

Arbër Salihu

Agrarian reform in Kingdom of SCS

and its influence in different parts of
the state



K



How was the agrarian reform carried out, and what was the effect on people's lives in different parts of the Kingdom of SHS?



A

- A critical understanding of the complex nature of the past
- Understanding the problem of the agrarian reform
- Understand the causes and consequences of agrarian reform
- Development of historical awareness



L

- The students will indicate the reasons for application of agrarian reform
- Comparing the realization of the reform in different regions in Yugoslavia.
- Analysing the role of reform in peoples life (How did it affect people's lifes?)
- Estimate effectiveness of the reform in general

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Step 1

I

Step 2

G

Teacher divides the student in 3 groups:
 First one: Represent the position of the SCS Kingdom;
 Second one: Value the actual development of the agrarian reform;
 Third one: Presents the perspective on how was the agrarian reform reflected the life's of the ordinary citizens) The teacher distributes the sources of each group. He/she also gives the needed instructions for their work and questions

Step 3

Each group works analyzing the sources . They try to answer the questions formed for each group. The groups prepare their own conclusions after analyzing the sources

Step 4

Each group resents their conclusions in front of the class. Followed with discussion

Step 5

The teacher give the three questions that will be open debate. The questions are:

- Did the reform achieve the goals for which was proclaimed?
- Were the inhabitants satisfied with the reforms?
- What were the effects of the reform?

Step 6

In the end the teacher makes a table with two columns, one with the positive effects, the other with the negative ones of the reform. The students decide in groups which will be those three things for each column and the leader of each group writes them on the whiteboard. These conclusions will be the next discussion of all the groups.



90 minutes

1	1
1	1
1	1
2	2
2	2
2	2
3	3
3	3
3	3

Introduction

Topic

The agrarian reform for a region it is very important being that is about the lands property and the existence of the population's life. By this workshop we try to present the reasons of the agrarian reforms realization in the SKS Kingdom, how did it end and what's its effect in the life of the people from different areas of the Kingdom?

Source 1

T SHS K

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was a characteristic agrarian country. Agriculture was basic branch of the economy in all parts of the state. One of the most important issues in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was the Agrarian issue.

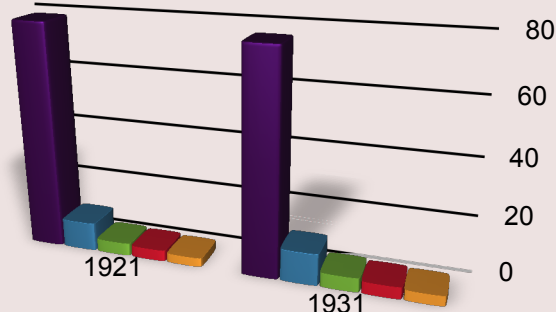
Various and specific structure of land possession in different parts of the country and revolutionary mood in villages among the peasants, were the Reasons which justified taking actions to organize and carry out democratic land reform in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Mr. Gordana Drakić
 "AGRARNA REFORMA U KRALJEVINI SRBA, HRVATA I SLOVENACA -POJAM I OSNOVNE KARAKTERISTIKE"
 FREE LAW JOURNAL – VOL. 3, NUMB 4 (18 OCTOBER 2007)
<http://www.freeworldpublishing.com/ILYV12008.pdf> (downloaded April 19, 2013)

Source 2

S K SCS

- Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries
- Industry and Crafts
- Trade, Credit, Traffic
- Public service free lance, Army
- Other professions



Zanimanja stanovništva Kraljevine, prema Lj. Dimic, Kulturna politika Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1918-1941, str. 35

