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GERMAN INFLUENCES ON INTERWAR SERBIAN AND YUGOSLAV SOCIOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC THOUGHT

Abstract: Whereas economics and sociology had a long tradition in Germany, these disciplines gradually developed at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century in the Kingdom of Serbia and, in particular, in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, where the establishment of economics and sociology as independent academic disciplines took an unusual course under the influence of the leading European countries (England, France, and Germany). This chapter aims to analyze German influences on interwar sociological and economic thought, which had, by that time, already gained momentum after the broader introduction of economic and sociological subjects into universities and the launching of specialized journals. In terms of influence, a prominent role belongs to the most renowned German thinkers, such as Max Weber, Werner Sombart, Ferdinand Tönnies, and others. In addition, the political circumstances, especially the World Economic Crisis and the rise of Nazism, led to more frequent citations of German authors who had studied the crisis of capitalism. Research suggests that the reception of German thinkers involved different groups of scientists and scholars: former academics of the Kingdom of Serbia who had studied abroad, former subjects of the Habsburg Monarchy, and Russian émigrés.

Keywords: sociology, economy, Germany, influence, theory

Introduction

German influences in Serbia and Yugoslavia were very intense and profound for several centuries. In the 19th century, travel writers from the Habsburg Monarchy and the German lands wrote about different directions of cultural influence in everyday life, education, culture, economy, and military.¹ At the same time, Serbs and other South Slavic nations in the Habsburg Monarchy were even more exposed to German influences through Austria, Vienna, and the German community that had lived in the Danube Region for several centuries.² In many aspects, Serbia and

- 1 Petar S. Ćurčić, “Putopisci iz nemačkih zemalja o Kneževini i Kraljevini Srbiji” [Travel writers from German countries about the Principality and Kingdom of Serbia], U *Kulturni transfer Evropa-Srbija u XIX veku*, ur. Slobodan G. Marković (Beograd: Institut za evropske studije, Dosije studio, 2023), 239–271. https://doi.org/10.18485/fpn_ctes_xix.2023.ch8.
- 2 Zoran Janjetović, “Odnosi Srba i Nemaca u Vojvodini (XVIII-XX vek)” [Relations between Serbs and Germans in Vojvodina (XVIII-XX centuries)], *Tokovi istorije* 1–2 (1996), 55–71; Zoran Janjetović, “Neprolazna svakodnevica: Nemački doprinos narodnoj kulturi Vojvodine” [Never-ending everyday life: the German contribution to the folk culture of Vojvodina], *Tokovi istorije* 3–4 (2008), 214–223; Mihael Antolović, “Nemci u Južnoj Ugarskoj” [Germans in Southern Hungary],

the German-speaking countries shared the same fate and problems not only during the long 19th century but also in the interwar period when political and economic instability shook many countries in Central and Southern Europe.³

In the academic community of Serbia, German influences have been present since the country became independent. This was especially true of the so-called sciences of mind/spirit (*Geisteswissenschaften*), which, thanks to German historicism in history, jurisprudence, economics, and other disciplines, had become remarkably popular throughout Europe. As noted by the historian Ljubinka Trgovčević (1948–2022), the Principality and the Kingdom of Serbia systematically worked on educating the future elite for jobs in state administration, education, and culture. This “planned” elite undoubtedly brought many ideas from Western Europe to Serbia, continuously applying them in practice. Germany (especially with the inauguration of the Humboldtian model of higher education in the 19th century) had a particularly important role in the education of the future elite.⁴

The cases of economics and sociology are particularly important because these disciplines gained full affirmation at universities in the German-speaking world in the 19th (economics) and at the end of the 19th and in the first decades of the 20th century (sociology). As Klaus Lichtbaum observed, under the strong French influence in German-speaking territories, during the 19th century, the concept of Cameralism was abandoned, and all attention was diverted to the study of society. The Verein für Socialpolitik (German Economic Association), a society founded in 1872 that sought to promote social legislation in the field of economy, played a

Žbornik Matice srpske za istoriju 79/80 (2009), 183–202; Zoran Janjetović, *Nemci u Vojvodini* [Germans in Vojvodina] (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2009); Mihael Antolović, *Nemačka manjina u Vojvodini (1918–1941): društvo i politika* [The German minority in Vojvodina (1918–1941): society and politics] (Sombor: Pedagoški fakultet, 2017).

- 3 Petar Ćurčić, “Prilog proučavanju problema spoljne trgovine preduzeća na prostoru današnje Vojvodine tokom tridesetih i četrdesetih godina XX veka na osnovu građe Udruženja industrijalaca iz Novog Sada” [A contribution to the research of foreign trade problems for companies in today’s Vojvodina in the 1930s and 1940s based on the materials of the Association of Industrialists from Novi Sad], *Godišnjak Istorijaskog arhiva grada Novog Sada* 13 (2019), 128–139; Petar S. Ćurčić, “Jugoslavija, Vajmarska republika i Španija – simultarni put u opadanju demokratije (sličnosti i razlike)” [Yugoslavia, the Weimar Republic and Spain – a simultaneous path in the decline of democracy (similarities and differences)], *U Jugoslovensko–španske paralele*, urednik Rajko Petrović (Beograd: Institut za evropske studije, 2023), 149–175.
- 4 Ljubinka Trgovčević, *Planirana elita, O studentima iz Srbije na evropskim univerzitetima* [The Planned Elite: On Students from Serbia at European universities] (Beograd: Istorijski institut, 2003), 33–155.

