


LIFE IN SERBIA

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Justice and Police FDJP
State Secretariat for Migration SEM



COMMISSARIAT FOR
REFUGEES AND MIGRATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA



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LIFE IN SERBIA

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Vladimir Sjekloća

Editor:

Vladimir Sjekloća

Authors:

Branislava Pokuševski Kumalakanta and Jovan Ristić

Design and prepress:

Milan Krotić

Translation:

Dejan Đošić

Cover photo:

Dušan Pokuševski

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INTRODUCTION

When we arrive to a country, we always look for information that can accurately and effectively point out how its inhabitants live, what kind of country it is, and what defines it – its culture and customs, landmarks, celebrations, who are its heroes and what its residents eat. This need for precise information is more noticeable among persons intending to stay in Serbia – asylum seekers as well as persons granted asylum or subsidiary protection. Having arrived in an unknown country, far from their homeland from which they fled, they have to cope with a new culture that cultivates a language different from their mother tongue and a new environment, so they need help, preferably in languages they understand.

Such is the experience of the Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC), which in 2019, in partnership with the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) started organizing workshops for refugees and asylum seekers, on the topics of integration and the asylum procedure. Attendees frequently asked one question: “Is there a book or a brochure that could help us learn more about Serbia?”.

The idea to create this publication, published in partnership with the State Secretariat for Migration of the Swiss Confederation (SEM), was born this way. We tried to bring Serbian cultural heritage, language and alphabet, customs and beliefs, science, culture, popular culture, sport, gastronomy and key figures from these fields closer to persons who seek asylum, who received protection, or are planning to do so. To bring Serbia and Serbia’s way of life closer to as many asylum seekers, refugees, and other persons interested in staying in Serbia as possible, this publication was compiled in Serbian but also in other languages frequently used by persons who arrive in Serbia seeking protection. So, besides Serbian, this publication is available in English, French, Arabic, and Persian languages too.

Serbia has a lot to offer, and as this publication provides basic information, readers can further explore themes that interest them the most on their own, focusing on their interests and needs, and in doing so they’ll have CRPC’s assistance if they need it. We hope that this publication will capacitate its readers to easily find their way in Serbia and get in touch with locals, discussing cultural topics which connect and bring people closer to each other for ages.

1. Cultural heritage

1.1. Prehistorical archaeological sites

Some of the world's oldest archaeological sites can be found in Serbia.

The oldest archaeological site is **Lepenski Vir**¹. Architectural remains and different items belonging to this culture date back to the prehistoric period, more precisely from the Stone Age (from 9.500 B.C to 5.500 B.C.). Lepenski Vir is the name of the region in the Djerdap Canyon (present-day Djerdap National Park) where several settlements with remains of 136 residential and sacramental buildings were found. Houses are arranged in a trapezoid form facing the Danube River. Houses themselves have a geometric shape with a hearthstone at the centre. Sculptures discovered in Lepenski Vir represent either simple geometrical patterns or anthropomorphic figures with certain emphasized elements like eyebrows, long noses, and wide fishlike mouths. Sculptures were an integral part of every house, embedded into the stone floor.

Archaeological site in **Vinca**, a place near Belgrade, dates from the early Stone Age (from 5.700 B.C. to 4.500 B.C.). Vinca is considered to be the centre of a culture that encompassed central Balkans and was named Vinca culture. Vinca buildings were geometrical. Anthropomorphic figurines found in Vinca range from simple columnar shapes, with barely indicated noses and eyes on their heads just scarcely abstracted from the clay mass, to lavishing sitting or standing figurines with beautifully decorated outfits. Research showed that the earliest known example of copper metallurgy occurred in Vinca, so this civilization was the most technologically advanced of its time. On Vinca's most known archaeological sites, the oldest metal items found were massive copper bracelets.

1.2. Archaeological sites from the Roman era

Romans built a series of cities and fortresses along their northern borders, facing barbaric regions. Their arrival to the Balkans, during the first century A.D, introduced artistic elements, based on the Roman tradition and culture, to a still primitive culture. The development of Roman cities created a complex society, and cities were built according to the already established Roman scheme.

Remains of **Sirmium**², an important Roman army stronghold, can be found in Sremska Mitrovica. Sirmium was one of the most important cities in the entire Roman Empire since it was one of the four Roman capital cities, established during the reign of Emperor Diocletian (284-305 A.D.). Several Roman emperors were born in this city, including Decius Traian, Probus, and Maximilian. Theodosius I (379-395 A.D), the last ruler of both the east and west Roman Empire, was crowned in this city. This archaeological site includes the remains of the imperial palace, Christian Basilica, etc. To the East of Sirmium, on the Sava-Danube River mouth, **Singidunum** was founded, and it was built on the remains of a Celtic fortress called Singidun. After the permanent division of the Roman Empire (395 A.D.), Singidunum became part of the Eastern Empire. The city was destroyed during the Hun

¹ Serbian spelling will be used for native places, buildings, customs, beliefs, meals and personalities in further text

² Latin spelling for places and persons from the Roman era will be used in further text

invasions in the mid-5th century, just like other Roman cities in the Pannonian Plain. Singidunum's remains are still visible. Medieval Belgrade was built over the ruins of Singidunum. Viminacium, a former Illyric city, located further east down the Danube, was the capital city of the Roman province Moesia Superior. Tombs from the late antiquity period painted with frescoes were discovered inside the ruins of Viminacium.

The most important Roman city south of the Danube was **Naissus** (contemporary Nis), where Mediana was built, a luxurious estate and summer palace of the Roman emperor Constantine the Great (Constantine I – 306-337 A.D). **Mediana**, the best-preserved segment of Naissus, and also the birthplace of Constantine, was located near thermal springs. Naissus itself was an important city even before Constantine. During emperor Diocletian, beautiful thermal baths were built there, with a floor heating system. Naissus was destroyed during the Hun attacks in 446 A.D. Approximately a century after, it was rebuilt by the Byzantine emperor Justinian (527-565 A.D). Slavic tribes inhabited Naissus during the 7th century.

Tabula Traiana memorial plaque, carved in stone above the Danube River in Djerdap Canyon, dates from the Roman Empire too. Trajan was one of the most renowned Roman emperors (98-117 A.C), and Tabula Trajana was built above the road which Roman troops used to pass through the canyon. On the same road, Trajan built a bridge over the Danube. Because of the construction of the Djerdap power plant and the artificial lake, the Roman Road was flooded and Tabula Trajana was moved 21.5 meters above the place where it was originally placed.

1.3. Significant fortresses built after the Roman era

Besides the heritage of the classical Roman culture, medieval fortresses, including the ones built after the Middle Ages by Serbs and other conquerors of these areas as well – Byzantines, Turks, Hungarians, and Austrians – are of great significance to the Serbian cultural heritage.

Bac Fortress – This is a well-preserved Hungarian stronghold in Vojvodina, located in Bac near the Danube River. The fortress was built between 1338 and 1342, during the reign of the Hungarian King Charles Robert. However, it got its present appearance a century later. The fortress was built on the site of an older Avar fortress, destroyed by Mongols.

Petrovaradin Fortress – It is placed on the top of Petrovaradin's rock, next to today's city of Novi Sad. This magnificent medieval fortress was constructed during the Austrian era (1692-1780), for defence against the Ottoman Turks, and was built where the Roman town of Cusum and the Byzantine stronghold Petricon were once located.

Nis Fortress – One of the best-preserved fortresses in the Balkans. This fortress is located in the downtown of today's city of Nis. It was built by the Turks on the leftovers of the Roman, Byzantine, and medieval fortresses.

Belgrade Fortress (Kalemegdan) – This fortress, located on a strategically important place – Kalemegdan hill above the Sava-Danube River mouth – bears the characteristics and archaeological layers of practically every conqueror ever to have captured it. On the location of the Celtic Singidun, a Roman fortress Singidunum was built as a part of the military border towards Barbaric Central Europe. This town was destroyed and rebuilt several times by different conquerors. Among them were Serbs who began to inhabit the area. Bulgarians were the first to call this town Belgrade. After this, Belgrade was periodically a Hungarian and a Serbian border town. Turks conquered Belgrade in 1521. During the Turk occupation, the town fell into Austrian hands several times. They renewed and modernized it. Serbs finally liberated this city in 1815, and declared it the Serbian capital in 1841, while the last Turkish garrison left the area in 1867.

Smederevo Fortress – One of the largest fortresses in Serbia. This fortress was built by Serbs (1427-1430) as requested by the Serbian Despot Djuradj Brankovic, after being forced to hand over Belgrade to Hungarians. Smederevo then became the Serbian capital until it fell under Turkish rule in 1459.

Kale Fortress (Momcilo's city) – A well preserved small fortress near Pirot. Its oldest parts date from the Roman era. The fortress was built by a Serbian medieval knight Duke Momcilo during Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic's rule in the second half of the 14th century, thus was named Momcilov's city. It was a military stronghold until the first half of the 20th century.

Golubac Fortress – Medieval Serbian fortress, located near the town of Golubac, on the cliffs that form the river Danube's entrance to the Djerdap Canyon. It was built between the XIII and XIV centuries over the remains of a Roman fortress but got its final look at the end of the XV century. Its builders were probably Serbs. Golubac Fortress is a gem of Serbian cultural heritage and it was completely restored in 2019. This fortress is part of the Djerdap National Park.

Krusevac Fortress – Remains of this fortress, presumably built by Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic, are located in the central area of today's Krusevac. Lazar ruled the state from this fortress, as well as his son Despot Stefan Lazarevic, until 1405 when the capital was moved to Belgrade after the city was given to Stefan by his Hungarian allies.

Stari Ras (Old Ras) – A mountain fortress, 11 km from today's city of Novi Pazar. Ras was the capital city of the medieval Serbian state of Raska, and for a long time, it was one of the most important medieval cities in the Balkans because of its strategically important position, on a significant crossroad. It was probably built over a Roman stronghold. Together with the nearby Sopocani Monastery, Ras is under UNESCO's protection.

Maglic – An almost unreachable mountain fortress, built in the XIII century on a hilltop overseeing the Ibar Canyon. This fortress protected the only road connecting Kosovo with Central Serbia. It also protected Sopocani and Studenica monasteries. It was probably built by Stefan the First-Crowned, the first king from the Nemanjic Dynasty, or his son Uros I. The name of the fortress comes from the Serbian word "magla" meaning fog.

1.4. Churches and monasteries

Serbian Orthodox monasteries, built between the 12th and 15th centuries, were strongholds of religious, cultural, and artistic life, and were of great significance for the Serbian cultural heritage. There are three architectural styles in which they were built: Raska style, Byzantine style, and Morava style.

Raska style gained its name from the Raska River around which the eponymous Serbian state of Raska was formed. This style is an original accomplishment of Serbian builders for which they became known worldwide. The era of the Raska style began with the construction of the Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery (1170) and ended with the construction of the Svetog Ahilija (St. Achillius) Church in Arilje (1296). The so-called golden era of Serbian fresco painting is related to this era. It began with the painting of the Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery around 1175, and ended with Gradac around 1275, reaching its artistic peak with frescoes made for Sopocani Monastery. Representatives of this architectural style are:

- **Studenica Monastery** (12th century) founded by Stefan Nemanja. Both churches have marble facades. This monastery is renowned for its collection of frescos dating from the 13th and 14th centuries. UNESCO enlisted Studenica on the World Heritage List in 1986.

- **Mileseva Monastery** (13th century) was founded by King Stefan Vladislav who was buried in it. Fresco White Angel, which is considered to be one of the most beautiful works of Serbian and European medieval art, can be found in this monastery.

- **Zica Monastery** (13th century) was built by King Stefan Nemanjic, better known as Stefan the First-Crowned. Zica was destroyed during Tatar's incursions but King Milutin rebuilt it at the beginning of the 14th century.

- **Visoki Decani Monastery** (13th to 14th century) was founded by the Serbian King Stefan Decanski who was buried inside. This unique church is decorated with more than 1.000 Serbo-Byzantine frescoes. This monastery was attacked, plundered, and renewed many times. The idea to build this monastery came from St. Sava (son of the *grand Zupan* Stefan Nemanja, whose birth name was Rastko Nemanjic). Stefan Decanski was the one who started the construction, and his son Emperor Stefan Dusan finished it. It is located near the town of Pec and is on UNESCO's Endangered World Heritage List since 2006.

- **Sopocani Monastery** (13th century) was founded by King Uros I. It is located near Novi Pazar. *Uspenje Bogorodice* fresco (Assumption of the Mother of God), considered to be the best representation of this obligatory motive in Orthodox fresco painting, can be found on the western wall of the monastery. Sopocani was put on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1979.

Serbo-Byzantine (Vardar) style, appeared in Metohija, Kosovo, and Northern Macedonia at the end of the 13th and lasted until the end of the 14th century. It is called Byzantine because

Byzantine buildings were taken as role models. Facades were created from grey or yellow stones and red bricks. Representatives of this style are:

- **Bogorodica Ljeviska Church** (*beginning of the 14th century*) was constructed during King Stefan Milutin's rule. It was built over the remains of a Byzantine church. The renewed church contained frescos created by Greek Byzantine painters. After conquering Kosovo, Turks converted the church into a mosque and it became a church again in 1912 when Serbian rule returned to this area. This church was heavily damaged during the 2004 riots and was restored after. This church was put on the UNESCO's Endangered World Heritage List, as well as Visoki Decani Monastery, in 2006.