Source 3

P

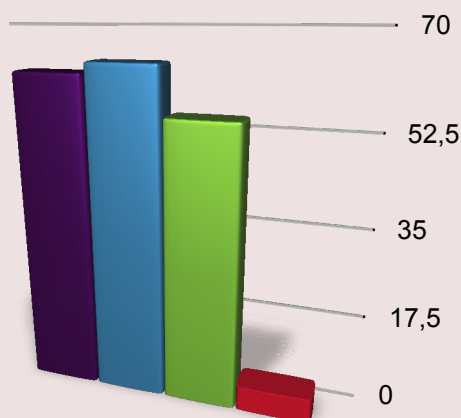
1931

R	E 1931					
	Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	Industry and crafts	Trade and credits	Public services, free professions and the military	Others	Total
S	60,8	21,1	5,7	4,9	7,7	100%
C	76,3	10,7	4,3	4,2	4,5	100%
S :	79,3	8,9	3,4	4,5	3,9	100%
C ,	62,0	15,2	5,7	5,2	4,7	100%
V ,	85,8	4,9	2,2	3,9	3,2	100%
K						
B&H	84,1	6,7	3,1	3,8	2,5	100%
M	78,1	5,8	3,0	8,3	4,8	100%
M	75,1	9,4	4,1	7,0	4,4	100%
S	89,3	3,9	1,0	2,5	2,4	100%

Source 4

A

- < 2 ha
- 2 - 5 ha
- 5 - 20 ha
- 20 - 60 ha



Mirković, Mijo: *Ekonomska historija Jugoslavije*.
Zagreb: Informator - Zagreb 1968. Page 322.

Source 5

W

?

In Serbia and Montenegro, the situation in the countryside was different. The peasantry, occupied by national and party-related issues, was fighting against war profiteers and demanding that land be distributed to them, basing their demand on a Serbian government decision of February 1917, according to which "each person that voluntarily joins the Serbian army and takes part in the coming battles shall be granted sufficient arable land for settlement, after the end of the war, in the liberated homeland territories, as a sign of recognition for their merits". Under such social circumstances, the highest authorities of the Kingdom of SHS decided to undertake appropriate measures in order to pacify the peasant uprising. In order to win over peasants for a peaceful change of the existing agrarian property structure, the Provisional National Representative Office was formed to prepare changes in the property structure, in accordance with the law.

Ratko Ljubojević, *LAND PROPERTY RELATIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA DURING THE DICTATORSHIP OF KING ALEKSANDAR*,
Original scientific paper UDC 32.2.021.8
(497.1)"1918/1941"

<http://www.megatrendreview.com/files/articles/015/18.pdf> (downloaded April 19, 2013)

1. Why was the government interested in implementing the agrarian reform?
2. What measures were taken by the government to implement the reform?

Source 1

M R A

Shortly after the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes a significant action by the regent followed. He influenced calming peasant dissatisfaction in connection with the agrarian

question. On the 6th of January 1919, the following Manifesto was published by Regent Alexander, in which, among other things, the following was said:

“I want you to immediately access the fair solution of agrarian question and abolish serfdom and large land holdings. In both cases, the land will be divided among the poor farmers, with just compensation to its previous owners. Let every Serb, Croat and Slovene be the master of their own country. In our free state, there can be and will be only free land owners. So I called My government to immediately form a commission that will make a solution of the agrarian question, and I invite you, the peasants, to confide in my royal word, calmly wait, and they will lawfully distribute the land, which will be just in front of the God and the people, as it is already in Serbia. “

Službene Novine Kraljevstva SHS br.2 od 28. januara 1919. godine
<http://www.freeworldpublishing.com/ILYV12008.pdf>
 (downloaded April 19, 2013)

Source 3

W R ? A

It was said that the reform was a “revolutionary measure” as a transition process from feudalism to capitalism, undertaken by the state, with the aim to bring changes in land ownership in agriculture.

As it turned out, the agrarian reform question was too complex to be carried out by the Ministry of Social Policy. As a result, the government of the Kingdom of SHS abandoned the idea of forming the State Office and, on April 2, 1919, appointed the first minister for agrarian reform,
 Dr. Franjo Polak (1877-1939).

Ratko Ljubojević, LAND PROPERTY RELATIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA DURING THE DICTATORSHIP OF KING ALEKSANDAR, Original scientific paper UDC 332.2.021.8(497.1)“1918/1941“
<http://www.megatrendreview.com/files/articles/015/18.pdf>
 (downloaded April 19, 2013)

Source 2

C A

King Aleksandra's Proclamation of December 21, 1918, underlined the need for Agrarian reform. A commission for the preparation of Agrarian reform regulations was formed on the basis of the proclamation. The commission has following permanent members: Vitomir Korać, Minister for Social Policy, Dr. Živko Petričić, Minister of Agriculture and Dr. Uroš Krulj, Minister of Public Health. Dr. Mehmed Spaho, Minister of Forestry and Mining, was named as an occasional member. The complexity of the commission's task was by the fact that the agrarian reform had a political, societal, social and economic character. The political character was reflected in the lowering of social tensions.

