

CultureTalk Serbia Video Transcripts: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>
Serbia During the Yugoslav Wars

Serbian transcript:

Ана: Па овако, што се тиче саме Србије, с обзиром да сам ја 90-е године имала пет година, и да кажем да сам одрасла у том неком периоду, ајде, те деценије, овај... У Србији није било рата, у самој Србији; није се на територији Србије ратовало. Али је Србија била дуго година под санкцијама, потпуно изолована од света. Људи су... Сви питају како су у ствари људи опстајали, са једном марком дневно – тада су биле немачке марке – да су људи чак... И пет марака месечно су људи зарађивали. Цене су се мењале из дана у дан, не знам колико... Инфлација '93, '94... '93, хиперинфлација у Србији; цене су се за годину дана порасле, па нешто стотине милиона пута, за тих годину дана.

Значи сви су се сналазили, ишли колико су могли. Неки су путовали у иностранство; опет, то је све било, овај, незванично и...

И: Да, да. И, је ли дошло до неке миграције, то јест, емиграције из Србије у том периоду?

А: Велике, да. Па велики број људи је, посебно та нека интелектуална, интелектуални слој, људи који су имали факултете: доктори, доктори наука, они су сви избегли из Србије и нашли, ето, боље, бољу будућност, овај. И углавном немају намеру да се врате у Србију.

English translation:

Ana: Well, when it comes to Serbia, I was five years old in 1990 and I grew up during that period, during that decade, and... There was no war in Serbia; the war¹ took place outside of Serbia's territory. However, Serbia was under sanctions² for many years,

¹ The speaker uses the term *rat* (“war”) as a common term for the Yugoslav Wars (1991-1999). Yugoslav Wars include the War in Slovenia (1991), the Croatian War of Independence (1991-1995), the Bosnian War (1992-1995), and the Kosovo War (1998-1999).

² Serbia (then the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, together with Montenegro) was placed under economic and cultural sanctions, including a trade embargo, by the United Nations Security Council as early as May 15, 1992, due to their involvement in wars in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. These sanctions were partially lifted in early 1994, after the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) closed its borders towards the Serb para-states in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The sanctions were fully lifted after the ratification of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Paris, on December 14, 1995. However, after the escalation of war in Kosovo (Serbia's southern province with an ethnic Albanian population, also known as Kosovars) in 1997, the UN and the United States imposed a new set of sanctions on FRY. This second set of sanctions was lifted in the summer of 1999, after the signing of the Kumanovo Agreement, which brought peace to Kosovo. The speaker here refers to the first set of sanctions from 1992, which are generally considered to have been the harshest.

completely isolated from the world. People used to... Many still wonder how people managed to survive on only one Deutschmark a day - we used German Deutschmarks [as currency] during that period³ - and people even... People even made as little as five Deutschmarks a month. Prices changed daily; I can't remember to what extent... The inflation of 1993 or 1994 - a hyperinflation took place in Serbia in 1993 - was when prices multiplied several hundred million times within a year.

So, people somehow survived, did what they could. Some people left the country; however, that was all through unofficial channels...

Interviewer: Yes, yes. So was there a migration, I mean, an emigration from Serbia during that period?

A: There was a huge emigration, yes. A great number of people left, especially the intellectuals, the intellectual elite. People who had advanced degrees: doctors, Ph.Ds, they all emigrated from Serbia and found a sort of a better future. They mostly have no intention of coming back to Serbia.

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Sources: Sankcije SR Jugoslaviji (in Serbian). (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved September 21, 2012, from http://sr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A1%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BA%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B5_%D0%A1%D0%A0_%D0%88%D1%83%D0%B3%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B8

³ The Deutschmark (also known as the Deutsche Mark) was a semi-legal currency in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia during the economic sanctions, mostly due to the severe unreliability of the local currency, known as the Yugoslav Dinar. Deutschmarks were phased out of Serbia once the country began recovering from the sanctions in 1995. However, Bosnia and Herzegovina used them as legal currency until 1998, and Montenegro and Kosovo (which were both formerly parts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) as late as 2002. Deutschmarks were replaced as legal tender in Germany by the Euro in 2001. For reference, in 1993, 1 DM was worth approximately 0.602 USD.

Sources: Marcuse, Harold. "Historical Dollar-to-Marks Currency Conversion Page." *UCSB Department of History*. Retrieved September 21, 2012, from <http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/projects/currency.htm>