

PROFESSOR DR. BRANIMIR JANKOVIĆ
THE FIRST RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ
(1920 - 1990)

Branimir Janković was born in Valjevo in 1920. He graduated from the Faculty of Law in Belgrade in 1947. He received the Ph. D. degree from the same Faculty in 1955, the thesis of his doctoral dissertation being "The Unanimity Principle in International Law". He has commenced his university career in Sarajevo as a teaching assistant and then was promoted to an assistant professor and professor of International Public Law with History of Diplomacy. It was in 1962 that he was elected a professor of the Faculty of Law and Economics of the University of Niš. From 1970 he had been a full professor of the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade where he retired on 1 October, 1985.

The expert and scientific activities of Professor Branimir Janković were exceptionally fertile as well. He was teaching International Public Law and Diplomacy in numerous universities and academic institutions. From 1967 he continuously held courses for M.A. and Ph. D candidates and young teachers in the State University of Florida in Tallahassee. He taught in the basic and postgraduate studies in the field of rights of man, international law and theory of law in the universities and academies of sciences in France, Germany, the United States, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Egypt, Lybia, Greece, India, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.

Professor Janković participated in the work of many international meetings in the country and abroad. He presided over a seminar entitled "University Today" in Dubrovnik and a seminar of UNESCO on education in human environment. Particularly rich was his engagement in the organs and bodies of the United Nations in the capacity of the Yugoslav representative and expert for international law and law of man. As a member of the Yugoslav delegation he participated in the sessions of the United Nations General Assembly of UNESCO and the European Ministerial Conference of this Organization and the Teheran Conference of the United Nations on the Rights of Man. In addition, he was elected in the personal capacity for the member of the UN Commission for the Rights of Man and Sub-Committee Against Discrimination and Protection of the Rights of Minorities. As a member, vice-president and president of the Special Group of Law Experts of the Commission for the Rights of Man he participated in many special missions of the United Nations in the countries of Asia and Africa.

In parallel with the pedagogical and scientific career Professor Janković has developed wide social activities. He performed a function of the vice-rector of the University of Belgrade from 1960 to 1965. During his office he was engaged in establishing new faculties in Niš and Kragujevac as well as the University of Niš. He has widened the international connections of the University of Belgrade bringing it into the Permanent Conference of Rectors and Vice-Rectors. He was the first rector of the University of Niš over the period from 1965 to 1969 and the rector of the Community of Universities of Yugoslavia. At the Faculty for Political Sciences in Belgrade he was a director of the Centre for International Studies until he went into retirement.

Professor Janković has left a wealth of scientific opus behind himself. Among his works particularly distinguished are textbooks and monographs devoted to the fundamental questions of international law, international relations and diplomacy. He has written one of the first Yugoslav post-war era textbook on International Public Law which has been published for several times (the last one in 1998). This textbook has been published in English (Public International Law, New York, 1984) and is still used as a compulsory literature in certain American universities. Also written by Professor Janković was the first textbook on diplomacy in Yugoslavia (Diplomacy – Contemporary System, Belgrade 1988), which, in contrast to other foreign works, does not confine itself to the diplomatic law and bilateral diplomacy, but contains a synthesis of theoretical views and the author's own experience in the field of multilateral diplomacy. Also, he has published monographs, books on international relations and international law (Sarajevo, 1964), international regulating on the prohibition of pollution of international rivers (Belgrade, 1976) and the theory and reality in the science of international relations (Belgrade, 1977). A particular field of his research activities are contributions on the development of international relations in the Balkans collected in a book entitled "The Balkans in International Relations", Belgrade, 1988). A circumstance that simultaneously with the edition in Serbian, the monograph in English (London - New York, 1988) was published, removes the barriers of the language nature that are on the way of wider using the results of the Yugoslav science abroad.

In addition, Professor Janković has published a great number of studies and papers in the most renowned reviews in Yugoslavia, France, Germany, the United States, Poland, Holland, Greece and Egypt. They are devoted to the actual events in the sphere of international law and international relations, such as the judgements of the International Court of Justice in some disputes, colonial federalism, the concepts of neutrality and non-alignment, the problems of political prisoners and slavery, apartheid and genocide or rights of man and their international protection. Added to them should be contributions concerning the development of the Serbian doctrine of the international law from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century.

Numerous generations of students will remember Professor Janković as an excellent pedagogue and exceptional orator who, easily and by his personal charm, has unselfishly transferred his wealth of knowledge. He knew how to absorb the attention of audience, to make the most complex questions of international law interesting and comprehensible, exposing cases from his perennial career in the United Nations. He had understanding for dilemmas and problems of postgraduate students encouraging them to persevere in the first, the most difficult steps in the science. Many M.A. and Ph. D. candidates in the faculties all over Yugoslavia and abroad will always remember with great pleasure the valuable advices and fertile co-operation they have had with him.

Professor Braminir Janković died on 26 September, 1990, in Belgrade. The works he has left behind have enriched the Yugoslav science of international law and international relations and contributed to its affirmation on a worldwide scale. As the first rector and professor of international law he has for ever indebted the University of Niš and the Faculty of Law in Niš. We, his students, admirers and friends, have nothing, in these times of quick changes and oblivion, but to harbour fond memories of the personality and work of Professor Janković.

Zoran Radivojević