

**Art**

**and**

**Politics**

**in the Modern Period**

EDITORS

**Dragan Damjanović**

**Lovorka Magaš Bilandžić**

**Željka Miklošević**

**Jeremy F. Walton**

**Zagreb, 2019**



## 7 Introduction: Intersections of Art and Politics

### 15 Portraits of Artists as Political Subjects and Actors

- 17 **Angelina Milosavljevic-Ault**  
AN ARTIST IN AND OUT OF THE SYSTEM IN EARLY MODERN FLORENCE. SOCIAL CONTEXT AND THE STRUGGLE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF YOUNG GIORGIO VASARI AS REFLECTED IN HIS LETTERS OF 1534 AND 1536
- 25 **Vladimir Peter Goss**  
*RESURRECTIO MEMORIAE* – THE CASE OF JOSEF STRZYGOWSKI
- 33 **Elizabeth Kajs**  
THE ORIGINS OF AN IDENTITY: KÄTHE KOLLWITZ'S EARLY EXPLORATIONS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
- 41 **Daniel Zec**  
OSCAR NEMON'S SYSTEM OF UNIVERSAL ETHICS
- 53 **Maria de Fátima Morethy Couto**  
KINETICS, DESPITE IT ALL: SOUTH AMERICAN ARTISTS IN EUROPE AND SPECTATOR PARTICIPATION
- 63 **Martina Bratić**  
SHOULD ENGAGED ART RE-ENGAGE? SOME PERSPECTIVES OF YAEL BARTANA'S WORKS

### 73 Spaces of Political-Artistic Representation

- 75 **Hadrien Volle**  
THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE DECORATIVE PROGRAMME OF THE FAUBOURG SAINT-GERMAIN THEATRE DURING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
- 83 **Katarina Mohar**  
ART REPRESENTING THE STATE: THE VILLA BLED OFFICIAL RESIDENCE
- 93 **Tijana Borić**  
A MANIFESTO OF POWER AND RESTORED STATEHOOD: KARAĐORĐE'S TOWN OF TOPOLA
- 101 **Sanja Zadro**  
TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE RONDO SQUARE IN MOSTAR IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

### 109 Representing Politics

- 111 **Danko Šourek**  
ICONOGRAPHY OF THE SACRED STAGE: SCENOGRAPHY FOR THE CANONICAL CORONATION OF OUR LADY OF TRSAT (1715)
- 119 **Aleksandra Kučeković**  
ART, POLITICS AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY – COATS OF ARMS OF THE PAKRAC SLAVONIAN BISHOPRIC IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY
- 129 **Tiphaine Gaumy**  
THE ICONOGRAPHY OF POPULAR REVOLTS IN MODERN EUROPE (14<sup>TH</sup> – 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES): IMAGES AND AUTHORITIES
- 139 **Jovana D. Milovanović**  
THE MILLENNIUM CELEBRATIONS OF 1896 AND THE CITY OF RIJEKA: ON ANDOR DUDITS' PAINTING *THE CEREMONIAL PROCLAMATION OF THE ANNEXATION OF RIJEKA TO HUNGARY IN 1779*
- 147 **Igor Borozan**  
BETWEEN THE ARTS AND POLITICS: RITUAL CRADLE DONATION AND THE CASE OF THE FALSE PREGNANCY OF QUEEN DRAGA OBRENOVIĆ
- 157 **Frano Dulibić**  
IDEOLOGIES, CARTOONS AND COMIC STRIPS DURING WORLD WAR II IN CROATIA
- 171 **Ana Munk**  
IDOLATRY: REFLECTIONS ON VISUAL PERMISSION AND PROHIBITION IN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

## 183 The Politics of Patronage, Provenance, and Curation

- 185 **Sanja Cvetnić**  
THE FRANKAPAN FAMILY AND THE POLITICAL ICONOGRAPHY OF EARLY MODERN AND MODERN CROATIA
- 193 **Marjeta Ciglencečki**  
THE DIPLOMATIC GIFT OF A PAINTING AND ITS COPY IN THE PTUJ CASTLE GALLERY
- 201 **Ljerka Dulibić, Iva Pasini Tržec**  
THE LONG LIVES OF TRANSFERRED MUSEUM OBJECTS: THE EXCHANGE OF PAINTINGS FROM THE STROSSMAYER GALLERY (ZAGREB) FOR THE BAPTISMAL FONT FROM THE MUSEO CORRER (VENICE) IN 1942
- 213 **Katja Mahnič**  
JOSIP MANTUANI ON THE ROLE OF ART COLLECTION WITHIN THE MODERN MUSEUM
- 221 **Jasminka Najcer Sabljak, Silvija Lučevnjak**  
STATE AUTHORITIES AND THE HERITAGE OF NOBLE FAMILIES OF EASTERN CROATIA

