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THE CULTURE OF ECONOMIC STAGNATION IN MONTENEGRO

by

Michael Palairet

Introduction

Most recent work on the development of the Balkan economies in the nineteenth century has focussed on their adaptive and dynamic elements, for example their industries, financial intermediaries and the more progressive features of their agriculture. But behind these highlights may only dimly be discerned the shrouded area of the Balkan chiaroscuro, the apparently changeless economy of upland pastoral life. Yet the structural problems of this all but invisible economy materially affected the evolution of the Balkan economic system, especially through the lifestyles and attitudes to which they gave rise. To isolate the workings of the shrouded sector from those of the evolutionary mainstream, we find in the small nation state of Montenegro a paradigm for the pastoral economic system of the Dinaric mountains. The lack of land suited for anything other than mountain grazing is indicated by the fact that in 1965 only 11 percent of the surface was under crops, compared with 35 percent for Albania, 50 percent for Bulgaria and 62 percent for Serbia¹.

The lands within the Dinaric mountain ranges, including Montenegro, were 'hive' areas whence much of the rest of today's Yugoslavia, especially Serbia and Slavonia, drew a substantial part of its population stock. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries especially, an endless metastasis of colonists from the Dinaric uplands pushed northward and eastward toward the fertile but thinly populated plains of the interior. These people brought with them their values and their

culture, which co-existed uneasily with the imperatives of lowland life. These traits were by no means extinguished by assimilation; rather, they contributed to the synthesis of Yugoslavia's material culture. For this reason we look beyond the confines of the Montenegrin state, to follow its emigrants into the lands they colonized, and suggest some of the implications of their migration for the longer term.

Population

To analyse the economic evolution of an underdeveloped territory, whose natural resources and population are the principal factor inputs, we need to ascertain the primary demographic facts. For Nineteenth Century Montenegro this is no straightforward task - even for the period from 1859, when its boundaries were fixed. The figures assembled in Table 1 below are not definitive, though they are an advance on such as have been published hitherto. Most contemporarily published figures were gross exaggerations since the Montenegrin government regarded the census details as a military secret, and contrived to convey an inflated impression of available manpower². For example, the '1863/64 census' figure of 196,238 souls in the calendar Orlić though usually accepted without comment, is purely fanciful³. It is not easy to set the record straight as only fragments of a single census - made in 1879 - survive in the Archive of Montenegro at Cetinje. Even Radusinović, in his recent work on the population of Montenegro before 1945, admits defeat on the period before World War I, dismissing the data as inconsistent⁴.

However, registers survive for certain years for the assessment of direct tax, 'dacija'. These appear to capture all heads of families (since some declared zero assets) and from them we can estimate population indirectly. In the registers, the number of taxpayers was never totalled, but at least from 1879, each folio was numbered and contained a fixed number of entries, whence close approximations can be made without ex-

cessive labour. We estimate from the earliest available register that in 1868 there were 13,565 taxpayers, and in 1879, within a larger area, 23,617⁵. Bulajić provides comparable figures for 1889 and 1900⁶. The census fragment for 1879 picks up 10,911 families and 54,285 souls, from which we infer a family size of 4,975⁷. The 'family' of the 1879 census is clearly the same as the tax unit in the 'dacija' register of the same year. For want of alternative information we assume that family size remained constant between 1868 and 1900. For 1911 Radusinović tabulates an archival census abstract, giving a population figure of 222,018. This almost certainly includes reservists absent abroad, who totalled 10,109, so we have deducted this figure to estimate resident population⁸. (By comparing a figure very close to Radusinović's with the population of the same area in 1921, Montenegro's wartime population loss was represented as the heaviest in Yugoslavia⁹. This may indicate some overestimation of the base-year figure.) Certain adjustments are needed to deal with major annexations of former Ottoman territory between 1876 and 1880. Between 1868 and 1879, the population of 13 identified 'kapetanijas' (municipalities) in the old territory rose by 7.26 percent, a figure which we have taken to represent the experience of the pre-1879 territory as a whole. Moreover, a considered contemporary estimate for the 1880's indicates war casualties of not less than 10,000, so it seems only cautious to assume that there was no population growth between 1875 and 1879¹⁰. Our estimate for the population of the post-1880 territory in 1879 and 1880 is obtained by backward extrapolation of the 1889 and 1900 figures. For population in 1880 we deduct the inhabitants of Ulcinj and environs, since this was only ceded by Turkey in November of that year. The population of the Ulcinj area in 1887 was put at 6407 by Rovinski¹¹. These figures form the basis for total population in Table 1 below. If family size was falling over the period, then the 1889 and 1900 figures overstate, and the figure for 1868 understates. However a curious fragment of evidence indicates the correctness of the 1889 figure. By announcing in October 1891 that Montenegro had

388 disabled persons, representing 23.2 per 10,000 of the population, the official gazette inadvertently declared a population of 167,300, presumably in 1890; this is identical with our estimate for 1890, if our 1889 and 1900 figures are interpolated geometrically. It is much smaller than the figure of 300,000 that this publication was touting a few years later¹².

In addition to providing the tabulated population figures in Table 1, the data also allows us to estimate that the annexations of 1876-80 enlarged Montenegro's population by 77,018 or 106.4 percent¹³. On the eve of annexation the former Turkish territory had been more densely populated, but substantial numbers of Muslims fled the country. Soon after annexation 1,060 Muslim families fled from the four main towns, and substantial numbers also from rural areas¹⁴. So the pre-annexation population of these territories had probably been at least 85,000. Population grew by 1.0 percent per annum both between 1868 and 1875, and again between 1881 and 1900. It then rose at 1.2 percent per annum up to 1911. This was a fractionally faster growth rate than that of neighbouring Dalmatia (1.0 percent p.a. for 1879-1911) but significantly slower than that of Serbia or Bosnia (both 1.6 percent). But then, like Dalmatia, Montenegro consistently lost population through heavy emigration.

For the first half of the nineteenth century, there is no shortage of population estimates, but most are probably inspired pseudo-statistics. As our tabulated figures fall consistently below even the least optimistic contemporary figures for their period, we have not attempted to extend them back in time before 1868, the earliest year for which we have had sight of a 'dacija' register¹⁵. We can however offer some tentative estimates for c. 1800 and 1838, though the extent of the territory they cover is not clear. One way contemporaries contrived to inflate their figures was by attaching unrealistically high multipliers to more credible estimates of the

number of families or of houses. For example, Paić and Scherb quote a figure of 11,700 families, (incorrectly totalled to 10,900) but multiply this by a family size of 11¹⁶. This statistic is the same as that attributed by Rovinsky to Karachay and dated to 1838, though with a different multiplier¹⁷. For the same year, or 1839, two sources offer figures of 9,328 houses and 9,463 families¹⁸. (This suggests a rough identity between the two measures.)

For circa 1800, Djordjević reproduced figures indicating 5,791 houses, 14,683 able bodied males and 58,732 inhabitants. The figures include villages which normally sided with Montenegro in battle¹⁹. If we were to assume that the characteristic zadruga household was as much a myth in the early nineteenth century as it was in 1879, and ignore estimates concerning the number of soldiers as deliberately misleading, then Montenegro's 1800 population becomes 29,000 and that of 1838, 47-58,000. (One should note that Montenegro gained territory in 1820 and again in 1859.)

