

**University of Toronto Archives  
and Records Management Services**



**Sofija Škorić fonds**  
B2021-0012

Chris Holmes, 2024

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## Contents

<b>Biographical note</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Scope and content</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Series 1: Correspondence</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Series 2: Academic and literary activities</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Series 3: University of Toronto</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Series 4: Community organizations (Association of Serbian Women and others)</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Series 5: Serbian Heritage Academy</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Series 6: Collected Serbian heritage materials</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Series 7: Photographs</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Series 1: Correspondence .....	10
Series 2: Academic and literary activities.....	10
Series 3: University of Toronto .....	11
Series 4: Community organizations (Association of Serbian Women and others) .....	12
Series 5: Serbian Heritage Academy .....	12
Series 7: Photographs .....	13

## Biographical note

Sofija Škorić (1937-2022) was a community organizer, librarian, and former Head of the Petro Jacyk Resource Centre at the University of Toronto. She served as Librarian Emerita following her retirement from the institution where she had worked from 1968 to 2002. Škorić was a prominent member of Canada's Serbian community fighting for the recognition of rights, working to promote connections to Serbia, and staunchly defending the nation's reputation during the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. She was a founding member of the Serbian Heritage Academy (Srpska Nacionalna Akademija), a cultural organization designed around the Yugoslav- and later Serbian-Canadian population. In addition, she founded and served as an executive member of multiple other Serbian-Canadian groups and organizations.

Škorić began her career at UofT as a reference librarian working with Slavic materials after completing a MA at McMaster University in Hamilton. While at UofT, Škorić hosted events and conferences related to the history, culture, literature, and politics of Serbia. This included the 1981 symposium, *Democracy and Parliamentarism: The 100th Anniversary of the Serbian Radical Party 1881-1981*, where she worked with Gleb Zekulin, Head of the Munk School's Centre for Eastern European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies. Škorić's dedication to hosting such events connected the University with scholars from across the United States and Europe.

One aspect of Škorić's work both at the University and beyond focused on promoting a connection to Serbian literature among the Serbian community in Canada and introducing it to an English-speaking audience. She translated key works of Serbian literature, including works by the Serbian poet laureate Matija Bećković, her close friend and confidant, and edited numerous works by other well-known Serbian authors.

Škorić curated and toured "Thank you Canadians! Canadian Medical Missions in Serbia 1914–1918," an exhibition to commemorate and thank the over six hundred Canadian medical professionals who travelled to Serbia during the First World War to provide care to soldiers and civilians. The exhibit was shown in Canada, the United States, and Serbia, which led to the installation of a permanent plaque at the Museum of Serbian Medicine in Belgrade to commemorate the medical and humanitarian service of those Canadians.

Škorić's commitment to the Serbian community led to her taking an active role in the founding of numerous diaspora and community groups in Canada and the United States. In 1988, she co-founded the Society of Serbian-Canadian Friendship (now the Serbian Association for Canadian Studies). That same year, she also co-founded the North American Society of Serbian Studies and was this group's president from 1988 to

1990. From 1991, she served as vice president of the Serbian Unity Congress until its formal closure. In 1996, she founded the publishing house Serbian Literary Company, and in 2003, she founded the lobby organization, Together for Serbia, in Belgrade. The latter organization lobbied for the rights of Serbs abroad, ultimately obtaining the right for the diaspora to vote in Serbia. In addition to these, Škorić was a passionate advocate for the rights of the women and was a founding member and vice-president of the Serbian Women's Association in Canada. In 1993, with the organization's assistance, she led a team of prominent Canadian women to Serbia to highlight the experiences of Serbian women during the Yugoslav War.

Sofija Škorić remained actively involved in multiple organizations until the end of her life. She died in Toronto in the summer of 2022.

## Scope and content

[195-] – [201-]

2.53m of textual records

0.07m of photographic records, 1 oversized

2 sound recordings

72 digital files (3 GB)

The Sofija Škorić fonds consists of records documenting the professional and personal life of Sofija Škorić. The fonds contains material from the 1970s to the 2010s and offers key insights into Škorić's work with Canada's Serbian diaspora community, the Serbian literary community, and her work at the University of Toronto.

**Arrangement:** Due to the intersecting nature of Škorić's personal, professional, and community-related activities, there is significant overlap across the fonds researchers are advised to consult material across all of the series when possible.

**Access:** The following files have been closed in order to protect the privacy of third-parties:

- B2021-0012/004(18) - /005(04) – closed until 2035
- B2021-0012\_002S – 008S

All other files are open.