## 231 Art, Nations, Nationalism

- 233 **Marina Bregovac Pisk**  
COLLECTING PAINTINGS, PRINTS AND SCULPTURES IN A NATIONAL MUSEUM FROM THE 19<sup>TH</sup> TO THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY
- 243 **Sandi Bulimbašić**  
THE MEDULIĆ ASSOCIATION OF CROATIAN ARTISTS IN THE CONTEXT OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN ARTISTIC AND POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS: THE MYTH AND THE NATION
- 255 **Iva Prosoli**  
FROM *HEIMATKUNST* TO THE ZAGREB SCHOOL (AN ATTEMPT TO CREATE NATIONAL IDENTITY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY)
- 263 **Nikki Petroni**  
SUBVERTING THE CANON: A RETHINKING OF THE PLACE OF TRADITION IN PERIPHERAL MODERN ART. THE CASE OF MALTA
- 271 **Ana Šeparović**  
CROATIAN PAINTING AND ART CRITICISM IN THE PERIOD OF SOCIALIST REALISM (1945–1950): THEORY VS. PRACTICE
- 281 **Aldona Tołysz**  
BETWEEN FREEDOM AND POLICY: THE POLISH ART SCENE IN THE COMMUNIST PERIOD BETWEEN 1945 AND 1965

## 291 Political Architecture/The Politics of Architecture

- 293 **Cosmin Minea**  
FOREIGN AND LOCAL ENTANGLEMENTS IN THE CREATION OF ROMANIAN ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IN THE LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY
- 303 **Franko Ćorić**  
PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF HISTORIC MONUMENTS AS A CULTURAL POLICY OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MONARCHY
- 313 **Aleksander Łupienko**  
ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING IN SERVICE OF POLITICS: NEOCLASSICISM AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF CITIES IN THE KINGDOM OF POLAND
- 325 **Michał Pszczółkowski**  
ARCHITECTURE AS A TOOL OF TRANSCULTURATION IN POLISH LANDS DURING THE PARTITIONS
- 335 **Dragan Damjanović**  
AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN DUALISM AND CROATIAN 19<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE – POLITICS AND DESIGN

## 349 List of authors

**Tijana  
Borić**

Faculty of Arts,  
University of Niš

## A MANIFESTO OF POWER AND RESTORED STATEHOOD: KARADORĐE'S TOWN OF TOPOLA

### Abstract

*An essential element of representative culture in the late modern European era was the process of choosing, establishing and shaping a capital city. The heart of the capital was the princely court, an unmistakable expression of the highest authorities. Despite its lack of independence and extreme political circumstances, the Serbian community was aware of contemporary developments. The construction of the town of Topola by the revolutionary leader Karađorđe provided evidence that the new concept of a ruler representing the state was already known to Serbian political elites. The construction of the court of Karađorđe in Topola was a conscious political intervention to create an institutional center for the restored Serbia, which legally and symbolically pointed to the political and ideological course Serbia took in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

**Keywords:** Karađorđe, princely court, Topola, capital city, national representation

### INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a little town in central Serbia named Topola developed into the center of the restored Serbian state. Here, the process of shaping a new image for the state and its national emancipation was initiated. Topola's prime geographical position in the Šumadija region made it ideal as a political and administrative hub for the recently liberated parts of Serbia during the rule of Đorđe Petrović, nicknamed Karađorđe (Black George).<sup>1</sup> Hidden and sheltered from nearby military clashes with dense forests that offered a place of safety in case of danger, Topola and the adjacent Oplenac Hill were naturally considered an ideal setting and a safe, stable seat for the nascent state. Therefore, it is not surprising the Grand Leader of the Serbs at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century decided to settle there permanently after a long period of constant migration.<sup>2</sup> Karađorđe Petrović, the leader of the Serbian Revolution, was born in the nearby village named Viševac<sup>3</sup> and settled in the immediate vicinity of Topola at the dawn of the First Serbian Uprising in 1804. It was under the leadership of Karađorđe that Topola experienced a real boom in its development.

