

Book review

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MIJAT STOJANOVIĆ

SGODE I NESGODE MOGA ŽIVOTA [ADVENTURES AND MISADVENTURES OF MY LIFE]

The autobiography of Mijat Stojanović, the notable Croatian teacher, educator and folk writer from the nineteenth century, was published in its entirety under the title *Sgode i nesgode moga života [Adventures and Misadventures of My Life]*. The three editors of the aforementioned book are the Croatian scholars and historians Dinko Župan, Stanko Andrić and Damir Matanović. The text was published as it was originally intended by Mijat Stojanović himself, and the editing interventions reduced down to a minimum. For the purpose of a better understanding of the political and social context in which Mijat Stojanović lived, two editors, Dinko Župan and Damir Matanović, additionally provide critical reviews and introductory explanations which contribute to the bigger picture of the life of the author. The book contains a prologue and two introductory overviews followed by the text of the autobiography by Mijat Stojanović. The additional materials in the book include the facsimiles of the selected pages of the original manuscript, the references page listing all the works of Mijat Stojanović, the glossary of historical terms, the dictionary of foreign, less widely known or archaic words and expressions, abstract in English and the index of personal and geographic names.

Due to the fact that the text by Stojanović was published in its original version with very little interventions, the abovementioned Glossary and Dictionary allow significantly for its better understanding.

In the first introductory text titled “Stojanović’s Adventures and Misadventures” the author Dinko Župan analyses the life of Mijat Stojanović who from a below average student evolved into a highly esteemed educator. The author stresses self-education and life-long learning as the foundation for his success. He also emphasises that Stojanović’s outlook was very progressive and ahead of his time, because he encouraged education of women in various professions, not perceiving women solely as wives, mothers or housewives.

The author of the second introductory text is Damir Matanović and it is titled “The World of Mijat Stojanović’s Childhood: Village and City of the Brod-Krajina Regiment in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century”. Matanović paints a picture of the political and social processes during the nineteenth century which subsequently influenced Mijat Stojanović’s development as a young teacher, and eventually a mature educator.

The mid-section of the book is the autobiography of Mijat Stojanović, titled “Adventures and Misadventures of My Life”. It was created based on the family records and his own memories, and it is the combination of memoirs, diary and annual records.

The manuscript itself is divided into two parts. The first part contains four chapters which depict Stojanović's family from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. In the first chapter, "Snippets from my great grandfather's life," aside from family history, Stojanović provides very important data regarding the migrations of the population during the Turkish conquest, as well as their overall way of life. In the second chapter, "Snippets from my grandfather's life," he describes the family life at the beginning of the eighteenth century in Babina Greda, the lingering danger of Turks and the position and circumstances of widows and children in such surroundings. In the third chapter, "Snippets from my father's and mother's life," the descriptions refer to the family life in the first half of the nineteenth century which is intermingled with important historical events that influenced the everyday life of a family, such as the French Revolutionary Wars.

After showing the "snippets" from the lives of the three generations of his family (great grandfather, grandfather and parents), Stojanović describes the most important events and happenings from his own life, emphasising his work in education. This segment is titled according to the years of service from 1871 to 1881, including the paragraph titled "From my travelogue", listing all the places that he visited.

In much detail he describes his development within the education system, all the while particularly stressing the importance of one's own self-education, crucial in order to superbly perform the duties of a teacher. He further delivers many interesting ethnographic data about the life of the Slavonian village population in the nineteenth century. The descriptions mostly refer to everyday life, such as housing and food management, but he also describes folk rituals and mores, as well as boyhood games and pastimes. Included are also interesting depictions, often subjective and emotionally tinged, which discuss the relationships between parents and children, and specific rearing methods applied at the time.

All the information contained in this book is very valuable and can be used as a remarkable source for many scientists doing research on various historical topics, education, ethnology, psychology, etc. Therefore, this work needs to be acknowledged as an important contribution to the future interdisciplinary development in the humanities and social sciences.