

NIKOLA TESLA – SERBIAN BY ORIGIN, AMERICAN BY CITIZENSHIP

TESLA Nikola, was born July 10, 1856 in Serbian village Smiljan, Austrian Empire, died on January 7, 1943 in New York, USA.

Tesla's parents Milutin and Georgina Draganic moved from Western Serbia to the Austrian Empire in 1852. Many Serbs changed their surnames (sometimes were forced) coming to Austria by getting a nickname for their new surname and this was the case with Nikola Tesla's family. His ancestors were either a priest of the Serbian Orthodox Church and/or soldiers (some of them performed liturgy in the morning and in the afternoon as officers guarded the border from Turkish attacks to Christian territory), but they were all educated. His family and he knew Serbian folk songs and Njegoš's *Gorski vjenac* by heart and Nikola knew even the Goethe's "Faust".

In an interview to one of the best-known literary and art magazines of the period, "The Century Magazine" in 1894, Nikola Tesla, among other things, said:

"There is hardly any people in the world are more sad and harder than the fate of the Serbian people. From the culmination of his glory, in which the Serbian state encompassed the largest part of the Balkan Peninsula and certain provinces, which today belong to Austria, the Serbian people plunged after the fateful Kosovo battle into the hard slavery of the Asian hordes, which were then overthrown. Europe can never pay off a large debt owed to Serbs by heavy casualties, which they have succumbed to fighting barbaric intrusion. The Poles under Vienna completed what the Serbs could not do, and almost the same as these were rewarded for their services to civilization.

On Kosovo, the field fell, as the Sultan of Murat II broke up in the middle of the army, Miloš Obilić the noblest Serbian hero. When this would not be a historical truth, then a man would succumb to the temptation to regard this event as a myth, growing out of touch with Greek and Roman cultures. In Milos, we are seeing Mucius Scevola and Leonid, and even more than the two of us, we see a martyr in him; because he does not die with light death on the battlefield as a Greek hero, but he pays for his brave work of life in a terrible martyrdom. It is therefore no wonder that the poetry of the people likened to such giant branches with the spirit of nobility, heroism and generosity ..."

"From this fatal battle to the most recent time, the Serbs knew only about a dark night with one star on the horizon, Montenegro. In that darkness there could have been no thought or any hope of science, commerce, skills, or economy. What else could this brave nation do in this state of affairs in order to constantly fight with its oppressor? And his sons really did it, and although each of them had to fight with twenty. But the struggle did not only meet their rough impulses. There was more to them than they could do and what they really did: they put on the immortal songs the noble works of their ancestors, heroism and self regret, those who fell in the struggle for freedom. These circumstances and innate traits made the Serbs a thinker and a poetic nation, and so their magnificent folk songs were gradually developed, first collected by the most prolific Serbian writer Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic, who at the same

time compiled a dictionary of the Serbian language, in which has more than 60000 words. These folk songs can, in the opinion of Gete himself, be placed alongside the most beautiful products of the Greeks and Romans. And what would he say about them that he thought he was a Serb? "

On June 1, 1892, during his visit to Belgrade, the capital of Kingdom of Serbia, Tesla declared: "I feel much more than I can say. Therefore, I ask you not to measure the strength of my feelings by the weakness of my words. I was taken out of business to come and I still cannot get rid of my thoughts and ideas, which are following me here as well. There is something in me that can be a deception, as it is more often with young, enthusiastic people, but if I am happy to realize at least some of my ideals - it will be a charity for the whole of humankind my hopes are fulfilled, the sweetest thought will be to me: that it is the work of one Serb. Long live Serbianity!"

On June 2, King Alexandar Obrenovic received him, and Minister of Education Andra Mitrovic was also present. On the same day, Tesla addressed professors and students of the Grand School (predecessor of the university) in Belgrade and among other things he said: "I, as you can see and hear, remained a Serb and across the sea, where I am doing my research. You must be the same, and by your knowledge and work, you will raise the glory of the Serbs in the world. "

In the honour of Tesla's visit to Belgrade, Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj, a great Serbian poet, dedicated him a song and two years later, Tesla translated this song and other Zmaj's poems into English and American poet, writer and diplomat Robert Underwood Johnson (a founding director of the Hall of Fame of New York University and permanent secretary of the American Academy of Arts and Letters) sang them, and published the collection in May 1894 in the Century Magazine:

"Electricity goes round/air will be a joint/possibly also with the four;/You are Tesla, you whispers/There is stronger currents a year/In distant Colombia/that lightning collapses;/ There will be a connection between us, /and there is no distance, no, /He'll understand the tale/every tree of its own tree, / (Electricity of our hearts)/and without wires and no cables."

