian" language. It is a lexico-historiographic fact that the Old Church Slavonic, as the first Slavic literary language, was artificially created by the missionary brethren Saint Cyril and Methodius on the basis of a 9th-century Macedonian recension in the vicinity of Thessalonica. [10] As such, it was written in the Glagolitic script and used for their Biblical translations from the Greek. What is more, if we are permitted to extend a symbolical fraternal analogy, while Saint Cyril and Methodius, the co-patrons of Europe, have donated the Slavs their language, script, and the Word of God, the Miladinov brothers, owing to Strossmayer's noble intervention and moral Slavophile support, have bequeathed an invaluable ethnographic collection to the Macedonian literature.

IV. CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

A single damaged exemplar of the *Bulgarian Folk Songs*, a capital masterpiece of the Macedonian revivalist literature that extolls the cities of Ohrid and Struga and affirms an identifiably Macedonian idiomatic expression, is presently exhibited in the Đakovo Theological Seminary Library. Yet, it would be utterly erroneous to think that Strossmayer's affirmation and popularization

of arts, culture, and literature in Macedonia in general was discontinued subsequent to his aid to the Miladinov brothers. Nonetheless, Strossmayer's selection criteria pronouncedly depended on a suppliant's recognition of an intolerable tendency to assimilate the Macedonian nation, which was fervently promoted by the Greek ecclesiastics (Phanariots), as well as on his or her readiness to also accept an expanded Roman Catholic influence. [11]

Therefore, upon a personal request of February 25, 1886, Strossmayer did not second a close relative and biographer of the Miladinov family, the Ohrid-based ethnographer and folklorist Kuzman Anastasov Šapkarev (Кузман Анастасов Шапкарев, 1804–1909), married to Dimitar Miladinov's daughter, the educationist Elisaveta Dimitrova Miladinova (Елисавета Димитрова Миладинова). [12] On the other hand, indirect contacts have been apparently established between the Bishop and the "heir to Homer," the 1860 University of Athens poet laureate Grigor Stavrev Prličev (Григор Ставрев Прличев, 1830–1893). This Macedonian lyricist and translator rendered his poem "The Serdar," a rhyme on an Ottoman-commissioned Christian militiaman, in a Pan-Slavic language of his own, for the poem was originally versified in Greek ("Ὁ Ἀρματολός").

While so doing, at the commencement of a national self-awareness epoch, Strossmayer has ecumenically initiated an omnidirectional cultural and educational cooperation among the South Slavs. Owing to Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer's enviable domestic and international reputation, the Miladinov brothers' *Bulgarian Folk Songs* were analyzed by the most distinguished Croatian scientists of the period, e.g., by Baltazar Bogišić, Vatroslav Jagić, Franjo Rački, etc., by what mostly contributed to the collection's popularity were early translations of some of its songs.

The series was initiated by Franjo Rački's recast of "Stojan i patrik" ("Стоянъ и Патрикъ," No. 81, pp. 113–115 of the Miladinovs' original) in the *Zagrebački katolički list*, No. 48 (Nov. 28, 1861), followed by the Czech philologist Jan Gebauer, whose selection was publicized in 1863 in the Prague-based *Lumir* literary magazine. August Šenoa, on the other hand, enthused over the esthetics and an immense versified pulchritude of the Macedonian epic "Бъла Неда и русъ Войвода" (No. 174, pp. 275f of the Miladinovs' original). He translated it in German to be published in the contemporary Austrian orthography as "Die weisse Neda und der blonde Vojvod" in *Slavische Blätter: illustrierte Zeitschrift für die Gesamtinteressen des Slaventhums* (Vienna), Vol. 3 (Mar. 1865), edited by Abel Lukšić. The content of the epic is emblematic: it depicts a heroic option of a juvenile female to rather breathe her last than to be subjugated to her abductor.

Still, a notable Strossmayer's achievement that surmounts the limitations of his era is his exceptional innate ability to recognize and cherish a deep-rooted cultural tradition of other fraternal Slavic nations, thus opening the broad and unprecedented vistas to a priceless, common European heritage.

