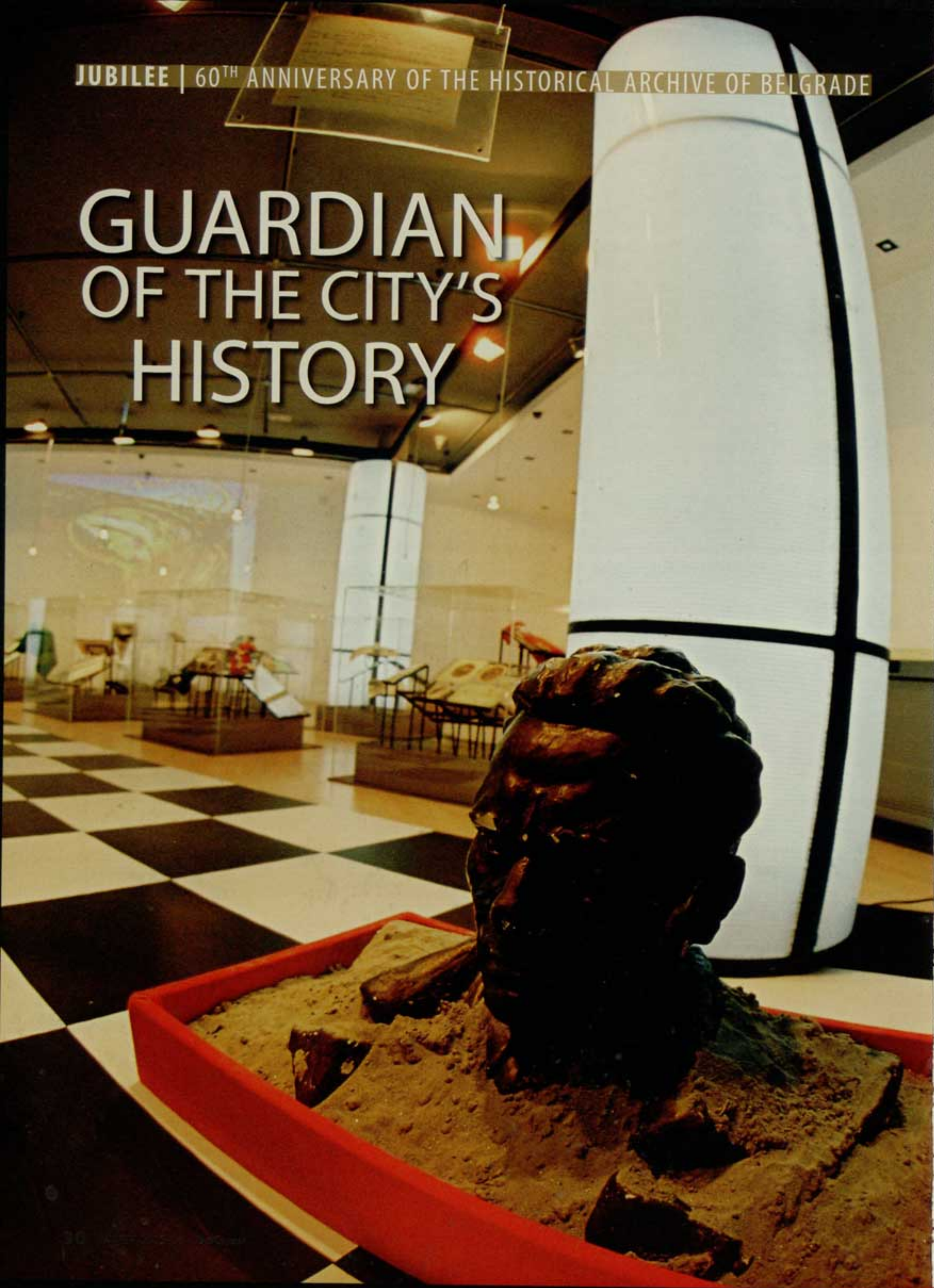


GUARDIAN OF THE CITY'S HISTORY



The Historical Archive of Belgrade, one of the most modern archives in the country, played a significant role in the development of archiving in Serbia. It spans many organizations in the city - cultural, commercial, educational - in all 16 of Belgrade's municipalities. Measured by kilometers of documents, only the Archive of Serbia and Montenegro surpass it.



The "people's kitchen" on Karadordeva Street

The Historical Archive of Belgrade was established, above all, to protect and preserve extremely important material from the Zemun Magistrate dating back to the 18th century. Immediately following the end of World War Two, in September 1945, the city's Archive was founded by decree with the purpose of collecting original documents from social and private legacies connected with the development of Belgrade and Zemun. At the beginning, the Archive was part of the City Library, only to become a separate section in 1947, and since 1973 it has been located in a building specially built for this purpose, in Palmiro Togliatti Street.