### Boxes:

**Textual:** B2021-0012/001 - /007

**Photographic:** B2021-0012/001P - /002P

**Sound:** B2021-0012/001S – 008S

**Digital:** B2021-0012\_df001 – df002

**Languages:** English, Serbian

## Series 1: Correspondence

[1980-] – [201-]

0.2m of textual records

Series includes correspondence representing all aspects of Škorić's life and work, including personal and professional exchanges with colleagues, family, and friends both in North America and Europe. Given the degree to which the material covers multiple aspects of Škorić's activities, this series also includes correspondence with various members of both the executive board and membership of the Serbian heritage Academy's (SHA) Canadian and American factions. Similarly, material covers exchanges with the Serbian Academy of Arts & Sciences (SANU).

Please see file listing for additional details.

**Arrangement:** Material is arranged in chronological order.

**Access:** Open

**Boxes:** B2021-0012/001(01) – (11)

## Series 2: Academic and literary activities

[195-] – [ca. 2002]

0.27m of textual records

2 sound recordings

2 digital files (500 kB; .doc)

Series includes Škorić's professional projects connected to her work as a librarian, and more generally, as a researcher and author. These activities span from her CIDA-funded work consulting on library modernization projects to her interview of Milovan Djilas in 1988. While most projects represented in this series were developed independent of the many Serbian-Canadian organizations for which she volunteered and worked, there exists some overlap given her many interests and roles. One example is research material related to her 1987 book, *Serbs in Ontario*, co-authored with George Vid Tomashevich and published by the Serbian Heritage Academy. Projects are represented through personal and professional correspondence, handwritten notes, travel documentation, recordings, and publication drafts.

Please see file listing for additional details.

**Arrangement:** Files are arranged chronologically.

**Access:** Open

**Boxes:** B2021-0012/001(12) - /002(06)  
B2021-0012/00S1

**Digital folder:** B2021-0012\_df001

### **Series 3: University of Toronto**

1966 – 2015

0.3m of textual records

Series consists of material related to Škorić's positions at the University of Toronto. The majority of files document Škorić's curatorial project, *Thank you, Canadians!*, an exhibit commemorating the service of Canadian medical workers in Serbia during World War I. *Thank you, Canadians!* was praised for its recognition of Canadian-Serbian relations and has been memorialized with plaques in Canada and Serbia. Also included is documentation of the 1981 conference with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, the Munk School's Centre for Eastern European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies (CERES), *Democracy and Parliamentarism: The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Serbian Radical Party 1881-1981*

Overall, material spans textual and photographic material from early in of Škorić's career at the University of Toronto Libraries to her retirement in 2002. Files contains examples of cataloguing, reference, and bibliographic work in the library, in addition to library correspondence. Škorić's early activism and community work was achieved through usage of University of Toronto facilities and leveraging her professional connections. Materials included contain examples of events held at UofT and contact with colleagues.

Please see file listing for additional details.

**Arrangement:** Files are arranged chronologically.

**Access:** Open

**Boxes:** B2021-0012/002(07) - /002(19)

#### **Series 4: Community organizations (Association of Serbian Women and others)**

1978 - 2001

0.07m of textual records

Series consists of documentation of Škorić's involvement in multiple national and international organizations, such as the Serbian Women's Organization, North American Society of Serbian Studies, Serbian Unity Congress, the publishing house, the Serbian Literary Company. Records predominantly document the Association of Serbian Women (ASW) and include correspondence, meeting minutes, presentation notes, and planning documents for events, including a visit from Sanda Raskovic, former Serbian politician. Records also cover Škorić's interest in Serbian literary and cultural production both in Serbia and North America, linguistics papers, and translations of Serbian works.

Please see file listing for additional details.

**Arrangement:** Files are loosely arranged by organization and subject.

**Access:** Open

**Boxes:** B2021-0012/002(20) - /003(06)

#### **Series 5: Serbian Heritage Academy**

[198-] – [201-]

1.56m of textual records

9 digital audio files (3 GB; .wav and .mp3)

Series documents Škorić's roles with the Serbian Heritage Academy over three decades. It contains organizational records of the executive committee: financial records, minutes, and correspondence; membership information, buildings and renovation projects (2381 Dundas St. W), events, exhibits, and publication information. Multiple projects and initiatives are represented, included Škorić's Nikola Pašić research, which is also documented in Series 2.

Škorić's commitment to collaboration and maintaining contact with many prominent Serbian individuals and communities contributed to the SHA's ability to establish itself as a serious Serbian cultural establishment. Correspondence in this series includes communication with Nicholas Pašić, Alex N. Dragnich, George Vid Tomashevich (Tomašević), Matija Bećković, Milovan Djilas, UofT Professors Emeriti Gleb Žekulin and Milan Surdučki, and members of the *Matica Srpska*.



Please see file listing for additional details.

