

**DOBRIVOJE JOVANOVIĆ, *ELECTIONS IN THE JAGODINA
AND ĆUPRIJA DISTRICTS, 1882–1903*, SELF-PUBLISHED,
JAGODINA, 2025, 214 PP.**

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The political history of Serbia from the proclamation of the Kingdom in 1882 to the May Coup of 1903 was marked by numerous turbulent and often decisive events. These included the formation of organized political parties, the Timok Rebellion, the Serbian-Bulgarian War, the Constitution of 1888, the abdication of King Milan Obrenović, the coup d'état of 1893, the Octroic Constitution of 1901, and frequent changes of government. These developments were accompanied by numerous parliamentary elections (1883, 1884, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1898, and 1901), not including repeated or supplementary elections held in certain constituencies. Parliamentary elections and other phenomena that characterized these important historical moments within the specified period and territory are thoroughly and convincingly documented in the monograph under review, authored by the distinguished, prolific, and dedicated historian of Jagodina, Pomoravlje, and Serbia, M.A. Dobrivoje Jovanović (Jagodina, 1952), retired archival counselor. Owing to his remarkable erudition, professional expertise, and evident research skill, the author has succeeded in producing yet another exemplary scholarly study.

Parliamentary life in nineteenth-century Serbia, examined from the perspective of a particular region and especially through the organization and conduct of elections, as well as through the activities of elected representatives within the highest legislative body, has rarely been the subject of dedicated research, apart from a few smaller studies. Consequently, this book may also be viewed as a continuation of a pioneering research endeavor initiated three years earlier through the author's documentary monograph on the same topic, covering the period from 1804 to 1882 and focusing on the regions of Pomoravlje, Resava, and Levač, that is, the former Jagodina and Ćuprija districts.

This monograph, devoted to the National Assemblies of the Kingdom of Serbia up to 1903 and to the participation of representatives from the Jagodina and Ćuprija districts during three decades of parliamentary history, extends over more than 200 pages. It has been prepared professionally and is based on extensive use of primary archival sources, relevant scholarly literature, and

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contemporary newspapers. The study successfully fulfills the author's considerable effort and research commitment, illuminating the chosen topic while also addressing certain assemblies and the role of particular individuals whose activities have received little or no attention in Serbian historiography.

The monograph is divided into approximately ten chapters, most of which are organized chronologically according to the year in which elections were held. Through these chapters, the author highlights numerous distinctive features of the development of parliamentary life in Serbia. He examines the fact that the convocation, opening, adjournment, extension, and dissolution of the Assembly were controlled by the monarch, who, until the Constitution of 1888, also appointed its president and vice presidents. The book provides valuable information on the procedures and organization of parliamentary elections at all levels of electoral administration, from districts and counties to municipalities. It emphasizes that voting rights were granted to every adult Serbian male over the age of twenty-one who paid taxes, while women, itinerant Roma, convicted persons, and soldiers in active service were excluded. The Constitution of 1888 introduced secret voting and abolished the practice established by the Constitution of 1869, according to which one deputy appointed by the monarch was added for every three deputies elected by the people. Parliamentary sessions were often highly turbulent, marked by verbal and physical confrontations, although the revocation of parliamentary mandates remained relatively rare. Political parties—the Liberal Party, the Progressive Party, and the People's Radical Party, formally established in the early 1880s, as well as the Independent Radical Party founded in 1901—rapidly became genuine participants in the struggle for political power.

The study provides numerous interesting and valuable insights into political life in the Jagodina and Čuprija districts, which, following the Constitution of 1888 and the administrative-territorial reorganization of the Kingdom of Serbia two years later, were merged into the Morava District. The author examines the establishment of local committees of all major political parties active in the region, the organization and conduct of elections, voter turnout, election results, and various irregularities that accompanied the electoral process. He also presents detailed information about elected representatives and their activities and speeches within the National Assembly. Particularly valuable are the excerpts and complete records of parliamentary interventions, proposals, criticisms, comments, and suggestions made by deputies from these regions during debates on important issues, including the so-called Resava Affair of 1887 and the decision in 1890 to designate Čuprija rather than Jagodina as the administrative center of the newly established Morava District.

Special attention is devoted to the activities of some of the most prominent parliamentary representatives from Pomoravlje, Resava, and Levač. These include the Radical politicians Dimitrije Katić of Crkvenac, Milija Milovanović of Bačina, Tasa Đikić, Milan Radenković, and Mihajlo Kosovljanin of

Jagodina, Sima Perić of Rekovac; the Progressives Neša Milenković of Jovac, Visarion Nikolić of Jagodina, and Milosav Petrović of Svilajnac; the Liberal Isak Cvetković of Svilajnac; and the Independent Radicals Mita Isaković of Svilajnac, Milosav Radojković and Sima Katić of Čuprija, Dragutin Pečić of Jagodina, and many others. The author also notes the intriguing phenomenon that fathers and sons were frequently aligned with opposing political camps, as in the cases of Jovan Kosovljanin (Liberal) and his son Mihajlo Kosovljanin (Radical), Isak Cvetković (Liberal) and his son Dimitrije “Mita” Isaković (Independent Radical), and Dimitrije Katić (Radical) and his son Sima Katić (Independent Radical).

The latest book by the diligent historian Dobrivoje Jovanović represents a valuable contribution to contemporary Serbian historiography. Like several of his previous works, it was published independently and in an exceptionally limited edition of only ten copies. The volume contains approximately ten selected photographs and concludes with a comprehensive list of archival sources, published documents, and scholarly literature. As such, it constitutes an important reference work for future studies of parliamentary history, political culture, and electoral processes in Serbia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.