- **Gracanica Monastery** (*beginning of the 14th century*) is located in the village Gracanica on Kosovo & Metohija. This monastery was built by King Milutin. It is also on the list of UNESCO's Endangered World Heritage.

Morava Style originate from the late period of the Serbian medieval state (beginning with the death of Emperor Uros in 1371 and ending with the fall of the Serbian Despot State under Turkish rule in 1459) and was used for the construction of churches and monasteries built by Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic, Despot Stefan Lazarevic and Despot Djuradj Brankovic. Representatives of this style are Ravanica and Manasija (Resava) monasteries.

- **Ravanica Monastery** (*second half of the 14th century*) with the church dedicated to the Ascension of Jesus was built by Prince Lazar. This monastery is surrounded by sturdy walls with seven defensive towers. The church was built of stone and brick rows. Inner monastery walls are heavily damaged so only a small number of frescos are preserved.

- **Manasija Monastery or Resava** (*15th century*), one of the most significant structures of the Morava style, was founded by Despot Stefan Lazarevic and was the cultural centre of the Serbian Despot State. The whole complex is fortified with big walls containing eleven defensive towers. Only one-third of the frescos were preserved but they represent the greatest achievement in medieval painting. The famous Resava School, gathering different scholars like interpreters, writers, monks, and scribes, was founded in this monastery. They decorated manuscripts and corrected mistakes in church literature caused by multiple interpretations and incorrect transcripts. Although the historical role of the Resava School has been deemed positive, the terms *Resava School follower* and *Resava transcriber* are often used nowadays for lazy students who transcribe from good students.

1.5. Significant modern age palaces

An important part of Serbia's cultural heritage are palaces that were built in the 19th and 20th centuries, especially in Vojvodina.

Dundjerski Palace (*19th century*) – This is probably the most famous and beautiful palace

out of around sixty palaces built in Vojvodina, while this region was under the rule of the Habsburg Monarchy. The palace and a part of the complex were built by the rich Serbian family Stratimirovic in 1826. The property changed its owners until it was bought by a landowner, industrialist, and philanthropist Lazar Dundjerski. His family managed the property until the end of World War II (WWII) and the palace was rebuilt during that time. The Dundjerski family was connected to the Karadjordjevic Royal Family so, the palace was a meeting place for political and public figures of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The palace is now a tourist attraction and a protected cultural asset.

Beli Dvor (*The White Palace - 20th century*) – Official residence of the Serbian Royal Family Karadjordjevic. It is located inside the Royal Complex in Belgrade's elite neighbourhood of Dedinje. Construction was initiated in 1934, by the Yugoslav King Aleksandar I. After his murder, the construction was finished by Prince Regent Paul who filled the palace with valuable art. After WWII and the creation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, its president Josip Broz Tito used the White Palace as a place where he welcomed distinguished foreign guests.

2. Development of language and alphabet

The Serbian language belongs to the Slavic Indo-European Language group and originates from the Proto-Slavic language, which was the common language for all Slavic tribes. There is no written trace left behind that language. The beginning of Slavic literacy dates back to 863 A.D. It was then that, following a request by the Moravian Prince Rastislav, the Byzantine Emperor Michael sent two scholars, brothers Cyril and Methodius on a mission to spread Christianity and literacy among Slavic tribes who immigrated to Europe and the Balkans. Before they started this mission, the brothers translated the Bible and other religious books from Greek to the Slavic Language and wrote them in Glagoljica (the oldest known Slavic alphabet). Proto-Slavic language which Cyril and Methodius wrote down, was the first written language of the Slavs. This language was based on the dialect of Macedonian Slavs who were living in the vicinity of Thessaloniki, where Cyril and Methodius were from. The Glagoljica alphabet was based on the Greek alphabet and had 36 letters.

At the end of the 9th or the beginning of the 10th century, Cyril and Methodius's pupils created the Cyrillic Alphabet, named after Cyril, which had 24 letters from the Greek Language and 12 new ones. As soon as the 12th century, the Cyrillic alphabet completely pushed out Glagoljica alphabet from the areas occupied by Serbs. The first change from the Proto-Slavic to the Serbo-Slavic Language, which was Serbia's first literary language, dates from the same historical period. Scribes from that time, who were transcribing church books, started inserting words from the common language into the Proto-Slavic Language. The first Archbishop of the independent Serbian church, St. Sava (1174-1236), used the Serbo-Slavic language to write all his church rulebooks. He wrote *the Life of St. Simeon* (1208) using this language, while the diplomatic document *Povelja Kulina bana* (1189) and *Dusanov zakonik* (Dusan's Law - 1349), created by the Serbian Emperor Stefan Dusan

(1308-1355), were also written in Serbo-Slavic. One of the most important monuments of Serbo-Slavic literacy, *Miroslavljevo jevandjelje* (written around 1190) – a liturgical manuscript containing 362 pages - was also written in Serbo-Slavic.

During the Turkish rule in Serbia (from mid-15th until the 19th century), monasteries took care of the Serbian culture and language, with the most important being the Manasija Monastery where transcribing activities were performed within the Resava School.

In 1690, during the so-called Great Migration of the Serbs under the leadership of Patriarch Arsenije Carnojevic, a big part of the population from Southern Serbia, running away from avenging Turks, moved to present-day Vojvodina (ruled by the Habsburg Monarchy – Austria – at the time). Serbian cultural and religious centres moved with the people too. Serbian immigrants were subjected to heavy Austrian pressure to convert to Catholicism, so the Serbian Orthodox church asked Russia for help. Russian teachers arrived at Sremski Karlovci and opened the *Slavljani* and *Slavic-Latin School*. However, these Russian teachers brought the Russian language too, which began to influence Serbo-Slavic literary language, the only written Serbian language in the Habsburg Monarchy. So, influenced by the Russian but also the Serbian common language, the so-called Russian-Slavic language was created.

During the 18th century, there was another change in the Serbian literary language, named Slavic-Serbian language. This language was the result of the influence of the Serbian common language on the Russian-Slavic language. It had no particular rules in which it was written, so every scholar thought he knew best how to write and pronounce certain words. Linguists Sava Mrkalj (1783-1833) and Dositej Obradovic (1739-1811) pointed out that the Serbian language needed to be reformed, while Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic (1787-1864) dedicated his entire life to accomplish these ideas. His reforms modernized the Serbian literary language and brought it closer to the common man while taking it far away from both the Serbo-Slavic and Russian-Slavic languages. The Cyrillic alphabet was reduced to 30 letters, with a tone for every letter, which means that even a foreigner, who doesn't know the Serbian language, can read every Serbian word if he learns the tone for every letter of the Serbian alphabet. Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic created the first Dictionary of the reformed Serbian language, which was published in 1818.

Besides the Cyrillic Alphabet, Latin Alphabet is also used in the Serbian language which is also adapted to the *one letter, one tone principle*, with few exceptions where two letters are pronounced as one tone (dž, nj).

3. Cities

(with the most significant multi-confessional and multicultural influence)

Belgrade is the capital of Serbia and its biggest city with a population of almost 1.7 million – which is a little less than a quarter of Serbia's entire population count. The city is located

at the Sava-Danube River mouth and was a target for a great number of conquerors. The city itself was founded by the Scordisci Celtic tribe who named it Singidun. Romans captured the city in the 3rd century B.C. and renamed it Singidunum. After the permanent division of the Roman Empire in 395, the city was assigned to its eastern half – the Byzantine Empire. From the second half of the 4th century, the city was periodically demolished or taken from the Byzantines, by the Goths, Huns, Sarmatians, Ostrogoths, Gepids, Avars, and Slavs. Bulgarians were the first to mention the city as Belgrade (876 A.D). The city became part of the Serbian medieval state during the 13th century. Belgrade's most significant landmark is Kalemegdan, an impressive fortress on the eponymous hill, located above the river mouth. The fortress was strategically very important for the Roman Empire (as a border fortress), Byzantine Empire, Serbian Despot State, Ugrian Kingdom, and the Ottoman and Austrian Empires. Germans and Austrians conquered it during World War I (WWI). The city later became the capital of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians which was later renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. After WWII the city was the capital of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1943-1991) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1992-2003). The city was seriously damaged during bombings conducted by both the Germans (on April 6, 1941), and the Allied Forces (in 1944). Because of numerous devastations and different influences, the city's architecture is very colourful. One of the symbols of the city, the "**Pobednik**" statue (the Victor) made by sculptor Ivan Mestrovic, is placed on the terrace of the Kalemegdan Fortress, above the river harbor and the river mouth. Another important symbol of Belgrade is **Avala Mountain** (511 meters) – one of Belgrade's favorite picnic areas – with its giant TV tower and the "**Spomenik Neznanom junaku**" (Monument to the Unknown Hero). Skadarlija, the bohemian district which became the gathering place for actors, poets, and painters by the end of the 19th century, is located in downtown Belgrade. Another city symbol is "**Beogradjanka**" – an office building built in 1974, 101 meters high, with a belvedere on its top, just like on the Avala Tower, from which Belgrade's panorama can be seen. Construction work on a new Belgrade district, on the Old Belgrade bank of the Sava River, Belgrade Waterfront, started in 2015. Belgrade has many religious monuments – churches and monasteries of different religions. One of the most significant Orthodox churches in Serbia, **Saborna crkva**, was built in 1840. Churches **Ruzica** and **Sveta Petka**, church **Svetog Marka**, **Topcidarska** and **Aleksandra Nevskog**, and **Hram Svetog Save** can be singled out by importance and design. Belgrade **Synagogue (or Sukkat Shalom)**, was built in 1929. It is located in the city center and is currently the only active Jewish shrine. **Bajrakli Mosque** is also located in downtown Belgrade, Dorcol Municipality. It was built around 1575 and is the only remaining out of 200 mosques that existed in Belgrade during the Ottoman Empire. The Serbian capital has a series of Catholic churches, with the most important being the **Church of Saint Antun Padovanski**. Belgrade has a very rich cultural life and the most visited cultural events are the **International Book Fair**, the **Movie Festival FEST** (the country's biggest), and the **Belgrade Beer Fest** (music and beer festival at the same time). BITEF (one of the most important theatre festivals in the world), BELEF (a festival which is a merge of different events held during summer), the Festival of Author Movies, Festival of Documentary and Short Movies "Kratki metar", Guitar Art Festival, Classical Music Festival BEMUS and other various events are also held in Belgrade.

Novi Sad is the second biggest city in Serbia (population 340.000) and the capital of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. It is located on the Danube River, in the south of the

Pannonian Plain. The origin of this city is related to the construction of the **Petrovaradin Fortress** in 1692, built by the Habsburg Monarchy to defend the city from Turkish attacks. As the fortress – also called “Dunavski Gibraltar” (the Danube Gibraltar) grew, the adjacent settlement, housing mostly soldiers, craftsmen, and merchants, grew too. The population was very diverse, for the city was inhabited by Hungarians, Slavs, Germans, Aromanians, Jews, and other nations. The Great Migration of Serbs (1696) under the leadership of Arsenije Carnojevic, significantly added to the expansion and diversity of the city. This great migration started from the southern parts of Serbia which were under Ottoman occupation at that time. Following these events, Novi Sad, under Austrian and later Austro-Ugrian rule, became the centre of Serbian culture and national awakening, being nicknamed “Serbian Athens”. Besides the Petrovaradin Fortress, very important symbols of Novi Sad are **Trg Slobode** (City Square) and **Gradska kuca** (City House), which is one of the most beautiful buildings in Serbia, and the Roman Catholic Cathedral – both constructed according to Djerdj Molnar’s architectural designs. **Saborna crkva Svetog Djordja** (the Church of St. George) and **Vladicanski Dvor** are in the vicinity too. A very important cultural-historical building is the **Synagogue**, constructed according to the designs of the Hungarian architect Lipot Baumhorn. Novi Sad is rich in museums, galleries, and cultural events among which the theatre festival “Sterijino pozorje” and the movie festival for young authors “Cinema city” stand out. Since the year 2000, the Petrovaradin Fortress hosts one of the biggest music festivals in the world – **Exit** where the world’s greatest musicians perform.