**Arrangement:** Files are arranged loosely by activity.

**Access:** All files are open with the exception of the following records, which are closed to protect the privacy of third-parties:

- B2021-0012/004(18) - /005(04) – closed until 2035
- B2021-0012\_002S – 008S

**Boxes:** B2021-0012/003(07) - /006(24)

**Digital audio:** B2021-0012\_002S – 008S

## Series 6: Collected Serbian heritage materials

[198-] – [200-]

0.13m of textual records

61 digital files (2 MB)

Series contains a variety of documentation and media related to the Serbian-Canadian community and Serbia and Yugoslavia, including newspaper and journal articles, promotional material, photographs of Serbian community events in Toronto, Windsor, and other areas of Ontario. Contains material that highlights the achievements of the SHA and members of the Serbian-Canadian community, as well as material for events relevant to the community or to Serbia more broadly. Material also includes a wide range of academic and journalistic materials documenting the Yugoslav Wars, including NATO's bombing of Serbia and articles highlighting the struggle faced by Serbians, particularly Serbian women.

Digital files consists of a WordPerfect digital manuscript, ca. 1994-1995, *History of the Serbs in Croatia and Slavonia (1848-1914)* by Vasilije Krestić; translated by Margot and Boško Milosavljević. Files were originally on two 3.5 inch floppy disks.

**Access:** Open

**Box:** B2021-0012/007

**Digital folder:** B2021-0012\_df002

## Series 7: Photographs

1961 – [201-]

0.07m of photographic records, 1 oversized print

Series consists of photographs related to various aspects of Sofija Škorić's work. Included are portraits, images documenting events (both at UofT and SHA), and images of the Serbian community used for her research and writing.

Please see file listing for additional details.

**Arrangement:** Files are arranged loosely by activity and subject.

**Access:** Open

**Boxes:** B2021-0012/001P - /002P

## Appendix

### Series 1: Correspondence

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/001(01)-(04c)	Personal correspondence	[198-]
B2021-0012/001(05)-(08)	Personal correspondence	[199-]
B2021-0012/001(09)	Personal correspondence	[200-]
B2021-0012/001(10)	Personal correspondence	[201-]
B2021-0012/001(11)	Personal correspondence	n.d.

### Series 2: Academic and literary activities

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/001(12)	Serbian community [research for "Serbs in Ontario"?, photographs removed, see B2021-0012/001P(07)]	[195-] – [199-]
B2021-0012/001(13)	Nikola Pašić	1971 - 1973
B2021-0012/001(14)	Notes	[198-?]
B2021-0012/001(15)- (16)	Publishing [2 files]	1982 – 1997
B2021-0012/001(17)	Calendar	1987- 1988
B2021-0012/001S	Interview of Milovan Djilas by Škorić	1988
B2021-0012/001(18a)	Notes [research "Serbs in Ontario"?)	[199-?]
B2021-0012/001(18b)	"Serbs in Ontario"	[199-?]
B2021-0012/001(19)	Wartime activism, Kosovo?	[199-] – [200-]
B2021-0012/001(20)	Serbian Unity Congress	1992

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/002(01)-(02)	Matica and diaspora [2 files]	[1999?] – [200-]
B2021-0012/002(03)	Translation and literary work	[200-?]
B2021-0012/002(04)	Work with the Parliamentary Library of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	[200-]
B2021-0012/002(05)	International libraries, including "Report – Montenegro Parliamentary Library"	2001 - 2002
B2021-0012/002(06)	Parliamentary Library of Yugoslavia	[ca. 2002]
B2021-0012_df001	Stress in the Vortex of Global Anomie by Dushan R. Kosovich, edited by Sofija Škorić – Serbian Literary Company [digital manuscript – Microsoft Word]	2000

### Series 3: University of Toronto

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/002(07)	Bibliography UTL	1966 - 1998
B2021-0012/002(08)	Exhibit documentation, "Thank you, Canadians"	[198-] – [199-]
B2021-0012/002(09)	Symposium, "Democracy and Parliamentarism, the 100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Serbian Radical Party 1881 – 1981," The Centre for Russian and East European Studies, UofT, and The Hoover Institution on War, revolution and Peace	1981 – 1982
B2021-0012/002(10)	Symposium, "Democracy and Parliamentarism, the 100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Serbian Radical Party 1881 – 1981"	1981 – 1982
B2021-0012/002(11)	Petro Jacyk Resource Centre	1983, 2015
B2021-0012/002(12)	Correspondence, "Thank you, Canadians"	1984, 2015
B2021-0012/002(13)	Grant application, "Thank you, Canadians" and research leave documentation	1988
B2021-0012/002(14)	Draft exhibition text, "Thank you, Canadians"	[ca. 1988]
B2021-0012/002(15) – (16)	"Thank you, Canadians" publicity and correspondence [2 files]	[ca. 1988]
B2021-0012/002(17)	North American Society for Serbian Studies	1989 – 1990
B2021-0012/002(18)	Travel documentation	1990, 1995
B2021-0012/002(19)	Draft texts re: Serbian diaspora	[ca. 2008] – [ca. 2011]