For urban population, the estimates compiled in Table 1 suggest that the towns grew steadily over the period as a whole, from less than one percent of population in 1870 to 8.9 percent in 1911. This is deceptive, however. The four towns in the territories annexed in 1876-80 were drastically depopulated condition at the time of their incorporation within the Montenegrin state. As late as 1911, they had probably not recovered to the size they were under the old regime, so the apparent growth observed represents no more than partial recovery. Till the 1880's the old territory of Montenegro was almost entirely rural. Only in 1847 did the first secular buildings appear beyond the walls of Cetinje Monastery from which the country was administered at that time²⁰. In 1879, Cetinje counted 734 inhabitants²¹. Two petty market settlements, Rijeka Crnojevića and Ceranić (renamed Danilovgrad) counted 380 inhabitants between them²². The four towns in the annexed territory, Podgorica, Bar, Ulcinj and Nikšić are

Population of Montenegrin Towns 1870 - 1911

	Cetinje	Podgorica	Ulcinj	Nikšić	Bar
1870	500	-	-	-	-
1878	-	(8,000)	(5,000)	(4,000)	(6,000)
1879	734	2,720	-	816	1,823
1880	(857)	(2,795)	-	(901)	(1,854)
1881	1,000	(2,872)	(3,362)	(994)	(1,886)
1887	(1,378)	(3,382)	3,362	1,800	(2,090)
1892	1,800	-	-	-	-
1896	2,476	-	-	-	-
1899	-	-	-	1,796	-
1900	(2,790)	(4,819)	(3,455)	(1,857)	(2,609)
1902	-	-	-	-	2,700
1911	3,874	6,503	3,536	2,685	2,309

Population of Montenegro 1868 - 1911

	Pre-1878 area total	urban	Current area total	urban	% urban
1868	67,486				
1870		500			0.7
1875	72,386				
1879	72,386	734	117,495	3,373	2.9
1880			144,967	6,407	4.4
1881			152,494	10,114	6.6
1887				12,012	7.4
1889			165,628		
1900			185,558	15,530	8.4
1911			211,909	18,907	8.9

Note on urban population. Figures exclude townships with less than 1,000 inhabitants in 1911. () enclose population of towns when external to sovereign territory. () enclose interpolated or extrapolated figures.

Sources for urban population: 1870, Cetinje: Dučić, p 25; 1878, Podgorica, Ulcinj, Nikšić, Bar: Djurović, p 109; 1879, Cetinje: A.C.G., M.U.D. VII. 1; 1879, Podgorica: A.C.G., M.U.D. VII 17. Given as 575 Turkish and 89 Christian tax heads, prorated to population as for Bar 1879; 1879, Bar, Nikšić: A.C.G., M.U.D. VII. 2 (Nikšić as "kapetanija Nišićka"); 1881, Cetinje: Rovinski III p 457; 1887, Ulcinj: Ibid, p 475; 1887, Nikšić: "Report of a Tour in the Neighbourhood of Cetinje," p.4, P.P. 1888 XCIX; 1892, 1896 Cetinje: Rovinski III p 457; 1899, Nikšić: Radusinović p 135; 1911, Figures for individual towns given by Radusinović for 1909, deflated proportionately from alleged 1909 census total of 34,569 (including townships) to 1911 census total of 22,719. Radusinović, pp 134-6.

Sources for total population see text above; 1911: Radusinović, Stanovništvo Crne Gore, p 133.

claimed to have had a combined population of 23,000 on the eve of annexation²³. This figure is probably too high since if correct, this territory had been about 27 percent urban, which is unlikely, even though Ottoman economic structure promoted a fairly high level of urban population. Nonetheless, there must have been a severe urban population loss on annexation. These towns had been populated largely by Muslims under the old regime. In the late 1850's, Bar is claimed to have had 4,000 inhabitants, 62.5 percent Muslim, and about 4,600 Muslims had comprised 70 percent of the population of Podgorica²⁴. At the moment of annexation there must have been a torrent of emigration not only of Muslims, but probably also of the Albanian Catholics. Bar, on annexation had 1,823 inhabitants, 30.9 percent Muslims and gypsies, and 24.6 percent Catholics²⁵. Podgorica was still, even in its shrunken condition, 86.6 percent 'Turkish'²⁶. So, to a large extent, the post-1879 growth of urban population, rapid though it was, could be represented as little more than a refilling of the towns. If the pre-annexation statistics are taken at face value, Montenegro's post 1880 territory had an urban population which in 1911 was still 20 percent smaller than that of 1878.

Economic Structure and Evolution

In April 1868, 13,565 persons were assessed for direct tax, 'dacija', which was levied on cultivated land and livestock. Their mean holdings amounted 1.02 hectares of arable, 0.98 hectares of meadow, and about 0.15 hectares of vineyard. These holdings were small by comparison with those in other parts of the Balkans. They are about 70 percent of the size of those in northeast Bulgaria in 1866/7²⁷. Moreover crop yields per hectare were low even by Balkan standards. Apart from grains and potatoes, wine was the only significant product of cultivation.

Livestock holdings compensated. These averaged 21 sheep, 10 goats, 3.8 head of cattle, half a pig and 1.7 beehives per family²⁸. These figures are much in excess of the Balkan

average. Dependence on livestock was extreme. For the period 1855-1912, livestock and their products accounted for a mean 71.3 percent of farm production. Of this by far the largest output was milk. In 1910 it accounted for 59.7 percent of animal production and 39.5 percent of farm production. Meat animals and poultry accounted for a further 19.9 percent²⁹. Together with products of the gathering economy, pyrethrum, sumach and medicinal herbs, and of freshwater fishing on lake Scutari, the export of livestock and dried meat onto the coastal market at Cattaro (Kotor) provided the basis of the export trade.

Most stockraising was transhumant, to make maximal use of the mountain pastures and minimize the need for cultivated fodder. Patterns evolved of some complexity, according to local conditions. The 'reverse migration' system was probably representative. In this variant of transhumant practice, hill hay would be mown in summer on intermediate level pastures, while livestock were grazing the 'suvats', the waterless high level pastures above the tree line. In autumn when the rains began, the animals would be brought down to the villages and when snow made further grazing difficult, they would be driven upwards to feed on the hill hay, stored where it had been mown. When the new grass appeared at village level they would be brought down again but as spring advanced to summer they would graze progressively higher levels, as heat and drought burned off the lowland grass³⁰. Systems such as this, designed to extract the maximum of available grazing, are indicative of a perennial fodder shortage, particularly in winter. As the pastures were owned communally or by the state, rules were enforced as to when any particular hillside was open and closed³¹.

The central activity connected with summer grazing was the 'bačija', the milking of sheep and goats and the making of cheese and other milk products. Since the 'bačija' was normally conducted far from the villages, usually on the 'suvats',

the peasants erected cabins and sheds (katuns) at the 'bačija' for temporary accommodation and storage³². Snow would also be stored there in winter, in ditches covered with straw, for such was the porosity of the soil on the 'suvats' that the 'bačija' would otherwise be waterless³³. 'Katuns' would also be needed in places where hill hay was mown. The 'katun' system became a means through which the grazing economy could absorb limited population growth, since in locations where this was feasible, the workers at the 'katuns' would attempt to cultivate a little land around them. Expanding families could then let some of their members use the 'katuns' for year-round settlement, and as the 'katuns' of different families tended to be grouped together, in course of time, they would evolve into 'daughter' villages. Their inhabitants would in turn seek out locations for new, higher level 'katuns' of their own³⁴. This process of upward colonization was highly characteristic of Dinaric pastoralism. It took precedence over making more intensive use of the lower valley lands, primarily because it entailed no fundamental change of lifestyle.

But the higher the line of settlement was driven by this process, the less secure became its subsistence, particularly in winter, so high-level villages would be obliged to seek winter grazings for their flocks at low levels, often perforce, a long distance from home³⁵. This led many Montenegrin stockraisers to draw upon the resources of adjacent territories, especially those on the lower 'karst' of the Adriatic coast. In the 1860's, animals from Katunska 'nahija' were regularly driven down in winter to Austrian territory to exploit its climate which was mild enough for grass growth to be sustained through winter. In hard winters they were especially dependent on this arrangement. But inland locations in the Hercegovina were also used by the mountain tribe of Pješivci, though the grazing of Turkish territory was not always attended with happy results. Some tribes took their flocks to overwinter as far away as the Sava valley³⁶.

Neither arable nor animal production kept pace with population in the long run. After 1905 the arable area was in absolute as well as relative decline. Between 1905 and 1910 it fell steadily from 33,531 hectares to 29,136. More important in terms of the decline in total farm output was the gradual breakdown of the transhumant system of stockraising. The worst bottleneck to develop was in the winter fodder supply, of which acute shortages had developed by 1890³⁷. The increasing difficulties of the pastoral economy meant that its output probably peaked as early as 1885. It had fallen by 12.1 percent by 1910. Conversely the area of meadow rose by 22 percent between the same dates. Comparison of 1889 and 1900 data by Bulajić showed a reduction from 36.4 percent to 34.3 percent in the number of taxpayers completely lacking meadows, especially in the Montenegrin heartland where grazing conditions were most difficult, and a corresponding growth of 25.8 percent in the number of those with fragments of less than one 'kosa', (0.364 ha.)³⁸. This tallies with the description of peasants struggling to provide sufficient feed even for their diminished numbers of livestock by converting communal open grazing into fragments of meadow³⁹.

