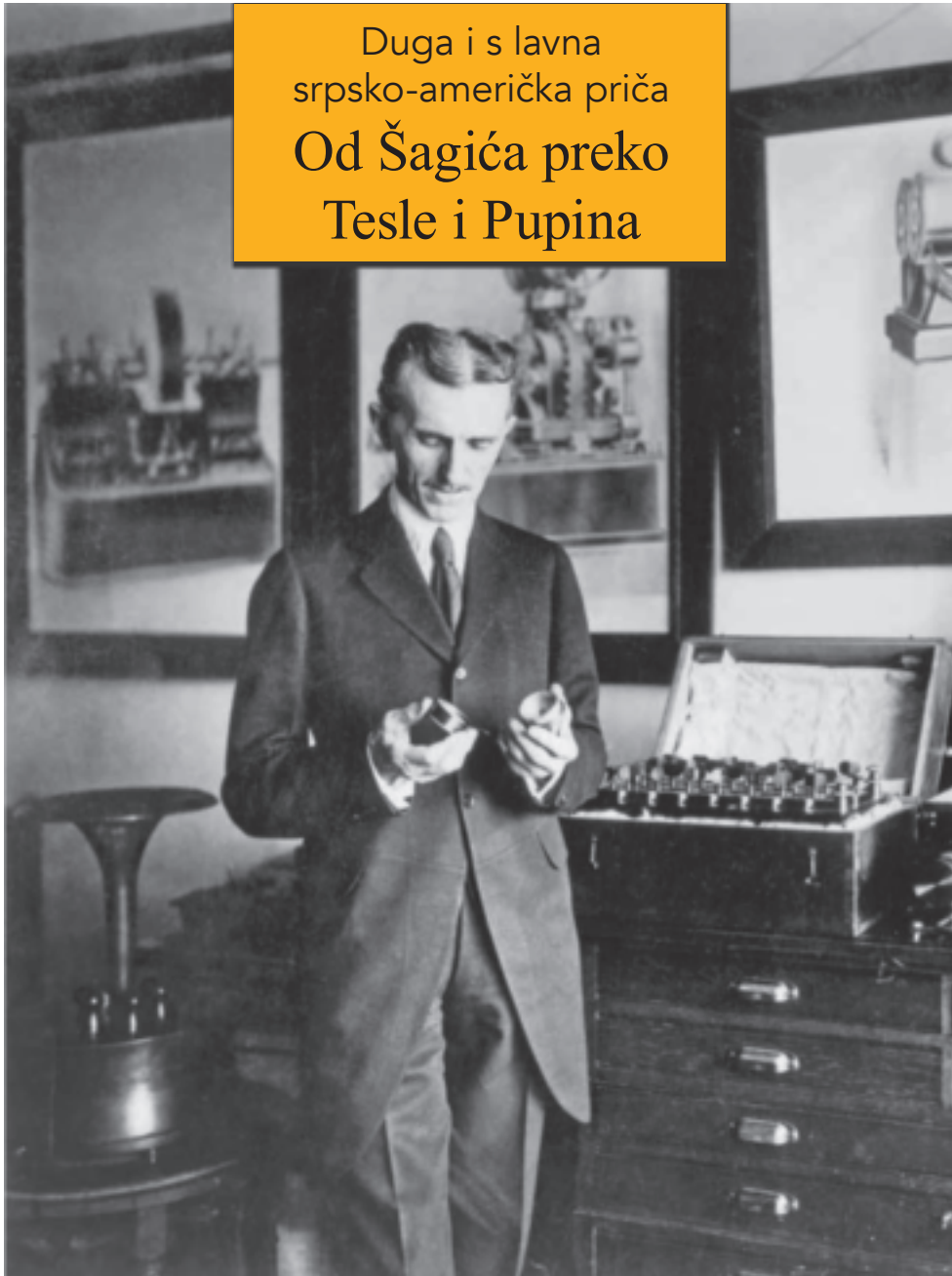


Milos Rastovic, SNF Cultural Outreach Coordinator published this article in the February 2022 issue of Elevate, the official magazine of Air Serbia, and is sharing it here with us.

Duga i slavna
srpsko-američka priča
**Od Šagića preko
Tesle i Pupina**



**Istorija srpskog iseljeničtva u
SA D započeta je zahvaljujući
avanturističkom duhu pojedinaca
početkom 19. veka**

Prema dr Krinki V. Petrov, istorija srpskog iseljeničtva može se podeliti na nekoliko većih perioda. Prvi Srbi su počeli da dolaze u većem broju u periodu od 1820. do 1880. godine iz Crne Gore, pre svega iz Bokokotorskog zaliva i Dalmacije. Pošto su se u svom rodnom kraju bavili pretežno ribarstvom, nastanjivali su američke obalske gradove kao što su Nju Orleans, Galveston i San Francisko, koji su bili slični njihovom rodnom kraju. Živeći u malim zajednicama, jedini način da održe svoju veru i običaje je bio da osnuju svoje crkve i parohije zajedno sa drugim pravoslavnim narodima – Rusima, Grcima i Sirijcima.