prominent institutional role in the popularization of economics and sociology, as did the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie (German Sociological Association), established in 1909 to academically and professionally affirm sociology as a discipline. Journals that notably contributed to their popularization and affirmation included the *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie* (founded in 1876), renamed *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie und Soziologie* in 1916. The close cooperation between economics and sociology was particularly apparent in journals such as *Archiv der politischen Ökonomie und Polizeiwissenschaft*, *Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft*, and *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*. Schmoller's Yearbook, a publication colloquially named after its editor, the influential economist and prominent representative of the German historical school of national economy, Gustav Schmoller, played a pivotal role. At the turn of the century, economists of the younger generation (brothers Alfred and Max Weber, Werner Sombart, and others), who were also members of the Verein für Socialpolitik reform movement, strove to establish sociology as an independent academic discipline based on a synthesis of German historicism and other approaches (especially Marxism). In 1904, this group of thinkers took over the social-democratic journal *Archiv für soziale Gesetzgebung und Statistik* and changed its name to *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*. This journal published some seminal texts in the development of sociology, most famously Max Weber's essay *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.⁵

In the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia, economics became part of the university curriculum at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, but there was no separate higher-education institution for the study of economics or sociology. First, Ernest Miller gave lectures on sociology at the Faculty of Law in Zagreb as part of the criminology course. In Zagreb, a sociological society was founded shortly before the breakout of World War I, but its founding meeting did not take place until 1919. However, these initial impulses left no lasting mark, and the Department of Sociology and Statistics, headed by Dinko Tomašić, was established as late as 1935. That same year, 1935, the Department of Sociology at the Faculty of Law was founded in Belgrade, and the founders were Slobodan Jovanović, Djordje Tasić, Jovan Djordjević, and the slightly younger Radomir Lukić, Drago-

5 Klaus Lichtblau, "Anfänge der Soziologie in Deutschland (1871–1918)", in *Handbuch Geschichte der deutschsprachigen Soziologie*, hrsg. von Stephan Moebius, Andrea Ploder (Wiesbaden: Springer 2018), 12–32; Peter Gosh, *Max Weber and the Protestant Ethic: Twin Histories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014); Peter Ghosh, "Max Weber, Werner Sombart and the Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft: The authorship of the 'Geleitwort' (1904)", *History of European Ideas* 36–1 (2012), 71–100; Peter Ghosh, *A Historian Reads Max Weber: Essays on the Protestant Ethic* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008).

slav Janković, and Sreten Vukosavljević. With a group of professors from Belgrade, Mirko Kosić established sociology as an academic discipline at the Faculty of Law in Subotica. Dragoslav Todorović held a course on sociology at the newly founded Belgrade College of Economy and Commerce on the eve of World War II. At the University of Ljubljana (founded in 1919), prominent professors included Aleš Ušeničnik and Andrej Gosar, the Russian émigrés Aleksandar Bilimović and Evgeny Vasilyevich Spektorsky, and the aforementioned Mirko Kosić.⁶

Considering that cultural transfer is a multi-layered and dynamic phenomenon (as described by Michael Werner and Michel Espagne)⁷, this chapter hopes to present the reception of German academic economic and sociological thought among Yugoslav scholars. Given that the chapter is a result of the project “Cultural Transfer Europe-Serbia from the 19th till the 21st Century – CTES,” funded by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia, it will focus on the Serbian academic community, while also looking at other South Slav intellectuals and Russian émigrés who worked with Serbian scholars. Given the broad scope of research on the history of sociology and economics in Serbia and Yugoslavia, the chapter will be limited to the relationship between sociology and economics in the context of interwar cultural transfer.

German influence and the fathers of Serbian sociology in Yugoslavia: the case studies of Slobodan Jovanović and Mirko Kosić

Mirko Kosić and Slobodan Jovanović played prominent roles in the development of sociology in Belgrade and the Serbian academic community in general. The jurist, historian, and university professor Slobodan Jovanović (1869–1958) demonstrated his knowledge of German sociological and economic thought by preparing materials for his courses and papers on formal sociology, sociology of religion, and the history of political ideas. The economist and sociologist Mirko Kosić (1892–1956) was educated at the University of Strasbourg and the University of Munich, where his teachers included the distinguished German economist Lujo Brentano. After the Great War, Kosić continued to maintain close ties

6 Milovan Mitrović, *Jugoslovenska predratna sociologija* [Yugoslav pre-war sociology] (Beograd: Istraživačko-izdavački centar SSO Srbije, 1982), 113–122; Miljković, Aleksandar, “Pluralizam u srpskoj sociologiji do 1941” [Pluralism in Serbian sociology until 1941], *Sociološki pregled* XXII-3 (1988), 173–199.

7 Espagne, Michel und Werner, Michael, “Deutsch-Französischer Kulturtransfer im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert: Zu einem neuen interdisziplinären Forschungsprogramm des C.N.R.S.,” *Francia* 13 (1985), 502–510.

with the German academic community, writing articles and participating in meetings.⁸