No doubt the division of communal pasture was itself one cause of the developing long crisis of transhumance, yet it is also a symptom of more fundamental difficulty. Expanding pastoral production had entailed 'borrowing' lowland resources. The progressive colonization of the higher levels by the conversion of 'katuns' into villages with still higher 'katuns' of their own would have increased the proportion of stockraisers with insufficient winter fodder. Moreover, as the density of lowland settlement rose, the overwintering migrations of upland graziers became increasingly unwelcome, and conflicts broke out between upland and lowland peasants over grazing rights. Especially after the redrawing of boundaries in 1878, overwintering migrations with livestock had increasingly to be curtailed⁴⁰.

The quality of the stock of land may also have deteriorated. Slash-burn methods were used to clear the woodlands⁴¹. The resulting progressive deforestation was also taking its toll on the quality of available land, because it caused soil erosion, and intensified the problem of drought. The Communists, when they came to power after World War II, regarded transhumance as an unwanted relic of the old dispensation, probably because it interfered with their plans for more intensive forest exploitation and banned the holding of goats, alleging that goatraising had contributed to damaging the pasture. However Vucinich argues that on the contrary the goats had helped keep the pastures clear of gorse and bramble, and that excessive woodcutting, limeburning and brush fires had caused most of the damage⁴².

In Table 2 we summarize the results of our calculation of the farm product of Montenegro between 1855 and 1913, at 1908 prices. These figures are only approximate. As crop yields were only available for 1910⁴³, we have taken the year to year yields per hectare given by the official Austrian statistics for neighbouring Dalmatia as a proxy. The Montenegrin crop area, as recorded annually in the 'dacija' registers and summaries, was divided between the different crops in the same proportion as in 1910, and the resulting estimates of areas for each crop were multiplied by the Dalmatian yield figures. Constant yields to livestock numbers over time have also been assumed. As 97.4 percent of the cattle of Montenegro were still of the unimproved 'Buša' type in the 1930's, this is probably not unreasonable⁴⁴. However, the procedure tends to underestimate year to year fluctuations in the yield from livestock, and to convey an impression of greater productive stability than would have been the case in practice.

These statistics strongly indicate that the Montenegrin farm economy was being subjected to Malthusian pressures. Population growth persistently outstripped total product, at least from the 1880's onward, with the result that per caput farm

Montenegro 1855-1912 Value of outputs (000 Kr of 1908)

Year	Truck Crops	animal Prods	Field Crops	All Prod	% Truck	% Animals	% Crops	Per Cap Prod
1855	633	9191	2422	12247	5.2	75.0	19.8	
1863	604	8937	2554	12096	5.0	73.9	21.1	189.5
1868	1257	10429	2694	14379	8.7	72.5	18.7	214.5
1869	426	10469	2675	13570	3.1	77.1	19.7	200.5
1873	586	12782	1762	15130	3.9	84.5	11.6	215.0
1880	1866	15748	8010	25624	7.3	61.5	31.3	184.9
1883	1109	22643	8471	32223	3.4	70.3	26.3	222.3
1884	1143	25511	9465	36119	3.2	70.6	26.2	246.9
1885	1398	25610	9844	36852	3.8	69.5	26.7	249.7
1889	1245	22326	8649	32220	3.9	69.3	26.8	210.4
1890	1163	19042	8312	28517	4.1	66.8	29.1	184.5
1893	1129	19904	7722	28755	3.9	69.2	26.9	180.7
1895	1923	24348	8246	34516	5.6	70.5	23.9	212.9
1897	1913	24409	5008	31331	6.1	77.9	16.0	189.6
1900	1463	24083	7003	32549	4.5	74.0	21.5	191.4
1903	2759	24465	5810	33034	8.4	74.1	17.6	187.7
1905	999	21617	6006	28622	3.5	75.5	21.0	158.9
1906	1251	22306	7638	31195	4.0	71.5	24.5	171.2
1907	2174	22730	5856	30760	7.1	73.9	19.0	166.9
1908	2412	23444	6341	32197	7.5	72.8	19.7	172.7
1909	1991	22249	13701	37941	5.2	58.6	36.1	201.2
1910	1913	22554	9701	34168	5.6	66.0	28.4	179.1
1911	1782	22288	7296	31365	5.7	71.1	23.3	162.5
1912	1010	22175	10324	33508	3.0	66.2	30.8	171.6

Table 2

production fell from 235 crowns in 1883-4 to 167 crowns in 1911-12. They also show how inflexible the farming system became: there is no per caput growth in agricultural output to compensate the erosion of returns from pastoralism.

No gains were derived, as they were in other areas of the Balkans, from diversification into truck cropping. This small sector had a potential significance in excess of its absolute contribution to output, because these products were raised mainly for sale, and so provided a means for peasants to obtain cash without cutting into the supply of subsistence

products. One noteworthy activity within this sector was the gathering of wild plant produce. In 1895, sumach (for the tanning trade), chrysanthemum (for pyridine) and laurel leaves (for wreaths) earned £ 6,100 or 146,000 crowns⁴⁵. But demand for sumach and chrysanthemum was declining as surrogates displaced them, and by 1905-10 earnings from these commodities had shrunken to a mean 28,000 crowns a year⁴⁶. Tobacco had shown promise as a cash crop up to 1903, but in 1904 the state imposed a monopsony whose prices were unattractive to producers so that cultivation fell 70 percent by 1910⁴⁷. The wine harvest was hit by phylloxera, while olive cultivation, having peaked in 1897, slowly declined thereafter, possibly because attempts made to spread it beyond the narrow confines of Bar and Ulcinj failed for climatic reasons⁴⁸. Failure to obtain a rising income from these products meant that export earnings continued to come mainly from livestock, hides and wool, and as their supply could not be increased significantly, so any growth in export volume meant their diversion from subsistence consumption.

Urbanization

Given this rural background, the observed expansion of urban population would have been surprising, were it not for the sharp fall that occurred at the time of the annexations of Ottoman territory in 1876-80. Under the Turkish regime, rural dwellers had been laden with heavy burdens by landowners and the fisc. In 1869, the people of Kolašin complained that they had to surrender an eighth of their crop in Imperial tithe, and half of it to their 'aga', as well as giving him one day a week of labour, and certain other dues⁴⁹. Such complaints tend to give an exaggerated impression of the true state of affairs, but they indicate that peasants produced surpluses which amounted to a substantial proportion of their production. These surpluses sustained a correspondingly substantial urban population, of officials and landowning families and those who supplied them with goods and services. With the

overthrow of the old regime, most former sharecroppers became proprietors of the land they worked, and consumed a greater fraction of what they produced. The urban income base diminished correspondingly. In fact the shrinkage of urban population was even greater than was proportionate to the shrinkage of its income base, because the Muslims departed not only because of economic distress but also through fear of maltreatment. So the urban population overadjusted leaving the country undersupplied with urban services, which the Slav population was neither qualified nor inclined to fill. The result of the slowness of readjustment was that skilled urban services were surprisingly highly rewarded, at least in the 1880's.

Towards the end of the period, in 1905-1911, there were signs of a powerful revival in urban commerce, even though the rural economy was in absolute decline during this period. This can be seen in Table 3, constructed from tax records which embraced urban incomes from 1904 onwards.

Indicators of Urban Economic Activity in Montenegro 1904-1911

Year	Incomes Trade & Crafts	(000 crowns/periuers) Wage Labour	from House Rents
1904	6170	254	371
1905	5270	241	374
1906	5640	276	393
1909	9690	409	598
1911	14150	754	959

Sources: ACG MF II/A-21 ff 5-6; II/A-39 d summary sheet; II/A-39 e (aggregate for returns of individual towns)

Note: 1 perper = 1 Austrian crown, at 23 to the £ sterling.

Table 3

This expansion was probably connected closely with the growth of the import trade, and it reflects strong growth in the import of non-food items. Import volume rose from 4.6 m. perpers in 1905 to 8.2 m. in 1910. During this period, agricultural imports rose modestly from 874,000 perpers to 1.13 million. Despite the decline of the farm economy, this reflected no more than the rising price of grain. The growth areas were in textiles and clothing, dyestuffs, metals, leather, wooden and spicers' goods⁵⁰.