Ratko Ljubojević, LAND PROPERTY RELATIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA DURING THE DICTATORSHIP OF KING ALEKSANDAR, Original scientific paper UDC 332.2.021.8(497.1)“1918/1941“
<http://www.megatrendreview.com/files/articles/015/18.pdf> (downloaded April 19, 2013)

Source 4

P R 27 F 1919 A

- I A**
1. Serfdom relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in new areas of Serbia and Montenegro are abolished, and creation of new serfdom relations is prohibited.
 2. The so far serfs are proclaimed free owners of the so far serf land.
 3. The so far owners (Agas) shall receive compensation guaranteed by the state for their land. Separate law will determine the amount of compensation and ways of payment.
 4. The compensation shall include the serfs' debts for 1918. . .

II A A

7. Colonists and other serfdom-like relations between the land lords and farming workers in Istria, Goricka, Dalmatia and other areas of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians are abolished in accordance with regulations of the first chapter (1-6) of these regulations.

Službene novine Kraljevstva SHS, 27. februar 1919; Petranović-Zečević, Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988, str. 275

Source 5

C K SHS

Article 42 – Feudal relations are considered legally abolished from the day of freeing from foreign rule. If at some instances certain injustices were made, prior to this deadline, in resolving the feudal relations or their transforming into private-legal relations, there has to be a legal remedy.

Serfs, and farmers in general, who work on land in a serfdom-like relation, are hereby set as free owners of state-owned lands, do not pay any compensation for it, and get the hereditary rights on their land.

Službene novine Kraljevstva SHS, br. 142, 28. jun 1921; Petranović-Zečević, Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988, str. 193.

- What were the purposes of the expropriation of land? Explain!

Source 1

A U

There was not any other country in Europe with such diverse, difficult and entangled agrarian Relations, such as those in various parts of Yugoslavia, after uniting...
Each province had its own, special, agrarian relations.'

*http://freeworldpublishing.com/Files/FLJV3N4-Oct2007-2.pdf
(downloaded April 19, 2013)*

Source 3

T

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia (SHS at that time) abolished feudal relations by an order in 1919, and because of problems with reimbursements of damage to former owners, the state established Regulation in 1920 that all large properties were put under the state supervision. Former serfs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of them Serbs, got their land for free, but former owners were compensated in money and government bonds. In BiH, approximately 113.000 families received 775.233 ha of land, of which 4.000 was in the possession of Aghas and Beys, more than half a million ha of it intended for growing crops. In Kosovo, Metohija, in jurisdiction of Raška and Macedonia, 20.547 families of serfs ("čifčija") received rights to the land they were cultivating.

Until the end of 1936 roughly 350.000 ha of land was determined for colonization: in Macedonia approximately 500.000 domestic and colonial families received the land from 290.000 Turkish owners, and a some land from the state.« »In the beginning of the 1920s, The Kingdom of Yugoslavia began the Agrarian reform and increased settling of poor families from Krajina, Lika, Montenegro and Herzegovina in Vojvodina, Kosovo and partially in Macedonia. Alongside economic, there was also a political goal: a protection of unsecured borders with Hungary and Albania, and establishment of desired democratic balance.

Bataković, Dušan, Nova istorija srpskog naroda, Beograd, 2000, Pg. 287 and 293.

Source 2

T

The Agrarian reform and abolition of feudal, half-feudal, and colonus relations were the most important economic measures in mainly agricultural state. Reform was executed slowly and inconsistently. Land maximum, which was set at the beginning, grew constantly (from 57 to 288 ha). In countless places it was ignored because of different political reasons or even because the reform was never established (for example Bey's land in Kosovo, Macedonia, and Sandžak were excluded, since Turkish political organization used them to condition consent in Unitarian and centralized organization of constitution). The government also used the Land reform for free division of the land to war volunteers and in this way kept Serbian colonization in Vojvodina, Slavonia, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Metohija, and discriminated national minorities. 1.7 million ha of land was divided, particularly the land owned by foreign landowners. Reform performance was also obstructed because of the resisting landowners, especially ecclesiastical.

Repe, Božo: Sodobna zgodovina: učbenik za 4. letnik gimnazij. Ljubljana: Modrijan 2007. Page 96.