Nis is the third biggest city in Serbia (population 260.000) and the administrative centre of its southern territories. Nis is one of the oldest cities in the Balkans. The city was demolished and burned on several occasions during its long history. The Romans conquered it during the first century B.C. and named it Naissus. Two Roman Imperators were born in Nis, Constantine the Great and Constantius III. The city was destroyed during Hun invasions in mid-4th century A.D and was later conquered by Avars and Slavs. Byzantines, Bulgarians, and Serbs periodically fought for dominion over the city. The city was part of the Serbian medieval state until it fell under Turkish rule in the 15th century. The Serbs took back the city from the Turks in the second half of the 19th century. One of the most important symbols of Nis is the archaeological park **Medijana**, dating back from the 4th century and containing remains of the residence of Constantine the Great. It is important to mention “**Cele kula**” (Cele Tower) and “**spomenik na Cegru**” (Cegar Monument) located where the Cegar battle, during the First Serbian Rebellion, took place. A great number of Serbian but also Turkish soldiers fell during the battle, so the Turks built Cele kula Tower using the skulls of 952 Serbian soldiers as retaliation for huge Turkish losses. **Nis Fortress**, located in the city center, counts as one of Turkish most famous fortresses. “**Kazandzijsko sokace**” is the only preserved part of the old town. Many sacral monuments and churches can be found in Nis. Main Orthodox Religious building in Nis is “**Saborni hram**”, a cathedral dedicated to the Holy Trinity; it was built in the 19th century and is located in the central city area. “**Crkva Svetog Pantelejmona**” (church dedicated to St. Panteleimon) was destroyed on multiple occasions and is one of the oldest religious buildings in Serbia. The original church dates back to the 12th century but the church as we know it was redesigned in 1878. “Islam-agina dzamija” (Islam-Aga’s Mosque), in downtown Nis, is the only Islamic religious building used as a mosque by Muslims in this city. There are also “**Bali-begova dzamija**” (Bali-Beg’s Mosque) inside the Nis Fortress, which was turned into a gallery, and “**Hasan-begova dzamija**”

(Hassan-Beg's Mosque) which was heavily damaged during the 1944 Allied Forces bombing. Nis Synagogue was built in 1925, in the same place where an old synagogue, destroyed in a fire in 1879, was located. Believers used the Synagogue until WWII. Most of the 400 Jews who lived in Nis died during the Holocaust. Nowadays, this space is used as a gallery. Nis has a rich cultural life too. Some very important festivals like "Filmski susreti" and "Nisville" are held there.

Kragujevac is a city with around 179.000 inhabitants and is located in the heart of Sumadija – once a heavily forested region in central Serbia (*suma* means forest). The name of the city was mentioned for the first time in a Turkish document from 1476. The city was taken periodically by Turks and Austrians from the 15th until the 19th century. During the Second Serbian Rebellion, in 1815, the city was liberated from the Turks and was Serbia's capital city from 1818 until 1841. At the time, a palace containing two court residences (Knezev konak and Konak kneginje Ljubice) and "**Amidzin konak**" – the only preserved part of this complex which is now a very important cultural monument, was built. The first Gymnasium was founded in 1833. In the mid-19th century, a **Military Factory** started operating in Kragujevac. First cannons were made in this factory in 1853. This city also has an operational **Car Factory**. One of the symbols of Kragujevac is the "**Kragujevacski oktobar**" Memorial Park which was built to commemorate the horrible massacre done in 1941 by the German occupiers. They summarily shot some 2.800 citizens, including schoolchildren, in retaliation for the Partisan attacks on Germans. A big rock music festival "Arsenal Fest" is also held annually in Kragujevac.

Subotica is located on Serbia's border with Hungary and is Vojvodina's second-largest city. The city was mentioned for the first time in 1391, under the Hungarian name Zabatka. In the 16th century, Subotica was briefly the capital of a short-lived Serbian rebel state, ruled by Jovan Nenad, a self-proclaimed Serbian Emperor of unknown origins. Turks ruled the city from 1542 until 1686 when it fell under the rule of the Habsburg Monarchy. Austrians changed its name twice in the 18th century so, the city was first renamed to Sent-Maria and then Maria-Theresiopel. The city's old name, Subotica, was restored in the 19th century. Subotica developed into a modern mid-European city between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century when Subotica went through industrial, architectural, and cultural development. Bela Lugosi, a Hungarian actor from neighboring Romania started his acting career in Subotica. After immigrating to the USA, Lugosi becomes worldwide famous as the vampire Dracula in the eponymous Hollywood movie in 1931. **Palic Lake** is located in the vicinity of Subotica, where the **European Movie Festival Palic** is held. **Gradska kuca** (City House), a magnificent building with a fountain in front of it, dominates the city square. The beautiful **St. Theresa of Avila Cathedral**, built in the late 18th century in the Baroque style, is located in the vicinity too. **Franciscan Church of Saint Michael** was built on the remains of a medieval fortress. **Muhadzir Mosque**, the first Islamic building built in these areas during the last two centuries, can be found in Subotica too. The Jewish community in Subotica can be proud of the beautiful **Synagogue** which was built at the beginning of the 20th century. It was known at the time as the second largest in the world.

Vranje is a city in the south of Serbia (population 83.000) that was mentioned for the first time in the 11th century. It is the birth place of Bora Stankovic, author of renowned novels

Necista krv and *Gazda Mladen*. The city managed to preserve a specific spirit of its turbulent past. Vranje was part of the medieval Serbian state until 1455 when it was taken by the Turks who remained its rulers until 1878. This is why oriental influences are visible in architecture, gastronomy, and many symbols of the city. One of the most important symbols of Vranje is the **Beli most/Most ljubavi** (White Bridge/Bridge of Love) which is associated with the sad love story between the Turkish woman Aisha and the Serbian shepherd Stojan. Aisha's mother built this bridge commemorating their love. **Bora Stankovic's Birth House** is of great cultural and historical significance as well as the Byzantine fortress **Markovo Kale** dating from the times of the Roman Emperor Justinian I (527-565).

4. National customs and beliefs

Serbian customs originate from several different cultures. The Old Slavs, whose southern tribes immigrated to the Balkans during the 7th century, were polytheists, with their magical rituals and superstitions. A good deal of this Old-Slavic tradition has been preserved after the Serbs accepted the Orthodox Christian religion, and is now merged with the Christian tradition.

Serbia, for example, celebrates *slava*, or saints. This custom is closely related to the ancient ancestral culture. Saints are persons who lived their lives in such a manner that the church proclaimed them as saints. Every family has a saint - protector of the home and the entire family. On the day of Slava, working persons in Serbia have the right to a day off. On that day, the host welcomes numerous guests; in honor of the house saint, a richly decorated candle is lit which is the centrepiece of the dinner table. Slava bread is placed next to the candle, which symbolizes a sacrifice to the house saint. Water and sweets are brought to the guests. Some parts of the country kept the custom of serving bread and salt to the guests.

Besides the most popular holidays (Christmas and Slava), Serbian customs of godfathering and hospitality are also related to the ancestral culture as well as some of the most important rituals: wedding and funeral rituals.

For example, one custom that is kept, purely comically, is buying off the bride. At a typical Serbian wedding, the groom comes to the bride's house to symbolically "buy her off" from her family. This custom was real, even very expensive until 1846 when Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjevic stopped it as "a custom contrary to human dignity".

Many Serbian customs, like tearing the shirt of a new father, giving money to a newborn child upon seeing him for the first time, pulling the child's ears for its birthday (for the child to grow big), pouring water behind students when they take off to an exam, are linked to the health and prosperity of the household and attract the attention of foreigners.

During festivities and on special occasions, Serbian traditional instruments are often used. Serbia is probably most recognizable for the *trumpet*, which arrived to these lands in the 19th century but still, no weddings or celebrations are held without it. Trumpet became so

beloved by the people that an International Trumpet Festival “**Guca**” was founded. The festival attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year. *Tamburica* is used for bohemian parties, an instrument beloved in Vojvodina, and with whom the so-called starogradske (old-town) songs are performed. *The wooden flute* is an important part of Serbian and Northern Macedonian tradition. The flute is used in ethnic music, and *kolo*, a dance characteristic of Serbia and the Balkans, is often danced when she is playing. Finally, there are *gusle*, a simple stringed instrument with which folk songs are performed. Gusle is a big part of Serbian and Montenegrin history because folk songs are related directly to gusle and their performers, who sing in a very special way with them.

Serbia celebrates New Year like other parts of the world do – on the night between December 31st and January 1st, but because of the Orthodox Calendar, Christmas is not celebrated on December 25th but on January 7th. Although informally, a “Serbian New Year” is celebrated too, between January 13th and 14th – which is also caused by this Calendar.

In Serbia’s rural parts, superstitions from the polytheistic time still exist. People believe in magic, and Vlach magic, which is associated with Eastern Serbia, is most feared. People used to believe, and some still believe, in different supernatural entities: vampires, werewolves, drekavac, avet, cuma, babaroga, sumska Majka, anatema, mora, rusalka, corava andjelija, zduhac, psoglav, todorac, vila, talason, ala, bauk, beda, kuga, sudjaja, jauda, karakondzula ... The most famous among these creatures is the **vampire** – resurrected (un)dead person with long fangs who enters people’s houses at night and drinks their blood. The Serbian folk variety of the vampire is wonderfully depicted in the famous horror movie “*Leptirica*” (1973), by Djordje Kadijevic. The vampire is driven by an evil spirit and, while murdering a vampire, one should be careful that a butterfly does not leave his mouth, since the evil spirit, inside that butterfly, will find another man to possess. The most famous Serbian vampire, depicted in Kadijevic’s movie, also known from folk tales, is Sava Savanovic, a peasant that lived in a watermill in the village Zaroze, near Bajina Basta, in Western Serbia. However, the oldest vampire is Petar Blagojevic (who died in 1725), a peasant from Kisiljevo. It was believed that he had risen from his grave and killed 9 persons. This case was recorded by the Austrian authorities who briefly ruled Central Serbia at the time, so they officially, although unwillingly, witnessed the “murder” of this vampire in his grave, that is, stabbing Blagojevic’s body with a wooden stick. Also, vampire is the only international word of Serbian origin.

5. Distinguished persons in science, culture, and sports

5.1. Scientists

Although territorially a small country, Serbia is proud of its scientists who indebted not only Serbia but the whole world. The most important among them are Mihajlo Pupin, Milutin Milankovic, and Nikola Tesla.

Mihajlo Pupin (1854-1935) was a Serbian-American scientist who lived and worked in the USA. He was born in Idvor, a village near Kovacica in Banat where his education started.

Pupin continued his studies in Pancevo, where he first familiarised himself with the secrets of electricity. After Pancevo he continued his education in Prague from where he returned to his birthplace. Following his father's sudden passing, he emigrated to America due to his financial woes. During the next five years, he did physical work while simultaneously learning English. He managed to land at Columbia University in New York. After he finished his studies there, he returned to Europe; He continued his education in Cambridge, then Berlin, where he earned his Ph.D. His most famous patents are in the field of long-distance telephony, telegraphy, and radio-networking, including Pupin's Coils. He published several dozen scientific articles during his lifetime. He received the Pulitzer Prize for his autobiography *From Immigrant to Inventor*.

Nikola Tesla (1856-1943) is one of the most brilliant minds of mankind. This Serbo-American scientist, physicist, electrical engineer, and inventor, did his research in the fields of electrical energy, magnetic fields, and mechanical engineering. He was born in Smiljan, on the territory of present-day Croatia. Tesla's father was an Orthodox priest and poet, he had a large library in which Nikola himself spent his childhood reading and learning foreign languages. He spoke Serbian, English, German, Italian, Czech, Hungarian, Latin, French and Slovakian languages. Nikola's mother was a very creative woman and wanted to improve country life with her inventions. It is considered that Nikola inherited the affinity for research from his mother. He finished first grade in his village, the rest of primary school in Gospic, and high school in Karlovac. Then he resumed his studies at Graz Polytechnical School and later went to a college in Prague. He left his studies and started working, first in Budapest, then in Paris from where he went to America because of his desire to develop the AC (alternating current) system. He managed to do just that and the AC system is his greatest contribution to mankind. His other famous inventions are the polyphase system, rotating magnetic field, induction motor, synchronous motor and Tesla coil. He is responsible for the creation of the first hydroelectric power plant – the one in Niagara Falls, USA. The unit for the magnetic flux density was named after Tesla. His character can be found on 100 Dinar bills.

Milutin Milankovic (1879-1958) was born in Dalj, Croatia. He was a mathematician, astronomer, climatologist, geophysicist, civil engineer, and a University Professor with a Ph.D. in Technical Science. He finished high school in Osijek, a city in Croatia. At 17, he enrolled in the Faculty of Civil Engineering at the Wien Technical University and at only 25 earned his Ph.D. He came to Serbia in 1909 and accepted the applied mathematics professor position at the University of Belgrade. That's when he developed an interest in Climatology and the secrets of the Ice Age, so he started researching the idea of the influence of atmospheric factors on climate change. He published numerous scientific researches and was a regular member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Milutin Milankovic's character can be found on 2000 Dinar bills.

5.2. Writers and poets

Prince Stefan Lazarevic (1389-1427) is probably the most famous example of a Serbian medieval writer. He was an educated ruler and artist and his most distinguished poetic work

is *Slovo ljubve*. The poem *Pohvala knezu Lazaru*, one of the most significant achievements of Serbian medieval literature, written by Nun Jefimija, dates from the same period.

Modern Serbian literature was probably conceived by Dositej Obradovic who travelled across Europe in the 18th century and adopted the ideas of enlightenment and rationalism. These ideas became primary in Serbian literature after the liberation from the Turks. The memoir prose of Mateja Nenadovic (*Memoari*) had a significant influence during the great Serbian rebellions at the beginning of the 19th century.

