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Summary

VISIT OF ALEKSANDAR AND DRAGA OBRENOVIĆ TO NIŠ IN 1902/1903

Immediately after his liberation, Prince Milan started the modernization of Niš and wanted to turn it into the "second capital". The National Assembly was often convened in Niš, the ministries performed their work from Niš, and when we add that the Obrenović royal family also spent several months during the year in Niš, the city can rightly take the name – the "second capital".

The visit of the royal couple in September, which lasted from November 20, 1902 to January 23, 1903, is especially noteworthy. First, it was planned to celebrate the slava of the Obrenović, St. Nikola, Christmas, New Year as well as 25 years of liberation of Niš. In addition, in the mentioned period, the visit of the Serbian royal couple to the Russian court was cancelled. The significance of this diplomatic move is best illustrated by the statement from the private letter of the Russian ambassador to Serbia, sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Count Lamzdorf: "It should not be emphasized that everything in this country depends on the king's trip to Russia."

Russia's ambassador to the Kingdom of Serbia, Cherikov, suggested to his ministry that it was necessary for Russia to send some high-ranking state officials to Serbia, thus confirming that King Alexander would continue to enjoy the emperor's support, even though it did not seem so in public. That plan was approved by the tsar, and personally the head of the Russian diplomacy, Vladimir Nikolajevic Lamzdorf, was given the task to go on a trip and visit Vienna, Niš and Sofia.

After the departure of Count Lamzdorf, the royal couple continued their activities in Niš. The ministerial sessions in Niš became more frequent, the royal couple sent charitable donations to the poor, and extensive preparations were ongoing for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the liberation of Niš. The anniversary of the liberation of Niš is December 29, 1902, according to the Julian calendar, or January 11, 1903, according to the Gregorian calendar. Until now, Niš has organized such celebrations, but this has been the most solemn so far.

King Alexander and Queen Draga spent almost a full month in Niš. Despite diplomatic and political efforts to resolve the accumulated problems on the external and internal level, King Alexander failed, and together with his wife he tragically died on the night between May 28 and 29, 1903. In that way, the Obrenović dynasty was terminated.

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