#### Series 4: Community organizations (Association of Serbian Women and others)

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/002(20)	Registration correspondence, Association of Serbian Women	1993
B2021-0012/002(21)	By-laws and financial statements, Association of Serbian Women	1993
B2021-0012/002(22)	Women's trip to Serbia coordinated by the SHA	1993
B2021-0012/002(23)	ASW minutes	1993 - 1994
B2021-0012/002(24)	ASW minutes and memoranda	1993 - 1994
B2021-0012/003(01)	"Serbian Women Victims of War" talk, Association of Serbian Women, includes women's trip to Serbia	1994
B2021-0012/003(02)-(03)	Association of Serbian Women [2 files]	1994
B2021-0012/003(04)	Associations [NASSSS / CAS / AASSS]	1978 - 1999
B2021-0012/003(05)	Javan Dučić	1983 - 1990
B2021-0012/003(06)	Desanka Maksimović Group	1994 - 1998
B2021-0012/003(07)	Danku Popović / Serbian Literary Community	1998 - 2001

#### Series 5: Serbian Heritage Academy

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/003(08) - /004(03a)	SHA correspondence and assorted documentation	[198-] - [199-]
B2021-0012/004(03b)	SHA Letters Patent	1981
B2021-0012/004(04) - (14)	SHA administration, including policies, executive and financials	[198-] - [201-]
B2021-0012/004(15) - (17)	SHA history	[198-]
B2021-0012/004(18) - /005(04)	SHA membership [RESTRICTED]	[198-] - [201-]
B2021-0012/005(05) - (07)	Meeting minutes and events	[198-] - [201-]

#### SHA special projects and events

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/005(08) - /006(02)	Nicola Pašić project [collected material, transcripts and notes]	[198-] - [199-]
B2021-0012/006(03) - (04)	Serbian Artists in Canada [2 files, photographs removed, see B2021-0012/001P(10)]	[197-] - [198-]
B2021-0012/006(05) - (06)	Matija Bećković [2 files]	[198-] - [199-]
B2021-0012/006(07)	Vojislav Šešelj research	1984
B2021-0012/006(09) - (10)	George / Djordje Vid Tomasevic	1984 - 2003
B2021-0012/006(11)	600 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of battle of Kosovo, including trip planning	1988 - 1989

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/006(12)	Zaduzbine Kosova	1986
B2021-0012/006(13) – (15)	750 St. Sava commemoration	[ca. 1984] – 2005
B2021-0012/006(16)	Mahastir Krka fond pol. Žarka Mitrovića	1983 - 1989
B2021-0012/006(17)	Ivo Andric exhibition	1991
B2021-0012/006(18)	Publicity, Serbian events at UofT	1991 - 1998
B2021-0012/006(19)	Serbian Icons, Gallery Gallery	1986 - 1988
B2021-0012/006(20)- (22)	SHA publishing [3 files]	[198-] – [199-]
B2021-0012/006(23)- (24)	SHA publicity and programmes	[198-] – [199-]
B2021-0012_002S – 008S	[SHA audio recordings] <b>[RESTRICTED]</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9 digital audio files (3 GB)</li> </ul>	[ca. 2012]

### Series 7: Photographs

File number	File title	Date range
B2021-0012/001P(01)	Portraits, Sofija Škorić	[198-?], [201-?]
B2021-0012/001P(02)	Portraits and candid shots, Škorić and others including author, Serbian Literary Company	[200-]
B2021-0012/001P(03)	Gerstein Library, University of Toronto	[197-?]
B2021-0012/001P(04)-(06), /002P (oversized)	"Democracy and Parliamentarism" International Symposium	1981
B2021-0012/001P(07)	Serbian community [possibly for "Serbs in Ontario"? images of community events, traditional dancing and dress, group portrait Lethbridge, Grancanica Serbian Orthodox Church, and others, photographs removed from ]	[195-] – [199-]
B2021-0012/001P(08)	Nicola Pašić	[195-] – 196-]
B2021-0012/001P(09)	Portraits, Arsenije Jovanović, Matija Bečković, Zoran Jerković	[198-]
B2021-0012/001P(10)	Documentation of exhibitions, SHA, Rada Greg [slides removed from B2021-0012/006(03)]	[197-] – 198-]
B2021-0012/001P(11)	Julijan Kolesar exhibition and snapshots	[ca. 1984]
B2021-0012/001P(12)	Assorted Serbian community photographs [events, church service, theatre, group portraits, candid snapshots]	[196-] – [199-]
B2021-0012/001P(13)	Community performance	[198-?]
B2021-0012/001P(14)	Community performances and streetscape	[ca. 1961]
B2021-0012/001P(15)	Various community events, individuals in traditional dress	1987