Despite this powerful growth of import-connected urban business activity, the volume of financial claims held by the private sector stagnated. The growth of banking seems mainly to have diverted interpersonal debt into bank deposits. These changes in the non-farm sector are related not to the performance of farming, but to emigration, and will be treated in that context.

Capital lent under interest in Montenegro 1904-1911
(000 crowns/perpers)

Year	lent privately	deposited with banks	Total
1904	2922	23	2935
1905	2700	37	2737
1906	2823	26	2850
1909	2734	239	2972
1911	550	2469	3019

Sources as for Table 3 and Djurović p 215

Table 4

Consumption

The people's diet reflected the resources available, so it was sparing in farinaceous foods and in alcoholic drink, but more generous in milk products. Dietary frugality was a general rule even when not imposed by force of circumstances⁵¹. Montenegrin peasants ate but twice a day. A meal at daybreak or at noon consisted of a piece of bread baked from maize flour, or from some coarse grain, described as "a black gritty compound about as palatable as a lump of Newcastle coal". In the evening, the same or a broth of maize and beans was consumed. This was accompanied at least in summer with milk, usually soured, of which the Montenegrins were said to be very fond⁵². Potatoes had been introduced between 1780 and 1786, and in the 'karst' uplands, especially Katunska 'nahija', they were substituting bread to an increasing extent. Between 1839 and 1848 there was even a potato surplus of 250-500 tonnes a year for export to Cattaro⁵³. In hard times when there was little or no grain, the crop could be diverted to home consumption, when "a baked or boiled potato had to suffice for a day"⁵⁴. Meat was eaten, fresh and dried, but few households partook of it in their daily diet. And since few parts of the country supported the vine or the plum tree, alcoholic beverages were expensive enough to be imported⁵⁵. As a result, drunkenness was much rarer than in Serbia or Bulgaria⁵⁶. On feast days however, meat was eaten to excess, accompanied by wine or 'šlivović'⁵⁷. Up in the 'katuns' where cheese was made during the 'bačija', the regular diet was similar, though richer in milk, cream and cottage cheese, so that those who sojourned there normally gained weight⁵⁸.

In terms of its value, both in a market and in a nutritional sense, the diet of the Montenegrins was no worse than that of Serbia, and they lived reasonably healthily on it. Access to milk products was the key to prosperity, with the result that the people of the higher villages "ate better and more", and were regarded as healthier than those of the valleys, even though the latter might have grain to spare⁵⁹. High altitude

and isolation no doubt contributed to protect much of the population from malaria, endemic in the nearby marshy lowlands of Hercegovina, and from tuberculosis, (to which they were nonetheless very susceptible). Then as now the Montenegrins were remarked for their good physique and high stature, claimed in 1902 to be an average of 1.80 m. for males. Even the people of Mirkovici, despite their extreme frugality, were claimed to be healthy and strong, and little troubled by diseases. Child mortality was thought to be high, and was attributed "mainly to parental neglect" but it was universally high in the Balkans. In fact, Montenegro probably stood relatively well on this count, as in 1948-52, infant mortality there was the lowest in Yugoslavia⁶⁰.

Consumption of clothing, "the sole luxury of the Montenegrin", probably preempted a large slice of cash income. As elsewhere in the Balkans, the houses might be bare of comfort, but "inordinate vanity in appearance" caused the people "to impoverish themselves for the sake of gorgeous clothes"⁶¹.

In Table 5 we have attempted to quantify trends in per caput consumption of the four dietary basics, milk, meat, grain and potatoes. The weak production trend in these commodities put downward pressure on their consumption. Valued at 1908 prices, production per caput of the rural population fell between 1863 and 1905-10 by about 15 percent. However, consumption was cushioned by a relative diminution in the export of meat animals and potatoes, and a relative rise in the import of grains, so that it fell only 8 percent per caput over the same period. Unfortunately we lack full international trade statistics save for 1905-10, and for trade with Cattaro in 1863. For milk products this hardly matters, since their export was never significant. Indeed - according to the personal recollection of Professor Wayne S. Vucinich, - nearly all the dairy produce was consumed by the families who prepared it⁶². So we have treated milk consumption as equal to production. Meat consumption, always modest, fell by 9 percent, and a 10 per-

Montenegro. Supplies per caput of living essentials 1863-1912

Year	Milk	Meat	in kg or litres		
			Wool	Grain	Potato
1863	289.7	33.5	4.4	140.1	- 10.3
1868	319.4				
1869	317.1				
1873	379.8				
1880	226.5				
1883	305.4				
1884	343.4				
1885	339.9				
1889	283.8				
1890	239.0				
1893	237.9				
1895	284.2				
1897	282.7				
1900	269.8				
1903	268.4				
1905	230.3	28.8	2.6	97.3	76.1
1906	232.8	31.5	2.5	130.9	69.6
1907	234.1	32.3	3.0	91.6	51.6
1908	239.9	30.0	2.7	105.7	56.4
1909	223.5	30.5	2.6	187.5	165.1
1910	226.0	29.7	3.0	139.3	128.4
1911	217.4			119.5	
1912	211.5				

Table 5

cent fall in the already exiguous consumption of grains was offset by a sharp increase in the consumption of potatoes. So although the availability of milk declined appreciably it remained the basis of a diet which was otherwise becoming bulkier and starchier, and somewhat less valuable. But only the country's ability to import more grain and export less of its own farm produce prevented a more serious dietary deterioration from occurring. Contrarily, the rising export of wool cut heavily into an already declining domestic supply, converting a production decline of 19 percent into a consumption decline of 38 percent. Almost certainly this reflects an increased import of textiles rather than increasing want, and

in any case, at 2.73 kg per caput in 1905-10, subsistence consumption of wool in Montenegro was comfortably in excess of that in either Serbia or Bulgaria (in 1903) with 1.16 kg and 1.62 kg respectively⁶³.

Poverty

Our information on food consumption, health and clothing do not indicate that Montenegro was especially disadvantaged by Balkan standards. Nevertheless, the country was a by-word even among Balkan observers for its poverty. "I can guarantee" wrote Dučić "that there is not a nation in Europe which lives more poorly than the Montenegrin nation. Neither the Irish nor the Scots can be compared with them in this"⁶⁴. If poverty be construed as life on the razor's edge between satisfaction and destitution, then Montenegrins lived perennially in that condition. The crops in the best of years barely sufficed to meet the exiguous levels of grain consumption to which the population was accustomed, and they were subject to serious year to year fluctuations because the porosity of the 'karst' rock made the harvest acutely vulnerable to drought. Although grain was usually imported, communications with rural areas were too bad to permit of its commercial circulation, and even in the relatively abundant 1880's, not a year went by without reports of starvation and famine mortality reaching the government in Cetinje⁶⁵. The supply of livestock products was also at the mercy of a hard winter, since the output of hay from the meadows fell far short of the minimal winter fodder needs of the animals. Deep snow could result in huge losses, and a single adverse winter could reduce the animal stock by a fifth or more⁶⁶.

The problem of poverty was aggravated by rural indebtedness. Peasants usually fell into debt by borrowing grain in anticipation of the harvest (vadjevina). To insulate them from ruinous recourse to usury, the state substantially monopolized the trade in grain, becoming as a result a creditor to the

greater part of the peasantry. This certainly lowered the cost of credit, but made it too attractive to seek 'vadjevina' loans, so in 1898, the state was forced to curtail its lending to protect its finances. More than any other stimulus, the need to service this debt probably pressed the peasant into the labour market, both abroad and at home⁶⁷.

Montenegrin Culture

Farming, especially in the Mountain areas of Katunska Nahija and the Brda did not demand an intense input of labour, because the arable plots were so small and unproductive, and the stockraising system was so dependent on unimproved grazing. Crop tending could therefore be assigned largely to the women. And because armed conflict or the threat of force was a constant feature of this society, Montenegrin culture easily accorded to the male the exclusive role of warrior and shepherd, burdening the women with most forms of drudgery. It imposed on them an intensity of sexual subordination which was extreme even by Balkan standards. With manual labour held to be "derogatory to a man", there was a good deal of substance in the stereotype which emerged of a lazy, arrogant and belligerent nation. Of course the stereotype reflected male attitudes and behaviour, but the obverse of this coin, the intense exploitation of women as beasts of burden was readily remarked on⁶⁸.