### FIRST AND SECOND RESIDENCES

Lack of primary sources and archival materials prevents reliable chronological reconstruction of the edifices constructed by Karađorđe in Topola. However, based on notes, memoirs and travel chronicles, we can forward a speculative description that, hopefully, future excavations and research will confirm or improve on. According to the memoirs of Konstantin Nenadović, the first household that Karađorđe established in Topola

<sup>1</sup> Branko Vujović, *Umetnost obnovljene Srbije 1791–1848* [Art in Revived Serbia 1791–1848] (Beograd: Prosveta, Republički zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture, 1986), 97–99.

<sup>2</sup> Konstantin Nenadović, *Život i dela velikog Đorđa Petrovića Kara-đorđa oslobodioca i Vladara Srbije i život njegovi Vojvoda i junaka: kao gradivo za srpsku istoriju od godine 1804 do 1813 i na dalje* [Life and Deeds of the Grand George Petrović Kara-dorđe, a Liberator and Ruler of Serbia, and the Lives of his Dukes and Heroes: as the Source for Serbian History from 1804 to 1813 and Beyond], vol. 1 (Beč: Štamparija Jovana N. Vernaja, 1883), XXIX–XXXII.

<sup>3</sup> Similar to biographies of ancient heroes, the exact place of birth of Karađorđe remains uncertain and many places claimed to be the birthplace of the Great Leader. It is interesting that the folk tradition emphasized the importance of Topola and tied it to the personality of Karađorđe, as deep into the late 19<sup>th</sup> century it was generally believed that he was born there. Joakim Vujić, *Putešestvije po Srbiji* [Travels in Serbia], vol. 1 (Beograd: Srpska književna zadruga, 1902), 127; Mile Nedeljković, *Zapisi o Šumadiji* [Records on Šumadija], vol. 2 (Beograd: Centar za naučna istraživanja Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti i Univerziteta u Kragujevcu, 2000), 35–37.

already reflected his newly acquired status of a successful leader and the material progress and prosperous life of a good young landlord.<sup>4</sup> Nenadović discusses the prominent position and structure of the spacious family home, which included defensive features such as arrow slits in the walls due to the unsafe circumstances prior to the First Uprising. Interestingly, the home of the future Great Leader was characterized by the need to establish a place undisturbed by eager eyes in which we can recognize the first signs of the enclosure of private space and a movement away from the old concept of an open countryside.<sup>5</sup> One detail that especially draws readers' attention is the fact that Karađorđe's house had a special door through which he entered with "higher honor". This privatization and personalization of space points to concepts of ownership, control and power. Furthermore, the description of an orderly household surrounded by cultivated orchards, vineyards and fields alludes to the successful management of the vast property, independence, and security in everyday life.

Beyond highlighting an idyllic image of Karađorđe's residence, this detailed account of the estate should be seen in the light of the author's attempt to insert an image of welfare and prosperity that prefigures the new course soon to be taken under the leadership of Karađorđe. An image of the household highlighted against the backdrop of an idealized pastoral landscape was commonplace in 19<sup>th</sup> literature and visual arts. It represented a carefully-calculated celebration of the idea of freedom, an Arcadian shelter from actual reality filled with daily turmoil.

Karađorđe's key role in the national revolution and the astonishing success of the First Serbian Uprising placed this little Serbian town at the center of political attention, and the reputation of Topola grew in proportion to the success of the revolutionary events. The fact that Karađorđe's household was burned in a revenge campaign in 1804 by Kućuk Alija, an Ottoman military leader, supports the fact that it was already recognized as a politically important seat of power.<sup>6</sup>

Armed conflicts during the first years of the Uprising prevented any bigger architectural undertakings in Topola, but it is quite certain that immediately after his first home was set on fire, Karađorđe built a new one, that, by all accounts and according to actual needs, had the characteristics of a fortified military camp.<sup>7</sup> Scarce diary notes and short references in memoirs reveal that Karađorđe's second residence in Topola was clearly defined by a palisade and fortified with a defensive rampart featuring loopholes (arrow slits) and watchtowers.<sup>8</sup>

Karađorđe's second residence in Topola was distinctive due to its recognizable purpose and the particular use of the space that underlined its role of a ruler's residence. Besides its strictly residential function, it was used as an official and public space. Next to the residential *konak*<sup>9</sup>, there were buildings that were used as offices, a court of justice and the headquarters of the Grand Leader.<sup>10</sup> Prominent Serbian individuals of the time frequently visited Karađorđe's seat in Topola, as did many of the leading political figures in revolutionary Serbia, representatives of the Ottoman government and members of the State Council. These frequent official visits to Topola systematically consolidated and legitimized the little town as the capital of the state authorities.