Drugi period srpskog iseljeničtva trajao je od 1880. godine do druge decenije 20. veka. Nakon Američkog građanskog rata (1861–1865) započeo je period velikog industrijskog razvoja i uspona Amerike. Iseljenicima iz čitave Evrope bila su otvorena vrata kako bi pomogli njen industrijski uspon. Amerika je postala obećana zemlja. Srpski iseljenici došli su iz Krajine (Lika, Kordun i Banija), Bosne i Hercegovine, Crne Gore i Vojvodine. Iseljenici iz Krajine su se naselili u Pensilvaniji; imigranti iz Bosne i Hercegovine u Čikagu, Detroitu, Geriju, Milvokiju i Sent Luisu; imigranti iz Crne Gore su se naselili u državama Montana, Pensilva-

nija i Illinois, a oni iz Vojvodine u Ohaju, Klivlendu i Akronu.

Prvi poznati Srbin o kome danas najviše znamo i o kojem postoje istorijski podaci, Đorđe Šagić, kasnije poznat kao Džordž Fišer, stigao je u filadelfijsku luku 1815. godine. Njegov doprinos izgradnji američkog društva bio je toliko značajan da se i danas u Nacionalnom muzeju Teksasa u Hjustonu čuva njegova slika.

Srpski iseljenici pristizali su u njujoršku luku uglavnom bez materijalnih sredstava. Tako je na primer Mihajlo Pupin, istaknuti srpsko-američki naučnik i pronalazač, došao u Ameriku sa pet centi u džepu. Nikola Tesla, proslavljeni srpsko-američki naučnik i pronalazač, došao je u Njujork bez novca. U luci je Tesla video jednog čoveka kojem nije polazilo za rukom da popravi motor u radionici. Ponudio se da popravi motor i tako je zaradio svojih prvih 20 dolara u Americi. Iako je većina iseljenika došla bez materijalnih sredstava, oni su sa sobom doneli nešto mnogo važnije, a to je spremnost da se radi i da se žrtvuje.

Pošto su iseljenici uglavnom bili neoženjeni, živeli su zajedno sa svojim sunarodnicima u pansionima sa jeftinim obrocima i rentom. Kako je broj iseljenika rastao, tako su nastojali da se organizuju u razne organizacije, kulturna društva, bratstva i crkveno-školske opštine kako bi održali kulturni i verski identitet. Davne 1892. godine otac Džon

Dabović osnovao je prvu srpsku eparhiju u SAD, a 1894. godine osnovao je prvu srpsku pravoslavnu crkvu Sveti Sava u Džeksonu, u državi Kaliforniji.

Mnogi iseljenici pristigli su na novi kontinent bez neke posebne kvalifikacije, a nisu ni posedovali znanje engleskog jezika. Iz tog razloga su pronalazili teške poslove u rudnicima, čeličanicama ili su radili na izgradnji pruga duž čitave Amerike. Samo neki od njih su imali sopstvene radnje, salone ili restorane. Rad u rudnicima i čeličanicama bio je veoma težak i nesiguran jer su radili u lošim uslovima i po 12 sati dnevno. Često su se dešava



Kralj Petar sa predsednikom Ruzveltom King Peter of Yugoslavia with President Roosevelt



Angels Camp, 1900, srpski imigranti u pansionima u Kaliforniji
Angels Camp, 1900, Serbian immigrants in boarding houses in California



Đorđe Šagić, kasnije poznat kao Džordž Fišer, stigao je u filadelfijsku luku 1815. godine
Đorđe Šagić, who was later known as George Fisher, arrived via the port of Philadelphia in 1815

le nesreće, u kojima je mnogo radnika izgubilo život. *Amerikanski srbobran* je u to vreme izveštavao o nesrećama u rudnicima i čeličanama. U jednom članku se navodi da je u jednom mesecu 1.500 rudara izgubilo život u Pensilvaniji. Jedna od nesreća dogodila se na Svetog Nikolu, kada je 400 rudara izgubilo život. Među nastradalima nije bilo Srba jer su ostali kod kuće da slave Svetog Nikolu.

Prvi svetski rat (1914–1918) najbolji je primer za to koliko su srpski iseljenici bili spremni da žrtvuju svoje živote za američku domovinu i ujedno da brane svoju otadžbinu. Srpski iseljenici su pomogli svoju otadžbinu političkim angažovanjem, prikupljanjem humanitarne pomoći i slanjem dobrovoljaca u srpsku, a kasnije i u američku vojsku. Požrtvovanosti i odanosti ideji slobode i pravde koje je pokazao srpski narod, američki predsednik Vudro Vilson je na najdostojanstveniji način odao priznanje saopštenjem od 28. jula 1918. godine američkom narodu. To je bio dan kada se srpska zastava vijorila iznad Bele kuće u Vašingtonu.