Since the output from the grazing economy could not be increased substantially by applying more labour to it, population growth elsewhere in the Balkans was normally accompanied by a shift towards arable cultivation⁶⁹. Table 1 has shown that little of the sort occurred in Montenegro. Physical conditions were undoubtedly unfavourable to such a structural shift, but the cultivation potential was far from exhausted. Contemporary writers were well aware that the peasants were highly resistant or inadaptable to anything other than a pastoral existence, and their inadaptability is readily under-

standable, since the adoption of more intensive farming systems would call for heavy inputs of the labour of men who under the pastoral regime were accustomed to doing little work of any kind. Impoverishment was, to some extent, discretionary. As was observed in 1900⁷⁰: "Each day more and more complaints are heard of how this or that person is ruined economically, how a village or an entire tribe has been impoverished. But some are moving up while other move down ... Some succumb to idleness, others become industrious..."

The problem was a very real one. Nineteenth Century pastoral life did permit men a lazy lifestyle, while departure from it called for a far greater work commitment from them. Reflecting in 1936 on "the traditional Bosnian laziness" characteristic of the Dinaric regions of that province, Rudolf Bičanić argued that it had become a thing of the past, and claimed frequently to have been told by villagers: "If we worked only as much as our old people used to work, everyone would die of hunger"⁷¹. Montenegro was probably slower to make this transition.

In such a society, where agricultural work was so much the responsibility of the women, male distaste for farm labour, or for any other work save that of a pastoral or military nature, would be rationalized by regarding it as 'derogatory'. Thus trades, as well as agriculture were held to be demeaning. Housebuilding, carpentry, ironwork, tailoring, even shopkeeping were low status occupations, "repugnant to the national notion of honour and freedom", and were practiced mainly by immigrants, who earned high wages from them because of the lack of labour market competition⁷². So as late as 1910, trade and commerce were largely monopolized by Muslims and Albanian Catholics⁷³. Those few peasants, mainly from Riječka 'nahija', who worked as masons or carpenters commanded reasonable wages, and seldom lacked work, but elsewhere, "only the weaker brotherhoods enter into crafts"⁷⁴. Not surprisingly, there was hardly a trace of cottage industry, though ostensibly the underemployment in farming should have promoted its develop-

ment. One of the puzzles concerning the regional structure of the Balkan economy is why some hill areas developed protoindustries, and others similarly placed did not. Though the question defies a definitive answer, it may well be that in the Dinaric provinces where male attitudes to farm work caused female labour time to be committed to farm tasks, female labour, which provided the basis for most protoindustrial manufacturing, simply became unavailable.

Banditry

Such attitudes inhibited development in Montenegro not only of cottage industry, but also of periodic building labour migration or (as was notable in the neighbouring Hercegovina) itinerant trading. These were constructive responses to the acute shortage of exchange incomes from which most Balkan mountain areas suffered. For want of such exchange income, the most readily available substitute was parasitism. Among the Montenegrins, this usually took the form of cattle raiding and armed attacks on highway traffic. Women did most of the farm work and men had time on their hands, and neither the opportunity nor inclination to put it to productive use. They also found it difficult to convert produce into cash, so the attractions of banditry become understandable. Those, more or less, were the grounds on which Prince Nikola defended the system to his visitor Lady Strangford in 1863. She saw the problem as "occasioned by poverty and sheer habitual wildness rather than any deep-rooted ill will"⁷⁵. Naturally, by representing these activities as armed struggle against the external enemy, the value system of this pastoral society could not only tolerate banditry but glory in it too. The preferred target was cattle, because of its easy marketability. It could therefore be claimed in all seriousness that, at least in years when grain prices were high, banditry became an essential branch of economic life. Banditry seems to have reached a peak of intensity after the battle of Grahovo (1858) when Turkish civil power beyond the Montenegrin borders was tempo-

rarily weakened. Heavy sales of booty followed on the coast, "materially improving the condition of families who had it to sell". The need to sell booty and purchase grain, says Pejović, sharpened Montenegrin aspirations for improved access to markets⁷⁶. None were more celebrated as bandits than the Kuči tribe, who, in hard times, wrote Erdeljanović, "lived almost solely from rapine and war booty". To these people banditry was a well organized business, and even provided a form of primitive social security, as part of the loot was earmarked for the relief of widows and orphans. But the Kuči did not always wait for a famine⁷⁷. This tribe had no monopoly in banditry, since the Ceklinjani of lake Scutari were "acclaimed as heroes of the first rank on water", where they plundered the commerce of the lake, "and by this means were enormously enriched"⁷⁸. Till 1855 the right to plunder in Turkish territory was officially sanctioned by Montenegrin law, and only then was forbidden by the Prince, who was anxious to achieve international recognition of Montenegrin statehood. His loyal subjects appreciated however that the law was cosmetic in design, and redoubled their efforts to abuse it⁷⁹. As a Montenegrin 'artlessly' confessed to a visitor: "If it were not for the Turks, I don't know how we should live"⁸⁰. Anyway they had never been particularly selective as to their targets. In the eighteenth century Dubrovnik rather than Turkey had been the prime target, because the pickings were richer, and Montenegrins were alleged to carry off Dubrovnik girls to sell to the Turks⁸¹. In the nineteenth, Kuči gangs preyed on all and sundry, including fellow Montenegrins⁸².

Active warfare against Turkey provided exceptional opportunities for looting, which in turn provided a strong incentive to the tribes to take part. Behind the soldiers in the Balkan Wars followed the women, to return from the front bent double under burdens of looted household goods⁸³. Capture of territory (as late as 1918) was followed by a frenzy of looting, which drew in even those who opposed it, for fear of being left out⁸⁴.

The Aims of State

Until 1852 Montenegro was a confederation of tribes over which the 'Vladikas' lacked even an effective taxing power. Only embroilment with Turkey would cause a measure of tribal coalescence. The age-old conflict was caused by struggles over grazing rights, banditry and support given from Montenegro to insurrectionary movements in the Hercegovina. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Ottoman Turkey had been too weak to pose any sustained threat to the Montenegrins. But its military efficiency was improving, and by 1851 it had reimposed central control over Bosnia and the Hercegovina. The resurgence of a militarily effective opponent forced the Montenegrin rulers to unify the tribes into a modern fighting machine, capable of withstanding it. After a successful campaign in the Hercegovina in 1851, the Ottoman general Omer Pasha invaded Montenegro, exposing that state's military inadequacies, whereupon the new ruler, Danilo I (1852-60) took ruthless measures to force the tribes to submit to his power and his taxes⁸⁵. A fresh uprising in the Hercegovina led to a renewed invasion by Turkey in 1858, but the Montenegrins destroyed a superior Turkish force at Grahovo. This led to renewed border instability, heightened banditry, and renewal of the Hercegovinian uprising in 1861. Danilo's successor Nikola (1860-1916) faced Omer again, but this time was his army shattered at Rijeka Crnojevića and was made to sign the humiliating Convention of Scutari (1862). Forced by superior power to keep the peace with Turkey, Montenegro then enjoyed a 13 year period of tranquility, economic stabilization and institutional development. Nikola re-equipped his army with Russian assistance⁸⁶. But by 1875, the Montenegrins were again fostering insurrection in the Hercegovina despite Nikola's misgivings in view of the risks involved⁸⁷. However, the events of 1875-85 embroiled Turkey in more general warfare, which worked to Montenegro's advantage, especially as her army achieved notable successes in the field. Thus in the aftermath of the Berlin conference she emerged with 87 percent more territory, and enhanced national prestige⁸⁸.

Economically, however, this victory solved few problems. Territorial gains enabled the state to reward some of its soldiers at the expense of former Turkish estates in the Podgorica plain. But the principal gainers were the settled peasantry of the area who mostly became proprietors of the land they had hitherto sharecropped. Despite their treaty obligations, the Montenegrins contrived to swindle the Muslims out of most of the value of their assets⁸⁹. But this did not satisfy the Montenegrin hunger for land for long, since the balance between land and population worsened if anything as a result of the annexations. Resumed population growth caused the balance further to deteriorate, though it was masked in the 80's by a run of good harvests. Opportunities for banditry much diminished, and external grazing grounds became decreasingly unavailable.