Source 4

T K

General number of the colonists who came to Kosovo was over 12,000 families approximately 70,000 thousand people together, that equals more than 10% of the total population of Kosovo.

Obradović Milorad, Agrarna reforma I kolonizacija na Kosovu 1918-1941, Prishtinë, 1981, pg. 221

Source 5

T

For the colonization program was spent large amounts of money. Only in western Kosovo during 1928-1929, the costs were 10 million dinars (approximately 180 thousand U.S. dollars at that time). Dimensions of this operation were exceptional during the period between the two wars, more than 200 000 hectares of agricultural land were seized from their owners and half of you scattered colonists. Throughout Kosovo there was only 584,000 hectares of agricultural land, of which only 400,000 hectares were arable land.

Noel Malcom, Kosova një histori e shkurtër, Prishtinë, 1998, pg.293,

- What were the purposes of the expropriation of land? Explain!

Source 6

T H
S A
R

Legend:

A map of territory of the High Secretariat for Agrarian Reform in Skopje Graphical overview of colonization in regions from the beginning until 1941.

Composed based on data collected from regional offices at the end of 1939.

Jusuf Osmani. Lënda arkivore për kolonizimin dhe reformën agrare në Kosovë 1918-1941. Prishtinë, 1996.



Source 7

C K

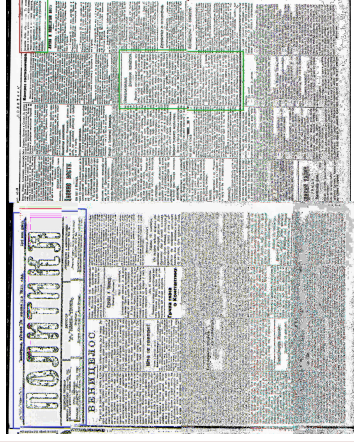
N	K	
1919	1931	1941
5975	5588	

Obradović Milorad. The agrarian reform and the colonization in Kosovo 1918-1941, Pristine 1981, prema : AJ, 96-21-71 The statistical data of Kosovo colonization according to years;

Source 8

C

The Decree on populating the southern areas, that we already wrote about before, enters into force today. Ministry of Agrarian Reform was granted a loan of 20 million dinars for execution of the Decree. In this way, the long stalled issue was finally taken off the agenda. But, despite everything, the interest of those who wanted to populate these areas seem to have decreased, judging on very small number of applications for settlement. Also, the number of already settled persons is not so big; it is only about 4.400 persons. So far most of colonists were settled in fertile plains of Metohija, then in Kosovo, and finally in Kumanovo and Tetovo area. An attempt to populate wine growing areas around Tikves and Bregalnica (river) valley failed due to malaria, which is there very frequent and very strong. Also, areas populated with purely Arnaut element (ethnic Albanians) could not be populated. The so far settlers to southern areas already founded their agricultural cooperatives, which were foreseen in previous regulations as well. As an aid to those cooperatives the Ministry for Agrarian Reform sent recently 100.000 dinars. The aid will continue to be allocated to cooperatives in allotments of 100.000 dinars, but only under the condition if given loans are used for these purposes, foreseen in the Decree. Otherwise, aid will be stopped. The same applies for new settlers, who besides agricultural and Vardar cooperatives, have to establish agrarian communities as well, which will guarantee the payoff of spent loans to the Ministry of Agrarian Reform.



Newspaper "Politika", Beograd, 20 novembra 1920

• Were all inhabitants satisfied with the reform? Explain!

Source 1

T

The story of an old lady named Melika Akbad who had 103 years during the i.

"... I came in Turkey when i was 7 years old. We came by a ship in where my little sister was born. When we arrived in the farm which was given to us by the Turkish state we where very frightened that they thought we were "Shkije" (Slavs-Christians). We suffered a lot because we had nothing to eat. Our mother prepared for us meals only with onions without any salt and oil or plant and this was how she feed us, her three daughters. In the beginning the state gave us only a small plate of corn or plants flour. Some of the woman's were left alone with no husbands being that they were dead or the state gave them different jobs. After a period of time we were forced to change the habitat and therefore we lived in a mosque for three years..."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBfPZgvNxXQ&NR=1&feature=endscreen>
(downloaded November 25, 2012)