Na početku Drugog svetskog rata američki predsednik Frenklin D. Ruzvelt je pomenuo samo neke hrabre narode u borbi protiv nacističke Nemačke, a među njima je bio i srpski narod. Velik broj srpskih iseljenika nikad se nije vratio iz rata, ali oni koji su se vratili dobili su visoka priznanja od američke administracije

According to Dr Krinka V. Petrov, the history of Serbian immigration in the U.S. can be divided into several periods. During the first period, from 1820 to 1880, Serbs arrived from Montenegro (Bay of Kotor) and Dalmatia. And because they'd lived in coastal towns in their native lands, they settled in similar towns in the States, such as New Orleans, Galveston and San Francisco. They lived in small communities and the only way to satisfy their "heart and soul," i.e., religious beliefs, was to build parishes and churches together with their fellow-Orthodox neighbours, such as The long and glorious Serbian-American story From Šagić, via Tesla to Pupin The history of Serbian immigration in the United States began with the adventurous spirit of individuals in the early 19th century Russians, Greeks and Syrians.

The second period of Serbian immigration lasted from 1880 to the second decade of the 20th century. Following the American Civil War (1861-1865), the U.S. began its great industrial and economic growth, opening the door to all European immigrants. The new land gave them hope for economic prosperity, along with political and religious freedom. In this context, America was a promised land for them. Serbian immigrants came from Krajina (Lika, Kordun, and Banija), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Vojvodina. The majority of



The long and glorious Serbian-American story

From Šagić, via Tesla to Pupin

The history of Serbian immigration in the United States began with the adventurous spirit of individuals in the early 19th century

immigrants from Krajina settled in Pennsylvania; immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina settled in Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Gary and St. Louis; immigrants from Montenegro settled in Montana, Pennsylvania and Illinois, and immigrants from Vojvodina settled in Ohio (Cleveland and Akron).

The first famous Serb, Đorđe Šagić, who later came to be known as George Fisher, arrived in the United States via the port of Philadelphia in 1815. His contribution to building American society was so important that today we can find Šagić's picture mounted in the National Museum of Texas in Houston. Most Serbian immigrants arrived in the port of New York without money. For instance, distinguished Serbian-American scientist Mihajlo I. Pupin had arrived with five cents in his pocket, while his fellow famous Serbian-American scientist, Nikola Tesla, arrived penniless. It was while at the port of New York that Tesla spotted a man who was unable to repair a machine in his store. Tesla offered his assistance to repair the machine and earned himself his first \$20 in the U.S. Although many immigrants had no money, they brought with them something more valuable: a heart filled with the will to work and the readiness to sacrifice.

Many Serbian immigrants were young, unmarried men who lived with their compatriots in boarding houses where rent and meals were cheap. As immigrant numbers grew, they began organising themselves into organisations, cultural societies, fraternal associations, churches and schools, in an effort to preserve their ethnic and religious identity. In 1892, Father John Dabovich founded the first Serbian Orthodox Diocese, and in 1894, the Church of St. Sava became the first Serbian Orthodox church in North America, in Jackson, California.

Many immigrants lacked any specific job skills and didn't speak English. As such, they were only able to find work in mines and the steel industry, or travelling throughout the country building railroads. Only a small minority of them could afford to own businesses, such as grocery stores, restaurants and saloons. Work in the mines and the steel industry was very arduous and insecure, as they laboured under very difficult working conditions and had shifts lasting 12 hours per day. Mining accidents were very common and resulted in many workers losing their lives. The *American Srbobran* publication reported these accidents in the mines and steel

industry.

In one of many articles, it was reported that 1,500 miners had been killed in accidents in just one month in Pennsylvania. One accident, which occurred on St. Nicholas Day, resulted in the deaths of 400 miners. Fortunately for the Serbian miners, they were not among the dead that day because they were at home celebrating the 'Slava', i.e., patron saint's day, of St Nicholas. World War I (1914 – 1918) provided an excellent example of how many Serbian immigrants were ready to sacrifice their lives for America, but also to defend their Mother Land from Austro-Hungarian invasion. Serbian immigrants helped their Mother Land through political engagement, collecting aid for civilians and sending Serbian volunteers to the Serbian army, and later by joining the American army. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson recognised the Serbian sacrifice and loyalty to freedom and justice demonstrated in World War I, and on 28th July, 1918, the Serbian flag was raised over the White House and all public buildings in Washington D.C.

At the beginning of World War II, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt mentioned a few courageous nations who were bravely fighting against Nazi Germany, with Serbia among them. A great number of Serbian immigrants never returned from the war, while some of those that did were decorated by the American Government.



Osvеćivanje prve srpske pravoslavne crkve Sveti Sava, Džekson, Kalifornija, 1894.
The consecrating of the Church of Saint Sava, the first Serbian Orthodox church in the U.S., in Jackson, California, 1894