The apparently ineradicable problem of poverty, and the belief among Montenegrins that a living could not be won from within the existing frontiers of the state, impelled the Cetinje government towards continued expansionism. Even before 1878, the Russians had been encouraging the Prince in this attitude⁹⁰. Besides, Nikola was ambitious. Blocked from further expansion into Hercegovina and the Sandzhak by the Austrian army, and lacking ethnically based irridenta beyond his other frontiers, his aims became imperialistic. He wanted to carve a greater Montenegrin state from Turkey's Albanian territories, to be ruled by him from Prizren. An opportunity presented itself when, goaded by the crass Ottomanizing activities pursued by the Young Turk regime, some of the Albanian tribes rose to assert their own national claims in 1910. The Montenegrins took advantage of this by backing the insurgent Catholic Malisori, to prepare for themselves an opportunity (and excuse) for invading northern Albania and capturing Scutari (Shkodër). Turkish reprisals against the Albanian insurgents and border incidents provided the immediate background to the Montenegrin theatre in the First Balkan War, which broke out as soon as the Balkan states had found a way of co-operating

militarily despite their mutual jealousies⁹¹.

This drive for 'Lebensraum', which came to dominate Cetinje's politics, was given urgency in the early years of the 20th century by an increase of emigration to the USA. Exaggerated reports circulated as to the scale of the movement, convincing Nikola that it was undermining his military strength, and that only by the seizure of new lands could his peasants - his soldiers - be enabled to remain within the country. Fears that half the army had melted away were exaggerated but the figure did reach 19.7 percent by 1911⁹². So land grants in territories-to-be-liberated were promised to returning emigrants, and lest that incentive be insufficient, the Americans were requested to repatriate all Montenegrins in the event of war, whether they wanted to return or not⁹³.

Had the process of Montenegrin military expansion taken place in an earlier era, it seems likely that, as they brought more and more resources under their own control, they would have evolved into a warrior caste (similar to the Turks themselves) which would have secured the resources it needed by exercising a feudal hegemony over a servile and ethnically differentiated peasantry. The big land accessions in Albania arising from the Balkan War of 1912/13 provided precisely this opportunity, especially as they brought within the state large non-Montenegrin populations. In the view of that well informed observer, Maizie Durham: "Judging by their talk, they proposed to live in future as marauding army. Never fond of work, they declared that they had conquered enough people to do the work for them, and looked forward to a life of something like slave-driving"⁹⁴.

Overwintering Migration and Emigration

While the Montenegrin state used its economic unviability as an excuse and justification for expansionism, its people, facing this problem as individuals, and conditioned in their

response by a similar psychology, pursued similarly colonistic strategies. Montenegro was a society in which "people did not accept hunger either as fate or as God's punishment, but as a natural phenomenon which frequently beset them and for which they found a cure ... In the regions where hunger so frequently afflicted, and in which people were hungry in normal circumstances rather than replete, proportionately little did they die of hunger". It was no surprise to them if in autumn, a simple reckoning showed that food and forage could not last out till spring. At this point, households would split up. As many people would be left at home as could be maintained on the available food, while the rest, mainly the able-bodied, would leave the villages, commonly driving their animals with them in search of subsistence. They often set out in desperate condition, however, with few scruples as to how they might achieve this aim. A party from Nikšić and Piva arrived on the Serbian frontier in 1835 without any papers, but armed to the teeth, and appeared to the worried officials to be more capable of armed robbery than of any useful service. Originally an occasional phenomenon, overwintering migration had become by the mid 19th century an established pattern, the numbers involved fluctuating according to food conditions. Thus long-range winter migration came to coexist alongside the routine upward migration of the summer months. Some migrants would try to find work in the towns, in general labouring, vinetending or maket gardening, while the women would launder, clean, carry or grind⁹⁵. Overwintering migrants had to seek work when the labour market was at its weakest, and they were consequently poorly paid. Overwinterers who worked in the Hercegovinian towns received little or nothing in addition to their keep. However, for those who took their livestock with them the return to effort was greater than appeared for it enabled them to keep their capital stock of animals intact. Still, the circumstances surrounding these migrations were sufficiently bleak for the migrants seriously to consider severing their links with their homes if they could but find lands which were free for resettlement.

The overwintering migrations led migrants not only to the towns and coasts, but also down towards the interior lowlands of the Balkan peninsula. Migrations such as these could lead to permanent emigration. In 1839, a bad harvest in Montenegro resulted in the arrival in Serbia of some 280 Montenegrin families "to seek bread for themselves by labouring this winter"⁹⁶. In fact the Serbians were far from certain whether the newly arrived Montenegrins had not come to settle. This, or a similar party of 110 families who arrived in September had not eaten for four days, and a letter which they brought with them indicated that the majority would settle permanently while the rest would overwinter and return⁹⁷. In this way, the overwintering migrations became a principal channel for emigration. Movements of population like this one generated a chain reaction since later migrants would endeavour to converge on settlements of previously departed kin and fellow villagers. Overwintering migrants could be encountered on the roads asking after the whereabouts of earlier departed relatives⁹⁸.

Serbia was an especially attractive destination for immigrants of Dinaric origin. In the 1790's, the province, then under the benevolent rule of Hadži Mustafa Pasha, attracted an immigration wave, and from the time of Karadjordje onward the new Serbian state maintained a vigorous pro-immigration policy. In 1815, Prince Miloš initiated what was to become a standing arrangement with the rulers of Montenegro concerning the immigration of Montenegrins. In the 1830's, the 'nahija' of Kruševac, recently recovered from the Turks, was earmarked for Montenegrin resettlement⁹⁹. The generous assistance which was usually extended to immigrants facilitated their transition from overwinterers to settlers. Liberal doles of cash were provided them and their interests were usually defended by the prince when the inevitable disputes arose between them and resident population¹⁰⁰. A tentatively estimated 11,600 immigrants a year, mainly from the Dinaric regions, responded to

this opportunity during the 1830's¹⁰¹.

Resettlement and Inadaptability

Resettlement caused severe adaptation problems for emigrants from Montenegro. What they sought was to re-establish their pastoral lifestyle in less compressed circumstances, and not to have to become arable farmers. Therefore they eschewed the plains, which were difficult to clear and unsuited to transhumance, and tended to seek upland locations for resettlement. Isolated patches of 'karst' where conditions most resembled those of their places of origin were much favoured. They would then proceed to dam up the cavities in the rock to convert them into waterholes for the animals even though the expedient was unnecessary in this well watered area of Serbia¹⁰². In the early nineteenth century, their objectives were still attainable. The family of Stojan Bogović who came to Serbia from Montenegro in 1821 obtained title to 40 hectares of land in the upland region of Užice, and prospered mightily as farmers, and later, as traders in livestock¹⁰³. Their success was probably not remarkable, for the Serbians, though having a poor opinion of the Montenegrins as cultivators, recognized their abilities as skilled sheepraisers¹⁰⁴.

Extensive pastoralism was as much the rule in Serbia in the first half of the nineteenth century as in Montenegro, and it required a great deal of space. Householders tried to disperse their homesteads from those of their neighbours as much as possible, and land which was waste in the eyes of the authorities, and thus available for settlement by immigrants, was regarded as valuable grazing or droving territory by the native population. As early as 1820, there had been violent struggles over grazing rights between the resident population and immigrants. A strong antipathy developed against the immigrants, who were regarded as parasites, and were sometimes whipped or driven from village to village. These problems became increasingly serious as population density rose. The

native population adapted to a more sparing pattern of land use, but the Dinaric immigrants found it hard to do likewise. In 1863, the Serbian government informed the Montenegrin authorities that the mountain areas of western Serbia, so strongly favoured by Dinaric immigrants, were no longer open for colonization¹⁰⁵.