During the Principality and Kingdom of Serbia (1817-1918) the greatest literary names were Milovan Glisic (short stories *Prva brazda* i *Glava secera*), Laza Lazarevic (short story *Prvi put s ocem na jutrenje*), Borislav Bora Stankovic (novel *Necista krv*), Petar Kocic (novel *Jazavac pred sudom*), Janko Veselinovic (novel *Hajduk Stanko*) and Radoje Domanovic (satiric tales *Vodja*, *Razmisljanja jednog obicnog srpskog vola*, *Kraljevic Marko drugi put medju Srbima*). Playwriters and comedians Sterija Popovic (*Tvrđica* and *Pokondirena tikva*), Branislav Nusic (*Narodni poslanik* and *Sumnjivo lice*) and Stevan Sremac (*Pop Ciria* i *Pop Spira*, *Ivkova slava*) gained great fame. Montenegrin Prince-Bishop Petar II Petrovic Njegos wrote his famous epic poems *Gorski vijenac*, *Luca Mikrokozma* and *Lazni car Scepán Mali* during this period, while Djura Jaksic, Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj, Vojislav Ilic, Aleksa Santic, Vladislav Petkovic Dis, Sima Pandurovic, Milan Rakic and Jovan Ducic were the great poets of that time. During WWI the war poet Milutin Bojic, who died on the battlefield (1917), gained fame.

During the times of the Kingdom of Serbians, Croats, and Slovenian, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918-1941) that is, great writers – besides the veterans Branislav Nusic (plays *Gospodja ministarka*, *Ozaloscena porodica*, *Dr* and *Pokojnik*, and his Autobiography) and Bora Stankovic (novel *Gazda Mladen*) – were Milos Crnjanski (novel *Seobe*) and Rastko Petrovic (novels *Burleska gospodina Peruna boga groma* and *Dan sesti*, travel book *Afrika*). The great poets were Isidora Sekulic and Momcilo Nastasijevic.

The great Serbian literary names of the Socialist Yugoslavia (1945-1991) were: Ivo Andric (novels *Prokleta avlija*, *Travnicka hronika* and *Na Drini cuprija*, for which he received the Nobel Prize in Literature), Borislav Pekic (novels *Godine koje su pojeli skakavci*, *Besnilo*, *Zlatno runo*, *Hodocasce Arsenija Njegovana*, *Vreme cuda* and *Kako upokojiti vampira*), Mesa Selimovic (novels *Tvrđjava* and *Dervis i smrt*), Milorad Pavic (novel *Hazarski recnik*), Branko Copic (novels *Orlovi rano lete* and *Basta sljezove boje*), Dobrica Cosic (novels *Koreni*, *Deobe*, *Vreme smrti*), Danilo Kis (novels *Rani jadi* and *Klopka za Borisa Davidovica*), Dragoslav Mihailovic (novel *Kad su cvetale tikve* and *Cizmasi*), Mihailo Lalic (novel *Lelejska gora*), Miodrag Bulatovic (novel *Ljudi sa cetiri prsta*), Aleksandar Tisma (novel *Upotreba coveka*), Slobodan Selenic (novel *Ocevi i oci*), Momo Kapor (novels *Beleske jedne Ane* and *Una*), Svetislav Basara (novel *Fama o biciklistima*). A distinguished place belongs to the dramatist Dusan Kovacevic (*Radovan treci*, *Maratonci trce pocasni krug*, *Sveti Georgije ubiva azdahu*, *Balkanski spijun*) whose comedies and screenplays were adapted into some of the most popular Serbian films ever produced (*Ko to tamo peva*, *Maratonci trce pocasni krug*, *Balkanski spijun*, *Sabirni centar*, *Podzemlje*). Great poets of this era were Desanka Maksimovic, Branko Miljkovic, Mira Aleckovic, Ljubomir Simovic, Ivan V Lalic, Miroslav Mika Antic, Matija Beckovic and the aphorist Dusko Radovic. The Serbian poet Charles Simic, born

in Belgrade, received the Literary Pulitzer Prize, for his poetry in English, which he wrote as an American immigrant.

Following the break-up of Socialist Yugoslavia, writers like David Albahari (novels *Mamac* and *Mrak*), Svetlana Velmar-Jankovic (novels *Lagum* and *Bezdno*), Vladimir Arsenijevic (*U potpalublju*), Zoran Zivkovic (novel *Cetvrti covek* and mosaic novel *Biblioteka* for which the writer received the World Prize for Fantastic Literature) and Goran Petrovic (novels *Opsada crkve Svetog spasa* and *Sitnicarnica 'Kod srecne ruke'*), while today literary scene is ruled by Dejan Stojiljkovic (novel *Konstantinovo raskrsce*, short story collection *Neonski bluz*), Vladimir Kecmanovic (*Top je bio vreo*), Aleksandar Gatalica (*Veliki rat*), Dragan Velikic (*Ruski prozor* and *Islednik*), Vladimir Pistalo (*Tesla: Portret medju maskama*), Marko Vidojkovic (*Kandze*), Srdjan Valjarevic (roman *Komo*) and Igor Marojevic (short story collection *Beogradjanke*).

5.3. Composers

Stevan Stojanovic Mokranjac (1856-1914) is one of the most significant Serbian composers. It is Mokranjac who introduced the national spirit to the music. His most famous pieces are *Rukoveti*, *Kozar*, *Liturgija*, *Opelo*, *Statije*, and others. He founded the First Music School in Belgrade in 1899. His character can be found on the 50 Dinars bill.

Zoran Simjanovic (1946-2021) composed film scores and theatre music and was a professor at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts of the University of Belgrade. He started his career by playing keyboards in rock bands "Siluete" and "Elipse". After the bands stopped playing, Zoran started composing. He wrote songs for pop singers and started composing film scores and theatre music in 1973. His music was used in some great Yugoslav movies like: *Specijalno vaspitanje*, *Nacionalna klasa*, *Petrijin venac*, *Maratonci trce pocasni krug*, *Variola vera*, *Balkan ekspres*, *Secas li se Doli Bel*, *Otac na sluzbenom putu*, *Bal na vodi* and *Vec vidjeno*.

Isidora Zebeljan (1967-2020) was a distinguished composer and a regular member of SANU (Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts). She studied at the Faculty of Musical Arts in Belgrade where she worked as a regular professor since 2002. She composed music for more than 30 theatre plays and was rewarded several times for her work in the field of theatre music. She also composed movie music and cooperated with distinguished filmmakers. She actively performed as a pianist and conductor performing her music and the music of other composers. She received many acknowledgments and prizes during her lifetime.

5.4. Actors and actresses

During the kingdoms of Serbia and Yugoslavia, Zanka Stokic (1887-1947) and Milivoje Zivanovic (1900-1976) became the first great Serbian actors who made their careers in theatre. But it was the era of socialist Yugoslavia that launched an immense number of excellent stage, TV, and movie actors from Serbia. Here is a list of 25 brilliant actors and 25 brilliant actresses, who built their careers since 1945, becoming household names in Serbia and the republics of former Yugoslavia.

Famous Serbian actors:

Rade Markovic (1921-2010) was a theatre and movie actor, a professor of acting, and father to the director Goran Markovic from his marriage to the famous actress Olivera Markovic. He gained fame in movies, starring in a rare Yugoslav fairy tale film *Cudotvorni mac* (1950). He also had important roles in *Valter brani Sarajevo* (1972), *Nacionalna klasa* (1978), *Variola vera* (1982) and *Sabirni centar* (1989).

Mija Aleksic (1923-1995) was an actor who gained fame in comedies in the fifties and sixties. He was one of the most famous entertainers in Yugoslavia thanks to the TV series *Servisna stanica* and *Ogledalo gradjanina pokornog*. During his late years, he played a major role in the blockbuster comedy *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* (1982).

Miodrag Petrovic Ckalja (1924-2003), a great comedian of the former Yugoslavia, became famous for his roles in TV series *Servisna stranica* (1959), *Dezurna ulica* (1967), *Ljubav na seoski nacin* (1970), *Kamiondzije* (1972-1973), *Vruc vetar* (1980) and *Kamiondzije opet voze* (1984).

Pavle Vuisic (1926-1988) is one of the most recognizable faces of Serbian and Yugoslav cinema. He came to prominence through roles in the TV series *Kamiondzije* (1972-1973), *Otpisani* (1974), and *Povratak otpisanih* (1976). He played in many famous Yugoslav movies, having his most remarkable roles in Slobodan Sijan's classics *Ko to tamo peva* (1980) and *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* (1982).

Ljuba Tadic (1929-2005) was one of the most prized theatre actors in Yugoslavia. There were almost no theatres he didn't perform at. His most famous movie role was in the WWI war movie *Mars na Drinu* (1964).

Bora Todorovic (1929-2014) is famed for his roles as common men coping with troubles and social repression. His roles in *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* (1982), *Balkan Ekspres* (1983), *Balkanski spijun* (1984), *Dom za vesanje* (1988), and *Podzemlje* (1995) became his greatest acting achievements. His sister is the famous actress Mira Stupica and his son is Srdjan Todorovic, also a famous actor.

Zoran Radmilovic (1933-1985) is probably Yugoslavia's most beloved movie and theatre actor. He became famous through theatre plays – hilarious comedies *Kralj Ibi* and *Radovan treci* which the Yugoslavs were recording to have on videotapes. In the comedy megahit *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* (1982) he played the grave plunderer Billy Python. His other famous role was the one in the TV series *Price iz radionice* (1981-1982).

Velimir Bata Zivojinovic (1933-2016) performed in more than 340 movies and TV series. Although he played different roles and performed in movies of the so-called Black Wave, he is remembered as the king of Partisan movies and his most famous roles are the ones in the movies *Bitka na Neretvi* (1969) and *Valter brani Sarajevo* (1972). The latter made him a big star in China where this movie was (and still is) a megahit. He is also remembered for his roles in *Halo taksi* (1983), *U raljama zivota* (1984) and *Lepa sela lepo gore* (1996).

Dragomir Bojanic Gidra (1933-1993), is an actor who gained his nickname Gidra because of his roles in Italian crime movies and spaghetti westerns under the pseudonym Anthony Gidra. The role of Zika Pavlovic in the 10-part series of movie comedies *Lude godine/Zikina dinastija* (1977-1992) made him famous.

Danilo Bata Stojkovic (1934-2002) was a theatre and movie actor who became famous for his roles of common men who clash with the socialist system, but for his portrayals of persecuted, authoritarian, paranoid people. As such he was most noticeable in *Balkanski spijun* (1984), *Varljivo leto '68* (1984), *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* (1982), *Kako sam sistematski unisten od idiota* (1983) and *Ko to tamo peva* (1982).

Tasko Nacic (1934-1993) was a master of character roles but is most remembered as Pera Mitic, the florist-serial killer with Oedipus complex in the horror-comedy *Davitelj protiv davitelja* (1984). He performed alongside Zoran Radmilovic in the hit theatre plays *Kralj Ibi* and *Radovan treci*.

Nikola Simic (1934-2014) was a theatre and movie actor but primarily a master of comedy. Although he appeared in a vast number of movies during the sixties and the seventies, he achieved true glory in the comedies *Laf u srcu* (1981) and *Tesna koza* (1982), and the horror-comedy *Davitelj protiv davitelja* (1984). Simic also appeared in the popular TV series *Srecni ljudi* (1993-1996) and *Porodicno blago* (1998-2002). He was the official Yugoslav voice for Bugs Bunny.

Ljubisa Samardzic (1936-2017) is an actor who becomes a movie director during his older days. He is most famous for his role of Surda in the TV series *Vruc vetar* (1980). His most significant roles were in the movies *Jutro* (1967), *Bitka na Neretvi* (1969), *Partizanska eskadrila* (1979), *Rad na odredjeno vreme* (1980) and *Policajac sa Petlovog brda* (1992).

Bekim Fehmiju (1936-2010) was a great actor of Albanian origin. He is the first actor from Eastern Europe who worked in Hollywood. He gained his fame in *Skupljaci perja* (1967), and played significant roles in *Specijalno vaspitanje* (1977) and *Partizanska eskadrila* (1979). He was a star in Italy where he played the ancient hero Odyssey in the TV series *Odyssey* (1968).

Petar Kralj (1941-2011) is a hugely recognizable Serbian actor who appeared in more than 200 movies and performed in around 4.000 theatre plays. He received several lifetime achievement awards. He was honored to play some of the most important persons in Serbian history.

Dragan Nikolic (1943-2016) was a highly regarded actor, capable of depicting a variety of characters – from rebels and hooligans to lords and gentlemen. He gained his fame as the guerrilla fighter Prle in the TV series *Otpisani* (1974) and *Povratak otpisanih* (1976). He is remembered for his roles in movies such as: *Kad budem mrtav i beo* (1967), *Mlad i zdrav kao ruza* (1971), *Nacionalna klasa* (1978), *Ko to tamo peva* (1980), *Banovic Strahinja* (1981), *Zivot je lep* (1985), *Poslednji krug u Monci* (1989).

Milan Lane Gutovic (1946-2021) was a movie, theatre, and cabaret actor. Everybody knows him for his role as the business and political manipulator Srecko Sojic in the *Tesna koza* film series (1982-1991) and its TV spin-off *Bela ladjica*.

Petar Bozovic (1946-) is a theatre and movie actor whose rise started with the lead role in the famous horror *Leptirica* (1973). Next to Orson Welles, he played Nikola Tesla in the movie *Tajna Nikole Tesle* (1980). Other famous roles were the ones in *Cudo nevidjeno* (1984), *Lepota poroka* (1986), and *Lepa sela lepo gore* (1996).

