

Thesis

The dissertation entitled *American Foreign Policy and the Making of Yugoslavia, 1910-1920* addresses a complex subject matter. Chronologically, one of the aspects examined in it is the progression that the United States of America experienced in becoming ever more involved in the matters relating to other states. This gradual expansion of interest occurred uninterrupted in spite of the differences of approach and beliefs of individual Presidents. The greatest example of this is the pair of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, who seemingly had opposing views on the question of the involvement in the war in Europe. Differences and similarities between the two Presidents are explored, as well as the added value that Wilson's idealistic approach implied.

American heavy involvement in the post-WWI settlement in Europe was a direct consequence of Wilson's impetus to make a world a better place, and more specifically, an attempt to find practical implementations for his proclamations issued under the title of Fourteen Points. At the Paris Peace Conference Wilson promoted the principle of self-determination for the peoples emerging from the two buckled empires. The idealistic position that he took brought him into the direct conflict with other Allied statesmen, particularly Lloyd George of Britain, Clemenceau of France, and Sonnino of Italy. The latter troika preferred the age-tested British invention of the Balance of Power, and was actively collaborating on undermining Wilson's strivings.

One of the specific reasons for the clash among the Big Four was a secret treaty that Britain and France had signed with Italy in order to get it to switch sides in the war. In return for the favor, the British and the French offered Italy large swaths of the northern Adriatic coast, and other prizes, scattered all the way to Asia Minor. Wilson, however, would have none of it. This resulted in protracted negotiations among the Big Four. These negotiations and surrounding events are examined in detail, and a picture is gained of Wilson's struggles, victories and defeats at the hands of his erstwhile allies. The case of the northern Adriatic port of Fiume is studied extensively, and some conclusions are made as to the success of the proclaimed self-determination principles as regards the territorial integrity of what eventually became the state of the Southern Slavs.

The representatives of various Southern Slav constituents were also present in Paris during the Peace Conference. The government of the Kingdom of Serbia, a war Ally, enjoyed the most prominent position. Less influential were the representatives of the Kingdom of Montenegro, who had the identical legal status as Serbia, but was nevertheless pushed aside. The delegations from the Southern Slav entities from the vanquished Austria-Hungary were given even less access to the negotiating table. This resulted in Serbia being able to impose its will onto the rest of the Southern Slavs, by imposing its monarchy to an entirely new set of constituents, while at the same time extending its homogenous state apparatus. The rest of the Southern Slavs, however, promoted a federal system for the new state. Many aspects of the struggle between the proponents of centralism and federalism are examined at length.

A question of identity of the Southern Slavs was also explored extensively. Initially a side issue, touched upon only because of the ambiguity that the negotiators from the Allied Powers had toward the topic, it gradually grew into one of pivotal parts of the present dissertation, requiring a lengthy research in the ethno genesis of the Southern Slavs.

The chief elements of the dissertation, therefore, are as follows: the American ever-increasing global of influence; the Wilsonian idealistic approach to the post-conflict settlement and the problems that it caused among the erstwhile Allies; the success or failure of the principle of self-determination as regards the territories that the state of Southern Slavs obtained, and a case study of the political struggles regarding the port city of Rijeka; the internal struggle of the future constituents of the new state, encapsulated in a duel of centralism vs. federalism, which had been by and large ignored by the Allies; and finally, the questions of identity, nation, citizenship and state as it applied, and perhaps still applies, to the Southern Slavs.

Curriculum Vitae

Ivo Mihajlović was born and raised in Dubrovnik, Croatia. After graduating from Maritime School he took to seas for two years, circumnavigating the globe and completing his tour as a Lieutenant of the Merchant Navy. Upon arriving to Budapest in late 1988 he initially worked as a translator and interpreter, eventually becoming editor, chief editor and manager of a publishing company. Among the projects he led as chief editor was a *Hungarian-Croatian Dictionary*, published in 2003 in Hungary. He also participated in an international collaboration that resulted in the publication, in the Netherlands, of a book entitled *European English*. Among the publications dealing with the topic of Anglophone language and culture, he edited the *So to Speak* set consisting of a textbook, a workbook and an interactive CD.

All of Ivo's tertiary studies were taken in Hungary: English Bachelor's degree at Miskolc University was followed by English Master's Degree at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. He obtained further two Master's degrees at the Central European University in Budapest: History MA and an MBA.

His interest in history was in good part motivated by the events occurring in the 1990s in the Balkans. A combination of his English and American studies on the one hand, and of the Central-European history research on the other, were the kernel from which the idea of his doctoral dissertation originated. It resulted in a dissertation that examines the history and the ramifications of the American foreign policy vis-à-vis the Southern Slavs, at the beginning of twentieth century. Besides Budapest, the research has taken him to Vienna, London, Washington D.C., and Santa Barbara.

Ivo has participated in various conferences, giving speeches on topics relating to his research. One such presentation, entitled *Croatian Emigration in the United States of America, 1900-1920*, and was delivered at the conference organized by the School of English and American Studies of the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Other participations in conferences have resulted in publications, with titles such as *Bush Years: Half Measures and Opportunities Lost*, and *The Yugoslav Committee in the United States*.

For two years Ivo has taught at the English Literatures and Cultures Department of Károli Gáspár University in Budapest. He taught compulsory courses in US and British History, as well as specialization courses focusing on the history of the US political and military interventions abroad.

A father of four, he now resides in Luxembourg, where he works for the European Commission on a project relating to the publication of the *acquis communautaire* in Croatian language.