Immigrants were now being settled with a view to arable cultivation. The results were sometimes disastrous. In 1849 the district of Ključ, on the Danube, was designated for the settlements of Montenegrins, but without attracting many migrants. Meanwhile, recent immigrants from Montenegro and Herzegovina were congregating in Užice province, where after a fashion, they made themselves at home, and declined offers of assistance for their removal¹⁰⁶. However several groups were directed to Ključ, given fertile land and substantial material aid. But they abandoned the land they had been given, sold such oxen as had survived their inexpert handling in order to buy sheep and goats, and withdrew into the hill country to the south. Here they practiced the kind of grazing and scratch plough farming with which they were familiar. Presumably they took up common land, on which they had no rights. Not being able to make a satisfactory living, they came into conflict with the settled population. Fifteen years later they were still utterly unable to pay their taxes. Since they were dangerous warlike folk, the authorities were disinclined to distrain against them, for fear they might become a still greater public nuisance. Official reports despaired of their shedding, their inappropriate outlook and mores, and regretted that "they live in idleness and do not understand agricultural work. Our fatherland cannot get cultivators from them"¹⁰⁷. The same happened in Bulgaria, where in 1885 the authorities permitted Montenegrins to settle on former Turkish estates. As in Serbia, they were given the land free of payment, and provided with money for livestock and equipment, but all to no effect. The land was left untilled, the equipment was sold off, and the Montenegrins, described as drunkards, vagrants

and armed robbers, turned to pillaging their neighbours for a living, till finally they departed whence they came¹⁰⁸.

After the annexation of new territories in 1878, the Serbian government, capitalizing on the reputation of the Montenegrins for lawlessness, tried to settle them along the new frontier. 7,000 were reported to have entered the country in November 1889. Though they were claimed to have been provided for generously with food and tools, 1,000 soon died of typhus, and many subsequently straggled home again. But a further thousand of "these turbulent mountaineers" were alleged to have been armed by the Serbian government. Predictably, this soon led to Turkish complaints of "a serious raid by about 200 Montenegrin immigrants assisted by some Serbian frontier Pandours, upon a Turkish village - all the cattle being driven off over the frontier while the faithful were at mosque...". In their defence, it was claimed that the raiders were in a famished state. After further incidents on the frontier, plans were made to relocate this colony. The immigrants, however, were reported to be "anxious for military employment - as preferable to the toilsome life of an agriculturalist, for which they are quite unfitted"¹⁰⁹. But soon Serbia was to be troubled with a rural overpopulation problem of her own, and resentment built up against the government in Cetinje, which was said to be "dishing out passports for Serbia, as if Serbia was free butter"¹¹⁰. The homesteading emigration of Montenegrins to Serbia came to an end in December 1906, when Serbia refused to admit new settlers. Most subsequent arrivals were sent back home¹¹¹.

Both World Wars created renewed opportunities for Montenegrin settlement elsewhere in Yugoslavia. After World War I, lands in Macedonia were earmarked for colonization, but squatters from Montenegro appeared instead in Serbia's state forests, despoiling them, and plundering those who sought to exercise legitimate rights upon them¹¹². After World War II, plans were made for Montenegrins to colonize abandoned Volksdeutsch farms

in the Vojvodina. They were notably unsuccessful. The colonists strongly resented having to undertake such intensive tasks as beet and vegetable growing, and considered poultry and pig raising as demeaning. Few stayed on their holdings much longer than was needed to secure homestead rights, and most drifted into the towns¹¹³.

It should not be thought that inadaptability was an intergenerational condition - our sources are at pains to insist that it was not. Moreover, the quality of the immigrants to Serbia was probably low since the Montenegrin authorities used Serbia to some extent as a dumping ground for their destitute, and discouraged the emigration of the better off¹¹⁴. But the foregoing evidence does provide certain indications: firstly that the cultural patterns of Montenegrin life were highly resistant to economically constructive modification, and secondly that adaptation difficulties probably curtailed the extent to which the surplus population of the hill regions could be bled off and resettled either within or outside the country. Therefore to keep the system in some sort of equilibrium there was little alternative to temporary labour emigration, especially from the 1890's onward.

Labour Migration

Montenegrins migrated in search of work throughout the nineteenth Century, in particular to Constantinople and its environs. The authoritative work of Dioka Pejović provides detailed information on these migrants. Their earnings provided a means by which they could pay their taxes and support their families, so the state intervened to ensure that the migrants fulfilled these obligations. In 1856, 452 workers went to Constantinople, in 1858, 241, in 1869, 442 and in 1874, 239¹¹⁵. Most worked as servants and labourers, members of the 75,000 strong 'bekiar' colony of transients who provided the city with much of its labour force¹¹⁶. Rich men and embassies sought the services of Montenegrins especially as bodyguards,

watchmen, and stableboys. Later they were to be found as bank guards and doormen who "graced the entrances to the most distinguished buildings in Constantinople, in fine clothing with sidearms". Links and protection helped them secure these favoured jobs, but larger numbers had to engage in port and construction work, which was much less to their taste¹¹⁷. The pay was usually good, but was all too easily dissipated through drink and gambling. So the Montenegrin Senate placed these workers under the control of captains, whose duty it was to collect a head-tax from them, to press them to remit funds for the support of their families, and forcibly to repatriate wastrels and unauthorized emigrants¹¹⁸.

Work in Constantinople and elsewhere made Montenegrins aware of the existence of a world-wide labour market, and they began to arrive in significant numbers in the USA around the turn of the century, many probably having come from Constantinople¹¹⁹. The closure of Serbia to immigration added to the flow. Nearly all were young men who departed without attachments. They were expected to remit their earnings home, and return fairly quickly. By 1911, much the greater part of the labour migration had converged on the USA, where were to be found 8,584 out of 10,109 reservists absent abroad¹²⁰.

Even as migrant labourers abroad, something of the cultural milieu of the homeland clung to the Montenegrins. Though claimed by Kosier to be tough, resilient labourers, the myth of the 'lazy' Montenegrin pursued them to North America and elsewhere. So too did complaints of their violence and indiscipline, and their passion for gambling¹²¹. This was perhaps inevitable as many of the emigrants had been sent from home as troublemakers and idlers in need of correction¹²². One autobiographist from Crmnica 'nahija' tells us how he, rather than his brother, was sent out to Australia in 1926 since the latter was considered a better worker who should therefore stay at home and marry. The judgement on the emigrant was not unfair, since he spent much of his time in Australia unem-

ployed, to some extent voluntarily, living off his fellow migrants, and learning the trade of the political agitator¹²³. But most of his fellows did remit heavily and many eventually returned home; so to that extent they did what was required of them¹²⁴.

Given the narrow bounds within which farming could sustain market exchanges, the repatriated earnings of emigrant labour largely determined the commercial structure of Montenegro. This was especially the case during the period of migration to the USA, since this generated much larger remittances than migration within the Balkans. It was claimed that migration to the USA caused the shrinkage of animal husbandry, by stripping the country of male labour¹²⁵. Certainly wages rose in response¹²⁶. But as there was much rural underemployment, the effect was more likely to have been indirect, with families reducing their work effort as remittances took care of their needs. Remittances received in Montenegro through banks and postal accounts from the USA alone provided an annual inflow between 1906 and 1910 averaging 2.48 million perpers¹²⁷. Allowance for other emigrants would raise this figure to 3 million, and even this would underestimate by ignoring the money brought back by returners. This spending power would have had an impact on urban trade at least as great as government spending, which was 2 million in 1904 and 4 million in 1911, and a much greater impact than the stagnant earnings of 2.1 million a year generated by exports¹²⁸. In earlier years, the contribution of emigrant remittances to the economy had probably been slight, since large remittances would have been reflected by the emergence of import surpluses. Between 1836 and 1848 however, Montenegro ran a substantial export surplus on its trade with Cattaro¹²⁹, which does not suggest there was any great inflow of invisible earnings. It was therefore migration, mainly to the USA, which largely enabled Montenegro to import after 1904 at nearly three times the rate she exported (imports were running at 6.2 million perpers a year). We have already noted that Montenegro was able during this period to

export less of its farm production and import more grain than hitherto, and it must also have been the inflow of remittance which permitted the astonishing earlier noted expansion of urban trade, wage-earnings and rents between 1905 and 1911. Remittances possibly also account for the paradoxal flat trend in lending. It is claimed that most of the migrants to the USA went to disindebt themselves. It seems probable that they succeeded, causing lenders to accept the lower returns available from bank deposits, which were applied to financing the expanding import trade. So what emerged was a moribund economy in which farming was to provide little more than a familial subsistence, while urban trade orientated to channelling imports and goods made from imported materials into the hands of remittance recipients.