Source 3

A

In the appeal of land owner bey Miralem Begovic from Derventa, which was sent in August 1920 to the Ministry of agrarian reform following facts have been stated: usurpation of land holdings took a broad scale; estates have been taken without order, without law, without authority, judgment and decision", they are simply abducted by physical force; abductors were more likely wealthier from the landowners. For himself personally Begovic says "that he is loyal, that he obeys the law and patiently waits that agrarian question be legally regulated. Both he and his ancestors have practiced "težaklukom." Possession were rationally worked (in Ljubljana Doljna totals 1,300 acres, of which 400 acres is Begluk). On bey's land is planted plum orchard is exemplary carried. Begovic says that "by the covetousness of residents" he lost not just serfs-land but bey's-land as well, and even mentioned plum orchard. He remained completely free of the land, though, as he points out, has not come inpossession of beyluk »... his free -land possession by forced removal of peasants but he partly inherited from my father, and him from their fathers or grandfathers as a free land, and if the parts of bey;s-land were under serfs-right, those former serfs gave their right to my father, and to me, having received full counter value, as a substitute for the other land, which in turn in cash ...".

Šehić Nusret, *Bosna i Hercegovina 1918-1925, Institut za istojju u Sarajevu, Sarajevo, 1991, 55 i 56; Isto, prez. br. 11033/1920.*

Source 2

A

C

One of characteristics of Croatian economy, but of the whole Kingdom of SHS as well, was very backward agriculture. The reason was scattering of farming land into very small parcels. Namely, in the country there were 2 million small properties with 5 to 20 hectares of land. For farming of that land, very primitive means were used, wooden plough like in the Middle Ages. The state brought Prior regulations for the execution of agrarian reform in 1919, foreseeing requisition of a part of large properties and distributing it to poor peasants. In northern Croatia, some 107.000 ha of large land owners was distributed to about 100.000 interested persons, but even this very positive measure had its down sides, for the land was given to political supporters. It was an opportunity for change of national composition of non-Serb areas. Belgrade regime settled its strongest supporters to wealthy non Serb areas. It was particularly related to the so-called 'Soluners', Serb soldiers from WW1, who were given free land in Croatia, while other interested individuals had to pay for the land. Agrarian reform changed the structure of economy in Croatia to a certain degree; however, large land parcels as well as numerous no-land peasants remained.

Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, Hrvoje Petrić, Jakša Raguž, *Povjest IV (Udzbenik iz povjest za 4. razred gimnazije, Meridijan, Samobor 2004, fq. 82*

Source 4

A

B H

The process of solving the agrarian issue in Bosnia started in 1919, where Muslim landowners were the most affected. That same year, approximately 400,072 acres of land were seized from Muslim landowners. Lawlessness in the implementation of agrarian reform has caused great violence against Muslims. Their properties were looted and burned, the property was seized, and many families have immigrated to Turkey. During these robberies hundreds of Muslims were killed in eastern Bosnia, eastern Herzegovina and in Montenegro (Sandžak).

H. Hadžiabdić, E. Dervišagić, A. Mulić, V. Mehić, *HISTORIJA, Udžbenik za četvrti razred gimnazije, Bosanska knjiga, Tuzla 2007, 101.*

Source 5

T

Population resettlement received certain form with the Decree on colonization to the so called 'southern areas' of 24 September, 1920. That Decree determined the land to be populated: Free state land, 2) municipal and village lands, and 3) unused lands and land permanently abandoned by its owners. During the colonization, colonists were entitled to a free transportation of all members of the household, cattle and belongings. The colonists were entitled to freely use state and municipal forest for house building, and free pasturage on village and municipal meadows. The colonists were exempted from paying taxes to the state, region/province and municipal level, for the period of three years.

Б Л А

J c

1918 - 1941,

Б 2002 c .288-289

Source 6

A O ,
V K SHS



Source 7

C

A	A	P	T	T
B&H	1.286.227	66,9%	249.580	4,71
M K S	231.099	12%	48.261	4,79
D	50.000	2,6%	96.953	1,94
S	110.577	5,7%	99.908	1,11
V	222.707	11,8%	100.004	223
S	23.697	1,2%	19.987	1,19

Edin Mutapčić, PRAVNO-HISTORIJSKI KONTEKST AGRARNE REFORME U BiH
POSLIJE PRVOG SVJETSKOG RATA <http://hrcak.srce.hr/74666>
(downloaded November 25, 2012)