Marko Nikolic (1946-2019) was a movie, TV, and theatre actor who became famous for his role of Giga Popadic in the TV series *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991) as well as for the role of the leader of the First Serbian Rebellion Karadjordje in the movies/TV series *Karadjordjeva smrt* (1983), *Vuk Karadzic* (1987), *Teatar u Srba* (1992) and *Sejtanov ratnik* (2006). He received many acting awards.

Voja Brajovic (1949-) is a theatre, movie, and TV actor who became famous for the role of the partisan guerrilla fighter Tihi in the TV series *Otpisani* (1974) and *Povratak otpisanih* (1976). His role in one of the most popular Serbian TV series of all time – *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991) was widely noticed. He was the Serbian minister of culture from 2007 until 2008.

Predrag Miki Manojlovic (1950-) is an actor who played in some of the most important Serbian and Yugoslav movies and then achieved a successful career in European movies too. He became famous after his role as Miki Rubiroza in the TV series *Grlom u jagode* (1976), and achieved his greatest movie roles in both movies for which Emir Kusturica received Gold Palms in Cannes – *Otac na sluzbenom putu* (1985) and *Podzemlje* (1995). He played Vuk Karadzic in the TV series bearing the same name (1987).

Aleksandar Bercek (1950-) played in more than 100 movies but is most memorable for his role of Milos Obrenovic in TV series and movies *Karadjordjeva smrt* (1983), *Vuk Karadzic* (1987) and *Pad dinastije Obrenovica* (1995).

Zarko Lausevic (1960-) was a big celebrity in the Serbian and Yugoslav movies in the eighties. He gained his fame in the TV series *Sivi dom* (1984) and was very successful in the movies *Smeker* (1985), *Oficir s ruzom* (1987), and *Braca po materi* (1988). His career was stopped because of the double murder sentence which he committed in self-defence in 1993. He returned to acting in 2014, mostly in TV series like *Pet* (2019) and *Drzavni sluzbenik* (2019-2020).

Dragan Bjelogrljic (1963-) actor, producer and director. He started his career as a child with the role in the partisan movie *Bosko Buha* (1978) and became a true star in the TV series *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991). His best roles are probably the ones in *Lepa sela lepo gore* (1996) and *Rane* (1998). From 2010, he achieved exceptional success as a director of movies *Montevideo bog te video* (2010) and *Toma* (2021), and the TV series *Senke nad Balkanom* (2017-).

Nikola Kojo (1967-) started acting as a teenager. He became a star by playing in three sequels of the comedy serial *Lude godine*, his final breakout was achieved with his role in the comedy *Mi nismo anđeli* (1992). His best performances were probably in the movies *Lepa sela lepo gore* (1996), *Rane* (1998), and *Parada* (2011).

Famous Serbian actresses:

Rahela Ferari (1911-1993) was a distinguished actress and master of character and comic roles. She reached glory in movies only during her older days, first in TV series *Kamiondžije* (1972-1973) and *Grlom u jagode* (1976) and then in movies *Nacionalna klasa* (1979), *Tesna koza* (1982) and *Davitelj protiv davitelja* (1984).

Mira Stupica (1923-2016) is one of the best Serbian actresses of all time and sister to actor Bora Todorovic. Her sixty years-long career was built in theatres but, she showed up in movies too, during the sixties and seventies. Her most important role in movies was the one in the movie *Roj* (1966). Many believed that Kika Bibic, the character Stupica played in the educational TV series *TV Bukvar* (1968-1969), which gave her enormous popularity, is a real person.

Olivera Markovic (1925-2011) showed in around 170 movies and TV series. Her first big role was in the movie *Vlak bez voznog reda* (1959), and had significant roles in *Kozara* (1962), *Sluzbeni položaj* (1964), *Petrijin venac* (1980), *Balkan ekspres* (1983) and *Sabirni centar* (1989). The prominent director Goran Markovic is her son from her first marriage with actor Rade Markovic.

Radmila Savicevic (1926-2001) is one of the most popular Serbian actresses. She usually played kind, simple-minded countrywomen. She became famous by her roles in TV series *Kamiondžije* (1973), *Pozoriste u kuci* (1973), *Babino unuce* (1976), *Vruc vetar* (1979), *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991) and *Srecni ljudi* (1993-1996).

Mira Banjac (1929-) is a very popular actress. She gained her fame in theatre and later on in TV and movies. Her famous roles are the one in the theatre play *Radovan treci* and in movies *Cuvar plaze u zimskom periodu* (1976) and *Balkanski spijun* (1984). She played significant roles in the movies *Sjecas li se Doli Bel* (1981), *Varljivo leto '68* (1984) and *Jagode u grlu* (1985) too.

Renata Ulmanski (1929-) is a theatre and movie actress who became famous for her roles in movie comedies *Pop Cira i pop Spira* (1957) and *Dilizansa snova* (1960), and in the TV series *Salas u Malom ritu* (1975-1976) and *Jesen stize dunjo moja* (2009-2010). Her role in the war classic *Lepa sela lepo gore* (1996) is significant too.

Ruzica Sokic (1934-2013) started her movie career during the late fifties and played significant roles in movies *Kad budem mrtav i beo* (1967), *Bokseri idu u raj* (1967) and *Zuta*

(1973). Her role in the comedy *Tesna koza* (1982) is probably her most famous one. During her older days, she played a great role in the blockbuster *Zona Zamfirova* (2002).

Milena Dravic (1940-2018) is the first big celebrity of Yugoslav Cinematography, the greatest even, according to many. She played an enormous variety of different roles during her career. She gained fame after her performance in the movie *Prekobrojna* (1962), and she played lead roles in important movies of the so-called "Black Wave – *Covek nije tica* (1965), *Jutro* (1967) and *WR Misterije organizma* (1971). She also played important roles in *Bitka na Neretvi* (1971), *Ljubavni zivot Budimira Trajkovica* (1977) and especially in *Poseban tretman* (1980).

Olivera Katarina (1940) was one of the leading stars in Yugoslav Cinematography during the sixties and seventies. Her beauty was famous outside Yugoslav borders and she built a career as a singer too. Her most famous role is in the movie *Skupljaci perja* (1967). Her other important movies are *San* (1966), *Uzrok smrti ne pominjati* (1968), *Dervis i smrt* (1974) and *Carlston za Ognjenku* (2008).

Stanislava Pesic (1941-1997) played her first big role in the partisan movie *Pesma* (1961), and after a series of lead and supporting roles, she gained big fame in the TV series *Pozoriste u kuci* (1972). She hosted a children's program on TV too. She was sister to the Serbian politician Vesna Pesic.

Seka Sablic (1942-) is a distinguished theatre actress and a masterful comedian. She gained enormous glory in movies by playing Kristina in the dark comedy *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* (1982). Her important roles were the ones in the TV series *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991) and *Srecni ljudi* (1993-1996). She remained popular even during her older days so she appeared in sitcoms like *Ljubav, navika, panika* (2005) and *Tri muskarca i tetka* (2021).

Svetlana Bojkovic (1947-) is one of the greatest Yugoslav TV Stars of the eighties. She became popular for her role in the movie *Pas koji je voleo vozove* (1977), played an important role in the thriller *Halo taksi* (1983), and is most known for her performance of Emilija Popadic in the TV series *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991).

Ljiljana Stjepanovic (1952-) is primarily a theatre actress, glorified with all the biggest acknowledgments. She is also famous for her roles in TV series *Srecni ljudi* (1993-1996), *Porodicno blago* (1998-2002), *Ljubav navika panika* (2005-2007) and *Selo gori a baba se ceslja* (2007-2017).

Gorica Popovic (1952-) was a recognizable face of Yugoslav Cinematography during the eighties. She was noticed for her role in the hit movie *Nacionalna klasa* (1979) and played leading female roles in movies like *Dorotej* (1981), *Pad Italije* (1981), *U raljama zivota* (1983) and *Halo taksi* (1983). She played significant roles in TV series and movies like *Karadjordjeva smrt* (1983), *Sivi dom* (1986), and *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991) too.

Tanja Boskovic (1953-) was at first, during the seventies, a big theatre musicals star, after this she became a big movie star. She is best known for her role as Lili in the movie *Balkan*

ekspres (1983). She played important roles in the movies *Okupacija u 26 slika* (1978), *Majstori, majstori* (1980), and in the TV series *Srećni ljudi* (1993-1996). She also played the lead role in the first Serbian 3D movie *Peti leptir* (2014).

Neda Arnerić (1953-2020) began her career as a child movie star in the movie *San* (1966), she was noticed in the movies *Jutro* (1967), *Podne* (1968) and *Ispravi se, Delfina* (1977). During the eighties, she became the sex symbol of Yugoslav movies thanks to her roles in great hits like *Ko to tamo peva* (1980), *Varljivo leto '68* (1984), and *Halo, praznik kurvi* (1988). She was an art historian and a politician for a while.

Radmila Živković (1953-) is an awarded theatre and movie actress, her important roles were the ones in the movies *Sok od sljiva* (1981), *Variola Vera* (1982), *Vec vidjeno* (1987), *Sabirni centar* (1989) and *Zona Zamfirova* (2002).

Danica Maksimović (1953-) is a movie, TV, theatre and cabaret actress. She played important roles in the movies *Hajduk* (1980), *Cao inspektore* (1985), *Noc u kuci moje majke* (1991) and *Carlston za Ognjenku* (2008). She played the lead female role in the first Serbian telenovela *Jelena* (2004-2005). She received numerous awards.

Ljiljana Blagojević (1955-) at first studied Chemistry and then moved to Drama School which she finished with immense success. She played her first lead role in the movie *Sjećas li se Doli Bel* (1981). She reached the peak of her TV popularity with her role of Queen Draga in the TV series *Pad dinastije Obrenović* (1995), she also had an important role in the TV series *Miris kise na Balkanu* (2010-2011).

Dara Džokić (1955-) played her first important role in the movie *Decko koji obecava* (1981) and shined while performing the lead female role in the movie *Obecana zemlja* (1986). She appeared in a great number of movies and TV series and received the highest awards for her contribution to theatre, TV, and movies.

Mirjana Karanović (1957-) is a theatre, TV, and movie actress. She received many awards. Her most famous roles were the ones in the movies *Petrijin venac* (1980) and *Otac na službenom putu* (1985). She is a human rights activist and the first Serbian actress that acted in a Croatian movie after the breakdown of Yugoslavia. She also directs.

Sonja Savic (1961-2008) is a great movie star and a charismatic rebel recognizable for her hoarse voice. Her roles in movies *Ziveti kao sav normalan svet* (1982), *Secerna vodica* (1983), *Una* (1984), *Davitelj protiv davitelja* (1984), *Balkanski spijun* (1984), and in the *Omnibus Kako je propao rokenrol* (1989) made her a symbol of the urban culture and an icon of the generation. In her remembrance, her birth town Cacak established the Sonjin septembar event.

Anica Dobra (1963-) is a movie and TV actress who created a significant part of her career in Germany. She became famous in Yugoslavia for her roles in the horror *Vec vidjeno* (1987), omnibus *Kako je propao rokenrol* (1989), and thriller *Crni bombardier* (1992). Her other important roles were in the movies *Sabirni centar* (1989), *Tito i ja* (1992), and *Klopka* (2007).





A scene from Skadarska street in Belgrade (Skadarlija), Photo: Dušan Pokuševski





Dubravka Mijatovic (1968-) was a teenage icon of the nineties and a very recognizable TV face. She was noticed for her role in the TV series *Bolji zivot* (1987-1991) and became a celebrity for her roles in the TV series *Srecni ljudi* (1993-1996) and the hit movie *Tri palme za dve bitange i ribicu* (1998).

Branka Katic (1970-) began to gain glory in the hit comedy *Mi nismo andjeli* (1992) and the TV series/movie *Policajac sa Petlovog brda* (1992-1993), she played great in the drama *Ubistvo sa predumisljajem* (1995) and the black comedy *Crna macka, beli macor* (1998). She also played a role in the movie *Rane* (1998). She spent part of her acting career in the USA.

5.5. Painters

The development of Serbian painting is linked with the decoration of church walls which were built by Serbian kings and nobility under the influence of the Byzantine art. The milestone in Serbian painting is the Great Migration of Serbs, during the 17th century when Serbs got involved in the Western-European culture.

Uros Predic (1857-1953) represent Realism. He is remembered for works that represented real life. He studied at the Wien Painting Academy and his most important paintings are *Vesela braca* and *Siroce na majcinom grobu*, but also historical scenes like *Kosovka devojka* and *Bosansko-hercegovački begunci*.

Paja Jovanovic (1859-1957) is the most important representative of Realism. He studied in Wien and his most significant paintings are *Seoba Srba*, *Takovski ustanak*, and *Krunisanje cara Dusana*.

Nadezda Petrovic (1873-1915) is a painter whose creation went side by side with European Expressionism, Impressionism, and Fauvism and was sometimes close to Abstract Art. Her most famous pieces are *Bavarac sa sesiom*, *Iz Iberzea*, *Vrsidba*, *Sedeci zenski akt*, *Kupacice*, and *Breze*. Her character can be found on the 200 Dinars bill.