Upward Mobility

Montenegro had reached the point by 1910 of facing a dead end polity whose problems could only be resolved by the crudest form of expansionism, linked to a dead end economy resting on a declining subsistence agriculture, the closure of the internal frontier of settlement, and the migration of labour overseas. For ambitious men, there seemed to be only one outlet which extended beyond the prospect of labour emigration, (which was not in any case seen as more than a temporary expedient). This lay in colonizing the expanding Balkan bureaucracies. Opportunities in government service, in tax collecting, secretarial work or the police were rare, but much sought after for the pecuniary benefit and prestige which they brought the families concerned¹³⁰. The door to such a career was to be opened by educational achievement.

Cvijić observed that many Montenegrins were unable to adapt to agriculture or craft work, but perceived that 'heroism' was no longer an effective means of achieving upward mobility. Therefore second generation emigrants from Montenegro concerned themselves with education as a means of access to official

posts¹³¹. Within Montenegro itself, interest in education was gaining ground. Although the first elementary school was not opened till 1834, there were 52 elementary schools with 143 teachers and 2,045 pupils in 1882, and the number of such schools had risen to 126 by 1905, plus a high school at Cetinje. In 1907 elementary education was made compulsory and free¹³². Although this probably expressed a target rather than an easily realized fact, resources were being poured into teaching. In 1909/10, 10,368 children were receiving elementary education¹³³. The schools budget of 1911 was 3.47 times that of 1904, and amounted to 16.8 percent of government spending (excluding the postal service)¹³⁴. The results are significant. At the end of 1909, urban literacy extended to 64.8 percent of males and 24.7 percent of females¹³⁵. Rural literacy is not known, but by 1921 overall literacy in the (enlarged) Montenegrin province was 33 percent¹³⁶. The much lower figures for Macedonia and Bosnia (under 20 percent) suggest also that the proportion in the old area of Montenegro had been considerably higher than the average for the entire province. Ruth Trouton is unjustifiably dismissive of this achievement, claiming that only 2-3000 children received an elementary education under Nikola, and relegating Montenegro to the ranks of the most backward regions educationally. Even on her own figures, Montenegro had 31 percent more elementary school teachers per caput of the population than the Yugoslav average by 1940-41¹³⁷.

The demand for more than an elementary education was not so easily fulfilled, and by 1912 there were some 3-400 young Montenegrins being educated in Serbia, often at great personal sacrifice¹³⁸. Still, by 1914 a further six high schools had been opened in Montenegro, including one at Berane (Ivangrad), Milovan Djilas' 'alma mater', of which more below¹³⁹.

Milojević's research on the pastoral peasants of the upper Lim valley provides insights into the impact of educational advance¹⁴⁰. These peasants clearly shared Montenegrin cultural

values. They were "not accustomed to everyday manual work", few entered into crafts, trade or transport, but "...there has developed among them an almost religious aspiration for school and an insatiable longing for education.

Peasants strain their resources to an extent far beyond what their generally deficient farm properties can afford in order to educate their sons, who also invest great toil and staying power, so that even those who are not highly gifted achieve success. The high school at Berane, a small town on the upper Lim, ranks foremost in our country in the number of its pupils, and in some years it had about 1,200. The peasants do not provide for the support of their sons in money, but bring cheese, curds, dried meat, grain and other things to the families in whose homes the children stay.

The children of these hill people are not content to leave the high school in order to go on to technical college, rather, after completing the full high school curriculum, they go away to the faculties at Skoplje, Subotica and especially Belgrade. Thus there come from these mountain regions a large number of the judges and schoolmasters in many of the towns in our country."

Cvijić also observed that, in keeping with the authoritarian mores of Montenegrin society, the career choices of these upwardly mobile highlanders reflected "very autocratic ambitions" meaning a preference for employment in state bureaucracy¹⁴¹. Durham poked fun at a society where men characteristically sought jobs 'superintending' others, as they were unable to do anything else¹⁴².

Whether the investment in human capital had much social utility for the Yugoslav state which these people proceeded to colonize after 1918 is questionable. These office-seekers came from backgrounds where the concept of personal as opposed to kin-group responsibility was little developed¹⁴³. Nor consequently was a sense of impersonality in bureaucratic procedure. Such officials were susceptible to social pressures

to misuse their powers of patronage for the benefit of their kin¹⁴⁴. Once established, the system of links and protection was to prove well nigh ineradicable. It long antedates Communist rule, though this was to provide a particularly favourable basis for the 'tribalization' of bureaucracies, to the detriment of efficient administration¹⁴⁵. There is nothing unusual in this problem, which accompanies the bureaucratization of most transitional societies. But in the Yugoslav case, there seems to be a link between this tendency and the career ambitions of persons from the Dinaric cultural milieu, of which we have taken Montenegro as a paradigm. The bloating of administrative payrolls in this province was already evident in 1939, when officials accounted for 5.9 percent of population, workers, 6.6 percent. The Yugoslav average for officials was 5.0 percent, but they administered a more industrialized economy in which workers accounted for 14.4 percent¹⁴⁶. After World War II, the excessive claim that burgeoning officialdom placed on resources was soon to attract criticism. In 1953 a remarkable 24.8 percent of the occupied population of Montenegro was employed in the services sector, while industrial jobs only employed 14.1 percent. A high proportion of the tertiary sector dispensed tax-financed services. As Macura explains¹⁴⁷: "In conditions where there is a great pressure of labour on employment and when places in the administration are frequently more easily secured than in the economy, strong official tendencies appear in certain strata of the population ... Because of [these tendencies] new workplaces are created in institutions so these themselves represent an important determinant of the continued unjustified growth of institutional employment".

In this paper, we have not been greatly concerned with the fact of Montenegro's economic backwardness: the entire Balkan peninsula was backward by the standards of 19th Century Europe. Rather we have attempted to investigate the dysfunctional attributes associated with Dinaric culture, and to suggest that instead of disappearing with the process of moderniza-

tion, dysfunction merely evolved into recognizably modern forms, of which bureaucratism was the apotheosis, and thus continued to retard the process of development.

Hailing from an environment in which an enterprise culture had significantly failed to take root, the upwardly mobile heirs to the Dinaric tradition can be construed as believing that their prosperity, or that of their kin-group, could only be attained by predation upon outsiders. Education was therefore used by them as a weapon which enabled them to update their predatory strategy for survival in a world in which the cruder forms of parasitism were no longer functional.

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124. The vexed question of whether the Balkan migrants who entered the USA went as settlers or temporary workers is treated in M. Palairet, *The New Immigration and the Newest. Slavic Migrations from the Balkans to America and Industrial Europe since the Late Nineteenth Century*, in *The Search for Wealth and Stability*, ed. T.C. Smout, London 1979, pp. 43-65.

125. Montenegrin Economics, p. 14.
126. Bulajić, Agrarni odnosi, p. 196.
127. Djurović, Trgovački kapital, p. 242.
128. See Rovinski, Chernogoriya, III, pp. 496-7; Djurović, Trgovački kapital, p. 242.
129. Peričić, Prilog poznavanju trgovine, pp. 66-7.
130. Communication to author by Prof. Vucinich dated 5 Aug. 1981.
131. Cvijić, Metanastazička kretanja, 59-60.
132. Schwarz, Montenegro, p. 460; Jagoš Jovanović, Stvaranje crnogorske države i razvoj crnogorske nationalnosti. Cetinje 1947, p. 399.
133. Radusinović, Stanovništvo Crne Gore, p. 110.
134. Rovinski, Chernogoriya, III, pp. 496-502.
135. Glas Crnogorca, XL, 1911, 14, (2 Apr.), p. 3.
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137. Ruth Trouton, Peasant Renaissance in Yugoslavia, 1900-1950, London 1952, pp. 100, 257.
138. Pejović, Iseljavanja crnogoraca, p. 443.
139. Djilas paints a detailed but equivocal picture of this seat of learning in his autobiography, Land Without Justice, pp. 193-268.
140. Milojević, Visoke planine, pp. 204-5.
141. Cvijić, Metanastazička kretanja, p. 60.
142. Mary E. Durham, Through the Lands of the Serb, London 1904, pp. 28-9.
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144. Ibid., p. 59
145. Leslie Benson, Class, Party and the Market in Yugoslavia, 1945-1968, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Univ. of Kent at Canterbury 1973, p. 92.
146. Radusinović, Stanovništvo Crne Gore, p. 242.
147. Macura, Stanovništvo i radna snaga, pp. 126-7, 176.