## DEVELOPMENT, FORM AND FUNCTIONS OF THE TOWN IN TOPOLA

The period of truce in 1807 and 1808 brought about a revival of construction activities in Topola. It is well known that patronage played a key role in the culture of the courts and in confirming the ruler's identity. Since at least the Renaissance, the

<sup>4</sup>Nenadović, *Život i dela velikog Đorđa Petrovića Kara-đorđa*, XXXII.

<sup>5</sup>Miroslav Timotijević, "Privatni prostori i mesta privatnosti" [Private Spaces and Spaces of Privacy], in *Privatni život kod Srba u XIX veku*, eds. Ana Stolić and Nenad Makuljević (Beograd: Klio, 2006), 172–177.

<sup>6</sup>Borivoje Drobniaković, "Topola Karađorđeva prestonica" [Topola Karađorđe's Capital], *Brastvo*, no. 20 (1926): 62–63.

<sup>7</sup>Radoš Ljušić, *Vožd Karađorđe: biografija* [The Grand Leader Karađorđe: Biography] (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2005), 512.

<sup>8</sup>Nenadović, *Život i dela velikog Đorđa Petrovića Kara-đorđa*, XXXIII.

<sup>9</sup>*Konak* is a Turkish word for a large palatial house that was built on the territories of the former Ottoman Empire and was used both for residential and official purposes. See Jelena Bogdanović, "On the Architecture of the Konaks in Serbia (1804–1830s)," *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 21, no. 2 (2007): 161–180.

<sup>10</sup>Radosav Marković, *Pitanje prestonice u Srbiji kneza Miloša* [The Issue of Serbian Capital During the Era of Prince Miloš] (Beograd: Štamparija Drag. Popovića, 1938), 8.

concept of magnificence had been an important instrument of rulership.<sup>11</sup> The invention of tradition had a special significance in propaganda program of the rulers and in the process of legitimizing modern national demands.<sup>12</sup> By encouraging construction activities, especially reconstructions of medieval monasteries and churches that had been demolished or destroyed, the collective memory of a former powerful medieval state was refreshed and contributed directly to the rise of a national consciousness. This concept was well known and accepted by the Serbian Grand Leader, too. Following the model of European practice, a system of active patronage helped to constitute and justify Karađorđe's leadership and to establish connection to a glorious, heroic past. Modelling himself on medieval rulers, Karađorđe renewed distinguished sacred *topoi* such as the medieval monasteries of Ravanica and Manasija.<sup>13</sup> Carefully calculated symbolism supported Karađorđe's political desires and backed up his aspiration to become the dominant political force in the province of Belgrade.

At the same time, the year 1808 witnessed the development of a powerful national cult of Karađorđe that exalted him as a member of the pantheon of idealized Serbian rulers and heroes. Visual culture was crucial in this process, and the portraits of Karađorđe<sup>14</sup> that were created during this period reveal an appreciation of political iconography and an understanding of the importance of the visible verification of power.

In order to block negative reactions to his unrestrained power and to prevent Belgrade from further strengthening its political prestige, Karađorđe took advantage of the period of truce in 1810 and conducted an extensive construction project that would make Topola an undeniable site of national memory and a symbolically and visually recognizable capital for the rebellious Serbia. Records state that in 1810 Karađorđe stayed in Topola more frequently and far longer than usual in order to plan the radical reconstruction and creation of the capital city.<sup>15</sup>

The National Assembly held in Belgrade on January 19–25, 1811 confirmed Karađorđe in the rank and title of the Grand Leader.<sup>16</sup> Having become a hereditary ruler, Karađorđe commenced the next important step in the visual glorification of his sovereign identity and political stature: the establishment of a clear seat of power, including a court, in Topola.