Sava Sumanovic (1896-1942) is considered to be one of the most significant Serbian painters. Cubism, Fauvism, and Expressionism had the most influence on his early work. During his later days, he managed to develop his own style. His most famous paintings are *Autoportret*, *Pijana ladja*, and *Bar u Parizu*.

Milena Pavlovic-Barili (1909-1945) is the most important artist of Serbian Modernism. Some of her paintings are *Zenski portret sa maramom*, *Autoportret*, *Portret Rudolfa Valentina*, and *Hot Pink with Cool Grey*.

5.6. Sculptors

The development of sculpting in Serbia starts in the mid-19th century under the influence of Academism and develops side by side with the civil society. Some of the distinguished Serbian sculptors are:

Petar Ubakovic (1852-1910) is considered to be the father of Serbian sculpting. He was a member of SANU. He studied sculpting in Wien and Munich. He created numerous public monuments and the most famous are the busts of Vuk Karadzic, knez Milos and Djuro Danicic.

Simeon Roksandic (1874-1943) is a representative of Serbian Academism. His most significant works are in Belgrade: *Decak sa razbijenim krcagom* in Cukur cesma, then *Zlosrecni ribar* in a fountain in Kalemegdan, and the sculpture *Decak koji vadi trn*, displayed in the National Museum.

Toma Rosandic (1878-1958) is one of the founders and the first Rector of Belgrade's Faculty of Fine Arts. He studied in Wien under the famous Croatian sculptor Ivan Mestrovic. Rosandic used bronze the most and his most famous sculpture is *Igrali se konji vrani*, in front of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia.

5.7. Athletes

Sport in the lives of Serbians takes a very special place. The people find idols in athletes and cheer, rejoice and celebrate their achievements but also experience their failures turbulently. Football, Basketball, Tennis, Water Polo, and Volleyball are the most popular sports. Athletes from these parts have achieved great results in European and World competitions.

5.7.1. Football

You can say that **Football** is the most popular sport in Serbia, and his arrival to these parts is linked with Hugo Buli who, upon returning to Belgrade from his studies in Berlin, brought the first football during the end of the 19th century. The first football match was played at Topcider in 1899. Since then, the interest in the game continues to rise so, in 1920, the first Championship of city teams was held. During the same year, the National Team of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians played its first match, against Czechoslovakia. The National Team of Yugoslavia achieved its most convincing victory in 1972, against Venezuela (10:0). The most important teams of Serbian football are Partizan and Crvena Zvezda (Red Star), rivals from Belgrade, both founded in 1945. The greatest success of Serbian Club Football was achieved by Red Star in 1991 when the club won the European Champions Cup and the Intercontinental Cup. The second greatest success was achieved by Partizan in 1966 when they played in the Final of the European Champions Cup.

Rajko Mitic (1922-2008) is a legendary Red Star footballer after whom Red Star's stadium got its name. He played 572 matches for his club and scored 262 goals. He played for 11 years for the Yugoslav National Team during his career and scored 32 goals. He was declared the first star of the Red Star and, until today, only five footballers received this special recognition.

Stjepan Bobek (1923-2010) was Partizan's footballer who originated from Croatia and was declared the best player in the history of that club in 1995. He is considered to be one of the best players in Yugoslavia. He started playing in Partizan after WWII (1945) and remained in the club until 1959 when he retired. With him as a player, this club won, two First Ligue Cups, and four Yugoslav Cups. He played 63 times and scored 38 goals for the National Team of Yugoslavia.

Dragoslav Sekularac (1937-2019) is the second Red Star star. He built his career in the country and abroad. He won five Yugoslav's Championships and one Cup with Red Star. After his professional career was over, he started working as a coach for numerous teams. He played himself in the movie *Seki snima, pazi se*.

Milutin Soskic (1937-), this distinguished goalkeeper started his career in Partizan. He played 387 matches for the "black & white" and stood in front of the goal of the national team 50 times. After Partizan, he continued his goalkeeping career in Koln. He was called to play for the "World Team" in the England – The Rest of the World game at the London Wembley Stadium in 1965. Later, he built his career as a coach in Yugoslavia and abroad.

Dragan Dzajic Dzaja (1946-) is considered to be one of the best domestic players of all time. He arrived to red Star at age 15 and received the invitation to play for the senior team only six months later. He played for the national team 85 times and scored 23 goals. He is one of the players with most trophies in the history of Serbian and Yugoslav Football.

Dragan Mance (1962-1985) became the player of Galenika, Belgrade, before his 17th birthday, as an incredibly talented player. He gained glory because of his bravery, charisma, and skills, which allowed him to score goals from incredible distances and positions. He celebrated his goals by sliding on his knees, which was his trademark. He is a hero of Partizan fans and a pop icon. He played 279 times for Partizan and scored 174 goals. He died at age 22 in a car accident and became a legend. 30.000 persons attended his funeral. A street in Belgrade bears his name.

Dragan Stojkovic Piksi (1965-) was a long-time captain of Red Star and the Yugoslav National Team. He is considered to be one of the best Yugoslav and Serbian footballers and is currently managing the Serbian National Team. He was declared the fifth Red Star star in 1989. After Red Star, he played for Olympique de Marseille then the Italian Verona, and finished his playing career in the Japanese Nagoya. He achieved great results in club and national competitions.

Predrag Pedja Mijatovic (1969-) is a famous footballer who started his career in Buducnost FC, from Podgorica (Montenegro) from where he went to Partizan and resumed his career in esteemed foreign clubs like Valencia, Real Madrid, and others. He played 73 times and scored 26 goals for the national team.

Nemanja Vidic (1981-) started his professional career in Red Star, then went to Spartak Moscow, then to Manchester United, and finally to Inter, Milan. He played for the national team from 2002 until 2011. He received many awards during his career.

Branislav Ivanovic (1984-) is a Serbian footballer who started his career in Srem FC from where he went to OFK Beograd then to Lokomotiva Moscow then to Chelsi. He went to the Russian Zenit from Chelsi and then to the English West Bromwich. He won numerous trophies. He played 105 times for the Serbian National Team and was its captain from 2012 until 2018.

5.7.2. Basketball

Besides football, men's and women's **basketball** takes an important place among Serbian sports lovers. First basketball teams were created within football clubs while basketball was played at Kalemegdan and Topcider. In 1941, Belgrade Basketball Championship was organized while in 1942, the Serbian Basketball and Volleyball Association was founded. The fact that the Association had 23 enlisted teams, for less than a year from its founding, speaks enough about the popularity of this sport. Our basketballers played their first international games (as Team Belgrade) in 1945, while the national team participated in the World Cup for the first time in 1950. The matches with the biggest point difference in favor of the national team were played in 1947, against Albania (90:13), and in 2019, against the Philipines (126:67). Some distinguished players are:

Drazen Dalipagic (1951-) arrived at Partizan Belgrade in 1971, and until 1982 played 10 seasons for the "black and white". He was selected best athlete in Yugoslavia in 1978. He played 243 matches for the Yugoslav National Team., and won four World Cup medals and three Olympic Games medals. He was selected best European player on three occasions. He was named one of the 50 greatest FIBA players of all time and entered the Hall of Fame. He started coaching after his playing career ended.

Dragan Kicanovic (1953-) is a celebrated basketball shooting guard. He played 216 times (180 wins) for the Yugoslav National Team, from 1973 until 1983, and scored 3330 points. He won the silver medal at the Olympic Games held in Montreal in 1976 and the gold medal at the Moscow Games in 1980. He won numerous medals at World and Euro Cups. He was named MVP (Most Valuable Player) of the FIBA 1974 World Cup, held in Puerto Rico, then European player of the year in 1981 and 1982, and was president of the Yugoslav/Serbian Olympic Committee from 1996 until 2005.

Aleksandar Djordjevic (1967-) is a famous basketball player who built his playing career, after Partizan, in numerous European clubs with whom he won many trophies. He won four gold and one bronze Euro Cup medals, one silver medal at the 1996 Olympic Games, and one gold World Cup medal playing for the Yugoslav National Team.

Vlade Divac (1968-) is one of the best players and one of the first European players who played in the American NBA league. He won three Euro Cups, two World Cups, and two silver Olympic medals with the National Basketball Team of Yugoslavia. The Union of European Leagues of Basketball (ULEB) named him one of fifty persons most deserving for the development of European basketball and the United Nations selected him as Ambassador of Goodwill for his engagements in humanitarian work.

Bogdan Bogdanovic (1992-) started his professional career in Partizan from where he moved to the Turkish Fenerbahçe. From Turkey, he left for the NBA, where he first played for Sacramento, and from 2020 for Atlanta. He participated in many competitions with the national team and won the silver Olympic medal in Rio.

Nikola Jokic (1995-) at this moment, plays in the NBA for the Denver Nuggets. He started his professional career in Serbia's Mega Vizura and signed a contract with Denver in 2014. He received many awards in basketball and was NBA's MVP for the season 2020/21. He won the silver medal with the Serbian National Team at the Olympic Games in Rio.

Andjelija Arbutina Sarenac (1967-) is a Serbian basketball player with the most trophies won. She spent a big part of her career playing for Red Star but played abroad too. She was a part of the Junior and Senior Yugoslav National Team. She won third place at the 1985 Junior World Cup and second place at the 1986 Junior Euro Cup. She played 81 games for the Senior National Team and won the Olympic silver in Seoul in 1988 and also silver at the 1990 World Cup.

Milica Dabovic (1982-) was the national team's captain. She played from 2002 until 2016 for the national team and won many trophies including the gold medal at the 2015 Euro Cup and the Bronze medal at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games.

Ana Dabovic (1989-) played in the strongest league in the world, the WNBA. She won many awards and medals playing for the Serbian National Team, including two gold medals and one bronze in Euro Cups (2015, 2021, and 2019 respectively) as well as the 2016 Olympic Games bronze medal

5.7.3. Water Polo

Water Polo is, decades behind, the most trophy-winning sport in Serbia. The Serbian National Water Polo Team won the first medal in 1950, at the Wien Euro Cup, the winning series continued after that. Serbian water polo players win a medal almost every year, either at Euro or World Cups so, the Serbian National Team won five gold medals at Olympic Games, five World Cup gold medals, etc.

National water polo legend, **Igor Milanovic** (1965-) is considered to be one of the best water polo players with 349 games and 540 scored goals for the national team. There's also **Aleksandar Sostar** (1964-), a water polo goalkeeper whom the Yugoslav Olympic committee selected as the best male athlete and who won the Golden Badge of Sport in 2001. **Vanja Udovicic** (1982-) is a national team player who built his career in domestic and foreign teams. He won many awards with the national team. FINA and the LEN Magazine selected him as the best player in the world in 2010. **Milan Gale Muskatirovic** (1934-1993), was one of the best water polo players during the sixties. He won the silver 1964 Olympic medal. He was a professor of Organic Chemistry at the Belgrade Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy. The sports centre in Belgrade's Municipality Stari grad bears his name.

5.7.4. Volleyball

The first volleyball arrived in Serbia in 1924, and from 1941 until 1945, during the German occupation, this sport gained popularity and more and more sports associations formed volleyball sections. In 1949, the Yugoslav Volleyball Association becomes an independent organization, two years later the Women Volleyball National Team wins the first medal in the Euro Cup held in Paris. This sport developed gradually and the greatest success of domestic volleyball players is the Sidney 2000 Olympic gold medal. Many recognitions and successes in different competitions followed after this.

The most popular representatives of this sport are:

Vladimir Vanja Grbic (1970-) won 14 medals playing for the Yugoslav National Team, including the 2000 Olympic gold, and was selected best European player during the same year. He is a member of the Volleyball Hall of Fame.

Nikola Grbic (1973-) is an awarded Serbian National Team member. He won the 2000 Olympic gold and became a member of the Volleyball Hall of Fame in 2016.

5.7.5. Handball

Handball in Serbia starts developing between the two Great Wars. The Serbian Handball Association was founded in 1949 and the first competitions were organized two years later. Initially, this sport was popular with women and girls. Many national team successes, among which two Olympic gold medals in men's competition (1972 & 1984) and Olympic gold in female competition (1984), followed. The most glorified name of Yugoslav and Serbian Handball is **Svetlana Kitic** (1960-), a national team player who played in two Olympic Games in which she won a gold medal (Los Angeles) and a silver medal (Moscow). She won the gold medal at the 1990 World Cup and IHF (International Handball Federation) selected her as the Best Handball Player of the World in 1988.

5.7.6. Tennis

Although team sports are primary in popularity, Tennis and Athletics take a special place in the hearts of Serbians. **Tennis** gained popularity during the end of the 19th century. Priboj was the first place where this sport was played. **Monika Seles**, one of the best of all times and the former number one in women's single competition of this sport, born in Novi Sad in 1973, played for Yugoslavia until 1994 when she started playing for the USA. During the last twenty years, the popularity of tennis reached incredible proportions. Matches of domestic tennis players are expected with anticipation while almost four players in senior competitions reached first places (**Novak Djokovic – men single, Ana Ivanovic, Jelena Jankovic – women single, and Nenad Zimonjic – men double**).

The greatest star is, by far, **Novak Djokovic** (1987-), who is considered to be the best player of all time, by many critics of the sport. He holds many records. In March 2021, he officially kept the record for the number of weeks spent at the top of the ATP list.