Tesla informed Zmaj, his favourite poet, about this in his letter of June 15, 1894 (the letter is kept in the National Library of Serbia), and "Politika" (the most prestigious and oldest Serbian newspaper that leaves today), on the occasion of the 80th birthday of Nikola Tesla, published it in a trumpet for May 31 and June 1 and 2, 1936. On the occasion of the same jubilee Vlatko Macek, a Croatian politician in Kingdom of Yugoslavia, leader of Croatian Peasant Party-HSS (he called on the supporters of HSS to respect and co-operate with the Independent State of Croatia, Nazi state during WWII which committed the most horrible crimes against Serbs and Jews), wrote to Tesla: "I turn to you as a son of a Serbian ancestry and Croatian homeland"... After WWII the propaganda of the new Yugoslav state (under dictatorship of Croat Tito), in order to abolish Croatia of mentioned crimes, has for decades persistently repeated the lie that Tesla said that he is proud of the Serbian origin and Croatian homeland. Bearing in mind that he had been granted US citizenship in 1891 and

literally never lived in Croatia, he could only say that he is proud of the Serbian origin and American homeland!

On the basis of the Croatian Law on Racial Race (adopted on the grounds that Hitler's Nuremberg laws that were the "legal" basis for the Holocaust) of May 30, 1941, Serbs and Jews were killed. In Croatia, from 1941 to 1945, many members of the Nikola Tesla family were killed, and 11 of his closest relatives, three women and eight men, were killed in the concentration camp Jasenovac. Only between 1 and 10 August 1941 in Smiljan Orthodox church Croatian Army killed everyone they could capture -568 Serbs, including babies (27 newborn babies who were not even baptized so they remained the nameless victims), children, women... At that time village Smiljan numbered 621 Serbian residents, among victims were 91 Tesla relatives. Had he remained to live in Smiljan, he would share his destiny with his near and far family, for sure. "The birthplace of Nikola Tesla exists today", "Remember this every time you hear that Nikola Tesla is Croat", wrote Prof. Gideon Greiff in his book *"Jasenovac - Auschwitz of the Balkans"*.

During WWII Tesla objected, of course, to politics and unprecedented crimes committed by Independent State of Croatia. On 4 and 5 July 1942 in Detroit, USA, at a meeting of Congress of united Serbs against fascism and Serbian People's Alliance, Tesla's image was next to image of general Draza Mihailovic, minister of war who fought against the German occupation and the Independent State of Croatia(his troops "Yugoslav Army in Homeland" were calling in the West "Chetniks"), and on the posters it was written: "Through the steel national unity against fascism we give all the support to Draza and Chetniks! Let's do everything we can do for defeat fascism this year! Greetings from Nikola Tesla a world famous scientist and honorary president of Congress and Alliance." The same year he met in the hotel New Yorker King Peter II Karadjordjevic and a joint photograph was published. It has never forgiven to him by the now state dictatorial power in Yugoslavia. After his death on Orthodox Christmas, on January 7, 1943 (at age 87) and burial of the Orthodox Christian ritual, after WWII his cousin (Sava Kosanovic who bowed to the new regime and was later rewarded with ambassadorial position) by ordering of new elite of power dumped him out from the crypt and burned his corpse and send the urn to Belgrade.

Nikola Tesla died at the time of three years of the existence of Independent State of Croatia, in which he never lived, at the time when his compatriots and his family were killed on the basis of the Law on Racial Discrimination. Therefore, to say that Nikola Tesla was Croat represents a reckless lie, even an insult to him and his family, for all the Tesla victims. The dictatorship propaganda was so powerful that it left a trace even in Portugal - In Museu de Arte, Arquitetura e Tecnologia in Lisboa still wrote: "Nikola Tesla Croat, Croatian"!After all, he himself clearly and unequivocally stated himself as a Serb.

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