As a polymath and erudite well-versed in the main streams of European thought, Slobodan Jovanović deftly combined history, sociology, and political science in several of his works. Although his work *Examples of Political Sociology* explored the legal and political development of Germany in the 19th century, focusing on the political rise of Prussia and the creation of the German Empire, Jovanović turned his attention to the history of ideas and the development of sociology in several of his studies.⁹ Although interwar communist intellectuals accused Jovanović of being a bourgeois thinker, Jovanović referred to Karl Marx in multiple works.¹⁰ Jovanović grouped his understanding of political history and the history of ideas around four key figures: Plato, Niccolò Machiavelli, Edmund Burke, and Karl Marx. The bulk of the second volume of his book *From the History of Political Doctrines* discusses Marx, Marxism, and its critics.¹¹ Jovanović saw Marx as a great thinker of modern industrial society who based his views on historical materialism. Analyzing the views of Karl Kautsky, Eduard Bernstein, Rosa Luxemburg, and Henryk Grossmann, Jovanović noted the contradictory and conflicting views of Marx's successors. Jovanović summarized their debates in several binary opposing conceptions. The first major issue among Marxists, in Jovanović's opinion, was the debate for or against endorsing Marx's idea of the inevitability of revolutionary change. The second dispute concerned the possible return or rejection of Marx's conviction that the capitalist system will predictably come to an end through its own unprofitability.¹² Jovanović grouped the

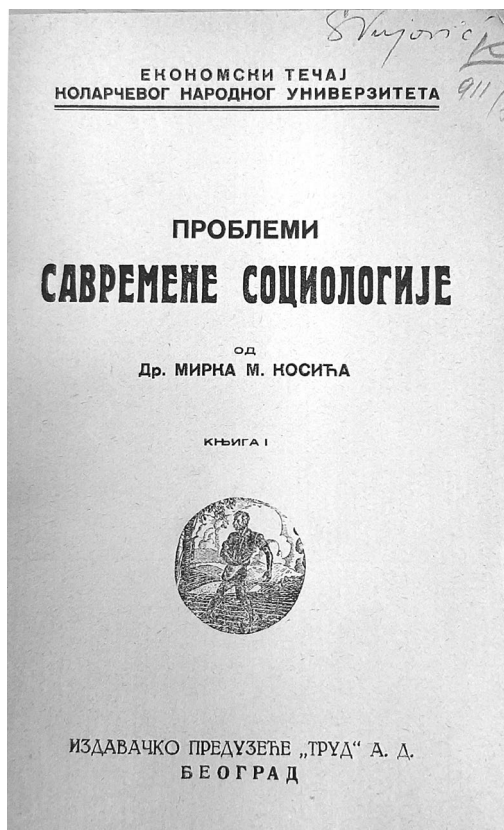
8 Boško Mijatović, "Ekonomске ideje Mirka Kosića" [Economic ideas of Mirko Kosić], *Sociološki pregled* 46–2 (2012), 163–87. <https://doi.org/10.5937/socpreg1202163M>; Boris Milosavljević, *Slobodan Jovanović. Teorija* [Slobodan Jovanović. Theory] (Beograd: SANU, 2017), 46, 48, 444–446, 452; Boris Milosavljević, "Slobodan Jovanović – istoriografija i metodologija" [Slobodan Jovanović – historiography and methodology], *Tokovi istorije* 2 (2014), 157–184.

9 Slobodan Jovanović, "Primeri političke sociologije: Engleska, Francuska, Nemačka: 1815–1914" [Examples of political sociology: England, France, Germany: 1815–1914] (Beograd: G. Kon, 1940), 375–505.

10 Boris Milosavljević, "Međuratna marksistička kritika studije Slobodana Jovanovića o Marksu i istoriji marksizma: moralni ideali i građanski objektivizam" [Interwar Marxist criticism of Slobodan Jovanović's study on Marx and the history of Marxism: moral ideals and civic objectivism], U *Istorija srpske filozofije: prilozi istraživanju*. 3., prir. Irina Deretić, Dobrilo Aranitović (Beograd: Evro-Giunti, 2014), 393–423.

11 Slobodan Jovanović, *Iz istorije političkih doktrina. Knjiga 2* [From the History of Political Doctrines. Book 2] (Beograd: Izdavačko i knjižarsko preduzeće Geca Kon A. D.), 1–82.

12 S. Jovanović, *Iz istorije političkih doktrina. Knj. 2*, 82–159.



*Title page of Mirko M. Kosić, *Problemi savremene sociologije* [The Problems of Contemporary Sociology] (Belgrade: Trud, 1934).*

critics of Marx's theory according to their ideological affiliation: 1) conservative socialists (Spann, Sombart); 2) liberal socialists (Franz Oppenheimer); 3) liberals (Ludwig von Mises); 4) Max Weber and Max Scheler. Commenting on the works of German thinkers, Jovanović noticed that objections to the Marxian theory could be summarized as follows: a) criticism of the definition of wealth and the nature of value, b) causal understanding of economic development, c) Machiavellian criticism of the state, d) understanding of the capitalist appropriation of surplus value, e) unfounded criticism of feudal societies (Spann and Sombart), f) the idea that surplus value can cause changes, g) an unrealistic understanding of the revolutionary nature of the reserve army, h) a misunderstanding of the nature of organization (Oppenheimer); i) excessive insistence on the conflictual nature of society instead of the theory of rational choice and agreement between workers and employers in market conditions (von Mises); j) overlooking that socialist movements and workers cannot establish rational foundations for effective action in practice; k) the misleading

revolutionary rejection of the idea that socialism can only succeed in a democratic way (Weber); 1) refuting the idea of a corporate state (Scheler). Enumerating the arguments of Marx's opponents, Jovanović was also aware of many shortcomings of German authors. Firstly, he criticized the conservative socialists for their idealization of old feudal societies. Oppenheimer, on the other hand, did not understand the nature of the decline of the peasantry, which should be sought not in the preservation of the latifundia but in the decline of rural crafts. As a liberal, von Mises viewed humanity in economic terms and fetishized economic rationalism. Scheler's political Catholicism and corporatism, as well as his ideas about combining European technical and rational knowledge and Asian spirituality, were not applicable in practice, in Jovanović's opinion.¹³