According to the standards of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Serbia, Topola was given all of the important institutional symbols of the state and nation including a court, church, city hall, courthouse, military barracks and school, which together marked it clearly as an ideological center of power and national life. The mobilization of all available building resources also points to the impressiveness of the architectural endeavors at the time. Topola became the largest construction site in the region. The importance of the project was underlined by frequent mention of Karađorđe's direct engagement in issues of design and organization, and his direct supervision of the overall construction process.<sup>17</sup> The expansiveness of the project demanded expenditures that went far beyond the financial capacity of the patron – this alone can be considered a direct reflection of the concept of magnificence, the ideological discourse which was used even in the period of revolutionary sovereignty of Serbia. Within only three years, in the period between 1811 and 1813, a fortified city was built in Topola. It was rectangular in plan, surrounded by a huge moat, included three-story towers

<sup>11</sup> Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Princes and Artists: Patronage and Ideology at Four Habsburg Courts 1517–1633* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 11–43.

<sup>12</sup> Igor Borozan, "Between Evidence and Imagination: The Shaping of Tradition and Art in the Service of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Serbian Monarchy," in *Imagining the Past: The Reception of the Middle Ages in Serbian Art from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, eds. Lidija Merenik et al. (Belgrade: Serbian National Committee of Byzantine Studies; Službeni glasnik; Institute for Byzantine Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2016), 71–86.

<sup>13</sup> Miodrag Kolarić, "Likovna kultura Karađorđevog vremena" [Fine Arts in the Era of Karađorđe], *Istorijski glasnik*, no. 1–2 (1951): 62–63.

<sup>14</sup> Pavle Vasić, "Karađorđeva Srbija u delima savremenih umetnika" [Karađorđe's Serbia in the Works of Modern Artists], *Zbornik Muzeja prvog srpskog ustanka*, no. 1 (1959): 70–75.

<sup>15</sup> Ljušić, *Vožd Karađorđe*, 320.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 335–348.

<sup>17</sup> *Delovodni protokol Karađorđa Petrovića: (1812–1813)* [Bookkeeping Journal of Karađorđe Petrović: (1812–1813)], eds. Mile Nedeljković and Milivoje Stanković (Kragujevac: Svetlost; Topola: Centar za kulturu Dušan Petrović Šane, 1988).



Fig. 1. The Town of Karadorde in Topola, lithography, from Konstantin Nenadović, *Život i dela velikog Đorđa Petrovića Kara-đorđa oslobodioca i Vladara Srbije i život njegovi Vojvoda i junaka: kao građivo za srbsku istoriju od godine 1804 do 1813 i nadalje* (Beč: 1883).

rising at its the corners, defended by cannons and encircled by thick walls designed for military maneuvers and the immediate defense of the city.<sup>18</sup>

A reconstruction of Karađorđe's heavily fortified town is almost impossible to imagine today. Topola was demolished in 1877 due to the fact that it was the seat of the rebellion against King Milan Obrenović. We must suffice with scarce records provided by contemporaries, some descriptions from later periods that must be treated with caution, and the few preserved buildings that later underwent significant changes.

The only known visual record of the Karađorđe's fortified town in Topola is a valuable lithographic print preserved in the book by Konstantin Nenadović, published in Vienna in 1883 (fig. 1). Even though the author was appointed as a teacher in the school in Topola during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the image was made long after that period, so we need to interpret it carefully. There is also another image, a tableau made in 1903 by the architect Stojan Titelbah, but this is believed to be based on the above-mentioned image since it largely repeats details from the lithography and the author himself could not have known the original appearance of Karađorđe's city in Topola.<sup>19</sup>

The fortified town of Topola had multiple functions: defensive, administrative, organizational, residential, judicial, economical, ecclesiastical and educational. Despite the fact that there was not much time for the construction, one gets the impression that Karađorđe knew very well what his capital should contain and which different functions it should include. Accordingly, within the city a whole range of buildings was designed to accommodate state institutions of different characters. The space available for development was planned according to an organized hierarchical system and properly distributed architectural edifices gave the overall impression of tidiness and controlled organization, but also of national emancipation.<sup>20</sup> The city was divided into clearly defined units of space in contrast to the surrounding idyllic landscape, so that the palace complex was marked off from the surrounding world both visually and symbolically. This normative poetics of this orderly

<sup>18</sup> Kolarić, "Likovna kultura Karađorđevog vremena," 9.

<sup>19</sup> Vujović, *Umetnost obnovljene Srbije*, 97.