5.7.7. Athletics

Serbia had great athletic success. **Vera Nikolic** (1948-2021), who reached fame in 800 meters races is one of the legends of this sport. She became the national team member and champion of the Balkans at only 16 and was also the European and World Champion in this discipline.

Other distinguished representatives of this sport are:

Dragutin Topic (1971-) participated in six Olympic Games. He holds the Junior World Record in the high jump with 2,37 meters jumped (1990). He won numerous rewards from various Championships. He is one of the best Serbian Athletes of all time.

Olivera Jevtic (1977-) is a still active long-distance runner who participated in many marathons and semi-marathons. She was named Best Athlete of Yugoslavia and Serbia multiple times and won many medals and awards.

Ivana Spanovic (1990-) is a national team and Athletic Club Vojvodina (Novi Sad) member. She competes in the long jump. She won numerous medals in World and Euro championships including the 2016 Rio Olympic bronze medal.

6. Manifestations

Serbia is organizing many Festivals and other events – from food festivals to cultural and pop events (film, music, theatre, comic book, and similar) to sports events. Many events are international and are of national importance. Also, many cities and local communities support small events, which depict local art and gastronomical treasures. Considering the number of events, this review contains just the most important ones. We will provide the place and year when the event was founded after each of their names.

6.1. Music Festivals

Serbia is rich in Music Festivals of all sorts; some are known worldwide and attract hundreds of thousands of visitors every year.

Guca Festival/Dragacevo Gathering of Trumpet Players in Guca (Guca, 1961) – This annual trumpet players and ensembles Festival competes with Exit for the title of the most visited and worldwide known musical festival from Serbia. This Festival is held in a small place called Guca, in Lucani Municipality, not far from Cacak. The festival gained its current popularity at the start of the 21st century and has an audience of hundreds of thousands every year. Famous jazz musicians, celebrities, and politicians from all over the world visit this Festival.

Zajecar Guitar Festival (Zajecar, 1966) – The oldest music festival in Serbia dedicated exclusively to the rock guitar. The festival is competitive, and young bands compete at this event, great national and international rock & roll stars perform during the revue part of this festival.

Days of Mokranjac (Negotin, 1966) – A traditional festival of folklore music, mostly a choir competition. It is held in Negotin, the birthplace of the great Serbian composer Stevan Stojanovic Mokranjac.

BEMUS/Belgrade Musical Festival (Belgrade, 1969) – The oldest classical music festival in Serbia. It promotes local artists and introduces top orchestras and soloists from around the world.

Nisville (Nis, 1995) – International Jazz Festival, which is held every August in the Nis Fortress. Jazz stars from all over the world perform at this festival.

EXIT (Petrovaradin Fortress, Novi Sad, 2000) – Is probably, besides Guca, the most known music festival in Serbia and the world. The festival is held, consistently, during summer at the beginning of July. Its focus is on electric music but hosts domestic and foreign pop and rock musicians too. The festival was named Best European Music Festival three times. It attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors because they arrive from all over Europe. This is why it became an important factor of tourism in Novi Sad.

Guitar Art Festival (Belgrade, 2000) is – International festival of classical guitar that brings masters of this instrument from all over the world.

Belgrade Beer Fest (Belgrade, 2003) – Although mainly dedicated to the promotion of beer, this big festival is a gathering place for domestic and foreign musical stars of different styles. Its musical program is very rich, often with celebrity performers. It was held under the Belgrade Fortress at first but then was moved to a much bigger and adequate space of the Belgrade River mouth. It is held every August.

Arsenal Fest (Kragujevac, 2011) – A big festival, which mostly hosts performers from ex-Yugoslav countries but brings world celebrities too. The rock expression prevails, but hip-hop and techno artists perform too. The festival is held at the end of June.

6.2. Film Festivals

In present-day Serbia, dozens of big and small festivals of different genres and types, exist and most of them are dedicated to domestic film production. Their importance grew significantly during the great cinema crisis from the first decade of this millennium.

Belgrade Festival of Documentary and Short Movies, also known as the March Festival (Belgrade, 1953) – is the biggest celebration of short and documentary movies in Serbia, with a very long tradition and international reputation. It is held every March. Prizes in different categories are awarded.

Nis Film Encounters (Nis, 1966) – Festival which is primarily dedicated to domestic movies, with emphasis on actors who are the ones that receive awards at this Festival.

FEST (Belgrade, 1971) – The biggest movie review in Serbia. This Festival gives an overview of last year's worldwide movie production. It became competitive during the last decade.

This Festival attracts movie stars from all over the world, mostly actors and directors. It is held at winter end.

Festival of Movie Scripts (Vrnjacka banja, 1977) – A Festival of domestic movies which are awarding movie scripts. It is held every August.

Palic Festival of European Movies (Palic, 1992) is – International competitive festival dedicated to European movies. It is held every July at Palic Lake and in cinemas in nearby Subotica.

Author's Film Festival (Belgrade, 1994) – is an event at which worldwide author movies are viewed. This event is the second biggest celebration of movies in Belgrade. It is held in December.

Balkanima (Belgrade, 2004) – European Festival of animated motion pictures.

LIFFE (Leskovac, 2006) – An international festival that awards directing.

Cinema City (Novi Sad, 2007) – An international festival dedicated to promoting young authors, built on the concept of Novi Sad as a City-Festival. This Festival was founded in 2007, and at the beginning was called the Serbian Film Festival, this name depicted the ambition of its founders, for this festival to be the most important movie event in the land.

BELDOCS (Belgrade, 2008) – International Documentary Festival, the biggest in the Western Balkans.

Kustendorf (Drvengrad, 2008) – Festival which is held at the ethnic village Drvengrad (another name: Mecavnik) near Mokra Gora Mountain and the city Visegrad. Director Emir Kusturica built this village for the needs of one of his movies and is the founder of this event which resists Hollywood glamour and commerciality in every aspect and celebrates the non-commercial, artistic movie.

6.3. Theatre Festivals

Theatres have a long tradition in Serbia where the most significant theatre festivals in former Yugoslavia were founded after WWII. Among them, BITEF is one of the most significant festivals in Europe and the world.

Sterijino pozorje (Novi Sad, 1956) – The oldest and most important Festival of domestic theatre performances in Serbia and Yugoslavia earlier.

BITEF (Belgrade, 1967) – Biggest theatre festival in Serbia and one of the most important of its kind in the world. It follows modern streams in theatre production on all continents and merges traditional and experimental forms.

6.4. Literary Festivals

Serbia is a country with many small literary festivals and one big, which is one of the most visited events in Serbia by far. This festival is the Belgrade Book Fair.

The International Belgrade Book Fair (Belgrade, 1956) – One of the oldest and most important literary events in the region of the former Yugoslavia. The first event was held in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, and then was moved to Belgrade. This event gathers local and foreign publishers and has very distinguished guests, a rich side program (conferences, round tables, writer encounters, etc), and a big number of visitors every year. It is held in several Belgrade Fair halls and is considered the biggest cultural event in Serbia's capital. It is traditionally held at the end of October and lasts eight days.

6.5. Art Festivals

October Salon (Belgrade, 1960) – Founded as a yearly exhibition of the best artwork. In time, this festival changed its concept and is now an exhibition of modern art in Serbia. It has lately become a biennale (held every two years).

6.6. Comic Book Festival

Yugoslavia was a worldwide Comic Book power and Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia & Herzegovina had the strongest scenes. Serbia today is a true export of Comic Book talents (many of them work for French publishers) and has numerous Comic Book Schools and a whole series of Comic Book Fairs and Festivals including two international events: the International Comic Festival and the Festival of Young Comic Book Authors of the Balkans.

Festival of Young Comic Book Authors of the Balkans (Leskovac, 1998) – Leskovac is a small city in Southern Serbia with a very vivid festival life and the Festival of Young Comic Book Authors of the Balkans is maybe the most important event in this town. This festival is competitive and hosts distinguished guests.

International Comics Festival (Belgrade, 2003) – The Biggest comic book festival in Serbia. The main part of this festival is the international comics competition, with prizes in several categories. Guest are stars of the world comic book scene.

6.7. Other festivals and sports events

BELEF (Belgrade, 1992) – The Belgrade Summer Festival is a mixture of festivals held during summer in Belgrade, with a very rich theatre, musical and visual program.

Belgrade Marathon (Belgrade, 1988) – A Marathon race that is held every springtime in Belgrade, usually during April. It gathers thousands of participants – professionals and recreationists. The competitions are conducted in the Full Marathon category (42 kilometers), Semi-Marathon (21 kilometers), and the Recreational Race (5 kilometers). The first Belgrade Marathon was held in 1988. Before that, the only marathon race held in Serbia was the one on the Obrenovac-Belgrade route in 1910.

Belgrade Dance Festival (Belgrade, 2003) – This Festival hosts dance teams from all over the world.

7. Gastronomy

In the words of the popular singer-songwriter Djordje Balasevic „Al’ se nekad dobro jelo” (Oh, how well we ate once). This sentence explains one of Serbia’s characteristics very well. You can say that diversity and plenty of the Serbian kitchen are some of the reasons foreigners gladly visit Serbia. The specificity of this kitchen lies precisely in the influences of foreign kitchens like Oriental, Austro-Ugrian, German, Greek, and kitchens from other Balkan countries. These influences can be seen in meals often present on the Serbian kitchen table – *Sarma*, Stuffed peppers and zucchinis, *Musaka*, *Strudel*, *Baklava*... The Serbian kitchen nurture old local recipes. Different parts of the country have different menus. For example, in Northern Serbia, a common lunch starts with Soup, continues with *Rinflajs*, then meat and *Cuspajz*, and is usually sweetened with *Snenokle* or *Strudel*. When we move south and reach Sumadija and Central Serbia dairy products, like *Kraljevo cheese* and *Kajmak*, then *Zlatibor* i *Zlatar* cheeses, as well as smoked and dried pork meat products like *Prosciutto* and *Pecenica*, characteristic for Uzice, are widely known. Many tourists, visiting this part of the country, would like to try the so-called *Komplet lepinja*. These parts are also widely known for raspberry production – this fruit is used to prepare different sorts of cookies, syrups, sweets, and candies and it has its event – Raspberry Days. The most famous and popular alcoholic drink from this part of the country is *Sljivovica* (Plum Brandy), a must-have aperitive before every meal. When we talk about the specialties from these parts of Serbia, we must emphasize *Duvan cvarci*. The kitchen of Raska and Sandzak received the Oriental influence the most. The biggest difference, when compared to other parts of the country, is that people do not eat pork meat a lot in these parts. Some popular dishes there are *Novopazarski cevap*, *Stelja*, *Sudzuk*, and *Mantija*, while *Sjenica* cheese is widely known. Eastern Serbia, rich in customs and superstitions, is also very rich in unusual gastronomic specialties. In these parts of the country grains are very important so, flour products, like bread, have a special place on the dinner table, while *Kacamak* is served with goat or sheep cheese. In areas near Danube, river fish like Catfish and Carp are often eaten, while the fish stew is something you don’t miss. Also, this area is very convenient for wine production. *Homolj honey* is inevitable in these parts of the country. In the south and west of Serbia, good music often follows good food, and *Ajvar*, *Pindjur*, *Cevap*, *Peglana kobasica*, *Pirot cheese*, *Stuffed dried peppers*, etc, are usually present on the dinner table. To preserve local tradition and products, Serbia has other events, local and national, besides Raspberry Days, like *Kupusijada* (Cabbage Days) in Mrcajevci (Cacak Municipality), *Slaninijada* (Bacon Days) in Kacarevo (near Pancevo), *Rostiljijada* (Grill Days in Leskovac)...

8. Pop culture

Unlike other communist countries during the Cold War, Socialist Federal Yugoslavia was oriented to the West, so its pop culture was very prominent. Popular music and movie scenes were particularly strong in Serbia as its largest and most populated Republic, with Belgrade, inhabited by almost two million people, being the capital of the whole country. Serbian filmmaking dates from the times of its kingdom and it became the backbone of the Socialist Yugoslavia Film Industry. On the other hand, pop and rock music gained momentum during the sixties, with their popularity exploding two decades later.

8.1. Film

In Serbia films have been made and watched since the time of the Serbian Kingdom (1878-1918). The first film screening was made for the Serbian king Aleksandar I Obrenovic in 1896, only six months after the first-ever cinema screening in Paris (1895). The first cinema in Belgrade was launched in 1909, and the first Serbian movie became *Zivot i delo besmrtnog vozda Karadjordja* (1911), directed by Cica Ilija Stanojevic.

In-between two World Wars, the key figure of Serbian and Yugoslav cinema was Ernest Bosnjak (1876-1963), director of many silent movies (the most famous: *Lazi mene radi* from 1923. and *Faun* from 1924). He also tried to build something like “Serbian Hollywood” in his hometown of Sombor, Northern Vojvodina, but that never came to be. Nevertheless, Bosnjak has opened a cinema in Sombor in 1906, while the city was still ruled by the Austro-Ugrian Monarchy.

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia, formed in 1918, wanted to develop its own national film production, so in 1931 the Law on Regulation of Film Circulation was passed, stipulating mechanisms designated to finance and protect the domestic film production at its own market, but the Law had to be modified only a year later, due to the pressure imposed by both foreign companies and Yugoslav exhibitors and distributors who wanted to maintain their monopoly, so the scope of domestic film production had significantly dropped, with cinemas predominantly showing foreign movies.