Unlike Jovanović, whose socioeconomic analysis rested on the exploration and criticism of the Marxian paradigm, Mirko Kosić did not focus on Marx and instead turned his attention to other German thinkers. Kosić was strongly influenced by Leopold von Wiese and the Cologne School of sociology.¹⁴ Kosić discussed the main conceptual currents of German sociology in many of his works. Analyzing the relationship between sociology and psychology, ethnology, and history and using the arguments put forth by Simmel, Sombart, and Weber, Kosić noted that Wilhelm Wundt's notion of a universal *Völkerpsychologie* was practically inapplicable because of various psychological motives. At the same time, Wilhelm Riehl's idea of creating a social ethnography aimed at identifying the general laws of historical development was equally unfeasible. At this point, Kosić revisited the ideas of German historicism and romanticism, which rejected the universality of human development. Although the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies, in his *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, (Community and Society) had developed a peculiar methodology combining the inductive method with the conceptions of other social sciences, the relationship between history and sociology was not all-pervading. Kosić was among the handful of authors (along with the historian Jovan B. Jovanović¹⁵) who

13 S. Jovanović, *Iz istorije političkih doktrina—Knj. 2*, 182–283.

14 Boško Mijatović, "Ekonomske ideje Mirka Kosića" [Economic ideas of Mirko Kosić], U *Mirko Kosić, ličnost i delo*, prir. Jovica Trkulja (Kikinda-Beograd: Narodna biblioteka "Jovan Popović", Pravni fakultet, Srpsko sociološko društvo, 2013), 273–303; Milovan Mitrović, "Sociologija Mirka Kosića" [Sociology of Mirko Kosić], *Žbornik za društvene nauke* 68 (1980), 125–144.

15 Djordje Tasić considered Jovan B. Jovanović a representative of German historicism. Đorđe Tasić, „Opšti pregled naše sociologije i naših društvenih nauka“ [A general overview of our sociology and our social sciences], *Sociološki pregled* I-1 (1938), 239–272. Jovan B. Jovanović was a historian educated in Munich and Berlin, where he received his doctorate under the mentorship of Hans Delbrück, a military historian. Jovanović belonged to the ranks of conservative and

noted that German historiography showed a marked reservation towards sociology, especially apostrophizing Georg von Below and his harsh criticism of Kurt Breysig's and Karl Lamprecht's works. In addition to the sociology of Leopold von Wiese (which insisted on social connections, groups, and other social formations), Kosić emphasized the importance of Max Weber's idea of an understanding/interpretative science (*verstehende Wissenschaft*), that is, the dominance of the thought element in understanding social phenomena. Nevertheless, in praising Oswald Spengler's work *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (The Decline of the West), Kosić stated that the main advantage of this work is the departure from established sociological methods and assumptions. Disapproving of Ludwig Gumplowicz as a prominent proponent of the struggle of the races theory, Kosić referred to Oppenheimer, Jelinek, and Renan, who rejected the idea of racial purity.¹⁶

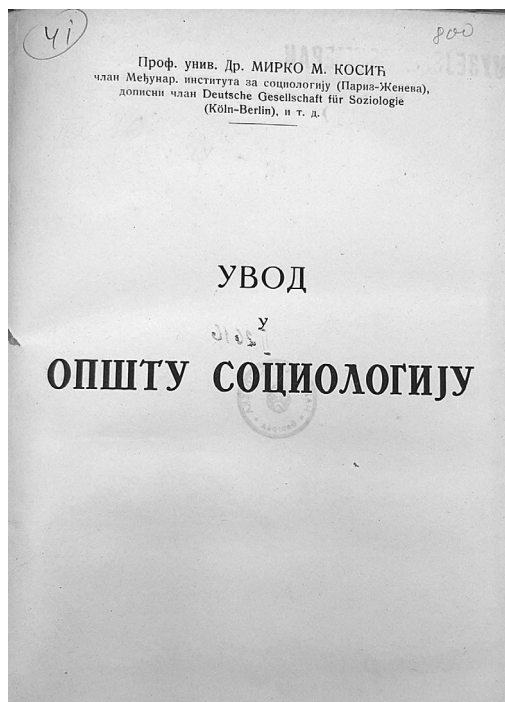
Kosić also relied on German thinkers in his definition of sociology as a discipline. Although his position had most in common with von Wiese and Simmel because of their shared approach to the theory of social relations and interactions, Kosić offered a different view of the nature of sociology. One of the alternative definitions of sociology was the idea of sociology as a theoretical national economy, another concept that had originated in the German-speaking area. Those ideas were staunchly defended by German thinkers such as Amonn, Schumpeter, and Oppenheimer. Kosić recognized new processes in the sociology of the Weimar Republic, especially in the works of Vierkandt, von Wiese, and Oppenheimer. Oppenheimer's idea was combining the principles of knowledge and action, scientific theory and reform, evolutionism and history. Vierkandt built his methodological approach on the principles of philosophical sociology and, above all, on instinctive sociology, which is based on instincts, e.g., the urge to help, nurture, combativeness, submission, and others. For Kosić, Vierkandt was too preoccupied with instincts as the basis of human action and neglected other spheres of social life.¹⁷

Jovanović and Kosić particularly insisted on the concept of formal sociology: the idea that society can be explained based on social interactions through forms of action. However, both scholars were very critical of the

pro-Obrenović intellectuals who recognized the importance of economic and sociological phenomena. See: Jovan B. Jovanović, "Istorija i sociologija" [History and Sociology], *Arhiv za pravne i društvene nauke* II 16–13 (1926), 161–180; Jovan B. Jovanović, "Problemi privredne istorije" [Problems of Economic History], *Arhiv za pravne i društvene nauke* 34–1/2 (1928), 16–40.