<sup>20</sup> Nenad Makuljević, *Umetnost i nacionalna ideja. Sistem evropske i srpske vizuelne kulture u službi nacije* [Art and National Idea in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century: System of European and Serbian Visual Culture in the Service of Nation] (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2006), 256.



setting was a stark antithesis to the expected appearance of spontaneous settlements usually associated with the recent slavish past.

The core of the court complex in Topola consisted of the court, church, guest quarters, school and practical ancillary buildings grouped around the court. Among these subsidiary edifices was the previous residence of Karađorđe, now used for the guards of the Grand Leader.<sup>21</sup> Outside the inner walls, there were buildings intended primarily for economic and commercial activities, to meet the needs of the residents.

One important symbolic space within Topola town was a Turkish cemetery that consisted of the graves of Turkish soldiers personally executed by the Grand Leader during the Uprising. The symbolic capital of this particular cemetery was used to encourage a national sensibility and permanently root an image of the praiseworthy ruler, hero and liberator of the nation in the collective consciousness of the population.

## INFLUENCES

The morphology of the town of Topola points to the undeniable cultural influence of Western European understandings of the symbolism of the city and its center. To design the new residence, Karađorđe's architects probably turned to the practices used at Metropolitan residences in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci in the Habsburg Monarchy and at noble estates of the Romanian territories that were surely known to Karađorđe and his builders. The entire town was located in a rich and noble natural setting, surrounded by fruitful fields and thick woods which guaranteed protection, peace and security. Organized as a refuge located in an idealized landscape, the town of Topola was based on the concept of a city surrounded by an ideal landscape. In a parallel manner, its political practice rested on the well known concepts of the court as an ideal city and a metaphor for the perfect world order.<sup>22</sup> Taking into account the persistent medieval idea of a city as a reflection of the Heavenly Jerusalem and the Enlightenment interpretation of the city center as a symbolic space, Karađorđe's town projected the harmony of a hierarchically stratified social order headed by the celebrated ruler and protector. In other words, the capital was conceived of as a reflection of the heavenly Concordia and functioned as a mirror image for the newly-established ideal hierarchy in Serbia, guarded and protected by the father of the nation, Karađorđe.<sup>23</sup>

A closer look at a drawing published in Nenadović's book reveals an entire system of spatial and symbolic boundaries, physical and mental borders that clearly separated and isolated spatial units protecting their essential nucleus, the court and the ruler within it. A complex system of walls, gates, fences and guards was established, as in any other European courts of the time, in order to control access to the ruler, protecting and mystifying him at the same time.<sup>24</sup> The level of access to the ruler's body indicated levels of influence within a particular society. In this sense, we can see how the Serbian authorities adopted and put into practice early 19<sup>th</sup> century standards for the spatialization of a court complex and the institutionalization of privacy as a part of the daily routine of a ruler.

## INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

The most important structure in the town of Topola, its physical and symbolic heart, was the court. The residence, which was the most difficult structure to reach, occupied the largest area and the most prominent position within the court complex. In this way, the ruler's dominant position within the society was visibly emphasized. In all probability, Karađorđe's residence was built in 1812 and its builder was the master Cena

<sup>21</sup> Nenadović, *Život i dela velikog Đorđa Petrovića Kara-đorđa*, XXXIV–XXXIX.

<sup>22</sup> John Adamson, "The Making of the Ancien Régime Court, 1500–1700," in *The Princely Courts of Europe: Rituals, Politics and Culture under the Ancien Régime 1500–1750*, ed. John Adamson (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 24–27.

<sup>23</sup> Igor Borozan, *Reprezentativna kultura i politička propaganda. Spomenik knezu Milošu u Negotinu* [Representative Culture and Political Propaganda: the Monument to Prince Miloš in Negotin] (Beograd: Filozofski fakultet, 2006), 109–111.