During WWII, occupied Serbia produced its sole film, *Nevinost bez zastite* by Dragoljub Aleksic (1942).

After WWII a new, Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was formed and it had one of the most successful cinemas in Europe. Lifelong president of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, was a movie buff, and because of favorable conditions, foreign movies were made in Yugoslavia, with domestic film production being much more prolific than in the time of the Kingdom. At least until the seventies, the majority of film production was comprised of so-called partisan movies that depicted Yugoslav partisan’s guerrilla fight against the Germans and their domestic helpers. The biggest star of this Yugoslav film subgenre was Serbian actor Velimir Bata Zivojinovic (*Valter brani Sarajevo* directed by Hajrudin Krvavac in 1972, and starring Zivojinovic in the main role, became a blockbuster hit in China), while the most celebrated

partisan movie of all times was *Bitka na Neretvi* by Veljko Bulajic (1969), which became a Yugoslav Oscar candidate, starring famous foreign actors like Orson Welles, Yul Brynner, Sergei Bondarchuk and Franco Nero.

In the time of Socialist Yugoslavia, which consisted of six Republics (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia), most movies were made in Serbia, the republic with most inhabitants and cinemas and one big film studio, Avala Film. The first movie of true importance was made by a director from the time of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Vojislav Nanovic (1922-1983). It was a fantasy tale *Cudotvorni mac* (1950), which rose over competition – mainly comprised of partisan movies – with its unusual genre (fantasy) and almost Hollywood production values, and became the first serious export product of the Yugoslav film production. Soja Jovanovic (1922-2002) became the first female director of the Serbian and Yugoslav film and first Yugoslav filmmaker who directed a colour movie – comedy *Pop Cira i pop Spira* (1956), based on a play by Stevan Sremac. The most famous partisan movie creator, among Serbian directors, was Zivorad Zika Mitrovic (1921-2005), who made *Kapetan Lesi* (1960) and *Uzicka republika* (1974), and also the only Yugoslav movie that depicted heroism of the Serbian Army during WWI – *Mars na Drinu* (1964).

At the start of the sixties, when western fashion, music, pop culture but also the spirit of social criticism started infiltrating Yugoslavia, new genres and themes showed up on the scene, breaking down the monotonous rule of Partisan war movies but also stirring up the entire society. The musical by Ljubomir Radicevic *Ljubav i moda* (1960) became a big hit, and an entire squad of mostly Serbian directors-actors began creating movies which questioned social justice and norms in Yugoslavia and the most important of these creations are *Covek nije tica* (Dusan Makavejev, 1965), *Tri* (Aleksandar Sasa Petrovic, 1965), *Kad budem mrtav i beo* (Zivojin Pavlovic, 1967), *Skupljaci perja* (Aleksandar Sasa Petrovic, 1967), *Jutro* (Purisa Djordjevic, 1967), *Ljubavna tragedija ili slucaj sluzbenice PTT* (Dusan Makavejev, 1967), *Budjenje pacova* (Zivojin Pavlovic, 1967), *Pre istine* (Kokan Rakonjac, 1968), *Bice skoro propast sveta* (Aleksandar Sasa Petrovic, 1968), *Rani radovi* (Zelimir Zilnik, 1969), *WR Misterije organizma* (Dusan Makavejev, 1971) and *Mlad i zdrav kao ruza* (Jovan Jovanovic, 1971). Among them, Makavejev, Pavlovic, Petrovic, and Zilnik enjoyed a big reputation at domestic and foreign festivals but Black-wavers faced censorship in the country.

One director who also did not create in line with the ideology of that time was Djordje Kadijevic. After making remarkable war movies *Praznik* (1967) and *Pohod* (1968), he moved to television, which started to be more and more serious and ambitious. There he created the folklore horror *Leptirica* (1973), which became one of the most-watched TV movies of all time in Yugoslavia. He created extremely important TV movies and series later, inspired by themes from Serbian history: *Karadjordjeva smrt* (1983) and *Vuk Karadzic* (1987-1988), before the break of Socialist Yugoslavia he created the probably most appreciated Serbian horror: *Sveto mesto* (1990), according to the motives of the tale *Vij*, written by Russian writer Nikolai Gogol.

During the seventies, directors from the so-called Prague School matured. These are authors who studied Film Art in the Czech Republic, among whom the most productive were

Srdjan Karanovic, Goran Paskaljevic, and Goran Markovic. Srdjan Karanovic became famous for the TV series *Grlom u jagode* (1976), while Paskaljevic and Markovic have big film opuses with the most significant creations from the seventies and eighties when, after Josip Broz Tito died, social restraints faded while artistic freedoms and freedom of speech grew stronger. Goran Paskaljevic is recognizable for his movies *Cuvar plaze u zimskom periodu* (1976), *Pas koji je voleo vozove* (1977), *Specijalan tretman* (1980), a great hit *Varljivo leto '68* (1984) and *Vreme cuda* (1989). Goran Markovic created extremely successful and viewed, socially engaged movies like *Specijalno vaspitanje* (1977), *Nacionalna klasa* (1979), *Majstori majstori* (1980), *Variola vera* (1982), *Vec vidjeno* (1987), *Sabirni centar* (1989) and *Tito i ja* (1991). Zorana Calic's great hit-drama *Lude godine* (1977) was created in this decade too and will transform into a long-lasting and profitable series of movie comedies (*Lude godine/Zikina dinastija*) not only in former Yugoslav territories but in the Soviet Union too.

At the beginning of the eighties, one of the most significant Serbian directors steps up. Slobodan Sijan whose bitter comedies *Ko to tamo peva* (1980) and *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* (1982) belong among the greatest hits of all times in Yugoslavia, while replicas from these movies became part of everyday language in all former Yugoslav Republics. During this decade, which bring significant genre enrichment to Yugoslav Cinematography, big hits were also made by Mica Milosevic (*Tesna koza*, 1982, which will have three sequels), Branko Bauer (*Balkan ekspres*, 1983), Srdjan Karanovic (*Petrijin venac* - 1980, *Nesto izmedju* - 1983 and *Jagode u grlu* - 1986) and dramatist Dusan Kovacevic (according to whose dramas/scripts movies *Ko to tamo peva*, *Maratonci trce pocasni krug* and *Sabirni centar* were made) as director of the cult movie *Balkanski spijun* (1984) while Emir Kusturica wins the Golden Palm at the Cannes Festival with the movie *Otac na sluzbenom putu* (1985). After Socialist Yugoslavia broke down, during Serbia's very unfortunate, nineties (when Serbia, together with Montenegro, was part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) the most important director becomes Srdjan Dragojevic with three great movie hits: comedy *Mi nismo andjeli* (1992), anti-war classic *Lepa sela lepo gore* (1996) and drama *Rane* (1998). Kusturica wins the second Golden Palm during 1995, with the movie *Podzemlje*. Significant creations of this decade are also *Ubistvo sa predumisljajem* (Gorcin Stojanovic, 1995) and *Lajanje na zvezde* (Zdravko Sotra, 1998).

The first decade of the 21st century in which the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cease to exist, brings the greatest cinema hit since the break of Socialist Yugoslavia, the comedy *Zona Zamfirova* (Zdravko Sotra, 2002), movie seen by more than seven million viewers. Around 2005, a once-mighty Serbian Cinematography enters a big crisis because of the closing of many cinemas in a problematic privatization process and cinema visits drastically drop. Only during the next decade will Serbian Cinematography recover a bit. With the movies like the sport drama *Montevideo bog te video* (Dragan Bjelogrljic, 2010), *Mali budo* (Danilo Beckovic, 2014), *Kralj Petar Prvi* (Petar Ristovski, 2018), *Juzni vetar* (Milos Avramovic, 2018) and *Toma* (Dragan Bjelogrljic, 2021). Important movies are created by Srdan Golubovic (*Klopka*, 2007), Dejan Zecevic (*TT Sindrom*, 2002 and *Cetvrti covek*, 2007) and Uros Stojanovic (*Carlston za Ognjenku*, 2008), and a young generation of directors steps up among whom the most important ones are Stevan Filipovic (*Sejtanov ratnik*, 2006, *Sisanje*, 2009 and *Pored mene*, 2015.), Mladen Djordjevic (*Zivot i smrt porno bande*, 2009), Maja Milos (*Klip*, 2012), Mina Djukic (*Neposlusni*, 2014) and Vuk Rsumovic (*Nicije dete*, 2014).

8.2. Pop music

After WWII, when Yugoslavia parted ways with the Soviet Union and the Eastern Block (1948), the so-called Yugoslav-Mexican music - with Yugoslav singers singing Mexican songs or creating new songs in Mexican fashion - started to gain prominence as a substitute for Russian music, which was popular until it became politically undesirable. This music was performed by Mariachi bands, dressed in traditional Mexican clothes with sombreros. The most popular Serbian representatives of this musical trend, popular during the fifties and sixties, were Predrag Cune Gojkovic, Ljubomir Milic, and the Mariachi band Paloma.

During the sixties, when Yugoslavia turned to the West, western rock and pop sounds arrived in the country, pushing out the Yugoslav-Mexican music and, on the other hand, inspiring domestic bands and singers. Great Serbian pop singers of this era are: Djordje Marjanovic (the first singer-superstar of socialist Yugoslavia), Lola Novakovic, Dragan Stojnic, and Miki Jevremovic. Siluete was one of the first Yugoslav rock bands, with its singer Zoran Miscevic becoming a youth idol and a sex symbol. The end of the sixties saw the creation of two more important Serbian bands, Crni biseri and Kornij grupa.

In the seventies, pop music flourished across Yugoslavia, and from Serbia came the evergreen pop singer Bisera Veletanlic and the greatest Yugoslav singer superstar of all times, Zdravko Colic, who expertly mixed pop, rock, disco, and ethnic influences. Talented writers and poets used to write songs for Colic. In the seventies, with hard rock and progressive rock sounds dominating the Yugoslav rock scene, bands like YU grupa, Time, Smak, and Galija were prominent. The modern folk music scene (novokomponovana narodna muzika as it was called) also started to develop, with its biggest stars, during the seventies and the eighties being Toma Zdravkovic, Silvana Armenulic, Saban Saulic, Lepa Lukic, Predrag Zivkovic Tozovac, Lepa Brena, Miroslav Ilic, Dragana Mirkovic and Vesna Zmijanac. Roma singer, Saban Bajramovic - later reaching worldwide fame as the King of Roma music - started his career in the seventies too. Near the end of the seventies, probably the most popular Yugoslav band of all times, Riblja corba was founded, achieving nationwide fame in the next decade. The singer of Riblja corba Bora Djordjevic will achieve his own fame as a street poet. The only rivals to Riblja corba and Bora Djordjevic were the Croatian band Azra and its singer-songwriter Branimir Džoni Stulic.

In the beginning of the eighties the Yugoslav new wave music emerged, with Serbian bands like Idoli, Električni orgazam and Sarlo akrobata having coverage in the British rock press. The Belgrade New Wave scene was closely connected to the Zagreb scene and its popular bands Azra, Prljavo kazalište, Haustor, and Film. Other Serbian New Wave bands also gained popularity at the time, such as Zana, U skripcu, Laboratorija zvuka, and Laki pingvini. Singer-songwriter Djordje Balasevic, singer and composer Oliver Mandić also became hugely successful, as well as ethnic-jazz singer Luis. In the mid-Eighties, Serbian bands like Bajaga i Instruktori (who enjoyed enormous popularity in the Soviet Union too), Ekatarina Velika, Partibrejkersi, and Disciplina Kicme ruled the mainstream rock scene in Yugoslavia. Montenegrin singer-songwriter living in Belgrade, Antonije Pusić, widely known as Rambo Amadeus, also became a big star. He is one of the pioneers of hip-hop in Yugoslavia, sampling foreign rock performers and domestic folk stars alike.

The wars following the break-up of Yugoslavia (1991) paused or ended many bands' careers, with their members going abroad or going out of music business. Meanwhile, discotheques and the TV were overrun with the so-called Serbian turbo-folk music – a fusion genre of popular music blending Serbian, Greek, and oriental folk music with other genres such as dance, pop, rock, electronic and hip-hop. The greatest stars of this music subgenre in the next three decades were Svetlana Ceca Raznatovic, Dzej Ramadanovski and Jelena Karleusa. In the nineties, the most important rock bands in Serbia were Van Gogh, Babe, Plejboj, Eva Braun, Ritam nereda, and Deca losih muzicara. Pop-rock singer Ana Stanic and Gru – the first hip hop star in Serbia - were also very popular.

In the new millennium, Serbian rock music lost its vitality and influence, with turbo-folk, pop, and ethnic pop becoming dominant in the mainstream. Hip hop music become favourite among the youth in Serbian cities. The greatest pop star of 2000s was Vlado Georgijev. The greatest names of Serbian ethno-pop are Zeljko Joksimovic and Marija Serifovic who both gained international fame at the Eurosong competition – Serifovic won the competition in 2008, and Joksimovic took second place in 2004. The most important names of Serbian hip hop are Beogradski sindikat and Marcelo.

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