16 Mirko Kosić, *Problemi savremene sociologije. Knj. 1* [Problems of Contemporary Sociology] (Beograd: Trud, 1934).

17 Mirko Kosić, *Uvod u opštu sociologiju* [Introduction to General Sociology] (Novi Sad: Štamparija Jovanović i Bogdanov, 1934).



Title page of Mirko M. Kosić, Uvod u opštu sociologiju [Introduction to General Sociology] (Novi Sad: Štamparija Jovanović i Bogdanov, 1934).

view that all human interactions occur within a single system.¹⁸ Analyzing Max Weber, both Slobodan Jovanović and Kosić underlined the importance of Weber's understanding of Protestant ethics. In a course on the sociology of religion, Jovanović presented Weber's concepts in a detailed analysis of his study *Religionssoziologie. Typen religiöser Vergemeinschaftung*. Jovanović believed that Weber had described primitive religion as too utilitarian and overlooked that ethical rationalism and the need for redemption are not inextricably linked by religion. In addition to Weber, to whom he devoted a large part of his study, Jovanović also analyzed the lesser-known conceptions of Ernst Troeltsch, Joachim Wach, and Karl Dunkmann. While Weber and Troeltsch insisted on spiritual and social morality, Wach, a formal sociologist, did not look at religion from a metaphysical perspective, and Dunkmann did the same, connecting religion to social communities.¹⁹

18 M. Kosić, *Uvod u opštu sociologiju*; Slobodan Jovanović, *Formalna sociologija: predavanja Slobodana Jovanovića držana na doktorskom kursu* [Formal sociology: lectures by Slobodan Jovanović as part of a postgraduate program] (Beograd: Futur, 1937).

19 S. Jovanović, *Iz istorije političkih doktrina, Knj. 2*; Slobodan Jovanović, *Sociologija religije* [Sociology of Religion] (Beograd: Litografija i štamparija Koste M. Bojkovića, 1938).

Teaching economics

Using the definitions of Hans Honegger, Werner Sombart, Othmar Spann, Walter Weddingen, R. Liefmann, Heinrich Dietzel, Amonn, and M. Weber, Aleksandar Bilimović, a Ukrainian-born White Russian émigré economist who worked at the University of Ljubljana, pointed out the challenge of defining the subject of economics. Terminologically, the fact that the economy could be political or national was also very important. This dichotomy stemmed from disagreements within the German academic community. Knies, Rau, Schünberg, Wagner, and von Philippovich insisted on the term political economy. The term *Nationalökonomie* (national economy) was used by Roscher, List, and Amonn, whereas the term *Volkswirtschaftslehre* (science of national economy) was the third term used by Schmoller, Mangoldt, Weber, and Brentano. Thanks to the Serbian politician and economist Mihailo Vujić, another German-educated intellectual, before 1914, Serbian scholars had used the term national economy, which also remained prevalent during the interwar period. The economic debate about nature and methodology also found a place in contemporary textbooks. Interwar scholars particularly insisted on the *Methodenstreit* in German economics and the two leading schools – Carl Menger's subjectivist and the historical school.²⁰

Numerous German authors tried to define the concept of need and economic good (Gut). According to Lexis and Dietzel, those needs can be of an economic and non-economic nature. German thinkers also disagreed on whether the economic good is of a material or immaterial nature. In the interwar Serbian and Yugoslav literature, there was also a debate regarding the nature of the German term Gut (good). Namely, several authors suggested that Adolf Wagner's *Bedürfnisbefriedigungsmittel* could be an alternative term. Heinrich Dietzel divided services into material and immaterial, and the economy accordingly implied human activity directly aimed at supplying people with economic goods. Josef Dobretsberger and W. Weddingen pointed out that the spiritual goal of the economy is psychological satisfaction related to external material means. Bilimović further referred to Carl Menger's division of economic goods into 1) consumer goods (which satisfy needs) and 2) goods that become assets.

Another lively debate revolved around the problem of the historical stages of economic development. Friedrich List and Gustav Schönbert

20 Milorad Nedeljković, *Uvod u političku ekonomiju* [Introduction to Political Economy] (Beograd: Izdavačka knjižarnica Gece Kona, 1920), 7–128; Milorad Nedeljković, *Osnovi političke ekonomije* [Basics of Political Economy] (Beograd: Izdavačka knjižara Napredak, 1921), 1–99. Cf. Obren Blagojević, *Ekonomska misao u Srbiji do Drugog svetskog rata* [Economic thought in Serbia until the Second World War] (Beograd: Stručna knjiga, 1996).

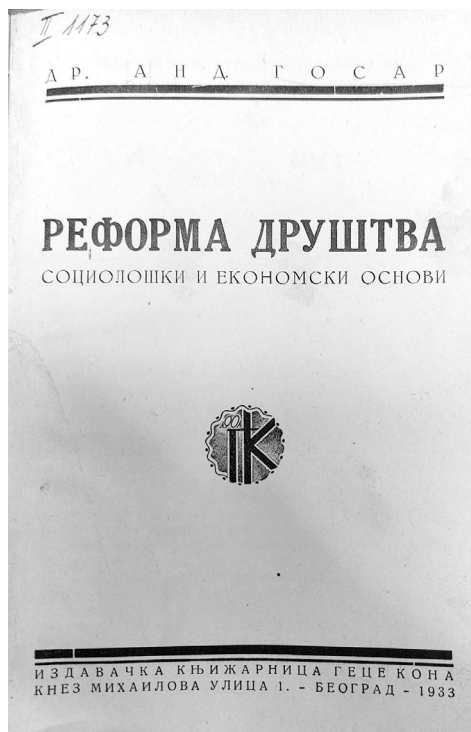
recognized more or less the same stages of development (from hunting, farming, and animal husbandry to handicrafts, trade, and manufacture/industry). Unlike them, Bruno Hildebrand and Karl Bücher established a tripartite division of economic development (Hildebrand divided economy into natural, monetary, and credit economy, and Bücher famously proposed the theory of stages, with household, town, and national economy). Like Bücher, Gustav Schmoller put forth a somewhat modified division of the stages of economic development, with family, village, town, territorial, and national economy. Bilimović was a fervent supporter of Bücher and criticized Sombart for his binary understanding of economic history, i.e., the alternation of democratic and aristocratic principles in the economy.²¹

