

Historical Context

By Andjela Bolta and Ajda Vodlan

Resistance Movements in Yugoslavia during WW II

Before WW II, Yugoslavia used to be a monarchy. King Petar II Karadjordjevic was still a child when WW II started. Instead of him, government Cvetkovic-Macek ruled Yugoslavia. Most of the neighbouring countries had already joined the [Tripartite Pact](#) [Link to Wikipedia], a military agreement between Germany, Italy and Japan. The Yugoslavian government needed to make a very tough decision, and eventually they joined the Tripartite Pact. They said that the reason why they did it was that the Yugoslavian army could not successfully fight against the Tripartite Pact.

On March, 27th, 1941, a few days after the Yugoslavian government signed the pact, major protest occurred on the streets of Belgrade. The protests were led by the communist party that was led by Josip Broz Tito. The main slogan of the protest was: "Better war than a pact, better grave than a slave!" After 11 days, Germany, assisted by Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania occupied Yugoslavia. As a result of the occupation, two main resistance movements emerged. One was called "Chetniks" and fought in the name of the Yugoslavian Crown and King. The other was called "Partisans", and they were led by communists with Josip Broz Tito as their leader.

Another significant threat for Yugoslavia was Ustaša, the army of a Croatian fascist organization. Over 70 000 children were killed in their camps. Partisans and Chetniks fought against Ustaše, but they did not cooperate. On the contrary, they fought against each other. They fought against each other, because they both wanted to rule Yugoslavia after the war.