<sup>24</sup> Adamson, "The Making of the Ancien Régime Court," 13–15.

from the village of Biskup in the region of Ramska Nahija.<sup>25</sup> It is likely that the palace builders used stone from the ruins of the neighboring medieval village of Banja, at the foot of the mountain Venčac. According to tradition, this village once housed palace of the last Serbian titular despot, Pavle Bakić, who was considered to be a paradigmatic heroic protector of the Serbian people against the Ottoman invaders.<sup>26</sup>

Primary sources, chronicles and records of contemporaries would certainly give us more detailed, reliable insight into life at the court of Karađorđe in Topola. Descriptions of the interior, inventory lists and notes on the daily activities at the court, which would have been crucial for understanding Karađorđe's lifestyle, have unfortunately not been discovered. The most comprehensive description of the court of Karađorđe in Topola is found again in the memoir of Konstantin Nenadović, and since it was written long after the period in question, it may be unreliable. Based on this description, the residential quarters were located on the first floor while the ground floor was intended for supplying facilities, stables and the kitchen.<sup>27</sup> Studies have shown that the residence was built of stone and brick, and that some rooms were paved with white marble slabs.<sup>28</sup> The use of luxurious building materials underscores the importance that the concept of magnificence held in the court, and underlines the fact that Karađorđe was familiar with notion of the ruler's dignity and the politics of magnificence.

Next to the residence, there was a church attached to the eastern wall and another smaller guest house that was located on the opposite side of the courtyard. This physical interconnection of the palace and the church is not surprising since courtly piousness was a fundamental attribute of a ruler's identity.<sup>29</sup> Thus, another compulsory element of the royal complex in Topola was a court chapel. The court church, better known as the church of Karađorđe, was dedicated to the Birth of the Virgin and, apparently, also served as the parish church of Topola. The church was adjacent to the eastern wall of the city and was surrounded by its own separate, somewhat lower wall, so that the courtyard of the church formed a visibly separate space, which included a school building and a teacher's dwelling.<sup>30</sup> It is likely that the Church was the first building to be erected within the urban complex in Topola.<sup>31</sup> The surviving founder's inscription above the west portal states that the church of Karađorđe was finished in 1811. The bell tower was located in the southeast tower of the fortress, and its bells were cast in the Gun Foundry of the Lower Town of Belgrade Fortress.<sup>32</sup> The construction of high towers and the use of bells were strictly prohibited to Christians within the Ottoman Empire, and the act of constructing a bell tower and casting bells was an obvious metaphor for the freedom achieved in the First Uprising, a demonstration of the state's sovereignty and the power of the ruler.

This single-nave domed church is simple in its architecture, reduced in size and without elaborate decorations on the facade. Its simplified architectural plan is associated with a distinctive model of church buildings that dated back to the period of suspended statehood and lost freedom, a time that entailed limitations in architectural design.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, the church that the Grand Leader of the First Serbian Uprising built in Topola was the most representative church of revolutionary Serbia, a fact that was reflected in its interior. The design and execution of the frescoes, icons and other artworks were entrusted to the most talented masters and artists of the time, including Jeremija Mihailović and Petar Nikolajević Moler.<sup>34</sup> The altar area of this spiritual center of the new Serbian capital contained a

<sup>25</sup> Kolarić, "Likovna kultura Karađorđevog vremena," 9.

<sup>26</sup> Mile Nedeljković, *Topola Karađorđev grad Oplenac* [Topola Karađorđe's Town Oplenac Hill] (Topola: Zadužbina kralja Petra I Karađorđevića, 1991), 16.

<sup>27</sup> Nenadović, *Život i dela velikog Đorđa Petrovića Kara-đorđa*, XXXIV.

<sup>28</sup> Dobrosav St. Pavlović, "Karađorđev grad u u Topoli" [Karađorđe's Town in Topola], *Saopštenja Republičkog zavoda za zaštitu spomenika kulture*, vol. 29 (1997): 228.

<sup>29</sup> Adamson, "The Making of the Ancien Régime Court," 24–27.

<sup>30</sup> Drobnjaković, "Topola Karađorđeva prestonica," 63.

<sup>31</sup> Kolarić, "Likovna kultura Karađorđevog vremena," 9.

<sup>32</sup> Nenadović, *Život i dela velikog Đorđa Petrovića Kara-đorđa*, XXXV.

<sup>33</sup> Tanja Ivanović, "Crkva rođenja Presvete Bogorodice u Topoli" [Church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary in Topola] (Master's thesis, University of Belgrade, 2008), 5.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 28–60.

carefully chosen program celebrating distinguished figures from the medieval Serbian state. By referring to the tradition of the Holy Serbian Kingdom and depicting its most important state and church leaders, the frescoes emphasized the continuity represented by Karađorđe and his undisputed paternal authority.