Attempts to find an alternative to the liberal and capitalist order:
from the economic crisis and planned economy to Roman
Catholic social teaching and Nazism

After the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929, the question of an alternative to the existing capitalist world order emerged. Spengler's theses on the decline of the West and Sombart's on late capitalism became glaringly topical. Mirko Kosić and Dragoljub Arandjelović underlined Sombart's premise about the loss of potential and the cessation of the vital driving forces of capitalism. Arandjelović also believed that capitalism was in trouble because of the increasingly frequent criticisms of plutocracy (associations, states, and cooperatives), which had shown itself unable to cope with the burden of the crisis. Two scholars held conflicting views about the possibility of creating a new economic system. Andrija Babić argued that it was necessary to introduce a planned economy, and Aleksandar Bilimović expressed reservations about this suggestion. Inspired by some German ideas about the need for agrarian reform and economic self-sustainability, Oton Frangeš, a Croatian politician and minister in several Yugoslav governments, wrote an article on the usefulness of agrarian reform, which had enabled the countries of Eastern Europe to make the peasantry self-sustaining.²²

21 On Bilimović's understanding of Sombart, see: Mihael T. Antolović, i Petar S. Ćurčić, "Srpska i jugoslovenska recepcija Vernera Zombarta (1895–2022)" [The Serbian and Yugoslav Reception of Werner Sombart (1895–2022)], *Etnoantropološki Problemi / Problems of Ethnology and Anthropology* 18–1 (2023), 285–304. <https://doi.org/10.21301/eap.v18i1.12>.

22 Swann, "Privreda na rečima" [Economy in words]. *Vreme*, 18.8.1930; Ljubomir Dukanac, *Problem pobuda ljudske privredne delatnosti i ekonomska teorija* [The problem of motivation of human economic activity and economic theory] (Beograd: [b.



Title page of Andrej Gosar, Reforma društva. Sociološki i ekonomski osnovi [Reform of Society. Sociological and Economic Foundations] (Beograd: Izdavačka knjižarnica Gece Kona, 1933).

In Yugoslavia, ideas of Roman Catholic clericalism, especially pronounced at the end of the 19th century, stemmed from Christian social movements, most of which were based in Slovenia. Aleš Učeničnik and Andrej Gosar, the most prominent representatives of this movement, were particularly notable among these Catholic thinkers. Sociologists of this orientation, in the spirit of Roman Catholic social teaching, insisted that social reforms were necessary to prevent the collapse of society and its

m.], 1939); Slobodan M. Drašković, "Politika i privreda" [Politics and Economy], *Pravda*, 16.1.1938; Mirko Kosić, *Previranja u svetskoj privredi – kriza kapitalizma* [Turmoil in the World Economy – the Crisis of Capitalism] (Beograd: Narodna štamparija, 1931); Andrija Babić, *Kriza i njeno rešenje. propast ultrakapitalizma i pojava novog doba* [Crisis and its solution. the downfall of ultra-capitalism and the emergence of a new era] (Skoplje: Biblioteka Istrajnost, 1933); L. „Privredni liberalizam i planska privreda. Predavanje g. dr. Aleksandra Bilimovića, profesora univerziteta” [Economic liberalism and planned economy. The lecture of Mr. Ph.D. Aleksandar Bilimović, university professor], *Pravda*, 18.3.1934; Dragoljub Arandelović, "Današnje stanje kapitalizma" [Today's state of capitalism]. *Srpski književni glasnik* 32–4 (1931), 311–315; Otto Frangeš, "Kriza kapitalizma u Nemačkoj" [The Crisis of Capitalism in Germany]. *Vreme*, 23–29.10.1931.

disintegration, which would inevitably lead to destruction and revolution. Therefore, the duty of sociology was to help society reform itself.²³ In particular, Gosar criticized Tönnies' work because he was reluctant to see human society in binary frameworks. He argued for reciprocity as the *ultima ratio* of the state. Gosar was also directly influenced by Dunkmann's and Heinrich Pesch's ideas of national solidarity and according to the concept that views a nation as an organic entity which grows and evolves, analogous to a living organism. Gosar based his critique of Marxism on Goetz's idea of the unequal interests of the working class. In his view, the German and Austrian Christian Socialists (like Pesch and Bishop Ketteler) had failed to build a separate economic system. This theoretical inadequacy was equally perilous as the Marxist sympathies of many moderate Christian Socialists like Weiss, Pesch, Cathrein, Biederlacka, and Lehmkuhl.²⁴