ENDNOTES

- [1] "Pan-Slavism" is a linguistic term coined in 1826 by the Slovak attorney and writer Ján Herkel' (*Panslavismus*) to describe the advocacy and idea of a political union of all the Slavic people. —Cf. *Elementa universalis lingæ Slavice et vivis dialectis eruta et sanis logicæ principiis suffulta*, printed in Buda, Hungary.
- [2] Dimitar and Konstantin were thereby assisted by their brother Naum Hristov Miladinov (Наум Христов Миладинов), who, in his capacity as an educated grammarian and a musician, has also notified the scores. On the Miladinovs' Bulgarian ethnicity, cf. Chris Kostov, *Contested*

- Ethnic Identity: The Case of Macedonian Immigrants in Toronto, 1900–1996* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 93.
- [3] The select correspondence is quoted and commented by Nikola Traykov (Никола Трайков) in his edition of *Братя Миладинови: Препуска*, printed in Sofia in 1964 by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences' Institute for Historical Studies, pp. 13–17.
- [4] Kostov, *ibid.*
- [5] The authorities differ in their adduction of an exact number of individual pieces contained in the 23,559-verse *Bulgarian Folk Songs*: the contradictory data thus vary from 677 to 660. Nevertheless, the Miladinov brothers' significance is circumstantiated and globally recognized not only by the Struga Poetry Evenings but also by the nomination of one of Antarctica's South Shetland Islands "Miladinovi Islets."
- [6] Therefore, a strikingly sympathetic parallel between his unrelenting struggle against Hellenization and a struggle the Illyrians (i.e., the Croatian National Revival) waged against Germanization and Hungarization may also be drawn.
- [7] Although he actually wrote only 15 poems, Konstantin Miladinov has secured an everlasting kudos in the Macedonian lyrics by his nostalgically grandiose "Longing for the South" (*Тъга за юг*), written in Russia. Originally published by the Bulgarian revolutionary Georgi Stoykov Rakovski (Георги Стойков Раковски, born as Съби Стойков Попович) in the *Dunavski lebed* (*Дунавски лебед*) magazine in 1860 (No. 20), the poem was translated in 42 languages worldwide.
- [8] Reliable testimonies about Konstantin Miladinov's visit to Đakovo are provided by the Vinkovci parson Jakov Stojanović (1841–1910), a Đakovo Seminary professor, as well as by Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer's "anonymous" autobiographers Milko Cepelić (1853–1894), his secretary, and Matija Pavić (1859–1929). Described are Miladinov's conversations with the Rome-educated presbyter Ivan Sić (1839–1864) and the Đakovo-based priest-turned-attorney Matija Šabarić, who in fact helped coedit Miladinov's miscellany. Apparently, Miladinov also discussed with Strossmayer's collaborator Dr. Stjepan Babić (1863–1911), Rector of the Đakovo Theological Seminary, subsequently a missionary to Belgrade. —Cf. *Josip Juraj Strossmayer: biskup bosansko-djakovački i sriemski god. 1850.–1900.: posvećuje mu svećenstvo i stado prigodom njegove pedesetgodišnjice biskupovanja u Djakovu 8. rujna 1900.* (Zagreb: Dionička tiskara, 1900–1904), p. 774.
- [9] Some sources claim that Dimitar Miladinov was denounced as a pan-Slavist working for the interests of the Roman Catholic Church by the Ohrid-based Greek episcopo Miletos, whereafter he and his younger brother Konstantin Miladinov succumbed to typhus in a Constantinople prison. Strossmayer's mediation with Anton von Prokesch-Osten, Austrian envoy to the Sublime Porte, and subsequently even with Count Johann Bernhard von Rechberg und Rothenlöwen, the then Foreign Minister of the Austrian Empire, did not produce a salutary effect. —Cf. Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian Question* (Westport: Praeger, 2002), p. 91.
- [10] As it was a sacral, Grecized language of liturgical scripts and not the old Slavs' vernacular, the Croatian philologist Eduard Hercigonja (1929–) suggests a hypercorrect title of a "Pan-Slavic literary language" therefor.
- [11] Phanariots were the prominent Greek inhabitants of the Constantinopolitan Phanar quarter.
- [12] An integral Croatian translation of Šapkarev's letter was printed in *Oko* (Zagreb) of Dec. 16, 1976, p. 11.

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