To Live in Belgrade

The archive, which enjoys the status of a cultural institution of special social importance, in the scope of its activities acts as custodian and protects archival material previously housed in the registers' offices for classification, processing, use and publication.

About 2,700 record groups hold nearly thirteen kilometers of documents that span from the 16th century onwards (one metre of archival material contains about seven thousand documents). The archive is one befitting a capital as it represents and testifies to the history of a country, connected to its capital, and which includes the political, cultural and commercial history of Serbia.

The Archive's director, Dr. Branka Prpa, points out that until recently the general attitude towards the

secular cultural wealth housed in the Archive was one of total indifference, despite its status of an institution housing cultural wealth of the highest or first-class importance. Four years ago, when she was appointed as the Archive's director, Ms. Prpa

discovered that this lack of concern resulted in the literal decay of 60 per cent of the material in the 19th century record group.

The files were in an alarming state and they are currently being microfilmed in order to be



A COSMOPOLITAN BELGRADE

The Historical Archive's oldest document about Belgrade dates from the 16th century and is a dialogue led between an Ottoman and a Christian about the military-political situation in the Turkish Empire. In a symbolic sense, it presents the foundation of a cosmopolitan Belgrade in whose history many cultures and religions have intersected, and which is characterised by a rich plurality that makes it different and unique in comparison to other capitals in Europe.

In the first half of the 19th century Belgrade had a population of about 12,000, which resided in three dominant communities: Turks, Serbs and Jews. Today it is a city with a population of nearly two million, indicating how rapidly it has grown. Apart from population, a true parameter of a town's development is its literacy rate. In the first half of the 20th century Belgrade had an illiteracy rate of only four percent. Hence, it is a city that has not only developed through building, expansion and population growth, but also in harmony with the modern idea of development according to which literacy is a key indicator of the process of modernisation. During that period, the percentage of illiteracy in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians amounted to about 60 per cent, while in Belgrade it was only four percent.



preserved, and are being conserved and protected against damage from fungi. The problem is how effective this method will prove to be, given that some four million documents must be treated. According to our calculations, treatment for preservation would require 150 years just for this one record group.

Having finally realised that the disappearance of cultural legacy will lead to the disappearance of history, the Belgrade City Assembly joined us in our efforts to preserve these records of enormous cultural value, and has thereby participated in one of the biggest enterprises undertaken in the history of Serbian archiving. Currently, we are microfilming records from the 19th century. We are successively publishing these documents in an edition entitled *To Live in Belgrade*. We've published three books so far, which are sure to profoundly change the perception of both Belgrade and Serbia's history. It is also a great enterprise in terms of the required financial resources and the volume of work that is scheduled to last five years, says Ms. Prpa.

The Historical Archive of Belgrade is not the only place for the study of Serbian history. The availability of files also enables people to practice their civic rights. This institution annually receives over eight thousand applications for the use of its files. Aside from researchers who have a professional approach to history and the use of records for scientific purposes, citizens also come to research the genealogies of their families or to obtain design plans. The Archive also houses the records of all elementary and secondary schools in Belgrade, files on all citizens between the two world wars and many other documents.

Man in Time

When Ms. Branka Prpa left her job at the Institute for Contemporary History of Serbia to come to the Historical Archive of Belgrade, many considered this choice rather unwise because she was leaving an academic career to become a state official i.e. the director of the Archive.

Knowledge of history is very complex and requires a lot of work with archival documents. I believe that Serbian historiography cannot develop with our archives in bad condition, because then they are of no help to historians. If our archive files are not in good condition, the material deteriorates quickly and then the question becomes what historiography one studies. Having all this in mind, when I came to the Archive as a historian and professional, I had a clear vision what an archive should be in order to fulfill its function and be useful for future generations and historical science in general. After four years I hope I have



succeeded in implementing what I had visualised when appointed to this post.

The extent of our accomplishments over the past four years can be seen in the publication printed for the 60th anniversary of the Archive. The exhibition "Man in Time" accompanied this special event.

"Those who have bequeathed their documents to the Historical Archive of Belgrade were presented at the exhibition. Our intention was not only to show our records but to present these important people from Belgrade and to convey the message

that we all, as individuals, participate in making history. Every person is a historical fact and we want to show the degree to which the Historical Archive of Belgrade has become close to its citizens. They have to understand that what they keep in their closets is a part of history. Just as those who lived a hundred years ago left us documents that allow us to learn more about Serbia and Belgrade from that era, we should also think about what knowledge we will leave to future generations. A 60-year period is very short compared to other

European institutions, but for a country marked by discontinuity and short-lived institutions, I think we've made a good foundation for the Historical Archive of Belgrade, which must only serve the function of knowledge and can last for centuries, said Ms. Prpa.