Defining National Socialism, Mirko Kosić noted that the ideology of Nazism was a blend of pan-German racism and Prussian militarism with influences of Bolshevism and fascism. Nazism is contrasted with Bolshevism because of its criticism of internationalism. Comparing Nazism and Bolshevism and condemning their destructive power, Kosić noticed that anti-elitism was a shared feature of both but that Nazism (unlike Bolshevism) based its ideology on the nation, honor, German law, race, and military caste society. Kosić was openly concerned about the rise of German nationalism and racism, which minimized the importance of sociology. He was particularly critical of Spann and Freyer and prophetically claimed that after the collapse of racism and nationalism in Germany, there would have to be a return to the Cologne School and the teachings of Tönnies, Simmel, and Max Weber, which the Nazis had unjustly and contemptuously rejected and ignored.²⁵

Even before Hitler rose to power in Germany, *Narodno blagostanje* (National Welfare), the most influential economic journal, wrote about Kurt von Schleicher's government's public works measures. Evaluating the ideas of Helmut Stellrecht, a Nazi official, about the need for forced labor, the *Narodno blagostanje* opined that it would not contribute to greater economic growth. The measures of the Nazis were limited to public works and depended on taxation. Contributors to this Belgrade-based liberal magazine believed that only private initiative could help Germany recover from the

23 M. Mitrović, *Jugoslovenska predratna sociologija*, 57–73.

24 Andrej Gosar, *Reforma društva. Sociološki i ekonomski osnovi* [Reform of Society. Sociological and Economic Foundations] (Beograd: Izdavačka knjižarnica Gece Kona, 1933), 24–33, 38–46, 57–64, 64–68, 130–195, 289–293.

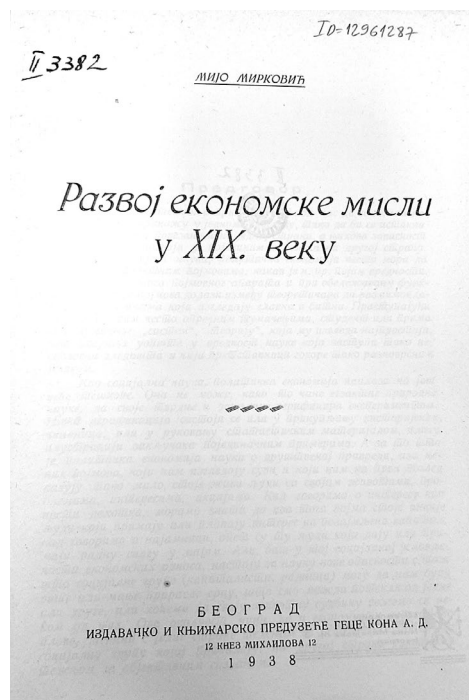
25 Mirko Kosić, *Boljševizam, fašizam i nacional-socializam* [Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism]. (Čačak: Štamparija Popović, 1933), 22–26; M. Kosić, *Uvod u opštu sociologiju*.

crisis, given that the Nazis had failed to solve the problem with the unions. At the same time, price control had not yielded the expected results. The concept of economic autarchy proved ineffective, and the Nazi government had to make concessions to the agriculturally underdeveloped countries with which they traded.²⁶

However, not everyone was as critical of Hitler's regime. In his doctorate titled *Economic and Social Policy of National Socialism and its Doctrinal Foundations*, defended in 1936 in Belgrade, Danilo Gregorić took a much more sympathetic stance toward the tenets of National Socialism. For Gregorić, Nazism was proof that the people themselves could carry out a spiritual revolution without losing their cultural and political position. The two conflicting principles were the materialistic-individualistic principle (liberalism and communism) and the idealistic principle. Praising the idealistic approach, Gregorić believed that the supreme ideal was the state, which was an expression of justice, the guardian of order, and an organic community. Gregorić saw Gottfried Feder, an engineer and a self-taught economist, as the leading ideologist of National Socialism. Feder's thesis was that the state must solve the problem of indebtedness by galvanizing its own economy by introducing compulsory unpaid labor, controlling the emission of money, and introducing a fair fiscal policy. The state was supposed to organize national forces in production relations, harmonize the prices of goods in the buyer-seller relationship, and establish price values in accordance with Dietrich Klagges' theory. Banks were to be nationalized, and employment was to be increased through large-scale public works, fiscal measures, the introduction of women into the workforce, and the development of highways. Gregorić admired the Nazi agrarian policy, believing that agricultural unions and the overall policy not only made Germany independent from other countries in food supply but also protected the peasantry from market speculation. According to Gregorić, the main problem of the Nazi state was that the parliament was not reformed into a class assembly and that the principle of liberalism remained strong in economic life.²⁷

26 Zoran Janjetović, "Narodno blagostanje i nemačka privreda 1933–1936. godine" [National Welfare and the German economy in 1933–1936.], *Istorija* 20. veka 13–1 (1995), 111–125.

27 Danilo Gregorić, *Ekonomika i socijalna politika nacionalnoga socijalizma i njene doktrinarne osnove* [Economic and Social Policy of National Socialism and its Doctrinal Foundations] (Beograd: Pravni fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, Beograd 1936), 31–82, 84–90, 104–114. Cf. Olivera Milosavljević, *Savremenici fašizma, 1. Percepcija fašizma u beogradskoj javnosti 1933–1941* (Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji, 2010), 31–82.



Title page of Mijo Mirković, *Razvoj Ekonomske misli u XIX veku*
[Development of Economic Thought in the 19th Century]
(Belgrade, 1938).