A key moment in the political glorification of Topola as a new capital, which also functioned as a convincing verification of Karađorđe as a Christian ruler, occurred during a three-day public ceremony in honor of Karađorđe's Patron Saint, St. Clement, which was organized in the courtyard of the court chapel.<sup>35</sup> Although we lack a detailed description of the ceremony, it surely involved a large gathering of celebrants from the surrounding cities, as well as the presence of various folk leaders. Ideologically, this festival was crucial to establishing and popularizing the ruler's image. Several memoirs mention that, despite the importance of ongoing political and military activities, Karađorđe interrupted his commitments to organize the celebrations in Topola and used the opportunity to interact directly with the people – this fact alone suggests that he planned to use the public religious ceremony for the sake of self-popularization and to establish his image in the minds of the people.<sup>36</sup> In comparison to later celebrations that Prince Alexander, following the example of his father, regularly sponsored, the three-day festivities were extensive – they even involved the participation of the assembled crowds outside of the church, where Karađorđe joined in the traditional group folk dance known as the *kolo* and thereby presented himself as a national ruler. On the other hand, the arrival and reception of privileged guests who had the honor of attending a meal in the court, was also a crucial part of the celebration.<sup>37</sup> Such ritual feasts provided an image of hierarchy within the community, headed by the undeniable authority of Karađorđe.

Another event that punctuated the central status of Topola occurred in June 1812, when the National Assembly of Serbia gathered on the occasion of the Treaty of Bucharest, the peace agreement between Russia and Turkey that ended the Russo-Turkish War.<sup>38</sup> On the occasion, the Russian imperial emissary Marko Ivelić awarded Karađorđe with the Order of Saint Anne. Unfortunately, there are no detailed descriptions of the ceremony that might give us insight into the finished appearance of the city.

The year 1813 marked a turnaround that resulted in the downfall of the First Serbian Uprising. Karađorđe left Serbia and during the autumn the Ottoman army, headed by Suleiman Pasha Skopljak, set Topola on fire.<sup>39</sup> In the following uneasy years, the town was burnt again, and the residents only renewed the church and the school building.<sup>40</sup> The restoration of the city would only occur during the reign of Prince Alexander Karađorđević.<sup>41</sup>

Topola lost its initial importance with the rise of Prince Miloš Obrenović and his execution of Karađorđe in July 1817.<sup>42</sup> However, Karađorđe's murder and the direct involvement of Prince Miloš in his execution left a significant mark on the subsequent memorialization of Topola as a vital site of national memory. Prince Miloš converted the church in Topola into a mausoleum in 1820 after he had placed Karađorđe's remains in the tomb. With this symbolic act, Karađorđe gained the aura of a hero-martyr and Topola was marked as a sacred site in a manner that would facilitate its ensuing revitalization. Despite the extremely short period of its existence in its original form, Topola was permanently established as a fundamental national and dynastic space of the Karađorđevićs.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 64–66.

<sup>36</sup> Lazar Arsenijević Batalaka, *Istorija srpskoga ustanka* [History of the Serbian Uprising] (Beograd: Batalakin fond; Štamparija Kraljevine Srbije, 1898), 332.

<sup>37</sup> "Pismo prijatelju" [A Letter to a Friend], *Srbske novine*, December 7, 1845, 385–387.

<sup>38</sup> Marković, *Pitanje prestonice*, 83.

<sup>39</sup> Ljušić, *Vožd Karađorđe*, 512.

<sup>40</sup> Vujović, *Umetnost obnovljene Srbije*, 99.

<sup>41</sup> Tijana Borić, "Dvorovi dinastija Obrenović i Karađorđević u Srbiji" [Courts of the Dynasties Obrenović and Karađorđević in Serbia] (PhD diss., University of Belgrade, 2014), 144–149.

<sup>42</sup> Political developments in 19<sup>th</sup> century Serbia were marked by bitter dynastic rivalry between the Karađorđević and Obrenović families. When the First Serbian Uprising was put down in 1813, Karađorđe fled Serbia. When he tried to return in 1817, he was beheaded by supporters of Miloš Obrenović, once a fellow rebel, who had launched the Second Serbian Uprising in 1815. Fearing that Karađorđe's popularity would undermine his own power, Obrenović had organized Karađorđe's assassination. More on Miloš Obrenović, see Vladimir Stojančević, *Miloš Obrenović i njegovo doba* [Miloš Obrenović and his Era] (Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 1990).