■ SANJA SAVIĆ
photographs: BRANKO JOVANOVIĆ
THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVE OF BELGRADE

The view of the former Belgrade Fair on the left bank of the Sava, from 1937.





JUBILEJI | 60 GODINA ISTORIJSKOG ARHIVA BEOGRADA

ČUVAR ISTORIJE

Povod za osnivanje Istorijskog arhiva Beograda bio je, pre svega, da se zaštiti i sačuva izuzetno značajna građa Zemunskog magistrata, nastala još u 18. veku. Zbog toga je, odmah po završetku Drugog svetskog rata septembra 1945. godine, doneta Odluka da se osnuje *Gradski arhiv* sa zadatkom da prikuplja originalne dokumente društvene i privatne zaostavštine čiji je rad vezan za razvoj Beograda i Zemuna. U početku Arhiv je bio u sastavu Gradske biblioteke da bi se 1947. godine odvojio i nastavio da deluje kao samostalna institucija. Sadašnji naziv dobio je 1958. godine, a od 1973. godine nalazi se u zgradi koja je namenski građena za njega u ulici Palmira Toljatića 1.

ŽIVETI U BEOGRADU

Kao ustanova kulture od posebnog društvenog značaja, u okviru svoje delatnosti Arhiv obavlja zaštitu arhivske građe u registraturama kao i njeno preuzimanje, sređivanje, obradu, korišćenje i publikovanje. Oko 2.700 fondova čuva gotovo trinaest

Jedan od najmodernijih arhiva u zemlji, Istorijski arhiv Beograda, odigrao je značajnu ulogu u razvoju arhivske službe Srbije. On pokriva sve institucije na teritoriji grada: kulturne, privredne, prosvetne i druge, u svih 16 beogradskih opština, i može se reći da je po kilometrima dokumenata od njega veći samo Arhiv Srbije i Crne Gore.

kilometara dokumenata koji pokrivaju period od 16. veka naovamo (u jedan metar arhivske građe stane oko sedam hiljada dokumenata). Reč je o pravom prestoničkom arhivu koji čuva dokumenta bez kojih nema niti istorije zemlje pošto je reč o dokumentima vezanim za istoriju prestonice u kojoj se prelamaju svi najvažniji događaji iz istorije Srbije kako u političkom tako i u kulturnom, ekonomskom i svakom drugom pogledu.

Kako ističe direktor Arhiva dr Branka Prpa, dokora je vladala totalna nebriga prema laičkim kulturnim dobrima koje čuva Arhiv, iako imaju status kulturnog dobra nulte kategorije ili prvog reda. To je dovelo do toga da je, kada je pre četiri godine preuzela dužnost, 60 posto građe u fondu vezanom za 19. vek bilo bukvalno u stanju raspadanja.

- Taj fond je bio u katastrofalnom stanju i on se sada mikrofilmuje kako bi se sačuvala i konzervatorskim postupkom izlečio od gljivičnog oboljenja, mada je pitanje koliko će to biti moguće, s obzirom da je reč o četiri miliona dokumenata. Izračunali smo da bi našem konzervatoru samo

za taj fond trebalo 150 godina života. Konačno shvatajući da kada jedno kulturno dobro nestane sa njim nestaje i istorija, na istom zadatku sa nama se našla i Skupština grada Beograda koja, spašavajući ovaj fond koji je u statusu kulturnog dobra od izuzetnog značaja, učestvuje u jednom od najvećih poduhvata u istoriji srpske arhivistike. Sada mikrofilmujemo fond vezan za 19. vek. Ta dokumenta sukcesivno objavljujemo u knjigama iz edicije *Živeti u Beogradu*. Do sada smo izdali tri knjige čija će građa uveliko promeniti percepciju Beograda i Srbije uopšte. Reč je o velikom poduhvatu i u finansijskom smislu i u pogledu obima rada koji treba da traje pet godina - ističe gospođa Prpa.