Epilogue: the founding of the *Sociološki pregled*: the struggle for influence

After the pioneering efforts of Slobodan Jovanović and Mirko Kosić, the Society for Philosophy of Law and Sociology was renamed the Society for Sociology and Social Studies in 1935. Following the International Congress of Sociology in Paris in 1937, the Society launched a journal called the *Sociološki pregled* (Sociological Review) in 1938. Although the new journal had a very prominent role in defining the subject of sociology, its establishment as an academic discipline in the Yugoslav space, and the relationship between sociology and other humanities, Mirko Kosić was not a contributor to the journal. Other scholars showed reservations towards some concepts of German economy and sociology. Djordje Tasić believed that German sociology was too focused on the state, nation, and power. Siniša Stanković contrasted the work of the French historian Lucien Febvre *La terre et l'évolution humaine* with the anthropo-geographical deterministic approach of Friedrich Ratzel, emphasizing that the work of the French historian was

much more grounded and less fatalistic in its descriptions of the relationship between humanity and the environment. Nikola Vučo rejected Wundt's idea of *Völkerpsychologie*, believing that the German idea of the national spirit was incompatible with the principles of modern sociology. In the context of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as a distinctly agrarian country, Slobodan Popović suggested that Hans Fuchs and his ideas about the effects of the environment on the psyche of rural people could provide a very useful analytical framework for rural researchers. Whereas the historian Dušan Popović in his essay on the relationship between history and sociology was more understanding of the German historical school and the genetic method of Alfred Weber and Ferdinand Tönnies, Jovan Djordjević drew on French authors (Lucien Febvre, Émile Durkheim, and Célestin Bouglé) in his text on the relationship between sociology and history, believing that sociology needed to make use of the multitude of data provided by historical scholarship for its own purposes.²⁸

Conclusion

From 1918 to 1941, in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia, after the initial pre-1914 impulses, the process of the academic affirmation of economics and especially sociology continued. As Michel Espagne and Michael Werner pointed out, cultural transfer is a multi-layered and dynamic process. The transfer of ideas to Yugoslavia unfolded through several channels – through scholars who read German academic literature and through migration (Russian émigrés). How did cultural transfer manifest itself in the Serbian academic com-

28 Slobodan Antić, "Mirko Kosić i Sociološko društvo" [Mirko Kosić and the Sociological Society], *Hereticus: časopis za preispitivanje prošlosti* 10–3/4 (2012), 189–215; Slobodan Antić, "Osnivanje Sociološkog pregleda 1938. godine" [Establishment of the Sociological Review in 1938]. *Sociološki pregled* 52–1 (2018), 7–23. <https://doi.org/10.5937/socpreg52-17319>; Uređivački odbor, "Uvod" [Introduction]. *Sociološki pregled* I-1 (1938), 3–10; Đorđe Tasić, "Filozofija i sociologija" [Philosophy and Sociology]. *Sociološki pregled* I-1 (1938), 27–33; Siniša Stanković, "Ljudsko društvo i živa priroda" [Human society and Living Nature], *Sociološki pregled* God. I, broj 1 (1938), 46–60; Nikola Vučo, "Sociologija i psihologija" [Sociology and Psychology]. *Sociološki pregled* I-1 (1938), 60–69; Slobodan Popović, "Prilog proučavanju odnosa između sociologije i psihologije" [A contribution to the study of the relationship between sociology and psychology], *Sociološki pregled* I-1 (1938), 69–76; Dušan S. Popović, "Istorija i sociologija" [History and Sociology], *Sociološki pregled* I-1 (1938), 76–83; Jovan Đorđević, "Sociologija i istorija" [Sociology and History], *Sociološki pregled* I-1 (1938), 83–92.

munity in Yugoslavia? Firstly, jurists were at the forefront of the affirmation of both disciplines. The older generation of jurists and economists (Slobodan Jovanović, Milorad Nedeljković, and Mirko Kosić) continued studying economic and sociological phenomena. Even though he never taught at the University of Belgrade, Mirko Kosić, a diligent reader of German economists and thinkers, made a significant contribution to the establishment of sociology. Serbian and Yugoslav sociology aficionados were very familiar with the ongoing debates in the academic disciplines known in the German-speaking world as sciences of mind/spirit (*Geisteswissenschaften*), as evidenced by their references to the *Methodenstreit* in economics, the relationship of historicism to sociology and economics, and the fundamental controversy surrounding the nature of the world economic crisis, the debate on capitalism (*Kapitalismusdebatte*), and the National Socialist regime. A review of their writings revealed that Serbian scholars were very interested in adopting concepts and theories from Germany – in particular, the fundamental economic concepts and even the definition of the discipline itself (instead of economics, the term people's economy – *Volkswirtschaft* – was used). In addition to the liberal current, especially at the end of the 1930s, a robust group of supporters of the growing regulatory role of the state appeared (especially in economic planning, price control, and the like). However, the reception of the economic policy of National Socialism, as well as National Socialism in general, was contradictory and conflicting, with no consensus among leading researchers. Although the interactions between the academic communities of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were quite limited, Serbian authors also showed an interest in Slovenian thinkers (as evidenced by the publication of Andrej Gosar's book, which was inspired by Christian socialism). Besides the influence that stemmed from the scholars who had attended higher-education institutions in Germany and Austria before the war, another source of influence was the connections to the former Habsburg Monarchy (especially in the Slovenian case). The third source of influence came indirectly through Russian émigrés, who brought their knowledge, experience, and reception of German economic ideas to Yugoslavia.

Although this chapter focuses on the relationship between economics and sociology and the reception of these works in Serbia and Yugoslavia, it has hardly exhausted the possibilities of studying these topics. Due to the abundance of writings left by Serbian scholars and the breadth of this topic, some subjects, e.g., social policy and interdisciplinary research, remain beyond the scope of this chapter.

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