Istorijski arhiv Beograda nije samo mesto gde možete da istražujete srpsku istoriju, već, zahvaljujući uvidu u njegovu građu nudi mogućnost da ostvarite mnoga svoja građanska prava. Godišnje ta institucija dobije više od osam hiljada zahteva za korišćenje njenih dokumenata po raznim osnovama. Pored istraživača koji se profesionalno bave istorijom i u naučne svrhe koriste ono što Arhiv čuva, u njega dolaze građani koji vole da istražuju genealogije svojih porodica ili oni kojima je potrebna projektna dokumentacija zgrada. U Arhivu se čuvaju i podaci o svim osnovnim i srednjih školama u Beogradu, kartoni žitelja grada između dva rata i još mnogo toga.

ČOVEK U VREMENU

Prelazak gospođe Branke Prpe iz Instituta za savremenu istoriju Srbije u Istorijski arhiv Beograda mnogi su smatrali besmislenim jer je prekinula naučnu karijeru da bi bila državni činovnik, odnosno direktor Arhiva.

- Znanje iz istorije je jako komplikovano i zahteva puno rada na dokumentima u arhivima. Smatram da srpska istoriografija ne može da se razvija ako su nam arhivi u lošem stanju jer



Branka Prpa, Director of the Archive of Belgrade.



Kafana Albania at the intersection of Kolarčeva Street and Knez Mihailova. Стари и нови Београд зими. Le vieux et le nouveau Belgrade pendant l'hiver.

takvi ne mogu da servisiraju potrebe istoričara. Ako nemate sredene arhivske fondove i arhivska građa propada velikom brzinom, onda je pitanje kojom istoriografijom se bavite. Imajući sve ovo u vidu, kada sam došla u Arhiv, kao istoričar i profesionalac imala sam jasnu viziju kakav arhiv treba da bude da bi obavljao svoju funkciju i da bi bio od koristi budućim generacijama i istorijskoj nauci uopšte. Posle četiri godine nadam se da sam, to što sam zamislila, uspela i da realizujem.

Koliko je urađeno u te četiri godine svedoči i publikacija koja je objavljena povodom obeležavanja 60 godina postojanja Arhiva, a jubilej je obeležen i otvaranjem izložbe *Čovek u vremenu*.

- Na izložbi su predstavljeni legatori koji su svoja dokumenta poklonili Istorijskom arhivu Beograda. Namera nam je bila, ne da pokazujemo svoje fondove, već da ističući značajne ljude Beograda kažemo da smo svi mi pojedinačno tvorci istorije. Svaki čovek je istorijska činjenica i mi želimo da pokažemo do koje mere je Istorijski arhiv Beograda postao blizak građanima Beograda. Oni treba da shvate da je ono što čuvaju u svojim ormanima deo istorije. Kao što su nam oni koji su živeli pre sto godina ostavili dokumenta zahvaljujući kojima smo naučili o Srbiji i Beogradu iz tog perioda, mi moramo u ovom vremenu da mislimo o tome da ostavljamo budućim generacijama neko znanje. Period od 60 godina je jako kratak kada pogledate neke druge evropske institucije, ali u zemlji u kojoj je diskontinuitet karakteristika i gde institucije ne traju dugo, mislim da smo stvorili dobre temelje na kojima Istorijski arhiv Beograda, koji jeste i koji mora da bude jedino u funkciji znanja, može da traje vekovima, zaključila je gospođa Prpa.

■ SANJA SAVIĆ

fotografije: BRANKO JOVANOVIĆ
I ISTORIJSKI ARHIV BEOGRADA

KOSMOPOLITSKI BEOGRAD

Najstariji dokument o Beogradu koji se čuva u Istorijskom arhivu Beograda potiče iz 16. veka. Reč je o dijalogu Osmanlije i Hrišćanina o vojno-političkoj situaciji u turskom carstvu. U simboličnom smislu on predstavlja temelj jednog kosmopolitskog Beograda u čijoj su se istoriji susretale mnoge kulture i religije i koji ima bogatstvo pluraliteta što ga čini drugačijim i posebnim u odnosu na druge prestoničke gradove Evrope.

U prvoj polovini 19. veka Beograd je imao oko 12.000 stanovnika među kojima su tri dominantne zajednice: Turci, Srbi i Jevreji. Danas je to grad sa gotovo dva miliona stanovnika što ukazuje na njegov veoma brz razvitak. Osim ovoga, faktički parametar koji ukazuje na to na koji način se jedan grad razvija jeste i pismenost, a u prvoj polovini 20. veka Beograd ima svega četiri posto nepismenog stanovništva. Dakle, to je grad koji nije samo napredovao u smislu izgradnje, širenja, naseljavanja, nego uopšte u ideji modernizacije, jer je pismenost jedan od ključnih pokazatelja modernizacijskog procesa. U to vreme u Kraljevini SHS Srbija ima oko 65 posto nepismenog stanovništva, a u Beogradu samo četiri.

